



DMINewssette

To Jesus through Mary

DMI

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April - June 2009

Annual Officers' Meeting Convened

The Annual Officers' Meeting of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate Int'l was convened last May 16, 2009 at the Rembrandt Hotel in Quezon City.

Opening the meeting was a Eucharistic celebration by DMI Vice-International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz who had just arrived from Anaheim, California where he attended the National Catholic Education Convention. In his homily, Fr. Jerome drew on the experience of Immaculi, a woman from Rwanda who survived genocide resulting from the tribal wars that broke out in her country. Immaculi who was a speaker in the convention has authored three books on her harrowing experience and the apparitions of the Blessed Mother in Rwanda. He related how Immaculi once had in her heart only bitter hatred for her oppressors and how, with faith and devotion to the Blessed Mother, she was able to overcome



The presidential table during the Annual Officers' Meeting

and find great peace, replacing anger and vindictiveness with the desire to share the goodness of the Lord.

Fr. Jerome urged his listeners to be like Immaculi, reflecting on their life experiences and sharing them with others - family and sisters in the DMI. After all, he said that "the best kind of witness is the witness of one's life".

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The image of the Blessed Mother dominates the stage.



The meeting's working committee headed by Sis. Lydia Ordonez mans the registration table.

**12th SMI National Biennial
Convention**
May 25-26, 2009

21st Mindanao Area Conference
May 22-23, 2009

Stories inside

Mary, Mother of God, Mediatrix of Mankind

by Sis. Cora Santos, Vice-Regent, Our Lady of Manaoag Circle, Zamboanga City

"Do whatever He tells you" is what Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God, instructed those serving the guests at the wedding in Cana when she came to learn that they had run out of wine.

This was the first miracle of Jesus. The scriptural passage in John 2:5 illustrates in simple but glowing terms how Mary, as mediatrix of men in need, moved the God Incarnate to fill the need, even if "His hour has not yet come."

In our role as Daughters of Mary

Immaculate, we can emulate her example and help in imploring God to fill the serious need in our society today - the need for moral recovery. Newspaper headlines scream of corruption and dishonesty that have become prevalent and almost the culture and way of life in our beloved country. We also hear and read about

robberies, salvaging and murder committed by many in our society, including those in the high echelons of government. So we begin to wonder what Mary would do to fill our need in curing our social ills if she were with us today.

"Do whatever He tells you" again re-echoes in our mind. And He is telling us in many

ways: "Repent and be faithful to the Gospel". Like those serving at tables at the wedding in Cana, we must obey what He tells us without question. Let us repent and work on our conversion and become faithful to the Word of God in the Gospel. A miracle may still happen . . .



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From the International Regent

MESSAGE



My dear Sisters in the Daughters of Mary Immaculate:

As we embark on another DMI year, deriving strength from our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, I have called on everyone to aim for more spiritual formation through personal and communal undertakings I have suggested in my previous message (*DMI Newsette*, 1st Qtr., 2009 issue) that promote our personal growth as true daughters of Mary Immaculate.

Let me now focus on the apostolate work we do in our respective parishes, the service we give to those in need in our communities as we pursue our missions in the DMI. Let the Acts of Mercy, corporal and spiritual, be our guide to enable us to serve better.

Corporal Acts of Mercy consist of:

- feeding the hungry
- giving drink to the thirsty
- clothing the naked
- harboring the harborless
- visiting the sick
- visiting the imprisoned
- burying the dead

Spiritual Acts of Mercy include:

- converting the sinner
- instructing the ignorant
- counseling the doubtful
- comforting the sorrowful
- bearing wrongs patiently
- forgiving injuries
- praying for the living and the dead

Our founder, the late Jaime Cardinal Sin during his lifetime had always encouraged a life of “living for others”. Let us heed his call to “live for others”, sufficiently equipped to do so by being loyal, strong and true DMIs.

Let us not lose sight of our goal.

“I am the Vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in Me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without Me you can do nothing.” (John 15: 4-5)


SIS. JEAN T. VELARDE



Sisters from St. Vincent Ferrer Circle of Baguio perform an ethnic dance during the fellowship.



The audience including Past International Regent Sis. Perla Arguelles joins the dancers on the floor.

"With the Blessed Mother 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."

The plenary session started with the traditional DMI opening ceremonies - invocation by Fr. Jerome, singing of the DMI Hymn led by Sis. Manolita Acevedo, Region IX Representative (RR) and the National Anthem by Sis. Ofelia Lucas, RR for Region I and the Pledge to the Flag by Sis. Rosalina Pimentel, RR for Region XII. International Secretary Sis. Tesy Villarino did the presentation of delegates, a total of 374 consisting of the regional representatives, and diocesan, vicarial and circle regents and other circle officers. Vice-International Regent for the Visayas Sis. Carmen de la Torre officially welcomed the delegates.

The business meeting was called to order by International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde

followed by the roll call by the secretary and reading of the minutes by Sis. Alice Capiral, vice-international regent for Luzon and past international secretary which was later approved by the body.

The main part of the meeting agenda were the annual reports of the International Officers and Committee Chairpersons.

The International Regent reported to the body the new DMI vision statement crafted by the International Board during the Visioning and Team-Building Workshop held in Tagaytay City last February 21, 2009 stated thus:

"With the Blessed Mother 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."

Sis. Jean underscored the need for the DMI sisters' continued formation to conform to our Blessed Mother. She also urged those present to receive Jesus at Mass daily, to read and contemplate often on the Word of God, to pray unceasingly (make our lives a "prayer"), to fast on Wednesdays in order to become spiritually strong, to support the Church and her projects, giving generously for the benefit of "the least, the last and the lost", and to imitate Mary's virtues as true daughters of our heavenly Mother.

She also called on the DMI officers to reactivate inactive circles and to organize new ones.

Presentations were made by the Mission Chairpersons.

For **Pro-Life**, Sis. Helen de Leon presented the committee's on-going programs which she said have no time frames as they cover all stages of life. She mentioned some of these on-going programs:

- On the environment - plant trees, help prevent climate change by reducing carbon emission such as using CFL lighting, proper waste disposal (reduce, reuse, recycle), etc.
- Advocacies in defense of life - national campaign

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against HB 5043, attend congressional hearings, launching signature campaigns, prayer crusades and other forums.

- Care and concern for the elderly, the physically challenged, the terminally-ill.

For Morality in Media, Sis. Sonia Manlapig reported the on-going campaign against pornography and bad media, continuing outreach in schools on values education through the media through symposiums and seminars, networking with government agencies and other NGOs promoting good and effective use of media as they affect people's way of life, culture and values and expressing support and commending organizations and individuals espousing good media.

For Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Linda Castillo expressed utmost concern for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and their families, particularly the loss of several jobs as a result of the present economic downturn. She urged DMI circles to launch programs addressing the needs of the OFWs and their families such as skills training and re-training, providing livelihood opportunities and helping them set up small businesses, and giving moral and spiritual guidance to the families, etc. These programs are in addition to on-going programs for the upliftment and empowerment of women.

For Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims, Sis. Milde Tong started her presentation by emphasizing that the target beneficiaries of this DMI thrust as mandated by the CBCP is the family of prisoners as well as their victims, as quite a number of NGOs are already addressing the needs of prisoners.

She cited the forms of assistance that DMI circles can extend to such families in their respective parishes. These are:

1. Moral support, spiritual guidance and counseling by - providing and maintaining a regular program of religious instructions and counseling services like catechism for adults, providing liturgical and devotional services such as administration of sacraments, Eucharistic celebrations, Bible sharing, holy hour, etc., sponsoring seminars or home visitations aimed at rehabilitating the family and helping them regain dignity and self-respect, and offering prayers for inmates and their families and/or victims.
2. Financial and social rehabilitation - giving educational assistance to prisoners' children or helping those deserving students get scholarships, providing employment or job

placement to potentially capable members of the family or teaching the spouse or children livelihood skills or income-generating activities, micro-financing or providing capital to families capable of starting a small business or self-employment, providing transportation fare and subsistence while pursuing the case and arranging visits to the detained family member, establishing scholarships, foundations or trust funds for eligible and potentially capable children of prisoners, giving support to any activity undertaken by any group for the rehabilitation of prisoners' families, providing medical and dental services, possibly for free when needed, and legal assistance while pursuing the case.

For Squirettes of Mary Immaculate, Sis. Mila Villanueva announced the forthcoming 12th SMI National Biennial Convention to be held May 25-26, 2009 in Ormoc City and extended the invitation for SMI circlettes to attend the event. She also announced that a new SMI logo has been adopted and that the newly-printed SMI Handbook is ready for distribution.

While making her presentation, Sis. Mila wore the new SMI uniform which she suggested to be worn by SMI lady counselors during SMI activities.

During the meeting, three resolutions were also ratified by the delegates. Sis. Rebecca Pacanan, international advocate and RR for Region XI facilitated the session. The 3 resolutions are:

1. Resolution to drop from the list of active circles those circles which are still in arrears in the payment of national annual dues by December 31, 2009.
2. Resolution to open a separate account to be named "Mission Fund" which represents the funds accrued from the dissolution of the DMI Foundation.
3. Resolution to amend Art. XIII, Sec. 2-d of the DMI By-laws: A circle may be instituted with only fifteen (15) members as a start-up.

Concerning other matters, Sis. Nemia Tagle, RR for Region XIII, appealed for more intensive collection for the DMI Building Fund. Sis. Rita Samarista, RR for Region VIII, announced the set of policies and rules covering the use of the mini-dorm at Mary's

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21st Mindanao Area Conference Held May 22-23, 2009

The 21st Mindanao Area Conference was held on May 22-23, 2009 at the Family Country Hotel & Convention Center on Mateo Road, General Santos City. Conference hosts were the DMI sisters of the Diocese of Marbel headed by Diocesan Regent Sis. Carmelita Lopez.

A total of 581 delegates came. Gracing the occasion were International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde, Vice-Int'l Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz, Vice-Regent for Mindanao and Region XIV Representative Sis. Lydia Ramirez, Region XII Representative Sis. Rosalinda Pimentel, Region XIII Representative Sis. Nemia Tagle, Past International Regent Sis. Beling Panganiban, Past Int'l Vice-Regent for Mindanao Sis. Evangeline Ang and Past Int'l Board Members Sisters Beth Salmon and Corita Hilario. Circle, vicarial and diocesan regents and other DMI officers from all over Mindanao attended the conference.

A Eucharistic celebration was presided by Fr. Jerome whose inspiring homily dwelt on the conference theme: "Act with

Integrity, Serve with Love and Work for Peace".

There were sharings of observations and ideas, pivotal facts and powerful perspectives on the organization from the delegates.

Sis. Vance Ang presented a paper "The DMI in Retrospect" which challenged those present to actualize the organization's vision and ideals, drawing from its past vis-à-vis the present to be able to become the best volunteer service organization.

The evening fellowship and dinner featured dance numbers performed by delegates representing the

regions/dioceses in Mindanao.

At the end of the conference, it was announced that the next Mindanao Area Conference will be held in Dipolog City in 2011.



Int'l Vice-Regent for Mindanao Sis. Lydia Ramirez gives her opening remarks at the start of the conference.



The conference delegates during the Eucharistic celebration.



Sis. Jean Velarde (at center) is welcomed at the conference venue.



An ice-breaker by members of the Holy Love Circle.



A lively audience participation



The DMI national and regional officers for Mindanao in a group photo.



Fr. Jerome Cruz receives a token of appreciation from Sis. Lydia Ramirez assisted by Sis. Lita Lopez, convention chairperson.



Dance numbers performed by the Diocese of Zamboanga and St. Cecilia, Circle of Koronadal



Annual Officers' Meeting Convened...Cont'd from Page 5

House, the DMI's own building. (Please see separate write-up on page __.)

The forthcoming Luzon Area Conference scheduled for Sept. 5-6, 2009 in Olongapo City was also announced with Region III headed by RR Sis.

Connie Macomb as conference host.

Ending the meeting were the closing remarks by Vice-International Regent for Mindanao Sis. Lydia Ramirez,

the DMI Prayer led by Sis. Connie Macomb and the DMI March led by Sis. Nimfa Yyance, RR for Region VII.

The fellowship that followed with Sis. Rita Caballero, RR for

Region II as host featured a dance number by members of the St. Vincent Ferrer Circle of Baguio City. The dancers invited the audience to join in, ending the day's program in an atmosphere of camaraderie and fun.

Post-Script: The 12th SMI National Biennial Convention

by Sis. Sis. Mila A. Villanueva, Int'l. Chairperson, Squirettes of Mary Immaculate

1. The Changing Tides of Time

Time was, when the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate members were in their teens, or almost . . .

Time was, when SMI conventions were held within 90-kilometer radius from the center of Manila . . .

Time was, when activities were classroomy and stiff . . .

Not anymore! Times have changed!

Younger, smaller members were accepted, activities were an intermingling of prayer, learning, playing and knowing . . . focused on the Blessed Virgin Mary and her virtues.

Structures as in conventions were re-phased and adjusted along what may be more meaningful and fun to the young.

So, with the gentle breeze blowing from the sea and the swaying palms lining the



Sis. Mila Villanueva models the suggested uniform for SMI lady counselors.

beach in Baybayon ni Agalon Resort in Albura, Leyte, a group of 58 Squirettes, a boy of 9 whom we teasingly call "Square Root" and 48 DMI sisters who were either their mothers, aunts, lady counselors, *lolas*, organizers, guests or hosts, traveled from far and near to hold the 12th

National Biennial Convention of the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate on May 25 to 26, 2009.

The convention theme was "Praying and Playing with Mother Mary Is Fun!" And that was exactly what we had!

2. The Diary May 24th, Sunday

A third of the delegation arrived at the resort, 17 delegates from the St. Thomas of Villanova Circlette with 3 DMI *titas*: Sisters Moravi Flores, Pureza Guzman and Rodelia Lat.

4:00 P. M. Our PAL Express flight from Manila touched down at the small newly opened Ormoc Airport. With

me were Sisters Jean Velarde, international regent who hopped in at NAIA 3 from the Mindanao Area Conference in General Santos City, Pro-Life Chair Sis. Helen de Leon, Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims Chair Sis. Milde Tong and Risen Christ Circle Vice-Regent Sis. Juliet Cruz. Sisters Jean, Helen and Milde were to be speakers, I and Sis. Juliet as convention organizers. Meeting us at the airport was Sis. Leny Larrazabal, past international advocate whose family owns the resort. (Now you know why we were confident about holding the SMI convention FOR THE FIRST TIME in far-away Ormoc and by the sea at that!)

5:00 P.M. While meeting with our co-organizers, the sisters from the Sts. Peter and Paul Circle of Ormoc, my cellphone

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The traditional Parade of Circlettes during the convention opening ceremonies.



The SMI delegates during an outdoor activity.

rings. Squirette Jonah Prado (SMI national treasurer from Our Lady of Lourdes Circlette in Kalibo, Aklan) and her party of 14 had just arrived at the Ormoc Pier after 14 rigorous hours trip by bus and boat (twice: Kalibo-Cebu and Cebu-Ormoc), hoping to be fetched. But Sis. Leny's van was out on an errand. Diocesan (Kalibo) SMI Chair Sis. Ging Manulat decided not to wait, got a multi-cab for the party's 15-km. ride to the resort. Exhaustion turned to excitement when the group learned they were going to sleep in the tree-house. Hungry Jonah suffered stomach upset after finishing her *sinigang* that she and Sis. Ging had to spend the night in the hospital.

8:30 P.M. Sisters Sally and Ever with two Squirettes from Our Lady of Peace Circle in Nasugbu, Batangas arrived. I finally settled in my room to review final details of the next day's program. Lights out by 11:00 p.m.

May 26, Monday

2:00 A.M. Cellphone beeps. Risen Christ Circle Regent Sis. Mila Brion texted "arriving in Tac 5 am. 11 kami" Texted back: "5 vans will be there by 5:30. Take van no. 1. Don't forget to pass by Sis. Benilda, Divine Word Hospital." Josie Halog was with them.

4:00 A.M. Sis. Sol Eugenio (Mary Mother of the Church Circle, Las Pinas City) texted "Gud am sis, now boarding Cebu pac. Arrive Tac 5 am."

Reply: "OK look for DMI vans, I for you." They were a party of 13.

5:00 A.M. Texted Josie Halog: "Pls make sure all 11 circles take the vans assigned to them. Tnx". Now wide awake with hardly any sleep. Time to start the day, excited to see that all the preparations were in place.

6:00 A.M. Squirette Jonah texted she's set to check out of hospital but couldn't without doctor's order. My mind raced, what to do? Ahhhh, pull strings! Of course, Sis. Leny! (Her family also owns the hospital.) How lucky!

9:30 A.M. The program was one hour late. Travel from Tacloban to Ormoc took more than 2 ½ hours. The delegates assembled in the field by the main conference hall, resplendent in their new uniforms, holding their new colorful banners.

9:45 A.M. The convention officially started. As the delegates paraded in, I was deeply touched and in awe . . . I felt a lump in my throat. "At last here are the new Squirettes, with their lady counselors, fired by their devotion to Mama Mary! They will grow in number and stand by their commitment to emulate Her!"

Sis. Perla Malazarte, regent of the Sts. Peter and Paul Circle and convention host, and Ms.

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A group busy at work on their flower arrangement.



An arts and crafts group. Standing out is the small boy (2nd from left), Square Root.



The winners in the Arts & Crafts and Flower Arrangement contests proudly display their entries.



A group photo of SMI convention delegates and their lady counselors.

Veronica de la Victoria, daughter of the mayor of Albueria, welcomed the delegates. Sis. Jean Velarde in her inspirational message exhorted the Squirettes to be prayerful and set the mood of the morning session for praying, listening and learning.

The speakers: Sis. Benilda Maramba, OSB, hospital administrator of the Divine Word Hospital in Tacloban talked on the virtues of the Blessed Mother which she said are all mentioned in her Litany, i.e., Virgin most faithful (faith, devotion), Mother most chaste (chastity, purity), Cause of our joy (happy, joyful). These virtues are invoked each time the rosary is prayed with the Litany. Sis. Helen de Leon spoke on Teen Sexuality. Sis. Teling Pangilinan, Action Group Leader, BCBP-Ormoc, said that social graces are an asset and are learned first in the home. She stressed that physical health and hygiene, modesty and table manners create positive physical impact. She also mentioned

proper use of the cellphone. Sis. Milde Tong talked about personal values such as love of God, family and work, respect for others and saying "Please", Thank you" and "I'm sorry" when the occasion requires it.

The talks were inspiring and seemed seamless (as if the speakers met beforehand), one presentation a continuation to the next. Coincidence or the work of the Blessed Mother?

1:00 P.M. Lunch was late but no one complained. After a 30-minute break everybody changed from their formal uniform to comfortable Bermuda shorts, T-shirts and slippers. Back at the social hall for Arts and Crafts and Flower Arrangement contests. Materials were provided: old bottles, old newspapers and magazines, straw, icedrop sticks, straw strings, glue guns and glue sticks for arts and crafts; fresh flowers from Sis. Leny's flower farm, vases, driftwood and ribbons for flower arrangement.



A group presentation in the evening of Day 1



2009-11 SMI National Officers Elected

A new set of national officers of the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate was elected by the Squirette-delegates to the recently-concluded 12th SMI National Biennial Convention held in Albueria, Leyte last May 25-26, 2009.

To serve from June, 2009 to May, 2011 are the following:

President
Jonah Eliza Prado
Our Lady of Lourdes Circlette,
Kalibo, Aklan

Vice-President
Andrea Kyra Mahinay
Risen Christ Circlette,
Paranaque City

Asst. Vice-President
Frances Erika Malazarte

Sts. Peter and Paul Circle
Ormoc City, Leyte

Secretary
Jessany Yap
Our Lady of Lourdes Circle
Kalibo, Aklan

Asst. Secretary
Veronille Ann Saw
Sts. Peter and Paul Circle
Ormoc City

Treasurer
Jessa Rae Paguntalan
St. Thomas de Villanova
Circlette, Miag-ao, Iloilo

They were inducted into office on the last day of the convention after the Eucharistic celebration.

Contest mechanics: Group picks a leader who picks out and gets materials they need from the table. All materials must be used, may get more if needed. Returned and unused materials earn

penalty point in determining winners.

Grouping: The 58 Squirettes plus Square Root were divided

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Region VII Holds Regional Assembly

by Sis. Merle Isabelita G. Gutierrez, Regent, Mater Purissima Circle, Batangas City

A very successful Regional Assembly by Region VII was held on December 13, 2008 at Casablanca, Pallocan West, Batangas City.

The theme was "THE DMI . . . ADVOCATE OF LIFE".

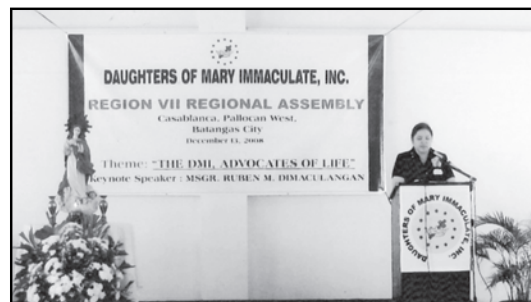
The assembly was organized and hosted by Mater

Purissima Circle of Batangas City. The participants came from the different circles of the Archdioceses of Lipa, Lucena, Calapan, and San Jose, Oriental Mindoro.

Msgr. Ruben M. Dimaculangan, judicial vicar of the Archdiocesan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Lipa, was the keynote speaker. Msgr. Ruben delivered a very timely and enlightening speech about House Bill No. 5043, giving emphasis on its hidden agenda. A 20-minute open forum followed.

The participants were entertained by the very talented University of

Mater Purissima Circle's Sis. Isabelle Renee Daria was program emcee during the assembly.



Batangas Dance Troupe and a fascinating dance performance by the sisters of the Holy Cross Circle of Bauan.

The very inspiring talks of the International Chairpersons of Upliftment of Women Workers Sis. Linda Castillo, Morality in Media Sis. Sonia Manlapig,

Pro-Life Sis. Helen de Leon and Squirettes of Mary Sis. Mila Villanueva were held after lunch.

Closing the assembly was a pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Glorious Cross where an anticipated Mass was celebrated by Fr. Ilde Dimaano, parish priest.

A Tribute to Sis. Sonia Mayo

A surprise tribute was accorded to the outgoing International Regent Sis. Sonia Mayo during the Regional Assembly of Region VII last Dec. 13, 2008 held at Casablanca, Pallocan West, Batangas City.

The sisters from the different circles of Region VII shared their unique and special moments with Sis. Sonia. They described her as kind, altruistic,

compassionate, cool, calm and collected. They looked back as far as when and how Sis. Sonia touched their lives. They recalled events when they were together during assemblies and conferences and how these encounters influenced them as persons. To everyone, Sis. Sonia is not just a sister in Mary but also a close personal friend because she will always make you feel as such, truly a woman of substance.

The international chairpersons of the DMI thrusts who were speakers at the assembly and who worked very closely with Sis. Sonia for two years described her as a composed person who is energetic, persistent, conscientious and hard-working. She is God's gift to all members of the DMI.

The idea of giving tribute to Sis. Sonia was initiated by two very close friends, Sis.



Linda Castillo, regent of the Archdiocese of Lipa and Sis. Myrna Zapanta, past international regent from Region VII. It was a very sentimental and memorable occasion for all those who witnessed the event.

Region III Gets Ready to Host Luzon Area Confab

An Executive Committee meeting was convened by Sis. Connie Macomb, Region III representative recently to plan and prepare for the forthcoming Luzon Area Conference to be hosted by the region in Olongapo City on Sept. 5-6, 2009. Conference venue is the Olongapo Convention Center with the theme: "DMII: Acting with Integrity, Serving with Love, Working for Peace".

This early, Sis. Connie announced that the event will be highlighted by the presence of two bishops -



The Executive Committee headed by Sis. Connie Macomb during the planning meeting for the Luzon Area Conference.

from the Archdiocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) and the Diocese of Iba (Zambales and Olongapo). A tour of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority

(SBMA) will also be part of the itinerary of the conference delegates.

Alternate Representative for Region III Sis. Ludy Amita, Diocesan Regent Sis. Puring Tuliao and Vicarial Regent Sis. Linda Crispin are members of the Executive Committee.

The event will be highlighted by the presence of two bishops — from the Archdiocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) and the Diocese of Iba (Zambales and Olongapo).

Regional Assembly and Recollection Held in Region IV

by Sis. Flor Barcial, Diocesan Regent, Diocese of Malolos

The officers and members of the DMI Diocese of Malolos comprising Region IV had the opportunity to come together last April 4, 2009 during the Regional Assembly cum Recollection at the San Lorenzo Gym of Colegio de San Pascual Baylon in Pag-asa, Obando, Bulacan.

The event was hosted by the Vicariate of St. Martin of Tours & St. Francis of Assisi with

Vicarial Regent Sis. Cora Raymundo spearheading the activity. The theme of the assembly was "He Who Humbles Himself Like Jesus and Mary Shall Be Exalted". Some 300 people including DMI members and guests gathered at the venue to participate in the event.

The two-part program consisted of the Regional Assembly in the morning and the recollection in the afternoon.

The Regional Assembly started with a holy Mass

officiated by Rev. Fr. Danilo G. de los Reyes. By mid-morning, an inspirational message was delivered by Vice-International Regent for Luzon Sis. Alice Capiral. The assembly ended with the submission of accomplishment reports for the first quarter of 2009 by the circles represented in the assembly.

The recollection started after lunch with Fr. Reggie Asuncion, DMI spiritual director as recollection speaker. The activity was very edifying and informative,

giving the DMI members the opportunity to reflect on and be enlightened by the talk.

In summary, the event was very successful and productive, enhancing among the participants the spirit of unity and support for the organization. The participants expressed the desire for more spiritual activities to be conducted in the Diocese as part of an active formation program for DMI members.

OMB'S Edu Manzano to Grace Region V Assembly

The forthcoming assembly of Region V scheduled on November 28, 2009 has this early a high-profile speaker who has confirmed his availability to be the resource person for Morality in Media.

Sis. Sonia Manlapig, international chairperson for Morality in Media announced the happy news as a result of their audience with Optical Media Board (OMB) Chairman Edu Manzano last June 4, 2009.

The party included International Treasurer and RR for Region V Sis. Lydia Ordonez and Diocesan Regents Sisters Cora Afuang of Antipolo and Lorie Manalansan of Kalookan.

It was a very pleasant and enjoyable meeting the group had with Chairman Edu who expressed full support for the DMI missions and assured them of OMB becoming an active partner with the DMI, particularly in media advocacy. He also explained the full mandate of the OMB and how it wages its war against CD and DVD piracy through the raids they conduct in coordination with the Philippine National Police.

Chairman Edu promised to update his visual and other materials on the OMB organization and functions for his presentation during the Region V Assembly.

Sis. Sonia expressed deep appreciation for Chairman Edu's thoughtful gesture of



OMB Chairman Edu Manzano is flanked by, from left, Sisters Lorie Manalansan, Lydia Ordonez, Cora Afuang and Sonia Manlapig.

escorting her and her group to the door when they bade him good-bye, hoping to see them again at the assembly.

Meanwhile, the National Morality in Media Committee has also prepared a position paper condemning the proliferation of sex videos in the Internet and supporting the Anti-Child Pornography

Bill and other House Bills in Congress prohibiting and penalizing persons and groups involved in the publication, importation, sale and distribution of pornographic materials.

She invites the DMI circles all over the country to join the Anti-Pornography Campaign of the organization.

Post-Script: The 12th SMI National Biennial Convention...Cont'd from Page 10

into 10 groups, formed at random (their IDs were mixed together), 5 or 6 members each. All odds do arts and crafts, the evens, flower arrangement. Objective: To learn to work with others you meet for the first time, and get to know and be friends with other delegates. Watching each group was fun, seeing them enjoying the activity. Square Root had the most fun!

Meanwhile, International Vice Regent for the Visayas Sis. Carmen de la Torre arrives with Sis. Lily Martin, SMI Lady Counselor for the Visayas who

promises to revive inactive SMI circlettes and expand the SMI membership. Sis. Carmen said: "I came late, wary about the dangers of having all these kids on a beach, but I now see no one is afraid. Everyone is enjoying! I congratulate the organizers for such a brave feat, thinking only of how best the Squirettes will learn and remember from this convention."

3:00 P.M. An election was held for a new set of national officers whose term is from June, 2009 to May, 2011.

Then came the beach games and swimming . . . what fun! And the DMI sisters? We took a break and rested awhile. Dinner was break time for the kids from all the physical activities. Then they had their presentations. And after that, more swimming and the winnie roast. The hot dogs served as midnight snack. Almost midnight and we all had a good night's sleep.

May 26, Tuesday

The day was more quiet. No more anxieties but just looking forward to the Mass and the

installation of the 2009-11 SMI national officers. The Mass celebrant was Fr. Romeo Callosa, a simple, almost shy priest. Then came the officers' induction. Squirette Jonah as the newly-elected president was teary-eyed. In those tears, I felt her commitment to the task. Congratulations to the newly elected officers! (Please see separate story on page 10 for the names of the new SMI national officers.)

And I? A very big THANK YOU to all those who helped make this convention work!



Vicarial Regent Sis. Rexie Aquino talks on the Responsibilities of a Leader and Leadership Techniques.

DMI Diocese of Kalookan Sponsors Spiritual Leadership Orientation

The Mother of Divine Grace Circle led by Past Regent Sis. Lucy Flores hosted the event which was well-attended in spite of the week-long rains and high tide

On June 6, 2009, the diocesan officers and circle regents in the Diocese of Kalookan attended the first part of the Diocese's Spiritual Leadership Orientation. The Mother of Divine Grace Circle led by Past Regent Sis. Lucy Flores hosted the event which was well-attended in spite of the week-long rains and high tide,

particularly in the flood-prone Kamana District.

Speakers were Diocesan Regent Sis. Lorie Manalansan and Vicarial Regents Sisters Sylvia San Pedro and Rexie Aquino. Sis. Sylvia tackled the topics "What Is Spiritual Leadership?", "The Qualifications and Traits of a Leader", and "Techniques to Be a Calm Leader". Sis. Rexie talked on

"Responsibilities of a Leader", "Taking Charge" and "Learning from the 58 Secrets of the Leadership of Jesus".

Sis. Lorie then capped the discussion by showing how the traits discussed and the leaders' qualifications and responsibilities can make them do their tasks more effectively, but less stressfully which she aptly called

"leadership, where less is more". The participants were later grouped by circle and asked to come up with a vision for their respective circles.

Participating in the seminar were the San Jose de Navotas, San Antonio, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Nuestra Sra. de la Nieva, Birhen ng Lourdes and Mother of Divine Grace Circles.

The Blessed Virgin Theme in World Literature



servant of Mary and that in her honor he "wrote full many a line." Taking all his writings together—twenty-

It was said of Chaucer (c. 1340-1400) that he was a good

nine "lesser works," Troilus and Cressida, and the twenty-three Canterbury Tales—we find about five hundred lines that are explicitly Marian poetry, omitting incidental allusions to the Virgin. Almost half are in The Prioress's Tale alone. His poem A.B.C. (dated about 1366), where each stanza begins with a letter of the

alphabet, is a collection of epithets that have survived to modern times, e.g., "But mercy, Lady, at the great assize/When we shall come before the High Justice," or "Fleeing I flee for succour to thy tent/Me for to hyde from tempest ful of drede."



A group photo of attendees in the Davao Diocesan Conference

Archdiocese of Davao Holds Diocesan Conference

Last June 6, 2009, the DMIs of the Archdiocese of Davao held their quarterly diocesan conference at the Sto. Rosario Parish in Toril, Davao City. The following officers were at the meeting: Regional Representative Sis. Nemia Tagle, Diocesan Regent Sis. Florencia Guzman, Vicarial Regents Sisters Ana Bon Uy, Belinda Fernandez, Encar Abarquez, Mila Bravo and Judith Nabatar, the chairpersons of the four

DMI thrusts and circle regents.

During the conference, Sis. Nemia gave some updates from the National Office to the members. She reported that she has turned over the Mindanao funds to the DMI Building Fund and that the DMI Foundation has been dissolved and its funds have now become the Mission Fund of the organization.

Sis. Florencia gave recognition to some parishes for their support by posting the Pro-Life tarpaulins within the vicinity of their parish churches. The said tarpaulins stress protection of life by condemning abortion and encourage all parishioners to wear modest attire during Masses. Quarterly reports were presented by the four mission chairpersons and circle regents regarding their activities, programs and projects.

Prior to the Conference, the DMIs of the Archdiocese participated in the Marian procession held on May 29, 2009. The group also made plans for the forthcoming Diocesan Assembly to be held on October 15, 2009. Invitation was also extended to the Davao circles to attend the Regional Assembly which will be held on August 15, 2009 in Digos City.



Mary's Tomb

Located in the Kidron Valley, on the foothills of Mount of Olives, near the Church of All Nations and Gethsemane garden, originally just outside Jerusalem, Mary's Tomb is regarded as the burial place of

Mary, the mother of Jesus by most Eastern Christians, in contradistinction to the House of the Virgin Mary near Ephesus, or the belief that Mary was taken bodily to heaven, without dying.

New Circle in Baler, Aurora Organized

Last April 25, 2009, the Exemplification Team of the Diocese of Cabanatuan led by Region II Representative Sis. Rita Caballero and Diocesan Regent Sis. Aida Beltran organized a new circle in Baler, Aurora in coordination with the Knights of Columbus of the Diocese of Cabanatuan led by Past Faithful Navigator Bro. Danilo Chua.

San Luis Obispo de Tolosa Parish is under the Diocese of Infanta but the circle will be under the supervision of the Diocese of Cabanatuan because it is more accessible to Nueva Ecija. Vicarial Regent Sis. Elisa Romano will oversee the new circle's operation.

The orientation of new members started after lunch with Sisters Rita Caballero, Aida Beltran, Elisa Romano and Rosita Combe as speakers. This was followed by the Long Conferral Ceremony with the assistance of Sisters Noemi Sibuyan, Leny Chua and Gloria de la Cruz. The officers

of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle, the new circle's name, were later installed in the presence of brother Knights in the parish and visiting Knights from the Diocese of Cabanatuan.

The officers of the circle are as follows:

Regent
Sis. Nora Tinio
Vice-Regent
Sis. Liwanag Quebral
Past Regent
Sis. Mila Deasanta
Financial Secretary
Sis. Teodora Laureles
Recording Secretary
Sis. Portia Alcaide
Treasurer
Sis. Lourdes Rotas
Scribe
Sis. Jenifer Porbido
Custodian
Sis. Ligaya Querijero
Monitor
Sis. Elizabeth Piccio
Banner Bearer
Sis. Veneracion Mercado
Senior Trustee
Sis. Menchie Ortomio
Junior Trustee
Sis. Violy Mesa



The newly-installed officers of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle with the Exemplification Team of the Diocese of Cabanatuan.

New Trustee

Sis. Daisy Sanchez

Guide 1

Sis. Glenda Rosales

Guide 2

Sis. Marissa Paraiso

Outer Guard

Sis. Liberty Querijero

The officers of the Diocese of Cabanatuan look forward to more circles being organized in Baler and the whole of Aurora Province.

The members of the Exemplification Team of the Diocese of Cabanatuan who motored to Baler did not mind the long trip and the hectic schedule of the day. They were thankful that they had been instrumental in organizing the new circle, the first in Aurora Province. They also felt the warm welcome and hospitality of the DMI sisters and brother Knights from Baler.

On April 26, Sunday, at the 6:00 a.m. Mass, members of the new circle with their guests were introduced to the parishioners and blessed by the parish priest, Fr. Nelvon Villanueva.

San Luis Obispo de Tolosa Parish is under the Diocese of Infanta but the circle will be under the supervision of the Diocese of Cabanatuan because it is more accessible to Nueva Ecija. Vicarial Regent Sis. Elisa Romano will oversee the new circle's operation.



High school students of the Philippine Statesman College who attended the Media seminar.



Sis. Carmen Velayo answers a question during the open forum.

From Cabanatuan

Divina Pastora Circle Conducts Media Seminar

Members of the Divina Pastora Circle of the Diocese of Cabanatuan conducted a seminar on Morality in Media to high school students of the Philippine Statesman College last March 22, 2009. They gave lectures on the adverse effects of modern media technology on the youth. Sis. Vicky Ramirez, past regent of the Circle

discussed the advantages and disadvantages of these new tools of media. Sis. Vicky kept the session lively by throwing questions at her young audience who responded positively and participated actively in the discussion.

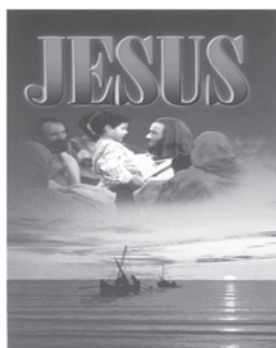
To take advantage of the opportunity, Sis. Carmen Velayo, regent of the Divina

Pastora Circle also lectured on sexual abuse and domestic violence. This was conceived because of the news on the alarming number of sexually-abused children and women in Nueva Ecija. She also gave the students the hotline numbers of the authorities to be contacted in case of emergency. The students shared their reactions to the issue during the open forum

and . came away enlightened.

Philippine Statesman College Principal Miss Corazon Estrella and Circle members who were present helped make the seminar a very successful activity.

Mary on the Silver Screen



The American movie "Jesus" by John Heyman, awarded at the Cannes Festival, was inspired by St. Luke's Gospel, the biblical account that has the most references to the Virgin Mary.

This movie has been released into over 40 languages and to this day nearly one billion people have seen it throughout the world.

The movie, which was co-directed by Australian Peter Sykes and Englishman John Krisch and filmed in Israel.

From Malolos City

Immaculate Conception Circle Marks 31st Anniversary

by Sis. Feliciana Aldaba, Past Regent

We should have celebrated our 30th Anniversary last year but everybody seemed so busy then that we had to reschedule our Pearl Anniversary in 2009.

As early as January, 2009, we began our anniversary celebration by undertaking a series of activities: offering Mass for the deceased media men of Bulacan who were victims of political crimes/ violence, sponsoring Mass for the unborn, blessing of the Tomb of the Unborn by Msgr. Antonio J. Galvez, conducting seminars on Responsible Parenthood, promoting Morality in Media through a slogan contest, conducting outreach programs at Tahanang Mapagpala and Home of the Elderly, and Jesus, Maria, Joseph Orphanage, attending seminars for sources of livelihood and conducting a survey at the Provincial and City Jails and Probation Office to look for inmates of Malolos covered by the Cathedral-Basilica to be given legal assistance.

To end our circle's anniversary celebration meaningfully, an exhibit entitled "DMI Immaculate Conception Circle Pearl Anniversary" was launched on January 9 to 11, 2009 at the lobby of the Cathedral-Basilica of the

To end our circle's anniversary celebration meaningfully, an exhibit with the theme, "Journeying with Mary on her Apostolate Missions".

Immaculate Conception Parish. It had for its theme "Journeying with Mary on her Apostolate Missions". The exhibit showcased the history of the circle, a roster of its regents from the days of the Daughters of Isabella up to the present, its activities and accomplishments in pursuance of the DMI missions, the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate, group photos with our spiritual directors, outreach programs and medical missions, retreats and recollections, social activities and others.

Highlighting the event was the Eucharistic celebration officiated by Fr. Francis Protacio Cortez III on January 9, 2009 at 7:00 a.m. Fr. Cortez expressed confidence that the DMI will fulfill its commitment to pursue its missions and serve the poor. He called on those present to open their hearts to those who are suffering and the women to increase the



Sisters Flor Barcial, Violeta Luna and Cora Villano cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the exhibit after the blessing by Fr. Francis Protacio Cortez.



The officers and members of the Immaculate Conception Circle with Fr. Cortez

workers in the Lord's vineyard by being members of the DMI.

After the Mass, Fr. Cortez blessed the exhibit followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Diocesan Regent Sis. Flor Barcial and assisted by Vicarial Regent Sis. Violeta Luna and Circle Regent Sis. Cora Villano.

The members and their guests were afterwards treated to a sumptuous breakfast. Sis. Flor Barcial congratulated the committee who put up the exhibit. She said that one who gives her time, treasure and talent to the fullest will experience joy and reap bountiful harvest. Sis. Violy Luna gave a brief closing message.

From Marilao, Bulacan

Ina Ng Grasya Ng Diyos Circle Facilitates Out-of-Court Settlement of Prisoner's Case

by Sis. Mila S. Reyes

Sis. Lina Galano, chairperson of the Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims of the *Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos* Circle of Marilao Bulacan, during one of her visits to the families of victims in the developing areas of Marilao, learned about the homicide case of Joven Olasso, the accused and Alex Baruelo, the victim. Baruelo was killed but Olasso claimed self-defense. The accused and the victim were neighbors and the case had dragged on for more than a year.

Sis. Lina and her members convinced both families for an open dialogue and to settle the case amicably since they have been living

miserably and have no means to sustain the financial requirements of court hearings. The wives are jobless and the children are out of school.

Both families agreed to settle out of court and the victim's family received P40,000 raised by the Circle, P20,000 donated by the members and from circle funds and the other P20,000 loaned by Sis. Lina to be paid by the accused in installments upon his release from jail. The accused is a construction foreman.

The accused was released from prison on March 26, 2009 after the dismissal of the case filed against him. He now

walks a free man, promising to lead a new life and continue his work. From the money the victim's family received, they were able to pay off their small house and lot and the children to resume their studies.

We, from the Circle, feel elated and pleased that we had been able to help the two families to resume normal lives.



The officers and members of the Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle

Ina Ng Grasya Ng Diyos Circle's "OPERATION HEALTH ALERT"

The *Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos* Circle of Marilao, Bulacan held its annual project dubbed "Operation Health Alert" last April 18, 2009 at Financial Secretary Flor Sunga's Sapphire Learning Center. The aim of this annual activity is to help parishioners

who are not able to pay the cost of a regular check-up (costing about P1,000).

The King of Kings Laboratory and Diagnostic Center provided the laboratory services. For a minimal fee of P200, the tests included ECG,

fasting blood sugar (FBS), total cholesterol, BUN, uric acid, SGPT, CBC, urinalysis and computerized eye refraction.

About 125 parishioners availed of the services. Results were released after

one week with two medical doctors present to explain the test results and for consultation on the findings.

The circle's Pro-Life Committee headed by Sis. Luz Yuan took charge of the activity.

Mother of Divine Grace Circle Conducts Bingo Raffle

The Mother of Divine Grace Circle of Malabon City held a Bingo Raffle at the Diwa Sports Complex in Tugatog, Malabon City on May 26, 2009. The affair was held for the purpose of generating funds for the Circle's various projects and for its support of the Sacred Heart Parish.

Given out were cash prizes of P10,000 , P5,000 and P2,000 for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners, respectively. A total of 15 consolation prizes were also given to the other winners. The prizes were cash donations from the DMI sisters and their friends.

In spite of the inclement weather, the affair was well-attended and very successful. Spearheading the project were Circle Regent Sis. Flor Limbo and Vice-Regent Sis. Vangie Esmino with the full support of circle members.



Circle members conduct the Bingo games.



A big crowd came in spite of the inclement weather.

Detainees' Children Receive School Supplies



Detainees' children receive school supplies from Mother of Divine Grace Circle led by Sisters Flor Limbo and Lucy Flores.

With the opening of Schoolyear 2009-10, members of the Mother of Divine Grace Circle donated school supplies to children of prisoners.

This was in line with the DMI's thrust to provide assistance to prisoners' families and/or victims. Recipients were children of detainees at the Malabon City Jail whose families are living in the mission

areas of Bgy. Catmon, Malabon City.

The children were given school supplies, bags, pencils, ballpens, pencil cases, crayons, notebooks, colored cartolina, manila paper and hand-me-down uniforms. The group who conducted the distribution last June 2, 2009 was composed of Circle Regent Sis. Flor Limbo, Past Regent Sis. Lucy Flores and Sisters Yolly Domingo and Lillian So.

Anti-Porno Drive by Media Committee

On April 26, 2009, members of the Morality in Media Committee of the Mother of Divine Grace Circle gathered and disposed of confiscated pornographic materials. The destroyed materials consisted of DVDs, CDs, calendars, magazines and newspapers showing indecent pictures and write-ups.

The activity was held at the Diwa Sports Complex in Tugatog, Malabon City. The materials were gathered from students over the months by the Morality in Media

Committee led by Chairperson Sis. Malou Salcedo. To show the committee's earnestness in pursuing the drive and that pornographic materials are unacceptable, the disposal was done in full view of the community, including students.

Unlike previous similar activities, disposal was done by shredding printed materials and breaking with hammers the DVDs and CDs instead of burning them to prevent air pollution.



The DMI sisters with the confiscated pornographic materials being readied for disposal.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle Sponsors Flores De Mayo

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle of Maysilo, Malabon City was one of the lead organizations participating in the Flores de Mayo celebration last May 30, 2009 of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish covering Barangays Maysilo, Santolan and Panghulo.

The DMI sisters headed by Circle Regent Sis. Offie Cruz took charge of the celebration, preparing the snacks for the participants in the procession. Sis. Rose Lou, a circle member, was designated Reyna Elena in this annual event.



Sis. Rose Lou, a member of the Immaculate Heart Circle was Flores de Mayo Reyna Elena.

From Navotas City

San Jose De Navotas Circle Goes on Annual Retreat Jointly With KC



The retreatants with Fr. Benedict Cervantes, retreat master.

The annual Lenten Retreat of the San Jose de Navotas Circle jointly with the Knights of Columbus was held at the St. James Academy on Malabon City on April 4, 2009.

Rev. Fr. Benedict Cervantes, vice-vicar of

the Vicariate of San Bartolome was the retreat master. He talked on the topic "Unity in the Organization" before 21 Circle members and some KC brothers. A Eucharistic celebration capped the activity.

From Caloocan City

Nuestra Sra. De La Nieva Circle Participates in Sports Tourney

Members of the Nuestra Senora de la Nieva Circle in Caloocan City headed by Circle Regent Sis. Monica Bularan participated in the San Roque Cathedral's Inter-Parochial Bowling Tournament among mandated organizations in the Diocese of Kalookan.

At the tournament opening ceremonies last June 11, 2009, the Most Rev. Deogracias Yniguez, Jr. D.D., bishop of the Diocese of Kalookan, declared in his

message: "This tournament is not only about winning and who shall be the best bowler; it is also about building relationships and nurturing friendships with as many colleagues as possible . . ." Parochial Vicar Fr. Jun Erlano also graced the occasion.

The sports event is being held at the RJ Bowling Lanes, EDSA cor. Roosevelt Ave. in Quezon City every Thursday and will end on December 8, 2009, Bishop Deo's birthday. It will be capped by an awarding ceremony.

The Nuestra Sra. de la Nieva Circle Bowling Team with Bishop Deogracias Yniguez (seated 4th from left) and Fr. Jun Erlano (to the Bishop's left).



For the past years, the Nuestra Senora de la Nieva Circle has been a constant

winner in the tournament but 2008 was its best year

31st Anniversary Celebrated

The 31st Anniversary of the San Jose de Navotas Circle was celebrated on May 1, 2009 with a Eucharistic celebration at the San Jose Parish church.

Fellowship followed at the residence of Sis. Baby Castillo where a potluck lunch was shared by the DMI sisters. A program featuring a Q & A format tested the sisters' knowledge about the DMI's national and local (circle) history and served to remind them about the virtues and thrusts of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate. Token gifts were awarded to those who gave correct answers to the questions.



DMI sisters during the anniversary fellowship.

From Marikina City

Marikina City Declared A Child-Safe Media City

Following the declaration by Mayor Marides C.

Fernando that Marikina is a "city of child-safe media", the DMIs from the Diocese of Antipolo represented by its Diocesan Regent Sis. Cora T. Afuang, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the City Government of Marikina, the Marikina Police, the Zonta Club of Marikina, the Soroptimist Club of Marikina, the Department of Education and the Association of Barangay Councils of Marikina wherein all parties agree to:

- take all appropriate measures to ensure that

- children are protected against all forms of unsafe media exposure;
- ensure the implementation of laws, ordinances, covenants and treaties aimed at protecting children against unsafe media exposure and media viewership;

- bind their efforts to encourage the mass media to disseminate information and materials of social and cultural benefits to the child; and
- undertake to promote and encourage government and non-government cooperation with a view of achieving progressively the



full realization of a child-safe media.

In line with this MOA, all the signatories to the agreement threw their full support behind a campaign to re-introduce children to the classic Filipino games like *patintero*, *sipa*, *tumbang-preso*, *piko* and other indigenous games. It is believed that children's focus nowadays is on watching TV and surfing the Internet

which not only pollute their minds but also somehow limit their physical, mental and social development. In order to correct this, children should be encouraged to engage in physical activities and at the same time recognize the importance of playing outdoors with other children.

From Sta. Cruz,
Laguna & Baguio City

St. Joseph the Worker Circle Second in Baguio

by Sis. Lorie Santos, Past Regent, Our Lady of Salvation Circle, Sta. Cruz, Laguna

The second circle to be organized in Baguio City was conceived in a distant place, Sta. Cruz, Laguna and born almost two years later.

It all began with a pilgrimage in Rizal, Laguna of the Fourth Degree Assembly of the Knights of Columbus, Baguio City. But for some reason, the group changed destination and instead decided to go to Sta. Cruz, Laguna. The KCs and their ladies who will stay for three days, May 25 to 27, 2007 were due to arrive on the afternoon of May 25.

It was raining hard that day because of the ITCZ affecting Southern Luzon, but the weather did not hinder our preparations. We

in the Our Lady of Salvation Circle assisted the Knights of Columbus, Holy Cross Council 4104 of Sta. Cruz, Laguna in preparing and welcoming the KCs and their ladies from Baguio. We helped clean the resort

of Our Lady of Manaoag, prepare the beddings, set

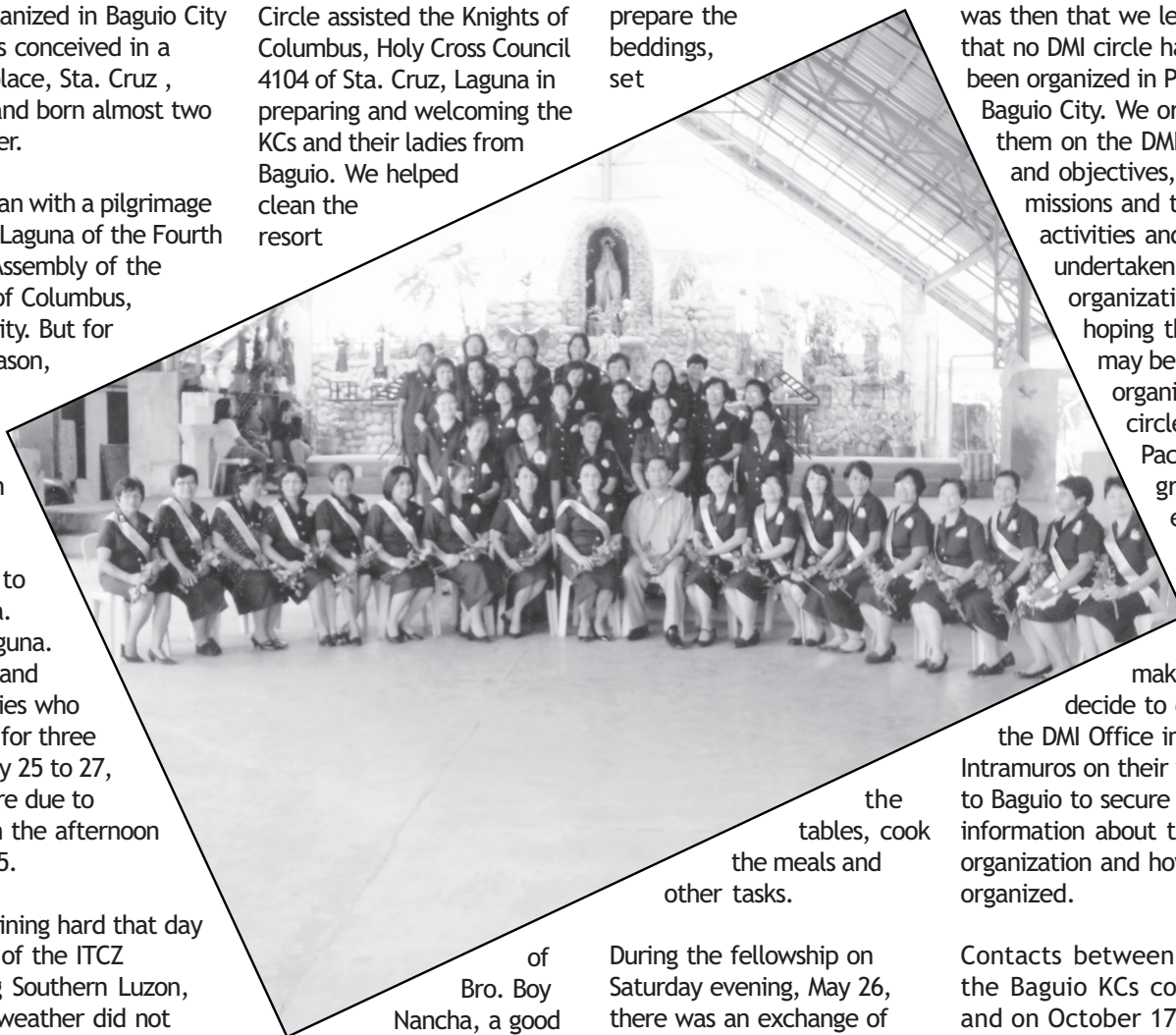
even of funny anecdotes. It was then that we learned that no DMI circle has yet been organized in Pacdal, Baguio City. We oriented them on the DMI vision and objectives, the four missions and the activities and projects undertaken by the organization, hoping that we may be able to organize a DMI circle in Pacdal. The group expressed keen interest, enough to make them decide to drop by the DMI Office in Intramuros on their way back to Baguio to secure more information about the organization and how to get organized.

the tables, cook the meals and other tasks.

of Bro. Boy Nancha, a good Samaritan and devotee

During the fellowship on Saturday evening, May 26, there was an exchange of stories and experiences,

Contacts between us and the Baguio KCs continued and on October 17 to 19, 2008, it was our turn with



The officers and members of the St. Joseph the Worker Circle during the installation of their charter officers on March 29, 2009. Photo shows seated from left: Sisters Esperanza de los Reyes, Marilyn Salvatera, Marcelina Pucdo, Linda Banta, Teresita Artos, Minie Ruaro, Rosalinda Martin, Marlyn Abratique, and Tessa Leones (regent), Rev. Fr. Jay Alipio (parish priest and spiritual director), Sisters Carolina Maramba (vice-regent), Nora Arellano, Racquel Tuazon, Thelma Melendez, Remedios Carbonell, Cristina Sumague, Ascension Duntugan, Lolita Mamitag, and Myrna Ramones. Standing in back row are the DMI sisters from Region V headed by Sis. Lydia Ordonez and from the St. Vincent Ferrer Circle.

the KCs of Sta. Cruz to go on the long-planned reciprocal visit to Baguio. Friendships were renewed and we learned that for some reasons (busy schedule, who will take the lead, time constraints), they have not gotten around to organizing a DMI circle.

On the last day of our visit, (October 19, a Sunday), the Sta. Cruz KC's honor guards assisted in the Eucharistic celebration, and in the afternoon we bade our hosts good-bye. We made a promise to assist them in organizing their DMI circle.

That was the signal! After two days, my brother husband and I visited the new DMI Office in Pasay City and conferred with Sis. Josie Halog, our office secretary. Then came the long distance calls and text messages to Sis. Nora Arellano and Sis. Marlyn Abratique in Baguio to follow up and be updated on their recruitment and preparations.

Sis. Josie texted on Nov. 6, 2008 that the new circle is scheduled to be given orientation on November 22 in the morning and that the St. Vincent Ferrer Circle, the first to be organized in Baguio will have the long conferral in the afternoon.

On November 11, I sent copies by FEDEX of the *DMI Newsette*, the *DMI Handbook of Basic Information* and the *Pro-Life Handbook* to Sis. Nora in Pacdal to guide them in their preparations. The representatives from Manila headed by Sis. Lydia Ordonez, International Treasurer and Region V Representative, came on November 22 as planned and the prospective circle members were given their orientation. Plans for the long conferral on February 15, 2009 were made.

There were again exchanges of text messages between us and the circle in Pacdal: "Merry Christmas!", "We r bc", "Nakakanerbyos!", "Malakas ang kabog ng aming puso", and "How do we look wearing the blouse and skirt? D kami sanay. Ha, ha, ha."

February 15 had come and gone and the much-awaited long conferral had taken place. The St. Joseph the Worker Circle of Pacdal, Baguio City is now an active and vibrant organization with 22 members headed by Regent Sis. Tessa Leones.

Welcome to the DMI! May God bless us all!

Photo News from the St. Joseph The Worker Circle



The Knights of Columbus of Pacdal, Baguio City expressed full support for the newly-organized St. Joseph the Worker Circle by throwing a party on Feb. 21, 2009 to celebrate the exemplification of the circle's charter members.



Circle members participated in the "Walk for Life" on March 21, 2009 held in Baguio City.



The St. Joseph the Worker Circle sponsored a Mass Wedding on April 30, 2009. Rev. Fr. Jay Alipio officiated at the wedding at the St. Joseph the Worker Parish Church.

From Nasugbu, Batangas

News Round-Up from Our Lady Of Peace Circle

A string of activities kept members of the Our Lady of Peace Circle in Nasugbu, Batangas busy. Sis. Norma Ulate, circle scribe, sent the following report:

*The dawn procession every first Saturday of the month for Mama Mary was started at the beginning of the year followed by the 2000 Hail Marys. The members led by Circle Regent Sis. Rosario Apacible are active participants in the liturgical life of the parish serving as commentators, lectors and collectors.

*The Circle assisted the volunteer doctors who are members of the UST Medical Alumni Association - Tri-state Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania in their medical mission. A total of 647 patients were given free consultations, medical services and medicines during the medical mission.

*For Morality in Media, the Circle conducted a symposium on Sex and Morality for students, both high school and college, of Batangas State University, Nasugbu Campus, Nasugbu



The officers and members of the Our Lady of Peace Circle

Municipal High, Nasugbu Institute, R.B. Cordero Academy, Adelaido A. Bayot Memorial Institution, Modern Maritime Technical School and I.B. Calingasan Memorial Institute. Fr. Jerry

Perocho, SVD was the resource speaker. The students participated actively in the open forum, enhancing their awareness of the discussed topic and

From Bauan, Batangas

Holy Cross of Bauan Circle Conducts Campus Sympo

The Pro-Life, Morality in Media and Upliftment of Women Workers Committees of the Holy Cross of Bauan Circle in Bauan, Batangas conducted last

February 27, 2009 a symposium which focused primarily on the three thrusts of the DMI. The symposium was held at the Bauan Technical High School with

560 graduating high school students in attendance.

Speakers were Fr. Nonie Dolor, chairman of Social

Communications and Mass Media of the Archdiocese of Lipa who spoke on Morality in Media. Sis. Linda Castillo, diocesan regent and



Symposium speakers Fr. Nonie Dolor and Sis. Linda Castillo before students of the Bauan Technical High School.

its effects on their daily lives.

is the patron saint of the Archdiocese of Lipa.

*The DMI also facilitated the free *Kasalang Bayan* for couples living together for as long as 27 years without the blessings of the Church and free baptism for children aged 7 years and above.

*The Year of St. Joseph was launched at the Nasugbu Parish Church in preparation for the Centennial Celebration of the Archdiocese of Lipa on April 10, 2010. The DMI sisters assisted in the event. Guest of honor was Archbishop Ramon Arguelles. St. Joseph

**The DMI also facilitated the free Kasalang Bayan for couples living together for as long as 27 years without the blessings of the Church and free baptism for children aged 7 years and above.*



The DMI sisters participate in the first Saturday dawn procession.

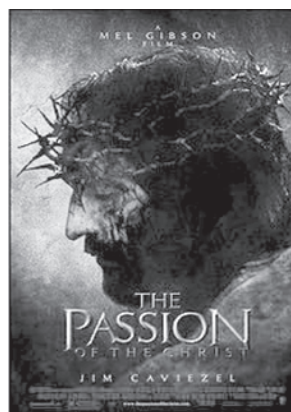


The DMI-sponsored Kasalang Bayan

international chairperson of the Upliftment of Women Workers Committee presented to the students DMI's mission of assisting women in learning legitimate skills so as to help them provide a better quality of life for their families. Fr. Dakila Ramos, spiritual director of St. Francis de Sales Major Seminary, Lipa City and director of the Archdiocesan Youth Commission discussed pro-life, moral values and the beauty of life.

Circle Vice-Regent Sis. Agnes Arada coordinated the activity with Mrs. Erlinda Ilagan, school principal and Ms. Violy Datinguinoo, head of the Guidance Office. Spearheading the activity were the Circle's committee chairpersons Sis. Norma Gonda for Pro-Life, Sis. Shirley Dolor for Morality in Media and Sis. Mena Alviar for Upliftment of Women Workers. DMI sisters gave their full support contributing to the success of the project.

Mary on the Silver Screen



The American film "The Passion" by Mel Gibson in 2003.

The way of the Cross to Christ's crucifixion and His death, accompanied by the Virgin Mary, His mother, is remarkably produced. This film was, popular from the moment it reached the Silver Screen, a great success.

From Paranaque City

Our Lady of Unity Circle Pursues DMI Thrusts

The Our Lady of Unity Circle of the Resurrection of Our Lord Parish (ROLP) in BF Homes, Paranaque City reported on-going projects benefiting the elderly and other residents in the developing communities of the Parish. They are as follows:

*** Ministry of Sick and Elderly.** Every first Friday of the month, the DMI sisters lead the elderly of Ipil and Clinic, two developing communities in the Parish in the 6:15 a.m. Healing Mass with anointing by a priest, followed by a breakfast/fellowship with short talks on various topics and medical check-up and

consultation, including distribution of free medicines and vitamins.

*** Anti-Pornography Campaign.** Ongoing in BF Homes is a campaign against pornography, a joint project of the DMI and KC. Collection drums are provided in the vicinity of the church and burning of collected porno materials, magazines, pictures, videos, etc. are done in the parking lot of ROLP church.

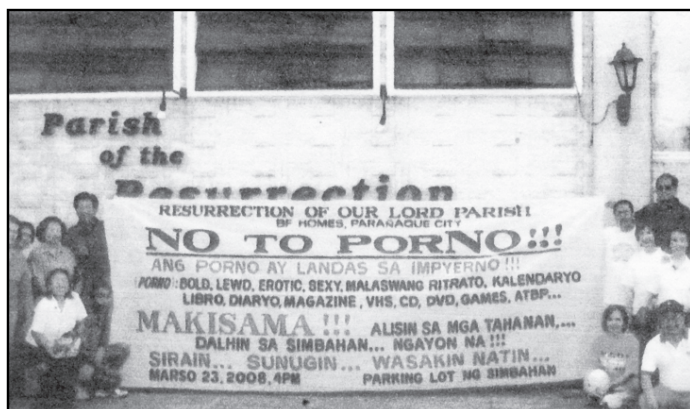
*** Tutorial, Catechism and Feeding of 300 FEES Students.** The DMI and KC-assisted Fourth Estate Elementary School (FEES) BF



Free medical check-up and consultation for the elderly of the parish

Homes Annex, located adjacent to the ROLP developing communities, Ipil and Clinic now offers Grades I and II to about 300 students. Catechism classes and

feedings are done by DMI sisters every Friday while tutorial lessons are given every Saturday by prospective Squirettes of Mary members.



Streamer stresses the DMI's Anti-Pornography stance.



Inauguration of the BF Homes Annex of the Fourth Estate Elementary School with Paranaque City Mayor Florencio Bernabe, Jr. and Dep-Ed's Dr. Lopez as guests of honor.

Did you know that...

At the time of the Old Covenant, the Hebraic liturgy sang of the "Daughter of Sion", waiting for the "Woman in Genesis whose descendant would crush the head of the serpent of old," in psalms, hymns and songs of praise, sung again today in the liturgical services of the New Covenant.

From Banga, Aklan

Ave Maria, Gratia Plena!

by Sis. Lorenza T. Nidua, Regent, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Circle

The Parish of St. Blaise in Torralba, Banga, Aklan is one with the Christian world in the celebration of the Month of Mary. The much-awaited month of May in our parish is spent to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary through the collaboration of all the parish organizations we collectively call LOMAS (Lay Organizations, Ministries and Societies). The catechists take charge of the summer catechesis. We culminate each month of May with the *Santacruz* and coronation of the year's *Reina Elena*. The Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Circle jointly with the Mother Butler Guild spearheads the activity.

Right after the parish fiesta, the DMI sisters start

brainstorming, discussing and planning to make this annual Marian celebration truly meaningful and fruitful. The theme "AVE MARIA, GRATIA PLENA" has been our inspiration as we work and pray at the same time. We always see to it, as suggested by our parish priest, that prayer becomes the important ingredient of our labor. Evidently, it also inspires all the chapel coordinators to get involved and be important collaborators of the event.

This year, May 30th was the BIG day with practically the whole community turning out for the event. The solemn procession of the image of the Blessed Mother was followed by children - the "twelve stars" and girls

dressed in white bearing each letter of AVE MARIA. Twelve *sagalas* from the twelve chapels within the parish and the *Reinas* representing the "Virtudes" participated in the procession. This year's *Reina Elena* is Arietta Rogero with her Constantino, Kert Jannzen Zabal. *Reina Elena* 2008 was also in the entourage.



Vicarial Regent Sis. Victorina Laroza with *Reina Elena* 2009, young Emperor Constantino and *Reina Elena* 2008.

A program was held at the Torralba Multi-purpose

Pavement where an inspirational message was

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From Calbayog City,
Samar

Julio Cardinal Rosales Circle's Prison Outreach



Sis. Esther Perez, regent of the Julio Cardinal Rosales Circle in Calbayog City, reported the circle's outreach activity at the Calbayog City Jail last March 8, 2009. Photo at left shows the DMI sisters who joined the activity. The right photo shows the jail detainees, numbering 102, who received gifts from the circle consisting of food, cash and used clothing

From Roxas City, Capiz

Updates from Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle

by Sis. Nene Molino

The Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle of Roxas City, Capiz has undertaken projects and activities for the DMI missions. They are shown in the accompanying photos.



Caring for the Elderly. The Home for the Aged in Barrica, Roxas City was recently visited by the Circle. The DMI facilitated the Philhealth insurance coverage of the elderly residents and renovated a room for the temporary confinement of those who get sick. The circle also gave financial assistance. Photo shows Circle Regent Sis. Mercedes Bermejo and Past Regent Sis. Zenaida Baeza with Msgr. Jose Alba and residents of the Home for the Aged.



Prison Outreach. A group of DMI sisters visited the Roxas City Jail and brought rosaries, sandwiches and ice cream for the prisoners. In photo are Sisters Mary Fuentes, Chedeng Bermejo, Bebing Uytengco, Sarian Legislador, Mila Nolasco, Nene Molino and Celine Reyes with the prison inmates and jailguards.



Christmas Gift-Giving. Children from Bgy. Cagay were the recipients of gifts during the Annual Christmas Gift-Giving that the Circle conducted last December. The children enjoyed treats from Jollibee and received toys and candies that the DMI sisters brought for distribution.



Diocesan Assembly. The Circle attended the Diocesan Assembly with the Theme "Global Peace Thru Mama Mary". The officers and members of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle and Our Lady of Lourdes Circle of Mambusao, Capiz led by Vicarial Regent Sis. Regina Alba and Circle Regent Sis. Chedeng Bermejo are shown in photo with Fr. Jose Joedol Dorado.

From Butuan City

Our Mother of Perpetual Help Circle Holds Cooking Demo on Indigenous Recipes

In celebration of Nutrition Month, a seminar-workshop was sponsored jointly by the Our Mother of Perpetual Help Circle and the Knights of Columbus of Butuan City. Dubbed “Sa Kalusugan ni Mamang, Siguradong Healthy Baby”, the seminar-workshop was conducted by the Provincial Nutritionist and Dietician of the Agusan del Norte Provincial Hospital. The circle’s Upliftment of Women Workers Committee headed by Sis. Charito Canete arranged the activity.



The Upliftment of Women Workers Committee headed by Sis. Charito Canete during the workshop-seminar.

Fifteen mothers living in the vicinity of the church and circle members learned to prepare dishes using indigenous ingredients such as *malunggay*, squash, *ampalaya* and mangoes. The dishes included burgers using *malunggay*, *puso ng saging* and squash, moringa (*malunggay*) hot cakes and *ampalaya*-mango juice.

The workshop participants later sampled the dishes they prepared.

From Zamboanga City

St. Joseph Circle Holds Sympo on its 15th Charter Anniversary

The St. Joseph Circle in Zamboanga City celebrated its 15th Charter Anniversary simply with a symposium on Violence Against Women at the St. Joseph Function Hall last March 8, 2009, International Women’s Day.

Dr. Leila Lopez Estrella, head of the Women and Children Protection Unit of the Zamboanga City Medical Center, discussed the statistics on violence against women in the Philippines,

the different types of abuses committed against women, how they affect women and children and how the women perceive such abuses. Ms. Carmen Luna, head of the Women Crisis Center of the city oriented the group as to what services the Center offers.

The speakers provided answers to the many questions about the topic and how DMI sisters may be able to help by referring the cases they



St. Joseph Circle members listen intently to the symposium speakers.

encounter to the right authorities.

The symposium was attended by vicarial regents, past and present circle regents and secretaries from all over the District of Zamboanga.

During the activity, Charter Regent Sis. Erlinda Ko and Sis. Chit Bustamante were given special recognition for having made the circle what it is today and for guiding the circle through its formative years.

Our Lady of Fatima Circle Hosts DMI Radio Program

The Our Lady of Fatima Circle hosted the DMI radio program on January 11, 2009 at Radio Station DXVP located at the Immaculate Conception Elementary School in Tetuan near the Jumbo Bridge of Guiwan. The DMI radio

program is aired every Sunday, from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m.

The topic tackled was "The Six Secrets of Strong Families" by Nick Stinett and John de Frain taken from the *Reader's Digest*. The topic is very significant not only for the DMI but for all families

considering that some families survive while others fail. According to the authors, the six secrets are the following: COMMITMENT, TIME TOGETHER, APPRECIATION, COMMUNICATION, SPIRITUAL WELLNESS and COPING WITH CRISES. Each of the secrets

was explained citing day-to-day life situations of families as examples.

The program was hosted by Circle Regent Sis. Jasmine Piolo. Sis. Alice Rivera anchored the program.

SMI Our Lady Of Fatima Circlette Officers Installed

The Squirettes of Mary Immaculate Our Lady of Fatima Circlette held an election of officers for 2009 recently at Putik Central School immediately followed by their installation.

Elected and installed were the following: Roxen Kayle

Angeles, president; Aizel Sotto, vice-president; Rica Piolo, secretary; Marjorie Reyes, treasurer; Kathleen Ong, chancellor; Denise Camille Apostol and Elaine Ong, trustees; Liza Jane Calungsod and Martha Jeane Eulalio, marshals; Louise Pinili, banner bearer; Ma. Irish

Celerio, flag bearer; and Kathleen Bernadette Pinili, information officer.

The SMI members are Jeska Vyiel Angeles, Regine de Asis, Jennet Joy Garcia, Jeremie Ann Garcia, Mary Therese Angeles, Rena Grace Martinez and Ella Mae Ong.

The SMI lady counselors are Sisters Cora Babor and Agnes Pinili.

Ave Maria, Gratia Plena!...Cont'd from Page 29

delivered by Dr. Victorina Laroza, the Dep-Ed's Schools Division Superintendent for Aklan, who is also the vicarial regent of the Vicariate of Mary the Queen composed of

the Parishes of Balete, Altavas, New Washington and Batan, Aklan. The program ended with the final blessing by Rev. Fr. Marvin Baylon, parish priest.

Words of appreciation were given to those who worked hard for the success of this annual celebration of Mary's Month. Hymns of praise to *Nanay Maria* - "Adios" and "Ave Maria, Gratia Plena" -

will continue to be sung even more fervently by Marian devotees, particularly the Daughters of Mary Immaculate.

The DMI in Retrospect

by Sis. Evangeline A. Ang, Past International Vice-Regent for Mindanao

(The following is excerpted from the speech delivered by Sis. Vance before delegates in the recent Mindanao Area Conference held in General Santos City on May 22 to 23, 2009. It is an incisive analysis of various factors in the DMI that will define its future, in light of what and how the organization had been in the past and is in the here and now. - Ed.)

The Daughters of Mary Immaculate has been around for 31 years, or if we were to stretch the years further back to 1951 when the first circle of the Daughters of Isabella, its forerunner, was organized, we have been around for 58 years - 58 golden years of progress and success, or retrogress.

How do we now stand as an organization? What have we accomplished for our missions? Have we been successful in our campaign on the right to life? It seems there are more abortions and pre-marital sex today. How many are the women in our communities whose status we have helped uplift? In morality in media - whereas before we had only the *Playboy* Magazine to contend with, today we have a number of its Filipino versions - *FHM*, *Maxim* and others - with young girls, actresses, socialites and celebrities posing almost in the nude in the guise of art and in exchange for popularity or money. And have we really improved the

quality of life of families of prisoners and their victims?

Retrospecting gives us the courage to face reality . . . And our conference today is an opportunity for us to reflect, assess and evaluate our accomplishments. This

Many of our circles have achieved what they had aimed for . . . yet some have retrogressed, even disbanded.

We ask ourselves: do we still have the enthusiasm and confidence that we can make things happen with our talents and hard work?

is a rare moment for looking back and at the same time looking into the future . . . providing us precious moments of experience that may have changed in form but remained in substance. It is an interesting tapestry - patterns of frustration, glints of sunshine, even a crackle of laughter . . . giving us mixed feelings . . . of satisfaction, fulfillment, being wise, and stupid sometimes, but blessed nonetheless.

Many of our circles have achieved what they had aimed for . . . yet some have retrogressed, even disbanded. We ask ourselves: do we still have the enthusiasm and confidence that we can make things happen with our talents and hard work?

Today, let us discern, discover our potentials, our weaknesses and strengths, our victories and waterloos . . . learn and unlearn the challenges, problems and barriers hampering our growth, then find solutions

to make us a better, if not the best, volunteer organization in our parishes.

New challenges and goals are before us, mere shadows today perhaps, but will one day be central to our lives . . . We look to the past to build the future and have the opportunity to bloom fully . . . reaffirming that enduring DMI spirit, the precious gift of membership, the beauty of our circles . . .

Based on my observations and experience, let me address some factors in our organization on which its success depends:

1. **Leadership** is the lifeblood of any organization, a special quality that builds it up. Do we have good and efficient leaders, leaders who are serving and not self-serving leaders? Jesus Christ once said that a true leader is

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one who doesn't lord it over his flock but is the first to serve.

When a member becomes a regent, everything changes. Whereas before one is just a participant, she becomes the decision-maker, the center of influence . . . Today's organization no longer relies so much on hierarchy . . . the mantle of leadership and the power the regent acquires with her position are not enough to motivate and influence others . . . Influence depends on the character/integrity and competence of the leader. Character is what you are; competence is what you can do.

Leadership is about growing . . . of empowerment and empowering others to grow . . . it means acting with integrity to develop an environment of character, competence and synergy . . . Integrity is the ability to walk your talk, a thorough integration of public, private and inner life around a balanced set of principles . . .

Leading . . . is the art of getting things done through people. While rules and techniques are important . . . a leader must have an attitude reflected in her character traits and demonstrated in her actions . . . She must have a vision that includes her values, beliefs and the association's mission . . . She must be

Leading . . . is the art of getting things done through people. While rules and techniques are important . . . a leader must have an attitude reflected in her character traits and demonstrated in her actions

optimistic especially in these negative times where we see the deterioration of social and moral mores . . . Optimism combats gloom, gives courage and energy to face adversity.

2. Membership is the foundation of the organization. It is not just about paying dues and making donations to the organization. Accepting the gift of membership in the DMI carries the obligation to attend meetings and participate in decision-making . . . It means sharing not only one's talents and resources but also her time, heart and spirit.

Sometimes we focus more on recruitment rather than retention . . . Retention means maintaining, holding members . . . the ongoing effort of the circle must be to find out why a member loses interest and leaves or becomes inactive. Are her

psychological needs being met? Her contributions recognized? Does she find fulfillment in your programs and projects? Are your meetings boring and a waste of time?

Meetings should be something members look forward to - because they are participative, enjoyable and fun. There must be a continuing effort of engaging, organizing and developing the right people . . . because when members are great, the association grows.

3. Goals are the guiding stars of the circle . . . They are your plans, your dreams, your objectives . . . Setting goals should be the officers' first activity . . . Ask the fundamental question: How do I see my circle many years from now?

Goals must be realistic, achievable and well-grounded on the realities of the external and internal environments . . . Goals must also have the passion, the enthusiasm that will inspire the members to work for their achievement. Goals will determine the organization's future.

4. Creativity and Innovation are critical characteristics of growth. New ways of doing things happen everyday . . . it has become a necessity in the management of organizations, our family, even our personal lives. We

cannot be complacent. Even God doesn't want us to be stagnant. He wants us to exercise our brain, to be alert, to be flexible and to productively respond to change. New development opportunities pass us by because of our obstinacy or resistance to change . . . Change must be an attitude . . . because an organization is a reflection of the people within it . . . their different characteristics, spirituality and consciousness.

5. Teamwork is the lifting power of many wings. It makes work easier . . . strengthens the bond of friendship . . . A stick breaks easily when alone, but a number of sticks bundled together can be very difficult to break. A person, no matter how gifted, needs the help and support of others to become successful. But the quality and strength of a team depends on how clearly its members understand their vision and goals . . . The circle regent must articulate very clearly the circle's goals.

6. Communication is essential to success. People react to words and images used to provide information, change attitudes and build relationships.

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A Travelogue

Mater Dei Circle's Northern Luzon Pilgrimage

by Sis. Rose Enriquez, Regent, Mater Dei Circle

The pilgrimage cum eco-tour of the Mater Dei Circle of Lagro Parish, Quezon City in the provinces of Ifugao, Cagayan, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur on May 15 to 17, 2009 will undoubtedly remain a significant experience among the 12 members of the circle, five Squirettes of Mary members and a lone member

The Banaue Rice Terraces in Ifugao Province was the group's first destination. This tourist spot is included among the UNESCO World Heritage Sites and has been considered the Seventh Wonder of the World. Built 2,000 years ago and passed on from generation to generation of Ifugaos, the Rice Terraces is a landscape of unparalleled beauty. The

Valley on the second day made everyone overly excited. The visit was the primary purpose of the trip. On the way to the place, the group did not miss appreciating the Nasipping Reforestation Project, one of the oldest reforestation projects in the country. After several "turn arounds" in locating the town of Piat, the group arrived at the Church of Our Lady of Piat full of hope that the visit will make everyone grow in love with the Lord and Our Lady. After attending Mass, paying homage to Our Lady's image, and making a brief courtesy call on Msgr Servando Eugenio and Fr. Jimmy Herrera, the group headed to a spring a few meters from the church to get healing water. It is worth mentioning that since 1624, miraculous healings and protection from calamities and dangers attributed to Our Lady of Piat have been documented.

constructed in 1765 to 1787 and known as the first church in the Cagayan Valley with galvanized iron as roof. The place is really a sight to behold.

The main objective of this activity was to deepen faith in God through experiencing His presence and that of the Blessed Mother's in the famous churches and in places up North that He richly endowed with nature's beauty.



The pilgrims take in the view of the Banaue Rice Terraces.

of the Knights of Columbus 8235.

The main objective of this activity was to deepen faith in God through experiencing His presence and that of the Blessed Mother's in the famous churches and in places up north that He richly endowed with nature's beauty.

group, awed by the scenery, commented that viewing it is like looking at a giant postcard. Incidentally, going to Banaue was then quite difficult because of the landslides in Kiangnan town due to the recent typhoon that brought down from the mountains big boulders and fallen trees.

The visit to the miraculous Our Lady of Piat in Cagayan

The last day was a hectic one. The first stop was in Calvary Hills in Iguig, Cagayan. It is an 11-heactare rolling terrain on top of which are found big concrete statues portraying the 14 Stations of the Cross which has become a favorite pilgrimage stop. Within the compound is found the Church of San Antonio de Galicia which was

The group proceeded to the Patapat Viaduct, a 1.3-km coastal bridge that connects the Maharlika Highway from Cagayan Valley to Laoag City. The viaduct has an elevation of 31 meters above sea level. The brief stop-over here made everybody wonder how God made such a beautiful panoramic vista: the forested

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mountains at your back, and before you, the aquamarine South China Sea meeting the blue skies in the far horizon.

Pagudpud was their next stop. All were very amazed at the white sand beaches and crystal-clear water beckoning to them to stay awhile to walk on the seashore and wade in the water. Unfortunately, due to lack of time, their eyes just feasted on the scenery and they took pictures to record its beauty.

A few minutes later, the group reached Bangui, Ilocos Norte where they saw at some distance the Giant Windmills of Bangui. The windmills are 15 giant wind turbines each as tall as a 23-storey building. They are the first wind turbines in South East Asia. The turbines are used for rural electrification and serve to reduce emission of greenhouse gases.

The famous tourist spot in the town of Paoay in Ilocos Norte is the St. Augustine Church, better known as the

Paoay Church. According to history, the Katipuneros used its coral stone bell tower as an observation post during the Philippine Revolution of 1898. The church, the structure of which has been preserved, is also listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Everybody had a chance to see the remains of the late President Ferdinand Marcos in his see-through glass coffin at his ancestral house in Batac. The feeling was eerie and at the same time exciting seeing his frozen remains. His memorabilia and family tree are also on exhibit.

The group stopped over at Fort Ilocandia Hotel for a few minutes' rest and a look-see, then proceeded to the Heritage City of Vigan in Ilocos Sur .

Vigan is known for its unique architectural design which is a mix of European, Asian and Latin American influences. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



At Calvary Hills in Iguig, Cagayan, the pilgrims' first religious stop.



The Blessing Station at the Our Lady of Piat Church where pilgrims can have their religious articles blessed.

Since it was already dark when the group reached Vigan, there was very limited time to go to other places of interest. But seeing the *calesas* and antique houses and walking through its narrow cobbled streets, the group felt that

they had been able to feel the ambience of the place.

After a 22-hour travel from Cagayan Valley with stop-overs in the Ilocos Region, the group returned to Manila feeling quite exhausted but spiritually nourished and fulfilled.

The DMI in Retrospect...Cont'd from Page 34

Communication seems to be lacking in our organization. Many regents are not aware of what's going on in the DMI's larger community . . . communications from National, changes in leadership, even in the structure of the organization are not funneled down to the local circles . . . The problems and concerns in the local circle are sometimes not addressed by the leadership for lack of communication and coordination.

Sisters, these factors pose as a challenge to all of us. As DMIs, let us shape our attitudes and mindsets in accordance with the ideals of the DMI and create a community of fulfillment and of peace . . . Let us create an unconquerable spirit that proclaims life is worth living and the DMI is worth it all.

Let us not be afraid of criticisms, failures or problems because a person's strength and power are revealed only when

she faces adversity . . . Shortcomings and failures should not be a reason to give up but a challenge to improve ourselves . . . Difficulties are not a reason to back out but an inspiration to move forward . . .

Before us is a journey the length of which is not as important as the footprints we leave behind for others to follow. We shall continue our journey, looking deep into where we failed and gain success with our

proactive/responsive action. We shall continue to reach out with healing hearts and helping hands that remain ever constant and undiminished.

Our unity emanates from the sincerity of our causes and the tempering qualities of humility, unity, friendship and charity. Guided by these virtues, we can act with integrity, serve with love and work for peace.