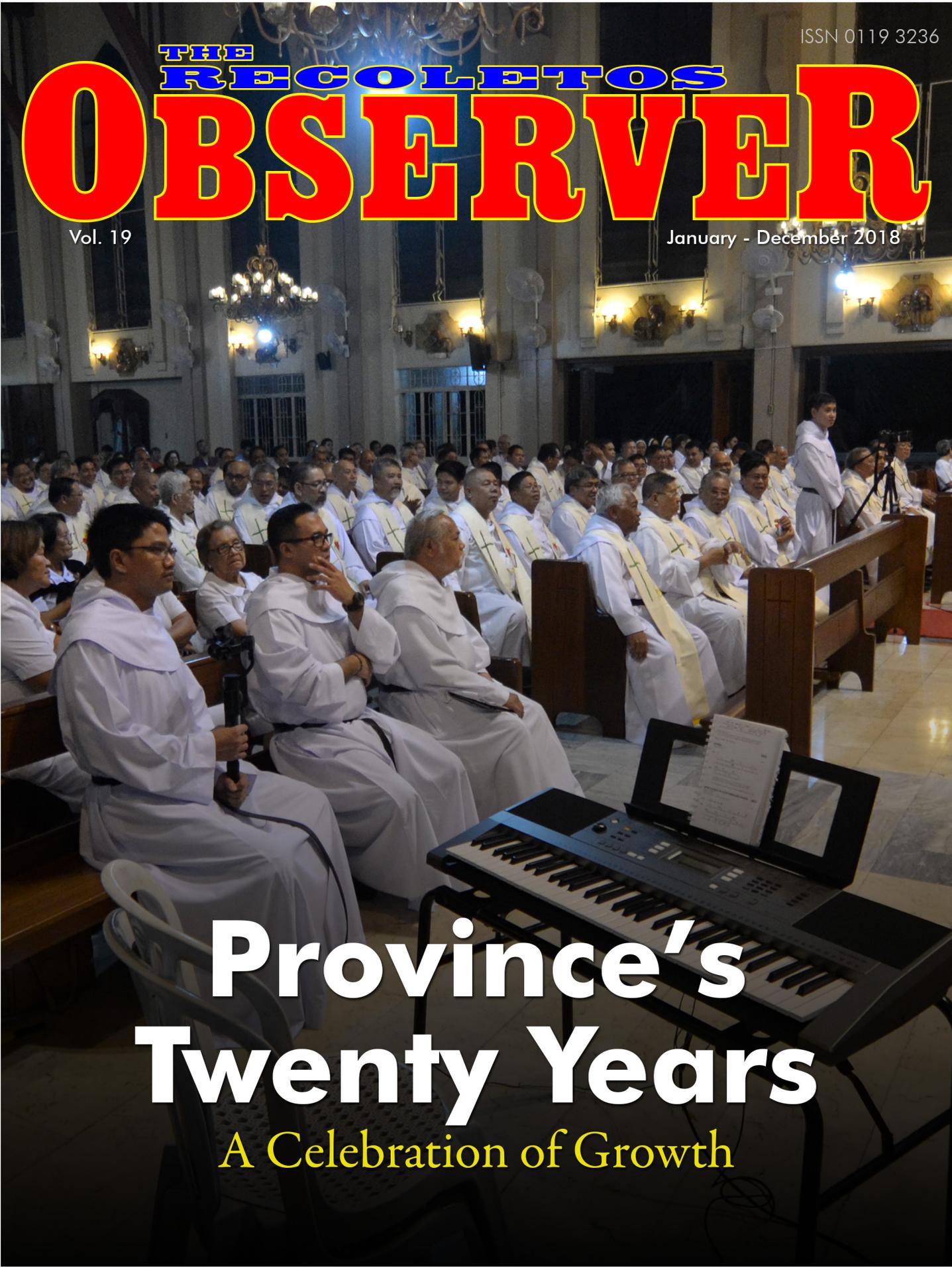


ISSN 0119 3236

# THE RECOLETOS **OBSERVER**

Vol. 19

January - December 2018



**Province's  
Twenty Years**  
A Celebration of Growth

# What's inside

## FEATURE

2 | The Virgin of Antipolo and the Augustinian Recollects

## PROVINCE'S 20<sup>TH</sup>

### ANNIVERSARY

- 5 | Launching of OAR Silver Anniversary
- 7 | Father Selma Presides Opening Mass of Province's 20<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary
- 8 | Deconstructing the OAR Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno: Looking back with Gratitude, 1606-2018
- 16 | Fraternity, Fun reign supreme in Day 1 Sports Activities
- 17 | Five-Year Plan towards

- 32 | Archbishop Soc Guides Capitulars to Reflection with Three Questions
- 33 | How the Provincial Chapter Opening Unfolded
- 34 | 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter Formally Opened
- 36 | 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter on its First Phase
- 38 | Commission Phase Meetings Kick Off
- 40 | Capitulars on a weekend get-away
- 41 | Holiness in the Christian

- 49 | USJ-R benchmarks with UNO-R CAMHS
- 50 | USJ-R scores 3 CPA topnotchers
- 50 | USJ-R is PH rep to UNESCO-Japan ESD teacher ed initiatives
- 51 | USJ-R Journalism and Communication Department receives JPPII Award
- 51 | USJ-R DJC at CMMMA
- 52 | USJ-R welcomes students from Lumad Bakwit Schools of Mindanao

PAGE ● 2 ● ● ● ● 18 ● ● ● ● 32 ● ● ● ● 42 ● ● ● ● 49 ● ● ● ● 53 ● ● ● ●

Province's Silver Anniversary in 2023 launched

- 18 | Bishop Bacani: Recollects as Missionary Community of Saints
- 20 | Logo for the 20th Founding Anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno Explained
- 21 | Venerables Star in Evening Program, Indicate Path for Province's Future
- 25 | Day 2 gives Space to Look back at Seeds once sown
- 27 | Celebration of Growth: A Viewpoint from a Distance

### 7<sup>TH</sup> PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

- 30 | A Day of Recollection for the Recollect Capitulars

### Community

- 42 | Commission Phase Continues
- 43 | Commissions Formulate Proposals for Decision Phase
- 44 | Ternary for Prior Provincial announced
- 45 | Fray Selma is re-elected Prior Provincial
- 46 | 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter finally concluded, councilors elected

### EDUCATION

- 47 | Alumni for OAR schools pass board exams
- 49 | USJ-R SHS champions District Level Math Competition

- 53 | USJ-R SHS champions Speak Up X: Visayas Schools Debate Championship
- 54 | USJ-R to host English Language Fellow Program
- 54 | UNO-R installs 17<sup>th</sup> President
- 56 | 9 UNO-Rians hurdle CPA board exams
- 56 | MEDLABS, NSTP and UCDO engage in Tree Growing Project Launch
- 57 | Two Summa Cum Laude Grads 9<sup>th</sup> placers in Teacher's Board
- 58 | UNO-R CAS Dean receives award for research
- 58 | UNO-R honors employees

- 59 | Golden jubilarians visit Alma Mater
- 60 | Korean Ambassador Visits UNO-R
- 60 | Barkadahan Debate: A Battle of Reasons 2018
- 61 | Kyoto University professor visits UNO-R
- 61 | UNO-R holds MAPA 2018
- 62 | UNO-R celebrates Vocation Awareness Week 2018
- 63 | GWD visits UNO-R and RESOURCE-Handumanan
- 64 | UNO-R celebrates its University Week "the RECOLETOS WAY"
- 65 | SSC-R alumnus as new Associate Justice

- 73 | SPA-R culminates October activities

### MINISTERIAL/MISSION

- 73 | Recoletos brand of education revolutionizes school programs in Sierra Leone

### FORMATION

- 75 | 12 housing units for Casiciaco staffers blessed
- 76 | Casiciaco welcomes 23 neophyte seminarians on special day
- 77 | Seminarians undergo English enhancement program
- 78 | Ezekiel's feast celebrated in 4 Baguio hospitals

for Teachers

- 88 | 11 OAR Coristas pass LET 2018
- 89 | Augustinian Recollects hail St. Augustine
- 90 | *Curso de Preparación para la Profesión Solemne* concluded
- 91 | RST opens new AY with 75 students
- 92 | RFC welcomes neophytes, friars from Spain
- 93 | 7 Friars make Solemn Profession amidst Typhoon Ompong
- 94 | Recoletos Formation Center opens to Pious Union of Clerics and Public Associations of the Faithful

59

65

73

79

88

94

- 65 | SSC-R Manila awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Place in animation contest
- 66 | SSC-R de Cavite hails 15<sup>th</sup> College President
- 67 | SSC-RdC and Holy Angel University collaborate on Project Proposal Writing
- 67 | San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite conducts Mid-year Operations Review
- 68 | Sebastianian presents Research in Europe
- 69 | SPA is officially a CEAP member
- 69 | San Pedro Academy opens S.Y. 2018-2019
- 70 | Recoletos de Caidiocan: where are you?

- 79 | Order receives 6 new postulants
- 80 | Opening retreat focuses on silence, discernment
- 81 | Bishop to seminarians: Love the altar
- 82 | Fides et Ratio colloquium held
- 83 | Novices undergo communications workshop
- 77 | SEMoNo-Re celebrates 27<sup>th</sup> Patronal Solemnity
- 85 | "Curtain!"
- 86 | Six Novices Profess their Simple Vows
- 87 | Pre-Novices break through Farm Exposure
- 88 | AR and OAR formands take Licensure Examination

- 94 | Recollect Formands Meet: Gathering focuses on Witnesses of Faith and Discernment
  - 95 | Seven Friars ordained as deacons
- ### SARF
- 97 | SARF-Antipolo and CEU team-up for Medical Outreach Mission
  - 98 | SARF-Philippines 2018 Report
- ### CCP-R
- 104 | On the 100<sup>th</sup> Day of the Quadrennium 2018-2022
  - 107 | Editorial Staff

# The Virgin of Antipolo and the Augustinian Recollects

BY MICHAEL P. DELOS REYES

The much venerated Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buenviaje (Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage), enshrined at her national shrine and cathedral in Antipolo City, has a rich history and widespread devotion in and out of the country, spanning for more than 390 years now. The image was brought to the Philippines by Don Juan Niño de Tabora from Acapulco, Mexico in 1626. Before his death in 1632, he entrusted his heavenly treasure to the Jesuits, who brought it to Antipolo and ministered in the parish until the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1768. The secular priests took over the administration of Antipolo for some time, and in 1863, it was entrusted to the Augustinian Recollects, who served there until 1898, or 120 years ago.



*The miraculous image of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage of Antipolo*

The first task of the Recollect Fathers in Antipolo was focused on the completion of the restoration of the church which had been battered and torn apart by the earthquakes of 1863. The repair works were directed by the notable architect, Padre José Salesa del Pilar, OAR. After much diligent work and valuable sacrifices, the friars were able to see their labors crowned when the halfdestroyed church became a worthy dwelling for the Virgin Mary. To the Recollects must also be attributed the beautiful silver altar of the Virgin which accumulated works of art and magnificent wealth; the Camarin (Dressing Room, or a niche for an image) of the Virgin; the paintings that adorn the ceiling and walls, and the artistic decoration of the altars; the installation of the organ, and the clock on the tower; the construction of the sacristy, and the solid iron fence surrounding the courtyard of the church. The works done in the convent should also not be forgotten, the bold arches of the facade, and the large roof terrace that overlooks the town. Furthermore, the Fathers took great interest in building schools, opening new roads, one of which has a large stone bridge, and introducing the best of urbanization



*The church and its patio with the solid iron fence surrounding it*

in streets and buildings, providing the pilgrims, a pleasant stay in Antipolo.

It may be said that the devotion to the Virgin of Antipolo reached the peak of its greatness and popularity during this time. People from all walks of life go up to Antipolo in pilgrimage during the flowery month of May. They come in caravans and waves flocking from all over the venerate the Virgin in her mountain shrine. The feast that has been celebrated on the first Tuesday of May for half a century already, was followed by three sets of continuous novena. During the novena days, Sung Masses were held from 4:00 to 8:00 in the morning, aside from the novena and ordinary Masses. Novenas were held twice a day, one in Spanish and the other in Tagalog, followed by letanía cantada, gozos and Salve (sung litany, praises, and Hail Holy Queen). The Virgin was brought out in procession four times, on the first day of the feast before High Mass, and at the end of each set of novena.

In recognition of his victory over the Lanao Moros in Marawi in 1895, the Ayuntamiento (City Council) of Manila gifted Governor-general Ramón Blanco y Erenas (1893-1896) with an Espada de Honor (Sword of Honor).

On December 19, 1896, Governor-general Blanco entrusted the sword to the Prior Provincial of the Recollects, [Fr. Andres Ferrero, OAR, to be offered at the foot of the Virgin of Antipolo. However, because of the tumult at that time, the said request was not carried out. It would be difficult to narrate all the sacrifices and hardships of the zealous Recollect Fathers, who carried out the mission of the spiritual administration of Antipolo and the custody of the precious treasure kept in the celebrated shrine. The friars who administered the church of Antipolo were the following:

- 1863: Fr. Francisco Villas de San Lorenzo
- 1865: P. Fr. Gregorio Omeñaca de la Virgen de los Milagros
- 1865-1867: P. Fr. Pablo Bienzobas de San Antonio de Padua
- 1867: P. Fr. Pedro Albericio de la Reina de los Ángeles
- 1868: P. Fr. Pedro Soto de San Juan Bautista
- February 1872 – August 1876: P. Fr. Santos Paredes de San Pedro Apóstol
- August 1876-1883: P. Lector Fr. Patricio Marcellán de San José

- March 1883-1896: P. Fr. Esteban Martínez de San Antonio de Padua
- July-November 1894: P. Fr. Pascual Lagunas de la Virgen del Castillo
- July-October 1897: P. Fr. Manuel Jimenez del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, substitute
- 1897-June 1898: P. Fr. Cipriano Benedicto de los Dolores

The names of Fr. Cipriano Benedicto, the last Recollect parish priest of Antipolo, and Fr. Hilario Vega de la Asunción, his companion, should be noted because they chose to fall into the hands of the revolutionaries in 1898, instead of abandoning the Virgin. At the start of the pilgrimage season in May that year, Katipuneros slipped into Antipolo unnoticed by the parish priest. The group had apparently chosen the high point of the festivities, the third day of the said month, to avenge the murder of one of their leaders by the Guardia Civil. But the attack was criticized in Antipolo itself as a desecration of the feast of the Virgin, and some influential



*Fray Andres Ferrero, OAR*

personalities were able to persuade the rebels to abandon the said plan. The feast went undisturbed, and it was only at the end of the pilgrimage season on June 17, 1898 that the rebels capture the priests of Antipolo. Before the religious were brought to Cavite for imprisonment, the pastor of Antipolo ensured that the belongings of the Virgin did not fall into revolutionary hands. He entrusted them to the care of the Virgin's Camarera (Caretaker), Vicenta Leyra, a relative of José Rizal, who had a good connections with the leaders of the revolution, and warned the rebels that if they dared to lay a finger on the treasures of the Virgin, she would inform Emilio Aguinaldo.

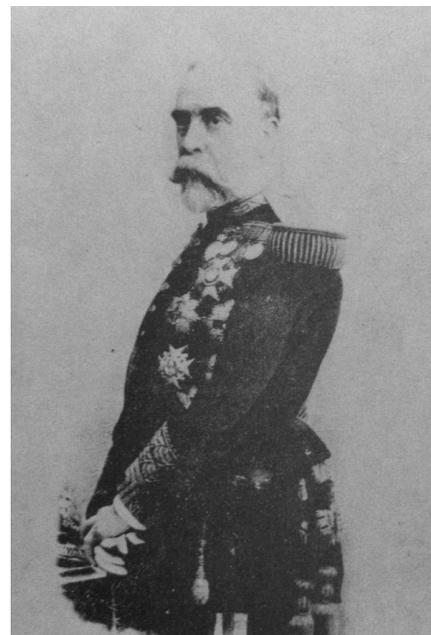
After the Recollects, the care of Antipolo was given to the Secular priests. In 1904, on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the Dogma of Immaculate Conception, the Virgin as Patroness of the Philippines visited

and stayed at the Manila Cathedral from November 27 to December 11. During this time, the offering of the Espada de Honor of Governor-general Blanco was finally fulfilled. The Vicar Provincial of the Recollects carried the silver tray where the precious jewel was deposited. Together with the other brothers in habit, they knelt at the foot of the altar steps to offer the sword to the Virgin. The Archbishop accepted the precious jewel in the name of the Virgin, and said a heartfelt allocution in Spanish. The offering apparently served also as a fitting conclusion to the splendid history of service of the Recollects to the Virgin of Antipolo.

At present, the Augustinian Recollects continue to serve the Virgin of Antipolo through the parish they administer, dedicated to the Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage. It is located at the entry of the North Harbor in Del Pan, Tondo, Manila, and was erected by the late Rufino

Cardinal Santos on March 16, 1971.

Ad Iesum per Mariam!



*Governor-general Ramon Blanco y Erenas  
(1893-1896)*

## REFERENCES

Del Carmen, Francisco Sadaba. *Catalogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolas Tolentino de Filipinas*. Madrid: Imprenta del Asilo de Huerfanos del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, 1906.

Delos Reyes, Michael P. *Morena Graciosa: The Devotion to the Virgin of Antipolo through the Centuries*. Quezon City: Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc., 2016.

Photos from *La Estrella de Antipolo*, 1904.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MICHAEL P. DELOS REYES hails from Cainta, Rizal and obtained his M.A. in Theological Studies from the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University in March 2004. The Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc. has published four of his works – *Prusisyon: Paghahanda at Pagdiriwang* (2006), which won as Best Book in Theology and Liturgy in the 2007 Cardinal Sin Catholic Book Awards (CSCBA); *Holy Week and Easter Processions: A Liturgico-pastoral Guide* (2015); *Salve Regina: On Crowning Images of the Virgin Mary* (2015), 2016 CSCBA Liturgy Category Finalist; and *Morena Graciosa: The Devotion to the Virgin of Antipolo through the Centuries* (2016), 2017 CSCBA Best Book in Liturgy. He is presently an administrator in Xavier School in San Juan City, and is happily married with four children.

Photo credits: Michael P. Delos Reyes, <http://www.filcatholic.org/the-virgin-of-antipolo-and-the-augustinian-recollects/>



**20<sup>TH</sup> FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO**  
NOVEMBER 28, 2018 - NOVEMBER 27, 2019



## **WITNESSES OF GOSPEL VALUES: DEEPENING OF FAITH AND DISCERNMENT OF VOCATIONS AMONG YOUTH AND CONSECRATED PERSONS**



# **Launching of OAR Silver Anniversary**

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY – “The countdown to the celebration of our Province’s 20<sup>th</sup> ‘birthday’ on November 27-28 is in its last three weeks,” wrote Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial, in his official communication released Tuesday and addressed to all religious of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

The two-day program will commemorate the creation of what was then the eighth Province of the Order of Augustinian Recollects in that historic 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter held in Monachil, Granada, Spain 20 years ago.

On November 28, 1998, the 36 delegates of that General Chapter unanimously approved the establishment of the new Province which, in compliance with ordinance

number 19, was to be named after St. Ezekiel Moreno.

St. Ezekiel is apparently the only patron of a Recollect Province who once lived and toiled in that same Province. Father Ezekiel who received the minor orders, and was ordained as deacon in Iloilo and as priest in Manila, ministered to the people of Mindoro, Palawan, Las Piñas, Santo Tomas in Batangas, Santa Cruz in Manila, and Cavite, registering a total

of 15 years in the Philippine soil from 1870 to 1885.

Moreover, the said establishment was tantamount to the elevation of what was merely a Vicariate of the Philippines and China to a status at par with the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentino to which, as a vicariate, it previously belonged.

In gratitude for the manifold blessings for the last two decades, the anniversary activities will be

## province's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

hosted for reason of space, facilities, and manpower by the Recoletos de Miranila community in Quezon City. The theme, "Witnesses of Gospel Values: Deepening of Faith and Discernment of Vocations among Youth and Consecrated Persons," hybridizes those of the universal and Philippine Church as well as those of the Order and the Province.

The first day will focus on the get-together of the Recollect religious from the different pastoral nooks of the Province. As in a family or clan reunion, there will be a sports festival, schedule for common prayers, meals and socialization. Father Provincial will preside the 7:00 AM Opening Mass at Our Lady of Consolation Parish church and, later, in the evening, he will meet and dialogue with the brothers who will first introduce themselves by batch.

The launching of the Five-Year Preparation for the silver founding anniversary of the Province will highlight the second day. In the morning, the religious will listen to two talks—on the history of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno and on consecrated life and climate change. In the afternoon, the Life and Mission Project of the Province for the quadrennium 2018-2022 will be

presented for clarification and owning. His Excellency Teodoro Bacani, bishop-emeritus of Novaliches, will preside the 6:30 PM Eucharistic celebration.

Aside from this Province-level affair, Father Provincial also encouraged a local-level activity "to allow a wider and more inclusive celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the Province among members of the Recoletos Family and constituents of the local communities, and to disseminate the yearly thematic program and the long-range preparation for the 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary celebration."

With such degree of formative significance of the celebration, Father Provincial in his November 6 follow-up letter said: "May I reiterate my invitation to all the brothers to come and join in this significant milestone," putting emphasis on the phrase "all the brothers" despite being aware that there could be some "who may not really be able to come due to distance, health or whatever grave reason."

As of to date, the Province's 179 religious are spread in nine (9) countries of the Recoletos world: Philippines, Taiwan, Sierra Leone, USA (including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), Italy,

Spain, Cuba, Colombia, and Indonesia. And what used to be, for many years, a Filipino-majority Province, is now paving the way for diversification, with the membership of two Nigerians since 2014, and, soon, God willing, with vocations coming from Indonesia.

This expansion of the Recollect presence spearheaded by the Province marks a great improvement when one reads again the Decreto de Erección which states: "The new Province is made up of the houses which belong to St. Nicholas of Tolentine Province in the Philippine Republic, those of Linyuan and Santimen in Taiwan (Republic of China), and the mission of Sierra Leone."

But, above all, as depicted by the heart and the number 20 in the anniversary logo, the St. Ezekiel Province—the only one that was not merged with another Province of the Order during its 2016 General Chapter which reconfigured the previous eight (8) Provinces to only four (4)—is called "to remain faithful to Christ and the charismatic identity received from the founding Fathers and the Mother Church" in the midst of challenges for renewal, revitalization, innovation and adaptation, and response to the social, cultural, and political circumstances.



# Father Selma Presides Opening Mass of Province's 20<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary

BY FRAY JHOEBEN RODRIGUEZ, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY – “*Ved: qué dulzura, qué delicia, ver los hermanos convivir unidos.*” (“How pleasant and good it is to see brothers living in unity.”)

The famous quote from Psalm 133 was aptly picked out by Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial, in his homily during the votive Mass in honor of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

The 8:00 AM concelebrated mass on November 27 was held at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish in Mira-Nila. It beacons the opening of the two-day celebrations of the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the Province.

“Indeed, it is a joy to see our brothers after twenty years of being a Province. It is a joy to have this celebration, having this gathering where many really are here,” said Father Provincial. “This is a moment of grace given to us by the Lord. It is a moment of encounter, a moment of sharing each other’s presence, vocation, joy, and hurts as we continue to fulfil the missions entrusted to us

by the Lord.”

The Prior Provincial took the opportunity to invite all the friars to reflect on a series of existential questions as guide for the itinerary in celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Province: “Who are we? How did we start [20 years ago]? Are we really convinced that we are Augustinian Recollects in word and in deed? What made us Augustinian Recollects? Why are we here? What is to be a Rekoletto nowadays? Are we still having the missionary dimension of our calling? What should we do [after 20 years]? Where are we going?”

Then, he concluded with prayerful optimism: “I hope that our missionary spirit will be like that of St. Ezekiel Moreno as our model.”

The Religious Priests and Brothers of the Province who were present—more than a hundred of them all—working in different apostolate areas (foreign missions, parishes, seminaries, and schools) in the Philippines and abroad gathered together, for the first time in two decades, with such magnitude, at the Recoletos Formation Center to celebrate this momentous event.

The anniversary events are guided by the theme: “Witness of the Gospel Values: Deepening of Faith and Discernment of Vocations among Youth and Consecrated Persons.”



Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR

# Deconstructing the OAR Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno: Looking back with Gratitude, 1606-2018

BY FRAY EMILIO EDGARDO QUILATAN, OAR

## I. Status Provinciae November 2017

As we celebrate the Twentieth Anniversary foundation of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno (1998-2018) let us see the latest overview status of the province.<sup>1</sup>

Total number of friars	179 friars	177 – Filipinos 2 – Nigerians
Total number of clerical friars	142 friars in permanent formation	134 – “Clerical religious” 8 – “Non-clerical religious”
Total number of non-clerical friars	37 non-clerical friars	24 – simple professed friars 13 – solemn professed/deacons
Total number of communities	24 communities	21 – Philippines 1 – Taiwan 1 – Sierra Leone 1 – Saipan

With God’s blessings and providence, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno is increasing in the number of vocations and expanding its apostolates. Recently, the province sent two friars to Indonesia to study the language as initial preparation for the future engagement to the Archdiocese of Pontianak. As we count our blessings, let us not forget who we are and what we are aiming at, i.e., to be holy Augustinian Recollects. “To be holy as our Lord God is holy” (Leviticus 19, 2) through the Augustinian Recollect way has been our “tatak Recolecto.” In the way we live and the way we share our life with others let the “tatak Recolecto” shine. It is difficult to enumerate in detail what is this “tatak Recolecto.” The OAR Constitutions delineates and defines the Recolecto trademark. The letters of the Constitutions were given life by the friars who were desirous of a more austere and perfect way of life. Let us examine who we are. Let us review the lives of our Augustinian Recollect predecessors by looking back at our Recollect history.

## II. The Spirit of 1606

The Augustinian Recollection was born on December 5, 1588 as a result of the decisions of the provincial capitulars of the Chapter held in Toledo, Spain, in the Augustinian Province of Castile. The cradle of the Augustinian Recollection was the monastery of Talavera de la Reina. Soon other Recollect monasteries were established. To guarantee the autonomy of the Recollects in the way they live their charism, all Recollect communities were organized into one religious province with its own Augustinian Recollect prior provincial. This was granted by Pope Clement VIII on February 11, 1602, with papal bull, *Apostolici Muneris*. This province was called “La Provincia de San Agustín.” However, partial autonomy was given since the Augustinian Recollects were under obedience to the Augustinian Prior General in Rome.<sup>2</sup> The ‘modus vivendi’ of the Augustinian Recollect friars in Spain was communitarian and contemplative. The apostolate

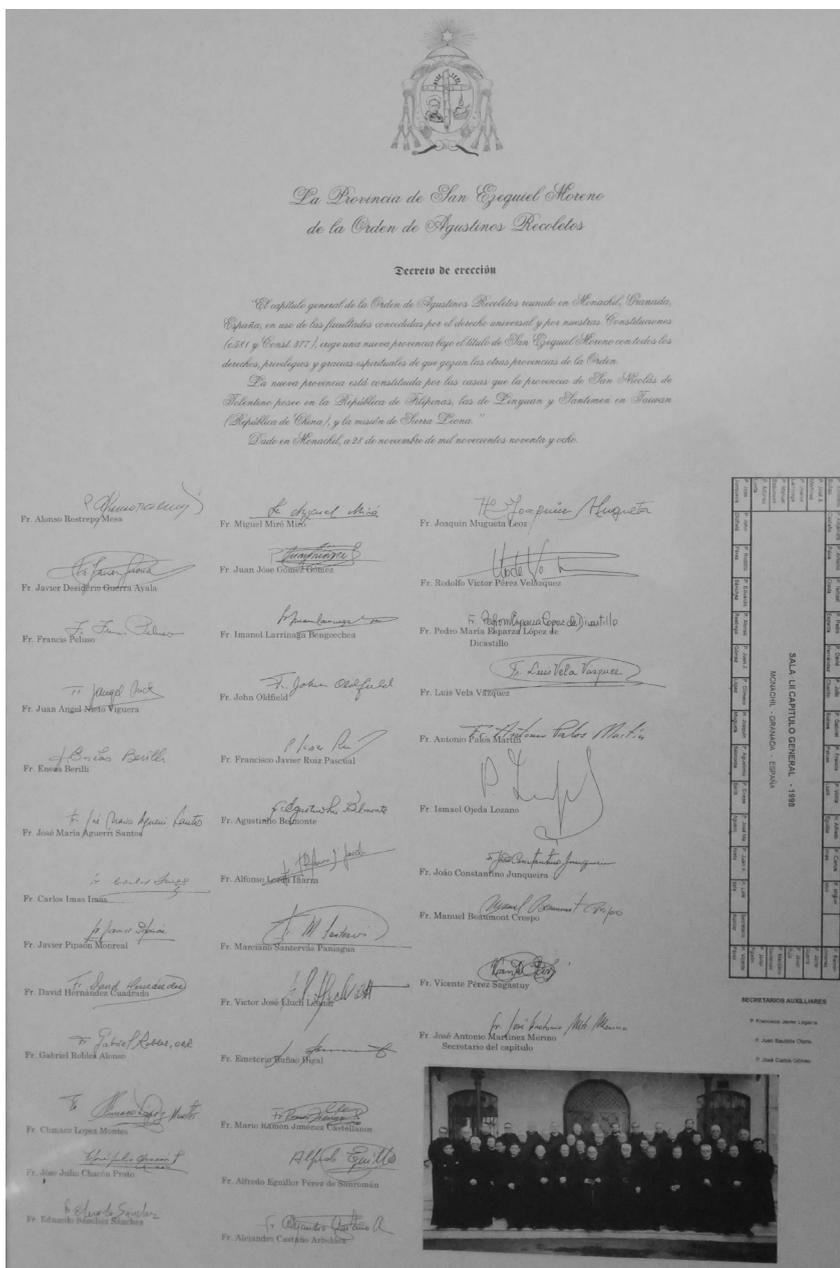
1 Commission on Communication-Recolectos, “20th Anniversary of the Province (1998-2018),” November 2018.

2 Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR, *Historia de los Agustinos Recolectos*. Vol. I: Desde los origins hasta el siglo XIX, (Madrid: Editorial Augustinus, 1995), 205-208.

was limited to assisting the local parish priests in administering the sacrament of reconciliation, anointing of the sick, teaching catechism, and retreat giving. Local chapels of the Recollect houses in Spain were open to the public for the celebration of the Holy Mass.

One important highlights of the Province of “San Agustín” was the decision of the Augustinian Recollects to open their doors to the missions in the Philippines. On December 23, 1604, the long awaited Royal License from King Philip III was given to the Recollects. King Philip III permitted the Recollects to go to the Philippines but with conditions: that the missionaries that would be sent by the superior should be men of “letters and age” [learned and mature].<sup>3</sup> Finally, in April 1605, the second provincial chapter approved the missionary enterprise to the Philippines “with unanimous consent” among the chapter participants who considered such apostolate as “of great service to God” (Crónicas I, 397-399).<sup>4</sup> The chapter fathers recommended P. Fray Juan de San Jerónimo to execute the ordinance of the provincial chapter. Later, on July 12, 1605, the 14 member expedition (10 priests and 4 lay brothers)<sup>5</sup> headed by Fr. Fray Juan de San Jerónimo boarded the ship “Santa María del Juncal” and left Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Spain. They arrived in Veracruz, Mexico on September 17. From Veracruz they had to make the in-land travel to Mexico City and to the port of Acapulco where a galleon would bring them to the Philippines. In late May or early June 1606, thirteen Recollects arrived in Manila. The Recollect priest P. Fray Andrés de San Nicolás died at sea.<sup>6</sup>

Upon arrival in Manila, the 13 Augustinian Recollect pioneers lodged temporarily at the Dominican community in Santo Domingo. Three days later they lodged at the Augustinian monastery of San Agustín. The Recollects raised funds in order to buy a house and lot outside of Intramuros – Bagumbayan. The house



The Decree of Erection establishing the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno

3 Martínez Cuesta, OAR, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*. Vol. I, 359.

4 Martínez Cuesta, OAR, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*. Vol. I, 360.

5 The ten Augustinian Recollect priests in the first expedition were: P. Fray Juan de San Jerónimo; P. Fray Andrés de San Nicolás; P. Fray Miguel de Sta. María; P. Fray Jerónimo de Cristo; P. Fray Pedro de San Fulgencio; P. Fray Diego de la Anunciación; P. Fray Rodrigo de San Miguel; P. Fray Francisco Bautista; P. Fray Francisco de la Madre de Dios; and Fray Andrés del Espíritu Santo. The four Augustinian Recollect brothers were: Fray Simón de San José; Fray Juan de San Jerónimo; Fray Jerónimo de la Madre de Dios; and Fray Juan de San Guillermo. See R. P. Fray Licinio Ruiz de Sta. Eulalia, *Sinopsis Historica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*, vol. 1 (Manila: Tip. Pont. de la Univ. de Sto. Tomás, 1925), 9.

6 Martínez Cuesta, OAR, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*. Vol. I, 360.

was formerly owned by the late Governor-general Pedro Bravo de Acuña. The house was dedicated to San Nicolás de Tolentino.<sup>7</sup> This was the first canonical house of the Recollects in the Philippines. And also within the year of arrival the Recollects proceeded to Zambales for their first mission.

The first batch of Recollect missionaries who arrived in the Philippines in 1606 laid the initial groundwork of the Recollect presence in the archipelago. Moreover, the Recollect missions were baptized in the blood of its martyrs. One of the trailblazers, P. Fray Miguel de la Madre de Dios was gravely wounded when the natives of Mariveles stoned the missionary alive. P. Fray Miguel did not survive his wounds. He was the “proto-martyr” of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines.<sup>8</sup> Other Recollect missionaries will follow the path of martyrdom in the mission fields of Bataan, Mindanao, Palawan, Mindoro, Romblon and Japan.

From 1606 to 1620 there was a total of 33 Augustinian Recollects who arrived in the Philippines. They were either assigned in the missions of Zambales or assigned in the different houses in Bagumbayan, Intramuros and Cavite Puerto (now Cavite City).<sup>9</sup>

### III. The Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, 1622

On June 5, 1621, Pope Gregory XV issued a papal brief, *Militantis Ecclesiae*, elevating the Augustinian Recollect Province of St. Augustine to a Congregation under the vicar general. However, the Congregation was still subject to the Augustinian Prior General in Rome. Nevertheless, the Augustinian Recollects were given rights to elect their vicar general and the vicar general was given faculty to subdivide the Congregation into religious provinces, and such subdivision the communities of the provinces were distributed geographically.<sup>10</sup>

For the Recollects in the Philippines, Pope Gregory XV canonically established the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine on August 31, 1622.<sup>11</sup> Thus, all Augustinian Recollects assigned in the different houses and missions in the archipelago belonged canonically to this province and the prior provincial had its provincial curia in Manila. From 1621 until 1896, the eve of the Philippine Revolution, 1,623 Augustinian Recollect friars served as missionaries, pastors, military chaplains and other capacities.<sup>12</sup> They converted and formed the Filipinos to the Catholic faith and later contributed highly to the formation of the Philippines as the only dominant Catholic nation in Southeast Asia. In 1896, the Augustinian Recollects took care of 1,249,399 souls in different 203 towns in 20 provinces.<sup>13</sup> By 1898 there were 233 Augustinian Recollects serving either as missionaries or parish priests distributed in the Archdiocese of Manila, Diocese of Cebu and the Diocese of Jaro.<sup>14</sup>

Selected notable contributions of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines:

Vigan Cathedral and Episcopal Palace	These ecclesiastical buildings were built during the episcopacy of Augustinian Recollect bishop, Juan Ruiz de San Agustín, from 1780 to 1796 (Sádaba, 268-269).
Forts and churches in Cuyo and Agutaya, Palawan	They were built during the time of P. Fray Juan de San Severo, †1697 (Sádaba, 109-110).
Forts and churches in Romblon	They were built during the time of P. Fray Agustín de San Pedro, a.k.a., “El Padre Capitán” in Philippine History. He died in Romblon in 1653 (Sádaba, 81-83).
The church and the bamboo organ of Las Piñas	They were built by P. Fray Diego Cera when he was the parish priest of the town from 1797 to 1831 (Sádaba. 363-363).

7 When the second Recollect community was opened in Intramuros in 1609 and was dedicated to St. Nicholas of Tolentine, the Recollect house of Bagumbayan renamed the patron of their community to St. John the Baptist. See Licinio Ruiz de Sta. Eulalia, *Sinopsis Historica*, Vol. 1.

8 Francisco Sádaba, *Catálogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas, 1606-1906* (Madrid, 1906).

9 See Sádaba, *Catálogo*, 331-156. Cited by Martínez Cuesta, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*, Vol. I, 372.

10 Martínez Cuesta, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*, Vol. I, 249.

11 *Status Generalis OAR*, Vol. XXVII (Jan. – Jun. 1992), Num. 86, 78.

12 Valentín Marín y Morales, OP, *Ensayo de una Síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las Corporaciones Religiosas Españolas de Filipinas* (Manila: Imprenta Santo Tomás, 1901), 256.

13 Pablo Fernández, OP, *History of the Church in the Philippines, 1521-1898* (Manila: National Bookstore, 1979), 26.

14 Ángel Martínez Cuesta, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos, Vol. II: El Siglo XIX* (Madrid: Editorial Augustinus, 2015), 941-942.

The city of Bacolod, Negros Occidental	P. Fray Mauricio Ferrero assigned in Bacolod from 1871-1894. He was the “town” planner of Bacolod and responsible for the construction of the church (now a cathedral), rectory (now the Episcopal Palace) and the town jail of Bacolod (now demolished). See Sádaba, 532-533.
The building and improvement of the sugar industry of Negros	P. Fray Fernando Cuenca, was parish priest of Talisay, Negros Occidental from 1850 until his death in 1902. He was the builder of the town of Talisay, he was responsible for the improvement of the sugar industry of Negros. Reportedly, he built the first hydraulic press for crushing of sugar (Sádaba 447-448).
The town of San Juan de Bolbok, Batangas	P. Fray Celestino Yoldi, parish priest from 1892 to 1898. He was responsible for the town planning of San Juan and built the still existing parish church (Sádaba, 659-661).
San Sebastian Basilica	The Augustinian Recollects contributed to the building of the first pre-fabricated all steel church in Southeast Asia. It was designed by Engr. Genaro Palacios. It was inaugurated on August 15, 1891. The church was also the first Basilica in the Philippines which houses the first image of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel brought by the Recollects from Mexico in 1618 (Cf. Romanillos, Spires of San Sebastian).
The Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters of the Philippines	The Augustinian Recollects supported the religious aspirations of two biological sisters from the Calumpit, Bulacan – Dionisia and Cecilia Rosa Talangpaz. The Beaterio de San Sebastian was established in 1725. In 1970, AR Sisters became a Congregation of Pontifical Right.

The Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentino survived the crisis that the Recollect Congregation faced in the Spanish Peninsula, i.e., the secularization of monasteries and convents in 1835. During this period, the Spanish liberal government confiscated all monastic communities in Spain, except for those who had missions in the Philippines. And because of their mission in the Philippines, Recollect novitiate in Monteagudo belonging to Saint Nicholas Province was spared from the government confiscation. Moreover, the Philippine Revolution, 1896-1898, and the Filipino-American War, 1899-1903 all Spanish friars suffered the anti-friar persecution from the Filipino revolutionaries. Finally, the Patronato Real ceased in the Philippines when Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States of America on December 10, 1898. The new political situation gave new opportunities to the Recollects. Under the leadership of P. Fray Patricio Adell, Recollect missions were opened in Latin America.

Under the American regime, the Augustinian Recollects regained their spiritual and pastoral élan and continue their apostolic works in the Philippines. With the application of Pope Leo XIII's Apostolic Constitution, *Quae mari sinico* (1903), the Spanish friars continued their presence in the archipelago. For the Augustinian Recollects, missions in Palawan were elevated as an Apostolic Prelature in 1910.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV. The Order of the Recollects of St. Augustine, 1912

On September 16, 1912, by virtue of the papal brief, *Religiosas Familias*, Pope St. Pius X elevated the Recollect Congregation to a full autonomous Religious Order.<sup>16</sup> The Order of the Recollects of St. Augustine at this time with its own Prior General based in Rome had three provinces, namely: the Province St. Nicholas of Tolentine (1622), the Province of Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (1660), and the restored Province of St. Thomas of Villanova (1909). The newly established Religious Order had 439 friars assigned to 92 houses in 9 countries. However, majority of the friars were from the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine.<sup>17</sup>

15 Rene F. Paglinawan, OAR, “Creation of the Apostolic Prefecture of Palawan” in *Recollectio*, Vol. 8 (1985), 109-112.

16 Los Agustinos Recoletos 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas (1606-1981), VIII.

17 José Javier Lizarraga, OAR, conference delivered on 28 November 2008 in Berceo, La Rioja: *I Centenario del Capítulo General de San Millán de la Cogolla: 1908-2008*, in *Boletín de la Provincia de San José*, nn. 62-63, Madrid 2010, pp. 177-207. Translated to English in part by Rev. Fr. Rene F. Paglinawan, OAR.

## V. The Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, 1912-1946

The Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines were responding to the urgent call of missions in China. They canonically opened a house of procuration in Shanghai on July 1, 1911. In November 1923 the Sacred Congregation Propaganda Fidei granted authorization to the Augustinian Recollects to enter China. The Recollects accepted from the Holy See the mission territory of Kweiteh-Fu in the Province of Hunan. The first batch of Recollect missionaries arrived in their designated mission in 1924.<sup>18</sup>



*Filipino Recollect missionaries in Sierra Leone*

The provincial chapter of April 19, 1940 issued an ordinance that the province would open its doors to formal and higher education as one of its apostolates. Two formal schools were opened in 1941: Santo Tomás de Villanova Institute, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, and Colegio Fray Luis de León in Caracas, Venezuela. Selected Augustinian Recollects were sent to study Education at the University of Santo Tomás. Another school was opened in 1941, San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Manila. However, with the outbreak of the Second World War in the Pacific, all Recollect schools suspended the Academic Year 1941-1942 and temporarily closed the schools.<sup>19</sup>

The province reactivated the novitiate in the Recollect church in Intramuros. On May 21, 1941, three Filipino candidates entered the cloisters of the novitiate – Salvador Calsado, Arturo Calsado and Honorato Francisco Laxamana.<sup>20</sup> They received the initial formation in Manila since the Spanish Civil War (1933-1936) and the due to the Second World War that erupted in Europe in 1939 prevented them from leaving the Philippines and undergo formation in Spain.

## VI. The Provincial Vicariate of the Philippines, China and Guam, 1946-1998

The provincial council met in Marcilla on May 13, 1946, and decided to transfer the seat provincial curia to Spain. Furthermore, the full council officially voted to create the Provincial Vicariate of the Philippines and China (later Guam would be included).<sup>21</sup> On May 25, 1946, the general council in Rome appointed P. Fray Leoncio Sierra as Vicar Provincial.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Los Agustinos Recoletos 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas (1606-1981)*, 90.

<sup>19</sup> Martín Legarra de la Consolación, ORSA, "Inauguración de Santo Tomás de Villanueva Institute, San Carlos, Negros Occidental, Islas Filipinas, en *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*, Año XXXII (Enero de 1942), Núm. 351: 14-15.

<sup>20</sup> Tellechea, "Tres Novicios Filipinos," en *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos* (BPSN), Año XXXI, (Julio de 1941), Núm. 345, 185-187.

<sup>21</sup> After the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish domains in 1768, the Spanish colonial government entrusted Mariana Islands (which included Guam) to the Recollects. In 1908, the Recollects left Guam. See Licinio Ruiz, *Sinopsis Histórica*, 744-757. The Recollects returned to Guam on August 28, 1974. See *Los Agustinos Recoletos 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas*, 103.

<sup>22</sup> Rene F. Paglinawan, OAR, "The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century" in *Recollectio 21-20* (1998-1999), 118.

Selected significant historical moments of the Recollect Vicariate in the Philippines:

### A. The increase of Filipino Recollect Vocations

Rev. Fr. Salvador Calsado, OAR, was the first Filipino Augustinian Recollect ordained to the priesthood in the Twentieth Century. He was ordained in 1945. Other Filipino candidates aspiring the Recollect habit and the priesthood would soon follow him. The Colegio Apostolico de Sto. Tomás de Villanueva (Minor Seminary) in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental was canonically established on May 10, 1948.<sup>23</sup> This was followed by the opening of the novitiate in San Sebastian friary on July 5, 1949.<sup>24</sup> Recollect postulants studied their philosophy at the Jesuit owned Seminario de San José (located along the former Highway 54, now EDSA). On June 5, 1965, the Augustinian Recollect retreat house, Casiciaco, in Baguio City, was converted to a College Philosophy called Seminario Mayor-Recoletos (now called Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary). The novitiate was transferred to this seminary on October 6, 1970. Then, on May 25, 1985, the OAR General Council in Rome, headed by the prior general of the Order, Rev. Fr. Javier Ruiz Pascual, OAR, canonically approved the establishment of the Theologate and Novitiate at the Mira-Nila Homes Subdivision in Quezon City.<sup>25</sup> Finally, the OAR novitiate in the Philippines finally has its own home in Antipolo City, Rizal. It was canonically established on November 6, 1991 under the patronage of St. Ezekiel Moreno.<sup>26</sup>

In 1997, the so-called “pre-novitiate” program was inaugurated as the fifth year of the postulancy prior to the novitiate. At first, the candidates shared board and lodging with the novices; then, on June 19, 2007, the Bahay Lingkod-Recoletos was inaugurated for the pre-novices.<sup>27</sup>

### B. Filipinization Attempts

Early Filipinization attempts of the Religious Congregations were made by Filipino priests as early as in 1957. On September 14, 1957 six Filipino priests — Fr. Hilario Lim, SJ; Fr. Benito Vargas, OP; Fr. Salvador Calsado, OAR; Fr. Antonio Garin, OSA; Fr. Julio Obvial, OFM; and Fr. Ambrocio Manaligod, SVD — wrote a Memorial addressed to Pope Pius XII. The Memorial was a petition to the highest authority of the Church urging for greater recognition of Filipino leadership in the Philippine Church. Moreover, the Memorial expressed lament on the general shortage of Filipino religious found among the Religious Orders and Congregation in the Philippines. This was the first voice of Filipinization of the Religious Orders and Congregations in the Philippines. However, their voices were hushed and the movement that they initiated passed into obscurity.<sup>28</sup>

In 1975, eleven Filipino Augustinian Recollects attempted to resuscitate the Filipinization issue within the vicariate.<sup>29</sup> A *ponencia* was prepared and this was to be read before the capitulars of the 1976 Provincial Chapter of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino held in the Recollect Theologate in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain. The Filipino Recollect delegates to this chapter were: Rev. Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, OAR; Rev. Fr. Federico de la Rosa, OAR; and Rev. Fr. Cirilo



Fr. Emeterio Buñao, OAR (second from left) was one of the Filipino delegates to the 1976 Provincial Chapter of San Nicolas de Tolentino

23 BPSN, Año XXXVIII, Junio (1948), Número 428, 132-133.

24 BPSN, Año XXXIV, Julio (1949), Número 441, 145-146.

25 Acta Ordinis OAR, Vol. XX, Ian.-Dic., Núm. 78 1985, p. 163.

26 Acta Ordinis OAR, Vol. XXVI, Ian.-Dic. 1991, Núm. 85, p. 69.

27 Document not available.

28 Rolando V. de la Rosa, OP, *The Beginnings of the Filipino Dominicans* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 1996), 206-212.

29 These eleven Augustinian Recollects were: Rev. Fray Victor L. Lluch, OAR; Rev. Fray Federico de la Rosa, OAR; Rev. Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR; Rev. Fray Casiano Cosmilla, OAR; Rev. Fray Pedro Escanillas, OAR; Rev. Fray Delfin Castillo, OAR; Rev. Fray Walthrode Conde, OAR; Rev. Fray Cirilo Durana, OAR; Rev. Fray Regino Bangcaya, OAR; Rev. Fray Mauro Ambubuyog, OAR; Fray Rolando Pineda, OAR. Based on the 2007 Interview with Rev. Fr. Delfin Castillo, OAR.

Durana, OAR. Rev. Fr. Federico de la Rosa, OAR, read the *ponencia* before the capitulars.<sup>30</sup> The provincial bulletin of the Province of St. Nicholas published diplomatically the effects of the paper on the Filipinization in the Recollect Vicariate. In Ordinance VI, seven sub-sections were delineated by the capitulars with regard to the Filipinization in the Philippine Vicariate.<sup>31</sup> At this point the Filipinization was still premature in a predominant Spanish Recollect province. Patience and humility were virtues needed for the right time for the formation of a Recollect Philippine province.

### C. The OAR 51<sup>st</sup> General Chapter of 1992 in Bogotá, Colombia

The possibility of the Augustinian Recollect Vicariate in the Philippines of becoming an autonomous province in the Order was slowly becoming a reality. Far from being a dream one of the section states in Enactment, no. 24:

*The General Chapter views with gratitude the evolution of the Vicariate of the Philippines and China toward becoming a future province of the Order. The Chapter asks the General Council...to undertake the studies and organize the meetings necessary to make it possible for the General Chapter of 1998 to establish a new province, if it judges that it is opportune to do so.*<sup>32</sup>

### D. The Status of the Recollect Philippine Vicariate on the Eve of Provincehood

According to the March 1, 1998 data there were 140 Augustinian Recollect religious of whom were 122 Filipinos (82 religious clerics; 4 non-clerical brothers; 5 deacons and 31 simple professed religious). The vicariate had a complete cycle of seminary formation. Moreover, the Recoletos Formation Center was affiliated to the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomás since 1995. There were fifteen Filipino Augustinian Recollects with licentiate degrees obtained in the Pontifical Universities in Rome.<sup>33</sup>

The vicariate had two universities: University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos (1962) and University of San José – Recoletos (founded in 1947 and elevated to university status in 1984). It had two colleges: San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Manila (1941), and San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Cavite City (1966). It had four high schools: Colegio de Santo Tomás de Villanueva, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental; UNO-R High School in Talisay, Negros Occidental; San Pedro Academy in Valencia, Negros Oriental; and San Pedro High School in Caidiocan, Valencia, Negros Oriental.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, the vicariate in the Philippines had nine parishes in 1998: five owned by the vicariate (San Sebastian



*The convent of Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo in Monachil, Granada served as the “birthplace” of the youngest province.*

30 BPSN, Año LXVI (Mayo, Junio y Julio 1976), Núm. 664, 114- 122.

31 BPSN, Año LXVI (Mayo, Junio y Julio 1976), Núm. 664, 128.

32 *Acta Ordinis* OAR, Vol. XXVII (Jul.-Dec. 1992), Núm. 87, 366-367.

33 Paglinawan, OAR, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century,” 125.

34 Paglinawan, OAR, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century,” 125-126.

Basilica in Manila; San Nicolas de Tolentino, Quezon City; Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Quezon City; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Cebu City; and Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Laray, Talisay, Cebu); three are administered “ad perpetuum” status (Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Del Pan, Tondo; Our Lady of the Abandoned Parish, Valencia, Negros Oriental; and San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, Talisay City, Negros Occidental); and one in Baguio City, St. Vincent Parish, was temporarily given administration to the vicariate in 1997 and it was turned over the Diocese of Montañosa in 2000. In the Diocese of Kaoshiung, Taiwan, the Recollect vicariate had seven parishes.<sup>35</sup>

The presence of the Augustinian Recollect Family was completed with the arrival of the Augustinian Recollect nuns from Spain in 1992 and the establishment of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternities in almost all Augustinian Recollect communities in the vicariate.<sup>36</sup> Finally, in preparation for the provincehood of the vicariate, two Vicariate Congresses were convened Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Baguio City. The first Vicariate Congress was on April 11-15, 1994, and the second on April 7-13, 1997.<sup>37</sup>

### E. The OAR 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter of 1998 in Monachil, Granada, Spain

The 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter elevated the OAR Philippine Vicariate as the eighth province of the Order on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1998, Sunday, according to Acts of the Chapter, nos. 19 and 20. The new province is named after St. Ezekiel Moreno with Rev. Fr. Victor L. Lluch, OAR, as its first prior provincial. The other members of the provincial council were: Rev. Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, OAR, first councilor and vicar of the province; Rev. Fr. Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla, OAR, second councilor; Rev. Fr. Samson S. Silloriquéz, OAR, third councilor; and Rev. Fr. Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, fourth councilor. The territories belonging to the province are: the Philippines, Taiwan and Sierra Leone, West Africa.<sup>38</sup>

### VII. Conclusion

As the French proverb says, “Gratitude is the memory of the heart.” We the Augustinian Recollect friars benefited the contributions of our forefathers and predecessors in forming the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. It is fitting to look back and give thanks to the pioneers of different periods of the history of the Order and of the province. Moreover, as we thank them let us also learn from our Recollect forebears! From their persons let us learn from their fidelity to the Augustinian Recollect charism as they translated the charism in their lives. In their dedication to the missions and the apostolates let us learn from them on how they served faithfully the church in spite of their human limitations. Finally, let us learn from their heroic lives in correcting their mistakes and how they look for solutions to their problems in the community.

It is by remembering that we learn to give thanks. It is by remembering of our Recollect forebears and predecessors that we maintain our connection with the past and be able to understand our present situation. And with the lesson from the past we hope that we would be able to accomplish the present task that we have at hand and pass it on to those who would succeed us. Let us take the words of Pope Francis when he said in one of his homilies:

*Today we ask the Lord to give us the grace to never lose our memory, never to hide our memory – memory of a person, family memory, memory of the people –; and that he gives us the grace of hope, because hope is a gift of his: to know how to hope, to look at the horizon, not to remain closed in front of a wall. Always look at the horizon and hope. And give us the grace to understand what are the lights that will accompany us on the road so as not to make mistakes, and so get to where they are waiting for us with so much love.*

*Today is a day of memory of the past, a day to remember those who walked before us, who also accompanied us, gave us life. Remember, remember. Memory is what makes a people strong because it feels rooted in a journey, rooted in a history, rooted in a people. Memory makes us understand that we are not alone, we are a people: a people that have history, that have passed, that have life. Memory of many who have shared a journey with us, and I am here... It is not easy to remember. We, many times, we struggle to go back with the thought of what happened in my life, in my family, in my people ... But today is a day of memory, the memory that takes us to the roots: to my roots, to roots of my people.<sup>39</sup>*

35 Paglinawan, OAR, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century,” 127.

36 Paglinawan, OAR, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century,” 125.

37 File Documents of the First and Second Vicariate Congress in Archivo Recoletos.

38 Acta Ordinis OAR, Vol. XXXIII (Jul.- Dec. 1998), Núm. 94, 302-305.

39 Pope Francis, “All Souls Day Homily” in Zenit (English), November 2, 2018.

# Fraternity, Fun reign supreme in Day 1 Sports Activities

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR AND FRAY PAUL DEMILLONES, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY—Part and parcel of “bene vivere” (“living well”) as consecrated persons is physical exercise such as playing sports, not only to improve physical fitness and overall health but also to develop fraternity and fellowship, particularly the virtue of esprit de corps.

That was affirmed once more when the friars engaged themselves in a variety of sports activities during the mid-morning and early afternoon of November 26, Day 1 of the Province's founding anniversary celebrations.

The mid-morning schedule saw the basketball match, reminiscent of its classic seminary version, between the OAR friars of Luzon versus the joint forces of those from the Visayas, Taiwan, Mindanao, and Sierra Leone (in short, ViTaMinS) at the covered court of the Recoletos Formation Center (RFC) in Mira Nila.

At the beginning of the game, no one could really guess who would make it better after the six 10-minute sixths since both sides were equipped with an excellent manpower.

Luzon players, many of whom composed the team that outdueled the defending champion representing the Archdiocese of Manila in a recently-held “inter-clergy + OAR” basketball tournament in celebration of the Year of the Clergy and Consecrated Persons, came out from their lair with oozing confidence.

On the other side were the equally self-assured powerhouse of ViTaMinS with “imports” who speak Mandarin and Krio. They might not have any trophy to crow about but they were a squad to beat (since there was no other!)—all in the name not necessarily of securing a big win but

surely of fostering the spirit of “anima una et cor unum in Deum” (“one mind and one heart intent upon God”).

To prove it, the first in the series of sixths jolted a bit the title-holders, 25-24, in favor of the heterogeneous team. Although the Prior Provincial, the eldest in the court but arguably a key player of Luzon, gave the historic first shot, his team was

practically tailing behind the challengers until the score tied at 19 each, with one minute and 40 seconds remaining.

The second sixth was a quick injection of fresh blood, either to re-energize the system and recover from an early deficit or to keep up and widen the lead. But Luzon's burning desire to take over paid off with a good 12-point lead, 41-53.

With Luzon's consistent advantage stretching up to the closure of the more dramatic third sixth, or half-time, the brand new electronic scoreboard registered the figures: 61-74. Would that ViTaMins' will to keep paddling up blaze up all the more, seeking to devise novel strategies to at least narrow the gap down in the next sixth! Indeed, with their collective hardwork, they were able to catch up in the fourth sixth—oh well, almost, with the score of 83-89, still in favor of their “kalaro” or “playmates” (which, by the way, is a good alternative to the oft-used term, “kalaban” or “opponents”).

Within three minutes into the fifth sixth, Luzon expectedly was the first to rake a three-digit score, 86-101, compliments of Fray Palagtiosa's three-pointer. But Fray Cepe's 16-point contributions into the coffer pushed Luzon to retrieve its lead by gaining 15 points, thus scoring 102-117 on the board when the whistle sounded to close the penultimate game.

When the last sixth unfolded, which was the funniest ever among the episodes, ViTaMinS released its new lineup of players against the formidable team of Luzon. But the comedic chain of assists, passes and turnovers turned the gym into a pandemonium of hollering, cheering, guffawing, and roaring crowd that spontaneously scattered towards the court. Upon resumption, the game continued until, despite the fierce efforts of the “multi-nationals,” Luzon prevailed with the final score of 109-136.

Although the wide margin of 25 points symbolically represents the silver anniversary towards which the Province is marching on, at the end of the day, the game was still more about fraternity, friendship, fun, among other values. That's “tatak-Rekoletos” even in sports!

Shortly after the game, a boodle fight for lunch ensued.

# Five-Year Plan towards Province's Silver Anniversary in 2023 launched

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR AND FRAY PAUL DEMILLONES, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY—This early, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno has already set its eyes on 2023 when it shall celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary.

To achieve the goal of commemorating a successful and meaningful silver year of the Province, a Five-Year Plan was launched in the afternoon of November 28, 2018, second and last day of the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary celebrations.

The Prior Provincial himself, Fray Dionisio Selma, presented the annual preparation programs that will run from this year 2018 to 2022, with a theme corresponding to each year. 2018 bears the theme: "Witnesses of Gospel Values: Deepening of Faith and Discernment of Vocations among Youth and Consecrated Persons." Next year, 2019 will have as its theme: "Creators of Communion: Fraternal Life our Share for and Gift

to Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dialogue."

For 2020, the theme will be "Prophets of the Kingdom: Solidarity with the Poor and the Marginalized through Gospel-inspired Social Responsibility Programs." The year 2021 will be grounded on "Mediators of Dialogue: Commitment to New Evangelization and Reliance in God's Mercy in the Encounter with Contemporary Cultures." And, finally, 2022 will revolve around "Disciples of Communion: Shared Apostolic Undertakings."

Moreover, Father Provincial also presented the Primary Objective of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno for this quadrennium 2018-2022. This

Primary Objective was approved by the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter, and ratified by the Prior General and his Council.

The said quinquennial Plan for the big event in 2023 was crafted by the Commission on History, Culture and Heritage-Recoletos (CoHCH-R), and was approved by the Prior Provincial and his Council.

## Cascading the LAMP decisions

Towards mid-afternoon, the Secretariat Presidents, Sections Heads, and Commission Chairmen presented the highlights of the Life and Mission Project (LAMP) of the Province for the current quadrennium.

The presentation was meant to



*Fray Leander Barrot, OAR discussing the progress on CoHCH-R*

cascade the key decisions approved by the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter to be implemented during and/or within 2018-2022. With raised awareness, it was further hoped that the religious own and collaborate in this “proyecto de vida y mision” of the Province.

First to talk was the President of Secretariat of Spirituality and Formation, Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR. His extensive area covers initial formation, permanent formation, spirituality and liturgy, and the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity.

For the Secretariat of Apostolates, particularly on the Section for Education Apostolate, Fray William Emilito Villaflor, OAR, President of the Recoletos Educational Apostolate in the Philippines (REAP) gave the report. And under the same Secretariat, Fray Edgar Tubio, OAR, took charge of the pertinent matters concerning the Ministerial and Mission Apostolate, two separate sections of which he is

the head.

Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, OAR, President of the Secretariat of Vocations and Youth Ministry, gave his highlights and plans for the quadrennium.

A short break was declared to allow the load of information to settle down, and for those present to take their merienda.

At the resumption, Fray Vincent Cadelina, OAR, stood on behalf of Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR, to report on the Commission on Social and Ecological Concerns-Recoletos (CSEC-R).

Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, OAR, put a spotlight on the two main decisions under the Commission on Communications and Publications-Recoletos (CCP-R).

Finally, Fray Leander Barrot, OAR, did his assignment by bringing attention to those decision related to

the Commission on History, Culture, and Heritage-Recoletos (CoHCH-R).

During the open forum, many friars shared their suggestions for the improvement of the plans and projects of the different secretariats and commissions. Bro. Ruiz, SAR, forwarded his suggestion to include the SARF members in the planning and implementation of the LAMP of the Province.

At the closing remarks Fray Selma, OAR expressed his gratitude to all who came and took part in the success of the celebration. He exhorted the young religious to learn from the experiences and wisdom of the elder religious and do better in the future. He also asked everyone to take part in the cascading and implementation of the Life and Mission Project of the Province.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter theme song “Sharing our Vision” was aptly sang to close the afternoon program.

# Bishop Bacani: Recollects as Missionary Community of Saints

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY—The two-day gathering for the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno ended with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in honor of St. Augustine. Most Rev. Teodoro Bacani, DD, Bishop-Emeritus of the Diocese of Novaliches, presided over the Closing Mass.

“You are a missionary community of saints,” said Bishop Ted in his homily. This was his perspective of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines, whose patronage is placed under St. Ezekiel Moreno and followers of the Rule and spirituality of St. Augustine of Hippo. Bishop Bacani further elaborated his perspective by re-contextualizing the famous

Augustinian quote, saying: “You made us to serve You, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in You.”

Like St. Augustine, the yearnings of the Augustinian Recollects should be the search for God. “It is God who should be sought in the community of brethren... in our ministry to the people... God first, God last, and God in everything,” said Bishop Bacani.

He even gave emphasis on the centrality of God in the life of the Augustinian Recollects by reminding them about the Commentary on John by St. Augustine: “God did not say ‘you can do little’ but He said ‘you cannot do anything without Me.’” The good bishop urged the Recollects to continue their life and ministry “united with the Lord...God first, God last, God

in everything.”

To be able to realize the spirit of St. Augustine, the Augustinian Recollect lived in a community which for St. Augustine is the “realization of God’s plan for man.” Bishop Ted then posed the missionary life of St. Ezekiel Moreno, who is not only a saint but an “indefatigable missionary... who went to all his [religious and missionary] assignments with the zeal that was coming from God, with a zeal that was unstoppable... that even death gave him an opportunity to give intercession for all the people.” He was a missionary who brought the Christ whom he experienced and whom he loves together with his brethren.

Bishop Ted, at the end of his homily, acknowledge the growth of vocation and membership of the Augustinian Recollect. He was also able to ordain some of the Recollect priests and deacons in the past.

To conclude his homily, he prayed

thus: “As you prepare for your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, may the Lord make you increase in holiness, in community life, and in missionary zeal. May St. Augustine and St. Ezekiel Moreno inspire you towards that ideal of being a missionary community of saints. Amen.”

In thanking the Lord for the blessings received during the twenty years of existence of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, ninety-seven Augustinian Recollect priests concelebrated with the bishop, thirteen deacons, four religious brothers, twenty-four simply professed friars, and two novices were present during the Holy Mass.

Religious from the Congregation of Augustinian Recollect Sisters and members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity joined the Recollect Fathers and Brothers in this joyful celebration. The beautiful ensemble of liturgical music was sung by the Chorus Angelorum, one of the choirs of Our Lady of Consolation

Parish of which majority of them are members of the Recollect Augustinian Youth.

A special gratitude was also extended to Bishop Ted, as he is familiarly known to many. He and the Recollects were not strangers to each other. He has been associated with some of the Recollects such as, Fray Hubert Dunstan Decena, Fray Emeterio Buñao, and Fray Emilio Larlar, Jr., to name some, during their formation years at San Jose Seminary in Quezon City. When the Recollects opened a school of theology in Quezon City, Bishop Ted was also one of its theology professors.

Indeed, the gathering of Recollect fathers, brothers, sisters and lay collaborators was a celebration of a family gathered together to thank the Almighty God for the existence of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

Viva San Ezequiel Moreno! Viva Provincia de San Ezequiel Moreno!



*Bishop Teodoro Bacani, DD celebrating the Mass*

# Logo for the 20<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno Explained

BY FRAY LEANDER BARROT, OAR



## Tree

This is symbolic of life in general, i.e. life of the Church, the Order, the Province and, specifically, every religious, Priest, SARF, saints, and all those connected with the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

## Color White of the Tree

Represents the role of those signified by the tree: "You are the Light of the Word.... Let your light Shine Before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Mat 5:14 & 16 NRS)." It speaks both of the identity as well as the challenge.

## Black circle

Represents the external challenges to the life of the tree and all it represent. This is the context life has to struggle with so as to remain faithful to its role as light of the world.

## The weeds between the trunk and the roots

These represent the internal struggles organization go through in the search for relevance, revitalization and restructuring for service. These are the challenges to the charismatic identity and gospel values treasured and lived. These struggles are externally connected but internally spreading.

## Dove

Represents the Holy Spirit. It is what keeps the tree and all its represent faithful to be the "light of the World." This is Jesus' promise. It guides the tree to its very roots in spite of external challenges and despite internal conflicts.

## Heart and the number 20

These represent the charismatic

identity of the Recollect movement. In the mists of challenges for renewal, revitalization, innovation, and adaption and response to the social, cultural, religious and political circumstances, the Province has to remain faithful to Christ and the Charismatic identity received from the founding fathers and the Mother Church. The number represents the spirit of gratitude to have lived this far as a province.

## A Rejoinder:

While, on the one hand, we maintain a unified interpretation of the logo, I think, on the other hand, we can allow the sprit of flexibility and adaption to the particular socio, cultural religious circumstance and advocacies the community finds itself in. Especially, that this logo may be used within the first year of the five-year preparation for the 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary celebration by all local communities.



# Venerables Star in Evening Program, Indicate Path for Province's Future

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY—If the evening program of November 27, the first day of the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary celebrations of the St. Ezekiel Moreno Province, were to be likened to a galaxy, the eldest group among the friars who, by unanimous estimation, stole the show would be the brightest of stars.

Although last in the queue to present themselves, the most “kuya” in the Province, which in that evening was collectively called the Venerables, was actually a merging of the “Sunset Group” and “Newed Recollects.” These last two names, by chronological order starting from the eldest group, were

among those conventionally created in 1997 when the erstwhile Vicariate of the Philippines and China was preparing for its Provincehood. Next to them were the “Bisagra” (or “Hinges”) because they composed the last of batches to spend their novitiate and theologate in Spain.

The Venerables’ stellar prominence that evening at the Bulwagang Recoletos Atrium did not come, however, from any gravity-defying performance nor any magical execution of sort. In fact, while just serenely and smilingly facing their younger confreres, those “senior

citizens” by civil category—half of them seated, the other half standing—offered Gospel-based exhortations and spiritual roadmaps to chart for the ensuing decades, related some broad historical sketches of the Filipinization movement or enlightening tidbits about the genesis of the Province, or shared their experiences as Augustinian Recollect religious.

Fray Walthrode Conde, the eldest in the Province at age 83, recalled with clarity those Filipinos who became Recollects since 1950s. He was trying to link the present to the not-so-distant past when Frays Oscar de la Rosa, Faustino Paglinawan, and Cirilo Durana—the first two made their simple profession in 1952, while the third in 1953—were together ordained priests in 1959.

(The trio came after a gap of 14 years between 1945 when Fray Salvador Calsado from Romblon, the first “Filipino” to become an ordained Recollect priest, and 1959 when the next presbyteral ordination of Filipino Recollects took place.)

Fray Emeterio Buñao, for his part, refreshed the younger ones about the five ordinances directly related to the establishment of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, the eighth and youngest Province until the reconfiguration of the Order into four Provinces during the General Chapter of 2016.

Those five ordinances approved on that unforgettable 28<sup>th</sup> day of November 1998 by the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter held at the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Monachil, Granada, Spain dealt with: the creation of a new province, its patronage, territories, membership, and patrimony.

Fray Dunstan Huberto Decena, the longest-serving formator—since 1968; ergo, it has been 50 years already! and still counting—addressed the young

ones the way a “lolo” (grandfather) would to his “apos” (grandchildren): “Make sure that what we have started..., you will allow to grow and bear much good fruits.”

In this group, moreover, belongs the first three elected Priors Provincial of the Province: Fray Emeterio Buñao (1999-2003), Fray Lauro Larlar (2003-2006, 2006-2009), and Fray Regino Bangcaya (2009-2012). Fray Larlar was re-elected to the office for the second time during the triennium 2012-2015.

### Post-vepers program

Clad in their anniversary T-shirts in red or dark sacramento, the friars assembled at the Bulwagang Recoletos Atrium for the 6:00 P.M. praying of the vepers (evening prayers).

Transitioning to the first part of the program, the prayerful mood continued as the brothers sang Josh Groban’s version of “You raise me up,” with Fray Giovanni Gil Magbojos, OAR, on the keyboard.

Expressing in words the contents of everyone’s heart, Fray Hubert Decena led the brief prayerful communion with the Lord “to express our thanksgiving [to Him] for past and present favors.”

Fray Lauro Larlar, local prior and rector of the host community, delivered his opening message, pointing out the reasons of the gathering: “to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Province and prepare for her silver anniversary that will be celebrated two years after the quincentenary of the introduction of Christianity to our people.”

“Our celebration is a God-given opportunity,” he said “to know more fully some of the answers to questions that also guided the past three [General] Chapters: who are the Augustinian Recollects today according to the Mother Church; what



“FrayRs”



“Reco4s”



“EZM Boys”

do the peoples of God expect from us today; and how to respond to so many needs starting from our spirituality and charismatic identity.”

In saying this, Fray Larlar was putting in context the birth, life and mission of the Province within the circumference of Vatican II and the OAR General Chapters of 2004, 2010 and 2016.

His hope and prayer was that



“Gen X”



“Pioneers”



“Bisagra”

“we learn to grow more intimately in communion in community, responding promptly to the call to serve the Church and society starting from our being Augustinian Recollects.”

After these appetizers for the soul, dinner was served. No doubt, the family ambience and social quotient during meals were enhanced as the coristas rendered familiar songs live onstage.

### Prior Provincial's Address

The second part of the program opened with the community singing of “Ibigay ang puso mo” composed by a former Augustinian Recollect, Fr. Ferdinand Hernando, MB. The newly-ordained deacon, Fray Jorr Rabacal, willingly sat when called to be the piano accompanist.

The current Prior Provincial, Fray Dionisio Selma, then gave his speech that consisted of some announcements, information, reminders, clarifications, and even challenges to the brothers. It was almost like a “State of the Province Address.”

He mentioned about the soon-to-be officially established Recoletos de Plaridel community in Aborlan, Palawan. In this barangay stands the San Rafael Parish church which, as of this writing, belongs to the Recollect community of Inagawan in Puerto Princesa City in terms of apostolate area.

Father Provincial also gave updates as regards our mission works in Saipan and Sierra Leone as well as the recent development in the plans of the archbishop of Pontianak for the two Recollect missionaries in Indonesia.

He also informed the brothers about the scheduled renewal visit of the Fray Miguel Miró—his last in his capacity as Prior General—from February to March 2019, and the meeting of the General Secretariat of Ministerial Apostolate in Cebu, also next year.

Father Selma made a special mention of the Prior General’s “Protocol for Protecting Children and Young People in the Order of Augustinian Recollects” in accordance with Pope Francis’s 2015 directive.

Using a powerpoint presentation, Father Selma highlighted the need

to look back, to look around, to look forward and, most importantly, he said, “to look up.” He was referring to every religious’ and community’s non-negotiable connection with God. This, he further stressed by calling to mind the icon of the beloved disciple who was leaning on the chest of Jesus, a position and disposition of listening to the Author of our vocation and mission.

Aware that some parts of his report would be dealt with more deeply during the following day’s “historical excavation,” he simply talked about those areas as a sort of review: the text of the Decreto de Erección of the Province; brief comparative statistical panorama of religious personnel, houses, and areas of apostolate; and the “cosas notables” in the Universal Church and the Order during the first and second decades (hence: 1998-2008 and 2008-2018, respectively) of the Province.

Towards the last part, he posed the question: “Quo vadis at 20?”

Airing out his take on the interrogative, one religious was saying that the question could be tantamount to a huge challenge to the entire Province whose members are now present in 9 or 10 countries, “to prepare not only for the silver founding anniversary in 2023, but even beyond it.”

Two religious raised their questions or interventions to the speaker. Fray Manuel Lipardo asked about the planned structural renovations for the Recoletos de Mira-Nila while Fray Hubert Decena made some clarifications about the plans behind the expedited construction of Recoletos Formation Center in early 1980s.

### By-batch presentation

The tandem of Frays Paul



*Members of the Reco4s presenting a surprise number*

Demillones and Jovy Gallego as emcees of the evening program was great as they did their job quite well. Surely they did their homework of making some research. For instance, before proceeding with the batch presentation, they first announced the statistical update on the number of religious of the Province as published by the Office of the Provincial Secretary during the 100<sup>th</sup> day of the quadrennium. (And this is now the most recent: as of November 27, 2018, the St. Ezekiel Moreno Province has 179 religious all in all, with this breakdown: 142 are in Permanent Formation while 37 are in Initial Formation. Of the 142: 134 are clerical religious while 8 are Religious Brothers. Of the 37 coristas: 13 are deacons while 24 are simply professed.) Then, they hoisted a rhetorical question whether anyone knows the name or face of every religious in the Province.

That was enough reason for the friars to introduce or re-introduce themselves or their cluster to the assembly.

The novices were the first to present themselves, followed by the simply professed coristas, then the deacons. Most of them not only introduced themselves and their hometown, but also mentioned who

among the friars were their “idol,” which naturally elicited cheers from some sectors in the crowd.

After them were the groups of solemnly professed and ordained priests who, collectively, have their own chosen name. Starting from the youngest group to the eldest, they came forward in that sequence: the “FrayRs,” “Reco4s,” “EZM Boys,” “Gen X,” “Pioneers,” “Bisagra,” and—last but not least—the “Venerables.”

“FrayRs” was formed when the Life and Mission Project of the Province in 2015-2018 gave instruction on the use of “Fray,” an equalizing title for all the professed Recollects whether clerical religious or Religious Brother. The “Rs” refers to the spirit of “Revitalization and Restructuring” that directs the entire Order.

“Reco4s” was crafted in memory of the Fourth Centenary (1606-2006) of the Recollect Presence or Arrival of the Augustinian Recollection in the Philippines. “Reco” truncates the word “Recoletos” while “4s,” pronounced like “force,” simplifies the said “4<sup>th</sup> centenary or 400 years.”

“EZM Boys” refers to the group that was established during the nascent years of the newly-established Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. “EZM”

refers actually to “Ezekiel Moreno.”

“Gen X” was the youngest group before the St. Ezekiel Moreno Province was born. It was “neXt” to the first batch of Recollects “entirely” produced in the Philippines. Although they belong to the category of GenerationX (i.e., 1960s to 1980s, following the Millennials or Generation Y), they consider themselves as the generation (=disciples) who follow Christ (indicated by the Greek character X or “chi”).

“Pioneers” refer to the group first produced (hence, “made in the Philippines”) by the Recoletos Formation Center since it catered to the novitiate and theologate programs of formation in 1985.

Those religious who went through their theological training in Marcilla, Spain belonged either to the “Bisagra” or the “Venerables.”

Though it was nearing 11 o'clock in the evening, the stars continued to shine more intensely with the testimonies and snippets of wisdom issuing from those Filipino trailblazers while the younger ones listened to them attentively.

To God be the glory!

# Day 2 gives Space to Look back at Seeds once sown

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR AND FRAY PAUL DEMILLONES, OAR

MIRA-NILA, QUEZON CITY—Although the Day 1 of the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary celebrations of the Province was basically for the Recollect friars only, Day 2 was set for all the members of the Recollect Family in the Province, including the members of the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters, the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF) members from different chapters, the Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY), and even some Former Seminarians of the Order of Augustinian Recollects (ForSOAR).

The OAR contemplative Nuns in their monastery in Bacolod, despite their physical absence at the Ground Zero of the celebrations, were very much spiritually united through their prayers and sacrifices with the rest of the family.

The morning of the second and last day was intended for talks related to history, consecrated life and ecology.

## Opening formalities

All the sessions in the morning and in the afternoon were held at the Parish Center Hall of the Our Lady of Consolation Parish in Mira-Nila.

Fray Antonio Limchaypo, OAR, Vice President for Student Welfare of San Sebastian College-Recoletos in Manila led the singing of a religious song, "New Creation," and the prayer of invocation. Homage to the country by singing along to a pre-recorded track of the Philippine national anthem followed immediately.

Delivering the Welcome Address was Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, the Vicar of the Province, who said: "Twenty years is but a twinkling of an eye in God's time, but it is a long time by human reckoning." And walking on this trajectory of human time, he exhorted the brothers to rely in God's

mercy and providence so as not to be afraid of what tomorrow might bring. "God is always with us and He will be with us till the end of time," he said.

## History of the Province?

The first resource speaker, Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR, HED, expounded on his topic, "Deconstructing the OAR Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno: Looking back with gratitude, 1606-2018." He presented a wider view of the history of the Province by going back to 1588, the beginnings of the Order, the Forma de Vivir and OAR Constitutions as sources of the Augustinian Recollect charism, then the missionary presence and activities in the Philippines, providing a backdrop for the birth of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

He also presented how the Province of San Nicolas de Tolentino in the Philippines grew and bore fruits from 1622, its foundation year, to 1898, which marked the end of Spanish colonization of the archipelago: 1,623 Recoletos friars served the islands; 1,249,399 souls were ministered to; 20 provinces and 203 towns were established.

In his discourse, the Recollect missionaries were depicted as

promoters of nation-building. Their apostolate paved the way to the birth of what is now Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters whose foundresses, the blood sisters Dionisia and Cecilia Rossa Talangpaz, are on the road to sainthood.

He shed light a little bit on the issue of Filipinization movement that sprang up towards mid-20<sup>th</sup> century until the increase of Filipino vocations to the Recoletos became a phenomenon.

The 51<sup>st</sup> General Chapter held in 1992 with its significant clause – "if [the 1998 General Chapter] judges that it is opportune to do so [= to establish a new province]" – had precluded the elevation of the Vicariate of the Philippines and China.

By God's design, the new Province named after St. Ezekiel Moreno was born—by unanimous vote of the 36 Capitulars of the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter held in Spain—on November 28, 1998. During the transition from Vicariate to Provincehood, there were 140 friars, 122 of whom were Filipinos; the Philippines had complete cycle of seminary formation, and 15 of the Filipino Recollects were licentiate degree holders, at least.

Appointed by the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter to lead the new Province

were: Fray Victor Jose Lluch, OAR – Prior Provincial; Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR – first councilor and vicar of the province; Fray Joseph Philip Trayvilla, OAR – second councilor; Fray Samson Sillorriquez, OAR – third councilor; and Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR – fourth councilor and is the current Prior Provincial.

Fray Quilatan concluded: “Today is a day of memory of the past, a day to remember those who walked before us, who also accompanied us, gave us life. Remember, remember. Memory is what makes a people strong because it feels rooted in a journey, rooted in a history, rooted in a people. Memory makes us understand that we are not alone, we are a people: a people that have history, that have a past, that have life.”

Two Rome-trained holders of a Licentiate in Church History—Fray René Paglinawan, OAR and Prof. Emmanuel Luis Romanillos—gave their reactions or offered another angle to the topic.

Fray Paglinawan affirmed the importance of basic knowledge of the Province within the history of the OAR, as illustrated by Fray Quilatan's presentation. He further said:

“Obviously, St. Ezekiel Province could not have existed without the mother Province.” To explain this, he made reference to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo: “The history of San Nicolas is like the roots and the solid trunk of the tree without which the fruits, the new Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, would not be produced.”

Whether one can speak of the “History of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno,” Fray Paglinawan's implicit answer was negative. “Strictly speaking,” he said, “an appropriate and broader length of time has to pass before an objective history of an institution could be written. Twenty years is not the appropriate length of time.”

Prof. Romanillos also stood to give what he called “The Underside of the History of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno during the Filipinization Phase” but only after making some clarificatory notes on some errors, including his incompletely written name.

“The gift of Provincehood,” according to this University of the Philippines professor emeritus, “was not handed to the Filipino Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines and in

other countries on a silver platter.” The reason he said was that, while Provincehood was “a happy confluence of many events,” it must be noted that some of these were “enlightened, well-crafted, planned and providential” while others were “clandestine, internecine, and James Bond-like.”

But, in the end, the love and affection of God and the well-being of the Church prevailed over human frailties, he said.

After the talks, the floor was opened for the question-and-answer portion. By the great number of those who raised their questions and views, one could tell that the multifaceted topic was very engaging and relatable.

The intervention of Fray Walthrode Conde who was once tagged as among those 11 Filipino Recollects who had pushed for the Filipinization of the Recollects in the Philippines shed light on the issue: “Our petition [during the 1976 Provincial Chapter] was not separation from Spain; [rather] it was the preparation for the Filipinos to take over the schools [which were then] headed by the Spaniards. And we wanted them to prepare us because we were just new [in the school apostolate].”

Unlike in the other religious congregations with schools in the country, such as the Filipino Jesuits, they were already ready at that time. “We, Recollects, were not,” Father Conde continued. “And we asked the Province [of San Nicolas] to prepare us to take over.”

He reiterated the key point he was driving at so that historians “study the issue of Filipinization of the Catholic Education in the Philippines”: “That was not our intention to separate from Spain immediately because we knew that we were not capable of doing this. But then, they made a very wrong conclusion.”



**Religious Life and Climate Change**

The second topic, "Religious Life and Climate Change," was elaborated by Fr. John Leydon of the Missionary Society of St. Columban.

Father Leydon first laid down the realities of today that present the condition of our world and its effects in ecology. The response to care for the earth has a deep connection with religious life. The vows every consecrated person professes reflect his oneness with God and the created

world.

For instance: "Obedience implies listening to this inner truth in the other, in every creature and in the whole universe."

Poverty lets us render "service to the Earth as those made poor," and make a "commitment to an ecological lifestyle" or a "lifestyle counter to current consumerist values."

Chastity "is a call to a more intensive relationship with creation. It is a way to reach out to the divine mystery."

In his parting words, Fr. Leydon said: "The call to live the vows is at the heart of Creation as it is unfolding today. I wish you every blessing as you grapple with the call of God in the 'cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor'."

After his talk, three reactors gave their own side of the topic. Bro. Edwin Ruiz, SAR, Sr. Maria Lirio Guillermo, AR, and Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, OAR shared their thoughts to deepen the sharing of the speaker.

The session closed 30 minutes past 12 high noon.

# Celebration of Growth: A Viewpoint from a Distance

BY FRAY JAZEAL JAKOALEM, OAR

**Journeying through many challenges**

As a Province, we will be facing many challenges both in the Philippine Church and in the global Church. The growing challenge to confront is the emerging "internationalization" of the Church as a whole, not anymore from our biased dependency on, nor from the biased positioning of the "European Church," but more from a worldwide "internationalization" of our Church.

Ten years after having been elevated into a Province, we received the plan to think about "restructuring and revitalization" in our Order, an emerging trend among religious institutes in the 2000's: fusing, unifying, and re-organizing many Provinces into a single entity. In the Order, we were able to fuse the eight Provinces into four—but only after the two General Chapters (i.e., of 2010 and 2016). It took us time to discern the gaps of the birthing of "restructuring" of some of our Provinces.

**Independence and Beyond Identity**

Embracing "independence" is embracing our cultural identity inseparable from our religious consecration. Among our forebears, there were some who insisted though they earlier failed, in managing our institutional structure as an all-Filipino entity; they did not win the battle, but they had gloriously fought a good fight. It was the call of the moment and, at the same time, a projection of what would become in the future: our being a Province now.

What could have been an experience of embracing our religious consecration beyond culture failed to be articulated and defined by the influence of culture-centered sense of entitlement. Our being Christian does not have a class distinction, neither our being religious. Our many experiences should make us embrace our culture humbly and be able to share our own with others; empower others without putting limits to their own identity; and make the Church, a church for others – with shared ministry. Not exclusive, but inclusive.





### Present and Future Challenges

In a not-so-distant future, without the many juridical barriers of our “Provincial system” of governance, the Order would be able to practically embrace a functional intra-cultural collective governance. With the experience of our “challenged” communities and Provinces in Europe, existing yet challenged by vocation and personnel crises, we are at the threshold of making a singular collective congregation – diffusing Provincial barriers; and thereby making the religious participate in co-creative spaces of assignment.

Pope Francis was right when he challenged us about “the temptation of survival,” an emerging dangerous sub-culture in religious communities. He said: “The mentality of survival makes us reactionaries, fearful, slowly and silently shutting ourselves up in our houses and in our own preconceived notions... It makes us want to protect spaces, buildings and structures, rather than to encourage new initiatives. The temptation of survival makes us forget grace...” (Pope Francis, XXI World Day of Consecrated Life, 2017)

These are real counter-communitarian sub-cultures embraced institutionally, and even by those in the leadership. Really emerging around this time are attempts to deconstruct the existing crisis among religious institutes i.e., from crisis of vocations to managing of resources. Internally, in the Augustinian Family, we need to try to re-think of a mythical yet possible “Second Great Union” concept of consolidating the richness of our ministries, resources and diverse cultural identities, and, in a way, to positively identify the “multicultural transformation”—according to Pope Francis—of religious life as challenged now and in the near future.

### Beyond 20

Tracing our beginnings from within the Augustinian family, to the founding moment during the Chapter of Toledo in 1588, to the arrival of the Augustinian Recollect missionaries in the Philippines in 1606 (plus the many succeeding missionary journeys bearing fruits of sacrifices, holiness and martyrdom among our missionaries), to the many attempts of “Filipinization” until November 28, 1998 when we received the official

decree of establishment as the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno... In all these, the Holy Spirit continuously inspires and accompanies our grace-filled existence, as Pope Francis said: “[H]e never tires of being creative! Now, with the new forms of consecrated life, he is truly creative, with charisms... It is interesting: he is the Author of Diversity, but at the same time the Creator of Unity. This is the Holy Spirit. And with this diversity of charisms and many other things, he creates the unity of the Body of Christ, and also the unity of consecrated life. And this, too, is a challenge” (Pope Francis, May 4, 2018).

After 20 years, and counting for the coming 25<sup>th</sup> year, we anchor our being a Province in our preparation to embrace the many creative challenges of the global church. This possibly includes re-thinking our ministries (now active in Sierra Leone, Saipan and Indonesia), divesting ourselves of our securities and insecurities, cleansing our own personal and institutional systems, embracing real communion from within and from among our people, and again, being responsive to the challenge and call of the Holy Spirit. Let us be creators of communion.





# 7<sup>TH</sup> PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

JANUARY-DECEMBER 2018



# A Day of Recollection for the Recollect Capitulars

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR

CEBU CITY— Before the official opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter, the delegates, with spiritual insights of Most Rev. Socrates Villegas, DD, prepared themselves spiritually. The Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan shared with the capitulars the reflections of Pope Francis as possible guide in their chapter deliberations. Archbishop Soc focused on these three words—Encounter, Accompaniment, and Discernment—and connected them to the triple functions of the Church, the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices of Christ.

## Ministry of Encounter and the Priestly Office

“God presented Himself as a great God, the Creator. And in the incarnation of God, he presented himself as a ‘small God,’ a baby,” Archbishop Soc reflected. Christmas, then, is a feast of defiance because God defied human hatred and sin. He continued to love us despite our rejection of him. He remembered one of his experiences during a Christmas activity in a home for the abandoned children in Marikina City. While giving gifts of candies and chocolates, he noticed that one of the children was not eating what he gave. Asking the child why, the boy just responded,

“Kalungin mo ako.” (Please carry me). And Archbishop Soc obliged. God sent his only begotten Son as a small child so that man can easily embrace and carry him. This was an encounter, which is essentially defiant, that God has initiated because he is the one who searches for us.

The priestly office of Christ that the ordained ministers of God share with Him is not a mere ritualistic function. It is an avenue for the priests to have an encounter with his flock. Pope Francis says in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, the shepherd should smell like his sheep. While it is true that the shepherd should also smell like his sheep, the shepherd, too,

should also contaminate the sheep with the fragrance of his anointing as a priest. The life of holiness of the priest should also be felt and lived by the people entrusted to his care. Priests should avoid the “swivel chair” type of shepherding the people of God; they should go and meet them, just as Jesus did, in the dusty places, in the marketplace, and in the peripheries.

## Ministry of Accompaniment and the Prophetic Office

To be with the last, the least, the lost, and the left alone in the society; those who experience inhumane treatment from their fellow human beings; and those who have fallen away are the focus of the ministry of accompaniment. According to Archbishop Soc, there are three steps in this ministry:

First, it is essentially confrontational. Accompaniment does not tolerate what is wrong; does not say yes to evil; and calls good as good, and evil as evil. This prophetic ministry of religious and priestly life leads the flock to the second step, conversion. After confronting evil, conversion should not lead people to despair, but to have hope in God. Archbishop Soc stresses to recognize the goodness in each person even if we confront



the evil we have done. The final step to accompaniment is contemplation. True accompaniment leads people to be contemplatives. Contemplative life should not be limited to the religious alone. The goals of the ministry of accompaniment are to confront and challenge; to convert and console; and to lead others to contemplation, which is silence. Archbishop Soc reminisces what he said to his students, “The language of God is not Latin, English, Spanish, nor Italian, but silence.”

### Ministry of Discernment and the Kingly Office

The kingly office of the Church is the one that serves God and his people, and this entails a lot of discernment. When the choice between good and evil, it is not discernment; it is a moral choice. Discernment is choosing

between two good things.

To have a better understanding of what is discernment, in Ignatian spirituality; Archbishop Soc enumerated the following steps. First, he talked about humility. Humility is essential in our life, but we should not brag about it. The moment we talk about our humility, we lose it and do the opposite. He also shared with the capitulars this quote on humility, “Hearts like doors will open with ease. With very very little keys, but the two very important keys are these, thank you sir and would you please.” By increasing the quota of saying “please” and “thank you,” it helps man to be humble and accept his littleness.

Second is learning to let go. Allow little ones to teach the proud; let go of the biases and prejudices that hinder us to leave behind each one’s

attachment; and discern with the hope of becoming a listening church.

Lastly, man should never forget that sense of wonder, that sense of mystery. Archbishop Soc challenged the capitulars to be men of mystery, and not to be mysterious men. That sense of mystery would also lead us to see and go beyond problems and achievements.

“Lord change me, even if I am not ready” was the mantra that Archbishop Soc used to close his talk and to let the capitulars prepare themselves for the noble tasks of the provincial chapter. During deliberations, many things may happen. However, this recollection prior to the formal opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter was a privileged time to pray, to reflect, and to discern the will of God for the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.



*Bishop Socrates Villegas, DD facilitating the recollection of the capitulars prior to the official start of the Provincial Chapter*

# Archbishop Soc Guides Capitulars to Reflection with Three Questions

BY FRAY JERIK TROY SIOZON, OAR

CEBU CITY – Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, the main celebrant of the votive mass of the Holy Spirit for the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter, challenged the delegates to ask themselves with all sincerity these three questions: Where is your heart? Where is your joy? Who really are you?

He began by saying that for those who do not belong to the Augustinian family, the only Augustinian phrase they know is “Late have I loved you O beauty ever ancient, ever new... and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” He used this as the jumping board in asking the rest of three questions.

Where is your heart? The heart that he was referring was not so much to the physiological heart but rather to our life. He reminded the Capitulars that on the day of their profession and ordination they had already given up their hearts to the Lord and to the Church. This donation of the heart to the Lord and to the Church should permeate every deliberation, decision, and resolution that would be done during the Chapter. That they

would be guided by what the heart of the Lord and the Church beats for because that will be the direction that they must take.

Archbishop Soc continued to challenge the Capitulars by asking the second question, “What makes you happy?” The source of their happiness must not merely lie in the strength of their numbers and the success of their ministries. Rather their joy and happiness and what eases their restlessness must be in the cross of the Lord because separated from it all happiness would be temporary. Perfect joy can only be found in the cross of the Lord.

The final question he gave was “Who really are you?” This former president of the CBCP (Catholic

Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines) added that in the Augustinian

Order, religious may be given titles such as Prior General, Prior Provincial, or President of a certain university. But before the Lord these titles do not matter anymore. “Before the Lord these titles do not exist because in the presence of the Lord man is only a sinner, but a sinner touched by God and now made beautiful” he clarified. Archbishop Soc used the motto in Pope Francis’ coat of arms “*miserando atque eligendo*” to explain further that man is miserable and yet chosen and called to a life of dignity, unworthy he may be.

Three questions put the Capitulars on the right track, right at the start of this historic Provincial Chapter.



# How the Provincial Chapter Opening Unfolded

BY FRAY FRANCISCO ANTONIO, OAR

CEBU CITY—The Provincial Chapter officially starts February 13 at Talavera House of Prayer.

Preceding the official opening of the said chapter was a day of recollection to give the Capitulars the opportunity to reflect, pray and ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit for a successful and fruitful chapter. The spiritual preparation was held February 12 with Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen- Dagupan as the recollection master.

The recollection was also an opportunity for the brothers to spiritually and fraternally enjoy one another's company as they are given sacred space in preparation for the Revitalization of the province. They are expected during the chapter proper to share past experiences as religious in their particular apostolates and their hopes for a deeper and more meaningful religious life and mission in the future. Or to adopt the words

of the Life and Mission Project of the Augustinian Recollects: "To live and proclaim the Gospel, bearing witness to a contemplative and fraternal life, at the service of the Kingdom and in a shared mission with lay people." And as one religious commented, "we have gathered praying for the courage and the freedom to dare the most challenging task of restructuring and revitalizing the Province."

In his homily, Bishop Soc led the Capitulars into reflection by challenging them with these three questions: Where is your heart? Where is your joy? Who really are you?

After the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the capitulars, together with Archbishop Soc as their recollection master, proceeded to St. Augustine Hall for the spiritual input. During

the morning session, Archbishop Soc shared with the capitulars the connection between Pope Francis' reflection and the tria munera of Christ—the ministry of encounter with the priestly office, the ministry of accompaniment with the prophetic role, and the ministry of discernment with the kingly function of Christ. In the afternoon, Archbishop Soc reflected on vocation to the priestly and religious life as the Philippine Church celebrates this year as the Year of the Clergy and Consecrated Life.

Having shared the bread and wine of the Eucharist together and spiritually recharged by the talk of Bishop Soc, the brothers are ready to put out into the deep and cast our nets wide, with joy, faith, and hope.



*The recollection facilitator, Bishop Socrates Villegas, DD, joining the common prayers of the capitulars*



# 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter Formally Opened

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR

CEBU CITY—As tropical depression ‘Basyang’ was passing through the Visayan islands, Fray Miguel Miró Miró, OAR, Prior General, opened the second day with a mass after the praying of the Lauds and the morning meditation.

In his homily, he reminded the delegates that the Chapter is a time of grace, discernment, and communion. He situated his sharing on the preparation for the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Arrival of Christianity in the Philippines with gratitude for the past, passion for living the present and renewed hope in looking to the future. He posed the following questions to the delegates for reflection: “Jesus gives us the light to discern what the Lord asks of us. What is He asking

from us the Augustinian Recollects? What is He asking from us the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno? What do our brothers and our people need?”

### Opening of the Chapter

After the Mass, the delegates convened at the session hall for the Address of the Prior General. He focused on the following themes: Creators of Communion, Process of Restructuring and Revitalization,

Sense of Order, Temptation of Survival, Discerning the Will of God and the Life and Mission Project of the Province. He ended his exhortation with a prayer coming from the works of Saint Augustine: “All my hope is in your great mercy. Give us Lord what you command and command what you will.” With the invocation for the intercession of St. Ezekiel Moreno and the Mother of Consolation, Fray Miró requested the delegates to discern the will of the Lord with humility and

wisdom. This was followed by the Prior General's declaration of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno open and the delegates' singing of the Veni, Creator Spiritus. The Ordo Capituli was read and the officials of the Chapter were designated. The tellers for the Chapter were Frays Enrico Silab, Jaazeal Jakosalem, and Kenneth Joseph Onda. Fray Lauro Larlar was elected as the first moderator and Fray René Paglinawan, the second moderator. Fray Jose Ernil Almayo was elected Secretary of the Chapter and Fray Dionisio Selma, Chapter Councilor. Those who were tasked to take charge in the preparation of the Chapter message were: Frays René Paglinawan, Leander Barrot, Christopher Maspara and Arnel Diaz. The Committee assigned to organize the Liturgy were: Frays Rommel Rubia, Amado Emmanuel Bolilia, Raymund

Alcedo and Don Besana. The Communication Team was composed of Frays Jose Ernil Almayo, Lauro Larlar, Ian Anthony Espartero and the members of the Chapter Secretariat, namely, Frays Reynaldo Jaranilla, Joel Villaruel, Jerik Troy Siozon, Robin Ross Plata and Jessriel Marcha.

Those who were assigned to send and reply to messages for the Chapter were Frays Julius Marcos and Don Besana. Fray Edgar Tubio was named the bellringer.

### **Reporting of the Secretariats and Commissions**

Fray Lauro Larlar proposed that the mode of reporting of the Prior Provincial and the different Secretariats and Commissions be done section by section with interpolations in each item. However,

the delegates unanimously accepted the proposal of the Provincial Council which was to abide by the usual sequence of the reporting, namely, the Prior Provincial to be followed by the Secretariat Presidents and the Commission Heads. In every end of the report, discussions, suggestions and reactions were done.

The reports of the Prior Provincial, the President of the Secretariat of Spirituality and the President of the Secretariat of Formation and Vocation Ministry were completed on the second day.

After the afternoon session, the delegates followed the regular schedule of free time, praying of the vespers and complines, dinner and recreation.



*The Chapter President (Prior General) together with the Chapter Council*

# 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter on its First Phase

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR



CEBU CITY—The delegates woke up at 5:45 AM after a windy night sleep because of typhoon Basyang and headed to the chapel at 6:15 AM for the Lauds, meditations and the Holy Mass.

Fray Dionisio Selma presided the Eucharistic celebration for the second day of the Chapter and the Mass for Ash Wednesday. He was assisted by Fray Corvin Maturan and Fray Christopher Maspara. In his homily, Fray Selma emphasized on the meaning of Ash Wednesday as a day of penance. “The Ash Wednesday,” according to him, “reminds us of our call for renewal and mortality.” He added that this is “to be expressed through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.” The ashes were imposed on the foreheads of the delegates after the homily. After the mass, the delegates proceeded to the refectory for the simple breakfast.

## Information Phase Continued

The sessions started at 8:30AM with an opening prayer. Messages and prayers sent by the different bishops, congregations and individuals were read. Fray Gideon Antolin Lagrimas took the first period to deliver his report on the Commission on Youth and Vocation Ministry. He presented the different stages of the Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY) and its programs as well as the updates on the Vocation Promotion and Applications turn-out for the incoming seminary year 2018-2019. Interventions ensued which were focused on the nature, membership, formation and integration of programs and itinerary

for the youth apostolate both in the present and in the future.

Fray Edgar Tubio was the second reporter of the day. He provided an account on the compliance of the Secretariat on Ministerial and Mission Apostolate during the triennium. He began with the updates on the Memorandum of Agreement that the Province signed with the bishops of the different dioceses both in the country and abroad. He cited that some of them were formalized while others were about to expire this year (2018). He advised the Commission who would be assigned to look into this section during the Chapter to consider the following matters: fulfilment of

the LAMP of the Province and the Order, sustainability of the local and foreign missions, and the possibility of expansion both in the country and abroad. He likewise reported on the progress of his visit in Indonesia and Vietnam as the first step of the Province to comply with the ordinance of the LAMP of the Order A.23: "Erect at least two houses in a new country in Asia, in order to strengthen the Province and contribute to its expansion."

The session was interrupted with a short break at 10:00AM and resumed at 10:25AM. Again, the second group of messages were read before the assembly. Before recommencing the sessions, Fr. Miro reminded the delegates about the mechanics of the Chapter, emphasizing that it had to begin first with the information phase before proceeding to the discussion and recommendation phase.

The parish priests who were present in the Chapter were given the chance to share their experience on the parish ministry in solidum. After exhausting all the necessary concerns in the parish ministry, Fray Julius Marcos presented his report as the president of the Secretariat of the Educational Apostolate of the Province. He focused on the extent of the implementation of the ordinances of the previous triennium related to the uniform textbook for all OAR schools, religious observances of the religious assigned in the schools and universities, integration of the Educational Plan of the Order and the Recollect Religious Graduates in all programs, the implementation of the Common OAR Religious Education Curriculum and Campus Ministry Programs and Services, the Evangelization Master Plan in the OAR schools, the Revisit of the REAP by-laws of administration to ensure continuity and sustainability, and the updates on the curricular

improvement, structural development, acquisition of resources, performance of graduates, qualification of religious administrators, accreditation status of the schools and the academic recognitions earned by the OAR schools, colleges and universities of the Province in the Philippines as measured according to Philippine government educational standards. Having completed all the discussions, the morning session ended at 11:45PM. The midday prayer was prayed and followed by Lunch and Siesta.

### Continuation of the Sessions

The afternoon sessions started with the Rosary and the Office of Readings at 2:15PM. Messages and prayers were read and the Review of the February 13, 2018 Minutes of the Meeting was made. Immediately after the suggestions were considered, the reporting resumed. Fray Jaazeal Estelou Jakosalem dealt with the updates, plans, programs and accomplishments of the Commission on Social and Ecological Concerns-Recoletos or the Commission on Social Apostolate of the Province.

He began with the presentation of the ordinances of the last provincial chapter which were implemented. He integrated in his report the nature and the contents of the ARCORES (Augustinian Recollect Solidarity network - Philippines), also known in the Province as HeartAnonymous, together with the actual activities that the Commission was undertaking, namely, Revisiting the Administrative and Operational Manual of the Commission, the Programs in line with the Year of the Poor, the Standardization of Wages of the Personnel in our communities, Housing for Personnel in our communities, Support of the Victims of Natural Calamities, Promotion of the Disaster Awareness and Preparedness Education Program, Monitoring of the Status of the Contractual Workers, Enrolment of the Parish Personnel in the OAR Retirement Plan, Implementation of the Solidarity Targets of the HeartAnonymous programs, Adaptation of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation framework in the Province's social action program, and Continuous Presence of RESOURCE-Handumanan, the social arm of the Province in Bacolod City. Fray



*Fray Gideon Antolin Lagrimas giving his report on Vocation Ministry to the capitulars*

Jakosalem indicated some proposals for the consideration of the Chapter delegates during their deliberations on the succeeding days of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter.

After Fray Jakosalem completed his report, Fray Miro explained to the delegates the nature of the social action apostolate of the Order, which is named ARCORES, and punctuated that this unit is the response of the Order to Pope Francis' challenge to become builders of communion through the social commitment of the Order towards the poor, the environment and the society. A 30-minute break was called. The

sessions recommenced at 4:00PM with the discussions, questions and clarifications on the concerns of the Province's Commission on Social and Ecological Concerns-Recoletos.

Fray Henry Santiago delivered his report on the financial status, concerns and programs of the Province. He presented the areas where the funds of the Province were sourced as well as the annual expenditures that the Province and its subsidized communities accrued during the previous triennium. Fray Santiago proposed that the next administration maintain the strategy of the cash flow that the Provincial

Procuration office had initiated as well as to improve the fund generation of the Province in the coming years. He expounded on the plan for the enrolment of all the religious of the Province in the Social Security System especially in securing their health needs in the future. Interpolations, clarifications, and suggestions were done immediately after the report.

The information phase wrapped up at 5:32PM. The one-hour-and-a-half freetime succeeded thereafter. The vespers and complines were prayed at 6:45PM. Dinner was served at 7:30PM. The delegates were favored with an early rest after dinner time.

# Commission Phase Meetings Kick Off

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR

CEBU CITY—Fray Julius Marcos situated the whole day activity with his reflection on healing during the holy mass. He narrated some stories of people including his mother who shared with him about the graces of healing that they received from God through the intercession of Saint Ezekiel Moreno.

As he developed his homily, Fray Marcos was able to tackle on the redemptive value of suffering as part and parcel of human life that Jesus Christ Himself embraced. He concluded his homily by saying that "we must be ready to accept suffering and pain especially in our religious life as our act of solidarity with the passion of Jesus and the plight of our suffering brothers and sisters." In conclusion, he posed three reminders to the delegates: "First, we have to deny ourselves and become self-sacrificing like Jesus. Second, we try our very best to carry our crosses everyday with joy. Third, we follow Jesus towards the cross with love."

### **The Proceedings of the Day**

The morning sessions opened with a prayer at 8:30AM. The messages to the Chapter were read by Fray René Paglinawan. Discussions on yesterday's deliberations were continued. Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, chairman of the Commission on Communications - Recoletos, made his report making use of strategic management's 7S Framework namely, Shared Vision, Structure (General and Provincial), Systems, Strategy, Style, Staff, and Skills. Questions and clarifications were raised regarding the works of the Commission that received generous applause from the delegates.

Fray Rommel Rubia, the head of the Commission on History, Culture and Heritage - Recoletos, presented the compliance of the Commission in looking into the ordinances of the previous Chapter. He treated the completion of the Mausoleum project of the Province, the publication of the different OAR materials and books for devotion, the reintroduction of the devotion to Our Lady of Health, the Preparation of the Celebration of the 4<sup>th</sup> centenary of the arrival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Philippines, the ongoing cataloguing of the archival materials, and the documentation of the belongings of the dead religious. He proposed that the members of the Commission during the succeeding

quadrennium come up with a manual of regulations and procedures as well as the Standard Operating Procedures during the passing away of a brother religious.

Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia gave an update on the San Sebastian Basilica Conservation, Foundation, Inc. He cited that the Diagnostic and Publication phase were already done. Due to be implemented next year would be the Design and Construction phase which would require adequate financial resources.

Fray Bernabe Dosdos updated the delegates on the Mausoleum project in Antipolo novitiate house. He revealed to the delegates that the approval of the City of Antipolo to issue the special use permit for the construction of the mausoleum is still on process.

Having completed the information phase, Fray Lauro Larlar distributed a copy of the Primary Goal of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter to all the delegates, which was submitted by the Provincial Council, for the consideration of the next phase of the Chapter: the

Commission phase. The delegates took a break at 10:00AM.

After the break, Fray Dionisio Selma imparted to the delegates the proposed three elements of the Priority Goal for the quadrennium, namely, creators of communion (encounter), prophets in daily life (accompaniment), and men of hope (discernment). Suggestions and discussions on the three elements were deliberated at the session hall.

After the delegates organized themselves according to their commissions, they formulated the Primary Goals that would set the direction of the next four years. The Midday prayer was prayed at 11:45 AM and it was followed by lunch at the refectory.

The afternoon session started at 3:00 PM. The voting machines and buttons were tested before the messages and prayers for the Chapter were read. The Minutes of the February 14, 2018 were read, corrected, and approved.

The brainstorming regarding the Priority Goal commenced

subsequently. The different Commissions took turns to present the outcome of their group discussion during the morning session. Almost all groups presented varied adaptations and improvements of the proposed statement by the Provincial Council. A short break was called at 3:45 PM to give way for the Chapter Officials to discuss the mechanics of the voting process. The session resumed at 4:00 PM. It was deliberated and voted upon by absolute majority that the Primary Goal of the next quadrennium is: "Placing all our trust in God's mercy, we, the Augustinian Recollects of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, desire to be creators of communion and witnesses of the Gospel values through our consecrated life and service to humanity."

The sessions ended at 5:00 PM. The delegates rested for two hours to do their group exercises before the praying of the Vespers and Complines at 7:00 PM. Dinner was served at 7:30 PM.



*Brainstorming during the Commission Phase*

# Capitulars on a weekend get-away

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR



**CEBU CITY**—After a week-long presentation of the status of the Province, meetings of different commissions, discussions, and plenary assemblies, the capitulars spent days of rest in preparation for another phase of the Provincial Chapter, the Decision Phase.

February 17, 2018—Celebrating the Holy Mass in memory of Our Lady of Consolation, Fray Edgar Tubio, OAR, president of the Secretariat of Ministerial and Mission Apostolate, shared his homily as a reecho of the reflection of Archbishop Socrates Villegas, DD, during their recollection with a gist of the season of Lent. Fray Tubio said, “The season of Lent is a season of encounter with the Lord, a season of accompaniment, and a season of discernment.”

After the Mass, some of the capitulars went to town, some chose to stay at the retreat house, while others headed toward Tabuelan, northwest of Cebu, to breathe in fresh air. The

group who went to Tabuelan left Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos at 5:45 AM for a three-hour journey. They had their lunch at La Familia Beach Resort with a sumptuous seafood meal. After bathing in the cool beach water of La Familia amidst a light downpour, they went back passing by the EcoPark-Recoletos at Danao City for an ecological exercise.

After disembarking from their bus service, the participants trekked to where the image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud is enshrined. The cool breeze of the mountain side greeted them as they arrived at the shrine. To memorialize their presence in the place, the capitulars who went to

EcoPark planted langka (jackfruit) and santol (cottonfruit) trees and took some time to commune with nature. Back to Talavera, the delegates who went to Tabuelan had their dinner with the rest of the capitulars.

February 18, 2018—The First Sunday of Lent was spent by the capitulars as a day of rest. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was presided by Fray Jerik Troy Siozon, OAR, one of the members of the Chapter Secretarial Committee, who at the same time celebrated his 31<sup>st</sup> birthday.

In his homily, Fray Siozon shared with the capitulars his realization about self-denial which he himself exercised in his service for the

Province, the Order, and the Church as member of the secretarial committee. This self-denial was done also by Christ who chose to deny himself and took our human condition, undergo temptation, suffer, and die for us. And this Jesus is the one who continuously invites us to deny oneself, carry one's cross, and follow him.

Relating his reflection on the Gospel of the day, Fray Jerik encouraged those who attended the Mass to not be afraid of confronting temptations, sufferings, and the difficulty of denying oneself. He then gave three reasons why. First, it is because Christ experienced all these also. Second, because God, will always give us the necessary graces to fight

the temptations and move forward in our spiritual journey. And third and the most important reason is, Jesus, who participated in man's temptations, sufferings and pains transformed them into something redemptive that now they are spring boards towards sanctity. Fray Jerik also quoted St. Augustine: "Our pilgrimage on earth cannot be exempt from trial. We progress by means of trial. No one knows himself except through trial, or receives a crown except after victory, or strives except against an enemy or temptations (Commentary on the Psalms)."

Fray Siozon concluded his homily with a story which he experienced during his missionary assignment

in Panamá. The story was about a native Panamanian who took a piece of wood from a tree which the natives considered as the cross of Christ and used it as a walking stick. In relation to our daily life as Christians, the cross, which is usually equated to burden, was perceived in another perspective—as a walking stick that is used to help us in our journey towards sanctity.

Lunch was served at Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos with the community of University of San Jose-Recoletos. After the birthday celebration, the capitulars took a day-off from the usual routine of the Provincial Chapter.

# Holiness in the Christian Community

BY FRAY JERIK TROY SIOZON, OAR

CEBU CITY—Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR, President of the Secretariat of Formation and Vocation Ministry, started the second week of the Provincial Chapter with the celebration of the Eucharist wherein he was the main celebrant and homilist.

In his homily, he first stressed that the call to holiness is a universal call to all Christians and that the growth of holiness always happens within the context of the Christian community.

He developed this theme by first asking what it means to be holy, then defined holiness as desiring the good of others in love. He cited the Catechism of the Catholic Church which states, "Charity is the soul of the holiness to which all are called: it governs, shapes and perfects all the means of sanctification." This decision to become holy, he added, has an eschatological effect as it gears man towards that joy to come. This invitation to holiness is also seen

in the Gospel of the day where Jesus grants eternal life to the sheep who have done good to others and sends to eternal damnation to the goats who have done nothing to others.

Second, holiness also entails a dedication to the Christian mission. He quoted Pope John Paul II who said that "there is no genuine holiness apart from a radical orientation toward the spiritual and material good of others." And in *Redemptoris Missio*, the same Pope emphasized that "there is no holiness with mission." Yet this dedication to the Christian mission must come with an attitude of joy in spreading the Gospel. The joy of the Gospel would tell us to bring this

holiness to other people.

Finally, he concluded saying we are all called to holiness and it is our companions who will direct us to this holiness. Hence, holiness occurs within the Christian community. This universal call to holiness and mission is meant to be fostered within the community. He challenged then the capitulars to make their communities places where all can grow in holiness by devotion, good example, generosity, and encouragement.

# Commission Phase Continues

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR

CEBU CITY—Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia continued the reflection on the meaning of Lent during the holy mass. He said that “Lent is a season of pilgrimage and an ascent to the mountain of Easter.”

He challenged the delegates “to give up the things that are not helpful to spiritual life, namely, addictions, attachments, evil inclinations and other disordered desires, affections and directions.” He presented the life of some Augustinian Recollects who set good examples of living out a life of penance, namely, Saint Magdalene of Nagasaki, the OAR priest-martyrs of Japan and their religious brother collaborators: Lorenzo Kaida Hachizo, Mancio Yukimoto Ichizaemon and Pedro Zawaguchi Kuhioe. Fray Bolilia concluded his homily with a prayer to God through the intercession of the martyrs of the Order to grant the religious of the Province the commitment towards selfgiving and surrender to God even until the point of martyrdom. Commission Phase Continues CEBU CITY—Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia continued the reflection on the meaning of Lent during the holy mass. He said that “Lent is a season of pilgrimage and an ascent to the mountain of Easter.” “THE BODY OF CHRIST.” Capitulars start their day by partaking of the Eucharist, the body of Christ, before gathering as a body to discuss

pertinent matters in their respective commissions.

## Deliberations on the Commissions’ Concern

The opening prayer was said at 8:30AM with the singing of the Chapter theme song, “Sharing our Vision.” The messages and prayers from various groups were read before the start of the formal sessions. Subsequently after the preliminary reminders to the delegates, the interview with Fray Miguel Miró Miró, Prior General, was played on the screen that laid down his concerns for the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno.

As the Commission phase continued, several matters of interest pertinent to the points mentioned during the reports and the discussions were treated so that they would be considered sufficiently in the formulation of Chapter of ordinances. Concerns from the Secretariat of Spirituality, Formation and Vocation Ministry, Ministerial and Mission Apostolate and Educational Apostolate were completely deliberated in the

morning. The Midday prayer was said at 11:45AM.

The sessions resumed at 3:00PM. Fray Lauro Larlar opened the afternoon sessions with the prayer taken from the intercessory prayers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter. The minutes of February 15, 2018 proceedings were tackled until all the necessary corrections and modifications were made. The Commissions on Governance, Culture, Finance and Social Action were given points for their consideration in their preparation of ordinances.

After all the major concerns were dealt with, the meaning of the logo of the 7<sup>th</sup> provincial chapter was presented which consisted of the following elements: book and heart, cross, rising sun with four rays, and number seven (7).

The afternoon sessions were concluded at 5:18PM. In the evening, each Commission was instructed to articulate the suggested priority topics into proposals for the group plenum next Monday. The delegates took their rest at 10:00PM.



# Commissions Formulate Proposals for Decision Phase

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR

CEBU CITY—Fresh from a weekend respite, the first day of the week opened with a celebration of the mass dedicated to all the deceased members of the Order. Fray Ian Anthony Espartero was the mass presider and he was assisted by Fray Joseph Dexter Palagtiosa and Fray Charlito Orobia.

Reflecting on the first reading, Fray Espartero focused on the passage: “Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.” He reiterated that “holiness is the universal call of all Christians,” whose genuine growth happens within the community. He focused on three points in sharing about holiness. First, he said that “holiness is seeking out the good of others in love.” Love impels Christians to act because it is the soul of holiness.

Second, “holiness impels us towards Christian mission.” Quoting Pope John Paul II, he said that genuine holiness must be articulated in actual and concrete service for the spiritual and material good of others.

Third, “holiness happens in the Christian community.” Fr. Espartero mentioned that “holiness is lived out not in isolation but in communion with the other members of the community.”

He pointed out the example of the missionary dynamism of the first Christian communities who “despite limited resources, they were zealous to proclaim the religion of the man who had died on the cross.”

At 8:30AM, the delegates convened at the session hall for the opening prayer and the reading of the messages sent by wellwishers. Then, they proceed to complete their proposals per Commission.

The afternoon session commenced at 2:45PM. Messages were read and the minutes of the previous sessions were approved. The proposals of the different Commissions were distributed to the delegates for their suggestions. After the instructions were made, the delegates again grouped themselves according to Commission.

## Sharing Our Vision

MUSIC: LEANDER BARROT, OAR  
LYRICS: FERDINAND HERNANDO, MB

With every man's heart restless  
Throbbing beats are endless  
Our minds are on a searching  
Leading each man's yearning back  
to You.

Loving and learning  
Work of Recollection  
Hands together we are one  
One family of one Father.

Share, share with all nations  
Our common vision  
To live one mind, One heart  
One in the Lord.

In foreign lands  
In mission fields  
Our predecessors so lived  
As to bathe us with the martyrs'  
blood.

Reminding us for always  
Of the gospel they believed  
And so today we still.

Share, share with all nations  
Our common vision  
To live one mind, One heart  
One in the Lord.



# Ternary for Prior Provincial announced

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR



CEBU CITY—The shortlist for the 7<sup>th</sup> Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno was finally announced by the Prior General, Fray Miguel Miró OAR, towards the end of the evening session on February 20.

The top three highest votes were garnered by Fray Dionisio Selma with 60 votes, followed by Fray Leander Barrot with 14 votes, and Fray Lauro Larlar, 9 votes.

These three religious were also the ones who composed the “terna” in the previous provincial chapter, in 2015.

Fray Selma is the 6<sup>th</sup> Prior Provincial. Fray Barrot is the Vice Prior of the community of Recoletos

Formation Center (RFC) while Fray Larlar is the Local Prior of RFC.

Moreover, the scrutiny for the recent election revealed an unprecedented statistics in the history of the Province as all of the 146 voting religious voted, registering a spine-chilling 100% participation rate of the friars who have the right to vote.

Last year, during the election of the delegates to the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial

Chapter, the canvassing of votes reported a 97.24% turnout, also the highest in the history of this 20-year old Province.

Anytime tomorrow, February 21, the election from among the ternary will take place. Whoever gets elected will be charged to steer the direction of this youngest province of the Order for the next quadriennium (2018-2022).



# Fray Selma is re-elected Prior Provincial

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

CEBU CITY—The 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter has spoken today, re-electing Fray Dionisio Selma as the Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

Thirty-six hours earlier, the results of the canvassing for the Prior Provincial was published and Fray Selma led the ternary with a wide margin of confidence from among the 146 voting religious of the Province. Tailing behind him were Frays Leander Barrot and Lauro Larlar.

During the final phase of the election held inside the Chapter Hall at 10:30 A.M. today, the 27 Capitulars have picked out from among the three “a Prior Provincial who will lead us towards renewal, unity, and charity,” as their prayer goes.

With just the first round of election, the scrutiny of the votes done through

secret ballot disclosed immediately that the absolute majority was already obtained. Fray Selma got 22 votes while Frays Barrot and Larlar garnered 3 and 2 votes, respectively.

In his brief speech of acceptance inside the hall, Fray Selma expressed his unworthiness for the office, but in the spirit of service and availability for the Province and the Order, he is placing all his trust in God’s mercy.

Towards noon, the rite of “toma de posesión” took place at the chapel. Fray Miguel Miró, prior general and president of the Chapter, confirmed the newly-elected “major superior” of this youngest of the four provinces

of the Order. He handed over to Fray Selma what the latter turned over to him earlier inside the Chapter hall—the seal of the Province.

As the seal reminds him to exercise authority with prudence and wisdom, the whole event acquired an even more profound nuance as this milestone is linked to the liturgical celebration of the day, feast of the Chair of St. Peter.

Fray Selma, or “Father Diony” to many, will lead the Province for four years, from 2018 to 2022.

Congratulations and God bless you, Father Prior Provincial!



7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter  
Confirmation of New Prior Provincial

# 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter finally concluded, councilors elected

BY FRAY IAN ANTHONY ESPARTERO, OAR

CEBU CITY—The historic 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter was concluded in the evening of February 23 with the election of the four Provincial Councilors and the delegate to the 56<sup>th</sup> General Chapter in 2022.

The new set of Provincial Councilors are as follows:

**Fray Ian Anthony Espartero**

Vicar of the Province/First Councilor

**Fray William Emilito Villaflor**

Second Councilor

**Fray Amado Emmanuel Bolilia**

Third Councilor

**Fray Edgar Tubio**

Fourth Councilor

Fray Leander Barrot was elected delegate of the Province to the 2022 General Chapter. Fray René Paglinawan was elected substitute to Fray Barrot.

Everybody was awaiting for that conclusion when the Provincial Councilors would have been elected. And it came to pass on February 23, a day earlier than scheduled. Actually, almost all in the Chapter hall expected that the proceedings would end up even much earlier.

However, due to the many corrections and integrations when the Directory of the Province was tackled, the closing was delayed. Nevertheless, it was unanimously approved.

Earlier in the day, during the morning session, Fray Leander Barrot read the Chapter message. Some delegates

made their suggestions before they cast their votes

Barrot received a resounding applause. It was followed by the reading and approval of the minutes of yesterday's sessions. For the completion of the rest of the minutes, Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, the secretary of the Chapter, was given the vote of confidence to integrate all the suggestions mentioned in the proceedings.

Towards the conclusion of the Chapter activities, Fray Miguel Miró gave his message of gratitude and challenge to the newly elected officials and to all capitulars. Then, he officially declared the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter closed at 6:49 PM. The thanksgiving mass that followed was presided by Fray Dionisio Selma together with two re-elected councilors as altar concelebrants. Fray Selma, in his homily, exhorted the religious of the Province to share in the collective responsibility and become themselves bearers of communion and forgiveness.

During dinner, it was also known that the Full Council, or the meeting of the Prior General together with the elected Prior Provincial and councilors, will meet the following day, February 24, for the appointment of the Provincial Secretary as well as priors and vice-priors of domus formatae such as the communities of the four big schools, the four seminaries, and the Provincial House.



# Alumni from OAR schools pass board exams

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR

**PHILIPPINES**—Alumni from different OAR-administered schools passed in the recently concluded Board Examinations.

During the September 2018 Medical Technology Board Examinations, MedTech students from UNO-R were able to pass the board exam putting UNO-R in Rank 3 as Top Performing Medical Technology School Nationwide. They were:

Abalajon, Adrian P.

Abella, Mishael Kate B.

Amar, Jenny Rae G.

Badilla, Aina Joyce P.

Balgos, Julyn Grace M.

Baliguat, Krystel Mae E.

Balinas, Carryl Joy P.

Brillantes, Alessandra Rae T.

Bruna, Julyanna R.

Bulacja, Johnrev M.

Buslay, Nicole Mae B.

Cabana, Marianne Therese Augustine

Caña, Joshua Angelica M.

Cardinal, Lea Kate A.

Celis, Rianna Mara T.

Chan, Michelle Rose B.

Cortez, Kimberly A.

Dealala, Althea Dune B.

Dolocanog, Jane Pauline H.

Domato, Norhainah M.

Dunton, Quenie Diane G.

Escollar, Jenny Belle B.

Española, Ruvie Grace D.

Esquerra, Aljon B.

Fernandez, Eunice E.

Flores, Genesis B.

Genova, Justine Kaye L.

Gequillana, Jaryl Kaye J.

Gonzaga, Shaira F.

Gultia, Exil S.

Hagonao, Nicole Grace T.

Huelar, Mae Shaira L.

Jalandra, Krizza Louise S.

Jalandra, Oscar III D.

 **San Sebastian College - Recoletos de Cavite**  
We Make Education Work

**CONGRATULATIONS!**



**RAN JOSEPH ALIMURONG MENDEZ, Rpm**  
**Board Topnotcher**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Placer**

October 2018 Psychometrician Board Exam  
High School Alumnus Batch 2014  
BS Psychology Batch 2018

Thank you for making your Sebastianian Family proud!

TOGETHER WE CAN! YES WE CAN! 

**Congratulations!**



**MS. MARY GRACE Y. MANLUNAS**  
**TOP 7**  
**Psychometrician Board Exam**  
**October 2018**

**San Sebastian College Recoletos – Manila**  
**College of Accountancy, Business Administration and Computer Studies**

*congratulates*



**CALPO,**  
Elmer E.

**CRUZ,**  
March Ferdinand F.

**GARCIA,**  
Louie Ann D.

**MONTALVO,**  
Donna May C.

*for passing the October 2018*

**CPA BOARD EXAMINATION**

Above  
National  
Passing  
Percentage

*Baste!*

- Tortosa, Anne Mary Margret M.
- Trabadillo, Myrdal P.
- Tubongbanua, Rhyz C.
- Tumbagahan, Rhea L.
- Untalan, Ruby Ann V.
- Villanueva, Marielle G.
- Wee, Clarizze Andrea M.
- Yangco, Maraille Zoie T.

University of San Jose-Recoletos alumna and San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite alumnus also brought pride to their Alma Mater for ranking as Top 7 and Top 9, respectively, in the recently concluded Psychometrician Board Examinations.

Other alumni from San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite also brought the laurels for their Alma Mater.

San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Manila also expressed their congratulatory remarks to their alumni who passed the October 2018 Certified Public Accountant Board Examinations.

- Jolipas, Christine G.
- Lachica, Anamae A.
- Lagansoa, Patricia Joy B.
- Lazalita, Raynon T.
- Lim, Irish Lhou P.
- Lima, Mia Paz O.
- Lopez, Ron Brian C.
- Mabugat, Paolo Augustine A.
- Magbanua, Jan Cary R.
- Mondejar, John Mark V.
- Mondia, Noreen Mae C.
- Montinola, Raul III H.
- Moreno, Patrice O.
- Natu-el, Ma. Flor Theresa L.
- Patarata, Mark Anthony P.
- Perartilla, Chlea Sheriez V.
- Piezas, Christian Vincent Y.
- Quintanilla, Jessa R.
- Regalado, Kayzyllyn Ann R.
- Rodriguez, Angelica May G.
- Rubin, June Anne A.
- Rufino, Shantyl J.
- Salcedo, Ro-Ann S.

- Sarino, Stephanie Claire M.
- Segovia, Louie John G.
- Soldevilla, Nicole Ann R.
- Tan, Shaun Andre V.
- Tasic, Remel P.
- Teodoro, Inza Rita S.
- Tolbo, Yza June

# USJ-R SHS champions District Level Math Competition

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

CEBU CITY—Senior High School students from the University of San Jose Main Campus, June Vernon B. Pasasadaba and Exel C. Bunaos of Gr. 11 Bl. Jerome of Recanati, emerged as Champions in the recently concluded District Level Math Competition (South District 1) held at DVRMNHS AVR earlier this afternoon.

Pasadaba and Bunaos were the 2018 Math Wizards in the Main Campus. They were coached by Mrs. Timelyn Ceniza, faculty member of the USJR – SHS Math and Resarch Cluster.

They will be the representatives for South District 1 in the Division Level this November 10.



## USJ-R benchmarks with UNO-R CAMHS

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL – The University of San Jose – Recoletos, Cebu bench marked with UNO-R last September 28, 2018. They sought the guidance of the College of Allied Medical Health Sciences for their plan in opening a degree program in Medical Technology at USJ-R. Rev. Fr. Leo Alaras, OAR – USJ-R VP Academics; Dr. Aubrey Verano, Dean of the College of USJ-R Nursing; and USJ-R Quality Assurance Officer Dr. Julieta Catipay were accompanied by Fr. Alden Alipin, OAR and Dr. Sheila Arnibal during their tour to the different offices and laboratories of the university.

# USJ-R scores 3 CPA topnotchers

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT



Harold Pacaña was riding on a motorcycle with his father on the evening of May 29 when he shouted for joy. He received a text message saying that he and two of his classmates topped the government's licensure examination for the accountancy program.

"I feel I was in cloud nine," Pacaña, who graduated summa cum laude from USJ-R, said. "I had very little sleep

because of the many congratulatory calls and texts that I received all throughout the night."

The Professional Regulation Commission announced on its website that Pacaña landed on the sixth place of the top ten finishers of the May 2017 Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Licensure Examination with an average grade of 91.00.

# USJ-R is PH rep to UNESCO-Japan ESD teacher ed initiatives

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

CEBU CITY—Dean Dr. Jestoni P. Babia is currently in Bandung, Indonesia to report on the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) initiatives in the teacher education programs of USJ-R representing the Philippines. As the sole Ph representative, USJ-R and Dr. Babia will be tasked to be part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian and Pacific framework committee meeting on ESD to be delivered to all teacher education institutions (TEIs) this coming 2019.



# USJ-R Journalism and Communication Department receives JP II Award

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

CEBU CITY—The Department of Journalism and Communication of University of San Jose-Recoletos, chaired by Dr. Nestor Godofredo B. Ramirez, was hailed as this year's recipient of the Pope John Paul II Award.

In a letter sent to Dr. Ramirez, the Pope John Paul II Award was first given in the year 2011 to give honor to the late pontiff, and now a saint, Pope St. John Paul II "who put the mass media into best use to send his message to people all over the world" (Letter of Fr. Rufino C. Sescon, Jr., Executive Director and Trustee of the Catholic Mass Media Awards, dated 5 November 2018).

USJ-R Journalism and Communication Department was chosen as a recipient because of its value-based works that are "strong tools for building an intelligent, discerning, and morally upright citizenry," said Fr. Sescon.

In his Facebook post, Dr. Ramirez expressed his gratitude for the honor given to the department:

"I would like to thank God Almighty who makes all things possible and to my colleagues in the Department

of Journalism and Communications of University of San Jose Recoletos for all the support and love to make this possible. To Bro. Tagoy Jakosalem, OAR who inspired and guided the department in conducting extension work and to Rev. Fr. Christopher C. Maspara, OAR, for the full support and inspiration and to Bishop Dennis Villarojo, DD, for his spiritual guidance and prayers. Kudos to all who contributed to this work in progress. Thank you Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA) for the Pope John Paul II Award. Adelante!"

The 40<sup>th</sup> Catholic Mass Media Awards Night was held last November 14, 2018 at Star Theatre, Star City, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

## USJ-R DJC at CMMA

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT

Pasay City, METRO MANILA—The Catholic Mass Media Awards confers the John Paul II Award for 2018 to the Department of Journalism & Communications (DJC) of the University of San Jose-Recoletos, Cebu City.

The award was bestowed to DJC for "being the forefront of training journalists in Cebu and its neighboring provinces with the guidance of the values of St. Augustine."

Congratulations!

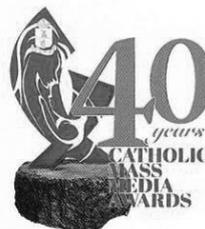
HIS EMINENCE  
LUIS ANTONIO G. CARDINAL TAGLE, D.D  
ARCHBISHOP OF MANILA  
AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS OF  
THE CATHOLIC MASS MEDIA AWARDS FOUNDATION, INC.

REQUEST THE HONOR OF YOUR PRESENCE AT THE

## 40<sup>TH</sup> CATHOLIC MASS MEDIA AWARDS

ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2018  
5:00 PM

AT THE STAR THEATER, STAR CITY, CCP COMPLEX,  
SOTTO ST., PASAY CITY



PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE  
ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 5, 2018.  
CMMA SECRETARIAT 892-4779 / 867-4026  
THECATHOLICMASSMEDIAAWARDS@YAHOO.COM

ATTIRE: FORMAL  
GENTLEMEN: BARONG TAGALOG  
LADIES: AS APPROPRIATE

# USJ-R welcomes students from Lumad Bakwit Schools of Mindanao

BY FRAY JAAZEAL JAKOALEM, OAR

CEBU CITY—Thirty-two (32) students from the different Lumad Bakwit Schools are currently staying and availing the continuing education program in the University of San Jose–Recoletos, Basak Campus, Cebu City, Philippines. They will be in the university on the following dates September 10-14, 2018. The solidarity presence in Cebu is organized by the Save Our Schools (SOS) Network, and co-organized by the Cebu Archdiocesan Commission on Social Advocacies (COSA), Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP) and the ARCORES-Filipinas.

The students are coming from the different indigenous tribes of Mindanao. They are currently 'on evacuation' as a result of the continued militarization of their communities; due to their active defense to protect their ancestral domain from mining companies and palm oil plantation. The militarization, the continued burning and occupation of their 'Lumad' schools affected their regular education. The imposition of Martial Law last year created more disruption in their communities. Many were threatened, murdered, and harassed. These Lumad students fled from their communities to escape from the onslaught of the heightened militarization, resulting in the continued bombings of their schools and communities. Beginning this month, they started to march

from Mindanao, arriving in Cebu last September 4, 2018. Bringing their plight and telling their stories of struggle and survival; they hope to reach Manila on the first week of October.

Archbishop Jose Palma, D.D. of Cebu issued a statement of endorsement to support the Lumads, that says, "I am deeply saddened by the fresh stories of violations and abuses [that] their people are currently suffering. Their plight should be a concern not only for our rural missionaries working in the mountain barangays of Mindanao but should also be ours as we heed the call of our beloved Pope Francis to care for our brothers and sisters in the peripheries of society and as a Church that proclaims preferential option for the poor."

The Lumad students will be having classes related to their indigenous curriculum. Volunteer teachers from USJ-R will also assist the students to avail the learning module related to basic computer use, mathematics, English proficiency, and robotics. Other activities also include, psycho-social sessions to help them cope with the traumas related to bombings, harassment and killings; art sessions, paper making at the WOW-RIDEM center, and sports. Conferences, fora and encounters with the participation of USJ-R students form a component part of their presence in the campus. "Our sufferings are not being reported thoroughly, we are here to share our real stories..." said Jong Monzon, lead Convener of Save our Schools Network.



FORWARD

The Save Our Schools Network was formed by indigenous peoples' groups, educators and support groups to combine efforts to address the need to advocate and mobilize resources to serve the indigenous and children's rights to education. The network provides advocacy and services to the community schools that are recognized by the Department of Education Indigenous People's Education Office (IPSEO). They uphold

these schools' programs that instill cultural heritage and pride to protect their culture and ancestral domain and prevent the encroachment of multinational investments. Instead they promote a sustainable, community-based development program. The Archbishop of Cebu made an appeal "to encourage your school, congregation, parish, or community to share a little of your time spending and immersing with the

Lumads. They are presently having their makeshift schools called Bakwit schools in Cebu and are hosted by various academic and religious institutions that extend support to the educational needs of these eager yet displaced Lumad students. May we be always open to the call of solidarity with them..."

# USJ-R SHS champions Speak Up X: Visayas Schools Debate Championship

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT



CEBU CITY – Speak Up X: Visayas Schools Debate Championship is a regional debate tournament hosted by the University of the Philippines-Cebu Lantugi Debate Society. On its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the tournament was dedicated to the legacy of Samantha Tornilla, one of the pioneers who spread the culture of debating in the Visayas.

USJ-R SHS A, composed of Rendel Alfonso Badayos (12-Our Lady of Grace) and Jade Angelique Alcomendras (12-BI. Gratia of Kotor), emerged as the grand champions. Jade was awarded as the 8<sup>th</sup> Best Speaker of the Tournament while Rendel was the over all Best Speaker of the Tournament and the Grand Finals Best Speaker.

They brought home the cash prize of 30,000 for being the grand champions and 5,000 for Rendel being the over-all Best Speaker.

Congratulations JDV!

# USJ-R to host English Language Fellow Program

BY USJ-R CORRESPONDENT



CEBU CITY—U.S. Department of State has selected USJ-R as one of the three universities in the Philippines to host a 10-month English Language Fellow (EL Fellow) Program.

English Language Fellow representative Ms. Taraji Belgacem signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with USJ-R represented by the president, Fr. Christopher Maspara, OAR, on September 17, 2018 in the USJ-R President's Office.

The EL Fellow Program fosters

mutual understanding, promotes English Language learning and enhances English teaching capacity abroad. Through projects sponsored by U.S. embassies, EL Fellows share their professional expertise, hone their skills, gain international experience and learn about other cultures. EL

Fellows model and demonstrate up-to-date Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) classroom practices that help foster thoughtful and responsible behavior in students and teachers of English.

## UNO-R installs 17<sup>th</sup> President

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD

BACOLOD CITY—After the Mass of the Holy Spirit, a concelebrated Mass to be led by Prior Provincial, Rev. Fr. Dionisio Selma, OAR today, July 05, 2018., Rev. Fr. Don Hormillosa Besana, OAR will be installed as the 17<sup>th</sup> Recollect President of the University of Negros Occidental –Recoletos.

The program will start with the relinquishment message by Rev. FR. Eduardo S. Celiz, Jr., OAR , UNO-R President, Triennium 2015-2018. Presentation of Plaque to Fr. Celiz by Fr. Selma follows. Rev. Fr. William Villafior, OAR, REAP President and

Recoletos de Bacolod House Prior, will read the letter of Appointment of the new President who will then Profess his Faith publicly. The Vice President for Academics, Rev. Fr. Jose Alden Alipin, OAR assisted by the deans of the Colleges of Engineering and Arts

and Sciences will don the Academic Gown to Fr. Besana. Vice president for Administration, Rev. Fr. Ronel Gealon, OAR to be assisted by the Dean of the Colleges of Education and information Technology will put the Presidential Medallion to the new President. The

University Mace shall be presented by Rev. Fr. Amadeo Lucero, OAR, VP-Student Welfare, and shall be assisted by Engr. Christopher Taclobos, UNO-R Registrar; and the Dean of the College of Business and Accountancy. The Presentation of the Vision –Mission of the university to the President is Rev. Fr. Cristituto Palomar, OAR, VP-Religious Affairs with Dr. Sheila Arnibal of the College of Allied Medical Health Sciences and Director of Student Affairs, Dr. Dexter Paul Dioso. Rev. Fr. Walthrode Conde, OAR, UNO-R

Research and Development Director; Dr. Angelus Diamante, Alumni President; Engr. Noli Ortiz, UNOFELA President; and John Lewis Pabilona, President, student government. Atty. John Paola Villasor, MSc, Dean of the School of Law will give the closing message. The emcees of the program were Mrs. Ma. Judy B. Legaspi.

He finished his basic education from his hometown in San Jose, Antique. He joined the Order as a minor (high School) seminarian in San Carlos City. He made his simple

profession in April 27, 1996; his solemn profession on July 23, 1999. He was ordained deacon on October 30, 1999. He received the Sacrament of Holy Order on the Birthday of the Blessed Mother, December 8, 2000.

from 2001 – 2003; He was then transferred to Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary (formerly Seminario Mayor, Recoletos) as Spiritual Director, Vice Prior and Procurator. Answering the call for missionary work, He was sent as Prior to the OAR African Mission in Kamabai, Sierra Leone from 2004 to 2006; He was then returned back to form future workers in the vineyard of the Lord as Spiritual Director, Dean of Studies and Registrar from 2006 – 2013. He was then called to serve the educational apostolate by his



*The UNO-R religious administrators flanking Fray Don Besana, OAR (center) during the latter's installation as university president*

HRMDO with associate Director, Dr. Carmenda Leonoras and Dr. Dennis Madrigal, Graduate School Associate Dean will present to the New President his roles and functions. Presentation of the Bible by Rev. Fr. Jose Teodulfo Jadulco, OAR with Criminal Justice Education Dean, Dr. Jasmin Parreno and ICTD Mariano Antenor will precede the Introduction of the new president by Dr. Carlos Eduardo Legaspi, Jr. The new President will then deliver his Inaugural Address. Statements of support shall be delivered by Rev. Fr. Persiuz Decena, OAR, Director of Basic Education; Dr. Monafreda Secondes,

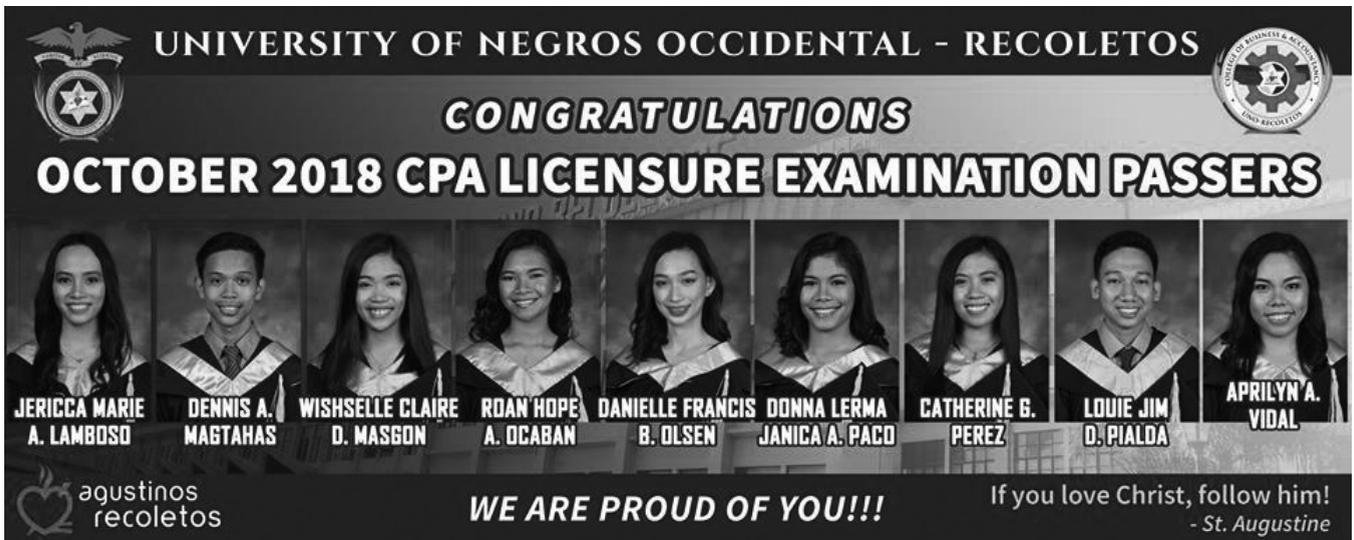
profession in April 27, 1996; his solemn profession on July 23, 1999. He was ordained deacon on October 30, 1999. He received the Sacrament of Holy Order on the Birthday of the Blessed Mother, December 8, 2000.

Prior to his election as President of the University, Fr. Besana's religious assignments are as follows: Parish Priest of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Cebu in 2000-2001; He was transferred to UNO-Recoletos as Chaplain, CMODirector, UCDO Director, and RESOURCE-Handumanan Treasurer and Vice President

appointment as VP-administration and Human Resource Development Center Director of San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Manila from 2013-2015. After the triennium, he was assigned to San Sebastian College –Recoletos , Cavite until 2017 as Vice Prior and Vp-Admin and HRMDO Director. In 2017, He was transferred to UNO-R as Vice President for Academics. And on May 25, 2018, the Board of Trustees, chaired by the Fr. Prior Provincial, elected Fr. Don as the 17<sup>th</sup> President of the University of Negros Occidental –Recoletos.

# 9 UNO-Rians hurdle CPA board exams

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Nine Unorians successfully hurdled the October 2018 Certified Public Accountants (CPA) Board examinations. The new

CPA's are:  
 Jericca Marie A. Lamboso;  
 Dennis A. Magtahas;  
 Wishelle Claire D. Masgon;  
 Donna Lerma Janica A. Paco;

Catherine G. Perez;  
 Louie Jim D. Pialda;  
 Roan Hope A. Ocaban;  
 Danielle Francis Olsen;  
 and Aprilyn A. Vida

# MEDLABS, NSTP and UCDO engage in Tree Growing Project Launch

BY DIANNE LAINE BANASIG

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The Medical Laboratory Sciences Society of the University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos, University Community Development Office and NSTP with various Catholic universities attended the Tree Growing Project Launch at Barangay Tuburan, EB Magalona last September 22, 2018.

Hon. Marvin M. Malacon, EB Magalona's Mayor, led the movement aimed to raise awareness of the Earth's deteriorating state and the ways that one could do to help and protect it. The Medical Laboratory Sciences Society spearheaded by Ms. Jennybelle Gallego, took part in this campaign for change to showcase the Unorian spirit and its will to help the

environment.

The participants, implanted trees with a piece of their desire for a better tomorrow and hope for the next generation. Not only hopes were planted but coasts were cleaned to implement the change that one should adhere within his or her self. Progress is impossible without change, and

those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. The launching was over, the shores were cleaned, and the trees were planted. But change does not stop there. Total environmental progress and awareness may seem far-fetched, but together, with an open mind and an open heart, our Mother Earth would start to heal.

# Two Summa Cum Laude Grads 9<sup>th</sup> placers in Teacher's Board

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Two summa cum laude graduates of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos Class of 2018 are among the September 2018 Board Licensure Examinations for Professional Teachers top notchers.



*Claire Clamor Magbanua and Allen Jake Sajot Talimodao bring another prestige to UNO-R*

Claire Clamor Magbanua and Allen Jake Sajot Talimodao both ranked ninth place in the Secondary and Elementary levels, respectively, the Professional Regulation Commission announced yesterday. Magbanua and Talimodao, both 21, thanked God, their parents, and their mentors for their accomplishments. Talimodao, who had an 87.80 percent rating in the board examination, is the son of Granada Barangay Captain Alfredo Talimodao Jr. and Dr. Juvy Talimodao, principal of the Education and Training Center School II in Bacolod City. He said he learned that he was the 9<sup>th</sup> placer from his mother who was informed by the St. Louis Review Center where he reviewed for the board.

Talimodao currently teaches English to grades 1, 2 and 6 pupils at the UNO-R. He said his being a

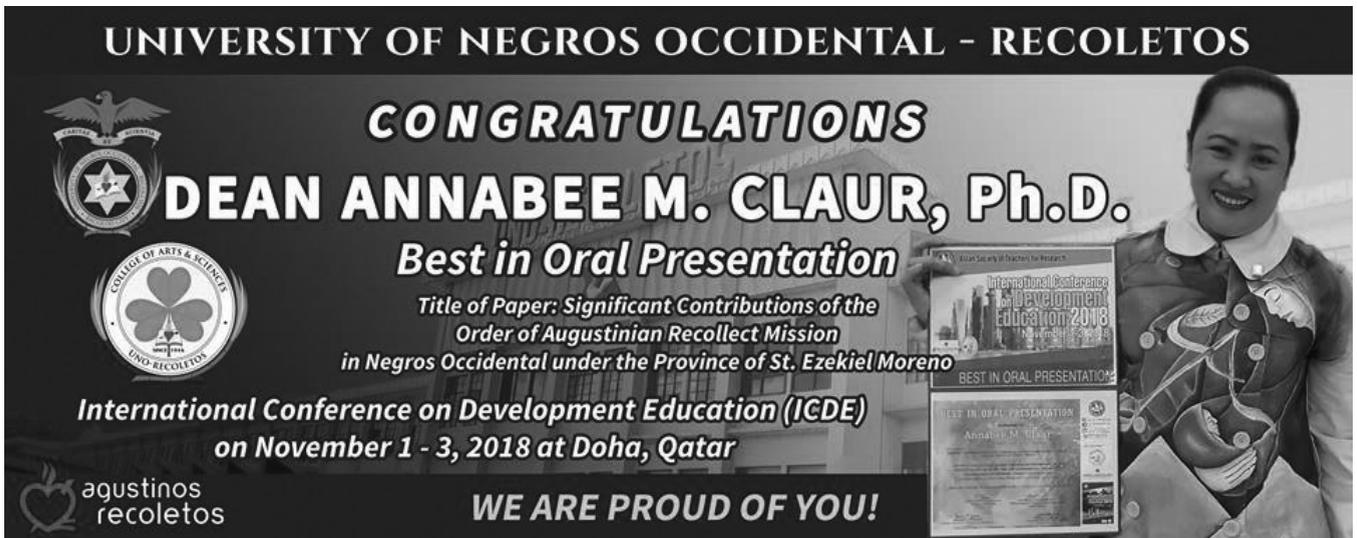
topnotcher had not sunk in yet, but he is thankful to God, his family, UNO-R, and the St. Louis Review Center for their support. Magbanua is the daughter of UNO-R security guard Leovin Magbanua and Arlene Magbanua, a teacher at Shiloh Christian School in Bacolod City. The topnotcher, who had a 91.20 percent rating in the board examination, teaches mathematics to grades 6, 7, and 8 pupils at Shiloh, where she finished her elementary and high school education. Magbanua said she was going home after a Shiloh Christian School inter-school rally at the BAYS Center yesterday when her excited co-teachers called her, but she could not understand what they were saying. Then Diana Rose Octubre, St. Louis Review Center Bacolod review director, called to let her know that she not only passed but was a 9<sup>th</sup>

placer in the board. She thanked God and her parents, and everybody who were part of her journey, including her teachers and reviewers.

A total of 79,212 passed the licensure examination for teachers given in September, the PRC announced. The PRC said 18,409 elementary teachers out of 90,750 examinees, and 60,803 secondary teachers out of 126,582 examinees passed the examinations. Rhea Joy Yeibes Genson of the University of Southeastern Philippines-Davao City topped the licensure exams for elementary teachers, with a score of 89.80 percent. Francis Dave Perez Cabanting, also of the same university, topped the licensure exams for secondary teachers, with a score of 92.80 percent.

# UNO-R CAS Dean receives award for research

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Dean Annabee M. Claur, Ph.D. was awarded with Best in Oral Presentation in the International Conference on Development Education 2018, November 1-3,

2018 at Doha, Qatar. The theme of this year's conference was "The Role of Development Education in the Transformation of Individuals, Communities and Societies." It was organized by Asian Society

of Teachers for Research, Inc. Dr. Claur presented her study entitled "Significant Contributions of the Order of Augustinian Recollect Mission in Negros Occidental under the Province of St. Ezekiel."

## UNO-R honors employees

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos gave honor to its employees on September 15, 2018 during the UNO-R Service Awards 2018 at 5 pm at the University Main lobby.

Recipients of the Star of Tolentine Service Awards are Vilma B. Azucena; Glenn M. Amantillo; Clarita T. Lacson; Villaflores S. Lorca; Ana Maria G. Melocoton; Freddie P. Parreño; Evelinda J. Chavez; Dennis L. Garganera; Josette G. Juen; and Gil U. Relatos. These were the employees of the university who are retiring within the school year 2018-2019.

Meanwhile, the St. Ezekiel Moreno service award was given to an employee who has served the university for 25 years; 30 years and

35 years. This year's awardees for 35 years of service were Susana V. Caler, Jelyn S. Gaspillo, Celo I. Magallanes, and Evelinda J. Chavez. For 30 Years, Ivy G. Aboy, Margiolina M. Menente, Nieves H. Pepito, and Teresita E. Golez. For 25 years of service, Vilma B. Azucena; Russell B. Buslay; Carlos Eduardo I. Legaspi, Jr.; John Clifford P. Salugsugan; Ernil T. Orbecido; Judy J. Mendoza; Ruby C. Ravelista; Norberto P. Sardito, Jr.

Diwa Rekoletto Service Award was given to an employee who has served

the university on their 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> year. This year's awardees for 20 years of service were Dennis V. Madrigal; Reymund L. Sabay; Lilyn G. Estrada; Rex B. Abibuag; Alex G. Agustino; Ramel C. Ambino; Mariano D. Antenor, Jr.; Joelittle M. Aritao; Romero M. Daruca; Noel P. De la Cruz; Raymundo L. Montinola; Federico C. Palmes; Raymund B. Reboton; Eddie P. Rodriguez; Armando C. Villanueva; and Dominador C. Villanueva, Jr. For 15 years of service, the awardees were Fatima A. Medel and Maricel



B. Pacio. And for their 10 years of service, the awardees were April Marie D. Gonzalez; Joy Q. Borcelas; Zonavieve A. Catalan; Rizah Ann P. Delos Reyes; Joanne A. Fantonalgo; Verna Mae A. Flor; Robelin I. Javier; Marisa B. Petalla; Arnel G. De la Cruz; Pallas Athena Joy M. De Paula; Allan B. Diloy; and Joey D. Jolito. The program opens with the formalities and

Homage to God was led by Rev. Fr. Cristituto A. Palomar, OAR, UNO-R Vice President for Religious Affairs. Words of Welcome were given by Rev. Fr. Walthrode B. Conde, OAR, UNO-R Human Resource Management Development Office Director. UNO-R President Rev. Fr. Don H. Besana, OAR gave his message. Awarding Ceremony followed right after

dinner. Responses were given by the awardees. For the St. Ezekiel Moreno Service and Diwa Rekoletto Service Awards, Celo I. Magallanes and Ruby C. Ravelista gave the responses while for the Star of Tolentine Award, all the awardees gave their responses. Closing Remarks was given by Rev. Fr. Ronel P. Gealon, OAR.

## Golden jubilarians visit Alma Mater

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos High School Class '68 revisited their alma mater, September 24, 2018. They are

this year's Golden Jubilarians. The batch opened their revisit with a Thanksgiving Mass led by Rev. Fr. Cristituto Palomar, OAR. The office of External Affairs facilitated the tour

around the campus. There were more than 40 alumni who revisited their alma mater.

# Korean Ambassador Visits UNO-R

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



*Ambassador Han Dong-man*

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Ambassador Han Dong-man will visit the University of Negros Occidental–Recoletos on November 14, 2018. He will give a talk to the administrators, faculty and students of the university at the UNO-R President’s Hall regarding bilateral relations between Korea and the Philippines. He will be accompanied by Mr. Shin Hyun Seong, the Third Secretary of the Korean Embassy.

He will be met by the welcome entourage of the university at the main Lobby and will proceed to the President’s office for a courtesy meeting with the Fr. President and the UNO-Recoletos School Board.

The lecture shall start with the Opening Prayer to be led by Rev. Fr. Persuiz Joseph Decena, OAR, Integrated School Director to be followed by the singing of the Philippine

and Korean National Anthems. Rev. Fr. Don Besana, OAR, UNO-R President, will give the welcome address while Dr. Carlos Legaspi, Jr. will introduce the Religious and Lay Administrators. Then the lecture of the ambassador will then proceed. Rev. Fr. Ronel Gealon, OAR, Vice President for Administration will formally close the program.

## Barkadahan Debate: A Battle of Reasons 2018

BY BIANCA CABABAHAY

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Team Affirmative and Team Negative attempted to prove themselves and disprove the other on whether or not “Online Education is as effective as Formal Education” during the Debate tagged as “Debate: a battle of Reasons” last September 12, 2018, at 1:00 PM in the UNO-R lobby. After the opening formalities, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Annabee M. Claur gave the welcome address while Mrs. Ma. Judy Legaspi, ARGDEB instructor, gave the rationale, mechanics, rules, and criteria of the debate. Mrs. Legaspi also explained that the term Debate was coined by Ms. Kathleen Balboa while the phrase “a battle of reason” was conceptualized by Carmen Jesusa Legaspi. Arts and Sciences Student Council (ASSC) Governor Carmen Jesusa Legaspi introduced the Board of Judges. The judges were Eugene Adiong, Dr. Al Z.M. Cruz, and Atty. Reena May

Reliquias, CPA; the moderator was Sir Jude Rosales. Team Affirmative is composed of Charles Gabriel Gelotin, Kayla Grace Arribas, and Krisha Marie Semillano while on Team Negative were IT Senior students John Rey M. Gamotin, Jess Patrick Francis S. Quiatchon, and Christian Shane D. Plaza. Adiong gave insights for the revival of debate at UNO-R, for he was once a debater of UNO-R. Director for External Affairs Dr. Carlos Legaspi, Jr. gave the closing remarks. The winners were then announced shortly with the added note of “having defended their points and their side”. Team Affirmative bagged this year’s Debate championship while one of its members, Gelotin, was the Best Debater and Gamotin was named “Best Speaker”. The whole event was sponsored by Recoletos Online Learning Extension project (ROLEx) and organized by the Mass Communication ARGDEB class under Mrs. Legaspi.

# Kyoto University professor visits UNO-R

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Professor Kwangmoon Kim, PhD visited the university last September 21. He was accompanied by Mr. Edward Kwon of PERA SWIPE and Mr. Haze Kyodo. Professor Kim met with the Fr. President, Fr. Don

Besana, OAR, and presented some opportunities for UNO-R and Kyoto University. After the meeting with the President, he met with Fr. Jose Alden Alipin, OAR; Dr. Jelyn Gaspillo; Dr. Corazon Acaba; Ms. Laarni Muzones; and students from the College of

Information Technology and school of Agriculture. Dr. Kim presented the opportunities and explained the programs of Kyoto University while Mr. Kwon presented his new mobile app, Pera Swipe.

## UNO-R holds MAPA 2018

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The Office of Planning and Quality Assurance (PQA) holds the Midterm Academic Planning Assessment 2018 at the President's Hall, November 16-17, 2018. The assembly opened with the prayer led by Rev. Fr. Cristituto A. Palomar, OAR, UNO-R VP-Religious Affairs and Chaplain. This was followed by the Opening Remarks of Fr. Don H. Besana, OAR, University President and Dr. Elmer Haro gave the rationale of the planning activity.

Fr. President, in his Opening remarks, challenged those present to take care of the students. He reminded all that our work in the educational apostolate is the work of God and we are all God's collaborators in forming the hearts and the minds of the young people. Fr. Besana also reiterated

that "we are one with the mission of Christ and the Church in spreading the word of God and to holistically and integrally develop the human person." He challenged the community to really make a difference in the areas of instruction, research and community involvement. He strongly reminded

the academic deans of these and that we have to be fair in dealing with the students. Listen to what they are saying. Lastly, he challenged everyone that we have to smell like sheep for the Shepherd to recognize us and to smell like fish in order to be identified by the fisherman.

On the first day presentations of the Manual outputs were done by the following Administrative Manual by Rev. Fr. Ronel P. Gealon, OAR, VP-Administration; Faculty Manual by Dr. Dennis Madrigal; Succession Manual by Dr. Elmer Haro; Research Manual by Dr. Mona Freda Secondes; Students Manual by Rev. Fr. Amadeo C. Lucero, OAR; Employees Manual by Dr. Carmenda Leonoras; Compensation and Honoraria Scheme by Rev. Fr. William Emilito C. Villaflor, OAR, UNO-R VP-Finance; Facilities Development Plan by Rev. Fr. Jose Teodulfo A. Jadulco, OAR, UNO-R Property Administrator and Program

Marketing and Linkages Manual by Fr. Cristituto A. Palomar, OAR and Carlos Eduardo I. Legaspi, Jr.

On the second day, the program will open with management of learning, CEAP seminar output and presentation of Client Satisfaction Survey. PAASCU recommendation updates for the interim visits shall be discussed. Department Accomplishments, concerns and updates will be presented by the respective Deans of the colleges. Rev. Fr. Ronel P. Gealon, OAR will close the program.



# UNO-R celebrates Vocation Awareness Week 2018

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos celebrates its Vocation Awareness Week 2018 which started on November 19, 2018 and will end on November 29, 2018. The Campus Ministry Office spearheads

this celebration.

On November 19, a Eucharistic Celebration with the Junior High School was celebrated at 7:30 am and opening of the exhibits at the Main Lobby at 9 am. The exhibits run

until November 29. Daily Eucharistic celebration are held at the Oratory and room to room campaigns highlight the week-long celebration.



# GWD visits UNO-R and RESOURCE-Handumanan

BY CARLOS LEGASPI, JR., PHD



*The representatives of the Global Workers of Daegu during their visit in UNO-R*

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—The Global Workers of Daegu (GWD) visited UNO-R last August 25, 2018. They were met by Rev. Fr. Cristituto Palomar, OAR; Rev. Fr. Ronel P. Gealon, OAR; and Dr. Carlos Eduardo I. Legaspi, Jr. with University Community Development Office (UCDO) Director Ms. Maribel Gonzales, UCDO Coordinators and some Social Work students.

The group is composed of Jee Wong Kim; Park Jae Gem; Suk Hyun Sung; Shim Ji Young and Son Min Joo. A program was held last August 27, 2018 at RESOURCE. Ms. Gonzales gave the opening remarks while Rev. Fr. Don H. Besana, OAR, UNO-R President gave his message. Mr. Jee Wong Kim, GWD President

also gave his message. Mr. Kim gave the Fr. President his donation for the UCDO projects in RESOURCE in return, Fr. Besana gave Medals of gratitude while Fr. Gealon awarded Certificates of Appreciation to GWD representatives. Fr. Gealon, President of RESOURCE – Handumanan, and a parent – beneficiary gave their

response messages. The visitors and the community of RESOURCE was entertained by the UNO-R UCDO Coordinators with their Zumba dance workout. Mr. Aaron Kim Gil, RSW, RESOURCE Social Worker gave the closing remarks.

# UNO-R celebrates its University Week “the RECOLETOS WAY”

BY DR. NIEVES PEPITO



*The official logo of UNO-R's University Week 2018*

Bacolod City, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—It is all systems go for the University of Negros Occidental Recoletos' University Week celebration on September 10–15, 2018 with the theme: “Paghigugma kay Kristo, Pag-alagad sa Isigkatawo.” St. Augustine wrote, “If you love Christ, follow him.” Also, Pope Francis told everyone that the “love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable.” St. Nicholas of Tolentine, the patron saint of UNO-R, showed his great love for God by serving his neighbors and even extending his service to the poor souls in purgatory. “Love of God and service to Humanity”: these are the very foundation of our University Week 2018.

The highlight of the celebration begins with the religious activities such as the Septenary Masses in honor of St. Nicholas of Tolentine. On September 10, the feast day of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, a procession and concelebrated Mass welcome employees, students, alumni and its stakeholders with the spiritual blessing from Bishop Patricio Buzon of the Diocese of Bacolod.

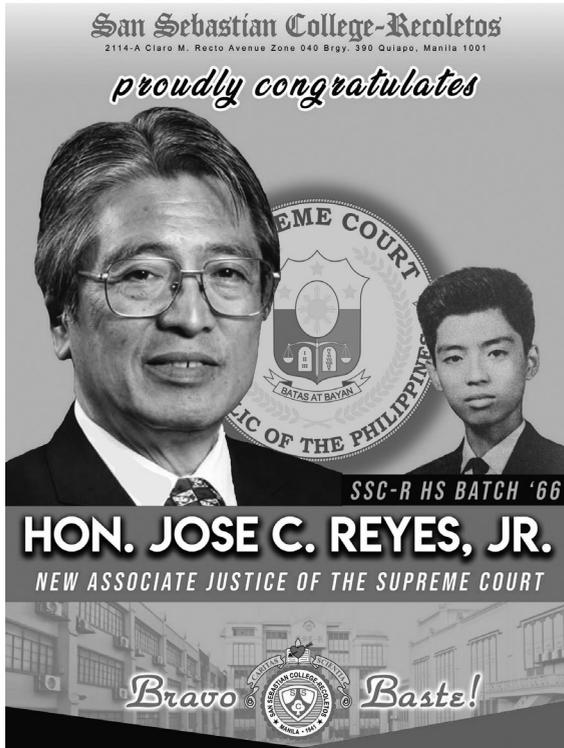
UNO-R is greatly blessed as being the first Catholic University in the Negros Province with an autonomous status, PAASCU accredited programs, IQume Category A(t), Center of

development in IT Education and high employability graduates. The Recoletos way of celebrating the University Week 2018 challenges and engages UNO-Rians to build a community of service with emphasis on interiority, moral integrity, peace and justice, love and a passion for excellence.

The five-day University Week special events include the motorcade of Mr. and Miss UNO-R candidates, the opening ceremony “Dance Craze” with the homegrown talents of students, academic and non-teaching staff, Drum and Bugle Competition, Interscholar News Casting Competition,

Essay Writing Contest, Mr. and Miss UNO-R, CheerIDanz competition, the Students' organizations booths and Guest kiosks, Debate, Academic Exhibits, Quiz Bowl, Literary Musical competitions, Battle of the Bands, Horror room, Dog Show, Club Hydrolympics, Larong Pinoy, Paint Party, Theater Productions, Community Outreach Programs, Futbol de San Nicolas, Beach Volleybelles Challenge, Basketball Exhibition Game, Seminars, and Mobile Legends Tournament. Added attractions to the celebration are the Fiesta Carnival rides and an open house tour.





# SSC-R alumnus as new Associate Justice

BY SSC-R MANILA CORRESPONDENT

MANILA—San Sebastian College-Recoletos of Manila, proudly congratulates Hon. Jose C. Reyes, Jr., newly appointed Supreme Court Associate Justice.

Associate Justice Reyes has successfully carried forward the red and gold colors of his Alma Mater, SSC-R Manila, when he made it to the Supreme Court as one of its Associate Justices, the highest aspiration that every lawyer dreams.

He belongs to High School Batch 1966.

# SSC-R Manila awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Place in animation contest

BY SSC-R MANILA CORRESPONDENT

MANILA —Nathaniel Cruz, Paul Ramos and Omnino Tolero, students of San Sebastian College-Recoletos, Manila won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the We Dream It, We Do It, Animation Contest during the 2018 Comguild's Media and Technology

Students Conference last October 13, 2018 held at UP Diliman, Quezon City. Congratulations! Bravo Basté!



# SSC-R de Cavite hails 15<sup>th</sup> College President

BY SSC-RdC CORRESPONDENT

CAVITE CITY—August 3, 2018. San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite celebrated the Investiture Rite of the 15<sup>th</sup> College President, Fray Rafael B. Pecson, OAR. Held at the 4<sup>th</sup> Centennial Coliseum at SSC-RdC Cañacao Campus, the Mass of the Holy Spirit was presided by the Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR.

Together with him were the members of the community of Recoletos de Cavite; Fray William Emilito Villaflor, OAR, President of the Recoletos Educational Apostolate in the Philippines; Fray Cristituto Palomar, OAR, outgoing College President of SSC-RdC; and other priests and religious of the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

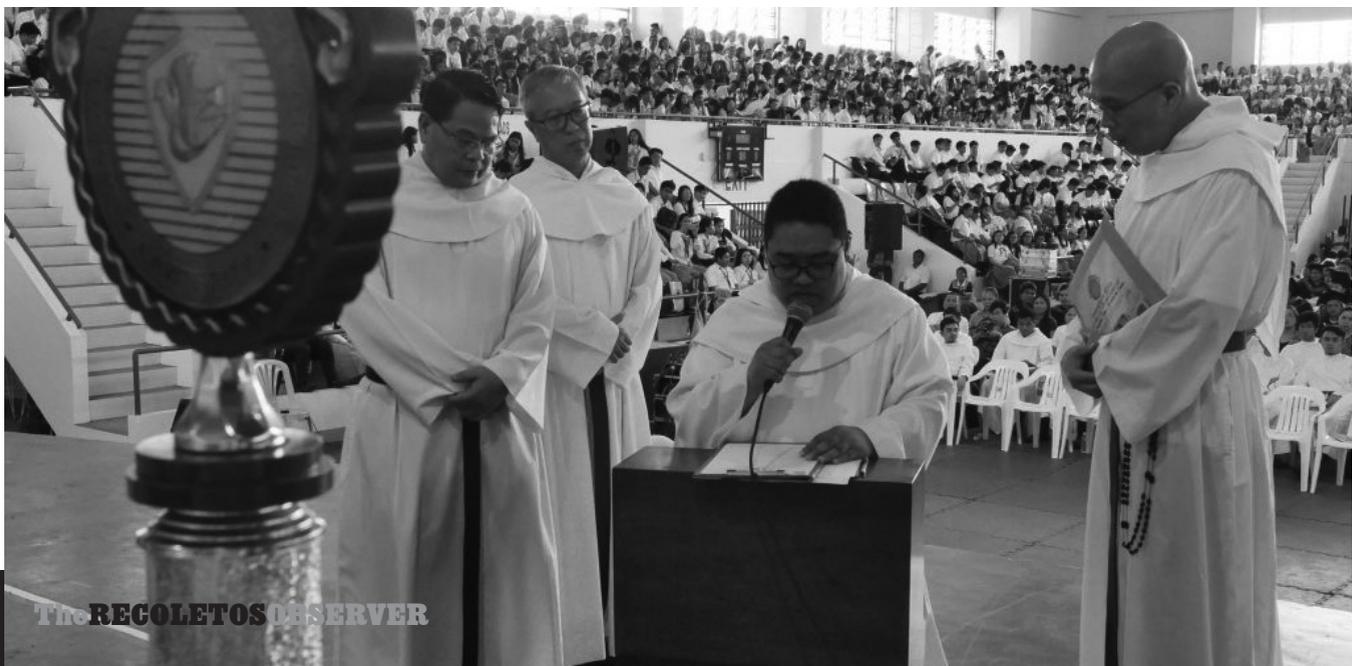
After the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the Rite of Investiture followed. Donning their academic gowns, the faculty and staff of SSC-RdC marched forward. Fray Palomar gave his message as he thanked the community of SSC-RdC for the fruitful years he spent with them as their College President. He then passed the President's mace, symbol of the authority of the College President, to Fray Pecson.

Fray Villaflor read the appointment letter of Fray Pecson as the new College President. After receiving the letter of appointment, Fray Pecson knelt for the Profesio Fidei. The religious and lay administrators of SSC-RdC gave Fray Pecson the President's academic gown, the President's medallion, the mace, SSC-RdC's Vision-Mission, and the Duties and Responsibilities of the Office of the President.

In his inaugural speech, Fray Pecson thanked the Almighty Father for allowing him to serve SSC-RdC as College President. He then cited the thrusts of the college: Institutional Excellence, Engaged Citizenship, and Integrated Formation. He also thanked the retired employees of SSC-RdC and included them in the programs of the college. Fray Pecson vowed to continue the legacies of

his predecessors and to guide SSC-RdC towards the attainment of the new administration's vision of being an icon of stability, creativity, and leadership.

Present in the Rite of Investiture were the family and friends of Fray Pecson who came from his native place in Jolo, Sulu; the Augustinian Recollect priests, religious and Pre-novices; the Augustinian Recollect Sisters from Saint Joseph College, Cavite City; the members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity Cavite Chapter; some members of the local government of Cavite City and representatives from the Department of Education; the lay administrators, teaching and non-teaching personnel, alumni, parents, and students of SSC-RdC.



# SSC-RdC and Holy Angel University collaborate on Project Proposal Writing

BY CAMILLE ICASIANO

CAVITE CITY—Dr. Caroline M. Acosta, Dean of School of Business and Accountancy at Holy Angel University, was invited by San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite, Inc., as resource speaker in a

seminar-workshop on project proposal writing at SSC-RdC. The schedule of the workshop ran from August 29-30 2018, at St. Thomas Villanova Library. The two-day activity was sponsored by the President's Office. The workshop

was attended by at least thirty faculty members from the Basic Education, Senior High School and College department as the college's research capacity building activity aims to strengthen its research thrust.



# San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite conducts Mid-year Operations Review

BY DR. NIEVES PEPITO

CAVITE CITY—San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite, through the initiative of its School President, Rev. Fr. Rafael B. Pecson, OAR, successfully conducted its Mid-Year Operations Review last October 24-26, 2018. The event which was organized by the Office for Accreditation, Planning and Development and Quality Assurance, provided an avenue for all administrators to share their accomplishment reports, challenges and the winning strategies of their respective departments.



The highlight of the celebration begins with the religious activities such as the Septenary Masses in honor of St. Nicholas of Tolentine. On September 10, the feast day of St Nicholas of Tolentine, a procession and concelebrated Mass welcome employees, students, alumni and its stakeholders with the spiritual blessing from Bishop Patricio Buzon of the Diocese of Bacolod.

UNO-R is greatly blessed as being the first Catholic University in the Negros Province with an autonomous status, PAASCU accredited programs, IQume Category A(t), Center of

development in IT Education and high employability graduates. The Recoleta way of celebrating the University Week 2018 challenges and engages UNO-Rians to build a community of service with emphasis on interiority, moral integrity, peace and justice, love and a passion for excellence.

The five-day University Week special events include the motorcade of Mr. and Miss UNO-R candidates, the opening ceremony “Dance Craze” with the homegrown talents of students, academic and non-teaching staff, Drum and Bugle Competition, Interscholar News Casting Competition,

Essay Writing Contest, Mr. and Miss UNO-R, CheerDanz competition, the Students’ organizations booths and Guest kiosks, Debattle, Academic Exhibits, Quiz Bowl, Literary Musical competitions, Battle of the Bands, Horror room, Dog Show, Club Hydrolympics, Larong Pinoy, Paint Party, Theater Productions, Community Outreach Programs, Futbol de San Nicolas, Beach Volleybelles Challenge, Basketball Exhibition Game, Seminars, and Mobile Legends Tournament. Added attractions to the celebration are the Fiesta Carnival rides and an open house tour.

# Sebastinian presents Research in Europe

BY SSC-RdC CORRESPONDENT



CAVITE CITY – “Be a GOAL digger, I am a PROUD Sebastinian!” said Marilex R. Llave, a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science alumna, batch 2004 of San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite after she presented her research paper entitled “Drivers of Business Intelligence-Based Value Creation: The Experts’ View” at the Ionian University, Corfu, Greece.

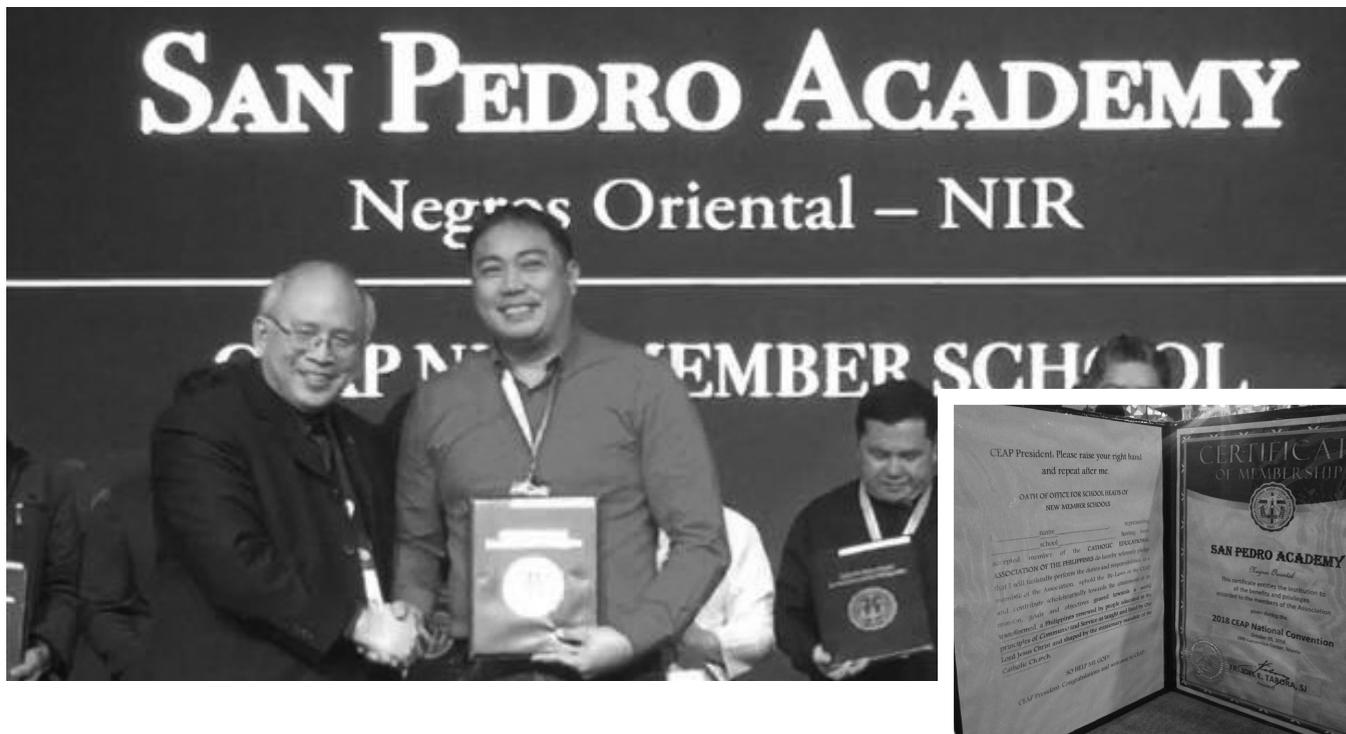
Llave is currently taking her PhD in Information Systems at the University of Agder, Kristiansand, Norway. Llave was also the first woman in the University of Agder to be awarded “Best Master Thesis in Information Technology” when she finished her Master’s degree in Information and Communication Technology in 2014. This November, Llave will present another research paper in Portugal.

# SPA is officially a CEAP member

BY SPA CORRESPONDENT

Valencia, NEGROS ORIENTAL—San Pedro Academy of Valencia, Negros Oriental was officially acknowledged as a member of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), the national association of Catholic Educational Institutions in the Philippines.

Fray James Dexter Tanquis, OAR, School Director and Principal of SPA, received the Certificate of Membership during the 2018 CEAP National Convention at SMX Convention Center in Manila last October 5, 2018.



## San Pedro Academy opens S.Y. 2018-2019

BY SPA CORRESPONDENT

VALENCIA, Negros Oriental—San Pedro Academy formally opened the academic year 2018-2019 with fervor and enthusiasm. To set the mood for another academic year, SPA conducted a General Orientation for Grade VII, transferees, and Parents last June 23, 2018.

The community of San Pedro Academy welcomed the new members of the religious administrators. Fray James Dexter Tanquis, OAR, was appointed as the new School Director

and Principal; Fray Enrico Peter Silab, OAR, as the new School Treasurer; and Fray Roderick Deguit, OAR, as Director of Campus Ministry Office.

During the orientation proper, Mrs. Estanislao Alviola, Treasurer of the Parents, Teachers, and Community Association, led the opening prayer. Fray James Dexter R. Tanquis, OAR, welcomed everyone with a warm and inspiring message. The election of officers; presentation of the school rules and regulations, student

manual update, grading system and promotion, financial and business matters transpired during the event. Mrs. Merlene T. Cabatingan, the newly elected PTCA President, expressed gratitude for being trusted as the PTCA President. Afterwards, the teachers facilitated the parents for the homeroom meeting. Ms. Divine Love Quibal, Grade XI-OLH adviser, was the lady of the ceremony of the said program.

# Recoletos de Caidiocan: where are you?

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

Provincial Curia, QUEZON CITY – Roughly 15 kms from Dumaguete City, capital of the province of Negros Oriental, or around 7 kms from the poblacion proper of the municipality of Valencia where it politically belongs, the hinterland barangay of Caidiocan nestles on the hillsides and a forested topography made famous by the geothermal operations of the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC).

Although these descriptions can somehow help one who is unfamiliar with the place locate where the newly established community of Recoletos friars is, nevertheless there is something more to the question “Where are you?” that Fray Jay Parilla, OAR relayed to other local priors two weeks ago.

During the first ever assembly of the elected and appointed priors of the St. Ezekiel Moreno Province last September 14 here at the Povincialate, Fray Parilla, the appointed local prior of the three-member Recoletos de Caidiocan community, made an inspiring report on the status of his community’s life and mission project.



Bishop Julito Cortes, DD, of the Diocese of Dumaguete

Despite the ongoing major renovation of the convent and the transition it is undergoing as a new community, the brothers are finding ways to be faithful in their common observances as religious and in the compliance of their apostolic works.

## Since 1984

The Recollect presence in Valencia (formerly Nueva Valencia, then Luzurriaga) began in mid-1850s. The Recoletos friars of yore were responsible for the birth of the town and the parish dedicated to Our Lady of the Abandoned.

Fray Pedro Ko, OAR is credited for the construction of the actual edifice of the parish church and the San Pedro Academy (SPA). The latter was built in 1963.

Then, in 1984, an educational apostolate began in Caidiocan, one of the 24 barangays of this “Little Baguio of Negros Oriental,” through the San Pedro Academy-Recoletos (SPA-R). The nearby school chapel-cum-kumbento became the St. Ezekiel Moreno Chaplaincy in 1997. And upon the directive of Bishop Julito Cortes of Dumaguete, it became a quasi-parish last triennium.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter

In his letter to the Prior General, Father Provincial noted that he and

his Provincial Council is “heeding the call of the 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter of the Province to revitalize and restructure our overall pastoral apostolate ... in Caidiocan.”

The said Chapter framed three decisions related to Caidiocan: (a) “Finishing the study on the possibility of establishing a religious community in Caidiocan”; (b) “Designating a team of religious to closely supervise SPA-R in Caidiocan”; and (c) “In establishing new communities, preference is given to those located in the peripheries.”

Since the study of the possibility of creating a new community had promptly been done purposively to closely supervise the school apostolate there, the Prior Provincial convincingly expressed the mind of the Council: “Now the time has come to intensify our presence and strengthen our ministries in Caidiocan by establishing a religious community.”

## Approval of the bishop

In compliance with the universal and particular norms, Father Selma formally asked for the consent of the local ordinary “that we establish a new and separate Recollect community in Caidiocan, Valencia, Negros Oriental.”

He assured the bishop “that this new foundation forms part of our LAMP (Life and Mission Project) as we intend to accomplish our tasks always in collaboration with you, being

the father of the diocese, as well as in synchrony with the pastoral program of your ecclesiastical jurisdiction.”

In his April 2, 2018 letter to Father Provincial, Bishop Cortes gave the positive response: “With this letter please be informed that with the Board of Consultors (BOC) I have resolved during our BOC Meeting last March 27, 2018 to give consent to Your Province ... in establishing a new and separate Recollect community in Caidiocan...”

### Consent of the Prior General

you that I am giving my consent for the establishment of a house non formata in Caidiocan.”

With that, the Prior Provincial and his Council established the 23<sup>rd</sup> Recoletos community of the Province.

### Composition of the community

The community is composed of three Recollect religious headed by Fray Parilla, the appointed local prior, house librarian, and CSEC-R (Commission on Social and Ecological Concerns-Recoletos) anchor. He is also the Priest in-charge of the San

are available in the convent, and these are occupied by Frays Hamo and Saycon. Fray Parilla takes his temporary residence at Recoletos de Valencia community. “He goes up to Caidiocan during mass schedules, community meetings and other important occasions, but not everyday to save fuel,” the local prior disclosed.

### Areas of Apostolate

The brothers of Caidiocan are attending to three areas of apostolate: the quasi parish in Caidiocan and the one in Apo Island, and the school



*Recoletos de Caidiocan community (L-R): Fr. Jay Parilla, OAR (Prior), Fr. Roweno Eugenio Hamo, OAR (Director/Principal of San Pedro Academy-Recoletos), and Fr. Excel Saycon, OAR (Priest-In-charge of St. Ezekiel Moreno Quasi-Parish)*

Having secured all the necessary papers, Father Provincial forwarded to the General Curia in Rome the petition for the consent of the major superior in order to erect a “domus non formata” or a house whose establishment, according to number 433 of the OAR Constitutions, requires prior consent of the Prior General.

Then came the reply dated June 4, 2018 which, in part, said: “In compliance with (Const. 433) I have informed the General Council about your proposal in its session of May 29 of the present year, and may I inform

Vicente Ferrer Quasi Parish in Apo Island which belongs to the town of Dauin, Negros Oriental.

The other two members are Fray Excel Saycon and Fray Roweno Eugenio Hamo. Fray Saycon is the Local Procurator, Local Vocation Promoter, Priest In-charge of the St. Ezekiel Moreno Quasi Parish, and School Treasurer of SPA-R. Fray Hamo is the House Chronicler, House Liturgist, Chapter Secretary, School Director and Principal of SPA-R.

Meantime, while the huge renovation is going on, only two rooms

(SPA-R). In due time, they will also form a local chapter for the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF) and the Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY), Fray Parilla said.

The St. Ezekiel Moreno Quasi Parish covers 19 chapels. The roads to most of these remain rugged and quite challenging especially during rainy season. With the new community closer to them now, the Catholic faithful are becoming more active in going to their respective chapel.

Fray Parilla was proud to report that in the quasi parish, the kneelers are all

foamed; repainting of the building and the main gate is nearly finished; LED lights on the outdoor church cross are installed; and the designated Priest In-charge was already installed by the bishop himself last August 19, patronal fiesta of the quasi parish.

The San Vicente Ferrer Quasi Parish in Apo Island covers the 74-hectare volcanic island, a renowned marine sanctuary and tourist destination. Though it belongs to the town of Dauin, it is nearer to the town of Zamboanguita. “Apo,” which is derived from the same Visayan term meaning “grandchild,” is around 7 kms from the coast of Malatapay, a sitio of Zamboanguita, where the Recoletos

friars and other passengers usually depart for the island.

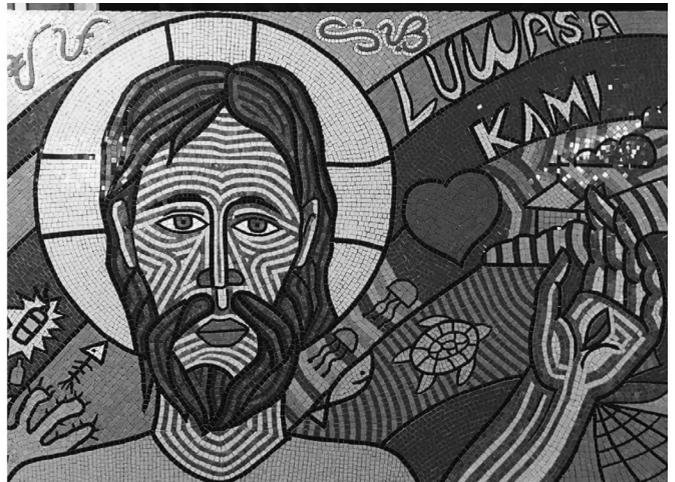
In his update, Fray Parilla informed the brothers that the place of worship which is ensconced on a hill was constructed through various generous persons and entities. A view from above reveals the fish-like design of the structure. Recently, tiling of the floors was finished and glass windows were installed. “Just imagine how all those things were transported with the boat from the mainland to Apo,” the Priest In-charge himself wondered.

SPA-R for its part is picking up. This school year, it has a total of 176 enrollees, an improvement to last year’s student population. There

are 14 employees in the school: 10 academic personnel, 2 non-academic, and 2 security guards. Rehabilitation and acquisition of physical facilities are also noted and monitored, thanks to the donors and sponsors. Recent achievements in the district level co-curricular and sports activities, enhancement of academic services, and its passing the FAPE (Fund for Assistance to Private Education) Re-Certification are among the visible indices of the progress in the school apostolate.

So, where is Recoletos de Caidiocan now?

It’s in the map of ongoing formation and integral development.



Counter-clockwise, L-R: The interior of the San Vicente Ferrer Quasi-Parish in Apo Island; one of the tourist attractions of the island—sea turtle; front entrance to Apo Island; and a mosaic, made from tile pieces, depicting the crucified Christ and a prayer “Luwasa Kami” (“Save us”).

# SPA-R culminates October activities

BY SPA-R CORRESPONDENT

Caidiocan, Valencia, NEGROS ORIENTAL—San Pedro Academy-Recoletos closed two celebrations for the month of October: the Rosary Month and United Nations Day, last October 26, 2018.

To culminate the celebration of United Nations Day,

students and faculty members donned national costumes of different countries. While wearing these attires, they prayed the Holy Rosary and formed a rosary made out of balloons. It was indeed an expression of SPARians' love for Mama Mary and how they can show unity amidst diversity of nations through prayer.



*Students of SPA-R praying the rosary while wearing their international costumes*

## Recoletos brand of education revolutionizes school programs in Sierra Leone

BY FRAY JOSE ERNIL ALMAYO, OAR

Kamalo, SIERRA LEONE – “Transition creates tension” summarized how Fray Jose Prudencio Castillo, OAR, head of the Augustinian Recollect Mission in Sierra Leone and local prior of the Recoletos de Kamalo community, saw the stakeholders' initial reactions to the educational climate change introduced by the Recoletos friars in their school apostolate here.

As the new school year opened last September, the Recoletos-run St. Paul School (SPS), under the directorship of Fray Jess Marco Sanchez, OAR, proudly displayed and brought into

play its new slogan, “One School, One Family, One Heart.”

Fray Castillo said that the slogan intends to reinforce the understanding of the school as a good place not just

for learning but also for the sense of belonging.

Starting SY 2018-19, SPS caters already to all school levels of Basic Education, from pre-primary to senior



*Left: Fray Dennis Castillo, OAR blessing the newly constructed Pre-school Building*

*Right: Fray Jess Marco Sanchez, OAR, School Director of St. Paul School in Kamalo, West Africa, during a school program*

secondary. And its standard, which has always been “top of the line” as Fray Sanchez proudly described it, is continuously raised not just in terms of its physical plant (such as the recent completion of the Pre-School Building, fence, modern toilet system, water facilities, and the school pavilion) but also including other equally important areas of the school operation.

“Now students from all levels can better feel the familial atmosphere. They gather daily as one family for the recitation of prayers, singing of the national anthem, and listening to the announcements,” Fray Castillo noted. “And this is a first in the history of Sanda Loko (a chiefdom in Bombali District where Kamalo belongs), or maybe of the country,” he added.

“However, the numerous developments that had been implemented caused some negative reactions from the parents, teachers, and students,” Fray Castillo recounted, identifying the two highly criticized innovations implemented by the administration, namely, the construction of a more sanitary flush toilet system and the imposition of “time rules” at the school gate.

“These are the things that they

have not encountered nor seen before. They are used to the unsanitary pit latrines, and also to doing their daily chores according to the mood of the sun,” Fray Castillo said.

“But, right after the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) meeting, everybody realized that everything was meant for the integral development of their children.” One parent even commented that these, as quoted by Fray Castillo, “are new things that will prepare our children towards a very challenging globalized world.”

Furthermore, the newly-constructed Pre-School Building was blessed just last October 29, 2018 by Fray Castillo.

“The construction of the school building was made possible through the efforts of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects – Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, the OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) of Sierra Leone, and the local contributors,” he said.

But payment for the so-called “teacher’s incentives” and other related financial needs are met through the consistent contribution of the eponymous St. Paul the Apostle

Parish and those of the parents themselves, he also said.

Fray Castillo also pointed out that the pre-school introduced a “heart-set” in their apostolate, an alternative to the cultural “mind-set” of the people that, among others, treats children as the least in the community. The children are the last to eat in a communal gathering, and their daily life normally consists of more work with practically no time for play or leisure. Recoletos Education rides on the current bandwagon of gradually eradicating the dark side of some practices so that the community as a whole can move forward towards a better future.

“And this made the people realize that the future of Sierra Leone lies in the hands of their children,” Fray Castillo said.

His last updates: “It is very heartwarming to see, on a daily basis, parents sending their small, happy kids to class wearing their clean and complete uniform, with their bags, juice bottles, and lunch packs. It is also notable that majority of the pre-schoolers enrolled at SPS are Catholics.”

# 12 housing units for Casiciaco staffers blessed

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—On the occasion of the founding anniversary of the Order, 12 housing units for loyal staffers of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary were blessed last Dec. 5, 2017.

Rev. Fr. Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, prior provincial, led the rite of blessing of the 2-storey, 12-unit row house project on Dahlia St., Brgy. San Luis, Baguio City, which is a short walking distance away from the seminary.

“It is the mandate of the last Provincial Chapter to provide housing units for our loyal employees because the Order cares for them and their well-being,” said Fr. Bob Cabanag, OAR.

Also present during the ceremony were the seminary fathers led by the rector Fr. Bernard Amparado, OAR.

Fr. Cabanag, who is the seminary

prefect of discipline and in charge of the housing project, said each housing unit has an approximate ground area of 40 to 50 square meters, with a mini-lawn, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, a veranda and 2 restrooms.

The 12 staffers who availed of the housing project are the seminary librarians; administrative, kitchen and laundry personnel; drivers and utility workers.

Some of them are currently living in houses located at the far end of the seminary. Fr. Bob said when they shall have relocated to their new homes, the seminary will construct a guesthouse there.

Miss Regine Llamera, a librarian for the past 5 years at the seminary, said she currently lives in an apartment unit located just 5 km away from the seminary. But because of traffic congestion which is slowly becoming felt in Baguio, she finds going to and from the seminary a daily struggle.

“Masaya ako na may sarili na kaming bahay dito sa Baguio,” she said. She is originally from Buguias, Benguet, a good 3 hours’ ride away from Baguio.

The housing units are constructed on an 800-square-meter property that sits on a hill overlooking the road.



*Staff members of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in the newly blessed housing units*

# Casiciaco welcomes 23 neophyte seminarians on special day

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG



BAGUIO CITY—Last feast day of St. John Mary Vianney (August 4, 2018) was not only a red-letter day for priests but also for high school and college seminarians of the Order as well.

Aboard a bus replete with the logo and design of San Sebastian College-Recoletos Manila (SSCRM), twenty-three (23) neophyte seminarians arrived at the grounds of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary at around 11 a.m. that day to begin their initial formation.

The neophytes were accompanied by the National Vocation Director, Fr. Gideon Antolin Lagrimas, OAR who gathered them the previous day at SSCRM before coming up to Baguio.

Upon alighting, the neophytes found that the main door of the seminary was tightly shut. Suddenly it was flung open, and on the parlor just outside the chapel, the oldphytes performed a song and dance number featuring two of their animation songs.

Senior High School Prefect of Discipline, Fr. Bob Cabanag, OAR greeted the neophytes with the song “Greatest Dream” which he himself popularized, and the seminarians’ theme song “Magpapari na.”

Then one by one, the neophytes were assigned an “angel” — an oldphyte seminarian who would help them adapt to the seminary life. They were to become “souls” who will have to learn as much as they can from their “angels.”

The oldphytes, who had reported to the seminary a week earlier, made the necessary preparations so that the new brothers would feel most welcome. They did a general cleaning of the seminary premises and the

angels even prepared the individual rooms of their souls.

The arrival of the neophytes also coincided with the birthday celebration of the new seminary procurator, Fr. Eduardo Celiz, OAR, who turned 54 that day.

Fr. Celiz spent the last 9 years of his ministry at the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos (UNO-R) in Bacolod City where he was school president in his last term.

“Ano pa bang hahanapin ko if I have all the people around me?” Fr. Celiz said in his birthday speech. “I thank the Lord for all the blessings through the years.”

# Seminarians undergo English enhancement program

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—Senior High School (SHS) and college seminarians of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary began the new academic year with 2-day enhancement classes to improve their English language proficiency.



*Top: Seminarians delivering a presentation to culminate their English enhancement program*

*Bottom: Fray Bernard Amparado, OAR (prior) appreciating the effort exerted by the seminarians*

Dean of Studies and SHS Principal Fr. Anthony Irineo, OAR designed the enhancement classes not only for seminarians to review their English but also to bring their minds back to the task at hand.

“Since the seminarians just had their almost 2-month vacation, we would like to give them an avenue for them to be properly disposed for the coming school year,” Fr. Irineo said. “We understand that their minds are still in vacation mode, so we wish to help them prepare.”

The classes focused on improving the seminarians’ reading, writing and speaking skills in English. These were handled by the seminary’s lay

formators: Ma’m Marisol Afuang, Ma’m Jovita Caluza and Ma’m Milanie Dalingay.

As culminating activity, the seminarians presented an output before the religious and lay formators, and some members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF) during the breakfast immediately after the Mass of the Holy Spirit.

Ma’m Afuang’s advisorship did a chorale reading of Edgar Allan Poe’s “El Durado” and the sinister-sounding poem “The Bells.” Ma’m Caluza’s class presented a Reader’s Theater while Ma’m Dalingay’s group produced a pseudo-serious TV broadcast replete

with entertaining commercials.

During the program, the new set of formators and professors were also introduced and the 23 neophyte seminarians were properly welcomed.

Fr. Irineo also presented the organizational structure of the seminary where, beginning this school year, a demarcation line has been drawn to highlight the separate structures of the seminary administration and the school’s.

After the program, the faculty members held a meeting at Café Adriana located along Outlook Drive in this city.

# Ezekiel's feast celebrated in 4 Baguio hospitals

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—Seminarians of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary visited and comforted the sick confined in the four biggest hospitals in this city as part of their apostolate on the feast of St. Ezekiel Moreno last August 19.

The seminarians did their hospital visit at the Baguio General Hospital, Pines Hospital, Notre Dame de Chartres Hospital, and St. Louis University (SLU) – Sacred Heart Hospital where they shared the Word of God, prayed for, and blessed those who were confined there.

“This is a very noble activity for our patients,” said Fr. Mackween Maniwang, CICM, chaplain of SLU Hospital who was the one who approved the activity at the CICM medical facility.

The seminarians reassured the sick and their relatives of God's providential care, and removed in them the thought that they are being

punished in their sufferings.

The seminarians pointed out that even Jesus, the Son of God, was not exempted from suffering. Moreover, they urged the sick to unite their pains with the sacrifice of the Lord on the cross to find meaning and merit in them.

It was also an opportunity for the seminarians to propagate devotion to St. Ezekiel Moreno whom the Church honored as Patron of Cancer Patients.

St. Ezekiel Moreno was a Spanish Recollect missionary who was ordained a priest in the Philippines where he spent a good 15 years of his active ministry.

He was later named bishop of Pasto, Colombia where he exhibited the virtues which made him a model pastor of souls in the Augustinian Recollect family.

He died of cancer of the palate, but the dreaded disease was not able to take his spirit. On the contrary, he bore his infirmity with utmost trust and confidence in the Lord and even used the malady to unite himself more fully to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

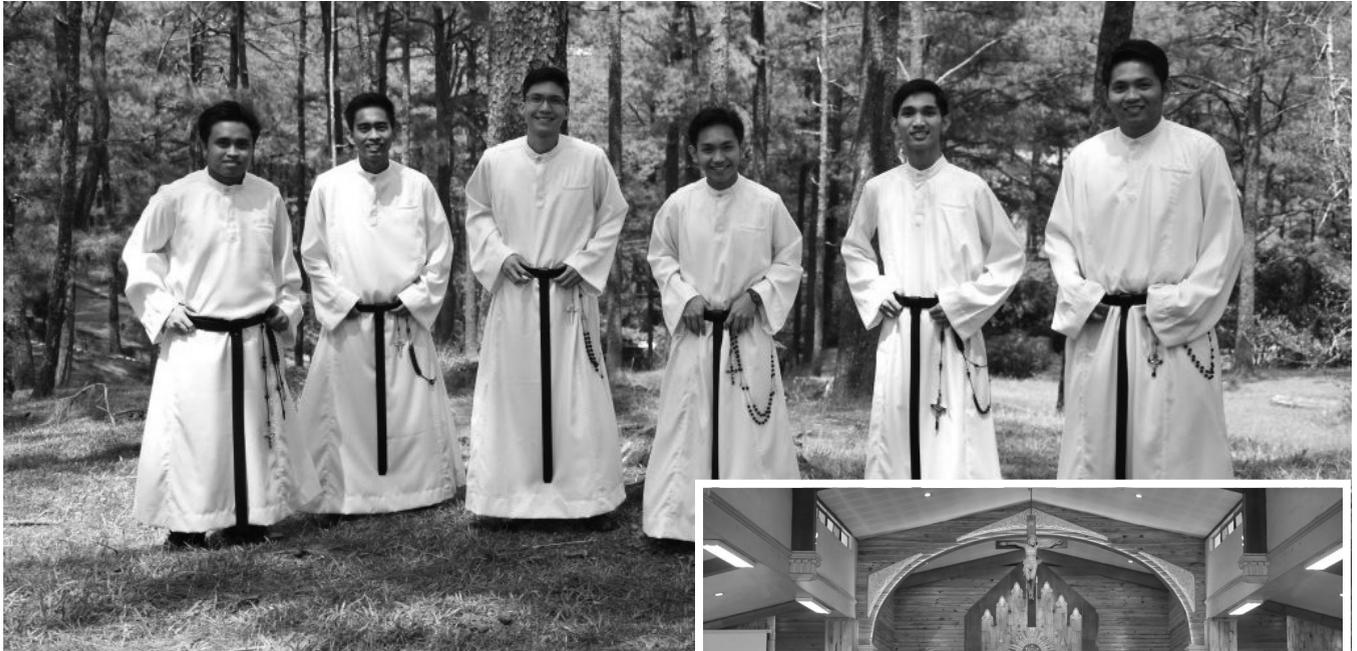
After the sharing, the seminarians also entertained the sick and their relatives with animation songs which put a smile on the faces of those who were around.



# Order receives 6 new postulants

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—Six formands of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary were formally received into the postulancy stage of formation during the solemn Rites of Investiture held at the seminary chapel last Oct. 12, 2018.



*The newly invested postulants*

The traditional “Toma de Habito” (loosely translated as “taking of the habit”) of the six-member Batch Heralds was officiated by the Vicar of the Province Rev. Fr. Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR on the joyous occasion of the feast of the seminary patroness Nuestra Señora del Pilar.

In his homily, Fr. Espartero said one is afraid at first to say “yes” to the Lord because it entails risks. However, he added, that if one is hopeful, patient and trusting in God’s plans, one is able to solidly say “yes” and remain constant to the commitment one pledges before the altar of the Lord.

“God planted the seed of religious vocations in our hearts when we were baptized,” Fr. Espartero said. “Our duty then is to nurture it, hopefully, trustfully and patiently.”

The postulancy facilitates the

gradual entry of the formand from the secular to the religious life by introducing to him certain religious practices peculiar to the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

Fr. Espartero also issued a challenge to the graduating class, the Batch Martyrs, who stands at the crossroad in their vocational journey.

“You better make a better choice because what you decide today will have telling effects of what you will become in the future,” he said. “One simple mistake will totally change the direction of your life, and that is why before you make decisions, make sure that you have thoroughly thought about it,” he added.

The celebration was made more meaningful by the attendance of



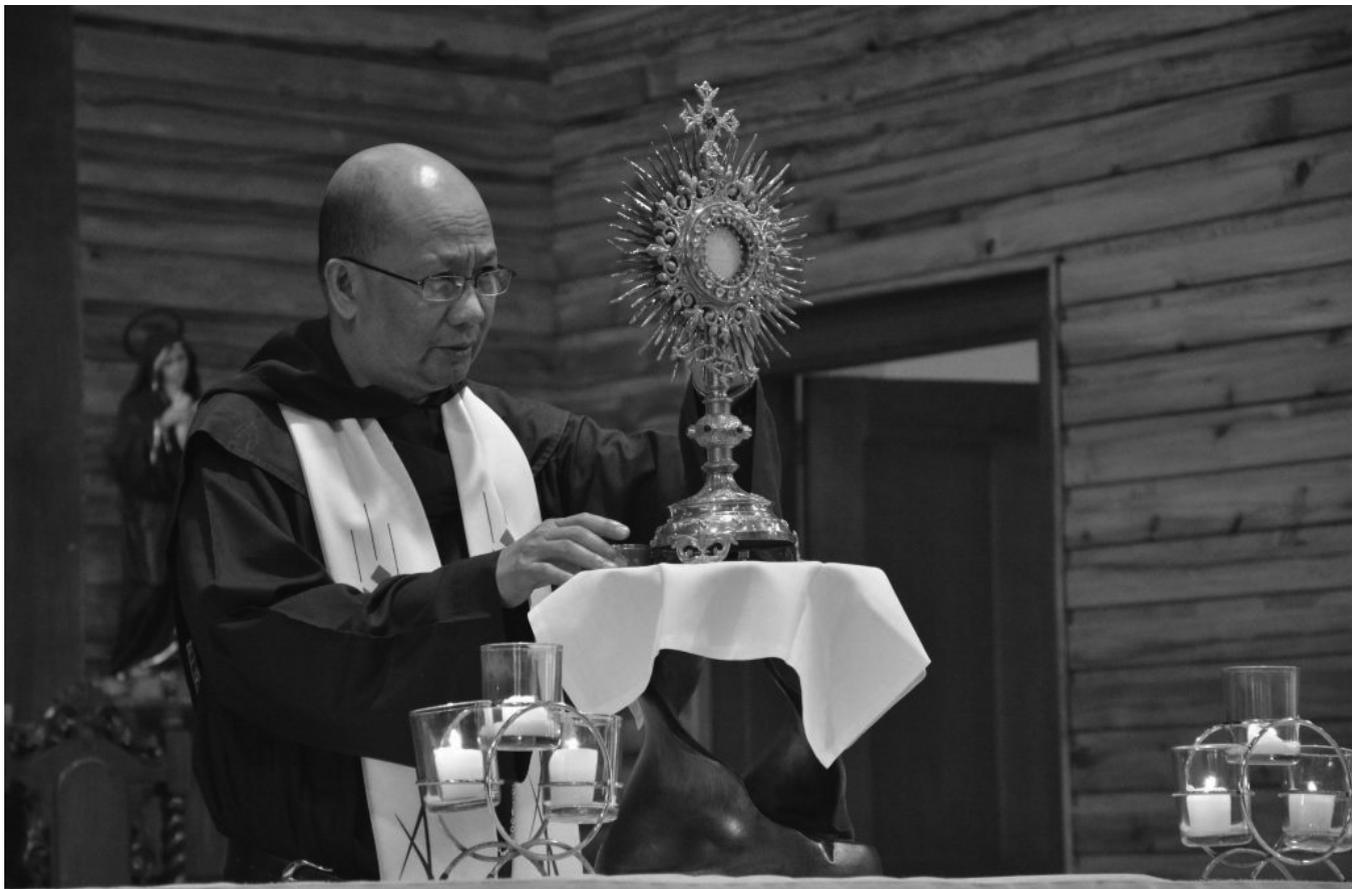
family members, friends, relatives and sponsors of the investees.

Present also as concelebrants were the different “guardians of vocations” in the different stages of formation, namely: Fr. Gideon Antolin Lagrimas, OAR (former vocation director of the St. Ezekiel Moreno Province); Fr. James Castelo, OAR (Pre-Novice Director); Fr. Roland Cepe, OAR (Novice Master); and Fr. Kenneth Joseph Onda, OAR (Master of the Professed). Two deacons also graced the ceremony. Rev. Keneth Pahamutang, OAR served at Mass while Rev. Robin Ross Plata, OAR led the documentation team in streaming live the event on Facebook.

# Opening retreat focuses on silence, discernment

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

BAGUIO CITY—Align your thoughts and desires with God’s.



This was the message Fr. Ronel Gealon, OAR gave to the seminarians during the retreat he facilitated in Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary before the opening of the formation year last August 7 and 8, 2018.

“God’s thought has been made concrete in Jesus,” Fr. Gealon said in the homily at the retreat’s culmination. “Aligning our thoughts with God’s means aligning it with the life and works of Jesus.”

Fr. Gealon, who is currently assigned at the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos (UNO-R) in Bacolod City, emphasized the importance of discernment in the life

of a seminarian and even the religious.

“Our desires can stray from God because the world is alluring,” he said. To give direction to life, it is necessary to discern the will of God in one’s life, he added.

In this enterprise, the retreat master said, silence is indispensable. “It is in silence that we hear God speaking to us,” he said. “Our God is a silent God, and in silence we return to our inmost core and meet Him.”

He noted that the world outside the seminary walls is dispersed, without identity and forgets God because it is drowned in its own noise.

“People of silence are people of prayer,” he said. “A man without prayer is like a tree without roots.”

He also urged the seminarians to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in their vocational discernment. This entails, he said, detachment from the world and all its concerns so that one may freely respond to the prayer of the Church for more workers in the Lord’s vineyard.

The two-day retreat was part of the preparations for the start of the upcoming formation year 2018-19. For this year, there are 67 seminarians in Casiciaco, 23 of whom are neophytes.

# Bishop to seminarians: Love the altar

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG

**BAGUIO CITY**—Love the altar while you are still seminarians because you will be attached to it when you become priests later on.

This was the message of Bishop Victor Bendico to formands of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary during the pontifical mass he officiated there on the occasion of the Solemnity of St. Augustine last August 28, 2018.

“As priests someday, the altar will be your place of consolation especially when you find yourselves in situations of injustices,” the bishop told the seminarians.

It was Bishop Bendico’s second visit to the seminary since his installation as Bishop of the Diocese of Baguio in January 2017. He first came and said mass at the seminary chapel on Dec. 5, last year’s Foundation Day Anniversary of the Order.

“As future priests, you will be attached to the altar,” he said, urging them to find refreshment in Jesus at the altar whenever the loads of future ministry become heavy and burdensome.

Bishop Bendico started his reflection on the importance of the altar table with the words of the dying St. Monica to her son Augustine, telling him to bury her wherever he wanted but asking only that he remember her at the altar of the Lord wherever he may be.

## Altar and its social dimensions

Aside from its sacrificial character — the altar being the table of the sacrifice of Jesus — the bishop also emphasized its social dimensions.

“We can readily notice the social dimensions of the altar whenever we celebrate masses for various social or civil needs,” he said, enumerating as examples masses offered for the preservation of peace and justice, for refugees and exiles, for victims of calamities and poverty.

“Truly, the altar is a place to console

people especially the poor who suffer injustice,” he said. “So the consolation coming from the altar is not only for the souls in purgatory, but also for the pilgrim people of God experiencing injustices and oppressions and longing for justice and peace.”

The bishop said that the role of the priest finds its fulfilment in the altar.

“Without the priest, without the Eucharist, without the altar, what will happen to the people of God?” the bishop asked, quoting St. John Mary Vianney, patron of priests, who said that people would worship beasts if there were no priests to tend them.

Before the final blessing, Seminary Rector Fr. Bernard C. Amparado, OAR thanked the bishop for coming over and celebrating the feast of St. Augustine with the community.

“We, too, are your flock and we love listening to your wisdom,” Fr. Amparado told Bishop Bendico.



*Bishop Victor Bendico, DD with the seminarians and formands of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary*

# Fides et Ratio colloquium held

BY BRO. IOANNES ARONG



*From left: Prof. Mark Joseph Calano, Fr. Anthony Irineo, OAR, and Dr. Danilo Alterado during the colloquium on “Fides et Ratio” at Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary last Sept. 14, 2018, exactly 20 years since the publication of the prophetic encyclical.*

**BAGUIO CITY**—With either one of them missing, “both faith and reason would become impoverished.”

This was how Prof. Mark Joseph Calano summed up the contents of the papal encyclical “Fides et Ratio” (Faith and Reason) during a lecture he delivered at Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary mini-theater last Sept. 14, 2018.

“Faith and reason are needed together,” said Prof. Calano, a full-time faculty member of the Ateneo de Manila University. “You cannot dispense one and choose the other” — an error, he added, which is committed by contemporary thinkers.

The lecture, organized by the Office of the Dean of Studies and Senior High School Principal, was held on the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the encyclical by St. John Paul II which clarified once and for all the relationship between faith and reason in the pursuit of truth.

The professor said contemporary philosophies are plagued by two (2)

characteristic ailments: 1) excessive pessimism on the power of reason to attain the truth, and 2) emphasis on the limitation of the human knowing — the results of man’s setting aside faith and relying solely on his rational powers.

This was the reason why the Church had to intervene by coming up with the encyclical, he said.

“It is the duty of the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church to make clear when there is a confusing philosophical error that could destroy simple faith,” he said. He also added that it’s a pity nowadays that “there are a lot of highly educated people yet poorly educated in faith.”

He said in Catholicism, truth isn’t simply an idea. “The fullness of the truth is the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the answer to all philosophical inquiries, yet this is based on our faith, and faith can’t satisfy the mind. Only

reason does,” he said.

Left on its own, however, the mind will wander far from the truth and will not comprehend transcendental truths otherwise it could not fathom on its own — the very thing which is happening in philosophy today.

“It is faith that sheds light on reason so that it can remain on the right track towards truth.” Therefore, he said, it is necessary that faith and reason go hand in hand in the philosophical enterprise, citing the first sentence of the encyclical which goes: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of the truth.”

To drive home the point, Prof. Calano even cited the experience of St. Augustine in his search for the truth. He said that even if Augustine was filling his head with reasons from Cicero and the Neoplatonics, he didn’t arrive at the truth without the faith of

Monica and Ambrose.

Dr. Danilo Alterado, a philosophy professor of Saint Louis University, in his reaction to the lecture, said that in the postmodern era, the truth is no longer universal but relative. This heightens the culture of disbelief, he said, so that philosophy, succumbing to the impossibility of knowledge, reverts back to skepticism — a tragic contemporary phenomenon.

The encyclical, he added, recovers

the sapiential dimension of the search for the truth by making as springboards of human inquiries — faith and reason.

The Seminary Dean of Studies and SHS Principal, Fr. Anthony Irineo, OAR, said John Paul II was prophetic when he released the encyclical 20 years ago, warning philosophy enthusiasts of the dangers of not integrating faith with reason in philosophizing.

He added that this year's first year seminarians — the first batch

who enrolls in the new curriculum — will have a subject called "Faith and Reason" wherein the encyclical will be used as the primary text of instruction. This was the result of the determination of the updated "Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis" (The Gift of the Priestly Vocation), a Vatican document meant to provide guidelines for the formation of priests and religious.

## Novices undergo communications workshop

BY BRO. EFREN OCON

QUEZON CITY—The Provincial Secretary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Fray Jose Ernill "Tol" F. Almayo, OAR, conducted a seminar-workshop on news-writing to the newly accepted Novices last July 10, 2018.

The session started at 8:45 in the morning and was held at Provincial house in Quezon City. Fr. Almayo discussed about the Commission on Communications and Publications-Recoletos and the many challenges and difficulties the commission is undergoing. The afternoon session was about the basics of photojournalism facilitated by Fray Boyax Jaranilla, OAR, of Recoletos Communications, Inc.

The said event added more knowledge to the Novices which they can use later on in their future ministry to evangelize people through the Communications Apostolate.



# SEMoNo-Re celebrates 27<sup>th</sup> Patronal Solemnity

BY BRO. JOSEPH NEIL E. BAYGAN

Antipolo City, RIZAL—After the nine-day festivity-like Novena Masses, which were sponsored by different Religious Institutions within Metro-Manila area, the community of St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> Solemnity of their very Patron, St. Ezekiel Moreno, last August 19, 2018.



The celebration, which started at 10:00am, was opened first with a Eucharistic Celebration presided and headed by the Vicar of the Province and First Provincial Councilor, Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR, who represented the Prior-Provincial who was into another major activity in Bohol, along with the community members themselves, Fray Paulino Dacanay, OAR, Fray Emeterio Buñao, OAR, Fray Roland Cepe, OAR, and Fray James Castello, OAR. Another Recollect Religious Friars present were Fray Joseph Philip Trayvilla, OAR, Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR, Fray

Arnel Diaz, OAR, Fray Glynn Ortega, OAR, Fray Dominador Mercado, OAR, Fray Rey Campomanes, OAR, Fray Rey Tripulca, OAR, and Fray Benjamin Edobor, OAR. The Novices and Pre-Novices of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno also served as the chorale of the Eucharistic celebration.

The Eucharistic celebration was immediately followed by a traditional procession of the patron's image throughout the Seminary compound escorted mainly by the Confraternity of Augustinian Recollect Altar Servers (CARAS-Antipolo Chapter) and Antipolo City Band, which orchestrated songs

of jubilee, making the celebration more grandeur and festivity.

After the procession, the community hosted an ample lunch for all those who were present in the celebration and in honor of the very patron himself. Among those other institutions present in the celebration were some members of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters (AR), Secular Augustinian Recollect-Fraternity (SARF-Antipolo Chapter), Missionaries of Charity (MC), Recollect Augustinian Youth (RAY-Antipolo Chapter) and the parishioners from nearby residences.

# “Curtain!”

BY BRO. CHRISLEAN REY PAMILAGA

Antipolo City, RIZAL—Ten prenovices of the Bahay-Lingkod-Recoletos displayed their hidden talents and potentials during the breathtaking three-day Theater Arts Workshop at the Auditorium of the Camillian Sisters in Kingsville Subdivision of this city last August 7-9, 2018.

In his opening remarks, Sir Albert, the workshop director, said: “God isn’t in need of your dance, your acting, your song, etc. At the end of your life He will just ask you one thing: how much did you love through these things?” These words seemed to address the participants’ capacity to worship God through artistic gestures and actions. They were magical words of introduction meant to inspire and calm the outburst of excitement and fear.

First day (Aug. 7, 2018) was quite light. Sir Albert was just clearly imparting kind words of welcoming to everyone. As stage symbols were presented, his orientation gave a vivid itinerary of the said activity. Soon, everyone got the idea he would truly be submerged in the seriousness of theatrical arts while being stirred by that cheer: “We can make it!”

As things were brewing during the 2<sup>nd</sup> day (Aug. 8, 2018), everyone had come to the better appreciation of such exercise when acting, dance, and mime had their overwhelming integration with the whole body.

Parody continued that day. Yet most participants were not yet quite familiar with what was truly going on within them. Everyone was told that everything would be performed on the third day which would surely require a lavish amount of concentration: Focus!

Third day (Aug. 9, 2018) was a form of recap. Everyone had to go over with those stuffs they had performed earlier but this time, in the front of



*Pre-novices showcasing their talent*

numerous invited guests. It was a test on how strong they had developed their guts and nerve!

As it was expected, an early taste of “purgatory” came by as it was described as the “Day of Judgment.” This last day caused so much fatigue and nervousness to the point that the participants besought the intercession of the saints. But that was the most

memorable day for them. It marked the occasion to showcase their talents through the many given areas.

Indeed, theater arts could be a form of prayer. It can be a way to express gratitude or acknowledgment of one’s indebtedness to the Creator. It further shows how everyone is wonderfully made: though distinct, one complements the other.

# Six Novices Profess their Simple Vows

BY BRO. ROMEL IRINCO ACEBRON

Antipolo City – the six Novices of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects (OAR) stepped a new ladder in their religious and priestly formations as they profess their simple vows of chastity, poverty and obedience last June 29, 2018.

The simple profession of vows is a culminating rite following the mandatory canonical year for all religious formands. The canonical year and novitiate formation for the OAR emphasizes on prayer life, work and community life. This year accentuate the studies on Augustinology, Recollect spirituality, the charism and history of the OAR. The entire year is solely dedicated to that pursuit prior to the formal advance theological studies. The brothers who passed the evaluation of the Chapter of Formation after a year of novitiate formation are: Fray Nero F. Bautista, OAR from Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro; Fray Helfrid D. Palmis, OAR from Ayungon, Negros Oriental; Fray Jose Enrico V. Gallego, OAR from Meycauyan City, Bulacan; Fray Rey Jay Y. Quevedo, OAR from San Agustin, Surigao del

Sur; Fray Renz Calex C. Soriano, OAR from Puerto Prinsesa City, Palwan and Fray Jhoben M. Rodriguez, OAR from Brooke's Point, Palawan.

The simple profession of vows was integrated within the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist in the solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. It was presided by Very Rev. Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR and Prior Provincial of the OAR Philippine Province. There were thirty Religious priest who concelebrated the Mass.

The presider highlighted the vows of the religious and related the essence of the martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul. Fr. Selma said that saints Peter and Paul, like the novices, came from different backgrounds. The former, St. Peter, is a humble fisherman while the latter, St. Paul,

is an academic intellectual. “They came from different background... but God is the one calling them. The other is a sinner and weak fisherman who turned to be solid and faithful – Peter – and the other is a persecutor who later became a proclaimer of the Gospel” Fr. Selma said.

The celebrant reminded the new religious the importance of an intimate relationship with God. “Who do say that I am?” says the Lord. He urged the religious to return to that encounter with God and make such intimate encounter as a solid foundation. Jesus is the Rock and people will crumble if not founded on the Rock. Fr. Selma addressed the newly professed brothers, “God is calling you regardless of your background, but according to the especial love of



God for you. Despite the limitations, God chose you as instrument of mercy and forgiveness.”

There were around six hundred people who witness the event that includes the OAR religious, Augustinian Recollect Sisters (AR), the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, Recollect Augustinian Youth, AR formands, other religious congregations, family members of the newly professed religious, their

benefactors and the seminary friends from the different parts of the country.

Fray Jhoben M. Rodriguez, OAR, one of the newly professed brothers, delivered a speech of gratitude on behalf of his brothers. He conveyed their thanks to the different individuals and groups who continue to help, support and mold them in one way or another. In one of his lines he said, “We are not alone, God allows us realize that he is with us not just within

the bounds of our deep and interior contemplation, but he also manifests his Divine presence...in the different people we encounter along the way. That is why we should be thankful in whatever mean.”

The celebration was punctuated with a big applause for the newly professed formands and the formators behind them. The entire celebration was culminated with a sumptuous lunch for all.

## Pre-Novices break through Farm Exposure

BY BRO. JOSEPH NEIL E. BAYGAN

Alfonso, CAVITE—Ten Pre-Novices of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno completed their four-week Farm Exposure experience in Pililla, Rizal and Alfonso, Cavite on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2018.



*Pre-novices in Pililla, Rizal*

Farm Exposure is one of the major activities of the Pre-Novitiate Program of St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos. It is considered as the commencement activity of the Pre-Novitiate stage of Formation. In this

exposure, the formands are sent to Recoletos Farms, particularly in Pililla, Rizal and Alfonso, Cavite to work and assist the caretakers for four weeks. The formands here are left on their own, with no formators to watch

over them, for them to practice and improved the more self-discipline, simplicity and community living. They are just given an accommodation, a weekly budget and the rest relies on how they spend it and find ways for their sustenance. This scenario is also obliged for them to develop basic household and labor skills.

In this year's Farm Exposure, the Pre-Novices were sent to Pililla, Rizal from June 21-28, 2018, and Alfonso, Cavite from July 1-19, 2018. The Pre-Novices themselves admitted that this, once-upon-experience for a Formand, is indeed a “worth-it experience” since it really contributed much in their Physical and Human formation. This is considered as one of those which contributed the essence of Pre-Novitiate Life that without which, the Formation of Pre-Novices will not be complete. Farm Exposure has already been part of the Formation of the OAR Formands in the Philippines for two decades and counting already.

# AR and OAR formands take Licensure Examination for Teachers

BY FRAY RALP ANDREW CEPE, OAR

QUEZON CITY—Pursuant to the Republic Act # 7836, otherwise known as “Philippine Teachers Professionalization Act of 1994,” and to accomplish the requirement to acquire license for future teachers and school administrators in the Augustinian Recollect Educational Institutions, thirteen simply professed Augustinian Recollect friars and seven temporarily professed Augustinian Recollect sisters took the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) at the Perpetual Help College of Manila, at V. Concepcion Street, Sampaloc, Manila last September 30, 2018 (Sunday).

The examination was divided into three parts. The first part was on General Education which started at 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM. The second part on Professional Education, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and the last

part, which was the chosen area of specialization by the friars and sisters, was on Values Education, from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

The examinees are looking forward with much prayer, anticipation, and

hope to December 4, 2018, the date for the release of the results of the Board Examinations.

Congratulations, in advance, brothers and sisters!



## 11 OAR Coristas pass LET 2018

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR

Mira-Nila Homes, QUEZON CITY—The result of the recently concluded Licensure Examination for Teachers has been published last December 4, 2018. Eleven of Recoletos Formation Center’s Theology students passed and are now Licensed Professional Teachers. Based on the released data from philnews.ph, the following friars have passed the LET 2018:

5535 AUSTRIA, RICKY JOHN ALARTE  
 15569 CEPE, RALP ANDREW JR RODA  
 10057 BITANCOR, RAMON III BUSLON  
 17387 CUISON, IVAN CARESUSA  
 26986 GATINAO, JAMES EROLD  
 POTENTE  
 37657 MARIN, CHARLEMAGNE JR DE  
 KEYSER  
 39905 MONTAÑEZ, JAZZY JEFF  
 VIRTUDAZO  
 42366 OLAIVAR, JOSHUA FRONTERAS  
 45728 PEJANO, STEPHEN ANGCAHAN  
 48767 RECLA, MELVIN PARAGOSO

53637 SIESMUNDO, JOVANIE  
 HENSIANOS

Aside from the eleven coristas, seven Augustinian Recollect Sisters also passed the examination. They were: Sr. Honey May Bucar Boquila, AR; Sr. Beverlyn De Guerto Nemiada, AR; Sr. Flora Mae Francisco Lanuza, AR; Sr. Kenneth Joy Montaña Bago, AR; Sr. Valerie Ann Baon Coz, AR; Sr. Jamaikha Aray Acle, AR; and Sr. Joan Marie Pederio Ubag, AR. All of them took an intensive LET review at Recoletos School of Theology, Quezon City weeks before the examination.

Professional Education Professors from Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Baguio City gave them the review. They all took LET at Philippine Regulation Commission Testing Center in P. Paredes St, Sampaloc, Manila last September 25, 2018.

This year, a total of 79,212 LET passers from all over the Philippines were added to the roster of the country's licensed professional educators.

Congratulations brothers and sisters!



*From L-R: Fray Ricky John Austria, OAR; Fray Ramon Bitancor, III, OAR; Fray Ralp Andrew Cepe, Jr., OAR; Fray Ivan Cuison, OAR; Fray James Erold Gatinao, OAR; Fray Charlemagne Marin, Jr., OAR; Fray Jazzy Jeff Montañez, OAR; Fray Joshua Olaivar, OAR; Fray Stephen Pejano, OAR; Fray Melvin Recla, OAR; and Fray Jovanie Siesmundo, OAR*

# Augustinian Recollects hail St. Augustine

BY FRAY RICKY JOHN AUSTRIA, OAR

RECOLETOS FORMATION CENTER, Quezon City—The Augustinian Recollects celebrated the solemnity of St. Augustine. Fr. Francisco Antonio, OAR, presided the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and concelebrated by Fr. Hubert Decena, OAR, Fr. Hector Gonzales, OAR, Fr. Gideon Antolin U. Lagrimas, OAR and Fr. Lauro V. Larlar, OAR. A procession to venerate St. Augustine and to praise God for giving him as model of holiness and as teacher of faith followed after mass.

In the afternoon, the community of the Recoletos Formation Center joined the Order of Saint Augustine – Province of Cebu in their celebration at the chapel of St. Augustine Center of Studies. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was presided by Fr. Arnel Recinto, Parish Priest of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish. Together with him were the priors of the two communities: Fr. Lauro V. Larlar,

OAR, prior of RFC, and Fr. Edgardo Lazo, OSA, prior of SACS. Present as well were Fr. Joel Beronque, OSA, Fr. Rommel Bongcae, OSA, Fr. Willibaldus Jampa, OSA, Fr. John Jericho Mier, OSA and Fr. Norberto Dominic Don III, OSA.

Fr. Recinto emphasized in his homily the kinds of love we give and receive. He presented the difference of true love from fake love. He used

St. Augustine as the perfect model of true love and reminded the faithful that “love should be pure, without malice, free, and above all, patterned after the love of Christ.” Fr. Recinto ended his sharing with the words, “If you said ‘I love You’, make sure you mean it. Make sure that it’s true, because Love is Life.”

Viva San Agustin!!!

# Curso de Preparación para la Profesión Solemne concluded

BY FRAY JESSRIEL MARCHA, OAR

Marcilla, Navarra, SPAIN — The six-week course of preparation for the solemn profession ended on August 24, 2018. The international group of seventeen participants consisted of friars from eight countries: Spain, Colombia, Philippines, Venezuela, Peru, Costa Rica, Brazil, and the USA.

Five simply professed Filipino friars joined the course namely Fray Jovy Gallego, Fray Andrie Pugate, Fray Jorr Rabacal, Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, and Fray Jessriel Marcha. It was facilitated by Fray Francisco Javier Monroy Rodríguez (President of the General Secretariat for Spirituality and Formation), Fray Juan Pablo Martínez Peláez (President of the General Secretariat for Vocation and Youth), and Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda (Master of the Professed of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno). The first half of the course was done in Monachil, Granada and the other half of the course was done in Marcilla, Navarra.

## Recollect Filipinos in Spain

In an unprecedented move, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno sent participants to the course of preparation. The Prior General, Fray Miguel Miró Miró could not help but notice the presence of all the four “new” provinces of the Order. On a sad note, the two Nigerian brothers were not able to go with the Filipinos in Spain due to difficulty in their documents. The six Filipinos left for Madrid, Spain on June 6, 2018. Upon arrival in the Barajas airport in Madrid, Fray Jovy Gallego, and Fray Andrie Pugate were transported to the Casa de Formación San Agustín, a formation house under the Province of San Nicolás de Tolentino in Las Rozas which is located in the Spanish capital.

Meanwhile Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda was transported to the Casa San Ezekiel which is also in Madrid. On the other hand, Fray Jorr Rabacal, Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, and Fray Jessriel Marcha were transported to the Convento Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo, a formation house in Monachil, Granada, under the Province of Santo Tomás de Villanueva. The course started on July 16, 2018 and while waiting for the said date, the Filipinos dedicated themselves to the study and familiarization of the Spanish language, thanks to the friars with whom they lived with.

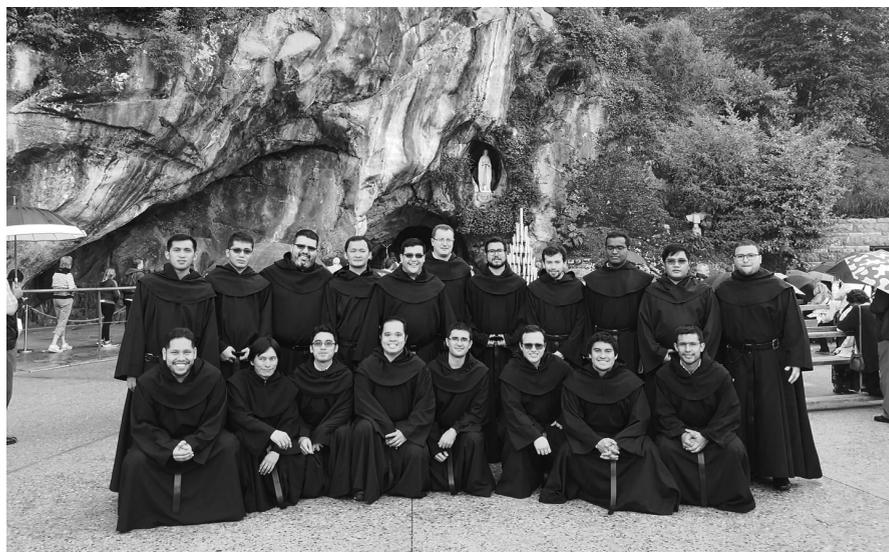
## Tres Sabidurías

During the first week of the course, Fray Juan Pablo Martínez Peláez discussed the three evangelical

counsels. On the second week, Fray Enrique Gómez discussed the following topic: Sabiduría de la Comunidad. During the third and final week in Monachil, Fray Hugo Sanchez elaborated on the following: Sabiduría de la Interioridad. During the fourth week of the course and the first week in Marcilla, Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda talked about the following: Sabiduría de Ecclesialidad.

## The Pilgrimage via Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago was done on the fifth week where everyone did a 101-kilometer pilgrimage to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela where the crypt of St. James, an apostle of Christ, is located. The Camino, as it is commonly called, found its place in



Participants of the Curso visiting Our Lady of Lourdes in France

the program as an ingenious way of allowing the participants ponder on St. Augustine's reflection on life as a kind of pilgrimage to God.

### Augustinian Spiritual Exercises

The final week of the course was dedicated on the Augustinian Spiritual Exercises which was facilitated by Fray Carlos Maria Dominguez, the former Prior Provincial of the Province of Santo Tomas de Villanueva. Within five days, the participants dedicated themselves to silence and the practice of lectio divina.

Four provinces, eight countries, sixteen young religious all converged in one country: Spain. Despite differences in language and culture, all the candidates for solemn profession



proved that unity and fraternity are always possible. It is hoped that with God's grace, the participants of this

course of preparation will continue the revitalization undertaken by the whole Order of Augustinian Recollects.

## RST opens new AY with 75 students

BY FRAY NERO BAUTISTA, OAR

QUEZON CITY—The Recoletos School of Theology opened the Academic Year 2018–2019 with a high record of enrollees. According to the Office of the Registrar, RST admitted a total of 75 enrollees from different congregations, including the 21 coristas of Recoletos Formation Center.

A new record high was set for the First Year Theology students with 36 enrollees, Second Year with 26, and Third Year with 13 who are all taking up Bachelor in Sacred Theology.

After the enrolment process, Seminary Classes on Critical Thinking, Research Techniques and Style, Pastoral Counseling, Media Evangelization, and Sacraments in Canon Law began. The seminar classes started last August 6.



# RFC welcomes neophytes, friars from Spain

BY FRAY REY JAY QUEVEDO, OAR

Miranila, QUEZON CITY—On the 1<sup>st</sup> day of September, the Recollect community of Miranila, in an organized party, welcomed the fourteen (14) neophyte theologians—six (6) newly professed Recollect friars and eight (8) from Pious Unions of Clerics of the Disciples of Hope, Emmanuel Servants of the Holy Trinity, Oblates of the Alliance of the Two Hearts, and Missionaries of Mary Mother of the Poor; and, likewise, the seven (7) Recollect friars: five who made their preparations for solemn profession in Spain and two in Baguio City.

The acceptance of seminarians to the Recoletos Formation Center from Pious Unions of Clerics was a response to the official mandate of the Bishop of Novaliches, Most Rev. Antonio Tobias, in his circular letter 2018-13 which said that theological schools are to house them so as to live and experience religious life in common.

At present, the first year, with 36 students, has so far been the highest batch number. We look forward to

the succeeding years of successive increase of enrolment at the Recoletos School of Theology (RST).

It was the first experience in recent history that the mandated month-long—in fact, 6-week—preparation for solemn profession was held in Spain together with other candidates from the other provinces of the Order. It was refreshing to see them back again, this time, conversant in Spanish language and full of zest to embrace the Augustinian Recollect vowed life.

Fray Jovy Gallego, OAR and Rev. Robin Plata, OAR hosted the jovial, fraternal, and comical welcome gathering.

The same party occasioned the monthly birthday party tendered for those who celebrated their natal day in the month of August. The birthday celebrators received not only greetings but also gifts from the community.

Indeed, “how good and how pleasant it is when brothers live in unity,” prays the psalmist.



# 7 Friars make Solemn Profession amidst Typhoon Ompong

BY FRAY RAMON BITANCOR III, OAR

Mira-Nila Homes, QUEZON CITY— Despite the supertyphoon Ompong devastating the northern part of the Philippines, the Order of Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines celebrated the scheduled Solemn Profession of Vows of seven friars at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish last September 15, 2018.



*Priests and deacons with the seven new solemnly professed members of the Order*

Those who made their definitive 'yes' to God and incorporation to the Order were: Fray Jorr Rabacal, OAR, Fray Benjamin Monday Edobor, OAR, Fray Maximillian Ifeanyichukwu Omem, OAR, Fray Jovy Gallego, OAR, Fray Andrie Pugate, OAR, Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, OAR, and Fray Jessriel Marcha, OAR.

Presiding the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the rite of of the Solemn Profession was Rev. Fr. Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. Among the other concelebrating priests were Rev. Fr. Lauro Larlar, OAR, prior/rector of the Recoletos Formation Center, and Rev. Fr. Kenneth Joseph Onda, OAR, Master of the Professed. Two

deacons, Rev. Keneth Pahamutang, OAR and Rev. Paul Demiliones, OAR, assisted in the altar.

In his homily, the Prior Provincial exhorted the candidates to recall their personal encounter with God and the moment they responded to His calling. Further, he admonished the candidates relative to the imminent challenges and difficulties lurking in their chosen path. He also consoled them not to back out but persevere instead for they have the Word of God to depend on. Fr. Selma reminded them not to fear because God "sends persons as instruments to guide us." Delivering the message of gratitude on behalf of the newly-professed was Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, OAR.

Prior to their solemn profession of vows, last September 13, 2018, the community of Recoletos Formation Center witnessed the Rite of Renunciation of these seven candidates. Held at Sto. Thomas Villanova Chapel, the Rite of Renunciation was officiated by Rev. Fr. Lauro V. Larlar and Rev. Fr. Kenneth Joseph Onda, OAR who acted as the witness. In the said ceremony, candidates answered the inquiry of impediments and publicly made the oath of renunciation before the community. The ceremony was then put into conclusion by Father Prior's short exhortation and final blessing.

# Recoletos Formation Center opens to Pious Union of Clerics and Public Associations of the Faithful

BY FRAY JHOBEN RODRIGUEZ, OAR

Mira-Nila Homes, QUEZON CITY–Recoletos Formation Center (RFC) opens its Clausura and caters formation to eight (8) seminarians from four Pious Unions of Clerics: three (3) brothers from Disciples of Hope, one (1) from Oblates of the Alliance of the Two Hearts, one (1) from Emmanuel Servants of the Holy Trinity and three (3) from the Missionaries of Mary Mother of the Poor.

In a circular letter 2018-13, the Bishop of Novaliches mandates that “the admitting schools should see to it that those students live as interns in the Theological School and not as Externs only returning after classes to their individual ‘houses of formation’.”

The good bishop, in the dialogue with the formators of RFC, asked the help of established religious congregations within his diocese to be partners in the religious formation of these Pious Unions and Public Associations of the Faithful prior to their promotion to the Orders.

The Recoletos Formation Center accepted the brothers last August 12, 2018. They are accommodated in

newly refurbished rooms and given all privileges in the use of facilities and avail of the religious formation program

of the formation center together with the OAR religious formands.



The “interns” of Recoletos Formation Center

## Recollect Formands Meet: Gathering focuses on Witnesses of Faith and Discernment

BY SR. FLORA MAE LANUZA, AR

Antipolo City, RIZAL–The AR and OAR formands gathered at St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos, Antipolo City last December 15, 2018. The theme of the annual gathering was “AR-OAR Formands in the Millennial Age: Witnesses of Faith and Discernment.”

The day started with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist presided by Fr. Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR, Vicar of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno. The presider exhorted the formands to purify once again the motivation of entering the religious life, to know the foundation of one's vocation and to focus on the cross. "Religious life is not an absence of the cross", Fr. Ian said. He also pointed out that those who are not faithful to their commitment are called, as he said in Filipino language, "salawahang at taksil."

Moreover, Sr. Rhiza Eltanal, AR, the Novice Directress of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters and at the same time one of the resource speaker of the said gathering, challenged the attendees to develop companionship, camaraderie and communion as roads to being a witness of faith and discernment. She emphasized that the Recollects are known to be builders of communion. Builders need to have best materials in order to build a target project. Thus, they need to choose the best, give the best and be the best version of oneself as created by God.

Group sharing and presentation followed.

Here are some reflections of the formands:

"God is the source of everything so

He is the center of our life. Give your entire life to Him." – Asp. Joycee

"Our vocation is a gift from God. Once we say our "YES" we are now committed to live the faith and not to lose it. The authenticity of our vocation depends on how we witness the faith through self-giving. Religious life is a life of dying [to] oneself and to live for Christ." – Asp. Joy

"God planted a seed of Faith in everyone's heart. It is being watered everyday with experiences. Once it is being nourished, it grows stronger and grow fully. Then it will bear fruit that radiates God's love. By this, we hope we will persevere." – Asp. Gwen

"How awesome is the Lord in sharing His great love [with] us. Today, we are called to ground our relationship with the Lord by encountering Him in our daily experiences." – Asp. Hazel

"It is really a challenge to witness the faith and preach it to the people but by the help and inspiration of God and the Holy Spirit we can continue towards this journey." – Asp. Genalyn

Everyone enjoyed the day. The formands were filled with mirth as they also celebrate the gift of Jesus this Christmas season by exchanging their gifts after listening to the inspirations laid by the speakers. Indeed, it was a great encounter with the Lord where one could develop to be a witness of faith and discernment.



## Seven friars ordained as deacons

BY FRAY ROBIN ROSS PLATA, OAR

Mira-Nila Homes, QUEZON CITY—Seven Augustinian Recollect friars of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno were ordained as deacons through the imposition of hands by Most Rev. Nolly Buce, JCD, DD, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Antipolo. This momentous event took place on November 17, 2018, Feast of Nuestra Señora de la Salud, at Our Lady of Consolation Parish church, Quezon City.



*The new deacons with their ordaining prelate, Bishop Nolly Buco, DD*

The newly ordained deacons were:

Fray Jorr Rabacal, OAR, from San Carlos City, Negros Occidental

Fray Benjamine Monday Edozor, OAR, from Lagos City, Nigeria

Fray Ifeanyichukwu Maximillian Omem, OAR, from Delta State, Nigeria

Fray Jovy Gallego, OAR, from San Vicente, Palawan

Fray Andrie Pugate, OAR, from Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur

Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, OAR, from Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental

Fray Jessriel Marcha, OAR, from Bislig City, Surigao del Sur

Of this group of friars, five were sent to Spain to participate in the common Month of Preparation proximate to

their Solemn Profession. They were Frays Rabacal, Gallego, Pugate, Yamaguchi, and Marcha. The two Nigerians, Frays Edozor and Omem, also belong to this group and made their Month of Preparation in Baguio. These seven Recollects were the first ordinandi of Bishop Nolly Buco, DD, who has just received his Episcopal Consecration last September 8, 2018.

Bishop Nolly shared with the congregation that, as a “first timer,” he “shall pray over them and lay hands upon them as an effective sign by which the Holy Spirit will fashion in the depths of their heart the image of Christ the deacon, Christ the servant of all, who came ‘not to be served but to serve, to give his life as a ransom for many’ (Mt. 20:28).”

Bishop Nolly also reminded the ordinandi of the ministries and roles of deacons that they may be “effective in action,” that is, “effective in ministry... gentle in ministry, and constant in prayer.” He even shared his experience as a deacon and recalled the moments when he was troubled. “Every time you feel so lonely and afraid, talk to Jesus, talk to Mary,” said Bishop Nolly.

More than 30 Augustinian Recollect priests and diocesan priests concelebrated with the ordaining prelate. The Augustinian Recollect Sisters, Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, Recollect Augustinian Youth, and members of the Sisters of Mary and their scholars were also present. Also, the families, friends, relatives, and other guests of the ordinandi graced the event.



# SARF-Antipolo and CEU team-up for Medical Outreach Mission

BY BRO. JOSEPH NEIL E. BAYGAN

Antipolo City, RIZAL—Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity- Antipolo Chapter (SARF) along with Medical Courses students and staff of Centro Escolar University-Manila (CEU) hosted a Medical Mission in St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos (SeMoNoRe) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of September 2018.

The Medical Outreach Mission held was part of the apostolate of SARF and practicum of the CEU Medical Courses students and staff. The mission opened its doors after the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration at around 9:00am. Around 50 students and staff from CEU, of varying Medical Courses namely Pharmacy, Optometry, Dentistry and Medical Technology, served the Outreach Mission. The Outreach Mission was intended as a charity program for those who are financially incapable for such medical services especially for those who are residing nearby and around SeMoNoRe.

According to Br. Edwin, who is the president of SARF, around 70 patients were catered by Medical Technology course; 50 patients by Pharmacy course; 40 patients by Dentistry course; and 30 patients by the Optometry course. Some patients



were catered more than one medical service. In total, more or less 150 patients were served by such kind of medical services.

Along with the SARF-Antipolo and CEU Medical Courses students

and staff, the Pre-Novices, Novices, Formators and some Personnel of SeMoNoRe also assisted the Outreach Mission. The Outreach Mission finished its service at around 2:00 pm.





# SARF-Philippines 2018 Report

BY BRO. EDWIN RUIZ

The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (SARF), an organization within the Church and the Order of Augustinian Recollects that is composed of lay faithful who made their Promise and follow the Rule of our father St. Augustine and the Particular Statutes of the SARF.

The Life and Mission Projects of the Order of Augustinian Recollect for 2016-2022 and of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno expressed the desire of the Order and of the Province to strengthen the life and spirituality of the SARF through constant formation based on the Augustinian Recollect Spiritual Exercises and the publication

of the "Pilgrims" (cf. LAMP OAR p. 46; LAMP PSEM no. 60).

The Directory of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno (2018-2022) encouraged all brothers to attend with special interest to the needs of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (cf. Const. 114); promote the alumni associations of our schools

and seminaries (cf. Const. 313); and show friendliness and extend help to those who abandoned the Province, fomenting a spiritual link with them (Const. 513).

During the 2017 SARF Biennial National Convention, the following brother and sisters were elected as National Council Officers:

Position	Name	Chapter Affiliated
National President	Edwin T. Ruiz	SEMNoRe-Antipolo
Vice President -Luzon	Zenaida Lapuz	Recoletos de Provincialate
Vice President-Visayas	Carmenda Leonoras	UNO-R Bacolod City
1 <sup>st</sup> Councilor - Luzon	Ceres C. Alcantara	SSBP-Quiapo, Manila
2 <sup>nd</sup> Councilor - Luzon	Yolanda V. Zaragoza	SEMNoRe-Antipolo
Councilor - Negros	Fe Violeta B. Taring	POLA-Valencia
Councilor - Cebu	Evangeline E. Gubatao	OLMCP-Cebu
National Secretary	Ma. Windle M. Oane	SEMNoRe-Antipolo
National Treasurer	Corazon A. Padua	RFC - Miranila, Q. C.



*Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR*

With the appointment of Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR, as Head of the Section for SARF and Spiritual Adviser of SARF National Council, he and the National Council Officers intended to visit the different SARF Local Chapters with the philosophy in mind:

1. To bring the SARF National to different Local Chapters.
2. To meet and know all members of SARF, thereby fostering unity among all.
3. To offer help to the Chapters, in terms of suggestions, recommendations, corrections, clarifications, and encouragements.

With these principles in mind, the National Council and the SARF National Spiritual Adviser, even before Fray Dosdos took the office, visited the Local Chapters in Luzon and Visayas Regions. Aside from the visits, the SARF in the Philippines joined many activities that strengthened their bonds and their spirituality as Augustinian Recollect Tertiaries.

### **Luzon Regional Cluster Activities**

On January 13, 2018, the National and Regional Council Meeting was convoked at Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Baguio City. Fray Emilio

Larlar, Jr., OAR, former SARF National Spiritual Adviser, together with the SARF National officers also took the opportunity to visit SARF CaReS Baguio Chapter.

The following month, on February 9-11, 2018, Fray Ceferino Roberto Añez, OAR, gave an Augustinian Recollect Spiritual Exercises (ASRE) Retreat to the National and Local officers and members of Luzon Chapters at Saint Paula Retreat House, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

On March 24, 2018, Fray James Castelo, OAR, gave Trial Teaching for the Trial Candidates. SARF San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite Chapter was also visited by SARF officers. The date was also set for the National and Luzon Regional Council Meeting.

As the Philippine Church celebrated the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first Carmel image in the Philippines, different SARF Chapters sent delegates to Manila to witness the Traslacion at Salubong 2018. They also attended the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Quirino Grandstand that was presided by His Excellency, Most Rev. Romulo

Valles, DD, Archbishop of Davao and President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. Thousands of devotees of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel de San Sebastian joined this momentous event.

A welcome party and birthday celebration was given to Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR by SARF Metro Manila Chapters on June 10, 2018.

On July 14, 2018, SARF officers visited the SARF Local Chapter of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Tondo, Manila. Fray René Paglinawan, Local Prior of Recoletos de Tondo, gave a Trial Teaching about SARF History for Trial Candidates. The National and Luzon Regional Meeting was also held on the same day.

On August 11, 2018, the SARF Local Chapter of Recoletos Formation Center, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City. Fray Lauro Larlar, OAR, Prior of Recoletos de Mira-Nila, gave an input for Trial Candidates about SARF Challenges. The National and Luzon Regional Meeting was also convoked on that day.

The Secular Augustinian  
Recollect Fraternity-Mira-Nila



*Luzon Chapters of SARF joining the Traslacion in memory of the 400th arrival of the first image of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel to the country*



*SARF de Mira-Nila*

Chapter celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary last August 25, 2018 with Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR, prior of Recoletos Formation Center, as main celebrant and homilist of the Eucharistic celebration at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church in Quezon City.

On August 28-30, 2018, SARF Palawan Chapters were visited: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Inagawan Chapter; Sacred Heart of Jesus High School, Brooke's Point Chapter; and St. Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center, Puerto Princesa City Chapter. The day after the visit to Palawan Chapters, an ARSE Retreat was given by Fray Louie Gabinete, OAR, Parish Priest of San Isidro Labrador Parish, Casian Island, Taytay, Palawan.

On September 4, 2018, Solemnity of Our Lady of Consolation, a Recoletos Family Day was held at the Parish of Our Lady of the Visitation in Urbiztondo, Pangasinan. Dr. Nilo Dizon gave a talk on the history and contributions of the Augustinian Recollects in Pangasinan. Most Rev. Socrates Villegas, DD, Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan, celebrated the Solemn Mass in honor of Our

Lady of Consolation, Patroness and Mother of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. SARF members from Baguio, Cavite, Mira-Nila, Quezon City, Tondo, Antipolo, and Manila joined the celebration.

September 8, 2018 marked the visit to SARF St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos, Antipolo City Chapter. Fray James Castelo, OAR, Prenovitiate Director, gave the input for Trial Candidate. There was also a meeting of the National and Luzon Council officers.

On September 28-30, 2018, the National and Local officers were

gathered at San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish Pastoral Center for the revision of SARF Life and Mission Project 2019-2022. The process of revisiting and revising the SARF LAMP was facilitated by Fray Rafael Pecson, OAR, College President of SSC-R de Cavite. Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR, Vicar of the Province and President of Secretariat of Spirituality and Formation, where the Section for SARF belongs, led the participants in revisiting and revising the Particular Statutes of SARF.

Another milestone in SARF Family was the celebration of the Golden Anniversary of SARF SSC-R de Cavite Chapter. It was participated by SARF members and their Spiritual Advisers from other SARF Chapter to indicate the unity among SARF Chapters. Members of SARF de Cavite who served for more than thirty years were given a Certificate of Recognition for their selfless service to the Fraternity and the Order. Former Spiritual Directors of SARF de Cavite were also recognized. Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial, gave an inspirational message to the SARF members.

The Feast of St. Magdalene of Nagasaki, Patroness of the Augustinian Recollect Tertiary was celebrated together with the annual Luzon Regional Cluster Gathering. A Solemn Mass was celebrated in



*Newly Promised members of SARF from Luzon Cluster*

honor of St. Magdalene of Nagasaki presided by Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, Prior Provincial. Fourteen candidates were admitted for Trial Period and 17 members were accepted as full-fledged members through their pronouncement of their Promises. Afterwards, a celebration was held at St. Rita College, Manila where Fray Ian Anthony Espartero gave a talk. The revised SARF Particular Statutes was unanimously ratified by the members from Luzon Chapters. The different SARF Chapter from Luzon also showcased their talents in a program that capped the day's activities.

The Prior Provincial, Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, celebrated for the first time his natal day in the Provincial Curia in Quezon City. His usually celebrates his birthday at Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos in Cebu, that coincides with the annual Spiritual Retreat. However, this year, due to the schedule of the annual retreat was a week earlier than his birthday, he celebrated it with his brothers in the curia. Members of SARF Luzon Chapters were able to join the celebration. After the celebration of the Holy Mass presided by the Provincial himself, a breakfast-cum-birthday party was held at the Provincialate convent.

To celebrate All Souls Day on



*Bro. Edwin Ruiz, the SARF-Philippines National President*

November 2, 2018, the friars of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, headed by the Prior Provincial, went to Himlayang Pilipino in Quezon City to offer the Holy Mass for their dead confreres. SARF members from Manila, Quezon City, Tondo, Antipolo, Mira Nila, and Cavite joined in the celebration for the dead Augustinian Recollects. Other OAR communities in Cebu, Bacolod, and Baguio also celebrated the Mass for the dead confreres in cemeteries where the body of their brothers were laid. SARF members from Cebu, Bacolod, and Baguio also joined in the celebration of their respective community.

The SARF National Council visited the SARF de San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, Quezon City Chapter on November 10, 2018.

On November 14, 2018, a birthday celebration was given to Fray Emilio Larlar, Jr., OAR, former SARF National Spiritual Adviser. Together with the friars and the family of Fray Larlar, some members of SARF also greeted and cheered the birthday celebrant.

SARF National Council sponsored the ninth day of the Novena to Nuestra Señora de la Salud at San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, Quezon City on November 16, 2018. Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR, SARF National Spiritual Adviser, presided the Holy Mass in honor of Mary, Health of the Sick. After the celebration of the Holy Mass, the Rite of Anointing of the Sick followed.

In the morning of November 17, 2018 at 9:00 AM, the members of SARF attended the Diaconal Ordination of seven Augustinian Recollect friars, namely, Fray Jorr Rabacal, OAR, Fray Benjamine Monday Edobor, OAR, Fray Maximilian Ifeanyichukwu Omem, OAR, Fray Jovy Gallego, OAR, Fray Andrie Pugate, OAR, Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, OAR, and Fray Jessriel Marcha, OAR, at Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Quezon City. In



*Newly accepted members for Trial Period*

the evening, they also attended the Fiesta Mass in honor of La Salud.

To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, the Provincial Council and the Commission on History, Culture, and Heritage-Recoletos organized a two-day gathering of religious and SARF members on November 27-28, 2018. The SARF were invited to join the second day of the celebration where the history of the Province was discussed by Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR, Provincial Archivist. Also, a talk on Climate Change and Consecrated Life was given by Fr. John Leydon, MSSC. Bro. Edwin Ruiz, SAR, President of SARF National Council, gave a reaction to the talk of Fr. Leydon.

For three years, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno joined the Intramuros Grand Marian Procession where the original image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud was brought to the streets of Intramuros, Manila for a solemn procession. On December 2, 2018, together with more than 250 devotees, members of the SARF

from Manila, Tondo, and Quezon City joined this annual celebration as preparation for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Philippines and namesake of the Cathedral of Manila.

As the Order of Augustinian Recollect Family joyfully celebrated the 430<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Augustinian Recollection on December 5, 2018, 5 OAR friars were ordained to the Sacred Order of the Presbyterate, namely, Fray Paul Demillones, OAR, Fray Niel Ryan Jarumay, OAR, Fray Elpedio Sarita, Jr., OAR, Fray Keneth Pahamutang, OAR, and Fray Kenneth Caligdong, OAR. SARF members from different Chapters joined in the celebration. After the Prayer After Communion, the Prior Provincial, Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, led the Augustinian Recollect religious in renewing their Vows. He also received the renewal of Promises of the full-fledged members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity.

## Visayas Regional Cluster Activities

The newly appointed SARF National Spiritual Adviser, Fray Bernabe Dossos, OAR, together with Bro. Edwin Ruiz, SAR, SARF National President, visited SARF Parish of Our Lady of the Abandoned, Valencia Chapter. They also visited the newly established community of Recoletos de Caidiocan.

The Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity in Talisay City, Negros Occidental celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary last September 1, 2018, first day of the novena to San Nicolas de Tolentino, patron of the parish and of the city.

A two-day ARSE Retreat for SARF Visayas Chapters was given by Fray Leopoldo Estioko, OAR, and Fray Renie Villalino, OAR. This was also a timely celebration for the Annual SARF Visayas Regional Cluster Gathering. The National Council also presented to the brothers and sisters from Visayas Regional Chapter the revised SARF Particular Statutes that was unanimously ratified. Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR, also presided the closing Mass where 4 candidates were admitted to Trial Period and 2 candidates were accepted as full-fledged members of SARF. Another birthday celebration for Fray Selma was held, now with Fray Villalino, who also celebrated his birthday in the month of October.

The following day, on October 29, 2018, the SARF National officers visited SARF Cebu Chapters, namely, Our Lady of Consolation Parish-Recoletos, Laray, Inayawan, Talisay City, Cebu; and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish Cebu City Chapter.

On December 5, 2018, in celebration of the 430<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Augustinian Recollection, OAR communities in Visayas also had their festivities and renewal of vows and promises. Each Local Chapter joined in the



SARF de Talisay

celebration of the Holy Mass of the OAR community where they belong. In Bacolod City, the Holy Mass was presided by Most Rev. Patricio Buzon, SDB, DD, Bishop of the Diocese of Bacolod.

### SARF Philippines

At present, the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity in the Philippines has been existing in almost all of Augustinian Recollect communities in the Philippines. Here are the Local Chapters of SARF in the Philippines:

#### Luzon Regional Cluster Chapters:

- \* Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Baguio City Chapter
- \* SARF de Provincialate Chapter
- \* Recoletos Formation Center, Mira-Nila Chapter
- \* Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage Parish, Tondo Chapter

\* San Sebastian Basilica, Quiapo, Manila Chapter

\* Saint Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos, Antipolo City Chapter

\* San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite Chapter

\* Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Inagawan, Palawan Chapter

\* Saint Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center, Puerto Princesa City Chapter

\* Sacred Heart of Jesus High School, Brooke's Point, Palawan Chapter

#### Visayas Regional Cluster Chapters:

\* Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Cebu City Chapter

\* Our Lady of Consolation Parish-Recoletos, Laray, Talisay City, Cebu Chapter University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Bacolod City Chapter

\* Sto. Tomas de Villanueva-Recoletos Formation House, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental Chapter

\* San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, Talisay City, Negros Occidental Chapter

\* Parish of Our Lady of the Abandoned, Valencia, Negros Oriental Chapter

The year 2018 has ended. However, the desire of each member of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, including the members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, and the rest of the Augustinian Recollect Family, continue in our journey towards holiness. Fray Genaro Fernandez, OAR, an Augustinian Recollect who is now on the process of being declared as a saint, said: "If it is not to become a saint, why would I desire to live?" May we all continue to live our life founded on the spirituality of St. Augustine and rooted in the love of Jesus Christ, our Lord.



SARF de Bacolod


**COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS - RECOLETOS**

 Recoletos Communications Office  
 Provincial Curia, Quezon City

**On the 100<sup>th</sup> DAY OF THE QUADRENNIUM 2018-2022**
**I-Updated Statistics on the Religious of the Province**

[as of June 3, 2018]					
PROFESSED RELIGIOUS [INITIAL FORMATION]				PROFESSED RELIGIOUS IN PERMANENT FORMATION	
Simple Professed		Solemn Professed		“Religious Brothers”	“Clerical Religious”
Newly-professed	Old Timers	Not-yet-Deacons	Deacons	8 <sup>d</sup>	135 <sup>e</sup>
6 <sup>a</sup>	26 <sup>b</sup>	0	7 <sup>c</sup>		
32		7			
<b>39</b>				<b>143</b>	
<b>TOTAL NO. OF RELIGIOUS: 182<sup>f, g</sup></b>					

**NOTES:**
<sup>a</sup> In anticipation: **Six** brothers will make their Simple Profession of vows (Antipolo/June 29, 2018):

- Fray Helfrid Palmis
- Fray Nero Bautista
- Fray Jose Enrico Gallego
- Fray Rey Jay Quevedo
- Fray Renz Calex Soriano
- Fray Jhoeben Rodriguez

<sup>b</sup> **Seven** are *Mes de Preparación* participants whose Solemn Profession, as already determined by the Provincial Council, is tentatively set on September 8, 2018 / 9:00 A.M. / OLCP Miranila, Q.C.

- A. *Mes de Preparación – Spain* (July 15-August 11: Monachil; August 12-25: Madrid)
- Fray Jorr Rabacal
  - Fray Jovy Gallego
  - Fray Andrei Pugate
  - Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi
  - Fray Jessriel Marcha
- B. *Mes de Preparación – Philippines* (June 18 – July 17: CARES, Baguio City)
- Fray Monday Benjamine Edobor
  - Fray Maximillian Ifeanyichukwu Omem

<sup>c</sup> Including Fray Jovani Tubiona (in irregular situation)

<sup>d</sup> Including 1 Religious Brother in special situation:

- Fray Teodulo Hayahay (Leave of absence for 1 year)

<sup>e</sup> Including 3 Clerical Religious in special situation:

- Fray Carmelo Borces (incardination in the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa, on process)
- Fray Jose Fortunato Garces (incardination in Diocese of Cubao, on process)
- Fray Abraham Latoza (Leave of absence for 1 year)

<sup>f</sup> Excluded in the counting:

- Fray James Christopher Rojas (Vows expired: April 21, 2018)
- Fray Arjey Patagoc (Vows expired: April 21, 2018)
- Fr. Arsenio Escabusa (incardinated in the Diocese of Kaohsiung, Taiwan / April 30, 2018)



PROVINCE OF SAINT EZEKIEL MORENO • ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

Additional information (FORSOAR):

- John Dexter Maribojoc (Laicized: October 17, 2017)
- Remo Rendora (Laicized: November 16, 2017)
- Leovigildo Jaboni (Petition for laicization submitted to the Vatican: April 2018)

<sup>f</sup> Distribution of Religious by country:

<b>Philippines: 154</b>	<b>Taiwan: 4</b>	<b>Sierra Leone: 7</b>	<b>USA: 4 (CNMI: 3)</b>
<b>Italy: 4</b>	<b>Spain: 2</b>	<b>Cuba: 1</b>	<b>Indonesia: 3<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Panama: 2</b>	<b>Colombia: 1<sup>b</sup></b>	NOTES: <sup>a</sup> Fray Russel Lapidez, Dominador Mercado, Neil Ryan Jarumay (cf. Prot. N. 00004/18; will leave later) <sup>b</sup> Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla (will leave later)	

<sup>g</sup> Distribution of Religious by Area of Apostolate

Admin	Seminary	School	Ministerial	Mission (Foreign)	Others
4 <sup>a</sup>	23	46	48	19 <sup>b</sup>	42 <sup>c</sup>
TOTAL: 182					

NOTES:

- <sup>a</sup> Includes the one in the General Curia
- <sup>b</sup> Includes the ones who are to leave later this year (Indonesia & Colombia).
- <sup>c</sup> 32 are coristas (RFC); 5 are students in Rome and Madrid; 5 are in special or irregular situation

## II-Religious Communities in the Province<sup>a,b</sup>

Philippines	Taiwan	Sierra Leone	Saipan
20 <sup>c</sup>	1	2	1
TOTAL: 24			

NOTES:

- <sup>a</sup> Recently closed communities: Recoletos de Project 6 (Quezon City); Recoletos de Tagburos (Palawan)
- <sup>b</sup> Newly established communities: Recoletos de Caidiocan (Valencia, Negros Oriental); Recoletos de Balamban (Cebu)
- <sup>c</sup> *Luzon*: 10; *Visayas*: 9; *Mindanao*: 1



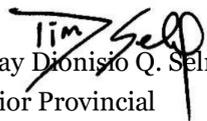
PROVINCE OF SAINT EZEKIEL MORENO • ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

### III-New Assignments in Recoletos Colleges & Universities - Philippines

	USJ-R	UNO-R	SSC-R MLA	SSC-R CAV
President	Maspara	Besana	Tolentin	Pecson
VP for Academics	Alaras	Alipin	Fornilos	Bumangabang
VP for Administration	Sia	Gealon	Santiago	Rubia
VP for Finance	Estioko	Villaflor	Santiago	Alcedo
VP for Student Welfare	Baluarte	Lucero	Limchaypo	Palagtiosa
Religious Affairs	Ocheda	Palomar	Ortega	Palagtiosa
Campus Ministry	<i>to be named later</i>	Palomar	Ortega	
Property Administrator	Jakosalem	Jadulco	Marcos	Cadeliña
Religious Education	<i>to be named later</i>	Palomar	<i>to be named later</i>	<i>to be named later</i>
Director/Principal	<i>to be named later (Basak)</i>	Decena (IS Director)	Marcos (Canlubang)	Eyas (Cañacao)
School Chaplain	--	Palomar	--	Zabala
Other Offices	Saladaga (Talavera Director)	Gealon (Scholarship / Handuman)	Limchaypo (School Chaplain – Canlubang)	
		Conde (HR)		
		Jamelo (Security & Maintenance)		
	Jakosalem (Outreach)	Palomar (Outreach)		<i>to be named later (Outreach)</i>

  
 Fray Jose Enril Almayo, OAR  
 Chairman - Commission on Communications-Recoletos

Noted by:

  
 Fray Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR  
 Prior Provincial

# THE RECOLETOS OBSERVER

**Moderator**

Fray Dionisio Selma, OAR

**Editor**

Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR

**Contributors**

- Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, OAR
- Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR
- Fray Leander Barrot, OAR
- Fray Ian Anthony Espartero, OAR
- Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR
- Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR
- Fray Jerik Troy Siozon, OAR
- Fray Paul Demillones, OAR
- Fray Robin Ross Plata, OAR
- Fray Jessriel Marcha, OAR
- Fray Ramon Bitancor III, OAR
- Fray Ralp Andrew Cepe, OAR
- Fray Ricky John Austria, OAR
- Fray Jhoben Rodriguez, OAR
- Fray Nero Bautista, OAR

Fray Rey Jay Quevedo, OAR

Sr. Flora Mae Lanuza, AR

Bro. Efren Ocon

Bro. Joseph Neil Baygan

Bro. Chrislean Rey Pamilaga

Bro. Romel Acebron

Bro. Ioanes Arong

Bro. Edwin Ruiz

Dr. Carlos Legaspi, Jr., PhD

Dr. Nieves Pepito

Michael Delos Reyes

Dianne Laine Banasig

Camille Icasiano

**Lay-out**

Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla, OAR

Fray Jessriel Marcha, OAR

**Photography**

Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, OAR

Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla, OAR

**Circulation**

Anthoneth Salcedo

**Publisher**

**Recoletos Communications**

Copyright © 2015, Quezon City

**The RC Team**

Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, *CC-R Chairman*

Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla, *President*

Fray Francisco Antonio, *Recoletos*

**Observer**

Fray Leander Barrot, *Non-Serials*

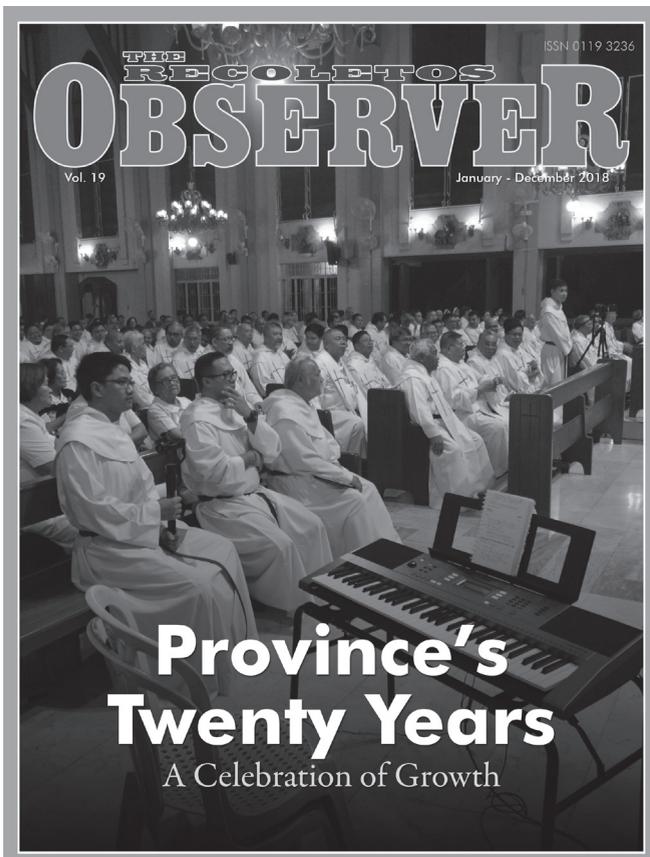
Fray Anthony Irineo, *Bulletin of the*

**Province**

Fray Jaazeal Jakosalem, *Creative*

**Designs**

Anthoneth Salcedo, *Staff*



**The Cover:** A province teeming with a good number of young religious, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno hopes to further foment growth by incorporating the wisdom of those advanced in years with the energy of the young.

**The Recoletos Observer** is the official Newsletter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno Order of Augustinian Recollects

24 Neptune St., Congressional Subd.  
Brgy. Bahay Toro (P.O. Box 1127)  
1106 Quezon City, Philippines  
Tel. (02) 921-6103  
Fax. (02) 456-1658

email: [observer@recoletos.ph](mailto:observer@recoletos.ph)  
website: [recoletosfilipinas.org](http://recoletosfilipinas.org), [recoletos.ph](http://recoletos.ph)



# 55th RECOLETOS OAR GENERAL CHAPTER

## Embracing Mercy: 55th OAR General Chapter

(STORY ON PAGE 98)



Recoletos Communications