



RECOLETOS OAR

Vol. VII No. 3

The Official Information Bulletin of the OAR
Vicariate of the Philippines and China

3rd Quarter, 1995

OAR Contemplative Nuns Inaugurate First Monastery in Philippine Soil



St. Ezekiel Moreno Monastery: contemplative life in action



The monastery, interior view

What took place in the city of Bacolod last August 19 brought joy to the entire Augustinian Recollect family! Saint Ezekiel Moreno Monastery founded by the Contemplative Augustinian Recollects nuns was blessed and inaugurated. It was the feast of the patron of the monastery, and exactly four years had passed since the day Mother Eufemia Lauzon, general of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters of the Philippines, arrived at Leon (Spain) to invite the Federation of Augustinian Recollect Contemplatives of Spain to make a foundation in our country.

On August 11, 1992 the five foundresses arrived in Manila: Mother Lourdes Eizaguirre, sisters Josefina Gonzalez, Maria del Carmen Mejias, Maria Elena Trejo and Maria Jose Vila, accompanied by Mother Federal, Maria Cruz Aznar. A month later, on the feast of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, they landed in Bacolod where they started their contemplative life in a little house at barangay Villamonte until they moved definitely to the new monastery last May 28, feast of the Ascension of the Lord.

After a year of hard work, the efforts of Felipe Jocson, as architect, Josephine Esgana, as director and Fr. Antonio Palacios, OAR, as

coordinator of the project, along with the support of the Federation of Contemplative Recollect nuns, the Province of Saint Nicholas, the Vicariate of the Philippines, benefactors and friends, bore their fruits: a beautiful monastery, plus the hope that in the future this mother house will give birth to more contemplative foundations for the Recollection in Asia.

Twenty five Recoletos, deacons, the parish priest of San Isidro Labrador — the parish to which the monastery belongs — two diocesan priests, the community of Augustinian Recollect Sisters, members of several other religious communities, a big number of faithful, workers, friends and benefactors attended the inauguration. Bishop Gregorio of the Diocese of Bacolod and Fr. Hernando Coja, OAR, prior of the Recollect community of Bacolod, welcomed the congregation. Mother Lourdes, with Fr. Rene Paglinawan, OAR and Fr. Coja, OAR cut the ribbon.

Master of ceremonies was Fr. Samson Silloriquuez. Fr. Rene gave the homily in which he reminded the religious and the faithful that now the Recollect family in the Philippines is complete with the presence of our contempla-

tive sisters; he also stressed the greatness and rich personality of Saint Ezekiel, manifested in the Philippines in multiple ways.

A very important moment was the consecration of the Church and the unction of the altar carried out by Bishop Camilo and Fathers Paglinawan, Palacios, and Javier Legarra, spiritual director of the Federation of Contemplative Recollects of Spain.

The blessing of the Monastery followed after the Eucharistic celebration. Then the blessing of the different places and rooms of the convent. Fr. Palacios gave thanks to all those who have helped make possible the completion of the monastery.

Our greatest joy is in the presence, here and now, of our contemplative sisters, and especially of those six young Filipino pioneers: Judith, Emy, Teresa, Sherley, Vivien and Quiteria. They are our future and our hope.

Our sisters, the contemplative Recollects are in the Philippines; in them the Lord blesses us. We will take precious care of such a beautiful gift.



EDITORIAL



Retrieving the Contemplative Spirit

"Faith is the recognition that all is gift" (J. O'Donnel, SJ). Faith, therefore, carries a built-in dynamism that flows from acknowledging life's various forms and levels of givenness. Many a time people can easily overlook the spirit-filled faith that goes beyond earthly wrappings. There are those, however, who look at the giver as more precious than the gift, since the giver is the first gift itself.

Definitely, this is what contemplation is expected to reach: the realization that the dispenser of every good thing is the greatest gift. The consciousness that sustains all contemplation is one of constantly beholding Jesus, the glory of God, and willing to be lost in the arena of grateful faith which bursts out in humble prayer. Only the humble can pray.

Taking a fresh look at our Constitution will provide us with very touching lines a propos of contemplation: "The special vocation of the Augustinian Recollect is to hold a continual conversation with Christ, and his special care is to attend to everything that will most quickly and easily set him ablaze in the love of Christ" (no. 11). "The exterior organization of the Order must promote interior peace,

silence of the spirit, study and piety, so that amidst the created things that we encounter by passing necessity, we may still maintain our quiet conversation with God, so that whatever we do may spring from the intimacy of our communion with Him" (no. 13).

Therefore, the Augustinian Recollect has to soak himself in that "one thing necessary." Every form of renewal – if renewal is what we desire and need – has to consider whatever stands as valid in the old, so the old can inspire new things in continuity with its lasting vigor. Retrieving the contemplative dimension sinks into the very heart of the Recollection's history, a history that continues to this day.

Who cannot be inspired by religious who work sincerely and silently? Who cannot be moved by the welcome development in the life of our cloistered Augustinian Recollect Sisters who have very recently inaugurated their first monastery in the Philippines?

This issue of **Recoletos Observer** is a humble tribute to them and to the people who were behind them and are with them. To recognize their presence is to recognize the perennial validity of their ideals, ideals which we also share and cherish.

The RECOLETOS OBSERVER is a quarterly publication of the OAR Vicariate of the Philippines and China which aims "to provide the religious a regular, updated and systematic information... in the various OAR apostolates" (Vicarial Circular Letter, July 3, 1989).

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FORMATION

Mira-Nila, Q.C.

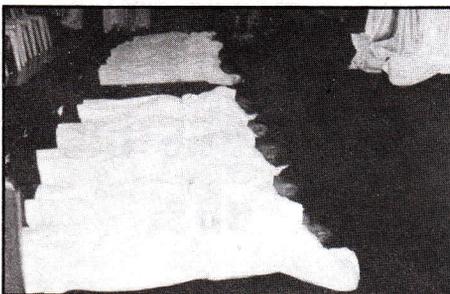
RFC Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

The Recoletos Formation Center celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. Its establishment has been one of the greatest blessings in the Vicariate in the recent past. We remember in gratitude, we celebrate in joy, and we re-commit with generosity.

One of the activities lined up for the celebration is the gathering of all the RFC alumni (26 priests and two brothers). Among the objectives of the gathering are: 1) to increase awareness of one's being as an OAR religious in the area of his apostolate; 2) to identify the challenges posed to the Recollect religious life in the present circumstances; 3) to experience more deeply the warmth of community life; 4) to formulate apt resolutions for a more fruitful adventure in the religious life.

More power to the RFC Alumni!

Big Diaconal Ordination



Humbling themselves for the Spirit's gift

On September 10, feast of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, 10 Recoletos were ordained to the sacred Order of Deacons by Most Rev. Ernesto Salgado, D.D., Vicar Apostolic of Baguio. In his homily, the bishop exhorted them to live a life of service which, he said, "is like playing tennis: You will not win unless you serve." Close to 500 faithful were present to witness the celebration. *Enhorabuena* to: Revs. Sixto Bitangjol,

OAR, Joven Saavedra, OAR, Edwin Macmac, OAR, Corvin Maturan, OAR, Julius Marcos, OAR, Jose Opalda, Jr., OAR, Anthony Morillo, OAR, Vicente Ramon, Jr., OAR, Ferdinand Fornilos, OAR, and Christopher Maspara, OAR.

Conferences

— Two Saturday mornings, July 15th and 22nd, were scheduled for conferences on Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) with Fr. Emmanuel Sarez, parish priest of Sagrada Familia in Caloocan as the expert resource person assisted by Misses Shirley Velasco and Ruby Dimalanta of the parish evangelization team. BEC would be none other than a "new way of being Church relevant to our time."

— Fr. Mario Sanchez, professor of San Carlos Seminary and licentiate-holder from Anselmianum in Rome, answered intelligently and perfectly all the curious questions hurled to him by the seminarians after he gave them a brief overview of Liturgy. This well-known Filipino liturgist gave his talk in RFC on August 12, morning.

Antipolo, Rizal

"Mary, the Woman" Affair

The Novices, among bishops, priests, religious, seminarians, students and laymen, flocked to the Manila cathedral on August 15, feast of the Assumption, for the closing ceremony of the three-day celebration dedicated to women. His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin who led the concelebrated Mass emphasized the role of the Blessed Virgin as a model of faithfulness, courage, truthfulness and love not only for women but for men as well.

Vocation Month Launching

The Recoletos de Antipolo community represented the OAR at the National Capital Region's (NCR) launching of this year's Vocation Month held at the Antipolo cathe-



OAR Exhibits, Archdiocesan Vocation Month at Antipolo

dral last August 18-20. The theme was "Misyon sa Kabataan at Bokasyon, Sabay Nating Pangalagaan." Various male and female religious institutes joined the campaign through exhibits, school visitations and talks.

Anti-Nuke Noise Barrage

On September 11, the Novices with Fr. Rex, roamed around Dela Paz subdivision with their cans, bells, dustpans and tambourines to join the national noise barrage, expressing their oneness with the world against the French nuclear testing in the Pacific. God sprinkled water at exactly the same time the noise-making started as if to remind us to respect Mother Earth.

Baguio City Casiciaco-Recoletos Seminary

Developments:

- restructuring of the Physical Plant to cater to a more Recollect Formation: "Bene Vivit, Bene Orat, Bene Studet" principle being used as the basis.
- returning to the original name, Casiciaco-Recoletos Seminary (*Cares*).
- defining the Criteria of Evaluation for seminarians, adopting the postulancy-related principles described in the Plan of Formation.
- individual and communitarian development according to the maxim, "Kingliness Without, Saintliness Within."
- underscoring of a more community oriented assignments of Formators.

SCHOOLS

Bacolod City

Solidarity Day



Group-sharing --- students

"As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you" was the theme of the UNO-R 4th Solidarity Day last August 27. More than 3,500 UNO-Rians converged at the University gym and amphitheater for a day of prayer, thanksgiving and sharing to keep alive the spirit of the 1995 World Youth Day. Three hundred volunteer facilitators composed of faculty members and representatives from various religious and academic organizations led the participants in communicating Faith, Hope and Love through their personal experiences with the Risen Christ. Invited speaker was Fr. Ferdinand Hernando, OAR.

The Solidarity Day was highlighted by a Holy Mass with Bishop Camilo Gregorio, D.D., as Main Celebrant.

Over-all Coordinator of the celebration was Fr. Ronel Gealon, OAR, University Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry.

For the first time, the feast of St. Augustine was celebrated with guided reflections on Love for God, Humility, Poverty and Community Life based on the life and thoughts of Father St. Augustine. This was joined in by the Administration, faculty members, employees and alumni.

Main celebrant during the Mass was Fr. Constantino Real, OAR, UNO-R President with Fr. Ferdinand Hernando, OAR of the Recoletos Formation Center as the Homilist.

Chapel of St. Nicholas of Tolentine and a new library to rise soon

A simple ground-breaking ceremony held recently marked the start of the construction of the Chapel of St. Nicholas of Tolentine and a new library building at UNO-R. Both structures were designed by the late Leandro V. Locsin.

When completed, the new library building will serve the needs of students, faculty and alumni of ONI, UNO and UNO-R. The chapel will be open to the larger Bacolod community.

UNO-R tops again



Magbanua, Saudi Adolfo garnered the second place of the Med Tech Board Exam last September 1995. Magbanua, who graduated Summa Cum Laude from UNO-R, hails from Dacalan, Ilog, Negros Occidental. He is the son of Arturo Magbanua and Warlita Adolfo.

The national passing average was 58.5%. UNO-R's passing average was 72.5%.

Cavite City

New Building Christened

The St. Ezekiel Moreno building was christened with ground breaking and cornerstone-laying ceremonies, July 11, in Cavite.

Fr. Arnie Visitacion, OAR (high school principal) said the invocation, and SSC-R Father President Victor Lluch, OAR, stated the rationale and read the scroll.

Fr. Federico de la Rosa, OAR; Fr. Joseph Granada, OAR; Fr. Nemesio Tolentin, OAR administered the bless-



Fr. Lluch reading the scroll

ing.

The new building will house a proposed chapel, canteen, libraries for the college and high school departments and classrooms.

The new building promises to usher in a new era of quality Christian Education.

Retreat-Recollections Program

The Campus Ministry Office of SSC-R (Cavite) has set a program of Retreat-Recollections which started last June and will go on until January 15, 1996. The total number of students to go through the program is 2,733.

The college is also offering two new courses: MBA and BS Criminology. The opening of these two courses is in line with the administration's desire to elevate the school one level higher in terms of education.

SSC-R celebrates St. Augustine's Feast

The Feast of St. Augustine was celebrated by the SSC-R community with the theme "Emptied of self, filled with God."

A series of symposia was held for the high school and the college departments. Speakers were Fr. Huberto Decena, OAR; Fr. Ferdinand Hernando, OAR; and Fr. Demetrio Peñascosa, OAR.

Different school organizations joined the event together with the faculty members.

Manila

NCAA champion

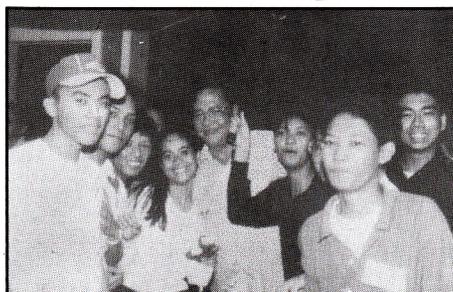


It's a three-peat for Stags

San Sebastian College-Recoletos (Manila) ended its championship campaign with a 92-83 win against the Mapua Cardinals in an overtime for the NCAA seniors basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum last October 3. It was the 7th NCAA crown of the Stags.

San Sebastian became the fourth team in the NCAA to win a third straight crown (1993, 1994, 1995).

STAGSCA hosts Archdiocesan assembly



Sen. Roco with SSC-R college students

The Archdiocesan Student Catholic Action (ASCA) of the Archdiocese of Manila held its second general assembly July 31 at the San Sebastian College auditorium with the theme "Pagsulong Para sa Katatagan", with Sen. Raul Roco as guest speaker.

The arrival of the ASCA's Youth Cross at the San Sebastian Basilica heralded the celebration of the liturgical mass officiated by His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin.

The ASCA is an association of young individuals devoted to Christ from 52 school chapters in the National Capital Region.

Cebu City

USJ-R Grade School Community Outreach Program



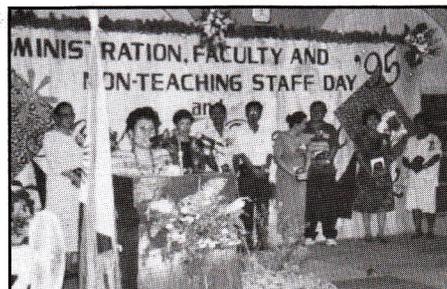
The graduates from the BBRC Sewing Class

The Non-Formal Pre-School Education to the children in the neighboring sitios in Basak is now on its 13th year of operation. From its former site in the KALIKASA neighborhood chapel, the classes are now held in the Department's Activity Center and with a new name: the St. Ezekiel Moreno Pre-School. About 35 pupils who are of the low-income bracket families in the area are the present recipients of this extension service.

The department has also extended help to the female inmates of *Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center (BBRC)* through its Skill Training Program in coordination with the city's MCDP project. Fifteen inmates gained skills in sewing.

In line with its spiritual growth formation, the Elementary Department is also conducting catechetical instructions every Saturday to the children of the neighboring areas.

55 Service Awardees honored



Dean Bathan responding in behalf of the service awardees

In the occasion of the 12th University Days and Intramurals, the Order of Augustinian Recollects of the University of San Jose-Recoletos awarded a total of 55 service awardees from various departments of the university. Of the 55 awardees, 10 have served for ten years, 23 have served for 15 years, 9 have served for 20 years, 11 have served for 25 years, and 2 have served for 30 years.

The awardees received certificates and plaques of appreciation, and cash gifts. The silver awardees received silver watches.

No less than the university president, Rev. Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, OAR spearheaded the celebration. On behalf of the silver awardees, Dean Alicia Bathan of the College of Law expressed words of gratitude.

Fr. Buñao Visits Thailand



One of the patriotic poses in Thailand...

As a founding member of the Association of Universities in Asia and the Pacific, **AUAP**, University of San Jose-Recoletos participated in the First Founding Conference in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand on July 27-29, 1995. Rev. Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, OAR represented the university during the conference.

The conference highlighted with a colloquium on the *University-Industry-Government Cooperation on Quality Engineering and Technology Education for Southeast Asia on the 21st Century*. The Assistant Director General for Science, UNESCO-Paris, Dr. A. Badran gave the keynote speech.

60 Josenian employees get houses



First organizational meeting of the Josenian Housing beneficiaries

A total of 60 employees of the University of San Jose-Recoletos benefited from the OAR Housing Project at Cansojong, Talisay, Cebu. The horizontal development of lots was already completed when the recipients raffled off the lots.

It was indeed a very memorable occasion for it was held during the feast of St. Nicholas of Tolentine. Rev. Fr. Andres Rodante Gotera, OAR, chairman of the USJ-R Housing Project, facilitated the affair.

VP Conde attends Indonesia Conference

Rev. Fr. Walthrode Conde, OAR, attended the Third Annual Conference of the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Universities at Atma Jaya University of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The three-day conference had for its theme, Strengthening the Role of Catholic University Alumni in Pluralistic Communities in Asia of the Twenty-First Century.

In the panel presentations, Fr. Conde actively participated in the discussion of the ways Josenians, Inc., USJ-R Alumni contributed in the affairs of the university.

From the AR Sisters...

Tahanang Talangpaz

The Tahanang Talangpaz, named after the Foundresses of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters, was blessed within the Eucharistic Celebration on 15 July 1995. Main celebrant was Bishop Bacani with Fr. Jose Tamayo as liturgist. Archbishop Joseph Ganda of Sierra Leone, West Africa also graced the occasion.

The Tahanang Talangpaz, located at the breezy Tagaytay City, within the compound of the Tagaste Retreat House and Our Lady of Carmel Novitiate, had been especially designed as home for the elderly, the sick and for those who may need a special time of solitude with the Lord. The pioneering community then, consisting of twenty-two, was formally initiated on July 22, 1995 with the installation of M. Ma. Bibiana Vendiola, AR as the Superior.

AR School Administrators Seminar-Workshop

August 16 to 21 had been a long schedule for the seminar-workshop of the AR school administrators, the school directress and department heads. The theme adopted by the pre-conference committee went with the seeming swing of the time: Apostolate 2000.

Indeed the seminar participants paved the way for the year 2000 as they seriously put together their minds and hearts in the revision of the Congregation's Vision-Mission to preserve the precious legacy of the Congregation while merging with the present modern man. With God's blessings through the patient assistance of Dr. Robert Borromeo of FAPE, the group was able to come up with the Vision-Mission Statement of the Congregation and of its Educational Apostolate.

Other related activities during the seminar-workshop were the Clinical Classroom Supervision, Revision of the School Administrative Handbook, and Legal Matters concerning school administration.

MILESTONES

Ordained Deacons, Sept. 10, 1995, OLCP: Revs. Sixto Bitangjol (Palo, Leyte), Joven Saavedra (Daet, Camarines Norte), Edwin Macmac (Culion, Palawan), Corvin Maturan (Bacolod City), Julius Marcos (Diliman, Quezon City), Jose Opalda, Jr. (Manito, Albay), Anthony Morillo (Almeria, Biliran), Vicente Ramon, Jr. (Bacolod City), Ferdinand Fornillos (Cagayan de Oro City), Christopher Maspara (Talisay, Cebu).

IN MEMORIAM

+ July 26, 1995 --- Mr. Timoteo C. Cachero, father of Fr. Dionisio Cachero, OAR (SSC-R, Manila president).

*From the
Secular Augustinian Recollects...*

*Ground Breaking
for the Multi-Purpose Hall
in Cavite City Depressed Area*

"Whatever you do to the least of my brethren you do it to me" (St. Matthew 25:40). This admonition of our Lord Jesus Christ could very well be the inspiration of the OAR Tertiaries of Cavite City in their apostolate for the economically disadvantaged. Last Sunday, September 17, ground breaking for a multi-purpose hall in the mid-10B Kingfisher.



Second Multi-Purpose Hall of SAR-Cavite

ing for a multi-right in the mid-10B Kingfisher. Luch, OAR, Augustinian Recollects, spiritual adviser of the Tertiaries officiated the blessing of the site. It was attended by officers and members of the community led by Fr. Victor Lallana, chapter president. As always, Dra. Rizalina B. Poblete, national president of the SARF, lent support and inspiration to the tertiaries. The residents, led by their Barangay Captain, Eman Caganap joined in the ground breaking ceremony and later served some refreshments.

The members are presently engaged in a fund raising for the project. It is hoped that the target of P120,000 could be reached before the end of October which is the projected completion date for the project.

The two-storey hall will be the center for the training of residents in the barangay in livelihood skills, initially in dressmaking and tailoring. It is also envisioned to be the center for the catechetical instruction especially for children in the area.

This is the 2nd Multi-Purpose Hall of the Tertiaries for the depressed areas, the 1st being at the Barangay San Lorenzo Ruiz (Pulo).

2nd National Biennial Convention

Resolutions

In the July regional meeting (Luzon) held in San Sebastian Basilica Parish, Manila, the National Council of the Secular Augustinian Recollects finally promulgated the *Resolutions* they arrived at in their 2nd National Biennial Convention held on April 27-28, 1995 in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental. The document was presented to the Vicarial Council for "approval", edited and then signed by representatives of the OAR and the SARF. The Resolutions contained the Formation Guidelines, Criteria for the Selection of Formator and the Plan of Action, synthesizing the theme of the Convention: "Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF): A Response to the Call of Formation."

BIRTHDAYS

November

- 09 - Fr. Emilio Jaruda, Jr., OAR
- 11 - Fray Edwin Macmac, OAR
- 15 - Fr. Pedro Ko, OAR
- 17 - Fr. Pedro Tung, OAR
- 23 - Fr. Euben Capacillo, OAR
- 29 - Fray Glynn Ortega, N., OAR

December

- 06 - Fr. Manuel Lipardo, OAR
- Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, OAR
- 07 - Fray Jose Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR
- 10 - Fr. Melquiades Modequillo, OAR
- 12 - Fray Lope Rama, OAR
- 14 - Fray Charlito Orobia, OAR
- 16 - Rev. Herman Cafete, OAR
- 19 - Bro. Severino Cuesta, OAR
- 28 - Bro. Santos Serato, OAR
- Fr. Joel Naranja, OAR
- Fr. Russel Emmanuel Sungcad, OAR
- 30 - Fray Joseph Girasol, OAR
- 31 - Rev. Antonio Zabala, OAR

RCC

Studies have been made on the possibility of interconnecting Recoletos communities by means of a computer network/internet. Networking will be experimented among the following centers: RCC, Mira-Nila and Baguio. RCC will become the hub of vicarial communications.

With a fast, constant and proper exchange of information, we hope to keep our communities closer to one another — formation houses, schools, parishes, religious government. We shall also have a medium of monitoring the implementation of the Secretariats' particular proposals and programs.

TOWARDS ONE HEART AND ONE SOUL



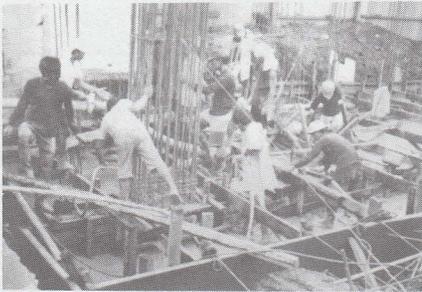
A new building rises for SSC-R Cavite



Cornerstone laying, Cavite City



The patron saint and the faithful



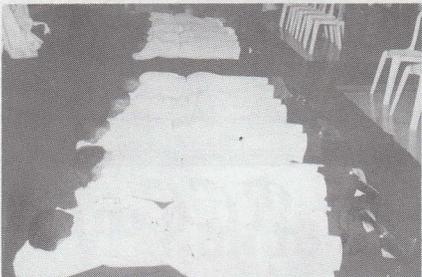
Work in progress



Augustinian feast



Recollect Deacons!



Being prayed over by the faithful



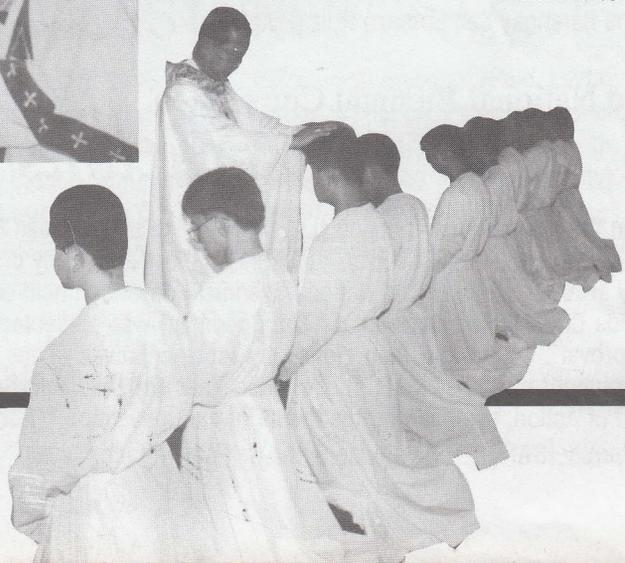
Deacons-to-be



Newly ordained Deacons



Deacon as servant



Solemn moment of ordination



And the lucky winner is...!



Fr. Buñao in Thailand



First Monastery in Philippine soil



Eucharist at the blessing



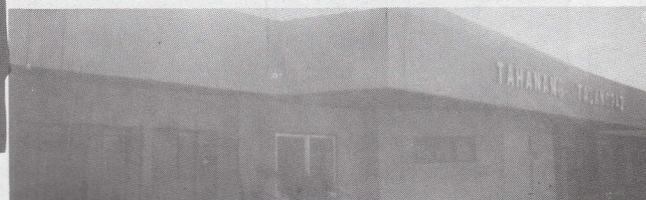
Pioneers all!



OAR retreatants



Proud parents of Deacons



Tahanang Talangpaz



One of the sessions



Jesus at the center of Retreat

Recollects at Retreat '95



The joys of the Retreat

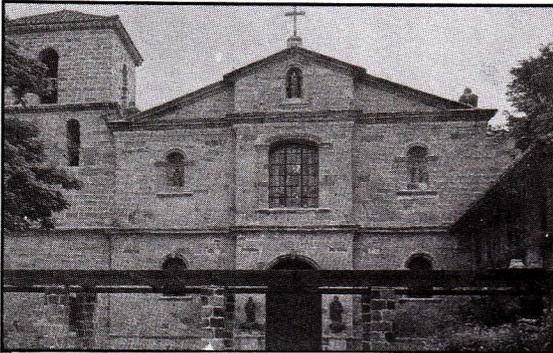




ST. EZEKIEL MORENO CORNER

(Note: St. Ezekiel Moreno Center at RFC, Mira-Nila, Q.C., now accepts reports of any favor received through the intercession of St. Ezekiel for filing and publication purposes).

St. EZEKIEL in 200 years of Las Piñas Parish



Las Piñas Church, built by Fr. Diego Cera, OAR

1795. On December 26 of this year, the Recoleta missionary, Fr. Diego Cera de la Virgen del Carmen, came to Las Piñas as its first Parish Priest. The town, 12 kilometers south of Manila, was put under the patronage of St. Joseph. Before Fr. Cera, Las Pinas was already designated a parish in 1775, but had no pastor of its own.

1995. This year, Las Piñas mark this first Recoleta presence, 200 years ago. In May the townsfolk headed by the parish priest, put up the "Fiesta Anno 1795" to relive the glorious history of the parish. It was part of the parish year-long celebration dubbed "Tik-Tak-Tik" mainly to honor its first parish priest and also to call grateful attention to his world-famous legacy—the Bamboo Organ.

Seemingly, the presence of the unique Bamboo Organ has overshadowed another unique presence in this parish—that of a Saint. Eighty-one years after the assignment of the first Recoleta parish priest, Fr. Ezekiel Moreno came into succession of the curacy. He served for three years, from 1876 to 1879. It was a presence unique for its shortness but singular in its richness.

Signs of sanctity

The parishioners already perceived Fr. Ezekiel as a holy man. The town officials, given the anti-friar atmosphere of the time, admitted in an official letter the excellent example of this Recoleta curate.

His activity

What did he do? His "ministerial activities

were to a great extent no different from those of the curate of his time." The simple change lies in the fact that he did his pastoral duty with more zeal, fidelity and compassion, even the littlest obligation. On top of that, he was claimed to have performed a miracle as testified by no less than four witnesses. A fire broke out in one part of the town on the early morning of April 12, 1879. The flames did not spread to the rest of the town as "the fire was extinguished at the spot where the Father stood with one hand gripping the breviary and the other clutching the habit and fanning the flames," declared Simon Villareal to the diocesan tribunal set up for Fr. Ezekiel's beatification process in 1913.

His way of life

How did he live? As a true man of God, in his prayer, mortification and detachment, Marian devotion and abundant virtues. When he was about to leave the parish, he foresaw "that someday people, disguised as ministers of God, would descend upon the town of Las Piñas." During the Revolution, followers of the schismatic Gregorio Aglipay entered the town and administered to the residents "to the great confusion of uninstructed people, exactly as Father Moreno had foretold." These were followed by various Protestant proselytizers brought along by the American Occupation. To the same assembly who heard his prediction, he bade farewell saying, "I am going away. But I will not abandon you." Another prophetic promise coming true today? Las Piñas through the centuries has reminded vigorous in its faith and now able to celebrate its 200 years of christian community life—because St. Ezekiel has not abandoned them!

Las Piñas parishioners, then

No wonder that in 1879, when this holy pastor was to be taken out of Las Piñas, 250 parishioners gathered before San Nicolas convent in Intramuros to demand from the Recollect Father Provincial, Fr. Arrue, that Fr.

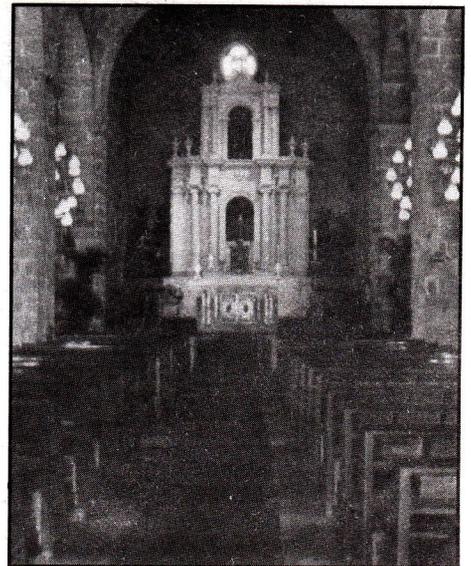
Ezekiel be retained as their curate. "We, the undersigned principalia and residents of Las Piñas...implore you to allow our dear curate to go on working on our town," petitioned the saddened townspeople. The order of transfer, however, was irrevocable.

Las Piñas, now

The present stone church of the parish was constructed under Fr. Diego Cera, OAR, and finished in 1819. The Bamboo Organ was completed in 1825. Under the Recolects, the Organ underwent repairs in 1867 and 1869. A parish rectory was built during the term of Fr. Enrique Aranda, OAR (1872-1876). Then in 1879, a Recoleta Saint left his footprint of holiness in the streets of this town by Manila Bay.

Two hundred years of parish life! All because the Recolects left a legacy of culture, faith and holiness—to Las Piñas to Islas Filipinas!

Reference: Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos, *Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Curate of Las Pinas (1876-1879)*, Marikina, MMla: Rodriqz Printers, 1992; Rebecca T. Añonuevo, "200 years Down Las Piñas Lane," in *Philippine Panorama*, Vol. 24, No. 19, May 7, 1995, pp.16-17.



Interior, St. Joseph Church, Las Piñas

VISION-MISSION STATEMENT OF THE OAR VICARIATE OF THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA

(Approved and promulgated, November 1995)

Introduction

We, the Augustinian Recollects -- faithful to the spirit of St. Augustine and living together in harmony and concord -- called to give witness to the people of God of contemplative and communitarian life, have bound ourselves to diligently fulfill the mission which the Church has entrusted to the Order in this part of the world.

VISION

We envision ourselves as a renewed family living as a model of community of love as we respond to the will of God and the call of the Church for the transformation of the people we serve into a community that enjoys the fullness of life.

MISSION

To attain this vision, we commit ourselves:

- to intensify oneness of heart and mind among the members of our religious communities;
- to strengthen unity and communion in all our apostolates by undergoing personal and communitarian conversion and by instilling the values of the Kingdom;
- to give preferential attention to the needy and weak members of our communities and apostolates;
- to integrate in our formative and apostolic programs global **education**, justice and peace, and social transformation.

CONCLUSION

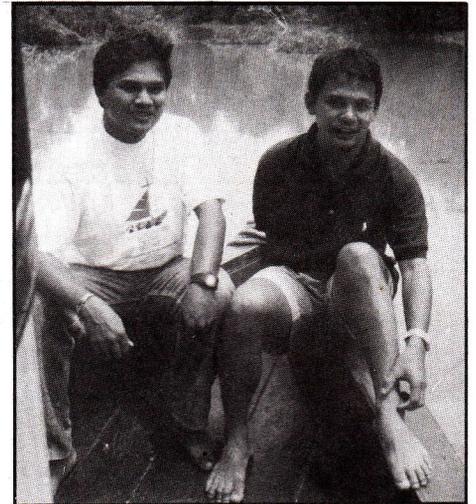
As Augustinian Recollects we hope to live our charism as ardent lovers of Mother Church ever ready to interpret and fulfill the will of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit as we continuously strive to faithfully follow Christ and his Gospel through the intercession of Mary, whom we invoke under the special title of Our Lady of Consolation.

From the OAR Missions...

Fr. Domingo Saladaga, OAR from Labrea, Brazil, writes us: "Our prelatore is located in the heart of the immense Amazon Rain Forest. There are no roads and highways that link us with the other towns and cities of Brazil. Boats (of weekly schedule) and planes (of daily schedule) are the only means of transportation in order to reach our place. We are really isolated from the rest of the world... The inhabited areas are the banks of the rivers grouped together into reduced fami-

lies (eight or fifteen families at most)... This is the reason why it takes us one month to make a "desobriga."... The people's attitude are not far different from the Filipinos... the only difference is that they are less demanding, less critical, less intriguing, frank but less hospitable since the majority are poor and almost have nothing to offer."

Fr. Doming is working in Labrea itself while another Filipino Recoletos, Fr. Loreto Dacanay is stationed at Pauini.



Fr. Dom & Fr. Dacs at the Amazons (Brazil)

Secretariat of Pastoral Ministry

For the Triennium 1995-1997, the Secretariat of Pastoral Ministry has presented to and received approval from the Vicariate on the following Major Areas of Concern:

- 1) Strengthening of small communities within the parishes run by the Recoletos.
- 2) Formation of members of small communities.
- 3) Attention to the weak and

needy members of the communities.

In line with these concerns, specific proposals-delineating situations, problems and possible solutions gathered from our parishes and religious assigned to pastoral ministry -- related activities -- were accepted by the Vicarial Council.

Among the implementing plans of the Secretariat is the adoption of the Bridge to Asia expertise and the conversion of the center into an OAR

Social Concern Agency. The proposed agency can link with Recoletos Communication Center and the St. Ezekiel Moreno Media and Values Proponents for purposes of research and dissemination of information. This can also coordinate with the social concern departments of the schools, parishes, seminaries and that of the Vicariate in general.



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