



DMI NEWSETTE

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41st NATIONAL OFFICERS' MEETING HELD

The 41st National Officers' Meeting of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International was held on May 2, 2021 bringing together 377 DMI sisters composed of the International Officers, Regional Representatives, diocesan regents, vicarial regents and circle regents or their representatives coming from various parts of the country via Zoom.

DMII International Chaplain Rev. Fr. Jerome Cruz was celebrant of a Holy Mass livestreamed from the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of San Jose in Navotas City.

The meeting started promptly at 9:00 a.m. with an opening prayer led by International Vice-Regent for Luzon Sis. Milde Tong. The opening remarks was delivered by a special guest, Bishop Honesto Ongtioco of the Diocese of Cubao. The good Bishop greeted the DMII for forty years of serving the parish communities. He thanked the DMI sisters for their untiring effort in pursuing their advocacies through the DMI Missions. He said that their services are needed more than ever today at this time of the pandemic.

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IR Sis. Ruby Macario presents the books on the DMII Membership Database and the integrated Red and Yellow books.

DMII MEMBERSHIP DATABASE ESTABLISHED

On its 40th year, the membership database of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International has been installed, the result of a survey conducted by a group headed by International Auditor for Membership, Sis. Juliet Cruz. The position was created by the International



Sis. Juliet Cruz

Board in May, 2018 at a board meeting in Baguio City coinciding with the DMII 21st Biennial Convention and 40th Anniversary celebration. Sis. Juliet is also assigned

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DMII DATABASE PER REGION "YEAR-END 2019" (SUMMARY)

# of Diocese	87 Dioceses
# of Vicariates	520 (average VRS/Diocese - 6)
# of Parishes	3292 (average Parishes/VRS - 6)
# of Circles	520 (% Circles of Total Parishes - 16%)
# of Members	15080

REGIONS	DIOCESE	VICARIATES	PARISH	CIRCLES	MEMBERS
I	8	33	257	11	523
II	7	28	182	48	1412
III	4	26	213	40	1200
IV	1	10	107	26	854
V	10	66	484	77	2324
VI	1	13	87	17	459
VII	7	45	207	38	1088
VIII	10	48	290	27	531
IX	8	60	328	41	1218
X	4	47	315	37	829
XI	6	29	212	15	571
XII	5	42	223	42	1181
XIII	7	40	204	51	1371
XIV	9	33	183	50	1519
TOTAL	87	520	3292	520	15080

* not included are the five (5) circles outside the Philippines

ST. JOSEPH, PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH



My beloved Daughters of Mary Immaculate:

One very beautiful event that was declared by Pope Francis was the celebration of the 150th Year of the Proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal church. To mark the occasion, the Pope wrote a very inspiring Apostolic Letter entitled "*Patris Corde*" which means 'with a Father's heart'.

"WITH A FATHER'S HEART: that is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as "the son of Joseph"." Thus Pope Francis began his Apostolic Letter as he declared the Year of St. Joseph from December 8, 2020 until the end of this year 2021.

St. Joseph had been chosen by God to be the foster father of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. He was a father. Yet even before that, St. Joseph was betrothed to Mary, the virgin mother of the Savior. He was a husband. As the head of the Holy Family, St. Joseph had a very great responsibility to take care of mother and Child. On his shoulders laid the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation.

In *Patris Corde*, St. Joseph was described as "a beloved father", "a tender and loving father", "an obedient father", "an accepting father", "a creatively courageous father", "a working father", and "a father in the shadows". In the life of Mary, we are truly certain that she relied very heavily on St. Joseph for the sustenance and protection of the family. We can imagine the family sharing the daily meals provided by St. Joseph. We could see Joseph teaching Jesus the secrets of the trade in carpentry. On Jewish feasts and celebrations, we could picture St. Joseph leading the family in the rituals of observance. In the Gospels, we find St. Joseph helping Mary in the upbringing of the Child Who is to become the Redeemer.

The roles of St. Joseph as father to Jesus and husband to Mary illustrate the preeminent and intimate relationship he had with Jesus and Mary. We remember how Pope Francis, in his visit to the Philippines, had shared that he would put under the image of the sleeping St. Joseph his notes containing his cares and problems. Later, he would find solace and positive resolutions to them with the help of St. Joseph.

In these times of the pandemic, as we all reel under the hardships of isolation and desolation, the feelings of uncertainty and fear, we can find an ally, a protector, a father in St. Joseph to whom Jesus and Mary had entrusted their own lives.

As Daughters of Mary Immaculate, we realize that this Year of St. Joseph is really a blessed year to rediscover the beauty of the role of St. Joseph in the story of our salvation. Jesus must have truly loved St. Joseph whom He knew as a father who took care of Him. Jesus must have respected Joseph so much that He did not take offense in being known as the carpenter's son.

Joseph loved Jesus as his own son after he understood that God was bidding him to stand as father to this Boy born from above. He was willing to stake his own life for the fulfillment of the Boy's mission. Thus, Joseph lived not mere obedience to the heavenly voice but loved, yes loved, the Son given to him by God.

As DMIs, this year is a great opportunity to bring back St Joseph to our side as he had always been at the side of Jesus and Mary. The DMIs are called to inspire their husbands and sons and sons-in-law and grandsons to be like St. Joseph to their families so that every family may be blessed and gifted and holy.

We want to end this message with two prayers: the first one from the footnote of *Patris Corde*, and the second, the last prayer from the same Apostolic Letter.

Prayer to St. Joseph: (Pope Francis says: Every day, for over forty years, following Lauds I have recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a nineteenth-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. It expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph):

"Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen."

Prayer to St. Joseph:

"Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen."

Sincerely in Christ through Mary,


REV. FR. JEROME CRUZ

DMII: MOVING FORWARD LIKE STAUNCH STEWARDS IN SERVICE



My beloved sisters,

It took a while before I was able to finish this message to you. One reason is that tinge of nostalgia that has been lurking in my mind and in my heart over the past months. The realization that the day of finally relinquishing my position is becoming closer each day. And so I beg our Editor-in-Chief's indulgence for the long delay.

Looking back, I remember lining up several plans and programs to be accomplished during my term. Except for the biennial convention in Iloilo, almost all have come to fruition, the latest being the Membership Database and the integration of the Red and Yellow Books, thanks to our Special Membership and Revision Committees. In this issue, you will find a special supplement on beautiful pilgrimage sites in our country, one project that we thought would never be accomplished during my term, but for the help of our supportive officers.

Who would think that we would ever gather in a plenary to ratify actions done by the Board of Trustees during the past three years? With the cancellation of our biennial convention, we thought that such gathering would not be possible anymore. But, thanks to our appreciation and better understanding of modern technology before us, we did it. The pandemic was not a deterrent to us from acknowledging outstanding efforts of deserving circle awardees.

With the Zoom platform, we are now able to hold circle, diocesan and board meetings as well as address various current issues on pro-life, mental health, media, upliftment of women workers and stewardship, among other topics, through webinars. Monthly, we are able to gather as a DMI prayer group as our International Chaplain celebrates the Holy Eucharist online, to pray for fellow DMIs who passed away or are indisposed or suffering from some forms of pain. Soon we shall have our spiritual pilgrimage virtually.

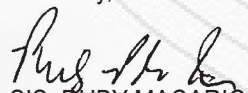
When our Youth Welfare Chairperson approached me to broach the far-fetched idea of holding a biennial convention, I had some misgivings. But our Squirettes had hearts fashioned from grit and steel and were undaunted. The Squirettes' biennial convention was a big hit – complete with the usual contests and fellowship, albeit done virtually.

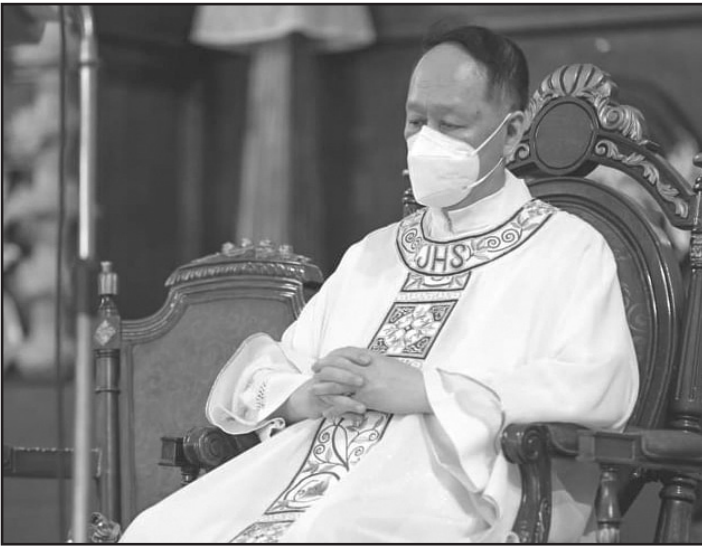
Our very existence has been threatened by a microscopic virus that has almost grounded us to a halt. I am so grateful that, with some soul-searching the pandemic has become an opportunity to awaken us from stupor to open ourselves to radical changes and face the new normal with a resolve to go in the scheme of our plans and missions.

At stake was our survival as an organization and you took the lead and set aside the risk of succumbing to our vulnerabilities and guided by Mama Mary, move forward like staunch stewards in service.

MABUHAY ANG DMI!

Sincerely,


SIS. RUBY MACARIO



DMI International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz celebrates Mass at the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of San Jose in Navotas City.

“The task of witnessing is an act of gratitude. Be happy with what you have now.”

The Covid 19 pandemic, he further said, shows how fragile and weak people are. Its positive effects, however, give families the time for togetherness which strengthens the individual members of the family.

On the year’s theme of *Missio ad Gentes*, “Gifted to Give”, he told the sisters:

- * Give even when it hurts.
- * Be thankful for what God has given (the 3 Ts – time, treasure and talent).
- * Give faithful witnessing in your everyday lives.

International Advocate Sis. Merinnisa Ligaya declared the presence of a quorum to discuss business. Approval of the minutes of the last National Officers’ Meeting held at the Golden Bay Restaurant on May 26, 2019 prepared by International Secretary Sis. Marlin Abratique then followed. International Treasurer Sis. Isabel Ticzon reported the organization’s financial performance during the period 2019-2020.

Sis. Ruby Macario, International Regent gave her annual report aided by a PowerPoint presentation. She reviewed the events leading to the culminating activity of DMII’s 40th Anniversary celebration.

2019, the first year of the incoming Board’s term, was still normal with the DMII gearing up for a major event in 2020 – the 22nd Biennial Convention in Iloilo City in May. Registration for the event went in full

swing with more than a thousand sisters registered and paid by end of the year.

The year 2020 saw many activities of the organization, even down to the circle level, put on hold because of the quarantines imposed to prevent the spread of Covid 19. Changes and adjustments were made in the programs and plans of the organization.

The International Board, meeting online, decided to move the convention date to August, 2020, then to May, 2021 until finally canceled because of the uncertainty of the situation.

Prayers and supplications were sent to the circles to be prayed by all – the “12 o’clock habit”, Oratio Imperata for Covid 19, these in addition to the Monthly Reflections, the 2000 Hail Marys and other devotional prayers that the sisters have regularly recited. A DMI Prayer Group on Facebook has been set up for members’ personal intentions to be included during a special Mass to be celebrated by the International Chaplain and for prayer offerings by the DMI sisters.

Various resolutions were approved by the International Board during their online meetings most of which introduced amendments to the DMII Articles of Incorporation and By-laws. Among these are the extension of the incumbent Board’s term until 2021 and the setting up of DMII markers in parishes with DMI circles. The resolutions were ratified during the meeting and those amending parts of the Articles & By-laws will be incorporated in a new book to be printed integrating the DMII’s Red and Yellow Books.

The circles remained active during the pandemic, reaching out to poor communities, people deprived of their livelihoods as well as victims of natural disasters such as the three typhoons that visited the country in the latter part of the year. Distribution of relief goods, food and alcohol; masks and PPEs for protection against Covid 19 were first in the DMII’s outreach activities. Many circles eventually put up community pantries assisted by other groups in their parishes modeled after the first community pantry on Maginhawa Street in Quezon City.

The DMI Missions continued to be pursued, undertaking the following projects and activities that Sis. Ruby reported as “Missions Possible”:

For Pro-Life – Celebration of February as Pro-Life Month during which motorcades with pro-life slogans and messages and visitations to the Tomb of the Unborn to offer prayers, flowers and candles were



Bishop Honesto Ongtioco of the Diocese of Cubao gives his opening remarks.



Vice-President Leni Robredo gives her closing message to end the Annual Officers' Meeting.

done, feeding programs, medical and dental missions, pro-life seminars and lectures (becoming webinars during the pandemic), assistance to calamity victims, and caring for the elderly and the environment in response to Pope Francis' *Laudato Si*.

For Morality in Media – Spiritual activities and seminars on values formation and promotion of good media, going from face-to-face to digital, use of various social media apps to promote good moral values, spirituality, and bringing Christ to the digital world, launching of a Poster-Making Contest and design of Christmas frame for FB profile pictures and promotion of devotion to the Blessed Mother.

For Upliftment of Women Workers – Trainings in meal preparation, livelihood, backyard farming, financial literacy, TESDA seminars for OFWs and marginalized women in the community, symposia promoting women causes and programs for women's spiritual upliftment.

Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims – Food assistance to prisoners' families, scholarships and other school expenses of prisoners' children, *negosyo kariton* and livelihood skills for mothers, visitation to youth centers and BJMP facilities, promotion of continuing communication venues between prisoners and their families.

For Youth Welfare/SMI – A review of the 2018 SMI Biennial Convention in Olongapo City held on May 17-19, 2019, preparations for the forthcoming 18th Biennial Convention via Zoom, the organization of 16 new circlettes, the SMI Hugot Challenge, "Hugot sa Bagot sa Panahon ng Pandemya" with 39 entries, webinars on leadership, entrepreneurship and spiritual

activities done online, Face Shield Design-Making Contest with the theme "Tuloy na Tuloy Pa Rin ang Pasko" with 112 entries and creation of FB Circlette account for video talks, catechism and hashtags for SMI members.

A DMII Membership Data Base has also been established which shows the membership profile of the DMII – 50,080 members in 520 parishes nationwide and 147 members in five circles abroad, (*See story also on page 1.*)

Winners of the Gold and Star Circle Awards and the Best Practices Awards for the DMI Missions were also announced. (*See story on pages 6 - 8.*)

Sis. Ruby ended her report by thanking the meeting participants as well as all the DMI members for their continuing work in the DMI Missions to serve their parish communities.

An intermission number was provided by Mr. Paeng Sindayan, a theater actor and commercial model, who sang "A Beautiful Life".

A video of Vice-President Leni Robredo with her short message officially closed the Annual Officers' Meeting. VP Leni said that there is no way out of this pandemic but being together. The Bayanihan spirit is very much alive, so very evident among the daughters of Mary Immaculate through their work in the DMI Missions. "Continue to serve even more" was her final message.

International Vice-Regent for Mindanao Sis. Tess Miranda ended the meeting with a closing prayer. Sis. Lorie Manalansan was the meeting host.

DMII Membership Database... from page 1

as Chairman, Special Committee on Foreign and Local Membership Affairs. Assisting Sis. Juliet are Sis. Emelie Ramos for Local Membership and Past International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva for Foreign Membership

The Membership Database Project is the first to be undertaken by the Membership Committee. Sisters Juliet, Emelie and Josie Halog, admin secretary, with the help of the 14 Regional Representatives, completed the survey started in late 2018 until December 31, 2019, just before the pandemic. Presented in book form titled “DMII at Forty”, a first copy was presented to International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario early this year. Another book form is given to the DMII office as reference for all members. All the Regional Representatives were given copies of the database of their respective regions. This database, in order to be effective, shall be updated at least every two years.

Following are the highlights of the database:

- DMII has a total membership of 15,080 as of Dec. 31, 2019.
- There are 520 DMI circles in the country.
- The Roman Catholic Church has 87 dioceses.
- The 87 dioceses have a total of 520 vicariates.
- There are 3,292 parishes under these dioceses and vicariates.

In addition to the 520 local circles, five circles had been established abroad - 4 in the USA (2 in California, 1 in Rahway, New Jersey, 1 in Burbank, Illinois) and 1 in Macau, China. Total membership in these circles is 147. A fifth circle has just been organized in Long Island, New York in the USA. The Holy Name of Jesus Circle was officially organized only in December, 2020.

Data on this circle are not yet included in the survey. (Please see the front page of the July-December, 2020 issue of the *DMI Newsette* for a complete report on the circle.)

The DMII’s organizational structure follows that of the organizational structure of the Catholic Church in the Philippines – its ecclesiastical provinces, dioceses, vicariates and parishes.

The DMII Membership Database aims to enable the organization in visualizing where it should focus in developing new circles for its expansion program. Likewise, it will help the leadership on the circle level in their membership recruitment campaign to sustain the circle’s growth.

The survey result also reveals that DMI circles are present in 520 parishes out of the 3,292 parishes or about 15.8% of the total number of parishes in the country. On per region basis, the percentage of parishes with DMI circles against the total parishes in the region ranges from a low of 7% to a high of 27%, Region XIV having the highest at 27% (50 circles in 183 parishes). Sixteen dioceses (including a few prelatures) have no DMI circle in their jurisdiction.

The DMII’s Five Missions – Pro-Life, Morality in Media, Upliftment of Women Workers, Assistance to Prisoners’ Families & their Victims and Youth Welfare/SMI – mandated by the CBCP, all aimed at serving the parish communities, particularly the marginalized, makes the organization’s presence of utmost importance in ameliorating and uplifting people’s lives, both physical and spiritual, in underserved parish communities all over the country.

Even more challenging tasks lie ahead for the DMII at forty.



STAR CIRCLE AWARDEES NAMED

Twenty-two DMI circles received the Gold Star Award and 12, the Silver Star Award during the Annual Officers’ Meeting held on May 2, 2021. For the first time, awards were also given to circles with outstanding projects in the Five DMI Missions called the Best Practices Award. They are as follows:

Gold Star Award

NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA,
Diocese of Malolos, Region IV

QUEEN OF FLOWERS CIRCLE, Diocese of
Malolos, Region IV

HOLY MARY CIRCLE, Diocese of Malolos, Region IV
OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION & CINCTURE CIRCLE, Diocese of Malolos, Region IV

ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS CIRCLE, Diocese of Antipolo, Region V

ST. GABRIEL OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS CIRCLE, Diocese of Antipolo, Region V

SAGRADO CORAZON CIRCLE, Diocese of Cubao, Region V

OUR LADY OF FATIMA CIRCLE, Diocese of Cubao, Region V

STO. NINO DE MOLINO CIRCLE, Diocese of Imus, Region V

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE CIRCLE, Diocese of Imus, Region V

SAN JOSE DE NAVOTAS CIRCLE, Diocese of Kalookan, Region V

RISEN CHRIST CIRCLE, Diocese of Paranaque, Region V

OUR LADY OF THE PILLAR CIRCLE, Diocese of Paranaque, Region V

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF KARANGALAN CIRCLE, Diocese of Pasig, Region V

STA. LUCIA CIRCLE, Diocese of Pasig, Region V

TOWER OF IVORY CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Palo, Region XI

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Davao, Region XIII

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CIRCLE, Diocese of Marbel, Region XIII

OUR LADY OF PEACE & GOOD VOYAGE CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle of the Archdiocese of Davao and the Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle of the Diocese of Imus were given special citations for scoring 100% in the set of criteria used in assigning each circle's scores.

Silver Star Award

QUEEN OF ANGELS CIRCLE, Diocese of Iba, Region III

STA. CLARA CIRCLE, Diocese of Malolos, Region IV

SAGRADA FAMILIA CIRCLE, Diocese of Cubao, Region V

NUESTRA SENORA DE NIEVA CIRCLE, Diocese of Kalookan, Region V

OUR LADY OF FATIMA BACOOD CIRCLE, Diocese of Manila, Region V

OUR LADY OF THE ROSE BACOOD CIRCLE, Diocese of Manila, Region V

SAN SEBASTIAN THE MARTYR CIRCLE, Diocese of San Pablo, Region VI

THERESIAN CIRCLE, Diocese of San Pablo, Region VI

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CIRCLE, Diocese of San Pablo, Region VI

MORNING STAR CIRCLE, Diocese of Malaybalay, Region XII

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PUTIK CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

OUR LADY OF PURIFICATION CIRCLE, Archdiocese of Zamboanga, Region XIV

BEST PRACTICES AWARDS GIVEN FOR DMII MISSIONS

For the first time, the DMII gave awards for outstanding mission projects undertaken by circles. These projects were specially cited as Mission Best Practices that the other circles may adopt for their relevance and sustainability. The circles with Best Mission Practices are:

For Pro-Life – **Sta. Cecilia Circle** of the Diocese of San Jose (N.E), Region II – Zumba dance competition for Persons with Disability

For Morality in Media -**San Isidro Labrador Circle** of the Archdiocese of Zamboaga, Region XIV – Hosting a DMI program on Radio Station DXVP

For Upliftment of Women Workers - **St. Paul of the**

Cross Circle of the Diocese of Antipolo, Region V – Introducing Christian values to househelpers through a “Symposium on Value Formation for Kasambahays”

For Assistance to Prisoners’ Families & their Victims – **Our Lady of Fatima Circle** of the Archdiocese of Davao, Region XIII – Scholarships and school supplies for children of prisoners and victims of crimes, catechism, food treats and fellowship for families and sending inspirational messages to prisoners from their families.

For Youth Welfare/SMI – **St. Paul of the Cross Circlette**, Diocese of Antipolo, Region V – Monthly visitation to abandoned children in the Heart of Mary Villa in Quezon City



MOTORCADE HELD TO CELEBRATE PRO-LIFE MONTH

By Sis. Cora Afuang, International Chairperson for Pro-Life and President, Pro-Life Phils. Foundation

This year’s Pro-Life Month celebration was highlighted by a motorcade last February 14. Organized by Pro-Life Philippines, DMI sisters from Region V (NCR, Rizal and Cavite) joined the activity consisting of 32 vehicles from the Dioceses of Antipolo, Cubao, Imus and Kalookan. The theme of the event was “*Buhay at Pamilya Sandigan sa Panahon ng Pandemya*”.

A Eucharistic celebration presided by Bishop Pablo “Ambo” David of the Diocese of Kalookan preceded the motorcade. End-to-end points were the San Roque Cathedral in Caloocan City and the Santuario de San Antonio in Makati City.

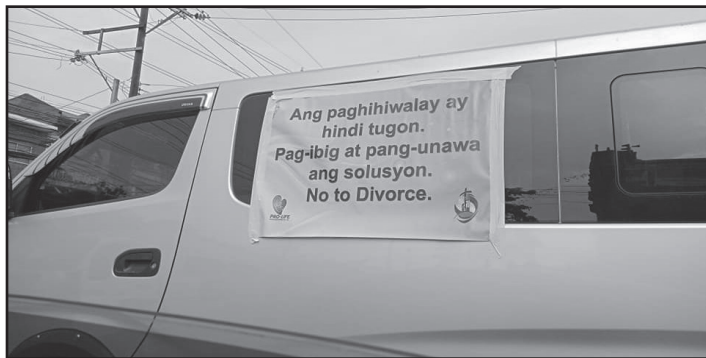
The participating vehicles each carried pro-life slogans and messages that caught the attention of people along the motorcade route.

DMI circles in various dioceses all over the country had their celebrations such as offering masses, flowers and candles before the Tomb of the Unborn and Aborted Babies in their respective parishes, A Special Prayer for the Unborn and Aborted Babies were sent to the circles to be prayed during Sunday Masses and before the Tomb of the Unborn.

Pro-Life Month is celebrated in February every year.



DMI sisters get ready for the Pro-Life motorcade.



A motorcade vehicle carries pro-life slogan.

MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN MORAL AND VALUES FORMATION

*By: Sis. Leah Molina, Diocesan
Regent, Archdiocese of Manila*

Unfazed by the shadow of death and fear cast by the unforgiving Covid 19 pandemic, the Our Lady of Fatima (Bacood) Circle in Sta. Mesa, Manila through its Morality in Media Committee organized a webinar entitled “Media and Its Role in Moral and Values Formation” last April 21, 2021. The circle’s Sis. Virginia Mendoza headed the organizing team.

International Chairperson for Morality in Media Sis. Cathy Pineda proposed that the seminar be done on a national level via Zoom. A total of 168 DMI sisters from circles in various regions nationwide participated in the webinar. Program host was Archdiocese of Manila’s Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Lilia Mendoza. International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario delivered an inspirational message after Sis. Cathy’s welcome address in which she underscored the important role of media, including social media in all forms of communication, and its essential role in nurturing moral values and in the formation of a Christ-centered life. Media can dictate how people see and perceive things, particularly in this time of the pandemic, hence, the timeliness of the webinar.

The resource speaker was Ms. Ellen Fullido, vice-president for Human Resources and Admin Services of the Manila Broadcasting Corporation and founding chairperson of Aliwan Fiesta. Aided by a PowerPoint presentation, the youthful speaker outlined media’s journey through time as it evolved from traditional media (print such as newspapers and broadcast – radio and television) as main sources of information to digital media composed of a wide array and rapidly evolving gadgets such as the computer and laptop, mobile phone and a lot more, and encompassing a wide range of social networking

sites and communication applications such as YouTube, Google, Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok, Zoom, etc.

Social media, Ms. Fullido said, is an amazing powerful communication tool and its impact on our lives is all-embracing. She underscored both its beneficial and destructive effects as well as its power to influence the outlook of children and teen-agers. Thus, she stressed the significant role that parents play in uplifting the moral and spiritual values of the youth who need constant guidance at this stage in their lives. Surveys and actual experiences indicate that the young spend more hours watching TV and using their gadgets and they become vulnerable to social media’s bad effects. She also cited the downsides to social media such as cyber bullying, negative influence of advertisements and deteriorating family relationships. She called on DMIs to strengthen the campaign for good media by first looking closely at their homes and families.

Ms. Fullido’s talk later centered on the revolutionary changes that social media brought to our lives and the world at large, in the advent of the pandemic and the never-ending ECQ lockdowns. She pointed out that the social networking phenomenon has risen to unprecedented heights, as everyone, especially the so-called “millennials” went online 24/7. She quipped: “*Sobrang addict tayong mga Pilipino sa gadgets.*”

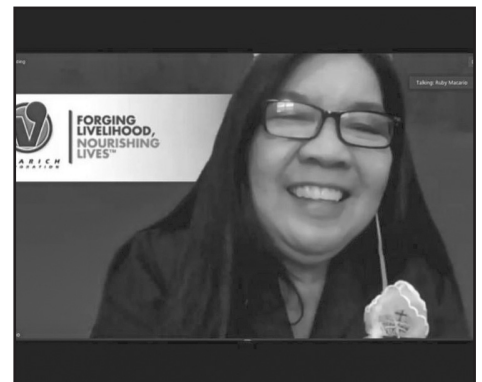
Diocesan Regent Sis. Leah Molina officially closed the activity which she said also gave the DMI sisters some time for saying their “hellos” and “how are you’s”. The webinar was well worth their time that afternoon.



Ms. Ellen Fullido - MIM Speaker



Sis. Cathy Pineda



Sis. Ruby Macario

SMI's CHRISTMAS PROJECT: FACE SHIELD DESIGN-MAKING CONTEST

By: Sis. Biennah Villanueva,
International Chairperson for Youth Welfare/SMI

Last Christmas, the Youth Welfare/SMI Mission conducted a Face Shield Design-Making Contest with the theme "Christmas Despite Pandemic (*Tuloy na Tuloy Pa Rin ang Pasko*).

The SMI's must have been so infused with the spirit of Christmas that participation in this contest tripled that of the previous one, the "Hugot Challenge" conducted earlier. Our Squirettes had been able to freely express their artistic

creativity and transform the "pandemic icon", the face shield, into a Christmas canvas of joy and passion with such wondrous play of color.

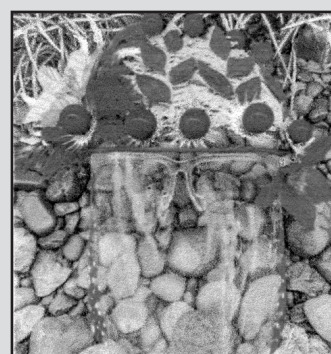
Just like the Hugot Challenge, all entries would have all been adjudged winners, giving the judges quite a challenging task. Yet they have a job to do and top entries need to be recognized. They are as follows:



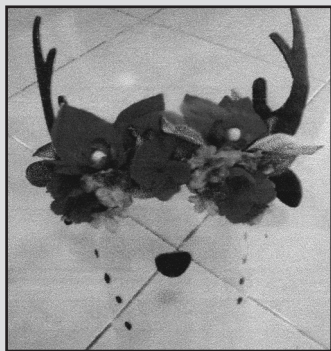
1st Place – Jollia Lorraine Umali
St. Martin of Tours Circlette
Archdiocese of Lipa (Region VII)



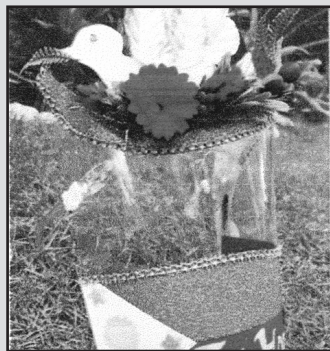
2nd Place – Jhelyn Gaile Saad
Our Lady of Miraculous Medal
Circlette
Diocese of San Pablo (Region VI)



3rd Place – Angelica Pacheco
Mother of Life Circlette
Diocese of San Pablo (Region VI)



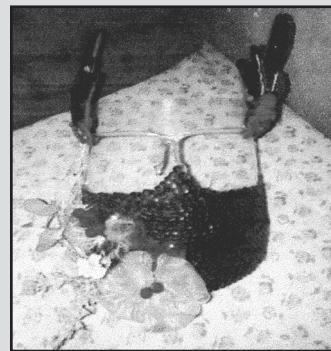
3rd Place – Lelen Zonio
Our Lady of All Nations Circlette
Diocese of Kalibo (Region IX)



3rd Place – Honey Lyn Zonio
Our Lady of All Nations Circlette
Diocese of Kalibo (Region IX)



4th Place – Ma. Crizel Mae
Gadiano
Our Lady of All Nations Circlette
Diocese of Kalibo (Region IX)



5th Place – Agatha Esmino
Mother of Divine Grace Circlette
Diocese of Kalookan (Region V)

The Youth Welfare Committee thanks the Squirettes who participated in the contest and their Tita DMIs who extended their unqualified support. The International Chairpersons of the DMI Missions composed the Board of Judges – Sisters Cora Afuang of Pro-Life, Cathy Pineda of Morality in Media, Laura Cespon of Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims and the Chair of Youth Welfare.

International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario provided the cash prizes for the winners.

Truly, our dear Squirettes have reminded us once again that it is in how we choose to view each event – either as a crisis or an opportunity. And what better time for us to showcase such Marian spirit than now.

TAHANAN NG BANAL NA AWA RECIPIENT OF SOLAR LIGHTS

By Sis. Evangeline Ruanto,
Scribe, San Jose Circle

The San Jose Circle of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija donated solar lights to the *Tahanan ng Banal na Awa*, a sanctuary of the Divine Mercy at Parang Manga in San Jose City. The Tahanan is a home for homeless children in the region.

The two big solar lights costing P19,000 including their installation were installed on January 23, 2021 witnessed by the DMI sisters led by Circle Regent Sis. Josephine Carino. They now light the street leading to the Tahanan and its entrance door which used to be very dark at night.

The *Tahanan ng Banal na Awa* is a new foundation established on January 19, 2020 by the Diocese of San Jose, Nueva Ecija led by Bishop Roberto Mallari, DD and has as Director Fr. Paul Silva. It is a home for abandoned, neglected and surrendered children from marginalized families who need to be protected from being discriminated against by society.

The mission of the Tahanan is to provide the children with their basic needs, educational

assistance, health and medical services and others that will eventually make them feel cared for and loved, socially adjusted and psychologically developed. Also a major component of its program is the children's spiritual growth and development, living and practicing Christian values.

As a faith-based, non-profit and non-government institution, the Diocese of San Jose provides the needed funding for its operation. At the time of writing, parts of its internal and external structures have yet to be completed. Additional funds required by the institution come from generous donors and benefactors and other funding agencies.

The San Jose Circle's donation of two NSS Solar Lights have aluminum alloy body with high-quality batteries that are energy-saving (zero charging), wireless and easy to install and maintain. Designed for the outdoors, they are operated using wireless remote control.



The DMI sisters of San Jose Circle led by Regent Sis. Josephine Carino turn over their donation of NSS Solar Lights to the *Tahanan ng Banal na Awa*.



The sisters watch while the solar lights are being installed.

UPDATES FROM THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL CIRCLE

ANNUAL BLOOD-LETTING PROJECT. The Miraculous Medal Circle of St. John the Evangelist Cathedral Parish in Dagupan City held its Annual Blood-Letting Project in collaboration with the Philippine Red Cross-Pangasinan Chapter last February 15, 2021 to celebrate Hearts Month. The activity was held at the St. John Catholic School.

Fifty-seven bags of blood from donors, students of the Pangasinan Merchant Marine Academy, were collected by the Red Cross staff. Sis. Tessie Mendoza chaired the project assisted by circle members headed by Circle Regent Sis. Ofelia Celi. Diocesan Regent Sis. Aileen Santos and Vicarial Regent Sis. Socorro Ramos were present to lend support to the activity.



The DMI sisters overseeing the blood-letting activity

VISITATION OF SICK MEMBERS.

Face-to-face encounters among circle members had not been possible during the lockdown. However, a group of sisters of the Miraculous Medal Circle calling themselves the Sunshine Group did the rounds of sick members' homes to cheer them up with gifts of fruits, saying "Hello" and praying for their speedy recovery. Health protocols were strictly followed during these visits.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Aileen Santos, Vicarial Regent Sis. Aurora Fernandez and Circle Regent Sis. Marlene Tandoc are members of the Sunshine Group.



The Miraculous Medal Circle's Sunshine Group pray over a sick member during one of their visitations.

VIRTUAL ROSARIES TO END THE PANDEMIC. The FB Messenger app is being used by the sisters of the Miraculous Medal Circle for their daily virtual Rosary that helps them strengthen the bond of sisterhood while praising God through Mama Mary and praying for the end of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Aileen Santos also reported that a Global Virtual Rosary is being held via Zoom every Sunday participated in by members of Batch '71 of the Holy Cross Academy in Sta. Ana, Pampanga of which she is a member. Alumni of said school now based in various parts of the globe participate in the virtual rosary to end the pandemic and for other intentions.



Zoom participants in the virtual rosary

FISH AND PAN DE SAL FROM THE HOLY FAMILY CIRCLE

By: Sis. Aileen Santos, Diocesan Regent

Sis. Erlinda Ventura of the Holy Family Circle in San Carlos, Pangasinan started an apostolate at the very onset of the Covid 19 lockdown in March, 2020. She had been sharing her harvest of *bangus* and tilapia with her neighbors once a week which she distributes with *pan de sal*. Reminds us of the Gospel about the multiplication of the loaves, a miracle Our Lord Jesus performed to feed the thousands who followed Him to listen to His teachings. As Pope Francis said, "The more we love, the more we are capable of giving."



Baskets of bangus and tilapia are prepared for distribution to neighbors.



From the Archdiocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) – Region III

IMMACULATE HEART CIRCLE: LETTER FROM A GRATEFUL PASTOR

Despite the pandemic, the Immaculate Heart Circle of the Holy Rosary Parish in Angeles City pursued many projects and activities to serve their parish community as well as outlying communities in Pampanga that have been so adversely affected by the lockdowns rendering people jobless and their movements restricted. This letter was sent to the circle by Rev. Fr. Nolasco Fernandez in grateful appreciation of the Circle's contribution to the parish.

To: All DMI Officers and Members
Daughters of Mary Immaculate, Int'l.

From: Rev. Fr. Nolasco L. Fernandez
Chaplain Circle
Holy Rosary Parish
Sto. Rosario St., Angeles City

Date: January 27, 2021

Letter of Appreciation

Dear DMI Officers and All Members,

In behalf of Holy Rosary Parish, indeed, we are extremely blessed having you to have such strong, dedicated and faithful shepherds that are continuously supporting in most all of our church projects even during this time of Pandemic.

Amidst the confusing and unexpected times for year 2020, even though we cannot talk with you directly as we did before, you supported us all the way the whole year through:

1. Campaign Mass Activities for Pro-life
2. Mass Sponsorship in celebrating Fiestang La Naval
3. Operation good stewardships through coastal donations to three (3) Parishes: Malusac, Sasman; Bulacus, Masantol, and Caingin, Masantol parishes
4. Coastal donations to San Roque Cathedral Parish
5. Cash Donations/ Assistance made to Prisoners and its families
6. Attendance of Cruzada ning Virgen Delos Remedios and Sto. Cristo Del Perdon
7. Attendance of Red Wednesday Mass, standing up for faith and freedom
8. Cash Donations for Vocation Committee, support for priests
9. Attendance of Holy Hour to the Blessed Sacrament
10. Squirettes spiritual enhancements through participation of Mass choir, and praising God in worship
11. Campaign for gender equality
12. Covid Pandemic relief drives to the least fortunate members of our community through Garapon ng Pasko

I'd like you to know how grateful I am towards each one of you for your care and support and concern towards all the faithful in these challenging times. Thank you for finding innovative ways to reach out to all of us. Thank you for all that you do, headed by your **DMI Regent Maria Ruby A. Santiago**.

Please know of our continued prayers for you.

God bless you all,

Rev. Fr. Nolasco L. Fernandez
Parish Priest
Holy Rosary Parish

NEWS UPDATES FROM THE OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE CIRCLE

By Sis. Veronica Bambilla, Vicarial Regent

Two major mission projects were undertaken by the Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle during the first semester of 2021, despite the pandemic.

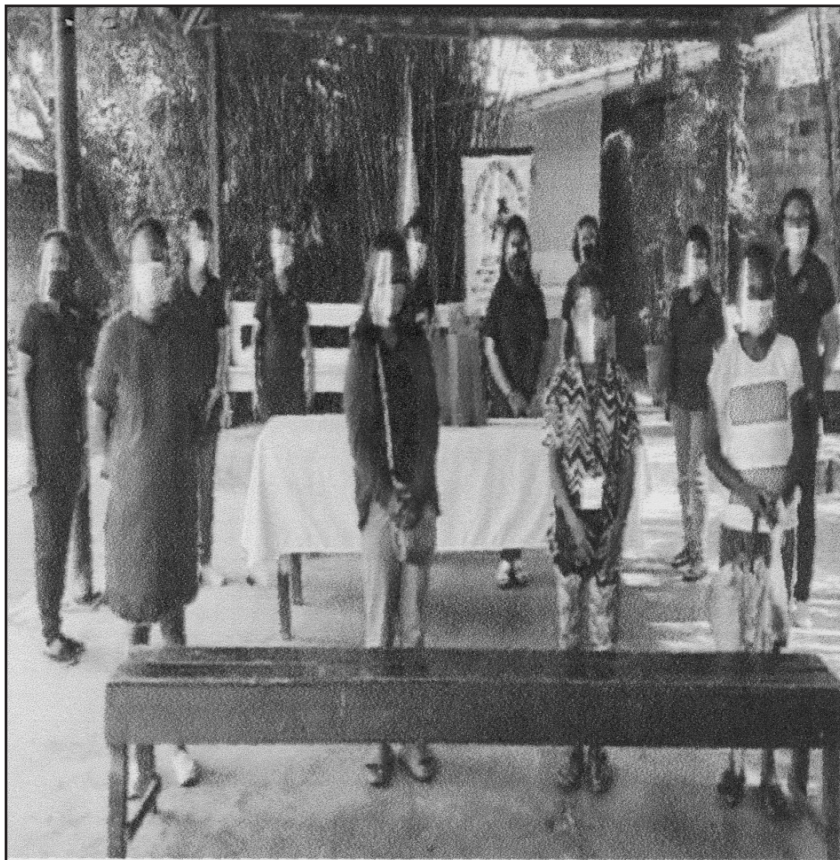
“WONDER WOMEN” RECOGNIZED

In celebration of Women’s Month, the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee headed by Sis. Maribeth Bien conducted an activity with the theme “Honoring the Hard-working Women in the Marginal Sector of Society”.

The circle identified four women in the depressed areas in the parish as project beneficiary – Emma

Martinez, a *mangangalakal* (gathering and selling junk materials), Marisol Baltazar, a 32-year-old fish vendor., Ronelyn Marcelino, 27, a *cariton* vegetable vendor and Lucina Yano, 60, a street sweeper.

On March 23, they were the DMI sisters’ guests at their parish church to receive special gifts, not the usual relief goods such as food items, etc., for their families, but gifts for their own personal use consisting of 6 panties, 2 camisoles, rubber slippers, a box of Vitamin C and a pack of 50 face masks. The four represented the “wonder women” in their community who are willing to forego their personal needs and comfort for the sake of their family. Selfless sacrifices of women, especially mothers, need to be recognized and rewarded. Who would understand this best but the daughters of Mary Immaculate?



The “wonder women” of the community honored by the Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle. A DMI sister hands a special gift to an honoree.

MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATED WITH PDLs' MOTHERS

Mothers of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) were honored on Mother's Day by the DMI sisters of Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle to celebrate Mother's Day.

The circle's Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims chaired by Sis. Tita Verde hosted the event last May 10, 2021. The mothers were presented with bouquets of flowers and gift bags by the DMI sisters headed by Circle Regent Sis. Susan Yongoyong. Diocesan Regent Sis. Zenia Velasco was present to deliver an inspirational message to the group.

The gift bags consisted of grocery items, a box of disposable face masks, a box of Red Ribbon *ensaymada*, a bag of bath towels with toiletries, a can of Fita Biscuits, 3-in-1 coffee sachets and a cash gift of P100. They also received a rosary and prayer guide.

The recipients thanked the sisters profusely, some even shedding tears of joy. One got carried away that she rendered a song to express the group's appreciation. The event is a yearly activity of the circle to celebrate Mother's Day. The mothers were one in saying that the DMI is God's comfort for their sorrow, having sons languishing in jail.



The PDLs' mothers with the DMI sisters.



STO. NINO DE MOLINO CIRCLE: UPLIFTING THE LIFE OF A MARKET VENDOR

By: Sister Catherine Longcob, Past Regent

Mirasol Belleza has been given a chance for a better life by the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle through its Upliftment of Women Workers Committee headed by Chairperson Sis. Lydia Limcolioc.

Mirasol is the first beneficiary of a financial assistance project that the circle has initiated to help women market vendors, one at a time, with initial or additional capital for business.

Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Emelie Ramos gave Mirasol a set of measures on how to grow her business, encouraging her and boosting her confidence that she can do it on her own and become financially independent, this in addition to being a mother to her children, particularly in these hard times of the pandemic.

This is how Mirasol conducts her business. She goes around the village with her multi-cab from Monday to Friday to collect orders for her meat products. Then on Friday afternoon, the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle gives her money, initially P5,000 to add to her capital. She then

purchases the meat products for delivery on Saturday.

The loan extended to Mirasol is interest-free to be paid back in weekly installments of P500. This frees her from the exorbitant interest she usually pays for "5-6" loans. Depending on her reliability in paying back the installments, she may subsequently be granted additional loans. This way, she may gradually grow her business.

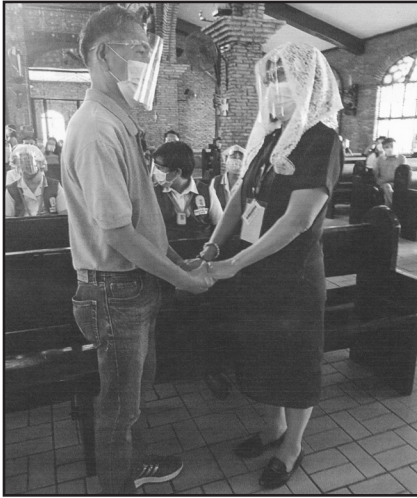


Mirasol Belleza meets with the DMI sisters.

RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS TO CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY

On February 14, 2021, some members of the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle celebrated Valentine's Day by renewing their marriage vows aimed at strengthening the couple's union and their family relationship and placing God at the center of their family life.

The 2021 circle officers led by Regent Sis. Agnes Terano were installed on February 21 by Regent Sis. Zenia Velasaco at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Bahayang Pag-asa, Bacoar City.



A DMI sister and her husband while renewing their marriage vows.



The Sto. Nino de Molino Circle's 2021 officers after their installation.

Photo News

STO. NINO DE MOLINO SMI CIRCLETTE:

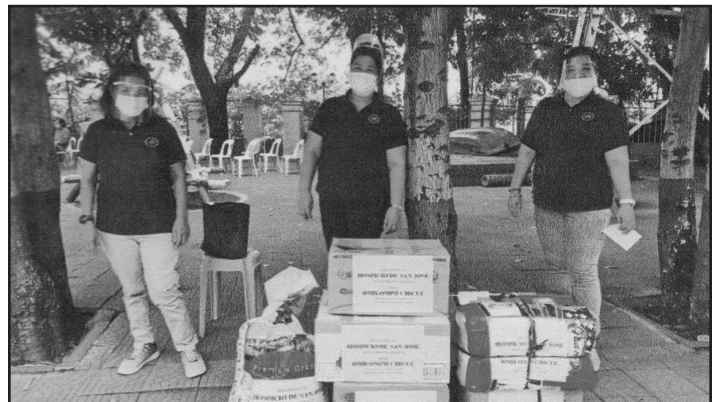
Ready to Know, To Love and To Serve

Sto. Nino de Molino Circle's SMI Lady Counselor Sis. Jocelyn Frias convened the circlette's officers last February to draw up the Squirettes' programs and activities for 2021.



HOSPICIO DE SAN JOSE RECEIVES ASSISTANCE FROM OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP CIRCLE

A call for help from Hospicio de San Jose during the lockdown was received by the Our Mother of Perpetual Help Circle of Bacoar City. Immediately, the circle responded by gathering members' resources, rumors about it being fake news, notwithstanding. On May 10, 2021, a delegation consisting of the Circle Regent Sis. Agnes Manuel, Vice-Regent Sis. Pamela Saguibo and Past Regent Sis. Loida Oliman turned over the circle's donation to the Hospicio at the Isla de Convalencia in Manila.



EMPOWERED DAUGHTERS OF MARY

By Sis. Cora Soliven,
Immaculate Conception of Karangalan Circle

The Covid 19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries in all the continents of the world. Closure of schools and other learning facilities has impacted 94% of the world's student population, up to 99% in low- and lower- middle-income countries (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org>).

In the Philippines, DepEd decided to shift to distance learning this school year to comply with President Rodrigo Duterte's directive for schools to delay face-to-face classes until a corona virus vaccine becomes available. From the onset of the pandemic, teachers were immediately tasked with implementing distance learning modalities, even without sufficient guidance, training or resources. Web-based class meetings and messaging applications have become useful tools and new ways of communicating with their learners and the education community.

Local government units have their different strategies, and fortunately for Pasig City, Mayor Vico Sotto allocated "one-is-to-one" gadget - tablets for elementary and high school levels and laptop for teachers and science school students.

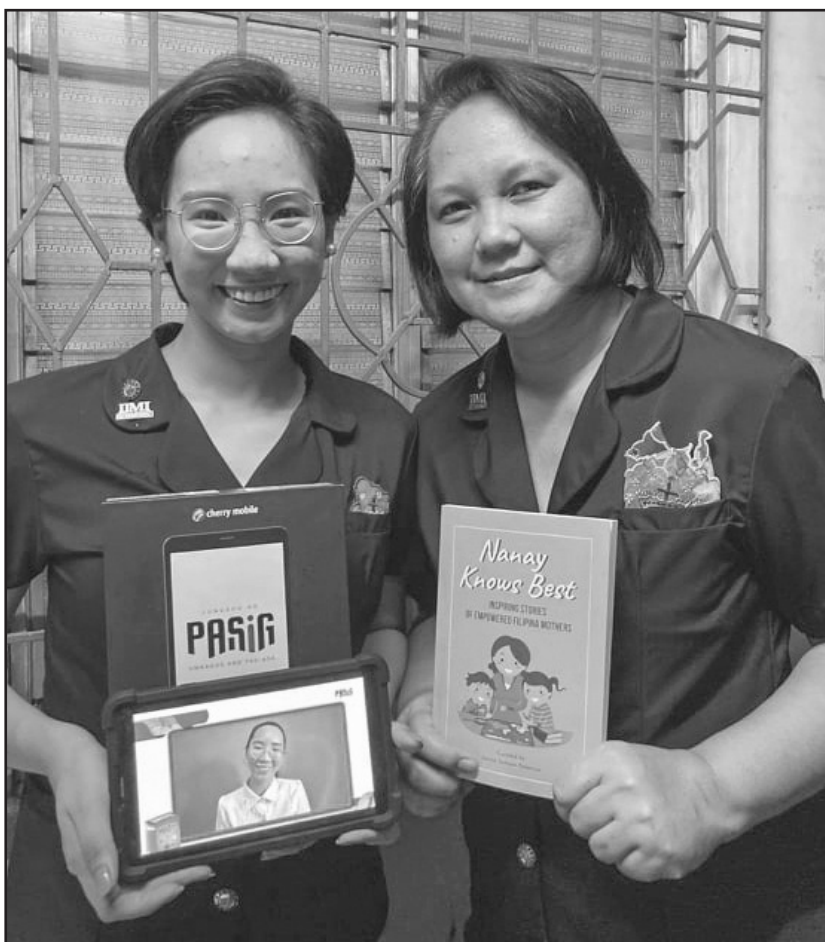
One of those teachers in Pasig City is Past SMI National President Ma. Caroline Soliven who patiently worked until the wee hours of the morning preparing the content of the video lessons. She worked several sleepless nights to shoot the videos to avoid unnecessary noise in the neighborhood during the day.

The hard work that Sis. Caroline put in was rewarded when she was chosen as one of the Module Writers, Video Presenter for Grade 7 Math lessons, Lyric Composer of Math Jingle and Video Editor. These roles she played eventually earned for her the Gawad Primero Award and qualifying for full scholarship for

a Master's degree at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Last May, 2020, I, Caroline's mother, was given the opportunity to be interviewed on the 34th episode of "Nanay Knows Best" (youtubeNKBJaniceSenorinDelacruz). Featured were 37 women during Mother's Day in times of pandemic. This inspired us to make an e-book (electronic) that was eventually printed as a real book. I am happy and proud to be one of the book's authors. The book is sold internationally and its earnings donated to He Cares Foundation as beneficiary.

We thank the Lord and our Blessed Mother Mary for the guidance while pursuing our work. We truly feel empowered while going about our task of empowering other women and the children who otherwise will be deprived of continuing education.



The mother-daughter tandem – Sisters Caroline Soliven and the author.

SIS. FORTUNATA “ATENG” AQUINO: A WELL-LIVED LIFE OF SERVICE

By Sis. Nina M. Cadiz,
Region VI Newsette Correspondent

A quiet, gentle, kind, helpful and unassuming lady is how she is remembered. Sis. Fortunata “Ateng” Aquino, Regional News Correspondent and Regent of the Theresian Circle, Vicariate of St. John the Baptist, passed away in the early morning of Sunday, June 6, 2021. The outpouring of prayers, financial support and good will from many DMI sisters were received with great gratitude by her family and the Theresian Circle.

A prayer vigil (via Zoom) at 10:00 AM was held in her honor the following day. Even with very short notice, other DMI sisters from other circles and some members of Region VI Executive Board were able to attend to give comfort through their kind words and recollections of how Sis. Ateng had touched their lives. Truly, Sis. Ateng led a fruitful and meaningful life of service to the Lord.

(The Editorial Board of the *DMI Newsette* condoles with Sis. Ateng’s family and the Theresian Circle and joins them in prayer for her eternal rest. Sis. Ateng will be sorely missed.)



Sis. Fortunata “Ateng” Aquino



DMII REACHES OUT TO TYPHOON VICTIMS

The three typhoons that visited the country in late October and early November last year brought much havoc to the Bicol Region. Super Typhoon Rolly, much like ST Yolanda in 2013, was a very destructive one, leaving a path of destruction as it crossed several provinces before exiting to the West Philippine Sea. The Bicol Region was hardest hit with storm surges from the Pacific Ocean, floods and landslides causing loss of lives and properties, people's homes and livelihoods.

The Daughters of Mary Immaculate International, one of the many groups that reached out to the typhoon victims, sent much needed help, in cash and in kind, the result of a campaign for donations launched earlier.

Region VIII Representative Sis. Eufemia Abragan received the donations and mobilized the DMI sisters and some volunteers to prepare relief goods for distribution to the victims, some DMI sisters themselves as well as residents of hard-hit barangays. Assisting in the distribution were the LGUS and barangay volunteers.

In her subsequent report, Sis. Fem thanked the DMII International Board and donors and sent photos during the relief distribution.



Distribution of relief goods to typhoon victims



The DMI sisters of Region VIII with volunteers

SAN JOSE DE TAGBILARAN CIRCLE SPONSORS FLORES DE MAYO

The month-long Flores de Mayo in honor of our Blessed Mother Mary is a yearly activity sponsored by the San Jose de Tagbilaran Circle led this year by Regent Sis. Beyay Sarmiento. Center of the celebration was the St. Joseph Cathedral Shrine in Tagbilaran City. The culminating activity was the Flores de Mayo procession with DMI sisters and Squirettes of Mary as zagalas. Region X Representative Sis. Sionee Naraga was the Reyna Elena. Special guests during the event were Bishop Albert Uy of the Diocese of Tagbilaran, Shrine Rector Fr. Sinfor Monton and Diocesan Regent Sis. Inday Lim.



The zagalas before the altar of the St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral Shrine



From the Diocese of Malaybalay (Bukidnon) – Region XII

MORNING STAR CIRCLE HAS TWO APFV SCHOLARS

By: Sis. Sol Simbulan, Past Regent

When they were in Grade 7, Lindy Ragrag and Hansel May Palomo became scholars of the Morning Star Circle of Malaybalay City, Bukidnon. Their scholarship started when then chairpersons of Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims (APFV), Sisters Fely Ponteras and Nestora Guil-an introduced them to the circle to become its APFV scholars, supporting their schooling (providing their school needs and allowances) from Grade 7 to Sr. High School (Grade 12).

After their graduation last March 14, 2021, Lindy and Hansel May requested the circle for further support. Lindy is taking up Education at Bukidnon State University while Hansel May is enrolled at Don Carlos, Bukidnon, also an Education student. The two scholars showed good academic performance in high school, hence, the Morning Star Circle decided to continue giving them financial assistance from their circle fund. The assistance, however, is not enough. Two members of the circle volunteered to help subsidize the need of their scholars.

Sis. Aldie Galvadores pledged to give an additional P1,000 monthly to Hansel May while Sis. Mary Jane Abucejo is giving Lindy a part-

time job at her construction company with free time to work on her school assignments and free use of an office computer and supplies.

The Morning Star Circle sisters are indeed "Gifted to Give" in this year of Missio Ad Gentes.

In return, Lindy and Hansel May have promised to perform well in school and finish their college education to enable them to help their families in the absence of their bread-winners.



Lindy Ragrag and Hansel May Palomo (4th and 5th from left) with the DMI sisters.

LIVELIHOOD TRAINING SERIES YIELDS 35 WOMEN TRAINED IN TABLE SKIRTING

A series of livelihood seminars was sponsored by the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee of the Morning Star Circle spearheaded by its Vice-Chairperson, Sis. Ethel Mamawag

The series of training held on three consecutive Saturdays on March 13, 20 and 27 trained seven groups of women of Bgy. Capinohan, Cabanglasan, Bukidnon. A total of 35 participants completed their hands-on

training in table-skirting conducted by a trainer that Sis. Ethel and her group hired. The participants showcased their just-acquired skill after the hands-on training at the barangay covered court.

The Circle hopes that the women may eventually find work in hotels and restaurants, and during conventions and conferences where their skill in table-skirting will be put to good use.



Hands-on training in table skirting by seminar participants.



From the Archdiocese of Zamboanga & Prelature of Isabela de Basilan

DMII AIDS ZAMBO FIRE VICTIMS

*By: Sis. Marilyn de Asis, Diocesan Regent,
Archdiocese of Zamboanga*

The DMII and other organizations in the Archdiocese of Zamboanga reached out to help the victims of a fire in Zamboanga City on March 20, 2021. The fire broke out in early dawn. The DMI sisters' response was immediate, their Chat Group sprang into action, calling for donations to help the victims. Soon enough the circles in the archdiocese were able to raise cash and donations in kind. Truckloads of relief goods consisting of rice



turn to page 22

DMII sisters get ready to hand over donations to fire victims.

MORALITY IN MEDIA POSTER-MAKING CONTEST

A Poster-Making Contest was launched by the Archdiocese of Zamboanga in late February, 2021 with the theme “My Social World and Digital Media During the Pandemic”.

The contest was announced by Sis. Ernie de Peralta, diocesan chair for Morality in Media (MIM) right after the webinar held to draw up programs for the mission as prescribed by the International MIM Committee headed by Sis. Cathy Pineda.

Judging of contest winners was held on April 29. Most of the entries came from the Squirettes of Mary circlettes with just a handful from DMI circles. The criteria for judging were: presentation – 40%, originality – 30% and relevance to the theme – 30%. Adjudged winners

were the following:

DMI Circle Division – St. Therese Circle of Mampang

SMI Circlettes Division:

1st Place – Janee Grace Tuballa
of St. Therese Circlette of Mampang

2nd Place – Francine Balunsay
of Our Lady of Lourdes Circlette of Talon-Talon

3rd Place – Nichole Balunsay
also of Our Lady of Lourdes Circlette

Consolation prizes were given to five non-winning entries. Other participating circles were St. Joseph, Our Mother of Perpetual Help and Jose Ma. Claret Circles.



The winners of the Poster-Making Contest

DMII Aids Zambo... from page 21

and groceries, water, clothes and other items needed by the victims were turned over by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Pinky Saavedra and myself on March 29 at the Baliwasan Central School through the DSWD staff in the venue. Physical distancing was a problem at the evacuation center and barangay officials and volunteers were on hand to keep the place safe especially for the children and the senior citizens.

This Pro-Life outreach activity had been dubbed Tabang Baliwasan Fire Victims in Relation with the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines Theme: “Gifted to Give”.



Recipients of the DMII donations await the distribution of relief goods.

DMII ACTIVITIES AIRED ON RADIO STATION DXVP

Radio Station DXVP has become a venue for the San Isidro Labrador Circle in conducting lectures for students of the Immaculate Conception Elementary School (ICES). The lectures were conducted by Diocesan Regent Sis. Marilyn de Asis (San Isidro Labrador Circle is her home circle).

The first was held last February 19, 2021 on the topic “Self-Care and Mindfulness of the Anxieties and Stress of the ICES Learners After the 3rd Quarter Examinations”. Then on February 23 and 24, upon the request of ICES Director Fr. Elmer Sumile, Sis. Marilyn talked on “The Lenten Journey of the ICES Mentors and Staff”. It was a 2-day lecture with the themes “Breaking the Habits” and “Choosing Life to be Productive”.



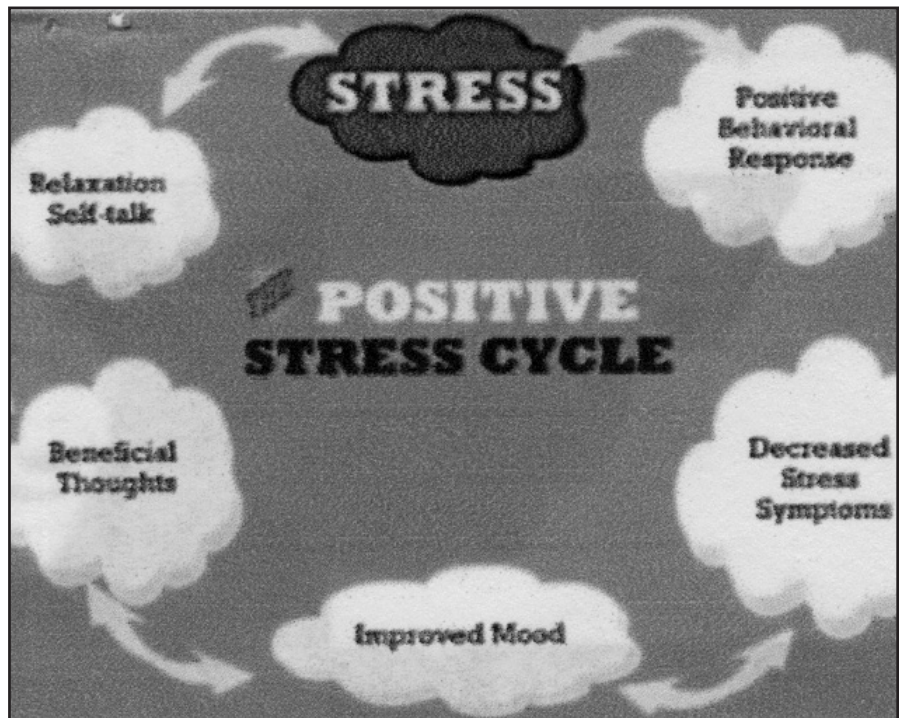
Lectures for students of Immaculate Conception Elementary School conducted via Radio Station DXVP.



“SELF-CARE FOR THE ELDERLY”: A PRO-LIFE WEBINAR

DMI sisters from various circles of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga & Prelature of Isabela de Basilan participated in a Pro-Life webinar “Self-Care for the Elderly” that Diocesan Regent Sis. Marilyn de Asis conducted on January 23, 2021 during which she discussed sub-topics such as: A Self-Care Plan for those who are busy to care for self, characteristics of self-care, types and benefits of stress, definition of elderly abuse, and signs and symptoms of elderly abuse. Drawing the most interest from the participants was the sub-topic “Happy Mind, Happy Life” composed of ideas for a Bright Mind – a radiant mind is a happy mind, treat yourself as someone you love, stop judging others, learn to say NO and exercise your mind and body. Participants also raised questions on good stress and bad stress, the types of elderly abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, financial/material exploitation, neglect, abandonment and

self-neglect. Filipinos place a strong cultural value on respect for age and for the elderly. Young people are expected to show respect for the elderly as well as family members older than him/herself, addressing them in polite language and appropriate titles of respect.



An audio-visual aid used in the webinar.

MASS WEDDING, OUTREACH PROJECT FOR PAROLEES

A Mass Wedding for prison parolees was held on December 29, 2020 as a project of the Committee on Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims (APFV) of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga headed by Sis. Maitess Go. The wedding ceremony performed for the beneficiary-couples who have been living in for some years was officiated by Fr. Marciano Villagracia at the Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish Church in Guiwan, Zamboanga City.

Some circles in the Archdiocese extended assistance to the project such as helping with the required documents for the wedding, providing the wedding attires, the wedding rings and other paraphernalia as well as the food during the reception which was attended by a few guests, mostly family members of the couples in compliance with quarantine protocols.

On February 17, 2021, the APFV Committee spearheaded the distribution of Covid 19 Prevention Kits and a Clean-up Drive with some 80 parolees of Region 9 at the Sta. Barbara Elementary School through the Dept. of Justice, Parole & Probation Administration – Region 9 of Zamboanga City headed by Ms. Hannah Nuno and Mr. Jason Garcia, the supervising officer and his staff. The parolees received face shields and bottles of alcohol for their families. DMI sisters from the circles

comprising the three vicariates of the Archdiocese – Central, Eastern and Western – donated the kits. The outreach activity being held on Ash Wednesday, Diocesan Regent Sis. Marilyn de Asis in her message underscored the meaning of ASH – A for alms-giving, S for service for those in need and H for holiness and observance of fasting and abstinence during Lent in commemoration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Holy Redeemer.

Another APFV project in the pipeline is the training of the parolees' wives in TESDA's livelihood programs.



Couples dancing during the reception.



Fr. Marciano Villagracia performs the wedding rites during the Mass Wedding.



Distribution of hygiene kits at Sta. Barbara Elementary School.

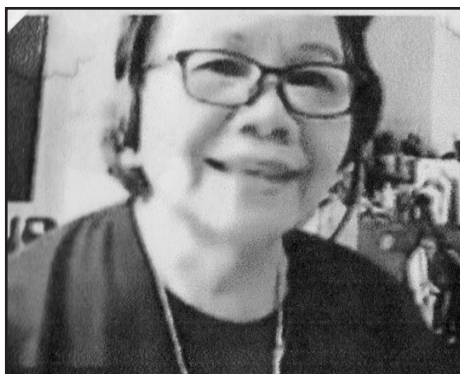
DIOCESAN WEBINAR ON MORALITY IN MEDIA HELD

Early this year, a diocesan webinar on Morality in Media was spearheaded by Diocesan Regent Sis. Marilyn de Asis of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga and concurrently chairperson of Morality in Media of San Isidro Labrador Circle.

The objective of the webinar via Zoom was to plan projects and activities for this DMI mission flowing from the National Program of the DMI International Board.

International Vice-Regent for Mindanao Sis. Tess Miranda, participating from Manila, gave an inspirational message, congratulating the participants for their active involvement in DMI activities despite the pandemic.

The sub-topics discussed were: the types and characteristics of morality, the most important element of morality and useful activities relating to Morality in Media. Special focus was given on how to become an effective radio broadcaster, the San Isidro Labrador Circle having a regular radio program aired on DXVP.



IVR-Mindanao Sis. Tess Miranda gives her inspirational message at the start of the webinar.

A Poster-Making Contest was announced by Sis. Ernie de Peralta, diocesan Morality in Media chairperson, inviting DMI sisters and Squirettes of Mary to join the contest. Regents of circles in the Archdiocese said that they will also revisit their 2020 MIM program that they will carry over to 2021.



Pointers on effective radio broadcasting as part of the Morality in Media webinar.

Photo News

BEING PRODUCTIVE DURING THE LOCKDOWN

The long-drawn lockdown that rendered many in the community jobless as well as restricting their mobility did not deter the DMI sisters of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga to hone their skills and produce various articles and products that they can donate to those in need or to sell to friends and neighbors for additional income. Various items from rare plants, baked products and desserts, crocheted articles, curtains and clothing apparel, face masks, rugs, rosaries and bead bracelet, etc. keep the sisters busy in their homes. Marketing of their products is also made through resellers.



Samples of products made by the DMI sisters

SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR CIRCLE CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY

The San Isidro Labrador Circle turned 25 last April 28, 2021. To celebrate this circle milestone, the Circle held an outreach for the DMI Mission, Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims. As suggested by their parish priest and DMI spiritual director, Fr. Jeff Taib, the anniversary celebration was held on April 25, the last Sunday of the month which coincided with the circle's Mass sponsorship that day.

Beneficiaries of the outreach were the families of prisoners/victims who received groceries, rice and hygiene kits as the cases of Covid 19 infection continue to rise in their barangay.

Awards of recognition were given to eleven past regents of the circle and Fr. Taib's inspirational message formed part of the circle's anniversary program.

The San Isidro Labrador Circle received its charter on April 28, 1996 with Sis. Ester Ibalio as charter regent and Sis. Marilyn de Asis as charter vice-regent. Many of its 25 charter members are still active in the circle with just a few having gone back to our Creator. At the time of its organization, the parish of San Isidro Labrador was still a young parish. Through the years, the circle has been very active in pursuing the DMI Missions, earning for them consistently the DMII's Star Awards, some years, the Gold Award and in others, the Silver Award. The circle's Sis. Marilyn de Asis is the present Diocesan Regent of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga.

This year's theme of *Missio ad Gentes*, "Gifted to Give" has been a way of life for the DMI sisters of San Isidro Labrador Circle, Covid 19 pandemic lockdown notwithstanding.



The officers and members of the San Isidro Labrador Circle



Fr. Jeff Taib and circle sisters get ready for the outreach.



The DMI and SMI banners are displayed during the anniversary program.

THE FINAL WAR

By: Rev. Fr. Melvin P. Castro,
Spiritual Director, Pro-Life Philippines

This article is excerpted by Sis. Lorie Manalansan, Region V DMI Newsette correspondent and Luzon coordinator for Upliftment of Women Workers, from Fr. Melvin Castro's talk during the Lenten Recollection sponsored by the International Committee on Pro-Life chaired by Sis. Cora Afuang on March 8, 2021. Fr. Melvin is a much-sought-after speaker on Family, Faith and Life. He hosts two TV shows on EWTN Channel – Mary, Mother of the Philippines and Consecration to Jesus Through Mary. He is currently the pastor of Mater Dolorosa Parish in Capas, Tarlac. "The Final War" cites the role that the Blessed Virgin Mary played in salvation history.

In the Book of Revelation, we are shown the final conflict with Satan (in the form of a dragon) and God. Here St. John the Evangelist had a vision he outlined in Chapter 12 where a seven-headed dragon was trying to snatch a baby from the mother but was rescued by God. On the right side was St. John himself while on the opposite side, he saw the dragon being slain by St. Michael the Archangel.

On Oct. 13, 1884, Pope Leo XIII, while waiting in-between Masses, had a similar vision. He also heard two voices: that of God and Satan. The conversation had Satan declaring 'I will destroy your church.' But God insisted that His Church will remain faithful. Since then, Pope Leo ordered that a prayer to St. Michael be said at the end of every Mass, a practice no longer required by Vatican II.

Meanwhile the Great War launched by Satan was aimed to attack the family. This is the reason why the Church is strong in its defense of marriage and the family. Even in his Holy Rosary Crusade, Rev. Fr. Patrick Peyton stressed that "the family that prays together stays together".

Families should stay strong because it is the first Church., *ecclesia domestica*, or Church in the Home.

When God created Adam and Eve, the first institution that He created was marriage. However, in the Old Testament, we find Satan tempting Eve first to eat the forbidden fruit, knowing that Adam will follow soon.

In the same chapter (Gen 3:15), we have the Protoevangelium or the First Gospel (proto – first; evangelium – gospel). The first gospel was God confronted the serpent, Adam



Rev. Fr. Melvin Castro

and Eve and said: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, your seed and her seed.. You will strike at her heel and she will crush your head." This is the Lord's prophecy that He will destroy the serpent.

When Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden, they were able to taste only the Tree of Knowledge, not the Tree of Life which was guarded by an angel.

In the Crucifixion, Jesus said, "Mother, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother." This scene juxtaposes that of Genesis. But now in the New Testament, we find that the Cross is actually the Tree of Life. And as St. Paul said, "Christ is the new Adam and the new church is Eve. No more serpent . . . a new creation!

In fact, Sis. Lucia, a Fatima visionary, was very prophetic when she said that marriage and the family will be the final battlefield; something which Our Lady of Fatima mentioned in one of her apparitions when she said, 'There are many marriages that are displeasing to God.

Fast-forward to today, in the Philippines alone, we see that there are more civil than church weddings; and statistics of couples living-in and not getting married at all is fast rising.

Then, we have the story of Cain and Abel wherein Cain, because of pride, killed his brother Abel. Because of this and the many great sins that man has committed, God was sorry for having created mankind.

turn to page 28

The Final War... from page 27

So God recreated the world by drowning it in 40 days, saving only eight people – Noah, his wife, children and in-laws. The world was re-created with this family.

In Sodom and Gomorrah, only eight people were saved, too. These were Abraham and his brother Lot's family. So we see, amidst the destructions in the Old Testament, it was always a family that the Lord saved.

Going back to the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant contained the two tablets of Stones (10 Commandments), the basin that contained the Manna and the staff that Moses used to part the Red Sea with. Today, nobody knows where it is.

In the Litany of the Rosary, one of Mary's titles is the "Ark of the Covenant" because she carried within her Jesus, Who is the fulfillment of the Law, the Bread from heaven and the Leader of the people.

It is God's providence that the old Ark of the Covenant cannot be found because there is no more need for it as we have our Lady as the new Ark of the Covenant.

To end World War II, two atomic bombs were dropped, one in Nagasaki and one in Hiroshima. In Hiroshima, very near the place of explosion, only a very few survived, among them eight Jesuit priests and brothers. One of them in an interview attributed their survival to the fact that "in that house, we prayed the Rosary everyday". The point is, Our Lady intervenes in critical moments when it is humanly impossible for one to be saved.

In year 2000, Pope John Paul II came to Fatima to beatify Francisco and Jacinta who died during the Spanish Flu Pandemic in 1919 and 1920, respectively, as Our Lady told the children. Lucia was told she will live long because she needs to propagate devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

A hundred years later, we have the Covid 19 Pandemic, a hundred years after the death of Saints Francisco and Jacinta. Nothing is coincidence! Is the Lady trying to tell us something?

Also we see that a hundred years after Pope Leo XIII promoted the prayer to St. Michael in 1884, Satan's 100 years to have power and dominion over the earth was extended. Is our Lady returning, this time to destroy Satan forever? This is the third secret of Fatima as revealed by Cardinal Ratzinger. In a vision, the children saw there were many ruins and a man in white (the Pope) walking towards the Cross on a mountain, but when he reached the foot of the Cross, he was gunned down.

Then St. Michael appeared and was about to strike the world with his fiery sword but our Lady opened her arms, and from her hands, rays of light appeared. When these rays hit the sword, St. Michael did not push through striking the earth. Instead, three

words appeared: Penance, Penance, Penance.

Going back to May 13, 1981, five years into his ascendancy as pope, there was an attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II. One year later, he visited Fatima and thanked Our Lady that he survived. He announced that he was the man in white in the vision at Fatima. But on that day, there were two hands – one pulling the trigger of the gun and the other guiding the bullet (the hand of Our Lady). During the operation, the doctors saw the bullet lodged near the main artery of his heart but stopped there at that critical point; otherwise, he would have died.

Years before, the Church recognized the authenticity of the apparition at Fatima. Later people were collecting jewelry to create the crown of Mary, but interestingly, there is a space inside where they were unable to put a piece of jewelry, so when he visited, he told them 'here is the bullet, I will leave it a jewel parting like a precious stone.' At that place where there was a space, the bullet fitted well and is now hanging inside the crown.

Thus, on March 25, 1984 or almost 100 years after Pope Leo XIII's vision, the Pope asked the original statue to be brought to the Vatican and consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Later Lucia was asked if Our Lady accepted the Consecration. She replied that it was not the perfect Consecration but Our Lady accepted it. So in my opinion, "we were given time from 1984 to the present because we are consecrated to Our Lady. That's why we see the fiery sword being stopped by the hand of Mary. Fact is, we are living on borrowed time."

It is good how we Filipinos are so devoted to Mary that on May 13, 2020 at the height of the pandemic, our bishops in all the cathedrals in the country consecrated the Philippines to the Immaculate Heart of Mary again.

St. Louise Grignon de Monfort gave us this Consecration for 33 days. He said in his book "Devotion to Mary": Those consecrated to her will be ministers of the Lord, like a flaming fire will enkindle the fires of divine love everywhere. They will become in Mary's powerful hands like sharp arrows with which she will transfix her enemies.

They will be like thunder clouds flying through the air at the slightest breath of the Holy Spirit. Attached to nothing, surprised at nothing, troubled at nothing. They will shower down God's word and eternal life. They will thunder against sin, they will storm against the world, they will strike down the devil and his followers, and for life and for death, they will pierce through and through with the two-edged sword of God's word at those against whom they are sent by Almighty God."

These are the exact words of St. Louise de Monfort. He died in the 18th century but his book was found hidden for 120 years and discovered only when he was about to be beatified. He

also foretold that the devil is so angry with this book that he will do everything to hide or destroy it.

Ironically in the book "Live a Mystery", Pope John Paul II's biography and written on his 50th anniversary as a priest, it mentioned that when he was a seminarian, he always wondered why he prayed to Mary when he can go directly to God. What changed him and developed in him a devotion to Mary was St. Louie's book when he understood the meaning of reverence to Mary. So when he became a bishop and eventually the pope, he made his motto "Totus tuus" meaning "Totally Yours" which was actually part of St. Louise's "Act of Consecration to Mary".

In Genesis, God promised never to destroy the world again by flood and so He asked His Son to assume our sins so we would not endure the punishment. So even if Jesus had no sin, He died that we may be redeemed. John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave His begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

This is what we are celebrating every year, beyond the rituals and the *pabasa* and the *palaspas* during Lent . . . Remembering the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. He saved us because He eternally loves us. God's love for mankind is enduring from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Slow, progressing until it came to a point where "He suffered, died, was buried and rose again". But it does not end there. As we say in the Profession of our Faith 'I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the forgiveness of sin and life everlasting."

That is where we are heading. And the reason why we as Christians are not afraid of the end of the world is because it will not end in tragedy, but with the triumph of our God.

The final war is not about destruction but about re-creation. That's why in the Book of Revelation, John saw a new Jerusalem from heaven. We will be re-created. The Garden of Eden will flourish again.

Thus nobody knows when the end will be. Yes, there will be signs – St. Michael, calamities, pandemics, but it will not end

with tragedy. Our Lady will return to remind us that there is still time for conversion. This was also the warning of our Lord to Sister Faustina Kowalska: "Now is the time of Mercy but when He returns, it will be time for justice."

And while we are still at the time of Mercy, let us ask for forgiveness . . . while we still have the time. Let us not focus so much on the death of the entire universe because we have our individual end, our own particular death, our own particular judgment. That when we die, we have time to be sorry.

This is a reminder for all of us: There is no Noah's Ark, no Ark of the Covenant that will save us but there is the Heart of Mary. We have to be protected by her mantle. We have to be there at the very heart of Mary because she is the Ark of the Covenant, the Ark of Salvation. And the only way to do that is to be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart.

Like Pope John Paul II, my favorite line is that of St .Louise de Monfort, "Totus Tuus" meaning "I am all yours, O Mary". As we are already consecrated to her, how could she turn us down? She is our Mother.

Like you, mothers, who can feel when her children are troubled even when you are not together, the Blessed Mother feels when there is something wrong with us, her children; thus, she will come and visit unannounced, unplanned from our point of view. But from the point of view of God, it is planned. Our Lord sends Our Lady to remind us that we need to be converted, we need to do penance, we need to return to God.

Accompanied by Our Lady, let us ask forgiveness for our sins, to do better, to remind our loved ones that we need to stand in need of God's presence. Our Lady will always be there to accompany and help us. And who can understand Our Lady better than you, the Daughters of Mary Immaculate? Like Our Lady, bring your children to Christ, and bring Christ to your children. That way, the heart of Mary triumphs in us individually and through those individual triumphs, we can see something that dramatic, that universal, that triumph of Our Lady when she wins with St. Michael to crush the head of the Serpent.



Genesis 3:15 - THE PROTOEVANGELIUM



Third Secret of Fatima

18TH SMI BIENNIAL CONVENTION VIA ZOOM

THE OPENING CEREMONY

*By: Sq. Abbie Gail Villanueva,
SMI Past-National Chancellor*

On the 27th of June 2021, Squirettes and Daughters of Mary Immaculate from all over the country came together to attend the 18th SMI Biennial Convention. Since before, the beginnings of these conventions have always been familiar – gathered in one place, participants exchanging warm welcomes and reuniting with missed friends. However, this year's convention is a bit different. Everything was done virtually. Because of the global pandemic, the 18th SMI Biennial Convention was done through video call via Zoom. However, despite the physical distance among the participants, it was evident that the excitement is still very much present and the same as before, if not more.

The opening ceremony was scheduled to begin at 9:00 in the morning. However, it was very interesting to see that as early as 7:00 AM, people, very eager to start today's celebration were already joining the call. Come 9:00 AM, Sq. Joy Ancheta, the SMI National Vice-President for Luzon greeted and welcomed everyone to this year's convention with the theme: "In this Year of Missio Ad Gentes, SMI being Gifted to Give, Keeps Shining Amidst the Pandemic". Sq. Joy introduced Sq. Elvanne, the SMI National Chancellor, to start the program and lead us all in praying the SMI Prayer. This was followed by the singing of the national anthem and reciting the Panunumpa sa Watawat led by Sq. Jona, the SMI National Secretary. After that solemn beginning, Sq. Elaisa, the SMI National Vice-President for Mindanao presented

and gave acknowledgment to the presence of all participating circlettes. To cap off the opening ceremony, Sq. Francesca, the SMI National Vice-President for Visayas led everyone in singing the SMI March.

Before proceeding to the rest of the morning activities, a quick throwback video about the most recent 17th SMI Biennial convention celebrated last 2019 was



Sis. Ruby Macario, DMII International Regent, giving her Inspirational Message.



Fr. Jerome Cruz leading the Eucharistic Celebration.

SMI NATIONAL OFFICERS



Sq. Elizabeth (President)



Sq. Joy (VP – Luzon)



Sq. Francesca (VP – Visayas)



Sq. Elaisa (VP-Mindanao)



Sq. Jona (Secretary)



Sq. Jenica (Treasurer)



Sq. Elvanne (Chancellor)



Sis. Biannah Elena C. Villanueva,
National Mission Chairperson for Youth and SMI

played. The video brought back memories and mixed feelings of nostalgia, but at the same time excitement for what is to come. An SMI Biennial Convention opening event would not be complete without hearing inspiring and welcoming words from the SMI National President, Sq. Elizabeth and, of course, Sis. Ruby, the International Regent of DMII. These welcoming remarks always leave the Squirettes with lessons and advice they would find themselves holding on to for a long time.

To conclude the morning event, officially start the Biennial Convention and welcome everyone, a Eucharistic celebration was held led by Fr. Jerome Cruz. Lastly,

appreciation was given to Sis. Ruby and Fr. Jerome Cruz for their unwavering support to the SMI, as always. Certificates were handed out by Sis. Biannah Elena Villanueva, National Mission Chairperson for Youth and SMI.

As mentioned, this year's biennial convention was a bit different from past conventions. Everything else must have changed but the excitement, solidarity, creativity, enlightenment, and irreplaceable memories these conventions bring to each SMI remains. By the end of the holy mass, everyone was excited for what is in store for the rest of the day.

TALKS BY GUEST SPEAKERS

*By: Sq. Mary Joy Ancheta,
SMI National Vice President for Luzon
Sq. Elaisa Marie Honculado,
SMI National Vice President for Mindanao*



Welcome Message and Reminders - Sq. Elaisa Honculado



Talk by Prof. Nephthaly Joel B. Botor

The afternoon session of the first-ever SMI online convention last June 27, 2021 was filled with joy and excitement. During the waiting and admittance time, SMIs and DMIs used this opportunity to communicate with each other while listening to the music. They meet and greet by turning their cameras on while waving to other participants, sending heart/like reactions, and typing in their greetings through the chatbox of the Zoom platform. At exactly 2 PM, the delegates, wearing their SMI convention shirts, settled down for the start of the program with Sq. Elaisa Honculado as the emcee. After the short introduction and reminder, the speakers from the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) were then introduced by Sq. Joy Ancheta and Sq. Cesca Lozano. Since the topic revolves around "Youth Mental Health: Issues, Challenges, and Coping Mechanisms Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic", the workshop, headed by Prof. Nephthaly Joel B. Botor who is a registered psychometrician and licensed

professional teacher, was first done to allow the participants to open up and reflect on their wellness status during this very challenging time. Here, Prof. Botor first prepared a sitting exercise as a physical coping mechanism to ease the mind of the participants. After which, he tackled the importance of checking on one's mental health status then presented questions regarding the topic at hand which will be answered by the SMIs through creative outputs- making of poems about their learnings on the talk of Prof. Botor. Here, the creative expression of oneself and sharing one's thoughts as forms of coping mechanism from stress, anxiety, and other negative emotions was highlighted.

For this workshop, SMIs were grouped according to their age brackets (9-12, 13-16, and 17-25 years old) so they can relate more to the experiences of their peers. Since

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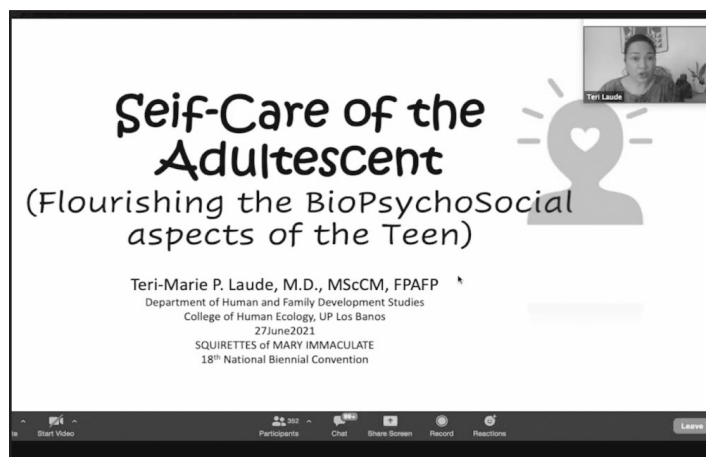
Instructions for the Workshop

there are hundreds of participants, 7 breakout rooms were prepared for more effective discussions among the members (2 teams/breakout rooms for 9-12 and 13-16 years old while 3 for 17-25 years old as the majority of the SMI participants were within this age bracket). Each team had separate Zoom breakout rooms assisted by the SMI National Officers and the speakers while the DMIs remained in the main room for their own Zoomustahan session.

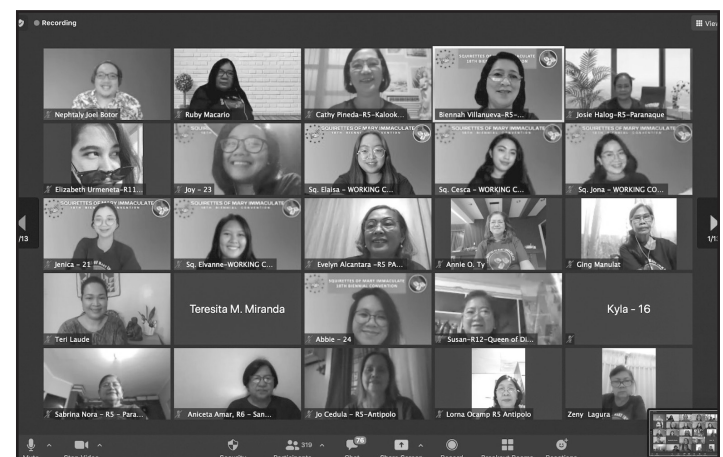
At exactly 3:40 PM, all the SMI participants came back to the main room and each group shared their outputs. The DMIs and the speakers were amazed by the active participation as well as the poems and sharings of the SMIs given the limited time they had to accomplish the tasks. Meanwhile, SMIs used this opportunity to open up their concerns as adolescents. The poems they prepared highlighted the importance of prayers and conversations with people around them as ways to keep their minds off the negative thoughts they have during this pandemic and online mode of learning. Moreover, they think of their fellow Squirettes as friends and support systems as they relate with each other's experiences. Somehow,

it gives them assurance that they are not alone as each of them is undergoing similar challenges and experiences. Sir Botor then concluded that being part of an organization like the SMI is beneficial not only for spiritual enrichment but also for the personality development of adolescents who are undergoing a lot of biological and psychological changes. It allows the Squirettes to be more equipped as they face these aforementioned changes within their bodies given the difficult situation posed by the pandemic.

After the interactive workshop activities, the second speaker, Dr. Teri-Marie P. Laude, a Diplomate and Fellow Phil Academy of Family Physicians, with a medical degree from the UP College of Medicine, tackled self-care as a way to handle the biopsychosocial factors affecting adolescents. Here, Dr. Laude was able to discuss the answers and sharings of the Squirettes during the aforementioned workshop. She presented various aspects affecting the emotions of adolescents and how these feelings can be better handled, for instance through less use of social media, allotting time for reflections, and eating healthy food like peanuts and bananas which can strengthen memory and cognition. Dr. Laude presented videos as well like the animation and informative presentation of a "Biopsychosocial Teen" to somehow summarize the discussions and attract the interest of the participants. Moreover, she discussed the topic of "Psychosocial: Brain vs. Mind" and expanded on what is mental health and the hormones which affect and trigger these substances. The topic on "Adult vs. Teen Brain: Adultescent" was also explained thoroughly with the supporting context of the three major transformations in the teen brain. Dr. Laude ended her talk with her reminders on the roles of the lighthouses or adults, what makes a resilient teen, and the healthy mind platter. Sq. Elaisa Honculada then called on Sis. Biannah Villanueva to present the Certificates of Appreciation to Prof. Botor and Dr. Laude. As the afternoon activities have come to an end, Sq. Elizabeth Urmeneta closed the afternoon session by giving the details for the upcoming gala night in the evening.



Talk by Dr. Teri-Marie P. Laude



Speakers with the SMI National Officers and Tita DMIs

SMI GALA NIGHT

By: Sq. Elizabeth Urmeneta
and Elvanne Laynes

"The preparations we have had, were not easy. It took us months to finish everything. Maraming conflicting schedules amongst us officers: exams, work- related activities along the way and sometimes, due to these personal and external factors we sometimes held a meeting at 12 or even past 12 am. All of the preparations and meetings with the officers and of course, with our National Mission Chairperson for Youth and SMI, Tita Biannah were done online.

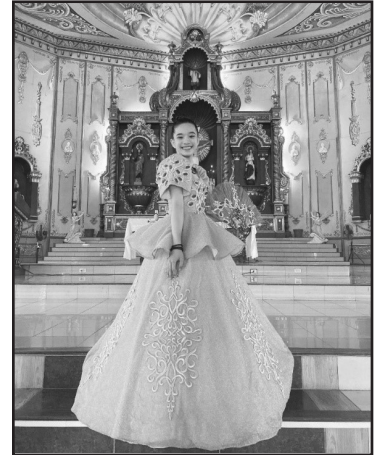
The conceptualization of SMI Star of the Night, was gauged towards the past biennial convention wherein we had this objective to always make our SMIs feel that "YOU ARE A STAR", they are all unique and beautiful in their own little ways. The same goes with the SMI Got Talent, we want to make them feel that they are all recognized and that no one is an outcast. We want to make them feel that all of them are special and that their God- given gifts are exceptional.

However, the concept for the theme, does not only talk about beauty and talents. Because, as SMI, we know that we have our mission. The mission to know the good from the bad; the mission to love what we have and strive for what we wish and dreamed; and the mission to serve the community because serving other people is like serving Mama Mary and Almighty Father.

With the beauty and talents that shine, we aim that we do not forget our purpose, and that we may be reminded of the reason why we have reached 500 years of Christianity- that despite all these challenges that we are all in, we may keep our righteous Filipino values, uphold the Filipino Culture and strengthen our faith."

The event started by showing a glimpse of the TOP 20 SMI Star of the Night and Got Talent entries who were introduced by SMI's National Treasurer Jenica Recinto and SMI's National Secretary Jonalyn Lico. The top 20 entries had been pre- judged by the SMI National Officers as board of judges and were selected based on the mechanics and criteria set with scoring scale of one (1) to ten (10).

The presentation of the Top 20 entries was then followed by an acknowledgment message of the DMII International Mission Chairperson for Youth and SMI- Sister Biannah Elena Villanueva where she expressed her gratitude to the ever glowing, energetic "Fairy God Mother of SMI's" the DMII International Regent- Sister Ruby Macario as well as the support from the SMIs and DMIs that had made the Biennial Convention possible and a success. She also expressed appreciation to the SMI National Officers for being on the top of the preparations of the online convention.



After the talk of Sister Biannah, the announcement of the Most- Liked SMIs Star of The Night and Got Talent were announced in which Sq. Kirsten Anne Ducusin from Our Lady of Abandoned Circlette, Region V and Sq. Mariz Evelyn Lim from Help of Christian Circlette, Region XII were announced as winners. On the other hand, the Most- Liked SMI Got Talent was awarded to Help of Christian Circlette, Region XII where a group of SMIs was able to show their talents through a dance.



The 2019 Got Talent Champion, Tower of Ivory Circlette also showed a special intermission through a cultural dance.

The announcement of winners took place after the special intermission from Region XI, where Sq. Ashley Panganiban was crowned as the Brightest Star of the Night 2021 and in which Sqs. Kristina Yari B. Aborka and Lynette Joy Baylon were both acknowledged as the Brightest SMI Talent 2021. The event was then concluded by Sister Biannah and farewell prayer of the SMI National Chancellor, Sq. Elvanne Laynes.

MONEY AND OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC (THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON WOMEN)

*By: Sis. Lorie Manalansan, Region V
Newsette Correspondent and Upliftment
of Women Workers Coordinator for Luzon*

Given the toll that the Covid 19 pandemic has taken on the family, it is usually the father who is expected to provide. And with women relegated to the background, most are not able to tap their full potential to be able to help the family by providing economic empowerment for women. This was the objective of a webinar on Money & Opportunity Management (MOM) that the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee organized during the latter part of 2020 with Ms. Reina Pelayo Lino, a female financial literacy advocate as resource speaker. (Pls. see sidebar About the Speaker.)

Sis. Meliza Guzman, regent of Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle of Marikina City gave the opening remarks during the webinar. Her vice-regent, Sis. Cathy Ong then introduced the resource speaker, citing her wide array of experiences in providing opportunities for women.

The webinar had two parts. The morning session targeted businesswomen among the DMI participants while the afternoon session was for non-business women such as employees, retirees, housewives, etc.

Ms. Reina started her talk by citing the challenge of recovering from the lockdown by meeting the problem head-on and overcoming it. Thus it is important for women – wives and female bread-winners – to be resilient

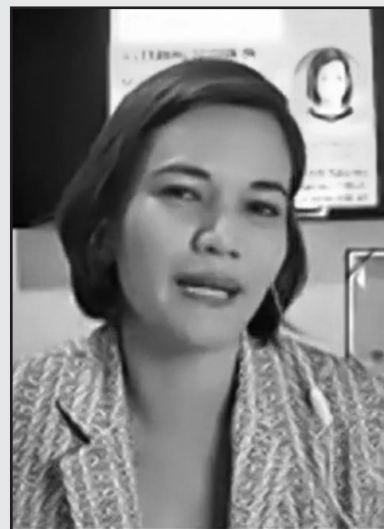
by managing their finances during the pandemic.

In the morning session, Ms. Reina said that by July, 2020, 26% of businesses have closed down based on reports provided by the Department of Trade and Industry. She then provided practical steps to make one's business survive the situation. These are:

1. Have a Financial Ambition. In so doing, the business owner should take steps to gradually grow the business by injecting additional capital. However he/she should evaluate funding strategies, options and read fine prints when borrowing from financial institutions, including interest rates.
2. Aim at becoming a Business Model. Decide which part of your company's activities should stop, start and continue based on the most impacted market as well as the competitive landscape.
3. Be conscious of Propositions and Brands. Track patterns to identify which products and services are subject to increasing or falling demand in various scenarios.
4. Be mindful of your Customers and Channels.. To do this:

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Ms. Reina Pelayo Lino is a Female Financial Literacy Advocate. She is the Founder and Program Management Director of FLOW Entrepreneurship Organization Phils., Inc. With over 30 years experience as a management consultant in various business aspects such as Operations, Banking, Insurance, Human Resources, Marketing and Business Development programs for small and growing business (also called the Micros), small and medium entrepreneurs, local governments, corporate foundations and foreign assistance projects. She has a multicultural experience working in New Zealand and attended trainings in New York and San Francisco, USA. She also has a certification from the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Turin, Italy for Gender and Mainstreaming Sustainable Development. Among her active community involvements are: as active member of the British Council Active Citizen as a global member, Association of Women's Rights Advocate (AWRA) and is a Brighter World Builder awardee. She holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the De La Salle University.



- * Emphatically understand customers and their immediate needs
- * Review your go-to market and strengthen your online/digital channels for reaching out to customers. Review your Facebook postings specially as most advertisements in the Philippines are posted on Facebook. (The Philippines is reported to be the most active in social media that Facebook has been proven as the most effective selling tool.)

Meanwhile, women in business can surpass the challenges brought about by the so-called new normal by not being afraid of change. Change is the only constant and refusal to adjust to the times can bring even large businesses down.

In fact, Ms. Reina said that change can even help your business grow to new heights. When change happens, she recommends to (1) solve the problem and (2) segment your market. Identify which customers to tap – the baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964), Gen X (between 1965 to 1980), Y or Millennials (1981 to 1996), or Z (1997 to 2015), and (3) transform your product into a service.

Ms. Reina also recommended Pivoting the business. This means revisiting the essentials or adapting a significant business change – ranging from mild to drastic. A pivot is usually intended to help a business recover from a tough period, or survive after experiencing new competition or other factors that make the original business model unsustainable. This is done by innovating continuously to ensure that you do not go out of business.

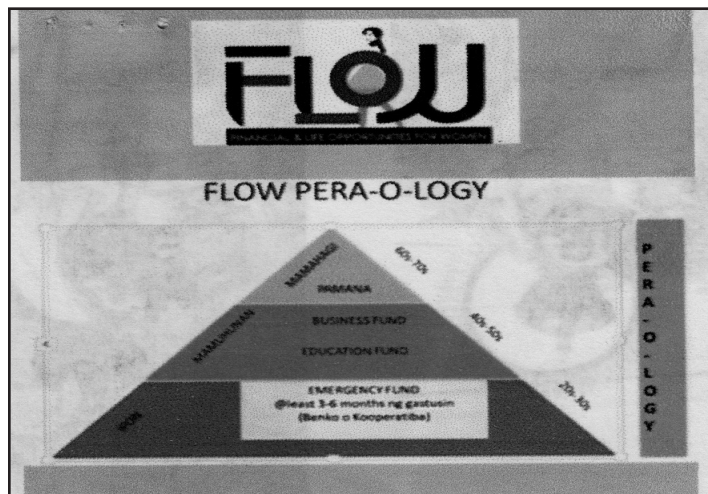
Pivoting during the Covid 19 pandemic shows some business adjusting their business. An example: motorcycles before the pandemic were public vehicles for the commuting public; however with the ECQ and the required social distancing, they have evolved into a delivery service for food and other products.

A Harvard University study shows that the new normal could last until 2022 or even become a trend. Thus businesses should be operating on this premise.

However, before putting up a business or an enterprise, one needs to evaluate options and analyze the value of the business to society. That being said, skills and social roles are two important factors in assessing Entrepreneurial Competencies.

In both the morning and afternoon sessions, Ms.

Reina introduced the FLOW Pera-O-Logy. FLOW being her acronym for her team (Financial and Life Opportunity for Women), she created a basic needs bracket for each



age category as inspired by the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs given the current times.

For the 20 to 30 year-old category – should have emergency fund which in a normal situation should be equivalent to 3-6 months of the monthly expense. However with the pandemic, “ipon” or savings should be 6 to 12 months equivalent. As such, it would help to write down all the monthly expenses to identify how much should be set aside monthly for this purpose.

For the 40 to 50 year-old category – would normally set aside funds for Business and Education; thus called “namumuhunan”. At this age, people are more daring to get into business and further their knowledge including investing in their children’s education.

For the 60 to 70 year-old category – “Namamahagi” - this is the time for women to be helping others too as discussed in Proverbs 31: 20 “She extends a helping hand to the poor and opens her arms to the needy.” (The Virtuous Woman)

Likewise, Ms. Reina reiterated the need to check each woman’s S-P-F-E-M circles as another form to check her resiliency. This is in the belief that a RESILIENT WOMAN has the ability to turn negative experiences into positive outcomes.

S-P-F-E-M refers to: Spiritual (not needing so much materially); Financial (ability to save enough so you do not jeopardize the people around you); Special (be a contributing member of your community); Physical (keep yourself healthy by exercising and/or indulging in activities like yoga and meditation which help one

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to be strong physically and aware of her body's needs); Emotional (emotional stability is important and stress must be avoided). For things beyond one's control, just "Let It Go."

For those who attended the afternoon session, Ms. Reina reminded them that it is the middle class that is saving the economy. Thus, she encouraged them to try and strengthen their "F" Circle.

For retirees, she pointed out that they can take on work-at-home jobs like being a Virtual Assistant and get paid P50/hour or P300/day approximately. Or they can do a Writer's Blog. Or be a One-on-One Consultant. Or for those who can still afford to go out, provide grocery shopping services.

The more flexible a woman is, the more earning capacity she can generate. Also, she encouraged them to practice modest living, citing John Gokongwei as a model of

Modest Living: he leaves only 20% of his earnings for himself.

International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario closed the

session with these words: "*Marami akong natutunan siyempre, marami tayong realization sa nangyayari sa ating paligid ngayon.* One thing certain is that we are now in a new normal situation and what we have to do is accept the change. Accept change and welcome online shopping. Change is here and in all these, we need acceptance. What we have to embrace is our return to basics. What remains is what is in our body now. We don't need anything more than we already have."

For her part, International Chairperson for Pro-Life Sis. Cora Afuang thanked Ms. Reina who happens to be her niece, a daughter of her first cousin, for the learnings gained from the webinar. The lockdown has not been a hindrance for the continuing education and empowerment of DMIs and other women in the community. She urged the participants to be content with what they have as the new normal dictates, including not being able to go shopping. God, in His Infinite Goodness, provided a number of worthy substitutes. Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle Past Regent Sis. Eyra Lourdes Umali exhorted everyone to intensify their marketing efforts, whether they be online or face-to-face. She ended by saying, "In the meantime, my creative brain is already working. I think we can do so much for the parishioners and looking forward to holding a Christmas bazaar as a sales outlet for our creativity and deft hands."



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