



PHILDOM

JULY
2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DOMINICAN PROVINCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

A MISSIONARY OPTION TO THE PERIPHERIES + SPIRIT OF ITINERANCY + DEEPER FRATERNAL INTEGRATION + QUALITY FORMATION

ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΙΑ Thanksgiving...



BROTHERS ON FOREIGN TRIP

(By reason of Office)

- ➔ 19-23 July - *Guam, USA* - Br. Florentino Bolo Jr., OP - To facilitate the CReED Program of the UST Institute of Religion in the Archdiocese of Agaña in Guam.
- ➔ 31 July-6 Aug - *Sri Lanka* - Br. Jose Martin Sibug, OP - To accompany the Prior Provincial on a canonical visit to Sri Lanka.
- ➔ 26 July-2 Aug - *S. Korea and Japan* - Br. Victor Calvo Jr., OP - Invited by the Larong Volleyball sa Pilipinas, Inc. to be the chaplain of the Women's National Volleyball Team in their trip to Japan and also to visit the Men's National Volleyball Team during their training in S. Korea.

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Calendar of the Prior Provincial

- 1-6 Aug - Canonical visit to Sri Lanka
- 7 Aug - 403rd Provincial Council Meeting
- 9-10 Aug - Philippine Dominican Pastors' Conference
- 11 Aug - Mass of the Holy Spirit, PDCIS/IP
- 15 Aug - Launching program of Our Lady of the Rosary La Naval Foundation Inc.
- 17-20 Aug - Canonical Visit to the Convent of Saint Raymond of Peñafort, Legazpi City
- 21-28 Aug - Retreat, Reparatrix Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Tagaytay City
- 29-30 Aug - Canonical Visit to St. Mary Magdalene House, Caleruega, Batulao, Nasugbu, Batangas

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 1 Aug - Mass of the Holy Spirit, University of Santo Tomas
- 7 Aug - 403rd Provincial Council Meeting
- 8 Aug - Solemnity of St. Dominic
- 11 Aug - Mass of the Holy Spirit, PDCIS/IP
- 9-12 Aug - Mission Summit and Philippine Dominican Pastors' Conference in Caleruega and Calatagan, Batangas
- 18 Aug - 40th Day of the Death of Fr. Pedro Salgado, OP
- 26 Aug - *Inggo 1587* Dinner Concert at UST Central Seminary Gym

AUGUST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATORS

- Aug 13 Br. Julius Paul Factora, OP
- 17 Br. Jayson Gonzales, OP
- Br. Gary Ni-og, OP
- 18 Br. Manuel Roux, OP
- 20 Br. Franklin Beltran, OP
- Br. Reginald Zamora, OP
- 22 Br. John Stephen Besa, OP
- Br. Cyr Stephen Magbanua, OP
- 26 Br. Roberto Ceferino Pinto, OP
- Br. Arthur Dingel, OP
- 27 Br. Joseph Raquid, OP
- 29 Br. Adrian Adiredjo, OP
- Br. John Paul Sontillano, OP
- 30 Br. Pedro Tejero Gonzales, OP
- 31 Br. Tamerlane Lana, OP

**REGIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON DOMINICAN PREACHING IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
THEME: "VADE, PRAEDICA!" (GO, PREACH)**

10-12 OCTOBER 2017, UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS, MANILA

A MISSIONARY OPTION TO THE PERIPHERIES

(as a Priority of the Province)

TEACHING APOSTOLATE IN CAMIGUIN

Br. Sandy C. Alerta, OP

This year, the Director of Pastoral Formation of the Dominican Studentate, Rev. Fr. Marcelino Saria, OP, took heed of the request of Rev. Fr. John Stephen Besa, OP, to send some student-brothers to teach at Lyceum of Camiguin in the island of Camiguin Norte. That is why, last June 1-26, 2017, six student-brothers went to Camiguin. Each of them taught one subject. For Grade 12 students; Br. Francis Borre, OP, taught Media Literacy; Br. Sandy Alerta, OP, taught Social Teachings of the Church; Br. Alexander Constantine Seño, OP, taught Philippine Constitution and Br. Jeffrey Pagaduan, OP, taught Introduction to Philosophy. For Grade 11 students, Br. Mark Philip Goroza, OP, taught Personal Development and Br. Jaymar Godalle, OP, taught Salvation History. The brothers taught for two straight weeks from June 5-23 to meet the required number of hours intended for each subject. Thus, the intensive classes were held from 8:00am to 5:00pm every Monday to Friday for Grade 11 and Monday to Saturday for Grade 12.



Aside from teaching, the student-brothers also facilitated the recollections of Grades 7-10 and vocation promotion to Grades 11 and 12.

This program for the student-brothers is hoped to be carried out in the years to come. Lyceum of Camiguin is looking forward for more brothers to be sent in order to help in the education of its students. This program is also inspired by the integration which is actually the direction of the educational apostolate in the Dominican Province of the Philippines. Actually, Lyceum of Camiguin is now



affiliated to Letran Manila. Moreover, the program is in adherence to one of the thrusts of the recent provincial chapter which is missions.

Meanwhile, the apostolate of six brothers in Camiguin was graced by the canonical visitation of Rev. Fr. Napoleon Sipalay, Jr., OP, the Prior Provincial who was accompanied by Rev. Fr. Jose Martin Sibug, OP, the Provincial Promoter of the Missions. Fr. Sipalay presided over the Mass of the Holy Spirit for the opening of the academic year 2017-2018. Moreover, Rev. Fr. Cyr Stephen Magbanua, OP, was installed as the new Parish Priest of St. Vincent Ferrer Parish and appointed as the new Principal of Lyceum of Camiguin.



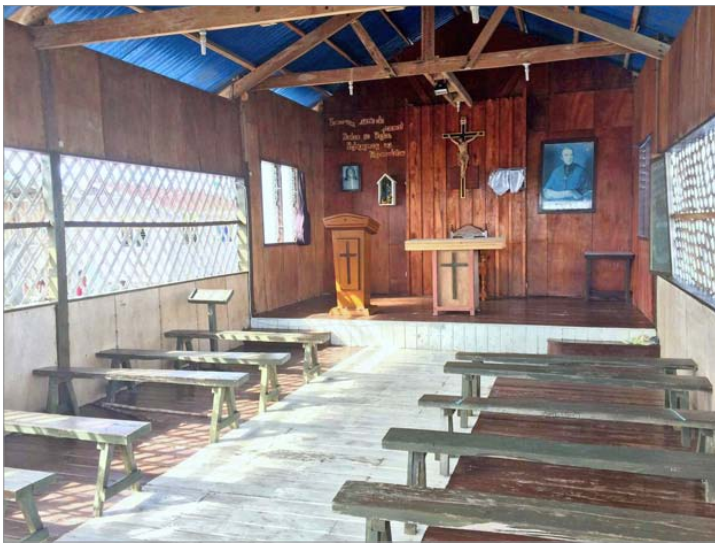
The summer exposure of the six student-brothers on educational apostolate helped them see and experience the apostolate of the province in the areas of mission and education. To be able to meet and teach the students of Lyceum of Camiguin was an opportunity for the brothers to have a foretaste of being missionaries.

MINISTRY IN THE PERIPHERIES

By Br. Eugene Dominic V. Aboy, OP

Last July 2017, I had a chance to visit my uncle's mission assignment. If there is a place in the Philippines which can be perfectly described as a periphery and would make all other places seem like bliss, it would probably be the islands of Tawi-tawi in Sitangkai and Sibutu. Aside from being at the far tip of the country, its population is largely poor. People drink from rainwater and rely primarily on seaweeds for a living. They also have not adopted a proper





waste management system and so human waste, internal and external, serves as unwanted food for the fishes below; fishes which would probably likewise end up on their plate; a plain example of the circle of life.

Tawi-tawi is a predominantly Muslim region which means that Christians live on the edge of the peripheries. This may sound redundant but it appropriately describes their situation, for these Christians are not only numbered among the poorest, but also, most often they live in the outskirts of the villages. These Christians are also in constant danger because the open sea provides highways for illegal and terrorist activities. In fact, not long before we arrived, some locals claimed to have spotted a member of the Maute group. If the poverty will not kill you here, Islamic extremists will.

In the mornings and evenings, simultaneous with our lauds and vespers, I could hear the “Allahu Akbar” chants resounding from the nearby mosques; an assuring reminder that I was not praising God alone. From one house of the main island in Sitangkai, we rode a small boat owned by the Oblates to go to the floating villages. Upon arrival, there was a loud party taking place. A family was celebrating the graduation of their daughter from law school, the first to attain such a degree in their village.



The community here differs not only in religion, but also in tribe. The residents try to maintain a peaceful atmosphere, but the presence of cultural and religious barriers makes it difficult for the Christian community to thrive. After staying in Sitangkai for two days, we went to Sibutu where I had a chance to join the small Christian community in Mass. They were glad and grateful for our presence, the only ministry which I could offer. All in all, there are three communities and houses which are administered by only one priest who once and a while makes rounds to sustain God’s flock.

Many people in our time will not understand why religious men and women go through such extreme conditions, exchanging their comfortable lives just to risk losing them in the process. But this is exactly the beauty of a life given! I most certainly had sleepless nights imagining that my head could end up being hacked off at any moment during my stay. But I see that the Christian community in Tawi-tawi endures because of people who understand that there are bigger and more urgent things than our comforts and fears. And when we have already given our lives to the Lord, how can we still be afraid of losing something which we already do not possess?

SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN LYCEUM OF CAMIGUIN AND COLEGIO DE SAN JUAN DE LETRAN-MANILA

By Br. John Stephen P. Besa, OP

The Dominican Mission in Camiguin Norte has been a privileged beneficiary of assistance from Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Manila, for the past 18 years. This would include assistance in terms of livelihood, health, and education.



Last July 8, 2017, Lyceum of Camiguin and Letran Manila took a step further and entered into a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), executed by Rev. Fr. John Stephen Besa, OP, Director of Lyceum of Camiguin, and Rev. Fr. Clarence Marquez, OP, Rector and President of Letran, with the hope of targeting and achieving institutional sustainability of Lyceum of Camiguin as a partner school of Letran.

Several faculty members and Letran students from Camiguin Norte joined Letran officials and employees,



particularly from the Office of the Vice-President for Religious Affairs and the Center for Community Development, to stand as witnesses to the MOU signing.

The MOU commits to increase the visits and programs and engagements of Letran in Camiguin Norte.









Arriba Lyceum de Camiguin!

Arriba Letran!



ITINERANCY (as a Priority of the Province)

ASSIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

-  Br. Virgilio A. Ojoy, OP, is assigned to the Convent of St. John Lateran, Manila on July 10, 2017.
-  Br. Jessie R. Yap, OP, is assigned, *ratione studiorum*, to Convento Santa Sabina, Rome, Italy on July 24, 2017.
-  Br. Juan V. Ponce, OP, is assigned to St. Dominic's House, Sri Lanka on August 1, 2017.
-  Br. Rudolf Steven N. Seño, OP, is assigned to Sto. Domingo Convent on August 1, 2017.
-  Br. Rommel P. Olivar, OP, is assigned to the Priory of Our Lady of the Rosary, Manaoag on August 1, 2017.
-  Br. Art Vincent M. Pangan, OP, is assigned to the Convent of St. Albert the Great, Calamba on August 1, 2017.
-  Br. Cyr Stephen A. Magbanua, OP, is appointed Parish Priest of St. Vincent Ferrer Parish (Camiguin Island) on June 6, 2017.
-  Br. Paul Lovell G. Javier, OP, is appointed Conventual Syndic of the Convent of St. John Lateran.

DEEPER FRATERNAL INTEGRATION

(as a Priority of the Province)

FEATURED BATCH



In the course of their Dominican formation, these three brothers shared something in common together:

Entrance to the Novitiate: **11 May 1983**

Simple Profession: **11 May 1984**

Simple Profession: **11 May 1987**

Date of Ordination: **30 April 1992**

We pray as they journey together in heeding God's call!



First Name: **ROLANDO**

Middle Name: **MAGPANTAY**

Surname: **CASTRO**

Nickname: "Fr. Roland"

Birthday: 20 Nov 1955

DPP ID No.: 198401

Current Assignment: Priory of St. Thomas Aquinas, UST Manila (since June 2011)

Previous Assignments: Bahay Dominiko (Apr 2011-Jun 2011); Convent of St. Albert the Great (Apr 2008-Apr 2011); Bahay Dominiko (Jun 1998-Apr 2008); Study in Rome (Dec 1998-Dec 2003); Sto. Domingo Convent (Jun 1997-June 1998); Bahay Dominiko (Sep 1996-Jun 1997); and Sto. Domingo Convent (May 1987-Sep 1996).



First Name: **FILEMON JR.**

Middle Name: **IGNACIO**

Surname: **DELA CRUZ**

Nickname: "Fr. Deng"

Birthday: 19 Jan 1964

DPP ID No.: 198402

Current Assignment: Priory of St. Thomas Aquinas, UST Manila (since May 2001)

Previous Assignments: Priory of Our Lady of the Rosary (Nov 1996-May 2001); Sto. Domingo Convent (Nov 1992-Nov 1996); St. Albert's House (Jun 1992-Nov 1992); Sto. Domingo Convent (May 1984-Jun 1992)

QUALITY FORMATION (as a Priority of the Province)

INDONESIAN POSTULANTS JOIN THE FORMATION PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES

Three postulants from Rumah Formasi Santo Tomas Aquino (Surabaya) arrived in the Philippines to join with other postulants at the Dominican Pre-Novitiate in Calamba, Laguna. They are the following:

NICHOLAS DIEGO ARDIANTO HALIM

Jl. Janur Hijau XII TP2/23, Kelapa Gading, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia

Birthday: July 9, 1993 *Age:* 24

Sports: Badminton

Hobbies: listening Music and admiring arts

Family Background: Youngest

Education:

Elementary: SD Don Bosco II, PuloMas, Jakarta.

Middle: SMP Don Bosco II, PuloMas, Jakarta.

Secondary: SMA Marie Joseph, Kelapa Gading, Jakarta.

College: Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta (BS. Architecture)

Work Experiences:

Freelance Architect from 2013-2016; Inhouse Junior Architect in PT. Totalindo 2015



ALEXANDER DETAYOGA

Demangan, Rt 2/8 Sapen, Mojolaban, Sukoharjo, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

Birthday: April 24, 1996 *Age:* 21

Sports: Martial Arts

Hobbies: books/Movies-History

Family Background: Eldest

Education:

Elementary: SD Negeri 3 Jati

Middle: SMP Negeri 1 Tasikmadu

Secondary: SMA Seminari Merto



ANDREAS PRIYANTO

Jl. Rangga Gede Gang Gempol Motor Rt 03/04 Kelurahan Tanjung Pura, Karawang, West Java, Indonesia

Birthday: April 16, 1989 *Age:* 28

Sports: Basketball and Football

Hobbies: Watching anime movies

Family Background: Youngest

Education:

Elementary: SD Negeri Tanjung Pura II, Karawang

Middle: SMP Negeri I Karawang.



Secondary: SMA Santa Maria I, Bandung. (Minor Seminary: Cadas Hikmat Bandung)

Work Experiences:

Typist in Dominican Publishing 2010-2011; Quality Control in PT. Fuji Technical Indonesia 2011-2012; Worker of Redemptor Mundi's Parish 2012-2015

GENERAL NEWS

THE CARPENTRY AND THE RELIGIOUS

By Rev. Carlo Rey C. Canto, OP

Last July 19, 2017, the Media and Communications Ministry of the Diocese of Cubao aired its seventh episode of its weekly Facebook Live Show called "The Carpentry: Modern Day Nazareths, Our Places of Formation." It dealt



with the theme "*Bokasyon sa Buhay Relihiyoso, Dulot ng Pag-ibig at Inspirasyon,*" with representatives from the Order of Discalced Carmelites, the Order of Preachers, the Society of Jesus, and the Order of Augustinian Recollects as guests. The show was aired in the evening via the diocesan Facebook page, Roman Catholic Diocese of Cubao. The concept of the show derived inspiration from the carpentry shop of St. Joseph in Nazareth, where Jesus is traditionally believed to have spent a long period of his hidden life and learned the craft of his foster-father, as he grew in stature and wisdom.



The guests were asked to explain the meaning of their respective religious habit, as well as share their own vocation stories and experiences of their formation in the religious life. They were also asked to describe their respective formation process and state the qualifications required of young men who are interested to enter the religious life. Questions posed by online viewers were also read and were answered by the guests.



Deacon Caloy, OP, with the program's host, Fr. Michael James Ty.



Rev. Carlo Rey "Caloy" C. Canto, OP, (center) and the two deacons from the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

Among the guests were three deacons, one from the Order of Preachers and two from the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

ANNUAL RETREAT AND REGIONAL CONVENTION OF LAY DOMINICANS IN MINDANAO

By *Marylle Castillo-Sangga*

The Lay Dominicans in Region VI (Mindanao region) held the Annual Retreat and Regional Convention last July 7-9, 2017 at the Dominican House of Prayer, Matina, Davao City. There were 78 delegates of sisters, lay women and men from different parts in Mindanao; some came from the COMVAL group, Gensan group, Davao Chapter, and Digos Chapter.

The retreat master was Rev. Fr. Honorato Castigador, OP, Provincial Promoter of Lay Dominicans in the Philippine Province. He mentioned that having a retreat was looking back on the good things that God has done for us. Following Jesus is knowing Him. During the discussion some questions were pondered upon: Why do you follow Jesus? Who is happy to follow Jesus? Why are you here and have decided to follow Jesus?



In the second day, Fr. Castigador was joined in by Fr. Alfredo Fernandez, OP, Regional Promoter and Ecclesiastical Assistant (Spiritual Director) in Region VI, during the Eucharistic celebration. Dr. Belen Tangco, OP, President of the Dominican Laity of the Dominican Province of the Philippines, attended the activity and gave her sharing that serving the Lord is ageless; we need to serve well.



The celebration was a grace-filled affair that brought good memories to everyone to be able to serve God more zealously as inspired by the spirit of St. Dominic.

ICLDF MEET IN QUITO, ECUADOR

By *Dr. Belen L. Tangco, OP*

The International Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF) held annual regular sessions on July 17 – 20, 2017 at the Convento Maximo de Sto. Domingo, in Quito, the lovely capital city of Ecuador, the second highest official capital city in the world.

The Council meet focused on the ongoing preparations for the International Congress of Lay Dominicans that will take place at Fatima, Portugal on October 04-10, 2018.

Seven (7) Commissions were formed to discuss specific areas of concerns and development on which questions were formulated to be distributed to the Lay

Dominican Fraternities worldwide for initial discussions and suggestions.

The Commissions are: Government, Rules and Statutes; Communications and Finances; Study and Formation; Prayers and Preaching; Justice and Peace and Care of Creation; On Relations with the Church and the Dominican Family; and, On Promoters.

Local and international Committees were also formed by the Congress Secretary-General to facilitate the operations in the duration of the Congress. The Second International Congress took place in Pilar, Buenos Aires in Argentina in 2007. The First International Congress was held in 1985.



Shown in the photo are (from left): Joseph Komadina, OP, of North America; Klaus Bornewasser, OP, of Europe (Treasurer); Hector L. Marquez, OP, of Latin America and the Caribbean (Coordinator); Belen Lorezca-Tangco, OP, of Asia-Pacific (International Congress Secretary-General); Rev. Fr. Rui Carlos Antunes e Almeida Lopes, OP, of Portugal (Promoter General); and Felix Foko, OP, of Africa.

August in DPP History (Culled from the Archives of the Province)

☞ **1587 August 16** – His Excellency Msgr. Domingo Salazar, OP, planted a wooden cross in a swampy place along the Pasig River. This served as the foundation of the first convent of St. Dominic. Having placed a foundation of three-thousand brick stones, a wooden church and house were erected under the name of our Holy Father. The new edifice housed our Fathers who before the convent's construction temporarily lived as guests of the Friars Minor. The early Dominicans established the Convent of St. Dominic on January 1, 1588 with Fr. Diego de Soria, OP, as its first Prior. They immediately and canonically organized the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. The image of the Virgin of the Most Holy Rosary, from whom the name of the Mother Province was taken, was placed at the side altar of the Church. Because of the Church's poor planning and construction, it collapsed at the end of 1589. From the ruins of the old Sto. Domingo Church, a more spacious and more beautiful and stronger edifice was constructed. In 1595, Governor

General Luis Perez Dasmariñas donated a new image of the Lady made of ivory. The old image of the Blessed Virgin was then transferred to the Church's façade. In 1603, the Church, together with the convent, was destroyed by fire. Even the magnificently rebuilt Church did not escape the destruction caused by the earthquakes, once in 1645 and twice 1863. Despite these calamities, both images of the Virgin, the old and new, were miraculously saved. In 1712, the construction of the Chapel of the Most Holy Rosary at the side of the Church began.

Since the beginning, this convent of our Father St. Dominic has been the center of Dominican apostolate in the Far East. Many religious coming from Spain first gathered here for sometime before they were sent to the mission lands. Hundreds of Orientals have already been clothed here with the Dominican habit. Sto. Domingo Convent has been, excepting one or two, the site of all previous Provincial Chapters. This Church is the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of La Naval de Manila.

On December 27, 1941, both Church and convent were ruined by the ravages of war and were razed to the ground by fire. But again the venerable image of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary was miraculously freed from destruction. She was brought to and temporarily housed at the University of Santo Tomas. The roving Dominican community later established themselves in Lingayen and at the same time put up the Novitiate and Studentate. After a while, they finally settled in San Juan del Monte, Rizal. On October 10, 1954, the eighth day of the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, His Excellency the Archbishop of Manila solemnly blessed the new Sto. Domingo Church. On the same day, the famous miraculous image of the Blesses Virgin, accompanied by nine bishops, a good number of priests and religious and hundreds of thousands of the faithful was transferred here in Quezon City. The transfer of the image was done in accordance with our laws upon the decree of the Most Rev. Fr. Vicar General of the Order promulgated on October 29, 1954.

In 1958, the Novitiate was transferred from Hongkong to this Convent. The whole Studentate was later established in 1959. Finally, the Very Rev. Aniceto Fernandez, OP, Master General, canonically established the Studium Generale here on June 28, 1963. *Source: Dominican Province of the Philippines Directory 1975.*

☞ **1974 August 26** – The Our Lady of La Naval was declared principal patroness of Quezon City by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship.

☞ **1975 August 15** - Msgr. Mario Baltazar, OP, of Batanes-Babuyan Prelature erected the new Parish of San Vicente de Camiguin. On the same day, he

appointed Fr. Eduardo Negrete, OP, as the first parish priest.

The erection of the parish was done in view of the fact that the needs of the people of several barrios in Camiguin and Fuga islands could not be properly attended to by the pastor of the parish of San Bartolome of Calayan island on account of the great distances among these islands and the hazards in making the necessary intra-parochial negotiations. The decision to create the new parish was made after the Pastor of Calayan parish and Fr. Rogelio Alarcon, Provincial, had given their advice, opinion and consent. *Source: D.I.P. (Dominicans in the Philippines) - September 1975*

- ✎ **1995 August 6** - Caleruega-Philippines Retreat Center in Batulao, Nasugbu, Batangas was erected.
- ✎ **1996 August 6** - Bahay Dominiko that served as the Provincialate of the Dominican Province of the Philippines was inaugurated.
- ✎ **1999 August 7** - The new Provincial Archives was inaugurated at Bahay Dominiko under the supervision of the Provincial Archivist, Br. Gaspar Sigaya, OP.

PC Notes...

Notes from the 402nd Provincial Council Meeting
on 3 July 2017

- ✎ A meeting between Mr. Alcuaz and the Provincial Syndic was held last 19 June 2017. After having inspected the commercial space at San Pio V Building, they are set to draft the lease contract. Target date for the opening of CAFÉ INGGO 1587 is on 8 August 2017.
- ✎ That the Provincial, in his meeting with the Board of Trustees of all the institutions under the Province, should establish an external audit Committee (whose primary purpose internally is to be at the service of the members of the BOT who are not adept in financial matters).
- ✎ That the approved Template of the Report of the Outgoing Prior regarding *De Statu Oeconomico* prepared by the Provincial Syndic be carried out.
- ✎ That the aspirancy section of St. Albert's Pre-Novitiate House be rented out to the Colegio de San Juan de Letran-Calamba from October 2017 until February 2018 (14 months) in response to the colegio's letter of intent to lease the said section of the House.
That the Provincial Syndic takes care in the disposal of the pieces of furniture and fixtures of the said section.
- ✎ That the respective Provincial Promoters and Commissions be given a slot to present their 4-year

apostolic plan within 4 consecutive Provincial Council meetings starting September 2017.

✎ For Information:

- a. Visa Affinity Card. There is a tie up between the Visa Card through Union Bank and our Dominican institutions. *Visa Card/Letran-Manila*: shares will be channeled for the scholarship of Letran-Manila; *Visa card/UST*: shares will be channeled for the mission projects of UST and the Province.
- b. Br. Hermel Pama, OP, the Promoter for the Dominican Family, is delegated by the Provincial Council to assess/evaluate the status of the Martinian Brothers regarding their incorporation to the Dominican Family.

BROTHERS ON FOREIGN TRIP (By reason of Office)

.... continued from page 1

- ➔ 10-13 Aug - *Brunei* - Br. Edwin Lao, OP, Br. Ernesto Arceo, OP, Br. Felix Legaspi III, OP, and Br. Roman Santos, OP - To accompany the AUL Dance Troupe upon the invitation of the National Commission for Culture and Arts to represent the Philippines during the Philippine Art and Culture Day of the Government of Brunei's celebration of the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN.
- ➔ 20-27 August - *Manila* - Br. Johannes Robini Marianto, OP - To attend the 2nd National Conference on the Ministry of Spiritual Liberation and Exorcism to be held at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila.
- ➔ 21-28 August - *Thailand* - Br. Herminio Dagohoy, OP - To attend the ASEACCU Annual Conference
- ➔ 23-30 Aug - *Thailand* - Br. Edwin Lao, OP, Br. Ernesto Arceo, OP, and Br. Felix Legaspi III, OP - To attend the ASEACCU Annual Conference.

DEATH IN THE FAMILY

We pray for the eternal repose of the soul of:

- † **Br. PEDRO V. SALGADO, OP**, who passed away peacefully in the grace of Our Lord on 9 July 2017.

FOR OUR DECEASED BROTHERS

Per mandate by the Eleventh Provincial Chapter Statute 26, V, we kindly request all communities to include in the intentions of their Conventual Mass and Evening Prayer our deceased brothers during the anniversary of their death in the month of August.

August 5 + Br. Vicente Cajilig, OP
8 + Most. Rev. Leonardo Legaspi, OP
9 + Br. Amador Ambat, OP
28 + Br. Regino Cortes, OP
29 + Br. Manuel Piñon, OP

TRIVIA QUESTIONS TO THE PERSONNEL OF THE PROVINCIALATE

(Editor's note: We are running a series of introduction of our personnel at the Provincialate for the brethren to know them.)



First Name: TERESITA
Nickname: "Terry"
Middle Name: PEÑALOSA
Surname: RAQUID
Birthday: 25 Oct 1968
Civil Status: Married
Hometown: Sariaya, Quezon
Educational Attainment:
Bachelor of Science in
Industrial Engineering (1990),
National University
*Date of Employment in the
Provincialate:* 16 Mar 2000

Current Position: Accounting Staff

Milestone/Highlight of being with the Province: I met my destiny.



Standing from left to right: German, my husband, and Anthony, my only son.

Canonical Visit of the Master of the Order

September 17 to October 1, 2017

We in the secretariat will do our best to publish the PHILDOM newsletter monthly for all the readers. ***We apologize for any inadvertent mistake in the content of this newsletter.***

Help us by sending your:

- » **Creative comments**
- » **Articles and news**
- » **Thoughts to ponder**
- » **Suggestions for improvement**

**Fax to: 732-4652 or
e-mail to: opphil@phils.op.org**

All articles sent to the Secretariat/Phildom shall be given due consideration. Due to some limit in space however, we may not be able to print them all at once. It may come out at the forthcoming issues. Just the same we are grateful for the articles and newsbits. Please continue sending them; they will be most welcome.

Thanks to our Brothers and friends who contributed articles and pictures for Phildom.

REMEMBERING FR. PEDRO

Published in the Manila Bulletin on July 15, 2017

By Br. Rolando V. de la Rosa, OP



Br. Rolando V. de la Rosa, OP

Last June 29, Fr. Pedro Salgado, a Dominican priest who had devoted practically all his life in the service of farmers, especially those in Isabela, celebrated his birthday. When I greeted him “Happy Birthday,” he smiled and said: “I’m now 80 years old, a good age to die. Besides, there are new priests who can take my place.” He was referring to three Dominican

priests who were ordained on the same day.

Fr. Pedro seemed to have played the prophet. Ten days after his birthday, he passed away.

Fr. Pedro graduated from the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Philosophy with the highest honor. Despite this, he did not opt to spend all his life teaching in the academe. He chose to devote his best years in uplifting the plight of farmers. He lived with them, ate their food, shared their problems, and found ways to alleviate their suffering.

When I was a seminarian, he was our professor in metaphysics, a difficult subject in philosophy. During our first class, he brought us all to the dining room and asked: “Is metaphysics real and can you eat it?” When we answered “No,” he stood up and said: “So, what’s the use of studying this subject? Class dismissed.”

At that time, I thought he was using a strategy that teachers often employ when they are not prepared. They usually give a difficult seatwork or examination to students. Or, they would ask a difficult question, then pretend to be so frustrated or disappointed with the students’ answer, that they would furiously storm out of the classroom. So, when Fr. Pedro left the classroom in a huff, I told myself that he probably did not prepare his lesson that day.

But I was mistaken. His sudden departure from the classroom was part of his first lecture about metaphysics. In our next class he asked us: “When you eat the doughnut, what happens to the hole? The hole would seem to have disappeared after you have eaten the doughnut. Now, how could a hole (which is nothing) disappear? But if the hole were nothing and it were not there, then what you ate could not have been a doughnut.”

He taught us to think beyond the obvious and vehemently insisted that philosophical concepts, no matter how sublime, are mere instruments of understanding the Christian faith. He did not want us to think that the

philosophical articulation of our faith is co-extensive with faith itself.

That was an important lesson we had to learn. For, there was a time when many Dominicans considered their brand of philosophy as perennially true, all of a piece, absolutely coherent, can always cope with unexpected criticisms and contradictions and defy historical contingencies. Many Dominicans substituted for faith the logical scheme with which they sought to define and articulate it.

That is perhaps why Fr. Pedro, after a few years of teaching metaphysics, concentrated on the social teachings of the Church. Not an armchair social reformist, he lived in an impoverished far-flung parish, serving the poor and raising funds to uplift their situation. He shied away from the academe, and when elected rector of a university, he distributed some of its lands to the farmers.

Fr. Pedro spent the past two years confined either in his room or in the hospital. Unable to work in the distant parish of his choice, he nevertheless continued to find ways to help the farmers, especially through his sister Dr. Stella Salgado Evangelista, a successful physician and entrepreneur who supported Fr. Pedro’s apostolate for the poor.

In a world where many priests and religious are busy with their trivial pursuits and are easily disturbed by tiny commotions, Fr. Pedro’s total commitment to his advocacy is worth emulating. His life, like all the best things in this world, will certainly be appreciated in its absence.



Br. Pedro V. Salgado, OP

FUNERAL MASS FOR FR. PEDRO V. SALGADO, OP

Mt. 11:25-30

13 July 2017, Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City

A Homily by Br. Virgilio A. Ojoy, OP



Br. Virgilio A. Ojoy, OP

I wrote a long article about Fr. Pedro Salgado, O.P. published in the *Philippiniana Sacra* last year. In deference to him whom I admire for his convictions, I showed it to him first in case he wanted me to revise something. He returned the draft to me with the comment: "Dear Fr. Ojie, I have gone over the manuscript

you wrote about me. I think it is very good. Thank you very much. Warm regards." I hope he will say the same thing about this homily. But he can keep the warm regards. I don't want to feel it when I am alone in my room tonight.

I am so fortunate to have been able to live with Fr. Pedro V. Salgado O.P., or *Ka Pete* as his fellow revolutionaries would call him, or *Supremo*, as his confreres in the Dominican Order would endearingly address him, in the Community of Santo Domingo for quite a time. Here we witnessed several times how he would scoop our favorite ube jam made by the Good Shepherd Sisters in Baguio, using a spoon which has just been taken directly out from his mouth. At first, we reacted with raised eyebrows and silent howls. However, later on we realized that this great man was so used to being alone on a mission to some faraway place where coco jams and bagoong and achara bottles were only his for the scooping. Having realized that, we just lovingly and with full understanding reserved all the bottles in the refrigerator which he touched with his used spoon all for himself.

He usually started our conversations with, "*Heto na ang pinakagwapong pari*" which I appreciated very much when he said it to me, for obvious reasons. After all, I was certain that he always told the Truth. Until I heard him saying those words to Fr. Apa as well. Both of them must be smiling now in heaven and talking in the Visayan language. Eventually, those conversations would drift towards injustice and the plight of the poor. And on this topic, Fr. Salgado had a lot to say. He had written several books and articles about them. He had long and very close contacts with poor peasants, laborers and revolutionaries. Thus, the conversation could drag on and on for hours. For someone who has so many commitments, a few of those conversations is sufficient. Kaya, later on, *dahil marami pang ibang dapat gawin, pag narinig ko na yung "Heto na ang pinakagwapong pari", tumatakas na ako. Ok na buong araw ko.*

Ka Pete did not only write on Social Justice, he spent his entire adult life doing it. He was a type of person who eats oppression and injustice for breakfast. *Ano mang pag-uusap ang gagawin ninuman kasama sya ay laging nauwi sa kalagayan ng mga taong nasasadlak sa kadustaan at pang-aapi at kung paano sila mapapalaya sa karukhaang ito.* There is only one way to take away Ka Pete's attention from his passionate commitment to the poor and that is to put on the dining table Elar's lechon, spicy crabs and kapeng barako. For one fleeting moment, he would forget the hungry poor and focus on his own craving. But not for long. In a short while, he would be back to his main course – injustice and oppression. And he worked very hard to fight the system that perpetuated them. *Sa kanyang pagbabalangkas at pag aanalisa sa kalagayan ng ating bansa, napagtanto nya na ang dahilan ng karukhaan sa Pilipinas ay ang malawak at mapang-aping kapangyarihan ng mayayamang bansa at ng kanilang mga kaalyansa dito sa ating bayan. Sa lawak ng kapangyarihang ito, para kay Ka Pete walang ibang paraan upang makamit ang kalayaan kundi ang armadong rebolusyon. At ipinakita nya sa kanyang mga sinulat na ang ideyang ito ay hindi taliwas sa mga turo ng ating simbahan. Kaya siya sumapi sa Malayang Samahan ng mga Magsasaka. Kaya mas pinili nyang gugulin ang mahabang bahagi ng kanyang buhay sa malalayong mga lugar kung saan maraming mga magsasakang nasasadlak sa kahirapan. At ang lahat ng mga biyayang natanggap nya sa kanyang trabaho bilang pari, sa mga isinulat nyang mga libro, at ang mga tulong ng kanyang mga kamag-anak na maykaya ay ibinuhos nya sa mga magsasaka: sa pagpapaaral sa kanila, sa pagbili ng mga binhing kanilang itatanim, at sa pagtulong sa kanila kapag sila'y nabibiktima ng bagyo at iba pang kalamidad. Sa pamamagitan ng mga gawaing ito, naisabuhay ni Ka Pete ang ibinilin ng ating Panginoon sa ebanghelyo: "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest." Dahil sa kanya, maraming mga tao*



ang naiangat mula sa karukhaan. Hindi natin lubusang masusukat ang lawak ng kanyang mga nagawa ngunit hindi malayo sa katotohanan kung sasabihin natin na malaki ang kanyang naiambag sa pagkakaroon ng Land Reform sa ating bansa na siyang nagbigay ng lupa at kaunting kalayaan sa ating mga magsasaka. Kaya ang mga mahihirap ay kadalasang hindi nawawalan ng pananampalataya, katulad ng pagtitiwala ng isang bata sa kanyang Ama, sapagkat may mga taong katulad ni Ka Pete na nagpapakita at nagpapadama ng pagkalinga ng Diyos sa kanila. Naisiwalat sa kanya at naunawaan ni Ka Pete ang kagustuhan ni Hesus at ng Ama para sa mga dukha, at ito ay isiniwalat din ni Ka Pete sa mga magsasaka at mga manggagawa: Pag-ibig na naipadadama sa pagkahabag.

In his twilight years, Ka Pete exerted a great effort to be in contact with the peasants and laborers. The flame of his revolutionary lamp, although at times was but a flicker because of his age and health condition, had not

been extinguished. He continued to visit the peasants and laborers to inspire them to dream on, to keep believing that the revolution would eventually happen. For his part, he kept on dreaming. One time, he recounted tongue in cheek, that he dreamed that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him and told him: "Ka Pete, don't die yet. The revolution is not yet completed." From the perspective of our Christian faith, Ka Pete is truly not dead. God just gave him eternal rest in fulfillment of Jesus' promise in the gospel that those who take up his yoke and learn from him shall find rest for themselves. Ka Pete is not dead. In the minds, in the hearts, in the lives, in the homes of people whose life situation he uplifted, he shall dwell forever. And that is why, my dear brothers and sisters, as we bury the remains of our beloved Rev. Fr, Pedro V. Salgado, O.P., the words of a writer can light up the darkness of our grief: "Do not stand on my grave and cry. I am not there. I did not die."

REFLECTIONS

By Br. Marvin R. Obedo, OP

I always ask why people are addicted to vices and sin. Then I saw myself in the same way people are struggling with those.

Perhaps, we can infer that sin and vices are the manifestations of a sad heart. Why the emptiness? Why the sadness?

Well I guess, it is inevitable. All of us are in the same way shattered and lacking. With these struggles, avoidance is not the answer. It is only by accepting that we at some point, are sad, not enough, and frail that the genuine joy that we are looking for may come into the picture.

May we pray to Jesus that all of us may be strengthened in our battle against loneliness. Amen.



Awhile ago, I had a the opportunity to chat with kuya Jojo a factory worker. According to him, he has 4 children but they are far from him. He is in Bulacan, his wife is in Saudi and his children are in Bacolod.

While sharing this, he got red; his eyes began to mist, and his voice became husky.

This is just one of the many stories of parents going afar to sustain their children. It simply goes to show that parents will always do their very best even enduring pain for the sake of their children.

So we pray that parents may be strengthened in sincere love for their family and that children may understand

their parents especially those parents of theirs who are working far away.



I guess, I already understand why many of us are so hesitant to be attached to somebody. Maybe because whenever we are attached to somebody, we are also vulnerable to the pain brought about by that person's departure.

Yes, the reality of departure may hurt us but it's not a question of pain here since the feeling of hurt is inevitable and can come in many ways.

Rather, the question is whether we are able to give a part of ourselves to make the life of others meaningful. Indeed, this attitude of being attached is regret free.



My bestfriend and I had a conversation. And one lesson struck me, "Besie, not all will come at once."

Perhaps yes, we cannot be both happy and sad at the same time. We cannot mourn and be overjoyed at the same second.

The very point is that each moment, either good or bad, is a blessing. The good and bad circumstances are just fleeting and what remains are lessons which make us better persons. May we always remember that through the good and bad instances, Jesus is in our midst patiently waiting for us to become the person He wants us to be.

“WHERE IS YOUR HEART? WHERE IS YOUR JOY? WHO REALLY ARE YOU?”

Homily of Most Rev. Socrates Villegas, DD, During the Ordination of
 Brs. Rommel Olivar, OP, Felix delos Reyes Jr., OP, and Art Vincent Pangan, OP
 Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, 2017, Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City

My dear brothers, Felix, Rommel, and Art, before you proceed to ordination, and after this homily, you will be asked a series of questions – six questions in all. If you have heard the questions, you also have the words for the answers – the answer is: “I do.” Yes, I do. The Gospel gave us Jesus asking two questions: “Who do people say that I am?” “But you, who do say that I am?” I would like to ask you to answer more questions. I want to add more to the questions that you have to answer. But the questions I will ask you cannot be answered by “Yes” or “No”. It can only be answered from the sincerity of heart. My first question to you dear brothers, is, **“Where is your heart?”** The second question is: **“Where is your joy?”** And the third question: **“Who really are you?”** *Sino ba talaga kayo?*



Most Rev. Socrates Villegas, DD, Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan

To the first question, **“Where is your heart?”**, there is a related question: “Where is your treasure?” Because the Lord told us: “Where your treasure is, there is your heart. Where your heart is, there is your treasure.” So, paraphrasing myself, now I ask you: “Where is your treasure? Where is your heart?” I will answer my own question. Your heart should always be in God and your heart should always be with the people. In fact, dear brothers, your heart is not even yours. Your heart is not yours! And because your heart is not yours, your heart should not even stay with you. Your heart belongs to God and your heart belongs to God’s people. It is only in giving yourself totally to God and totally to the people whom God loves that you can truly say: “There lies my treasure.” Keep in mind, without God, you cannot be priests. And you are only priests for God’s people. You will be ordained priests because of God and for the people. Keep your heart in the right place all the time. There might come a time in your lives when your heart will be possessed by lesser gods, when your heart will listen to lesser voices, when your heart will get attracted to lesser lives. It is good to review

your priorities daily because we are only humans, and as human beings, we can forget, we can compromise, we can neglect. So where is your heart? My answer: with God and with God’s people.

“Where is your joy?” Are you happy this afternoon because you’re going to be priests? You are happy because your loved ones are here sharing your happiness? Where is your joy? What makes you happy? Finishing your academic degrees? Getting a good assignment? Enjoying the trust of your superior? Getting congratulated for job well-done? Hearing people say about you: *“Ang galing ni Father!”* Is that where you find your joy? Now, dear brothers, there will come a time when your superior will tell you to do something even if you know there is something better than what your superior is telling you to do. And yet, you will be told to do it because it is God’s will. There will come a time when you will do something good and you will be suspected. There will come a time when you do something good and you will be ignored. There will be a time when you will be calumniated. There will be a time that you will be forgotten. There will be a time, my dear brothers. When that time comes, in the words of Brother Francis: “Rejoice, because that is perfect joy!” Your perfect joy is not when everybody claps for you. Your perfect joy is not when you are popular, not when you are appreciated and recognized. Your perfect joy should be in the cross! The reality my dear brothers is, Jesus was happiest not in Galilee where people were saying: “We have never heard something like this before.” It was not in Jerusalem when he was entering with people saying: “Hosanna to the son of David!” The highest point of the happiness of Jesus was at the cross when he was able to say: “It is finished, I have accomplished the will of my Father.” You, my dear brothers, are called to be happy priests. You are called to be disciples of joy. But that joy should come from the cross and nowhere else! Because if that joy just comes from visiting exotic places, and eating in exotic restaurants, and wearing fancy clothes and shoes, it is shallow! It is not from God! It is destructing. It is from the enemy of God. Where is your joy? Say humbly: in the cross of the Lord. Where is your heart? With God and with His people.

The last question: **“Who really are you?”** Believe me, brothers, after vesting you with chasuble later on, *gagwapo kayo ng ten points*. And people will say: *“Ang gwapo ni Father!”* *Huwag kayong maniwala!* Who really are you? You are not what you do. You are not what you have. You are not the money that you carry in your pocket. You are not the doctorate that you will earn. You are not the books that you will publish. Who really are you? Before the Lord, we can only say: *“Miserando atque eligendo.”* Before the Lord, we are miserable sinners but because of the Lord, we have been made beautiful. We used to be ugly



and now we are good because the Lord has touched us. We used to be blackened and scarred by sin, but now, we are beautiful because we have been touched by love Himself. Who really are you? You are sinners, do not forget. Who really are you? But you are not only sinners, you have been redeemed and you have been trusted with the mission to bring Jesus to this world. Who really are you? Do not forget your humble beginnings. Do not allow your priesthood to enrich you. Do not allow your priesthood to become a story of “rags to riches” because if you become rich because of the priesthood, you are like Judas who became thirty pieces of silver richer when he died. My dear brothers, we will always be sinners. God calls you as

sinners and God knows that you will still fall, you will still stumble, you will still be carried away by your weakness even after ordination. And yet, God says: “Nevertheless, I choose him. Nevertheless, I love him. Nevertheless, I will send him.” Where is your heart? Where is your joy? Who really are you? Answer these questions day-by-day, every day of your life. Do not allow your priesthood to turn dull. Keep it sharp like a two-edged sword. Your heart belongs to God and to His people. Your joy is in the cross and in nowhere else. You are sinner but you are loved and beautiful because of the Lord.

Felix, Rommel, and Art, it is not by chance that I will lay hands over you and call you to the priesthood. You, three together, will be my one hundred ninety-fifth priests to ordain. I keep you in the memory of my heart. I keep you in the memory of every prayer. If there should come a time, my dear brothers, when you cannot answer the questions anymore – **Where is your heart? Where is your joy? And who really are you?** – if there should come a time when you feel like walking in the valley of darkness, please come over. We can talk together. And I know that God who calls you today, will be the same God who will keep on calling you, because His call is irrevocable. At the sunset of your lives, may the same God who called you be the same God who will say to you: “Welcome, good and faithful servant! Enter your everlasting reward.”

**Special thanks to Br. Michael John Pinuela, OP, for transcribing the homily.*

A HOMILY DURING THE THANKSGIVING MASS OF FR. ART VINCENT M. PANGAN, OP

3 July 2017, St. Michael the Archangel Parish Church, Camiling, Tarlac

By Br. Clarence C. Marquez, OP



Br. Clarence C. Marquez, OP

I was Master of Students at Santo Domingo Convent, 2008-2012. Fr. Art Vincent Pangan made his first profession in 2008. We have a term of endearment: we are BATCHMATES, because we entered the Studentate in the same year.

Kung ang buhay ni Fr. Art Vincent ay isang aklat, ang araw na ito ay maituturing na masayang kabanata. At kasali tayo sa kabanatang yaon, kabahagi ng saya, kaisa sa pasasalamat.

Pero ang mga aklat, katulad ng Bibliya, na pinagkakadalubhasaan ni Fr. Art Vincent, ay hindi lang binabasa na tila baga isang guhit lamang, mula simula hanggang wakas, simple lang ang plot o ang buod na iniikutan ng kuwento, mga tauhang hindi makatotohanan, at mga pangyayaring hindi masundan, hindi maunawaan, hindi mapaniwalaan. Ang aklat ng buhay ni Fr. Art

Vincent ay kailangang basahin nang malapitan. It demands a CLOSER READING.

Kung teksto lang ang pagbabatayan, titingnan lang natin ang kanyang birth certificate, ang kanyang baptismal certificate, na galing mismo sa parokyang ito, ang kanyang confirmation certificate, ang kanyang mga dokumento sa paaralan, ang kanyang dokumento sa seminaryo - profession, assignation, installation to ministries, ordination, ang kanyang mga sinulat kasama na ang kanyang STL-MA thesis, at maging ang mga pinost niya sa kanyang social media accounts. Pero, gaya nga ni sinabi ng Amang Santo Domingo, ang mga teksto ay patay na balat; Hindi nila sinasabi ang buong kuwento; at mayroong higit pa sa aklat, sa kuwento, sa buhay ni Fr. Art Vincent.



Br. Art Vincent M. Pangan, OP

At para maging mas kaaya-aya ang ating pagkukuwento, hayaan ninyo basahin ko kasabay nito ang ebanghelyo para sa araw na ito, ang kapistahan ni Santo Tomas Apostol.

Bagaman, apostol ang bansag ng liturhiya sa kanya, sa ebanghelyo ni San Juan, mas lapat ang salitang SAKSI, sa Griyego, marturia. Ang mga alagad ni Kristo at tinuturing na saksi, nakita nila, nakasama, narinig at nakausap, nakasabay sa pagkain, nahawakan, nakasalamuha nila ang SALITA NG DIYOS, NA NAGING TAO.

Pero, sa tagpo bago nito, Si Tomas daw ay wala doon. ABSENT siya. Paanong magiging saksi ay wala doon sa pinangyarihan? Hindi yan matatanggap sa korte. Yaon ang dilemma ni Tomas, wala siya, absent. Kaya, hindi siya masisisi nang humingi siya ng karagdagang kondisyon – “hangga’t hindi ko nakikita, hangga’t hindi ko nahahawakan, hangga’t hindi ko naipapasok at nailalapat ang aking kamay sa kanyang sugat, sa kanyang tagiliran, hindi ako maniniwala,” hindi ako magpapatotoo, hindi ako sasaksi.

At malaking hamon yan para sa ating lahat, mga Kristiyano sa panahong ito. Hindi natin nasaksihan. Paano tayo sasaksi?!

Sana nga, magpakita sa ating lahat ang Panginoon! At dito pumapasok ang pari. Sa buhay ng pari, sa sakramentong kanyang ginaganap, pinapakita sa atin, pinasasaksi sa atin si Kristong muling nabuhay! Sa kanyang pagpapahayag, hinihikayat niya tayo sa pananampalataya.

Ang saksi ay nakatuon sa pananampalataya. Kung gagawin nating bulgar ang salaysay ni Santo Tomas, simple lang ang sinabi nya, MANIWALA AKO SA INYO.

Usong pa ba ang paniniwala at pananampalataya? Sa panahonito, talamak ang peke at propaganda, ang mababaw at mapagkunwari. Nasa krisis ang pananampalataya. Pero, nasa pananampalataya din ang sagot at susi sa suliraning ito; dahil ang pananampalataya ay mas matayog na paraan ng pagtingin, at mas malalim na uri na kaalaman. Ika nga ni San Pablo, ang pananampalataya ay katiyakan sa mga hindi nakikita, sa mga inaasahan pa lang natin.

Maniwala at magtiwala tayo sa ating pananampalataya. Maniwala at magtiwala tayo sa simbahan, sa mga pari, kay Fr. Art Vincent, at sa isa’t isa. Dahil hindi ito basta basta nakabatay sa kung anu-ano, kundi sa Diyos. Siya ang nagkaloob ng pananampalataya; sa Kanya ito iiral at tatagal.

Sa huli, sa ebanghelyo ni San Juan, ang kuwento ni Santo Tomas ay encuentro. Sa panahon ngayon, ang salitang encuentro ay nagbabago na ng kahulugan. Sa sagupaan ng militar at Maute sa Marawi, sa laban laban sa NPA, sa digmaan laban sa droga, ang encuentro ay marahas, madugo, nakamamatay. Sa henerasyon ng mga millennial, ang social media ay nag-aalok ng encuentro... sa ibang anyo ng meet-and-greet... real-time, mabilis, kaagaran, kahit malayo...

Pero, ang buhay ng pari, ang buhay-Kristiyano ay nananatiling encuentrong marahan at malaliman, mistikal at mahiwaga, personal, espirituwal... ang ka-encuentro natin ay Diyos, at kahit saglit, pangmatagalan, panghabambuhay.

Fr. Art Vincent, mga kapatid sa pananampalataya, baunin natin ang mga ito – ang pagiging saksi, ang paniniwala, ang tunay na diwa ng encuentro sa Diyos, encuentrong Kristiyano.

A HOMILY DURING THE THANKSGIVING MASS OF FR. FELIX F. DELOS REYES JR., OP

22 July 2017, St. James the Apostle Parish Church, Plaridel, Bulacan

By Br. Clarence C. Marquez, OP



Br. Clarence C. Marquez, OP

Ako po ay naging Maestro ni Pdr. Felix delos Reyes, OP, noong siya ay seminarista sa Kumbento ng Santo Domingo, taon 2008-2012.

At tulad kay Pdr. Art Vincent Pangan, “batch-mates” po ang turingan namin ni Pdr. Felix. Kaya, “*may sikreto akong sasabihin sa inyo, maraming nangyaring hindi nyo alam, ito’y mga lihim itinagong kay tagal...*”

Ano nga ba ang masasabi ko tungkol kay Pdr. Felix?

Ika nga ng sikat na awit, “*DESPACITO...*” Slowly. Dahan-dahan. Softly. Tahimik. Sa tuwing kinakausap ko siya, marahan, tahimik, banayad, halos walang imik, mabagal po siya kung tumugon. Nakalimang tanong na po ako bago niya masasagot ang unang tanong. Para bagang dumaraan sa kumplikadong proceso ng pag-iisip, ng pagninilay-nilay, ng pananalamin, ng paninimbang, ng pagsusuri at pagsusukat ng marapat na tugon, ng paghahanap sa lapat na salita para maipalabas ang tunay niyang sinasalooob.



Br. Felix F. delos Reyes Jr., OP

DESPACITO. Ganoon din natin maituturing ang kuwento ng banal na babae natin para sa araw na ito, si Santa Maria Magdalena. Slowly. Softly.

Hindi si Maria Magdalena ang bida ng ebanghelyo, wala sa kanya ang mga katangiang inaasahan natin sa isang bida. Sa katunayan, si Maria Magdalena ay anti-hero/anti-heroine; hindi naman kontrabida, basta hindi lang bida, salungat sa mga inaakala nating bida.

Pero, Despacito. Slowly. Softly. Ang papel niya sa kuwento ay dahan-dahang lumago at lumawak. Madalas nga, kinakabit na natin sa kanya ang maraming tsismis na wala naman talagang kinalaman sa kanya. Si Maria Magdalena ay hindi ang kapatid ni Martha at Lazaro ng Betania. Tsismis lang yun. Hindi rin si Maria Magdalena ay makasalanang babaeng naghugas at nagpunas at nagpahid ng pabango sa ulo at paanan ng ating Panginoon. Tsismis lang yun. Hindi si Maria Magdalena ang babaeng nahuling nangangalunya, ang adulterang nais nilang batuhin at patayin. Tsismis lang yun.

Si Pdr. Felix, maraming maling akala rin tayo sa kanya. Tahimik daw si Pdr. Felix. Tsismis lang yun. Orihinal na pangarap niyang maging heavy metal rock star. Kung ang INGGO na magkakaroon ng reunion concert sa susunod na buwan ay nangangailangan ng gitarista o tagatambol, puede si Pdr. Felix. Hindi raw siya marunong humarap at makihalubilo sa mga tao. Tsismis lang yun. Sa katunayan, malambing po siya, cariñoso, at may lihim na harot. Kilala natin si Pdr. Felix dahil sa kanyang malaki at matipunong boses/tinig. Tsismis lang yun. Sa katunayan, soprano po siya; yung paminsan-minsang pagpiyok niya, yaon po ang tunay nyang boses.

Pero, ano nga ba ang totoo kay Pdr. Felix? Kay Maria Magdalena? Tulad nating lahat, sila ay naghahanap... naghahanap sa Panginoon... lumuluha, nananangis sa tila nawawalang Kristo... Christ-seeker.



At hindi lang yun. si Maria Magdalena na unang naghahanap kay Kristo; pues, si Kristo mismo ang nakahanap at nakatagpo sa kanya. Bago pa man niya makilala, tinawag na siya ng Panginoon sa pamamagitan ng kanyang pangalan.

Ganoon din ang kuwento ng bokasyon ni Pdr. Felix at tayong lahat na tinawag. Sa paghahanap natin, tayo ang nahanap ng Diyos. Kahit despacito, slowly and softly... mahahanap din tayo, mahahanap din natin.

At pagkatapos mahanap, tulad ni Maria Magdalena, hangad natin ang mahawakan, mayapos, kumapit sa Panginoong ating nahanap at nakahanap sa atin.

Pero ang sagot Niya, Noli me Tangere. Bumitiw ka. Tama na ang hawak; tigil na ang kapit.

Hangad man natin na hawakan at kapitan si Pdr. Felix, lalong lalo na dito sa Plaridel, pero hayaan na natin... Let him go... Mayroon siyang misyon, ang ipahayag na si Kristo ay muling nabuhay.

Samahan natin siya sa panalangin; at sa pamimintakasi ni Santa Maria Magdalena at Santiago Apostol, nawa si Pdr. Felix ay maging mabuti, banal na pari... kahit despacito, slowly, softly, but surely... maging saksi, maging tagapaghayag sa Kristong muling nabuhay.

A HOMILY DELIVERED BY FR. ROMMEL P. OLIVAR, OP, DURING HIS THANKSGIVING MASS

31 July 2017, Memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola
Saint Nicholas of Tolentino Parish Church, Balaoan, La Union



Br. Rommel P. Olivar, OP

A Life in God and for God

Naimbag nga bigat tayo amin kakabsat. Agyamanak ta immay kayo nakimisa uray no napigsa iti tudo ket nalayos dagiti dadduma nga lugar tayo. Diyos kuma iti mangsubli ken magsupapak kanyayo. (Good morning to all of you, brothers and

sisters. I thank you for joining us in today's Mass even if the rains have been heavy and many places here were flooded. May the Lord bless you and repay you).

There are several points that I would like to highlight in today's readings which I would then connect to the life of a priest and of a Christian.

The first reading is from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians. Ang sulat na ito ay sinipi ni San Pablo para sa mga sophisticated na mga taga-Corinth. Dito pinaalalahan niya sila kung ano ang mahalaga sa buhay Kristiyano: sabi niya sa kanyang sulat, *Whatever you do, whether eating or*



drinking, do it for the glory of God. Maganda ang ginamit na verbs: eating or drinking, even eating or drinking should be done for the glory of God. Lahat tayo ay kumakain at umiinom. Ibig sabihin ni San Pablo, even the ordinary things of life should be done so as to give honor to God. The result of this way of looking at life can be seen in the life of St. Ignatius Loyola whose feast we celebrate today. His motto is *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, for the greater glory of God. Hindi ko po pinili ang araw na ito, ito lang ay coincidental dahil hindi puede ang simbahan sa June 29. Pero sa palagay ko isang mensahe rin ng Panginoon. Kaedad ko kasi si San Ignacio noong siya ay naging relihiyoso, thirty two. Binibiro nga ako ng mga brothers: ngayon na ordain na daw ako, puede na akong mag-early retirement. Pero si San Ignacio, kahit na late vocation siya, naitatag niya ang isa sa mga pinakamalakas na religious order ngayon, ang mga Heswita. Truly, our age should not be a hindrance when we do the work of God. When we do everything for his greater and honor and glory, wonderful things can happen through us.

The responsorial psalm is Psalm 34. Sabi ng response: the Lord hears the cry of the poor, blessed be the Lord. Let the lowly hear and be glad. Sabi ng mga commentaries sa salmo na ito, sinulat ito ni Haring David noong siya ay nagtatago sa kanyang anak na si Absalom. Gusto siyang patayin ng kanyang sariling anak kaya siya ay nagpanggap na baliw at nagtago sa isang kueba. Sa panahon ng kagipitan, ito ang kanyang awit: the Lord hears the cry of the poor; blessed be the Lord. And the Lord heard his prayer. He was rescued by his followers and he was restored to his throne. Indeed, in the moment of difficulty, gaya ng bagyo at ng baha, the Psalm reminds us that the Lord is close to us. Let the lowly hear and be glad. The Lord listens to their pleas. And to heart broken God is near, he will hear the cry of the poor.

Ang ating Ebanghelyo ngayon ay tungkol sa cost of discipleship, ang kabayaran ng pagiging disipulo. Galing ang account na ito sa Ebanghelyo ni San Lukas, at ang mga naunang chapters ay patungkol sa mga milagro ni Hesus. Dahil sa mga milagro, narinig natin ang sinabi sa Ebanghelyo: many people followed him. They wanted to see his miracles, they wanted to become a part of his kingdom, a kingdom where they will be rulers and powerful men and women. Pero sa pagtuturo na ito ni

Hesus, sinabi niya kung ano ang kabayaran ng pagiging disipulo: ang pagsunod sa kanya ay nangagahulugan ng pagtataya, nangangahulugan ng krus: hindi korona at trono, kundi krus.

Bilang paglalagom sa lahat ng mga ito, nais kung ilahad ang buhay ng isang Dominiko. Hindi ako ang dapat magbigay ng homily ngayon. Ang napili ko na magbigay ay isang dakilang Dominiko, si Padre Pedro Salgado, OP, na dating propesor sa UST at misyonero sa Isabela, kung saan siya nadeestino ng humigit kumulang 30 taon. Nagdiwang siya ng kanyang 80th birthday noong June 29, araw ng aming ordinasyon, at namatay siya noong July 9. Gusto sana niya na magbigay ng homily. Sabi niya kasi *miss* na daw niya magbigay ng homily sa Ilocano. Sa loob ng halos tatlumpung taon niya sa Isabela, ang dami niyang nagawa para sa mga tao. Ipinatayo niya ang simbahan, pinag-aral niya ang maraming mga bata, tinulungan niya ang maraming mahihirap. Noong siya ay nakaburool sa Santo Domingo, ang daming ang nagpunta upang makilamay, kahit napakalayo ng Isabela. Marami sa kanila ang umiiyak. Sa huling gabi ng lamay, mayroong isang lalaking mga 40 years siguro ang edad. Luma ang damit, halata na mahirap. Lumapit siya sa kabaong ni Padre Salgado, nagdasal ng taimtim, at pagkatapos palihim na pinunasan ang kanyang mga mata. At noong ililibing na si Fr. Salgado, mayroong boses na narinig mula sa likuran: babay apo Pedro. Babay apo Pedro. Sa palagay ko, ito ang lalaki na iyon.

The life of St. Ignatius, the life of David and the life of Fr. Salgado, all converge to create for us the image of a follower of Christ. First, that whatever we do, we are called to do our best for God, for the greater glory of God. Secondly, that we are called to be men and women of faith. Even in the darkness of the cave when the world seems to have turned against us, we must still hold the light and say, the Lord listens to our plea. Blessed be the lord. And the last, we must not forget that the man we follow is not a man of wealth or power. He was a poor man, and if he is rich, it is only because he loves and he was willing to give himself as a ransom for many. Let this be then our prayer and a challenge: we new priests, old priests, we men and women of the Church: a life for the glory of God, a life of faith in God, and a life that is not afraid of the cross of God. Amen.



UNANG MISANG ALAY

3 Hulyo 2017

By Br. Art Vincent M. Pangan, OP

Matagal ko pong inisip, pinangarap at pinag-planuhan ang Misang ito. Nais ko po muna sanang magpaliwanag. Kailangan kong ipaliwanag sa inyo kung bakit pagkatapos baybayin ang maraming milya mula sa Metro Manila, Manaoag at ilang bayan ng Tarlac, tayong lahat ay nagsisiksikan sa maliit na kapilyang ito. Pangarap ko po talagang ipagdiwang ang unang Misang iaalay ko sa *adoration chapel* na ito.



Br. Art Vincent M. Pangan, OP

Unang-una po, ngayong araw ay anibersaryo ng aking binyag at ngayon ay nagdiriwang tayo ng Misa sa mismong lugar kung saan ko tinanggap ang aking buhay Kristiyano. I received the common priesthood in this very place, and so it is just fitting that I return to this very place to celebrate the ministerial priesthood.

Pangalawa, nabinyagan ako sa simbahang itinayo ng mga paring Dominikong nauna sa akin. Ang simbahang ito ay kanilang pinagpaguran at sinikap na itayo at alagaan. Sa simbahang ito tinipon nila ang bayan ng Diyos upang ipagdiwang ang Misteriyong ipinagdiriwang din natin ngayon. Ang simbahan at kumbentong ito ay lalong pinabanal ng pag-agos ng kanilang dugo nang sila ay patayin noong rebolusyon. Maari naman silang tumakas, sa katunayan may tumakas ngang isa sa kanila, ngunit pinili nilang manatili dahil ayaw nilang mawalan ng pari ang mga taga-Camiling. Ang kanilang buhay at kamatayan ang nagtuturo sa akin kung paano maging pari: na sa buhay ng isang tapat na pari, hindi mahalaga ang gusto at ayaw, ang komportable at mapanganib, ang mahalaga lamang ay ang pagtupad ng misyon at kalooban ng Diyos. Ang Misang ito ay iniialay ko bilang paggunita sa kanila – sa mga misyonerong nagdala ng pananampalataya rito sa atin – na ang buhay-sakripisyo ay hindi na natin lubos na naaalala.

Pangatlo, ito po ang pinaka-unang Misa na aking inialay bilang pari. Sa aking puso, nakakahiya kay Hesus, at talagang mahihiya ako kay Hesus, kung ang unang Misang inialay ko, na nakikisalo lamang sa pagkapari

niya, ay malayong mas marangya sa pinaka-unang Misang ipinagdiwang niya sa tagong silid ng Cenakulo. Si Hesus po talaga ang pari. Si Hesus lamang ang totoong pari. Kami pong mga pari ninyo ay pinagpala lamang na makisalo sa pagkapari niya. Hindi ko po Misa ito. Misa po ito ni Hesus. Pinagpala lamang akong ganapin ito sa pag-alaala sa kanya. Dito tayo nagdiriwang ngayon at ang pagdiriwang nati'y hubad sa bulaklak at seremonya dahil ang nais ko sana'y maalala ninyo si Hesus – hindi kung gaano kaganda ang mga awit at musica, hindi kung gaano kakulay ang mamahaling bulaklak, hindi kung gaano kabango ang usok ng insenso, o kung gaanong nakakaaliw ang sayawng mga bata sa *Gloria*. Ang gusto ko sana'y maalala si Hesus at si Hesus lamang. Kalimutan po ninyo ang paring nanguna, basta maalala lamang ninyo na sa hapong ito, nakaharap natin si Hesus.

Hihingi po sana ako ng regalo sa inyo. Simple lamang po at kayang-kaya ninyong ibigay ang regalong hinihingi ko: ipanalangin po ninyo ang mga pari. Ipanalangin po ninyo kami dahil kaunti lamang po kami. Ipanalangin po ninyong pabanalin kami ng Panginoon. Ipanalangin po ninyong maging kamukha kami ni Hesus upang sa bawat paring makakasalamuha ninyo, mararamdaman ninyo ang yakap ng Diyos. Ipanalangin ninyo kaming mga pari sapagkat sabi ni propeta Hosea, *“Like priest, like people! (Hosea 4:9)”* Kung banal po ang pari ninyo, mahahawa kayo sa kanyang kabanalan. Kung makamundo po ang pari ninyo, mahahawa kayo sa kanyang kamunduhan. Ipanalangin po ninyo kami – iyon lamang po ay sapat na.



WHY ARE YOU AFRAID?

Mt 8:23-27 (The Calming of the Storm at Sea)

4 July 2017, Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of Manaoag

By Br. Felix F. delos Reyes Jr., OP

*When you walk through a storm
Hold your head up high
And don't be afraid of the dark...*

I wonder if one can really sing this song in the midst of a storm, like the storm we heard in the gospel reading for today. Ang nakapagtataka, the disciples are actually sailors and fishermen, mga manlalayag, mga mangingisda, kaya bakit sila natakot sa ganitong pangyayari? Hindi ba pangkaraniwan lang dapat ito sa kanila dahil sanay na sila sa



Br. Felix F. delos Reyes Jr., OP

dagat? It must have been a very powerful storm na sila mismong mga sanay na sa dagat ay nayanig at natakot. Pansinin natin ang sinabi ng Ebanghelyo: "As Jesus got into a boat, his disciples followed him. Suddenly a violent storm came up on the sea..." Tila sunod-sunod ang mga pangyayaring iyon. Parang binibigyan ng Panginoon ng "preview" ang mga alagad tungkol sa magiging buhay nila: After following Him, violent storms will come up.

Habang nasa bangka, ang naging focus ng mga alagad ay yung mga nagyayari sa paligid nila: malakas na buhos ng ulan, malakas na hangin, malakas na alon, pinangunahan ng takot ang mga alagad because they are not in control anymore of what is happening. Hindi na nila alam ang gagawin. Nakalimutan nila na kasama nila si Hesus. They forgot that Jesus, the one in control, is in the boat with them. Kaya ang tanong ni Hesus sa kanila, "Why are you afraid?" "After all this time na magkakasama tayo, you still have little faith. You are afraid because you are not in control. Hindi ninyo hawak ang ulan, ang hangin, ang alon. But I'm the one in control, remember? Nakalimutan ninyo yatang nandito ako. Hindi kayo nag-iisa, I'm here in the boat with you." These are the words of Jesus to his disciples: "Yes, there is a storm but do not be afraid. You're not alone. We will face the storm together."

Do not be afraid. Maraming pagkakataon nating nababasa iyan sa Banal na Kasulatan. Katunayan, iyan din ang sinabi ni Arkanghel Gabriel kay Maria: Do not be afraid Mary, you have found favor with God. Parang ito rin ang naging motto namin when we were novices here ten years ago. Sabi nga ng isa naming kasama, ang initials ng novitate house na DNA ay nangangahulugan daw ng

Do Not (be) Afraid. Sa loob ng labingtatlong taon ko sa seminary, there were also times I asked and even doubted if I would be able to make it to the other side. Nag-iisip din ako kung paano ko maitatawid ang bawat araw patungo sa susunod, kung paano makakalagpas sa mga itinuturing kong bagyo at unos. Pero naroon ang paalala ni Hesus: those who want to follow Him should not be afraid of the storm. It's not that God will give us a life full of comfort. It's not God will not give us storms in life. Sometimes, God just calms the storms. Sometimes, God calms the sailor. And sometimes, God teaches us how to swim.

Sa paghinay natin sa Magandang Balita, tanungin natin ang ating sarili, tayo ba, ano yung mga pagkakataon sa buhay natin na dumaan tayo sa unos? Did we see Jesus on the boat with us o baka tulad ng mga alagad, tayo rin ay nadala ng mga pangyayari sa paligid natin? Sa lahat ng ito, God's loving assurance is there: Do not be afraid. You are not alone. I am here on the boat with you. And so urges us to:

*Walk on through the wind
Walk on through the rain
Though your dreams be tossed and blown
With hope in your heart
And you'll never walk alone*

Yes, one can sing this song and face any storm because Jesus tells us, "You'll never walk alone."



RELIGIOUS VOCATION IS A DECISION

*(Taken from the Naming Grace Newsletter of Rumah Formasi Sto. Tomas Aquino)
By Br. Joseto Bernadas Jr., OP*

Religious vocation is a calling from God to vowed life. He wants us to work as harvesters in His vineyard. There is need and urgency in the call since the harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few. Moreover, he chooses us, not we choosing him. Unless he calls us, we cannot do anything in his vineyard.



Basically, how are we supposed to respond to God's call? What must we do first? What is required of us above all? It is simple. We must decide to follow him. That's it! But the tricky thing is that we must decide to do his will with a very strong and solid commitment. What kind of commitment is it? It is a commitment without excuses!

Jesus made this clear when he categorically said that we either say "Yes" or "No", anything else in between comes from the devil (Matthew 5:37). "You are either hot or cold. If you are lukewarm, I will vomit you" (Revelation 3:16). "Yes Lord, I will follow you. But let me bury my loved one first," said one of his disciples. "No. Let the dead bury the dead" (Matthew 8:21-22). "Anyone who does not leave father or mother or brothers and sisters for my sake is not worthy of the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:26). What does Jesus Christ mean by these declarations? Put simply, he wants us to follow him truthfully and faithfully without a single reservation! We must stay focus all the time and refuse to be distracted even by logical and convenient excuses.

This sounds hard and difficult or even cruel and impossible for those who are used to making excuses. "Ya, I know. The meeting is set at 10 AM. But the traffic was so heavy, so I am late. And besides, it is only 2 minutes past 10. I am only few minutes late, right? So, it's ok! The others were 15 minutes late. Others are even absent. But I am present! So, it is ok! I am alright."

No. It is not ok. A true decision is one that accommodates no excuses. 99% is not good enough! It is difficult and almost impossible at the start. But in the long run, it will make easy and meaningful the following of Jesus. This is the only true way to follow Jesus. This is the narrow way, the way of the cross, the way of the Calvary.



THE GARDEN OF EDEN - PART 2

*(Taken from the Naming Grace Newsletter of Rumah Formasi Sto. Tomas Aquino)
By Br. Rupinus Kehi, OP*

"The Garden of Eden - Part I" was written during my postulancy. It's an article where I likened the seminary to the Garden of Eden. Why? As far as I understood before, in the Garden of Eden there were a lot of rules to be followed; to fail in following any of them is equal to an expulsion. So, I thought the best way to "survive" in the seminary is to follow those rules carefully. But, I was wrong!

The rules in the seminary were not intended to make or lead us to fear. On the contrary, they're there to make us aware. Aware about what? Firstly, to be aware of our state of life, and, secondly, to be aware of our own maturity. The rules are there to remind us of who we truly are. As St. Thomas tells us about divine law in us, the Sacred Scriptures were compiled to remind us of all those things in us.

Now I have made my vows, now I am a religious. I have promised myself to follow God, I committed myself to take a vow in order to conform my will to God's. I follow him, because I believe that the purpose of my life here on Earth is to follow him not by simply following the rules. My vocation is more than following the rules in the seminary. With the help of God, I hope the rules would form me, to conform my will to God's.



FUNERAL MASS FOR MA. ESTELA ASOR BOMBASE

1 July 2017, St. Claire Parish Church, Tigaon, Camarines Sur
A Homily by Br. Gallardo "Butch" A. Bombase Jr., OP



Br. Gallardo A.
Bombase Jr., OP

“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven”. This last verse in the Gospel that we have just heard, Beatitudes according to St. Matthew, must be the welcoming words my Mama Esting would be hearing from God our Father when she reaches heaven. Yes, my mother tried to live the Beatitudes. She practised poverty; she was poor in spirit by trusting everything to God. She lived a sorrowful

life. She was lowly and humble. She was merciful and compassionate with the needy. She was persecuted in this world by not being understood for loving too much. I believe that now Mama Esting is reaping the fruits of the Beatitudes which are gladness and rejoicing with God in heaven. She must be hearing words like these in heaven: “Come, you have my Father’s blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.”

At the start, let me tell you that Mama Esting was my prayer partner. I would not be who and what am i now, had it not been for my Mama Esting. She was the one who introduced me to God. She prayed all the time that I would become a servant of God as a priest; that, I become a faithful, loving, committed and holy priest. This is all her doing. She prayed for me a lot all the time, as i prayed for her, too. Prayer is our bond and connection. Mama Esting is now gone. Nevertheless, I believe that she is praying for me right now in God’s presence; the more she is praying in heaven and interceding for me, her son.

Mama has gone now to heaven after suffering purgatory here on earth. Her real home is not our house in Gubat, Tigaon, Camarines Sur. Her home is Heaven. She wanted our home to become like heaven where love and forgiveness reign. She loved God very much; I can attest to that. As my sister would describe Mama “Mama does not think much but love much, thinking less but loving and caring more”. Many said that Mama is mapagmahal, mapagpasenya at mapagparaya. Many have known Mama as a loving and generous woman. We have heard last night during the Eulogy and Tribute to Mama.

Now, let share with you some insights. Early in the morning of Sunday, June 25, 2017, I received a text from Sunshine, my niece, the daughter of my youngest sister Beget. She texted me in Bicol language “Mau ni si Mama Esting.” (Mama passed away) I could not simply accept

the reality of death. I cried alone and prayed “Lord bring Mama to your kingdom in heaven.” I was in Minore Basilica of Our Lady of Manaoag that time when I learned that Mama died. I told Mama Mary of Manaoag to please bring Mama to her Son Jesus in heaven. It was Sunday, that was why I celebrated my Mass at 5 in the afternoon for the intention of my mother. Yes, the painful message of death has come. The Gospel that Sunday was “Fear not; do not be afraid.” What a providential message! What comforting words of Jesus, telling me: Butch, do not be afraid. I told myself: “Believe and put all your trust in God, just like your Mama.” By the way, I formulated a prayer for Mama, she would utter this prayer “Anak ako ng Diyos, mahal na mahal Niya ako kaya may magandang bagay na mangyayari sa aking buhay.”

Whenever I visited my mother, I would bring her the Eucharist; she would always tell me “I am ready to die.” I would react and say “no, we want you to live longer because we love you; we will do everything for you.” If ever you die, there must be a reason or a cause for that. She had purgatory already in this world. What Mama wanted all her life is to go to heaven. That was why, she lived like Christ.

May I share with you her last words. My sister Beget and the caretaker, Salve, were with Mama hours before she died. Mama, knowing that the following day was Sunday requested them “I want to go to Mass; bring me to the Church by a wheel chair.” Every June 27, she would celebrate the Feast of our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Chapel in Baligon, Goa, Camarines Sur which she helped build 45 years ago. Then she died before that day. Yes, she must have celebrated already the Feast with Our Lady of Perpetual Help in heaven.

If I would to describe Mama Esting, she is a daily Mass-goer. Going to Church is her life. I can attest to the fact because I would go with her everyday. She was the one who brought me to Church to become an altar server. That was why, I began to go to Mass everyday with her. She introduced me to love the Mass. Her life is centered and revolves around the life of the Church.

What is the life of the Church? The life of the Church is a life of prayer and a life of love. First, it is a life of prayer. She prays a lot. Mama listens to God in prayer. The secret of her successes is always attributed to the power of prayer. Mama taught me and everyone of us to pray. Every night, we have a family rosary at 8 in the evening. Prayer makes us closer to God. Prayer makes us closer and kinder to one another. Mama is my prayer partner. Mama till her

last breath prayed. Beget prayed with Mama. Mama would gather her children to pray with her in the afternoon even before she died. She had a clear mind in prayer. Never she forgot prayers, she prayed with memory and from the heart. Mama prayed the rosary.

Secondly, a life with the Church is a life of love. To love is to give. She lived a life of love by being generous. She loved every kind of people. In fact, she would welcome everyone to our house; our house becomes like an orphanage. She would love even the unlovable and even those who persecuted and maligned her. She would forgive my Papa even. She has always loved Papa even she was hospitalized; she would ask me “did your papa eat his lunch or dinner?” She is really unselfish in loving. She lived a life of love. Several years ago, she would go to Mother Seton Hospital in Naga City. She would volunteer as a pastoral health worker. She would give her time and space for people in need whom she did not even know. She is a generous person. She would not think of herself. She would give even though she would have nothing for herself anymore. She is really an unselfish woman. Mapagbigay si Mama. All she wanted in her life is to follow Christ. My Mama Esting influenced every aspect of my life. She has an impact in my life. I learned a lot from Mama. I would never forget her life of prayer and a life of love.

Mama tried to live the life of the Church which is a life of prayer and a life of love. Her life is already a living

testimony or a homily. She did not preach at the pulpit but she preached it in our family and in our Church. If I am telling you all these things, I am simply her mouthpiece.

Mama has delivered the best homily, for she walked the talk. Mama is a martyr. She witnessed the faith. Let us learn from her life. Let us learn from her selfless and undying love, from her generosity and kindness. Her last words to Beget and Salve were words of affirmation. “Am I beautiful?” Mama asked them, “Salve, make me laugh and happy.”

Death is going home. Mama is gone forever in a place where there are no more heartaches, no more pain and suffering neither, nothing but joy without end. Mama is now telling us not to grieve for her, for now she’s free. Be not burdened of sorrow. Mama is wishing everyone the sunshine of tomorrow. God wants Mama to be free and be happy with Him in heaven.

Lord God, grant Mama your promises when she was baptized: Everlasting Joy in Heaven. Inside the coffin of Mama is the statue of St Claire of Assisi to accompany her.

What Mama Esting wanted in all her life is now realized. She wanted to come to the Church. Mama is now back to the Church where she was baptized, confirmed, nourished, strengthened, and anointed as a daughter of God.



THE HONORABLE CASTIGATOR Fr. Honorato “Atong” C. Castigador, OP

By Br. Eugene Dominic V. Aboy, OP



Br. Honorato C. Castigador, OP

Ever since I met Fr. Atong, he has been my confessor. I chose him from the beginning to hear my sins because “wisdom is with aged men, with long life is understanding” (Job 12:12). No one knows us better than our confessors, and so with most of the coristas, I can cry out to him: “You know my foolishness, my sins are not hidden from you” (Psalm 69:5)

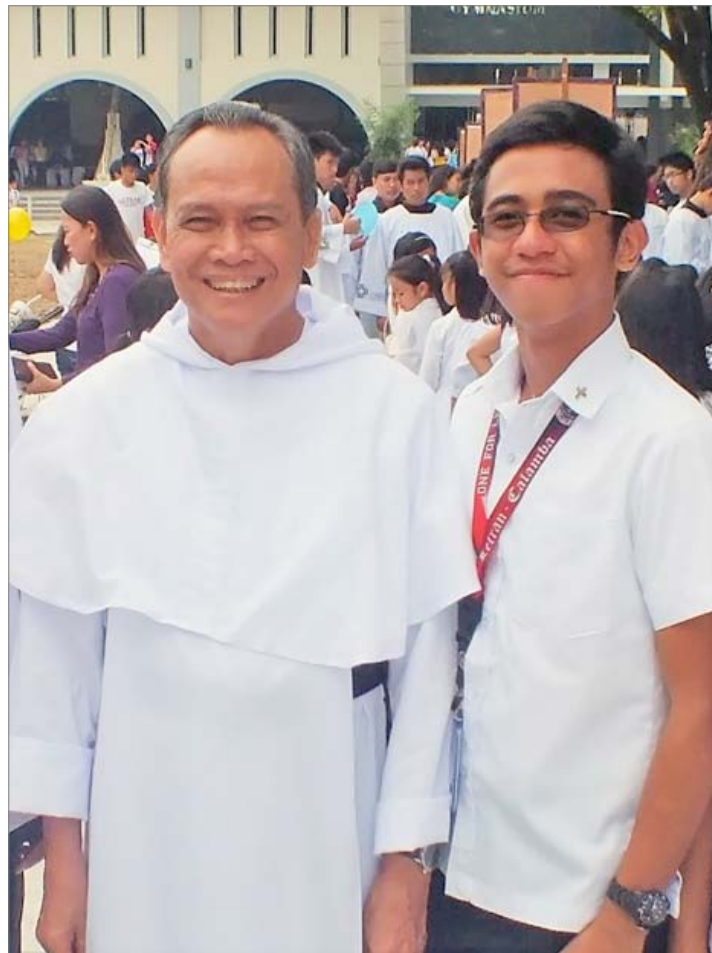
Fr. Honorato Castigador, OP

is one of the “big men” in the province. He is well known and respected within and outside the Order and you can even spot his face in documentaries and history books. He served the Dominican Province of the Philippines as a formator, a chaplain, a spiritual director, a professor, a prior, rector of the Central Seminary and of Letran Calamba and as a Provincial, and continues to serve the Church in all vitality and enthusiasm. At age 72, he still plays basketball with his classic “*Ayayay*’s” and gives talks in different parts of the country. In spite of his old age, he remains a strong and active worker in the Lord’s vineyard even obediently accepting a new assignation in the far mission area of Sri Lanka.



Most of my moments with Fr. Atong are met with corrections in the classroom if not in the confessional. He isn’t called “Castigador” for nothing. But his sharp rebukes are always infused with a fatherly affection concerned only for the wellbeing of his child. His remarks do not humiliate but rather inspire one to do better. In confessions, he never belittles nor condemns but encourages one to strive harder for the path to holiness. Whenever I remember

Fr. Atong, I hear his signature laughter which resounds in the classroom during his lectures. A true intellectual, he continues to be knowledgeable with the vicissitudes of our time while staying detached from the pomps and vanities of the world. His lessons in class either give color to the past or bring one to the transcendent.



Fr. Honorato “Atong” Castigador, OP, and Br. Eugene Dominic V. Aboy, OP (left).

Fr. Atong is one person who reminds me that happiness is indeed possible in this kind of life. He definitely belongs to what Greek tradition calls *kalogeroi*, “beautiful old men”. His counsels during confessions reveal the truth; his mere presence brings forth grace. I cannot articulate enough how I admire him. As a young Dominican, I can only thank him for his many efforts in the Order and can only dream of following his footsteps as an authentic and an exemplary Dominican.



The teen-age Gesu

Acrylic on canvas, July 2017
 Br. Joseph Conrad V. Salenga, OP
 Second Year Student Brother

*"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature,
 and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)*



Thousand Cranes

Art Installation

By Br. Isidro C. Abaño, OP
 Ordained priest on 30 August 1985



Batch 2017: Unity in Diversity

Marker, Textile Paint on T-Shirt, 1 October 2016
 Br. John Michael S. Cruz, OP
 First Year Student Brother