



DMI

Newslette

To Jesus through Mary

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Around the Country with the International Regent



Stories Inside

Second DMI Circle Organized In California

Fourteen sisters from St. Charles Circle in San Diego, California blazed a trail last July 9, 2011 when they exemplified 16 charter members of St. Joseph Circle in Westmorland, the second to be organized in California, USA. Two sisters from the Philippines were present during the long conferral ceremony – Zamboanga Diocesan Regent and Past International Treasurer Sis. Beth Salmon and Past International Board Member Sis. Fely Villaruz.

The St. Joseph Circle is based at the St. Joseph Catholic Church with Fr. Jorge Moreno

as spiritual director. The circle's charter officers were later installed by Sis. Beth. They are: Sisters Susan Marquez – regent, Imelda Mariz – vice-regent, Santos Sandoval – financial secretary, Julia Garcia – treasurer, Natividad Padilla – recording secretary, Emilia Serrano – chancellor, Antonia Curiel – scribe, Antonia Carrillo – custodian, Elvira Carrillo – banner bearer, Lucia Sandoval – organist, Guadalupe Castro – 1st guide, Errendira Tamayo – 2nd guide, Jovita Orosco – inner guard, and Alejandra Tamayo – outer guard.



The charter members of the St. Joseph Circle of Westmorland, California.



The St. Charles Circle Exemplification Team with Sisters Fely Villaruz and Beth Salmon, standing at left and 5th from left, respectively.



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From the International Regent

MESSAGE



My dear Sisters in Christ through Mama Mary:

"If sin entered into the world through a woman, salvation entered into the world through a woman. If sin entered into the world through Eve, salvation entered into the world through Mary."

This was pointed out by Rev. Fr. Rafael Cabarles, OSB in his talk on Marian devotion during the assembly of Region IX in Palau, Calatrava, San Carlos City.

Today we are at the crossroads of actions and challenges. Confusion abounds. Natural calamities like typhoons leading to widespread flooding not experienced before wreak havoc in the lives of many, especially the poor and marginalized, and particularly our small farmers. Who can we turn to?

Mother Mary as ever is our hope, more so in our present situation. It is man who creates his own problem. In his distorted view of life, he creates a much bigger problem that he cannot seem to solve. We cannot disregard the turmoil in our community. We are ostracized for opposing the Reproductive Health Bill and the Divorce Bill. There is a clamor from the different sectors to pass them into law and those who oppose them are seen as villains. These bills are made palatable for the non-discerning to accept, unaware of their evil consequences. We can only turn to our Mother Mary to deliver us from the claws of evil. Mary's role in the history of salvation cannot be discounted. Mary prayed a lot, at the foot of the Cross on Good Friday, at the Tomb on Easter Sunday. It is her holiness that saves the world. The time is now, more than ever, for the Daughters of Mary Immaculate to emulate this holiness of Mary, the only weapon to fight evil.

There is now a call for us DMIs to join in prayer in this project of the Marian Solidarity for Pope Benedict XVI:

"A million roses for the world. Filipinos at prayer. Peace for all nations."

DMIs are enjoined to pray the five decades of the Holy Rosary daily from October 10, 2011 to May 13, 2012, Monday to Saturday, dedicated to one nation in the world, while the Sunday Rosary is reserved for our families and our nation, the Philippines.

Let us also pray for a deep moral renewal from within, a revolution of sorts – a moral and spiritual revolution for all our political leaders that they may value human life, because it is these moral values that will ultimately determine our future.

As DMIs, let us be like Mary, be a model of service, prayerful, humble and not self-seeking. Let us involve more women to our cause. There are many who are just waiting to be led to Mother Mary, as we realized from our Macau sojourn, when we organized the Our Lady of Fatima Circle there. It was not easy but Mother Mary was with us all the way, recharging us with energy when we were weary, boosting our morale when we seemed hopeless, guiding us as we convinced them, mostly OFWs, of our great trust in our work of bringing them closer to our Lord through Mother Mary. We succeeded, and so the first DMI circle in Asia outside of the Philippines was born on September 25, 2011. *AVE MARIA!*

Yours truly,

SIS. LYDIA L. RAMIREZ
International Regent

Diocese of Dipolog Hosts 22nd Mindanao Area Conference

By Sis. Thelma Sorronda, Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of Dipolog

The Zamboanga del Norte Cultural & Sports Center in Dipolog City was the setting of the 22nd Mindanao Area Conference on April 29-30, 2011. DMI sisters from all over Mindanao started arriving in Dipolog City on April 28. International officers led by International Regent Sis. Lydia Ramirez were welcomed by Sis. Nonie Lacaya, diocesan regent of Dipolog.

A Eucharistic celebration at the Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Cathedral signaled the start of the conference on the

morning of April 29. The Mass was officiated by Most Rev. Jose Manguiran, DD with Fr. Cesar Tinga as co-celebrant. In his homily, Bishop Manguiran cited the Gospel of St. Luke pertaining to the Book of Isaiah about Jesus as the cornerstone or foundation of the church. The Dipolog KC-DMI Choir provided the liturgical music during the Mass.

The conference formally opened with the traditional opening ceremonies with the entrance of the image of the Blessed Mother, the International Officers led by Sis. Lyding and the

regional and diocesan officers, followed by the entrance of colors. A beautiful rendition of "Ave Maria" by Sis. Elba Fiel served as tribute to Mama Mary. Dipolog Diocesan Regent Sis. Nonie Lacaya officially welcomed the delegates who were later presented by Vicarial Regent Sis. Nemie Gurdriel.

Sis. Lyding in her inspirational message reiterated her call to establish DMI circles in every parish in the country so that more women may be able to reach out to those who are in need. SMI International Chairperson

Sis. Ruby Macario informed the delegates about the changes effected in the SMI organization to attract more Squirettes of Mary members. Her call was for the establishment of SMI circlettes by every existing DMI circle nationwide. The closing remarks by Sis. Zeny Martinez ended the day's session.

Highlight of the evening fellowship on Day 1 were the dance presentations by circles representing the different regions of Mindanao. Special guests were Dipolog City Mayor Evelyn Tang-Uy and Past KC State Advocate Bro.



The delegates sing the National Anthem during the conference opening. At the left side of the photo, front row are Sisters Cecille Apura, vice-international regent for Mindanao, Region XII RR Sis. Lelis Pimentel, IR Sis. Lyding Ramirez, Josie Halog of the DMI National Office, and SMI Chairperson Sis. Ruby Macario.



Most Rev. Jose Manguiran, DD and Fr. Cesar Tinga during the Concelebrated Mass.



Retired Judge Eustolia Mata talks on Upliftment of Women Workers.



International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez (seated at center) with Sisters Angie Baez, Sonia Manlapig and Lelis Pimentel (standing).



A colorful Hawaiian dance during Luau Night

Uldarico Mejorada. A meditation song by Sis. Elba Ladera ended the evening program.

The morning session of Day 2 opened with a message by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Mila Jauculan. The program consisted of presentations by invited speakers on the DMI missions: Retired Judge Eustola Mata on Upliftment of Women Workers, declaring woman as a special creation, she being drawn by God from Adam's ribs; International Chairperson Sis. Sonia Manlapig on Morality in Media; Fr. Patrick Dalangan, diocesan director and chaplain of the Prison Ministry, on Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims, who, citing the Gospel of Matthew, declared that it is the moral responsibility of every Christian to perform corporal acts of mercy, that bringing prisoners food and gifts is not

enough, and that what matters most to prison inmates is being in close contact with their families; and Fr. Joel Agad on Pro-Life who said that one should choose life, a gift of God to His creatures.

A Plenary Session opened by Region XIV Representative Sis. Miriam Angot took most of the afternoon. The delegates were divided into workshops for the various DMI thrusts. The workshop outputs consisted of suggested plans and programs and resolutions which the Conference Committee compiled. The session ended with an Anticipated Mass by Fr. Virgilio Bellen, Cathedral Parish rector and DMI diocesan chaplain.

A festive mood pervaded the conference venue in the evening with a Hawaiian *luau* as motif of

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Mama Mary Was With Us!

By Sis. Cecille Apura, Vice-IR for Mindanao

It is said that traveling is a broadening experience, but for us that day (April 28, 2011), it was a tragic and saddening one.

We, from the Diocese of Tagum, were on our way to Dipolog City for the 22nd Mindanao Area Conference. It was a rough ride with stumbling blocks presenting themselves along our way. First, our vehicle broke down in Cagayan de Oro, requiring five hours of repair work.

Then tragedy struck after crossing the Channel. One of the delegates, Sis. Necita Pusta Anas, had a cardiac arrest and succumbed to death. The group was faced with a dilemma whether to proceed to the conference or go back home. Thanks to Sis. Lyding, Bishop Wilfredo Manlapaz of the Diocese of Tagum and our

Spiritual Director, Fr. Nestor Bonghanoy, who communicated with us and guided us all the way, thus boosting our morale during those trying moments.

We had decided to stay with our deceased sister during the night. When we went looking for a place to spend the night, an angel came in the person of a KC brother, Atty. Jun Fernandez whose wife, Luchie is also a DMI sister. They generously offered us free accommodation in a beautiful hotel in Ozamis City. In the morning, we proceeded to Dipolog and went straight to the cathedral for the opening Eucharistic celebration.

Indeed Mama Mary was with us!

(The full report on the 22nd Mindanao Area Conference in this issue was written by Sis. Thelma Sorronda, secretary of the DMI Diocese of Dipolog, - Ed)

Zambo Revisited

By Sis. Sally Estrada

Zambo beckoned . . . and we came. In fact, over a thousand did in May, 2010 for the 17th DMI National Biennial Convention. Everybody agreed that it was one of the best conventions ever.

The lure of Zamboanga is still very much with us so that when International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez invited the International Board and mission chairpersons, with free board and lodging, to hold the 3rd quarter meeting in her city, we all said "yes". The occasion was a special one for Sis. Lyding, for on August 13, 2011, she celebrated her birthday, and we were her special, and her "only", guests. It served as R & R and bonding time for us.

Most of the Board members planed in on August 12, a Friday, and right after checking in at Astoria Hotel and lunch, off to the barter trade area we went, shopping till we almost dropped. After dinner, we had a 30-minute rehearsal for an interpretative dance of the song "I Have A Dream" for Sis. Lyding's birthday dinner the following night.

Day 2 started with an early morning Mass at St.

Joseph Church. Mass celebrant was DMI Vice-International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz. The pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Fr. Adrian Barcelo joined us for breakfast at Lantaka Hotel.

A courtesy call on Most Rev. Romulo Valles, DD, archbishop of Zamboanga came next. It was a most cordial meeting during which he was apprised about the ongoing projects of the organization in pursuance of the CBCP-mandated DMI missions.

The Board meeting was scheduled after lunch so that we had time for more shopping in the morning. We bought identical blouses, our improvised costume for the interpretative dance. Lunch was at Alavar Restaurant with its famous *curacha* (coconut crab) dish. We also feasted on *marang*.

The meeting which started at 1:00 p.m. lasted till late afternoon. The telephone rang asking for Sis. Lyding at about 5:00 p.m. for an important family matter. Vice-IR for Luzon Sis. Mila Villanueva took over as presiding officer. It was then that we learned that Sis. Lyding's children prepared a surprise birthday dinner for her.

(She was summoned to be "fixed".) It meant a large dinner crowd, including her family and friends. "*Pwede pa kaya yung dance number natin?*" We asked each other. "*Nakakahiya yata mag-perform!*"

There were indeed many guests and all her children and grandchildren, many from Manila, were there. Sis. Lyding became emotional when she saw her friends and family whom she did not expect to come as she had planned another dinner at another venue for them later. "*Exclusive talaga ang birthday dinner ko for the DMI,*" she had told us earlier. DMIs from the Archdiocese of Zamboanga led by Past International Regent Sis. Beling Panganiban, Diocesan Regent Sis. Beth Salmon and Alternate DR Sis. Angie Baez were there. True to the DMI spirit, we did our interpretative dance, no matter what! Success *naman!* The other guests enjoyed our performance, all for fun!

Still more fun after dinner. Everybody gathered inside the room of the mission chairpersons for *kwentuhan*. Sis. Amy Castaneda, RR of Region III, was the *bangka*. She's

so talented, delivering jokes, in full animation, with perfectly-timed punchlines, that we were in stitches most of the time. Sis. Mila V almost fell out of the bed for laughing so hard. With all the excitement of the day, we slept soundly that night.

Morning call on Sunday, August 14, was at 7:30 a.m. for Mass at Our Lady of Purification of Sta. Maria Church, the parish of Fr. Moises Cuevas, DMI-Zamboanga diocesan chaplain. Fr. Jerome was again the Mass celebrant. Brunch was at Vista del Mar, a beach resort owned by the family of Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat. It was another feast before catching our plane back to Manila.

Looking back on our Zambo sojourn, it was a totally exhilarating experience with such happy scenes to tuck away in our memory banks. Indeed there's a time for everything – living, loving, sharing, praying, learning, laughing. Mother Mary might have smilingly looked down upon her daughters enjoying themselves while serving in the DMI missions. *Hasta la vista, Zamboanga!*



LEFT: The group after Mass at St. Joseph Church. Front row, from left: Sisters Josie Halog, Rebbie Pacanan, Lita Canonizado, Rita Samarista, Sally Estrada, and Cora Afuang, St. Joseph Parish Pastor Fr. Adrian Barcelo, Sis. Lyding Ramirez, Fr. Jerome Cruz, Sisters Ofel Lucas, Lelis Pimentel, Cecille Apura, Linda Castillo, Amy Castaneda and Miriam Angot. Second row: Sisters Ruby Macario, Nimfa Yyance (partly hidden), Au Manangan, Flor Barcial, Milde Tong, Helen de Leon, Sonia Manlapig and Carmen de la Torre. Not in photo: Sis. Mila Villanueva who planed in before lunch. **RIGHT:** Archbishop Romulo Valles with Fr. Jerome and Sis. Lyding during the group's courtesy call at the chancery of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga.



The group with Archbishop Valles at the facade of the chancery

The International Board in session at the Astoria Hotel



Sis. Lyding's DMI guests during her birthday dinner.

Birthday celebrator Sis. Lyding Ramirez



LEFT: The Board's dance presentation **RIGHT:** Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Purification of Sta. Maria Church. With the group is Sis. Beth Salmon (2nd from left, front row) and DMI Diocesan Chaplain Fr. Moises Cuevas (at right).



Fr. Vener Ceperes receives a plaque of appreciation from the assembly hosts after his keynote address. Region I RR Sis. Ofel Lucas stands at right.



The DMI sisters with Fr. Bong Lazaro (seated at center) during fellowship night.

Diocese Of Isabela Hosts Region I Assembly

The assembly of Region I was hosted by the Diocese of Isabela last July 23-24, 2011 at the ISU Credit Cooperative in Echague, Isabela. The assembly theme was "Strengthening the DMI Thrusts Through the Intercession of Mama Mary".

The event was well-attended with circle delegates coming from as far as Baguio City and Laoag City. DMI sisters from the Our Lady of Atocha, Mater Immaculata, Queen of Mercy and Sto. Nino de Prague Circles comprising the Diocese of Isabela were the assembly hosts.

The whole-day conference on Day 1 started with the traditional opening ceremonies with Region I Representative Sis. Ofelia Lucas welcoming the delegates and guests. Heading the guest list was International Regent Sis. Lydia Ramirez who gave an inspirational message.

Keynoting the assembly was Rev. Fr. Vener Ceperes whose topic was about

the Blessed Mother and her virtues. The chairpersons of the DMI missions then talked about their respective thrusts: Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-life, Sis. Sonia Manlapig for Morality in Media, Sis. Linda Castillo on Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Milde Tong on Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims, and Sis. Ruby Macario for Squirettes of Mary. Sis. Marilyn Abratique, regent of St. Joseph the Worker Circle of Pacdal, Baguio City spoke about Violence Against Women. A concelebrated Mass by Fr. Patrick Henry Pua, pastor of Our Lady of Atocha Parish and Fr. Bong Lazaro, pastor of Cordon Parish ended the day's program.

The fellowship night featured presentations from the different circles around the theme "Retro of 1960's" in the colorful fashion of the '60s. Ballroom dancing brought many to the dance floor. DMI sisters letting their hair down and enjoying themselves was a sight to behold that even Fr. Bong stayed awhile to watch them.

Diocese of Dipolog Hosts 22nd Mindanao Area Conference...cont'd. from Page 5

the fellowship. The delegates came in colorful floral attires which transformed the hall into a beach in Waikiki. The evening's guest of honor was Zamboanga del Norte Provincial Board Member Cedric Adriatico who represented the Governor. In his speech, the Board Member, an active church worker, paid tribute to the Blessed Mother and her role in our lives as the Mother of Jesus. He later acceded to a request to act as member of the board of judges for the regional presentation contest. A surprise number, an interpretative Hawaiian dance by Sis. Sonia Manlapig, drew enthusiastic applause from her audience who gamely threw coins during the performance. Prizes were given to the contest winners while DMI sisters who made the event a success received plaques and certificates of appreciation. The evening ended with the closing remarks by Vicarial Regent Sis. Clarita Bengua. Sis. Emma Jalosjos, program emcee, helped make the evening a truly fun-filled affair.

Region IV Assembly Underscores Availability as Engine for Purpose-Driven Service

by Sis. Lyn Millora, Regent, Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle

The Regional Assembly of the Diocese of Malolos (Region IV) was held on Sept. 4, 2011 at the Hiyas Convention Center in Malolos City.

The regional assembly started with the grand entrance/parade led by Region IV officers headed by Regional Representative (RR) Sis. Flor Barcial, Diocesan Regent (DR) Sis. Violy Luna, the vicarial regents and 19 regents of circles comprising the region. A total of 243 circle delegates attended the assembly. The Diocesan Regent Sis. Violy welcomed the participants and RR Sis. Flor delivered the opening statement.

The keynote speaker was International Regent Sis. Lydia Ramirez (a *taal na Bulakena* having been born in Marilao, Bulacan) who expounded on the assembly theme "In God's and Mother Mary's Service, Our Greatest Ability Is Our AVAILABILITY". She said that every DMI must be ready, willing and able to perform the five missions. Every parish must also have a DMI circle. She also announced the formation of a second circle in California and soon, one in Macau. Past RR Sis. Tesy Villarino introduced Sis. Lyding.

DMI *Newsette* Editor Sis. Sally Estrada was the second speaker. She was introduced by Past RR Sis. Presing Hermogenes. Sis. Sally started her presentation by relating her topic "It's Never Too Late! Growing Up



The officers of the Diocese of Malolos and Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle with Int'l Regent Sis. Lydia Ramirez, DMI Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada, SMI Int'l Chairperson Sis. Ruby Macario, Past RRs Sisters Piling San Juan, Presing Hermogenes and Tesy Villarino, RR Sis. Flor Barcial, Diocesan Regent Sis. Violy Luna, Vicarial Regent Sis. Mila Reyes and Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle Regent Sis. Lyn Millora.

(Old) Gracefully" to the assembly theme, stating that one's availability in serving God and Mother Mary would depend on the state of her physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Her presentation offered tips on how to achieve this, summing them all up in 5 words: LOVE, LEARN, LAUGH, DREAM, PRAY which one should never cease doing for as long as she lives.

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The Region IV Assembly participants



A dance number by the Queen of Flowers Circle members

Region V Assembly

"Enjoy Health, Beauty and Long Life the DMI Way"

It is every woman's quest – good health, beauty, long life. During the assembly of Region V on August 27, 2011 at the AIM Conference Center in Makati City, some 300 delegates from the seven dioceses and one prelatore comprising Region V discovered how these can be achieved and enjoyed – the DMI way.

As the program unfolded, the enthusiasm and immersion of the delegates in the day's proceedings grew in intensity, keeping the mood upbeat from start to finish. The emceeing of Sis. Rose Enriquez, past regent of Mater Dei Circle, had a lot to do in keeping that mood.

The day's program started with a Eucharistic celebration by Rev. Fr. Santi Fernandez, pastor of Holy Eucharist Parish with the

DMI Risen Christ Choir providing the liturgical music. In his homily, Fr. Santi talked on stewardship of God's graces. Love, he said, is giving away but investing for eternal life.

The traditional opening ceremonies followed with Sis. Sonia Manlapig leading the opening prayer, the National Anthem and Pledge to the Flag by Sis. Jean Castaneda and the DMI Hymn by the Diocese of Novaliches. The diocesan regents then introduced the delegates from their respective dioceses – Sis. Rita Lucena of Antipolo, Sis. Ruby Macario of Cubao, Sis. Virgie Inigo of Imus, Sis. Sylvia San Pedro of Kalookan, Sis. Mimi Gan of Manila, Sis. Pitz Torres of Novaliches, Sis. Milde Tong of Paranaque and Sis. Josie Zabala of the Prelature of Palawan. Past International



Fr. Santi Fernandez, Mass celebrant

Regents Sisters Myrna Zapanta and Sonia Mayo also attended.

In her opening remarks, Vice-International Regent and Region V RR Sis. Mila Villanueva welcomed the delegates and expounded on the assembly theme and gave a preview of the day's program. She said that the assembly is a "festival". "So let's all shout for joy to God, our defender. Start the music and beat the tambourines,

play pleasant music on the harps and the lyres. Blow the trumpet for the Festival." (Psalm 81)

International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez, coming straight from the airport, congratulated the assembly organizers and greeted the delegates. She noted that having Makati ("the city that never sleeps") as the assembly venue fits the theme perfectly. The city's slogan ("*Ganito Kami sa Makati*") which expresses



The hardworking Region V Assembly Working Committee.



Laughter Yoga advocate Ms. Elvie Punzalan-Estavillo leads participants in a yoga exercise.



Laughter yoga in progress



Past IRs Sisters Sonia Mayo and Myrna Zapanta flanked by Past Int'l Treasurer Sis. Lydia Ordonez, at left and Vice-IR for Luzon Sis. Mila Villanueva at right. Standing behind them is Sis. Ruby Macario.



Sis. Mila Villanueva awards certificate of appreciation to Fr. Dennis Paez, SDB, guest speaker.



The Mid-Life Crisis Band in a mini-concert

the pride Makati residents have in the benefits that the city government provides for them augurs well with the theme.

"See what you have and enjoy them. Balance your life. That's how you can attain health, beauty and long life," Sis. Lyding exhorted. She ended her inspirational message by reminding the DMIs present to continue the fight against the passage of the Reproductive Health Bill and the Divorce Bill which destroy the essence of family, the bedrock of society.

The morning's guest speaker was Ms. Elvie Punzalan-Estavillo, the founder of Laughter Yoga in the Philippines. Ms. Estavillo, an ex-ADB staffer, was introduced by Region V Alternate RR Sis. Cora Afuang. Ms. Estavillo said that laughter yoga started in Mumbai, India in 1995. Finding for herself the many benefits of laughter yoga, "the easiest, fastest stress buster", it became her advocacy. "Laughter is nature's best moisturizer and tranquilizer. One minute of laughter equals 10 minutes of carbo exercise," she said. She also told her

audience that the laughter must come from the heart, accompanied by breathing (oxygenation) from the diaphragm. Exhalation must take longer. She demonstrated and taught her audience yoga exercises that would serve as therapy for some illnesses, even defective vision. The hall resounded with laughter; the laughter yoga dictating the delegates' mood for the rest of the day.

The afternoon session started with the reports of the mission chairpersons: Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-

life, Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims, Sis. Sonia Manlapig for Morality in Media, Sis. Sally Estrada, *DMI Newsette* editor who pinch-hitted for Sis. Linda Castillo for Upliftment of Women Workers and Sis. Ruby Macario for Squirettes of Mary.

Fr. Dennis Paez, SDB was the afternoon's guest speaker whose presentation centered on "The Truths on the Blessed Mother" for "To Know HER

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Region V Assembly: "Enjoy Health, Beauty and Long Life the DMI Way"...cont'd. from Page 11

Is To Love HIM More". Fr. Paez was introduced by Sis. Mosette Don, vicarial regent of San Martin de Porres, Diocese of Paranaque. From her, we learned that Fr. Paez is a marriage and family counselor and a Mariologist.

Fr. Paez talked on the dogmas and truths about Mary as a consequence of her being the mother of Jesus. He enumerated the Catholic Church's five dogmas on the Blessed Mother, citing their biblical, ecclesiastical and traditional bases. The five dogmas are:

The dogma of Mary as the mother of God
The dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary
The dogma of the Immaculate Conception

The dogma of the Assumption of Mary
The dogma of Mary as the Mediatrix of All Grace

The first four dogmas have already been proclaimed. Work is in progress for the proclamation of the fifth dogma.

Fr. Paez, his talk punctuated by his characteristic humor, underscored the role that the Blessed Mother had taken in the work of Redemption and her continuing work as mediatrix at various points in the history of the Catholic Church. Through all these, he said that the Blessed Mother's message is that she loves us very much. And how do we respond to such love? By upholding and practicing three virtues:

humility, humility, humility. All else follow.

The conference session ended with a Thanksgiving prayer led by Sis. Ruby Macario. But this did not signal the end of the assembly. The delegates had their *merienda-cena* while eagerly awaiting the mini-concert of the Mid-Life Crisis Band, a group of doctors and professionals led by Ronnie Henares.

It was worth an hour's wait. A re-charged crowd swayed, stomped, danced and jumped as the band dished out the music hits of the 60s, 70s and 80s. Even the seniors seemed not to tire until the band played the last song at 7:30 p.m.

And who says that fun and

enjoyment have no room when serving the Lord and Mother Mary? The Bible says something about this: "A cheerful heart is good medicine; but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." (Proverbs 17:21)

As the delegates walked past the doors on their way home, they thanked Sis. Mila for the unique and enjoyable program. Their comments, in summary are as follows: "Super *saya talaga!* Good work!" (Sis. Menchie) "We enjoyed and learned a lot; the laughter is medicine for both body and soul. Thank you and God bless." (Sis. Lucy Flores) "We never danced as we did tonight." (Sisters from Palawan) "One of the best I ever attended. Fr. Dennis Paez was heaven-sent." (Sis. Sonia)

Region IV Assembly Underscores Availability as Engine for Purpose-Driven Service...cont'd. from Page 9

Squirettes of Mary International Chairperson Sis. Ruby Macario discussed the qualifications for SMI membership, age requirement of prospective members and various activities that SMIs may engage in. She disclosed that only 30% of DMI circles nationwide have SMI circlettes, so she encouraged DMI circles to form their own circlette. To the delight of everyone, Sis. Ruby did an

interpretative dance of the song "I Have a Dream" with her audience agreeing that they, too, believe in angels. Sis. Ruby was introduced by Sis. Belle Ortiz, SMI Diocesan chairperson.

The afternoon session started with a Eucharistic celebration by Fr. Reggie Asuncion. DMI diocesan chaplain. Dance numbers by the Queen of Flowers Circle, the Rosarian Circle and the

Santissimo Sacramento Circle provided the program intermission. The mental gymnastics prepared by Sis. Tesy Villarino tested the participants' mental alertness. The circle which garnered the highest score received a prize. Past RR Sis. Piling San Juan also gave an inspirational talk. Program emcees Diocesan Secretary Sis. Cora Raymundo and Upliftment of Women Workers Diocesan Chairperson Sis. Celia

Mendiola saw to the smooth flow of the day's program.

The three host vicariates - Vicariate of the Immaculate Conception headed by Vicarial Regent (VR) Sis. Cora Villano, Vicariate of St. Joseph II & St. Augustin under VR Sis. Gloria Gatuz and Vicariate of St. Martin of Tours & St. Francis of Assisi under VR Sis. Mila Reyes - left no stone unturned to make the whole-day event a big success.

CARAGA Region (Region XII) Holds Assembly

The DMI of Caraga Region (Region XII) held its Regional Assembly at the Capitol Seminar Hall in Tandag City, Surigao del Sur on May 28-29, 2011. Participating in the assembly were the Dioceses of Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro, Gingoog, Butuan, Agusan, Surigao and Tandag.

International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez led the

international officers who graced the occasion. In her inspirational message, she dwelt on the assembly theme "Following Jesus and Everything for Mother Mary in Our Daily Lives" and urged the assembly delegates to continue their strong opposition to the Reproductive Health Bill in support of the pro-life stand of the Catholic Church.

Highlight of the event were the talks and presentations by invited speakers: Rev. Fr. Elvies Petros, DCT, parochial vicar, for Pro-Life; International Vice-Regent for Mindanao Sis. Cecille Apura for Morality in Media; International Chair for SMI Sis. Ruby Macario for Squirettes of Mary; Region XIV Representative Sis. Miriam Angot for Upliftment of Women Workers and a

representative from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology for Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims.

During the assembly, the members of the newly-organized SMI Divine Mercy Circlette, the youth arm of the Immaculate Conception Circle of Tandag, received their membership certificates and SMI pins.

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LEFT: The Parade of Circles opened the assembly. **RIGHT:** Past CBCP President, Bishop Nereo Odchimar of the Diocese of Tandag with international officers, from left, Region XII RR Sis. Lelis Pimentel, IR Sis. Lyding Ramirez and Vice-IR for Mindanao Sis. Cecille Apura.



Regional and diocesan officers of Region XII with Sisters Ruby Macario, Cecille Apura, Lelis Pimentel and Lyding Ramirez.



Members of the SMI Divine Mercy Circlette who received their membership certificates and SMI pins. They are shown in photo with Tandag Diocesan Regent Sis. Annie Ty and Sisters Lyding Ramirez, Ruby Macario and Lelis Pimentel.



Carwash materials and supplies donated by the Our Lady of the Atonement Circle to the NAPC-PWD BGH carwash outlet.



Circle officers with NAPC-PWD Head Edward de los Santos. From left: Sisters Lyn Zamuco, Zeny Cabunilas, Rose Jamorabon, Meli Escano and Cristie Escano.

From Baguio City

Our Lady of the Atonement Circle Reaches Out with a "Cleaning" Hand

By Sis. Romelda Frances Escano, Circle Secretary

A group of DMI sisters from the newly organized Our Lady of the Atonement Circle in Baguio City turned over last April 7, 2011 cleaning materials for a carwash outlet located at the ground floor of the Cobalt Bldg. of Baguio General Hospital right at the junction leading to Kennon Road.

What sets this carwash outlet apart from the others in Baguio City is that it was organized and now being manned by selected members of the city's recognized and accredited group of persons with disabilities, the Fr. Rafael Desmedt Multi-Purpose Cooperative (FARAD). The carwash business is run by the Anti-Poverty Commission – Persons with Disabilities Office (NAPC-PWD) which was established in 2002.

The NAPC was created under the provisions of RA 8425 which aims to institutionalize the social reform and

poverty alleviation program of the government. Persons with disabilities have been identified as one of several marginalized sectors needing particular assistance. The NAPC-PWD Office is headed by Mr. Edward de los Santos, a wheelchair user himself. The carwash business is one of several initiatives to engender self-reliance among physically-challenged citizens and help them gain financial independence.

The Pro-Life Committee of the Our Lady of the Atonement Circle chose to support the NAPC-PWD's carwash business as its first outreach project. Donations of carwash supplies such as Formula 1 shampoos and waxes, sponges, car chamois, felts and others were turned over to Mr. de los Santos (*Manong* Edward) himself who expressed deep appreciation for the donations he received on behalf of his hearing- and orthopedically-

impaired employees at the carwash.

The funds used to buy the carwash supplies were personal donations of the circle members led by the Pro-Life Committee's Sisters Edith Grageda, Aurora Ambanloc and Lourdes Dauz. Also with the group during the turn-over of donations were Regent Sis. Zeny Cabunilas, Vice-Regent Sis. Rose Jamorabon, Recording Secretary Sis. Meli Escano, Chancellor Sis. Lyn Zamuco and Inner Guide Sis. Cristie Escano.

The Circle's first outreach project brought deep satisfaction and sense of fulfillment to the DMI sisters. If generosity is its own gift, the members of the Our Lady of the Atonement Circle had been more than repaid, seeing *Manong* Edward's smile of gratitude and the sight of carwash employees busily going about their tasks as productive members of society.

From Dagupan City

Our Lady Of the Miraculous Medal Circle Joins CBCP'S Handwritten Unity Bible Project

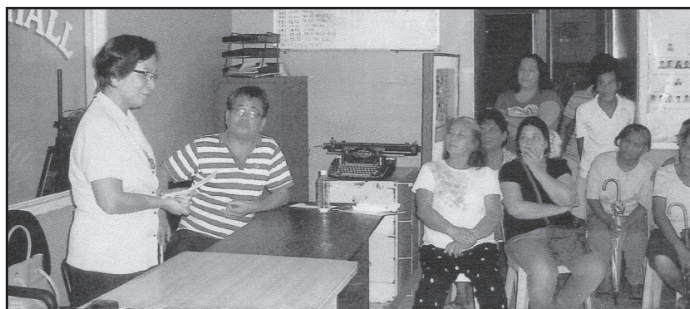
The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the Philippine Bible Society jointly launched the "May They Be One Bible" Campaign which aims to provide 5 million Bibles to 5 million less fortunate Christians in 5 years to foster the spread of the Good News.

In conjunction with this campaign, the Handwritten Unity Bible (HUB) project was initiated across the Philippines to drum up interest and awareness of God's Word. The project entails the rendering of the Bible as a

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Regent Sis. Aileen Santos as she writes her verse during the launch of the HUB Project.



St. Raphael the Archangel Circle Grants Micro-Financing For Small Business

The St. Raphael the Archangel Circle put up a micro-financing project in Bgy. San Rafael, Tarlac City. Conceptualized by the Circle's Upliftment of Women Workers Committee, the idea was presented to the Barangay Council who consequently set aside P100,000 for the project. A counterpart fund of P100,000 was provided by the Provincial Government. The project aims to assist

women operating small businesses obtain loans with low interest.

According to Circle Regent Sis. Tina Acuna, the next phase of the project is the conduct of skills training and development of new business opportunities. Sis. Tina is shown in photo discussing the set of policies for the Micro-Financing Project.

From Tarlac City



25 Couples Wed in Kasalang Bayan

The Our Lady of the Ransom Circle of Tarlac City co-sponsored with the Parish Pastoral Council a *Kasalang Bayan* at the San Sebastian Cathedral on June 25, 2011.

Twenty-five couples living together received the sacrament of matrimony performed by Fr. Melvin Castro, senior parochial vicar, assisted by Fr. Jowi Mendoza, asst. parish priest.

From Marikina City

News Briefs from St. Paul of the Cross Circle

The St. Paul of the Cross Circle led by Regent Sis. Nini Calma had a full calendar during the summer months of 2011. Several projects the circle undertook for the DMI missions are reported in this issue.

Pro-life.

The members of the Pro-life Committee headed by Sis. Alma Luces conducted

medical missions and outreach projects such as 'Operation Tule', one in Talim Island, Binangonan, Rizal and the other at the St. Paul of the Cross Parish in Marikina City. Medical attention was also given to the indigent residents of the two communities. Free medicines and vitamins donated by generous donors were also provided to the



The members of the St. Paul of the Cross Circle with International Chairperson for Pro-life Sis. Helen de Leon (2nd from right, seated) during her talk in one of the circle's meetings.

outreach beneficiaries.

Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims.

Continuing what has

been started some years back, Sis. Weng Delansing and her committee regularly

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From Tondo, Manila

Highlights from Cause of Our Joy Circle



"Pedicab Hulong Boundary Program". The Cause of Our Joy Circle of St. Joseph Parish, Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila headed by Regent Sis. Yolanda Concepcion turned over 15 pedicabs to beneficiaries last May 11, 2011. The pedicabs were the second batch to be given under the Circle's livelihood program. Present during the turn-over were Past International Treasurer and Region V RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Alternate RR Sis. Cora Ajuang, Diocesan Regent Sis. Mimi Gan and Sisters Zeny Pleyto and Jean Castaneda. The pedicabs were blessed by Fr. Nestie Gungon, parish priest.



Relief Goods for Fire Victims. The Cause of Our Joy Circle distributed relief goods to some 130 families who were victims of an early dawn fire in S. Trinidad, Gagalangin, Tondo and Juan Luna, Tondo, Manila recently. Regent Sis. Yollie Concepcion and Welfare Committee Chair Sis. Ligaya Gomez led the distribution of the relief goods and water to the fire victims.

From Bocaue, Bulacan

Queen of Flowers Circle Sponsors Cooking Demo

The Queen of Flowers Circle of the St. Martin of Tours Parish in Bocaue, Bulacan sponsored a cooking demo as part of its livelihood project on March 12, 2011 at the parish meeting room.

The project was undertaken by the Circle's Upliftment of Women Workers Committee under Chairperson Sis. Tita Galvez, a past regent. Sis. Tita herself taught and demonstrated the preparation and cooking of *leche flan* and *siomai*. Bro. Mario, husband of Sis. Paz de los Reyes, circle treasurer, also demonstrated the preparation of *puto*, *kutchinta* and *pichi-pichi*.

Unemployed housewives and mothers in the parish as well as members of the circle were the participants in the demo-seminar.



Participants watch the cooking demo being conducted by Sis. Tita Galvez.

The finished products of the seminar served with macaroni soup were enjoyed by the participants as their *merienda* after the activity. They came away equipped with another know-how that would help augment their income.

News Briefs from St. Paul of the Cross Circle...cont'd. from Page 16

visit the family of a Marikina City Jail detainee to extend moral support and material and spiritual assistance. The circle helps four of the six children of the prisoner with their school needs such as their daily transportation and *baon*, school uniforms, shoes and bags.

Upliftment of Women Workers. In pursuance of this DMI thrust, the Committee has extended support to the family of the prisoner the Circle has adopted by giving additional capital of P1,000 to the wife who sells newspapers at a street corner near their shanty. This will give

her a chance to earn more for the sustenance of her family.

Squirettes of Mary. Taking advantage of the summer vacation, the "future DMIs of St. Paul of the Cross" kept themselves busy with various activities such as a pilgrimage to the Marian churches of the

Diocese of Antipolo. Led by their Lady Counselor Sis. Carol Abucay, they went to nine Marian churches where they offered flowers to Mama Mary. Capping their summer activities was their participation in the parish *santacruz* as "big" angels.

From the Diocese of Paranaque

Diocese of Paranaque Launches Tree-Planting for Life

Early in the morning of August 20, 2011, 135 DMI sisters representing nine of the 13 circles comprising the Diocese of Paranaque assembled at the proposed site of Rotary Homes in Paranaque City to plant trees. The activity has been dubbed "Tree-Planting for Life".

A joint project of Rotary International District 3830, the Paranaque City Government, Gawad Kalinga and ANCOP, the property is being developed as a relocation site for families residing along the Paranaque River as part of the Paranaque

River Rehabilitation Program. Located along C-5 Extension near Multinational Village, Rotary Homes will house some 1,000 families and will be a self-contained community when completed.

The DMI sisters led by Diocesan Regent Sis. Milde Tong and Pro-Life International Chairperson Sis. Helen de Leon jumpstarted the tree-planting project by donating and planting 100 cloned *gemelina* trees along the roads of Rotary Homes. The activity is a pro-life project of the DMI Diocese of Paranaque.



Sisters Helen de Leon and Milde Tong (5th and 7th from left, respectively) pose with part of the 135 sisters who participated in the tree-planting activity.



The DMI sisters get ready for action.

Our Lady Of the Miraculous Medal Circle ...cont'd. from Page 15

handwritten work of individuals from Aparri to Jolo.

The Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Circle of the St. John the Evangelist Cathedral Parish in Dagupan City was one of the organizations invited to participate in the project.

The event was held last June 11, 2011 at the Santuario de San Juan Evangelista. The participating DMI sisters wrote Bible verses from the Book of Genesis in English and Pangasinense.

The event started with the Enthronement of the Holy

Bible, the greatest book ever written, followed by the formal introduction of the HUB Project by Bishop Renato Mayugba. To set the tone for the verse writing, Fr. Fidelis Layog made a catechesis on Genesis 41. Regent Sis. Aileen Santos and Sis. Aurora Fernandez wrote

the verses assigned to them in English while Sisters Norma Tababan, Nenita Bautista, Jane Rosario and Isabelita Daroya wrote theirs in Pangasinense. It is their fervent hope that their efforts will go a long way in promoting the Bible among Filipino families.

From Las Pinas City

Mary Mother of the Church Circle Conducts Mother's Day Prison Outreach

Last March 14, 2011, the DMIs from the Mary Mother of the Church Circle of BF Resort Village, Las Pinas City celebrated Mother's Day at the Las Pinas City Jail with some 70 female inmates and their children. The activity started with a Holy Mass celebrated by Msgr. Felipe Ocol, parish priest, attended by the male and

female prison inmates.

Then came the distribution of school bags and school supplies to 51 children of the inmates under the Circle's "School Supplies Ko, Bigay N'yo" outreach program. The kids, Grades 1 to 6 pupils, excitedly received the goods. To motivate the children to perform well in their studies,



The DMIs from Mary Mother of the Church Circle with Msgr. Felipe Ocol, their parish priest

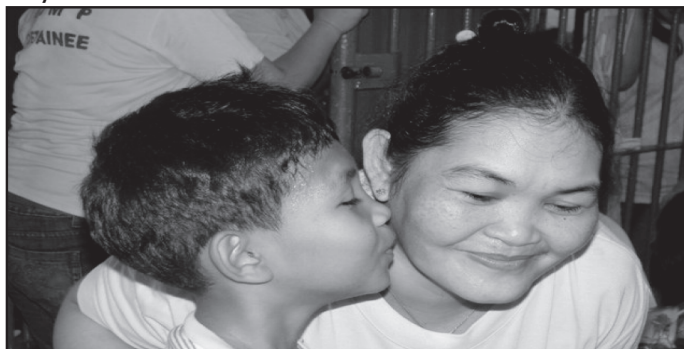
a prize in the form of educational assistance will be given in December to top performing pupils for each grade level.

The kids made Mother's Day cards for their inmate

moms after receiving the school supplies. Their moms, some teary-eyed, happily received their cards sealed with kisses from their children. Merienda was later served to everyone.



Inmates' children eagerly prepare Mother's Day cards after receiving their school bags.



A boy kisses his inmate mom after giving the Mother's Day card that he himself made.

Our Lady of Unity Circle Attends Congressional Hearing on RH Bill



Officers and members of the Our Lady of Unity Circle of the Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in BF Homes, Paranaque City attended a hearing on the RH Bill at the House of Representatives last March 8, 2011 to show their support for the pro-life stance of congressmen who oppose the Bill. The group is shown on their way to the gallery of the Batasang Pambansa.

From Quezon City

A Busy Summer for Regina Mundi Circle

The Regina Mundi Circle and SMI Circlette of the Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish, Broadway, Quezon City reported a number of activities during the summer months. A few are captured in the accompanying photos.



LEFT: Rummage Sale. The Regina Mundi Circle held a Rummage Sale on April 2, 2011 as a fund-raising project for the benefit of its adopted community in Bgy. Damayang Lagi. **RIGHT: Visit to Molave Youth Center.** Circle members visited the inmates of the Molave Youth Rehabilitation Center on May 21, 2011. The activity was part of the prison outreach project of the Diocese of Cubao. Circles in the Diocese take turns in visiting the Center on rotation basis. The schedule of each circle is every two months.



LEFT: Parish Sportsfest. The SMI Regina Mundi Circlette members participated in the Parish Sportsfest on April 2, 2011. **RIGHT: Participation in Holy Week Activities.** SMI members performed a dance number as part of the Parish's Siete Palabras on Good Friday. The dance participants are shown in the above photo.

CARAGA Region (Region XII) Holds Assembly...cont'd. from Page 13

The delegates concretized their position on the RH Bill by signing Res. No. 004-2011 expressing their strong opposition to the passage into law of the Bill.

Adding color to the assembly was a Hawaiian dance contest which the DMIs from Butuan City won.

The fellowship was made

even more fun-filled with the Hawaiian dance performed by Region XII RR Sis. Rosalinda Pimentel and Diocesan Regent Sis. Annie Ty.

Returning home with fond memories of this year's assembly, the DMIs of Region XII eagerly look forward to next year's event.

From Kalibo, Aklan

New Bishop of Kalibo Lauds DMI Pro-Life Billboards

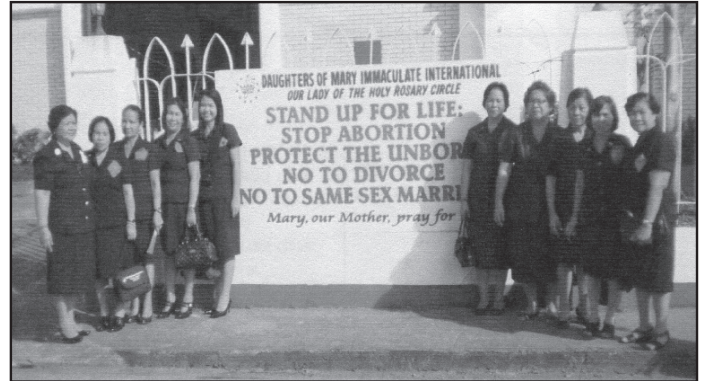
By Sis. Jean T. Velarde, Past International Regent

After two years of waiting, a new bishop was installed in the Diocese of Kalibo last July 27, 2011. His Excellency Msgr. Jose Corazon T. Tala-oc, fondly called Bishop Cor by his *kababayans*, is an Aklanon and was formerly Bishop of Romblon.

A welcome luncheon was tendered for Bishop Cor by the DMI and the Knights of Columbus on August 6, 2011. Having served in most of the parishes in Aklan since his ordination to the priesthood, he was warmly welcomed during the occasion. In his message, Bishop Cor lauded the DMI and

expressed his gratitude for the Pro-life billboards prominently displayed in the church grounds of twenty parishes (out of the 24 in the Diocese) where there are DMI circles. He said that the Pro-Life billboard is a big voice in support of the Church's stand on various pro-life and family issues, particularly against abortion, divorce and same sex marriage.

Incidentally, while Bishop Cor was in Romblon, he invited the DMIs of Aklan to organize circles in the Diocese. Due to the difficulty and the time involved in going to this province of seven islands, however, the Aklan DMIs have not yet



Officers and members of the Holy Rosary Circle of New Washington, Aklan led by their regent, Sis. Jessica Ferrer pose before their pro-life billboard before their scheduled diocesan exemplification of new members. With them is Past International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde (at left).

been able to do so. In God's own time, they still hope to achieve this "elusive dream".

I encourage DMI circles to make more Pro-life billboards to make our

stand known and tell the world what we believe in and what we stand and fight for. I suggest that we use materials more durable than tarpaulin for a more lasting display of our advocacies.

Our Boracay Experience...cont'd. from Page 24

Shannon Irish Patino

One of my life's unforgettable moments is when we went to Boracay. I couldn't contain my excitement to reach our

destination, the long and tiring trip notwithstanding. And lo and behold! The wonders of Boracay at last! All my tiredness went away as soon as my feet touched the

fine white sand and the caress of the clear blue water. Finding it hard to get over all that beauty and the warmth and kindness of new-found friends that surrounded

me, I bought some souvenirs to remind me of my beautiful experience. Wonderful Boracay!

From Tacloban City

Relief Goods Distributed to Flood Victims

The residence of International Advocate and Region XI RR Sis. Rebbie Pacanan in Tacloban City became the headquarters for the preparation and distribution of relief goods to residents of Barangay 95 and 95-A who were victims of widespread flooding in their area in late March.

The relief goods were distributed on April 2, 2011 to 150 families, each pack containing rice, groceries, used clothing, blankets, towels, etc. from funds and donations in kind coming from the DMI National Office and the Tower of Ivory Circle of Tacloban City.



From Ormoc City

Lecture on Fetal Development



Past Region XI RR Sis. Alice Tugonon, a medical doctor (2nd from left in photo), delivered a lecture on Fetal Development at the Ormoc Maternity and Children's Hospital last May 25, 2011.

The lecture which was attended by expectant mothers was a pro-life project of the Sts. Peter

& Paul Circle of Ormoc City. The activity was undertaken with assistance from the nursing staff and attendants of the hospital. The members of the SMI Sts. Peter & Paul Circlette were on hand to assist in the registration of participants and attend to their needs.

From Paranas, Samar

Love Drive Held in Observance of Women's Month

The officers and members of the Our Lady Mediatrix of All Graces of Paranas, Samar distributed relief goods to identified indigent families in six barangays of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish in Paranas.

The activity was undertaken as part of a Love Drive the Circle launched in celebration of Women's Month last March, 2011. Regent Sis. Gemma Llauder (at right in photo) spearheaded the drive.



From Zamboanga City

Hataw 2011 A Big Success

August 21, 2011 was a BIG day for the DMIs and SMIs of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga who got together early in the morning for *Hataw* 2011. The activity was spearheaded by the Diocesan Pro-Life Committee chaired by Sis. Ellen Velasco for the purpose of promoting health and wellness as well as camaraderie among the participants. The *hataw* was one of the DMI's avenues to draw awareness to the CBCP theme in its Pastoral Letter: "Proclaim life, in season and out of season".

A short walk from the Rizal Monument fronting City Hall to Paseo del Mar started the activity. Two nursing students from the Ateneo de Zamboanga University conducted the *hataw* (light physical exercises) upon reaching the Paseo. Present in the activity were International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez, Past IR Sis. Beling Panganiban, Diocesan Regent Sis. Beth Salmon and her alternate, Sis. Angie Baez, Pro-life Chair Sis. Ellen Velasco and other officers of the Archdiocese and the circles comprising it.

The participants rated the



Hataw participants walk to Paseo del Mar. At center is Diocesan Regent Sis. Beth Salmon.



Hataw na!

activity a success in terms of achieving the objective of "proclaiming life, in and

out of season" and promoting camaraderie among themselves.

From Butuan City

Holy Redeemer Circle's Medical Outreach

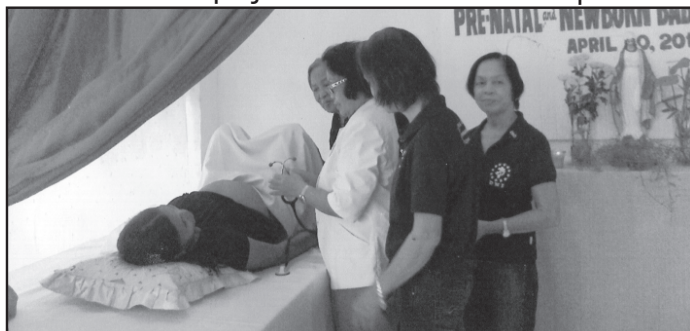
The Pro-life Committee of the Holy Redeemer Circle of Butuan City sponsored a medical outreach project

last April 20, 2011 providing pre-natal check-up and screening of newborn babies. It was held at the Our Mother of Perpetual

Help Parish.

The project was undertaken with assistance from volunteer doctors and the

Department of Health. Free medicines and vitamins were distributed during the outreach. - Sis. Charito Canete, Vicarial Regent.





The Squirettes who recorded their memories and impressions of the 13th SMI National Biennial Convention in Boracay last May, 2011. Left photo, in their SMI uniform, from left: Eloisa, Emmarie, Shannon and Sofia. Right photo, on the beach: Eloisa, Sofia, Shannon and Emmarie.

Postscripts: 13th SMI National Biennial Convention

Our Boracay Experience

(Four Squirettes of Mary members of the Mary Mother of the Church Circlette of BF Resort Village, Las Pinas City have written about their unforgettable experience as delegates to the 13th SMI National Biennial Convention in Boracay last May 13-15, 2011. - Ed.)

Ma. Eloisa T. Tan

I have wanted to go to Boracay for the longest time. Last May, I was able to join the SMI Convention in Boracay. I learned a lot from the trip. I gained new friends and I had the chance to reach out to others. Not only did we enjoy the beauty of the place but at the same time, the activities we had were very educational and fun.

I love every morning when we woke up early and worshipped God through prayers and songs which really strengthened my faith.

We also had fun swimming in the clear blue water and the food was really great! I can't forget these experiences. I'm so proud and honored that I was nominated for treasurer of the national SMI organization. I didn't win but not everyone was given the chance to be nominated. I promise to show and do my best next time.

I would like to thank all the officers of the DMI for choosing me to be part of your group. Thank you for the guidance and support. In return, I promise to honor and praise our Mama Mary and continue

to be a role model for the youth as an SMI member.

Emmarie Ann Abaya

In Boracay, I got to build a sand castle for the first time. I felt I was seven years old again. Being chosen as one of five candidates to compete for Princess of the Night out of more than a hundred participants during the White Masquerade Ball on the beach was a happy and unforgettable experience for me. It was really unexpected. Woot!

Lucille Sofia Kanapi

It was my first out-of-

town trip without my parents. I was luckily chosen by the DMI and we went all the way to Boracay last May. We stayed at Casa Pilar. It was great to have the place all to ourselves. I had fun staying under the sun, enjoyed the white sand and clear blue water that Bora is famous for. The food was great and I enjoyed making new friends. They were all nice to me. My joy is indescribable! I thank the Lord, Tita Marissa and Mommy Sol for this wonderful opportunity.

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