



DMINewssette

To Jesus through Mary

DMI

VOL. XXVI, No. 1

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY IMMACULATE INTERNATIONAL

January - March 2009



A tarpaulin streamer at a parish churchyard in Paranaque, one of many that DMI circles have put up all over the country.

DMI Launches National Campaign vs. HB 5043

While House Bill No. 5043, known as the Reproductive Health Bill is being advanced by its authors and supporters in Congress, the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International's support of the stand of the Catholic Church against the bill has been given more impetus.

Last February, Pro-Life Month, a national campaign was launched by the International Pro-Life Committee for tarpaulin streamers with a uniform message to be put up and displayed the whole year round in town plazas and churchyards all over the country where DMI local circles are present. The message says: **"Stand up for Life. Stop Abortion. Protect the Unborn."** To attract more attention, the words are in white against a red background with the DMI and the name of the local circle printed on top.

According to Sis. Helen de Leon, International Pro-Life chairperson, the tarpaulins are the DMI's expression of its silent protest against the Reproductive Health Bill. It creates no sound but expresses in no small voice one of the organization's major thrusts - Pro-life which is the promotion, preservation and protection of life at all stages.

Efforts are also being exerted on the diocesan, vicariate and parish levels all over the country through symposia, dialogues, rallies and other fora held in towns and cities to drum up support for the stand of the Catholic Church on the sacredness of life.

The DMI's stand on the issue has been expressed in full in a position paper that was published in the October-December, 2008 issue of the *DMI Newssette*.

New International Board Holds First Meeting

International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde convened the first meeting of the International Board last February 21 and 22, 2009. Present were the international officers, the regional representatives and committee chairpersons. Asst. International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz was also present.

The business meeting took place on the morning of February 21st during which the regional representatives reported the projects and activities on the local level for the purpose of providing a situationer and guiding the Board on the direction and thrusts of the organization beginning 2009.

Chairpersons of the different working committees were also named. They are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Committee on Ceremonials | - Sis. Lydia Ordonez |
| Committee on Rules & Regulations | - Sis. Rebecca Pacanan |
| | - Sis. Rita Caballero, co-chair |
| Committee on Ways & Means | - Sis. Alice Capiral |
| | - Sis. Mila Villanueva, co-chair |

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Members of the International Board and committee chairpersons at the Visioning and Team-Building Workshop in Tagaytay City.

New International Board Holds First Meeting...Cont'd. from Page 1

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Committee on Audit | - Sis. Ofelia Lucas |
| Committee on Awards | - Sis. Jean Velarde |
| | - Sis. Baby Acevedo, co-chair |
| Committee on Missions | - Sis. Jean Velarde |

Hold-over chairpersons for the DMI Missions and editorial board were also re-confirmed. They are:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Pro-Life | - Sis. Helen de Leon |
| Upliftment of Women Workers | - Sis. Linda Castillo |
| Morality in Media | - Sis. Sonia Manlapig |
| Editorial Board, <i>DMI Newsette</i> | - Sis. Sally Estrada |

The new chair of the Committee on Assistance to Families of Prisoners and Their Victims is Sis. Milde Tong, diocesan regent of the Diocese of Paranaque. The chair of this committee was left vacant with the untimely demise the other year of its chairperson, Sis. Fely Gonzales.

The group motored to Tagaytay City after lunch for a Visioning and Team-Building Workshop at the Pleasant Hill, the sprawling place of Ms. Stella Tejada-Dy, Sis. Jean's sister. Workshop facilitator was Ms. Sandra Tolentino, an HR practitioner formerly connected with the Manila Water Services, Inc., an Ayala company.

The first part of the session started in late afternoon with a getting-to-know-you exercise. Workshops were held after dinner preparatory



The Board in session. At the head table are Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Fr. Jerome Cruz and Sis. Jean Velarde

to re-visiting the DMI vision for the purpose of bringing it up to date. Utilizing SWOT analysis, the workshop groups drew up the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It was an incisive view of the DMI inside and out to be further explored and considered in forthcoming plans and programs of the organization.

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Daughters Of Mary Immaculate International **Block 3, Lot 5, Kathleen Place, Fernando St., Pasay City**

Executive Officers

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sis. Jean T. Velarde | - International Regent |
| Sis. Alice A. Capiral | - Int'l Vice-Regent - Luzon |
| Sis. Carmen O. de la Torre | - Int'l Vice-Regent - Visayas |
| Sis. Lydia L. Ramirez | - Int'l Vice-Regent - Mindanao |
| Sis. Lydia P. Ordonez | - International Treasurer |
| Sis. Teresita B. Villarino | - International Secretary |
| Sis. Rebecca C. Pacanan | - International Advocate |

Msgr. Francisco G. Tantoco, Jr.
International Chaplain

Rev. Fr. Jerome Ma. J. Cruz
Asst. Int'l. Chaplain

DMI Newsette Editorial Board

Sis. Sally T. Estrada
Editor

Contributors

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sis. Manolita Q. Acevedo | Sis. Ofelia G. Lucas |
| Sis. Cora T. Afuang | Sis. Constanca P. Macomb |
| Sis. Ludy A. Amita | Sis. Sonia G. Manlapig |
| Sis. Mirriam O. Angot | Sis. Lourdes N. Pensotes |
| Sis. Letecia M. Azura | Sis. Narcisa R. Pepito |
| Sis. Flordeliza G. Barcial | Sis. Rosalinda C. Pimentel |
| Sis. Teresita Q. Birata | Sis. Rose L. Ramiro |
| Sis. Rita O. Caballero | Sis. Lolita C. Romero |
| Sis. Lita M. Canonizado | Sis. Rita R. Samarista |
| Sis. Linda L. Castillo | Sis. Nemia G. Tagle |
| Sis. Helen B. de Leon | Sis. Milde R. Tong |
| Sis. Carmelita T. Domondon | Sis. Mila A. Villanueva |
| Sis. Pureza M. Guzman | Sis. Nimfa D. Yyance |
| Sis. Adelina A. Lee | Sis. Mylene Segundera-Bass |

From the International Regent

MESSAGE



My dear sisters in the Daughters of Mary Immaculate:

Greetings of love, peace and joy!

At the start of our term as your International Regent, allow me to invite you to set goals in order to give direction to our formation as DMIs. It is a rare privilege to convey to you some thoughts which will surely be spiritually enriching for all of us - allowing us to grow in faith and love. These should be helpful tips to direct us as Mary's daughters to imitate her and be like her in order to conform ourselves to her. She was the holiest of all creatures and was the sacred vessel which bore the Son of God. Since we bear her name, our first goal must be to humbly imitate her to make us worthy of her name!

Let us be close to her Son Jesus, our Eucharistic Lord by receiving Him daily at mass.

Let us listen to what her Son teaches us by faithfully reading God's words daily and contemplating on them.

Let us be guided by the teachings of the Church, its rich practices, dogmas and traditions; study and imitate the lives of the saints to better understand how God works in the lives of men.

Let us pray unceasingly, with full reverence for the Lord. Let us make our lives a "prayer".

Let us practice fasting on Wednesdays believing in God's words that "we become spiritually strong when our body is mortified and sacrificed".

Let us give to the support of the church; contribute to the programs and projects of the DMI which usually benefit the less fortunate ones, generously and joyfully for "God loves a cheerful giver".

Let us imitate Mary's ten principal virtues as enumerated by St. Louis Marie de Montfort: "her profound humility, her lively faith, her blind obedience, her continual mental prayer, her mortification in all things, her surpassing purity, her ardent charity, her heroic patience, her angelic sweetness, and her divine wisdom".

These would be a good way to start this term. Let us form ourselves to conform to our heavenly Mother!

May God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit empower us and bless all that we do!

May the Blessed Virgin Mary pray for us!

Lovingly in Jesus through Mary,

JEAN T. VELARDE

Diocese of Paranaque Goes to Congress

On February 17, 2009, the DMI Diocese of Paranaque headed by Diocesan Regent Sis. Milde Tong went to the Batasang Pambansa in Quezon City to attend the scheduled hearing on HB No. 5043, known as the Reproductive Health Bill. Pro-Life International Chairperson Sis. Helen de Leon initiated the activity.

Some 50 members representing the three vicariates and 12 circles of the Diocese came in full uniform to make their presence felt as pro-lifers and against the passage of the bill.

It was a long day for the DMI members who were met at the lobby of the Batasan and accompanied to the Session Hall by Past Regent Sis. Beth Bongon of the Diocese of Cubao, a member of the Batasan Secretariat. The waiting was long as discussions on the floor centered on the National Budget urgently needing to be passed. It took the most part of the day's session so that the debate on HB 5043 was pended for a later date.

The DMIs' going to Congress bore some fruit nonetheless. The organization became visible as an advocate of pro-life and anti-RHB in support of the stand of the Catholic Church.



The Diocese of Paranaque delegation poses for this photo at the Batasang Pambansa driveway.

Then, too, they were able to personally express the organization's full support to the pro-life advocates in Congress: Congressmen Alex Cheng (Buhay Partylist), Anie Rosa Susano (Quezon City), Antonio Roxas (Pasay City), Roilo Golez and Eduardo Zialcita (Paranaque City) and Hermilando Mandanas (Batangas).

The group plans to go to Congress once more when the hearing on HB 5043 resumes. And more are expected to come.



The DMI members are shown seated at the gallery of Congress waiting for the hearing on HB 5043 to begin.



Sis. Mathy Ramos of Risen Christ Circle, a Batanguena, exchanges pleasantries with Batangas Congressman Hermilando Mandanas.

SMI to Hold 12th National Biennial Convention

The Squirettes of Mary Immaculate is scheduled to hold its 12th National Biennial Convention on May 25-26, 2009 at the Baybayon in Agalon Resort in Albueria. Leyte just in the outskirts of Ormoc City.

SMI International Chairperson Sis. Mila Villanueva said that the theme of the convention is "Playing and Praying with Mother Mary Is Fun!" "And this is exactly what we shall be doing," she declared.

The Day 1 morning session will cover just two major topics: Mariology to be conducted by a nun as resource speaker and Etiquette and Social Graces. Her schedule permitting, a very well-known personality will be handling the latter.

The fun portion which starts in the afternoon includes swimming, beach games, a beach party and winnie roast in the evening. On Day 2 (May 26) there will be an election of a new set of national officers. A Eucharistic celebration and the induction of the newly-elected SMI officers will bring the convention to a close. It's pack-up and departure time right after lunch.

What to bring? The SMI uniform for the Mass and for the most part of the convention, dark blue Bermuda shorts and white SMI T-shirts that can be purchased at the venue, plus a bathing suit and rubber slippers.

The whats and hows:

1. Convention delegates must PRE-REGISTER. Deadline of registration is APRIL 30, 2009.

2. The convention fee is P1,700 for non-aircon sleeping quarters and P1,800 for an aircon room. The fee covers two days and 1 night stay at the resort and all meals from breakfast to lunch of Day 2.

3. To be officially registered, the delegate must pay the convention fee upon registration. Payments may be deposited to the DMI Current Account with the BPI (CA No. 4955-813753) and a copy faxed to Sis. Josie Halog at the DMI National Office, Fax No. 833-1203, together with the name of the circle/circlette and the number of delegates.

4. Flight bookings and other transpo arrangements are to be made by the individual circles sending delegates to the SMI Convention.

Information on airline flight schedules and other means of transportation available to get to the venue has been provided in a circular issued by the SMI National Chairperson to all the DMI circles.

SMI members are looking forward with excitement to another very successful and fun-filled convention in 2009. Remember Baguio in 2007?

COME NA!

New International Board Holds First Meeting...Cont'd. from Page 2

The morning of Sunday was spent crafting a new vision for the DMI based on its revised Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Several suggestions were given by the participants and, for a while, it seemed that an agreement would not be reached. Sis. Jean then formed a Prayer Group to invoke the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother. Some three minutes into the prayer, the proponents of several vision statements came to agree on the following:

'WITH THE BLESSED MOTHER MARY AS OUR MODEL AND GUIDE, WE ARE AN ORGANIZATION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN UNITED AND STRENGTHENED IN FAITH AND COMMITTED TO THE SERVICE OF

GOD AND COUNTRY THROUGH APOSTOLIC WORK IN BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES (BECs)."

Feeling really blessed and guided from up above, the group congratulated one another and gave praise and thanks to the Holy Spirit and Mama Mary for the new DMI vision statement.

It was a late morning Mass that the group attended at the Focolare Center celebrated by Msgr. Alex Menez, a cousin of Sis. Jean, whose simple but beautiful homily touched the heart of everyone.

Region I Holds First Assembly

Region I held its 1st Regional Assembly last March 26, 2009 at the Renzo Hotel Function Hall in Laoag City with the theme: “The DMI Moving Towards Renewed Concern for the Integrity of Women”. The assembly was purposely scheduled to coincide with the celebration in March of Women’s Month.

Some 85 delegates coming from six parishes in Region 1 attended the assembly. Represented were the Our Lady of Atocha Circle of Alicia, Isabela, the Mater Immaculate Circle of Our Lady of the Pillar Parish of Cauayan City, the Queen of Mercy Circle, Parish of Angandanan, Isabela, St. Vincent Ferrer Circle of Baguio City, Our lady of Grace Circle of the San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte, and the Our Lady of Good Counsel Circle of St. William Parish, Laoag City, the host circle.

The International Board was represented by Sis. Alice Capiral, international vice-regent for Luzon and Sis. Lydia Ordonez, international treasurer, Past International Vice-Regent for Luzon Sis. Mila Paguila and Region I Representative Sis. Ofelia Lucas also graced the occasion.

The program began with an invocation by Past KC Grand Knight Vivencio Diaz. Then came the traditional Parade of Circles and the *Pambansang Awit* led by Sis. Luz Alvarez. Sis. Euprecita Martin, regent of the host circle formally welcomed the guests and delegates who were presented by Diocesan Regent Sis. Hilaria Josefa Badua.

Representing the keynote speaker, Rev. Fr. Leonardo Ruiz, diocesan director of the Social Action Commission was Mr. Franklin Bitogon, former Vice-President for Administration and a professor of the Graduate School of the Divine Word College of Laoag who gave a comprehensive discussion on the theme of the assembly. He said that there is now a heightened awareness and concern for women because of the increasing incidences



Members of the International Board at the presidential table - from left: Sisters Alice Capiral, Lydia Ordonez and Mila Paguila.



The officers of Region I with Bishop Sergio Utleg and the International officers present

of violence against them. He pointed out that 90% of all forms of abuse such as physical violence, and psychological and economic abuse are committed against women. To safeguard the rights and dignity and integrity of women, a number of pro-active measures such as legislation have been passed, the latest being RA No. 9262, the Anti-Violence Act of 2004. In the open forum that followed, queries were raised by the delegates and clarifications given by the speaker. The lunch was a relaxing break with Sis. Arcelie Agpaoa, monitor of the host circle, leading in the community singing of Marian and Ilocano songs and introducing some ice breakers.

The afternoon session started with an inspirational message by Sis. Alice Capiral who represented International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde. They were one in the message: "Do as He tells you," which Mama Mary, God's chosen one, uttered at the wedding at Cana. And as the Blessed Mother's daughters, they exhorted each one to imitate her and inspire others to be like her. Sis. Alice also encouraged the delegates to receive the grace to do God's will and be able, with the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to accomplish what they have set out to do in their apostolates.

The plenary session was presided by Region I Representative Sis. Ofelia Lucas who provided updates and other information from the National Office and clarified questions posed by circle regents. She also urged those present to work for the activation of inactive circles especially in Ilocos Sur.

The Eucharistic celebration was officiated by the Most Rev. Sergio L. Utleg, DD, bishop of the Diocese of Laoag as main celebrant. In his homily, he dwelt on the qualities of the Blessed Mother, particularly humility and obedience and how DMLs can be transformed in imitation of her. He also advised the DMLs to assess their strengths and weaknesses to be able to effectively implement their apostolic missions.

Certificates of appreciation were awarded to the keynote speaker and the International Officers who graced the occasion. Recording Secretary Sis. Marcelina Agustin of the host circle thanked all those who made the assembly the success that it was.

The Fellowship Night was an affair to remember. Hosted by Sis. Lucena Tamayo and Sis. Hilaria Badua, the Hawaiian motif of the affair made it very colorful with the circles presenting their unique version of dances to the tune of Pearly Shell. A surprise number was the *Putungan* to honor the birthday celebrators from March 27 to 29, 2009 - Sisters Glorien Pascua, Elma Francisco, Ruby Baptista and Lydia Ordonez.

The evening's program started with the opening remarks of Past Vice-Regent Sis. Filomena Pilar and ended with the closing remarks by Regent Sis. Euprecita Martin of the host circle. Having enjoyed the whole-day assembly, the delegates commended the host circle, the Our Lady of Good Counsel Circle for a well-planned and executed event and thanked them profusely for their hospitality.



The assembly delegates in their colorful Hawaiian attires during Fellowship Night

Regional Officers' Conference Held in Region IX



The presidential table at the Regional Officers' Conference and First Diocesan Board Meeting. From left: Sis. Tesing Rivera, board member; Sis. Yoly Galvez, diocesan regent, Archdiocese of Jaro; Sis. Pureza Guzman, Region IX deputy representative; Sis. Jean Velarde, international regent; Sis. Baby Acevedo, Region IX representative; Sis. Lucy Buendia and Sis. Perla Arguelles, past international regents and Sis. Tery Tan, board member.

A Regional Officers' Conference of Region IX (Western Visayas) was held simultaneously with the First Diocesan Board Meeting of the Archdiocese of Jaro at the Centennial Resort Hotel in Iloilo City last March 7, 2009.

Hosting the event was the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Alta Tierra Village, the first time that the circle played host to a conference. The circle officers and members left no stone unturned to ensure the success of the event which was very well attended. The conference delegates came from the provinces of Aklan, Iloilo and Negros Occidental and the cities of San Carlos, Bacolod, Cadiz, Roxas and Passi.

Gracing the occasion were the incumbent International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde and Past International Regents Sis. Perla Arguelles (2002-04) and Lucy Buendia (1993-96).

Sis. Jean in her inspirational message focused on the merits and timeliness of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Region IX Representative to the International Board Sis. Baby Acevedo who was instrumental in convening the conference to be able to meet the regional officers and circles in Western Visayas distributed copies of a hand-out she prepared - catchy and

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Prayer Rally Supports CBCP's Rejection of BNPP

Members of the St. Joseph Circle of Balanga City, Bataan joined a prayer rally headed by Bishop Socrates Villegas of the Diocese of Balanga last February 23, 2009 to express the opposition of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to the rehabilitation of the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP). The rally was attended by parishioners, other religious organizations and students.

The plan to rehabilitate the BNPP is being advanced by some congressmen led by Pangasinan Congressman Mark Cojuangco to help solve the energy crisis.

The CBCP's position on the issue is expressed thus:

What has been rendered unsafe 20 years ago cannot be made safe by a congressional action. The site sits on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of volcanoes and fault lines that encircles the Pacific Basin making the area prone to seismic upheavals.

Bataan is only 35 kilometers wide and Manila is not more than 30 kilometers away from Bataan's western shores. The northeasterly wind (*amihan*) normally blows through Bataan toward Vietnam. But the southwesterly wind (*habagat*) blows from the opposite direction toward the north and east placing residents of Manila,



Members of the clergy of the Diocese of Balanga led by Bishop Socrates Villegas at the prayer rally.



The DMI members led by Regent Sis. Digna Biazon with other parishioners. Among them are Sisters Eva Camacho and Charrie Redulla, vicarial regent of St. Michael the Archangel of Orion, Bataan.

Bulacan, Zambales and Pampanga at risk in case of nuclear fallout. Contrary to claims that nuclear energy is clean, nuclear waste is deadly and cannot just be dumped.

PHOTO NEWS



From Olongapo City

Sta. Rita Circle Officers Installed

The 29th Installation of Officers of the Sta. Rita Circle, Sta. Rita Parish, Olongapo City was held recently at the Kauffman Clubhouse, Gordon Heights, Olongapo City. Vicarial Regent Sis. Ludy Amita was the installing officer. Special guest was Region III Representative Sis. Connie Macomb.

News Briefs from St. Joseph Circle

by Sis. Digna R. Banzon, Circle Regent



Outreach at Bahay-Puso

Circle members led by Regent Sis. Digna Banzon visited Bahay-Puso, a center for abandoned elders, last February 10, 2009 in observance of the International Day of the Sick. The sisters are shown above with Fr. Regie Hizon. Among those who came were Past Regents Sisters Mercy Laxa and Susan Edano and Treasurer Sis. Auring Austria. They brought groceries, disinfectants and pampers for Bahay-Puso residents.



Family Day & Valentine's Day Raffle

A fund-raising project was undertaken by the St. Joseph Circle jointly with the Knights of Columbus Council 3887 last Feb. 15, 2009 for the benefit of incoming schoolers of Bgy. Tanato, Balanga City. An "Alay sa Kabataan" Project will also be conducted in May, 2009 to provide school supplies and bags to grade schoolers this coming schoolyear.

Regional Officers' Conference Held in Region IX..Cont'd from Page 7

challenging one-liners - as her message to the delegates. She also announced the forthcoming activities and conferences in the Region, foremost of which is the next regional officers' meeting to be hosted by Bacolod sometime in June.

The delegates congratulated the Our Lady of Fatima Circle and Diocesan Regent Sis. Yoly Galvez for hosting a most successful conference. While the expected 80 participants swelled to more than double that number, they were easily able to make adjustments, making all the delegates feel welcomed and their stay comfortable, manifesting to the fullest the DMI motto of friendship, unity and charity.



Day of the Unborn Observed

The St. Joseph Circle marked the international observance of the Day of the Unborn with a Eucharistic celebration officiated by Fr. Percival Medina and the blessing of the Unborn Children Marker at the Pablo Roman Expressway, corner of Ma. Lourdes Subdivision. A fellowship breakfast followed at the site.

Mary, All Beautiful Circle Celebrates 25th Year

by Sis. Cristy Calaquian, Circle Scribe

A milestone event for the Mary, All Beautiful Circle of Project 8, Quezon City took place last December 7, 2008. It was the circle's 25th anniversary. Highlighting the celebration was an outreach project earlier in the day benefiting the poor families of Sitio Maligaya and an Anniversary Dinner and Program in the evening at the Congressional Village Clubhouse.

The circle's 25th anniversary theme was "25 Years of Journeying to Jesus Through Mama Mary". Attending the celebration were 30 charter and current members of the circle accompanied by their KC husbands. Past International Vice-Regent for Luzon Sis. Fely Villaruz graced the occasion and gave a reflection on the anniversary theme.

Specially honored during the occasion were the circle regents who served from 1983 to the present. They are Sisters Prune Tan, Fely Villaruz, Sylvia Adame, Mameng del Rosario, Tita Alagar, Cely Dario, +Sophia Badilla, Mila Florentino, Raquel Oliveros, Miner Catalig and Tessie Yap.



The officers and members of the Mary, All Beautiful Circle and their guests during the Anniversary Dinner and Program.



A special dance number was presented by circle members. Shown in photo are Sisters Meldy Palad, Cristy Calaquian, Mila Florentino, Lorie Moreno, Lory Abella, Glo de los Reyes, Linda Sajul, Lily Capili, CelyDario and Linda Miranda, incumbent regent.

Ina Ng Grasya Ng Diyos Circle Conducts Livelihood Seminar

Pursuing one of the four DMI thrusts, Upliftment of Women Workers, the Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle of Marilao, Bulacan sponsored a seminar on Perfume-Making and Packaging at the multi-purpose hall of the Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Meralco Village on the afternoon of February 21, 2009.

Forty participants consisting mostly of housewives and students, including 10 DMI sisters, learned to prepare perfumes (pure type for women, EDT for men and cologne for both men and women). They were later grouped into 5's for a hands-on on

From Marilao, Bulacan



perfume mixing. They also learned to package and label their products and where to buy their raw materials.

The Circle's Committee on Upliftment of Women Workers spearheaded the conduct of the seminar.

March Marks Birth of Two New Circles

by Sis. Flor Barcial, Diocesan Regent

The month of March was very productive and fruitful for the Diocese of Malolos: the month marked the birth of two new circles in the Diocese.

San Antonio de Padua Circle, Hagonoy, Bulacan

The San Antonio de Padua Circle was officially organized on March 7, 2009 in the Parish of San Antonio de Padua in Iba, Hagonoy, Bulacan with the exemplification of the circle's charter members, and right after, the installation of its first officers.

The newly-installed officers are:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Regent - | Sis. Yolanda Cruz |
| Vice-Regent | - Sis. Ma. Lourdes de Guzman |
| Chancellor | - Sis. Virginia Javier |
| Custodians | - Sis. Milagros de Vera |
| | - Sis. Leoncia Pagdanganan |
| Financial Secretary | - Sis. Cristina Factor |
| Recording Secretary | - Sis. Winnie Cuz |
| Treasurer | - Sis. Carmen Cruz |
| Trustees | - Sis. Epifania Cruz |
| | - Sis. Nenita Lacsamana |
| | - Sis. Miguela Lizarondo |
| Scribes | - Sis. Eulalia Gutierrez |
| | - Sis. Rosemarie Calzo |
| Monitor | - Sis. Ma. Rosario Manalo |
| Banner Bearers | - Sis. Representacion de la Cruz |
| | - Sis. Jacinta de Jesus |
| Inner Guards | - Sis. Zenaida Gutierrez |
| | - Sis. Luzviminda Jose |
| Outer Guards | - Sis. Herminia Robles |
| | - Sis. Gregoria Lacap |
| Guides | - Sis. Lorelei Pahati |
| | - Sis. Gloria Nievera |
| Organist | - Sis. Evelyn de Jesus |

Nuestra Senora de las Flores Circle, Baliuag, Bulacan

On March 28, 2009, members of a second circle to be organized in the Diocese were exemplified at the Virgen de las Flores Church in Baliuag, Bulacan. The new circle has been named Nuestra Senora de las Flores Circle. The following were installed as the circle's charter officers:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Regent | - Sis. Maritess Santiago |
| Vice-Regent | - Sis. Elvira Cruz |
| Recording Secretary | - Sis. Josephine de la Cruz |
| Financial Secretary | - Sis. Emma Cauzon |
| Treasurer | - Sis. Celia Cruz |
| Asst. Treasurer | - Sis. Norma Ramos |
| Chancellor | - Sis. Olivia Gabriel |
| Custodian | - Sis. Clarissa Santos |
| Scribe | - Sis. Rosalinda Sevilla |
| Trustees | - Sis. Anita Dizon |
| | - Sis. Lolita Manuel |
| | - Sis. Emelita Santiago |
| Guards | - Sis. Eliza Cruz |
| | - Sis. Analie Santos |
| Guides | - Sis. Violeta Tomas |
| | - Sis. Elenita Ricaforte |
| Banner Bearer | - Sis. Rowena Maturan |
| Monitor | - Sis. Eloisa Bautista |

With these additional circles, the aspirations, missions and goals of the DMI can be more easily achieved as more Catholic women get involved and commit themselves to serve in the Lord's vineyard.

From Sta. Mesa, Manila

A Busy February for Our Lady of Fatima Circle



"Alay sa Puso" provided free ECG and FBS testing.



Tocino- and longanisa-making and bangus-deboning demonstration



The newly-exemplified Squirettes of Mary members



Visitation of the sick and the elderly

Circle Regent Sis. Yoyie Yao of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle in Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila reported that February was a very busy month for the Circle.

On February 14, 2009, the Circle launched "Alay sa Puso" which provided free ECG and FBS testing to parishioners of Our Lady of Fatima Parish. The circle's Pro-Life Committee headed by Chairperson Sis. Virgie Mendoza was the lead group who handled the project.

The following week, it was the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee's turn to get busy. Headed by Chairperson Sis. Dang Barrameda, a free seminar on *tocino-* and *longanisa-*making and *bangus-*deboning was conducted for women from various barangays of Bacood, Sta. Mesa. Some DMI members also attended the seminar.

The next day, a rummage sale was held at the parish patio with the Social Affairs/Ways & Means Committee chaired by Sis. Tess Tinawin taking charge, together with the SMI Our Lady of Fatima Circlette. Simultaneously with the activity was the Visitation of the Sick and Elderly headed by Vice-Regent Sis. Ellen Jimenez . After a sumptuous breakfast provided by Sis. Yoyie Yao, the circle members divided themselves into four groups and set off with fruits, flowers and pastries to bring to those they were scheduled to visit.

On February 28, the Lady Counselor of the Squirettes of Mary, Sis. Penny Lopez exemplified new SMI members and installed the circlette's new set of officers at the Our Lady of Fatima Parish in the presence of their parents and DMI members. A short program was held after dinner.

Mother of Divine Grace Circle Holds Pro-Life Project with KC



Circle members prepare snacks for distribution to those who attended the Medical Mission. Shown from left: Sisters Eva Soriano, Jessie Abagat, Circle Regent Flor Limbo, Queta Gregorio and Yolly Domingo.

To celebrate Pro-Life Month, the Mother of Divine Grace Circle of Malabon City held a Medical Mission jointly with the Knights of Columbus Council 3951 last February 8, 2009 at the Sarile Chapel, a multi-purpose building used by KC and the DMI for various activities.

Free medical check-ups were provided to residents of three barangays - Tugatog, Tinajeros and Acacia in Malabon City. Services provided included complete blood count, X-Ray and medical consultations. A total of 378 residents benefited from the mission.



DMI Sisters Flor Limbo, Jessie Abagat and Lilia Alfonso assist the volunteer doctors and health workers who attend to mission patients.

DMI members provided free snacks for those who came, particularly those who went on fasting in preparation for the tests. They also manned the registration table, assisted in taking blood pressure and acted as assistants to the doctors and medical technologists.

This joint DMI-KC activity is undertaken annually for more than 20 years now.

Circle Members Attend Wellness Seminar

On March 8, 2009, members of the Mother of Divine Grace Circle, together with participants from the San Antonio de Padua Circle of Tonsuya, Malabon City and the Birhen ng Lourdes and Nuestra Senora de la Nieva Circles in Caloocan City attended a Wellness Seminar conducted by Ms. Bles Varona. Ms. Varona was a resource speaker on Wellness during the assembly of Region V last year.

Venue of the seminar was the office of OB Varona Enterprises on Leveriza St., Pasay City. The topic included the importance of a good breakfast, sleeping and its effects, and having self-control. An assessment of participants' health age was also made. Health age is not necessarily the same as one's biological

age but is based on his lifestyle which will spell whether an individual is prone to various diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases, hypertension and many others. With the assessment comes a recommendation on how to improve one's health by altering his lifestyle. The seminar included a cooking demonstration using only healthful ingredients. Later the participants partook of the prepared foods at lunch.

Noting that many of the participants expressed great interest in promoting Wellness as an advocacy, Ms. Varona promised to assist the DMI in conducting similar seminars for its members as well as for residents within the Diocese of Calookan.

Circle Projects Promote Healthy Lifestyle

A number of projects have been lined up by the Mother of Divine Grace Circle aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle for circle members and other parishioners.

The first on the list was a demonstration on vegetable production held last January 31, 2009. The demo was conducted by Sis. Carmina Roxas, an agriculturist from the Department of Agriculture at the Sacred Heart Parish in Tugatog, Malabon City. She gave a lecture on the subject and demonstrated to participants how they can grow their own organic vegetables right in their backyards, no matter how small the space available. They were also shown how a 1.5-liter empty soda bottle can be used for planting seeds.

The participants also learned how to decompose soil to use as organic fertilizer.



Sis. Carmina Roxas demonstrates how to plant organic vegetables.

Sis. Carmina emphasized that growing one's own vegetables gives plenty of benefits as it helps minimize purchase of vegetables in the market and at the same time gives assurance that no harmful pesticides and other chemicals which cause harmful side effects had been used.

After the lecture, the participants were given seeds to plant like okra, Baguio beans, patola and many others.

More seminars are scheduled to be held.

"Alay-Lakad Para Sa Puso" Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle's Valentine Project



DMI members proudly display their circle banner during the "Alay-Lakad Para sa Puso" on Valentine's Day.

On February 14, 2009, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle of Maysilo, Malabon City celebrated Valentine's Day earlier than most.

This was by joining and supporting the "Alay-Lakad Para Sa Puso 2009" Project of their parish with the theme *Sa Sama-samang Paglalakad, ang Puso ay Lalakas, Samahan ay Magiging Matatag.*

The said project which started at 4:30 in the morning of Valentine's Day was participated in by the parish's mandated organizations and parishioners including the Squirettes of Mary and the DMI headed by Circle Regent Sis. Ofie L. Cruz.

Capping the activity was the 6:00 a.m. Mass during which the DMI sisters also provided the liturgical music as choir members.

Immaculate Heart Of Mary Circle Concludes Environment Project



Circle members with the materials collected from their environment project being readied for eventual disposal/sale.

The members of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle of Maysilo, Malabon City concluded last March 24, 2009 an environment project they called “Friends of the Environment, Recycle of Waste Materials Toward Earth Cleanliness”.

The accomplishment of this activity is two-fold: it helped clean the environment of non-biodegradable materials and at the same time became a source of funds through the sale of the collected items to those who need them.

This project was spearheaded by Circle Regent Sis. Ofie Cruz with the able support of the DMI sisters of Maysilo.

From Marikina City

St. Paul of The Cross Circle Outreach in Talim Island

by Sis. Lou Biason, Circle Regent

To celebrate the Month of Love, the St. Paul of the Cross Circle, SSS Village, Marikina City, went to Talim Island in Rizal to conduct a Medical Mission last February 28, 2009.

A 12-man team – two doctors, one a DMI sister and other health workers, also DMIs – took off early in the morning with medicines and five *balikbayan* boxes of goodies.

The team was eagerly and warmly welcomed by the people of Talim Island. The group later learned that there is no health worker in the island nor a drug store where they can buy medicine.

Due to time constraint and medicines being in short supply, only a limited number of patients were treated : 120 adults and 157 children. Later the group distributed clothing and slippers donated by circle members.

It was a tiring but totally satisfying and enjoyable day for the group in spite of having lunch at 3:00 p.m.

The boat ride was a new and exciting experience.. As they ended the day, each felt very fulfilled realizing that even in their little way, they had been able to help the people of Talim Island.



The Medical Mission team attends to patients seeking consultation and treatment.



The DMI sisters get ready to distribute the clothing and slippers they brought as gifts to the people of Talim Island.



The DMI members with Msgr. Balbago and Marikina Mayor Maridez, Fernando after the Mass on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.



The image of Our Lady of Lourdes during the procession.



DMI members with other parishioners attending the procession.

Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle Celebrates Feast of Our Lady Of Lourdes

The Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle in Marikina City marked the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes last February with a series of activities which began on February 2nd with daily novenas at the Grotto located at the Marikina River Park. Culminating the celebration was a Holy Mass on her feast day, February 11 after the recitation of a living rosary.

February 11 being the International Day of the Sick, there was a blessing and anointing of the sick with oil during the Mass.

Capping the celebration was a procession attended by the different DMI circles in the vicariate.

From Los Banos, Laguna

Theresian Circle Supports Crisis Center for Women and Children

by Sis. Wilhelmina Antonio, Circle Regent

Nestled in the foothills of Mt. Makiling in Lamot, Calauan, Laguna is a haven where abused women and children can seek refuge from the cruel realities of their everyday world. It is called the Women and Children Crisis Center.

Bringing with them soap, shampoo, toothpaste, sanitary napkins and milk for the youngest ward, a 3-month old baby, members of the Theresian Circle of the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in Los Banos, Laguna started visiting the Center in August last year. At the time of their visit, there were 14 children with ages ranging from 5 to 12 years, mostly victims of physical and sexual abuse, and a 3-month old baby whose mother is currently in jail.

Seeing that the children's most urgent need are love and a break from the monotony of their daily lives at the Center, the DMI members tendered a Christmas Party for them last December 11, 2008 at a swimming resort in Los Banos. The children feasted on Christmas goodies and received Christmas presents from the DMI sisters.

The Circle intends to provide continuing assistance to the inmates of the Center in the form of moral support and providing the older children with some livelihood projects.

2009 Officers of New Circle Installed

by Sis. Cora Afuang, Diocesan Regent Diocese of Antipolo

A new circle has just been born in Marikina City, Diocese of Antipolo. The circle has been named St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows Circle with address at St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Marikina Heights, Marikina City.

The 27 charter members went through the long conferral rites last March 14, 2009 performed by the combined conferral teams from the Diocese of Cubao and the Diocese of Antipolo. Shortly after, the elected officers were installed by International Treasurer and Region V Representative Sis. Lydia Ordonez. The newly-installed officers are:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sis. Yhet Cudiamat | - Regent |
| Sis. Sen Balete | - Vice-Regent |
| Sis. Zeny Reynoso | - Chancellor |
| Sis. Sofie Saligumba | - Custodian |
| Sis. Belle Lumba | - Treasurer |
| Sis. Dada Tapucar | - Financial Secretary |
| Sis. Nel Topacio | - Recording Secretary |
| Sis. Cleofe Baggayan | - Scribe |
| Sis. Cecil Martinez | - Trustee |
| Sis. Maribel Bustamante | - Monitor |



The officers and members of the St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows Circle

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Sis. Alice Manlapaz | - Banner Bearer |
| Sis. Rose Diaz | - Guide 1 |
| Sis. Mila Sorrosa | - Guide 2 |
| Sis. Bella Tindoc | - Guard 1 |
| Sis. Jean Rosario | - Guard 2 |

Appointed chairpersons of the DMI missions are:

| |
|---|
| Sis. Myrna Dagos |
| Pro-Life |
| Sis. Rose Diaz |
| Morality in Media |
| Sis. Beth Ebreo |
| Upliftment of Women Workers |
| Sis. Rose Sto. Domingo |
| Assistance to Families of Prisoners & Their Victims |

Theresian Circle Conducts Watch-Your-Health Project

As part of its pro-life activity, The Theresian Circle of Los Banos, Laguna conducted its annual Watch-Your-Health Project (WYHP) from January 31 to February 1, 2009. Using the facilities of the Sto. Domingo Diagnostic Clinic, the WYHP offered basic health evaluation package consisting of urinalysis, complete blood count, ECG and X-ray at a discounted price of P300.00. The

regular price for a similar package is P980.00.

This annual project aims to make people aware of the importance of keeping in excellent health by closely monitoring health indicators such as cholesterol profile, triglyceride, blood sugar and others.



The WYHP this year was able to serve 370 individuals, mostly those who are not able to pay the full amount of a regular check-up.

New Circle Being Organized

A new circle is being organized in Pacita Complex, San Pedro, Laguna through the initiative of the Knights of Columbus Kawanggawa Council 9189. Some 20 candidates attended the orientation and organizational meeting.

The activity started with an opening prayer led by Past Grand Knight SK Restituto Ramos. Former Luzon Deputy SK Rodolfo Magsino delivered a welcome address informing the ladies that the DMI circle being organized in Pacita is the very first in San Pedro, Laguna. He said that the aim of the DMI is to work hand-in-hand with the Knights of Columbus on humanitarian and development projects for the benefit of the church, community and family as well as for the welfare of the youth.

A brief statement on the formation of the DMI was given by Grand Knight SK Rosendo Chaves. He urged the candidates to exert their utmost efforts in accomplishing the DMI's aims and purposes.

Past Grand Knight SK Chris Gonzales was requested to talk on the proposed construction of Museo de San Pedro and how it eventually became a reality.

DMI International Treasurer and Region V Representative Sis. Lydia Ordonez briefed the candidates about the DMI organization, its goals and objectives, its mechanics and the rights and obligations of its members including the prescribed uniform. She informed the candidates that after her term as International Treasurer, she plans to join the DMI Pacita circle as member.

The candidates then introduced themselves individually. The election of officers followed. Elected were: Sis. Lilian Ella (wife of Bro. Eligio Ella, Jr.) as regent, Sis. Nona Gonzales (wife of Bro. Chris Gonzales) as deputy regent, Sis. Rose Celis as secretary and Sis. Cora Palpal-latoc as treasurer.

The circle held a maiden meeting on March 22 in preparation for the installation of officers on April 25, 2009.



Opening remarks by former Luzon Deputy SK Rodolfo Magsino



Briefing and orientation of new circle members by Sis. Lydia Ordonez

DGK Larry and Sis. Lydia Ordonez tendered a light snack. The members of the KC council who assisted during the organizational meeting were FLD Rodolfo Magsino, GK Rosendo Chaves, PGK Chris Gonzales, DGK Larry Ordonez, PGK Restituto Ramos, FS Eligio Ella, Jr., SK Alejandro Gajunera, Jr., SK Virgilio Guiroy and SK Salvador Avestruz.

Typhoon Reming Victim Revisited

The devastation wrought by Typhoon *Reming* in the Bicol Region in 2006 left so many families in several towns of Albay Province homeless and without any means of livelihood.

Responding to the sad plight of these victims of *Reming*, the DMI launched a nationwide fund campaign and the cash donations received were turned over to Sis. Sol Fernandez, then the regent of the St. Rita Circle of St. Gregory the Great Parish in Old Albay, Legaspi City. The turn-over of the donation took place during the Luzon Area Conference held at the Chateau Royale, Nasugbu, Batangas in February, 2007 where Sis. Sol was the lone delegate from Region VIII (Bicol Region).

Recently, Sis. Bernie Lita who was appointed chairperson of the committee in charge of selecting the most deserving families to be extended assistance revisited one of the family-beneficiaries - Noli and Rosemarie Bagangan and their eight children.

The St. Rita Circle released on May 27, 2007 an initial amount of P5,000 as loan to the Bagangan Couple which they utilized as capital for a buy-and-sell business of live chicken and vegetables. The couple religiously paid their monthly installment of P500 until the loan was fully paid. Because of their proven integrity and dedication to the welfare of their family, Noli and Rosemarie were granted a re-loan of double the initial amount and they were able to expand their business.

Aside from the loans granted, the St. Rita Circle appropriated the amount of P5,000 for the school expenses of four of the Bagangan children. The makeshift dwelling (made of torn plastic and cardboard for walls and an earthen floor) was later improved through a donation of 15 bags of cement and 100 pieces of hollow blocks. On the spiritual side, two of the youngest children



The Bagangan Family: Noli and Rosemarie and their eight children



The family's shanty before receiving DMI's donation of cement and hollow blocks.

who were not yet baptized received the sacrament of baptism with all expenses shouldered by the circle.

In a letter dated December 30, 2008, Noli and Rosemarie Bagangan acknowledged with thanks the graces they received from the Lord through the DMI and expressed their appreciation for all the material, moral and spiritual assistance extended to them.

The Bagangan Family sees the dawning of a new day that is full of promise and hope for a better life and a brighter future. Indeed there is life after Typhoon *Reming*.

"LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

---- Psalm 16:5-8

Our Lady of Montserrat Circle Holds Pro-Life Symposium

by Sis. Thelma A. del Castillo, Regent
Vicariate of St. Peter II, Jaro, Iloilo city

The Our Lady of Montserrat Circle of Gran Plains Subd., Jaro, Iloilo City accomplished its thrust under Pro-Life by holding a symposium and film-showing last March 5, 2009. The activity was held at the RG Hechanova National High School in Bgy. Hechanova. Participants were the high school students of the school.

The symposium guest was Dr. Dolores Octaviano, an endocrinologist. Before the film regarding abortion was shown, Dr. Octaviano told her audience about the right of every human person, specifically his right to life. She pointed out that a fertilized ovum is already a human being; hence, it should be accorded its right as a human being.

Dr. Octaviano further stated that she is against the proposed Reproductive Health Bill in Congress. She believes that practice of abortion causes dangers to mothers. Birth control pills which many claim to be safe have many harmful effects on mothers. They cause breast cancer, cervical cancer, and damage the liver.

While the film was being shown, the students were very attentive. They later participated very actively during the open forum.

Relative to the proposed program on Reproductive Health being advanced by the government, the DMI as an organization strongly objects to it, the teachings of the

The Prayer Of Pro-Lifers

O God, the Father and Creator of human life, help us never to become discouraged in defending the full breadth of that most precious gift, from the miracle of fertilization to the spiritual serenity of a natural death.

Inspire us to remember that without You, we are powerless and that what we do for the least, especially the helpless unborn dearest to You, we are actually doing for Your Son, Who lives and works in and through us.

Protect us against the wiles and wickedness of the devil, "a murderer and liar from the beginning". May the Holy Spirit enlighten us along our daily way. Amen.

Catholic Church being the most Christian and safest way to help protect and preserve human life.

(The author has accompanied her report with a beautiful Prayer of Pro-lifers written by Fr. Paul B. Marx, OSB of Human Life International for Family Life which is reproduced here. - ed.)



Dr. Dolores Octaviano speaks before students of the RGH National High School.



Members of the Our Lady of Montserrat Circle with Dr. Dolores Octaviano.

Two Circles in Archdiocese of Jaro Attend Joint Recollection

Aimed at deepening members' commitment to the DMI missions through unity, friendship and charity, two circles in the Archdiocese of Jaro in Iloilo City - San Nicolas de Tolentino Circle of Cabatuan and Lambunao and the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Circle of Janiuay - held a joint recollection last March 28, 2009 at the Cabatuan Parish Hall. Vicarial Regent Sis. Emma Victoria with the support of Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Ma. Teresa Jamili organized the recollection.

Rev. Fr. Macario Sortido who was the recollection master utilized the appreciative inquiry approach to the operational process, walking the participants through its four stages - discovery, dream, design and destiny.

In keeping with the season of Lent, Fr. Sortido also talked on the Triduum of the Paschal Mystery.

A lively open forum and sharings by participants ended the recollection. Gauging from the participants' sharings, they came



The participants with recollection speaker Fr. Macario Sortido

away inspired and firm in their commitment to the DMI missions. The participants even requested for an extension of the session.

Joining the group later were Cabatuan Parish Priest Fr. Pat Salarda and Asst. Parish Priest Fr. Lester Villa.

From Talisay City, Cebu

San Jose De Tabunoc Circle Says No to HB 5043

Sis. Norevic Laroa, regent of the San Jose de Tabunoc Circle of Talisay City in Cebu reported that members of the circle joined the march and prayer rally held recently by the parish against HB 5043 known as the Reproductive Health Bill. Led by Msgr. Ruben Labajo, parish priest, the circle together with the parish ministries and other mandated organizations and parishioners converged at the Plaza Independencia for the rally.

Later, Msgr. Labajo gave a talk on the Reproductive Health Bill and why the Catholic Church opposes population control, homosexual union and indiscriminate sex education. "*Kinabuhay Ampongan, Dili Among-amongan*" was the rally's cry.



LEFT: The circle members with Msgr. Ruben Labajo at the march and prayer rally.
RIGHT: The DMI sisters and other church workers of the parish listen to Msgr. Ruben Labajo's talk on HB 5043 and why the Church opposes its provisions.

Circle Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The San Jose de Tabunoc Circle celebrated its 25th Anniversary last January 29, 2009 at the Garces Royal Garden in San Isidro, Talisay City with a Eucharistic celebration by Fr. Charmaine Leciones and a program featuring awarding of recognition certificates to the circle's charter members, musical presentations and parlor games and door prizes given away. Joining them during the celebration were Msgr. Ruben Labajo and Fr. Alex Apigo. - By Sis. Norevic Laroa, circle regent



Sto. Nino Of Tacloban Circle and KC Hold Joint Medical Missions

by Sis. Elena G. Casco, Circle Regent



DMI sisters man the registration table as clients arrive to avail of free medical consultation and treatment.

The Sto. Nino of Tacloban Circle and the Knights of Columbus Council 3171 of Sto. Nino Parish, Tacloban City organized two joint medical missions on December 14, 2008 and February 22, 2009 at the Parish Social Hall.

A total of 758 beneficiaries were provided services which included general medical

consultations with free medicines, Pap Smear with consultation and laboratory services, blood pressure taking, blood sugar testing and blood typing.

Volunteer doctors from the Divine Word Hospital and the Eastern Visayas Regional

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Updates from Tower of Ivory Circle

Regent Sis. Linda Solite of the Tower of Ivory Circle, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Tacloban City reported her Circle's activities to wrap up year 2008 through these following photo news.



"Wow Beauty & Brains" for Nanays

Mothers of Sitio Tigawon I and II in Bgy, Calanipawan, Tacloban City attended the "Wow Beauty and Brains" Program for mothers sponsored by the Tower of Ivory Circle last Dec. 21, 2008 with the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee spearheading the activity. The accompanying photos show: Top left: The DMI members feeding the children who came with their Nanays; Top right: Giving of gifts to the Nanays who came; Bottom left: Song and dance presentation by the mothers; and bottom right: Demonstration of vegetable gardening using sando bags.

Officers of Our Lady of Fatima Circle Installed

The officers of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Putik, Zamboanga City had their 18th Installation Ceremony last January 10, 2009 at the Parish Church of St. Anthony of Padua with the theme “New Beginnings, Continuing the Ideals”.

Installed into office were:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Regent | - Sis. Jasmine Piolo |
| Past Regent | - Sis. Rosario Natividad |
| Vice-Regent | - Sis. Julieta Villaflor |
| Chancellor | - Sis. Adelaida Saavedra |
| Custodian | - Sis. Asuncion Sotto |
| Recording Secretary | - Sis. Erlinda Macaso |
| Financial Secretary | - Sis. Lydia Labayog |
| Treasurer | - Sis. Carmelita Ongchua |
| Scribe | - Sis. Zenaída Arcillas |
| Monitor | - Sis. Shirley Parcon |
| Sr. Trustee | - Sis. Pilar Celerio |
| Jr. Trustee | - Sis. Esperanza Lazo |
| New Trustee | - Sis. Gloria Guerrero |
| Banner Bearer | - Sis. Pilar Saplan |
| Guards | - Sis. Fernanda Mitante |
| | - Sis. Alberta Dagalea |
| Guides | - Sis. Carmen Salamat |
| | - Sis. Teresita Madrazo |
| Organist | - Sis. Corazon Babor |

Sis. Laura Fuerte of the Holy Trinity Parish in Pasonanca, the new vicarial regent was the installing officer assisted by Sis. Wilhelmina Siasico, the vicarial regent of Our Lady of Ransom Circle of Mercedes.

Sis. Jasmine Piolo, the newly-installed regent, in her acceptance speech, pledged to do her very best to perform her duties with the blessing and guidance of Mama Mary and called on her DMI sisters to give their full support in undertaking the four missions of the organization.

Likewise, Sis. Rosario Natividad, the past regent, reported the accomplishments of the circle and thanked the members for the support and cooperation they gave her during her term.



Sis. Jasmine Piolo, the newly-installed regent of Our Lady of Fatima Circle delivers her acceptance speech.

Msgr. Arnold de la Serna, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, gave the spiritual message while Sis. Pacing Manalac gave words of inspiration and sang songs in honor of Mama Mary.

Present during the installation rites were Sisters Lydia Ramirez, International Vice-Regent for Mindanao, Laura Fuerte, vicarial regent of Holy Trinity Parish, Tita Penaflor, ceremonials chairperson, Rose Manzo of St. Joseph Circle, Beth Salmon, past Int'l Board member Pacing Manalac, diocesan regent alternate and Angie Baes, diocesan treasurer.

Concluding the affair was a fellowship and merienda cena at the residence of the Regent.

Sto. Nino Of Tacloban Circle...Cont'.d from Page 22

Medical Center, the student nurses of the St. Scholastica's College of Health Science, volunteers from “An Waray” Partylist, medical technologists from Unilab, the Philippine National Red Cross - Leyte Chapter and the V & G Subd. Youth volunteers ensured the success of the project.

Sto. Nino Parish Pastor Msgr. Ben Bacierra extended his blessing and full support.

From Zamboanga City



The Our Lady of Purification Circle's regents from 1984 to present: At left photo, from left: Sisters Lucy Magdales, Chit Ong, Laling Gutierrez, Angie Baes, Mila Navato and Chit Paragas. Right photo: Sisters Nenie Abendan, Beth Salmon, Lowel Tantoco, Titing Iglesias and Darling Tandoc.

Our Lady Of Purification Circle Celebrates Silver Anniversary

The Our Lady of Purification Circle of Zamboanga City celebrated its Silver Anniversary last January 29, 2009 at the Astoria Celebrity Hall in Zamboanga City. The theme of the celebration was “DMI Through Mama Mary: Be Ardent in Spirit - Serve the Lord”. Congresswoman Ma. Isabelle “Beng” Climaco was the keynote speaker.

A Eucharistic celebration officiated by Bishop Romulo Valles, DD opened the anniversary celebration. After dinner, Sis. Angie Baes traced the history of the circle. Past International Board Member Sis. Beth Salmon welcomed the DMI sisters from various circles in the Diocese of Zamboanga and brothers from the Knights of Columbus who came to participate in the celebration.

Highlighting the event was the unveiling of the canvas showcasing the 15 regents the circle has had since 1984. Charter Regent Sis. Lucy Magdales led the lighting of the vigil candles symbolizing the circle's filial devotion and commitment to Mama Mary.

Plaques of appreciation were awarded to the regents and certificates of recognition to six of the original 27 charter member of the circle. They are Sisters Lucy Magdales, Chit Ong, Brenny Bonggay, Lowel Tantoco, Chit Paragas and Laling Gutierrez.

Chairing the Committee for the Anniversary Celebration were Sis. Darling Tandoc and Alternate Vicarial Regent Sis. Titing Iglesias who were instrumental in making the event a huge success.

From Dipolog City

Queen of The Most Holy Rosary Circle and KC Jointly Celebrate Day of the Unborn

The Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Circle and the Knights of Columbus Council No. 3374 of Dipolog City jointly celebrated the International Day of the Unborn last March 15, 2009 despite the heavy rains.

The event started with a Eucharistic celebration at the Holy Rosary Cathedral. At 8:00 a.m., the rain stopped as if by divine providence and the scheduled motorcade along the main streets of the city pushed through. Hundreds of colorful balloons donated for the occasion by KC's SK Ben Palma were distributed to each vehicle joining the motorcade. Three big tarpaulin posters were posted in conspicuous places such as the Central Public Market, Bus Terminal Junction and in front of the Cathedral where the motorcade started and ended. Participating KC and DMI members happily posed before the tarpaulin posters for souvenirs.

It was a very successful event under the able leadership of KC Grand Knight Fred Silao and Circle Regent Sis. Marites Uy, in partnership with the Family Life Ministry Chaircouple Sabino and Lilia Balansag.

Immediately after the motorcade, the DMI sisters proceeded to the Centennial Chapel for an impromptu program to celebrate the Circle's 26th Anniversary.

S i s .
Evangeline
Lara was
crowned DMI
Queen 2009,
Sis. Mila
Jauculan as
Lady Charity,
Sis. Nonie
Lacaya as Lady
Unity and Sis.
V i r g i e
Remolano,
with Sis.

Ligaya Gaylan as proxy, as Lady Friendship. The contest, an annual fund-raiser, was started a month earlier with the compulsory registration of circle members as candidates paying a registration fee of P20. Winners of the title are determined by means of a raffle draw.

Tributes were given to the queen and prizes provided by the circle regent were awarded to winners of the different parlor games. Fellowship and a hearty lunch were happily shared by those who came.



The DMI sisters and KC brothers pose before a Pro-Life tarpaulin poster put up in response to the National Pro-Life Campaign vs. HB 5043 launched by the DMI International Pro-Life Committee.



Members of the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Circle with DMI Queen 2009 Sis. Evangeline Lara and her court.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag

Who has not heard of Our Lady of Manaoag?

Formally *Nuestra Senora Santissimo Rosario de Manaoag* (literal translation: Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of Manaoag), it is the title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary, associated with a wooden statue said to be from the 16th century. She is the patroness of the sick, the helpless and the needy. This holy image is very popular among Roman Catholics, not only in the Philippines but other parts of the world.

Many people come and visit the town of Manaoag, in the province of Pangasinan, where the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary is enshrined in a church dedicated to her name. The church is under the Archdiocese of Lingayen - Dagupan District.

The origin of Our Lady of Manaoag started with the Augustinian Fathers who were in charge of the spiritual administration of the town of Manaoag from 1590 to 1613. It was accepted as a vicariate under the Dominican Provincial Chapter in 1614, under the patronage of Sta. Monica.

According to documented legend dating back to 1610, a native man who was walking home heard a Lady's mysterious voice. He looked around and with great awe saw a radiant Lady with a Rosary in her right hand and a Child on her left as she stood on a cloud veiling a treetop. The man fell on his knees. He told the people of the apparition. And soon, right on the spot where the Lady appeared, a church was built.

A town that gradually flourished around it was called Manaoag.

Tradition has it that the town itself was born from the Virgin's call; thus, the term "taoag" meaning "to call" was used to name the town. This is where the name Manaoag was derived, which means, "She calls".

The statue of Our Lady of Manaoag has a long history of miraculous and pious events that are duplicated on the murals of the church. This is done so that events will never be forgotten. Devotees coming from all over the globe have various reasons for visiting the place, among which are pleas for health restoration, good voyage and better fate.

The statue of Our Lady of Manaoag is considered priceless because of the great identity it brings to the province of Pangasinan and also because of its jeweled crown. Many criminal attempts have occurred to burglarize the Manaoag Shrine. Several golden crowns and halos are owned by the Shrine, which were donated by both Filipinos and foreigners who have visited it. In addition to this, a great display of perfumes is also in the Manaoag Museum which are donations from all across the globe presented as gifts to Our Lady of Manaoag.

Some of the miraculous accounts regarding Our Lady of Manaoag are the barbaric times when early pagans from the mountain tribes used to burn down early Christian villages, from which the town of Manaoag was not spared. The town was set on fire. The church with its



thatched roof was the last refuge of the people. But the leader of the pillagers climbed over the fence and shot lighted arrows at all parts of the church. Not a single flame, however, set it on fire. The miraculous event was repeated and nationally reported during the Second World War. The Japanese Army dropped several bombs on the roof of the Manaoag Shrine; all landed but caused no damage to the roof of the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Because the statue is heavily guarded and secured through bulletproof glass panels with the high altar of the church, the Archdiocese of Pangasinan has opened an opportunity for people to have a chance to be able to touch the statue of Our Lady by climbing up to the second floor through the stairs located at the back of the church. The soft velvet gown worn by the Lady has a faded spot where the devotees streak their hands on. The devotees make a short prayer, touch the back of Our Lady, makes the sign of the cross, then move across a souvenir store on their way out of the building.

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Our Holy Land Pilgrimage

by Sis. Lourdes Sanchez-Taruc, Past International Regent

It has been more than eight years since our pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Egypt, but the beautiful memories are still fresh and will forever be enshrined in our hearts and minds.

We were slated to attend the International Knights of Columbus Convention in Boston when my husband and I agreed to go to the Holy Land first. It was indeed a timely decision because two weeks after we arrived in Boston, trouble erupted between the Israelis and the Palestinians which lasted for over seven years.

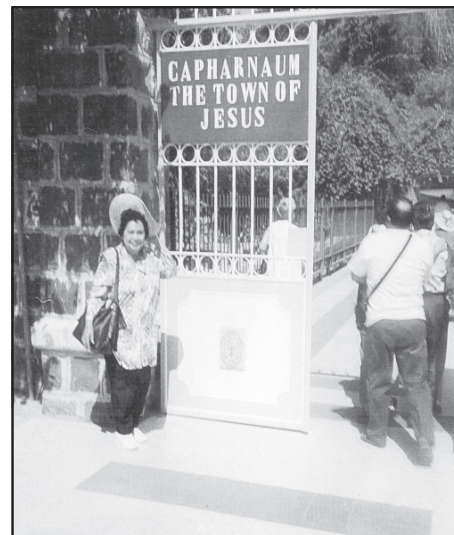
We are now commemorating the Lenten Season and this is the time to reflect on the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord. It is also a good time to relive our visit to our Lord's birthplace in Bethlehem, in Nazareth where he spent His boyhood, on the shores of Lake Galilee where He gave His sermon on the Mount and in all the places where Jesus and the Blessed Mother Mary walked and performed miracles.

Our first stop was the New City of Jerusalem, which is the world's most renowned, ancient and at the same time modern, where the splendor of the past blends with the unique atmosphere of the present. For me, Jerusalem is the most meaningful place as it takes us back to the roots of our faith. The historic sites, the holy places, the hilly topography and the colorful multi-ethnic population draw many pilgrims and tourists every year.

Going back to history, we can see that Israel went through a series of wars, persecutions and destruction under the Romans, Persians and others. When Jerusalem was under the Romans, King Herod continued to build in Jerusalem fortresses, castles, parks and public buildings, turning the place into a beautiful, thriving city. Jerusalem was the seat of the kingdom, the priests and the wealthy. We even went to an excavated mansion of sixteen rooms owned by a high priest.

On the way to the Old City of Jerusalem, our guide pointed to us the village where John the Baptist was born. I could just imagine the ordeal our Blessed Mother went through when she visited her cousin Elizabeth. The place is surrounded with rocky mountains, and to think that there were no roads in those days. It was indeed a tremendous sacrifice for our Blessed Mother who was herself bearing the Son of God.

The morning of our first day was spent walking around the Old City and I almost couldn't believe that we walked a distance of over three kilometers. It was a series of going up and down the four levels of the city. We were even told that we were actually walking on the roofs of some buildings. Then we traced the Via Dolorosa - the stations of the



The author by the gate leading to the town of Capernaum.

Cross, the place where Jesus was nailed on the Cross, and the cave where He was buried. This was the tomb borrowed from Joseph of Arimathea. It was indeed a very

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Our Holy Land Pilgrimage...Cont'd from Page 27

meaningful and moving spiritual experience. I kept thanking the Lord for this one-in-a-lifetime experience of treading on places where Jesus and our Blessed Mother once walked. When Jesus fell for the second time, He was so weakened and exhausted and His hand landed on a stone wall. His hand miraculously left a mark on the wall which has deepened through the passage of time. People have been putting their hands on this spot where the hand of Jesus rested for a few seconds during His passion. Each of us in the group also placed our hands on the same spot. These places where Jesus was crucified and where He was buried are in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. We lingered for a while to pray, meditate and reflect on the sufferings of our Lord.

The Old City of Jerusalem with the winding alleyways, markets and historic sites is composed of four quarters - the Jewish, Christian, Moslem and Armenian Quarters. The Christian Quarter contains the holiest site in Christendom - the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Set on the hill of Golgotha (Skull Place), the church houses the place of Crucifixion, burial and Resurrection of Jesus. The experience was truly spiritually uplifting and awe-inspiring as we were treading on holy grounds. Stories we read in the Bible came alive as they unfolded before us. We also had the opportunity

to see the Dead Sea Scrolls encased in glass at the Israel Museum.



The third day of our pilgrimage was another wonderful and memorable experience - the trip to Bethlehem, at the place where our Lord was born. It is a cave located inside an Arab territory but under the care of priests.

The next day, we went up north - to Galilee, Capernaum, Jericho and so many other historic places. After an hour's drive from Jerusalem, we passed the Mount of Temptation where Jesus was tempted by the devil. It is the topmost part of the mountain and again, I thought of the ordeal of Jesus as he walked up. Then we stopped at Yardenit, the baptismal site of

Jesus by the River Jordan. Then we proceeded to Capernaum passing by the place of Mary Magdalene. On the mountainside by the shore of Galilee is the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus preached the famous Sermon on the Mount. It is a beautiful spot shaped like an amphitheatre that slopes down to the Sea of Galilee. It was such a beautiful site to behold that we had to linger for a while before proceeding to Tiberias where we

boarded a boat, pretty much like the boats fishermen on the lake used during the time of Jesus, for a cruise along the lake. There were so many biblical events that we tried to relive during our boat ride - Jesus walking on the water, Jesus commanding the storm to stop, the apostles pulling their net full of fish and so many other miracles.

We really thank the Lord for giving us this once-in-a-lifetime experience. And as I look back, I wish and pray that more people could be given the chance to have the same experience of being one with the Lord in His ministry, passion, death and resurrection.



The Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag...Cont'd from Page 26

The hilltop location of the Our Lady of Manaoag Shrine stands up to this day where thousands continue to flock each day of the year. Huge crowds attended the day the image was canonically crowned by His Holiness Pope Pius XI, using his papal power of Papal Nuncio on April 21, 1926. She celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of her coronation on January 1, 2000.