



DMI NEWSETTE

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BIRTH OF A NEW DMI CIRCLE IN NEW YORK, USA

*By Sis. Mila A. Villanueva,
Past International Regent & 2019-21
Chairperson for Foreign Membership*

How It All Began

In February, 2019, I was visiting my ailing brother in Woodbury, Long Island, New York. Every Sunday, we would attend Mass at the Holy Name of Jesus Church, a ten-minute walk from home. It is not a very big church, I surmised its capacity is a hundred or so. As in anywhere in the world, you see Filipinas and their husbands attending the mass. In this simply elegant church, some banners hang on the walls And one of these banners is the Knights of Columbus.

As we were walking back home, I asked my sister-in-law Mofty, if she knew any member of the K of C. She said, "not the KC, but their wives" So I broached the idea of setting up a Daughters of Mary Immaculate circle in the parish. Her reply,"Why not?"

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Attendees during the orientation meeting conducted by Sis. Mila in February, 2019.

From the International Regent

A Message of Hope



January 1, 2021

My beloved sisters,

For the past 40 years, the existence of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International had been smooth-sailing, save for a few challenges here and there. But the year 2020 will long be remembered in history as unprecedented and something we will never forget for its social, political, environmental and economic effects. To say the least, its scope was large-scale and its intensity was immense, creating strong emotions beyond words. Its effects were experienced all over the world, yet each of us in our own way and in terms unimaginable, indescribable and beyond comprehension, has our own stories to tell.

How you as individuals and as Daughters of Mary Immaculate have coped has made me feel truly honored and grateful, not to mention proud and inspired as your International Regent. A "thank you" seems inadequate.

What a year it had been! In January, 2020, we were busy gathering delegates to what would have been our Biennial Convention last May. That would have coincided with the installation of new international officers. This message would have been my farewell message as your International Regent.

However, heeding the counsel of our International Chaplain, our Council of Advisers and past International

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From the International Chaplain

Message



Our beloved Daughters of Mary Immaculate,

The time of the pandemic is upon us. Did we think it would only be for a week, or months, confined to a small territory or country or region? Did we ever imagine that it will change our way of life, disturb our thoughts, make us reflect on who we are and where we are going?

Whoever thought that the birth of a Child will change the world, or the simple “Yes” of a humble Virgin will have an impact eternal and bring about the Light? Whoever imagined that God will be one of us and will be the Son of a human mother?

God’s mystery is upon us and we will never fathom the depth of its meaning. Suffice it to say that we shall not fully understand our lives unless we see God. We do not hold our lives in our hands but God does. And His hands are loving hands, caring hands, protecting hands, fatherly hands.

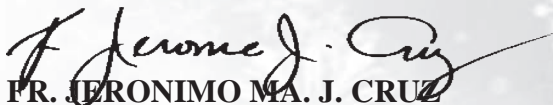
We are asked to trust in the Only One who truly matters, to listen to the Voiceless Speaker, to see the imperceptible Presence, to touch the untouchable Reality.

Yes, God is with us, and in us and among us. The Love of God created us and gave the very meaning to who we are. To be able to love and be loved is to live as God ordained us to live.

Our faith is a gift that has brought us into the mystery of God. The mission we celebrate is the deep and personal experience of God’s concrete revelation of Himself to us in Jesus and the sharing of that experience of the holy and the divine to others. Fulfilling the mission is living the faith faithfully each day where others may be drawn to the same mystery of God in us.

As we celebrate the Year of Mission and the Year of St. Joseph, and as we mark the 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines, let us reflect on how deep is our faith and how it has permeated our life - our dreams and ambitions, our plans and decisions, our actions and pursuits. How real is God in our lives?

Maligayang Pasko at Pinagpalang Bagong Taon sa inyong lahat!


FR. JERONIMO M.A. J. CRUZ
International Chaplain



Regents, your Board of Trustees and other International Officers confirmed and humbly accepted the recommendation to keep our respective positions for one more year in 2021 until the pandemic restrictions will have been relaxed.

With this new mandate, I urge you to more than ever pursue our missions with zeal and drive, following of course health and safety protocols that would protect you and others in our care. Let us take advantage of this quarantine to be closer to our families and appreciate every moment spent with them, make full use of the technology available to not miss out on our communion with God and communication with our dear sisters, and discover new talents and hobbies to fill our precious time. Remember that, despite the stress and insecurities, we are still here, alive and kicking, thank God. Others may not have survived and we remember them with love and fondness.

The year ahead will definitely be different. Whether it will be good, better or not will immensely depend on our resolve. The speed with which we will be able to adapt will be all up to us to calibrate. Hand in hand, we need to craft the course we will take. We are sisters and we depend on each other for strength and inspiration. Let us never give up!

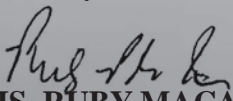
Most importantly, let us keep in mind that we are a team of women whose character absolutely shines like the crown of Mary, bright with the hope of HOPE, STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE in the face of adversity and fear. Our collective actions will see us through this pandemic.

Several years ago, we wrote our vision and the resounding words were SERVICE and CARE FOR OTHERS. Let these two words define us, and this year, be our anchor in everything that we do, as we have been doing in the past but now, with fervor beyond words.

Have faith that we will have our face to face encounter once again. Take care and never stop believing in a bright and better world for all.

Have a blessed New Year.

Sincerely,


SIS. RUBY MACARIO
International Regent



HOPE

Birth of new circle... from page 1

That was the moment . . . the mission to create a circle in Woodbury commenced! Mofty started getting in touch with the ladies she knew who were parishioners. One of them was Lorelei Onglengko, uniquely nicknamed “Bullet” She was enthused by the idea, too. And before we knew it, fourteen ladies said “yes”.

On February 6, 2019, I did an orientation of these ladies at the home of my siblings, Jose and Mofty Aujero over a snack of spaghetti *a la vongole*, garlic bread, fruit punch and cake (my culinary skill was tested once more!). This congenial gathering of women with the same dreams, direction and desire to know God more and to be closer to His Mother, Mary Immaculate, agreed to organize a DMI circle. The orientation centered on the DMI vision, missions, purpose and mottoes of Humility, Sanctity, Charity, Unity and Friendship. After a brief discussion on the missions, the group accepted all the tasks that the DMI requires.

That was the beginning of the Holy Name of Jesus Circle.

The next task was getting the approval of the parish priest, Msgr. Richard Bauhoff and the concurrence of the Knights of Columbus. They were delighted to know that the Daughters of Mary Immaculate was originally the Daughters of Isabella, the sister counterpart of the Knights of Columbus. I proceeded on to the discussion of the missions and tasks of the DMII, zeroing in on the two most applicable missions in the Americas. These are Morality in Media and Pro-life with the emphasis on the care for the elderly. This somehow allayed the Monsignor’s fear of the duplication of efforts of the Columbiates, an existing parish women’s organization and the DMII. I told him that our work is based on the principle of cooperation and not competition. This shall also “bring more laborers to the harvest”.

On February 19, Monsignor Bauhoff gave his approval depending, however, on the approval of the Archbishop of the Long Island County. The Monsignor also requested that circle activities be held in abeyance until the imprimatur of the Archbishop is received. This being the case, all plans were temporarily shelved and we all agreed to wait. We in the Philippines likewise waited patiently with prayers for the new circle to be officially chartered, in the words of Sis. Juliet Cruz, International Auditor for Membership, “in God’s own time, with the intercession of our Blessed Mother”.

A Moment in Hiatus

Nearly two years later, I received a call from Sister Scribe Mofty Aujero that Monsignor Bauhoff had informed them that they can now start their activities with the theme “Mary Saves the Poor”, a fitting and timely mission as we all struggle to overcome the effects of this long-drawn pandemic. Her call came just two days before my birthday. What a wonderful birthday gift!

As I read through the exchanges in the mail among our new sisters, a letter from Sis. Maria “Jiji” Shapiro, the charter vice-regent, was so touching and so inspiring. This embodies their desire and enthusiasm to serve for the Glory of God and Mother Mary Immaculate. With her permission, I quote:

“May we all serve the Blessed Mother and be her Immaculate Hands to caress with tenderness,

To touch the Flesh of Jesus in our poor, sick or despised brethren,

To raise up those who have fallen and support those who waver.

May we also be Her Immaculate Feet, to go toward those who know not how to take the first step,

To walk on the paths of those who are lost, to find those who are alone . . .”

Spoken as a true Daughter of Mary Immaculate!



Sis. Mila Villanueva and sister-in-law, Mofty Aujero, in front of the Holy Name of Jesus Parish Church.

Finally on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

The first official meeting of the Holy Name of Jesus Circle of Woodbury, LI, New York took place on

December 8, 2020 on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Charter Regent Sis. Lorelei de Guzman-Onglengko sent in her report.



FIAT! I am proud to present to the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International a new circle in New York, the Holy Name of Jesus Circle that launched its first official meeting on December 8, 2020, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

There were eleven women who braved the cold weather here in New York and despite the pandemic, were all happy to be there for each other and ready to do something for this broken world we live in today. We started with praying the rosary and I gave an opening prayer. Then each one of us introduced ourselves, the charter officers and the members. It was amazing to hear each one expressing their strong belief in their faith and love for Mama Mary. I am honored and blessed to be the Charter Regent of this circle. And even more blessed that my two sisters, Alisa and May, my daughter Lorraine and soon-to-be daughter-in-law Andrea are members of this ministry. It was a beautiful night with all these wonderful women craving to serve God in one way or another.

We discussed some of the sad experiences of our members who tried to reach out to the churches to offer their service or any help they can give. Unfortunately, some of the churches are not open to accommodate the help due to Covid 19. Even clothing, toys and other articles for basic needs are not recommended at this time.

Christmas is all about giving and we are so sad to know that we are not able to give much. I shared that I get phone calls from the rectory and from these calls I learned that among the reasons for people's difficulty to cope during this pandemic are loneliness

and isolation, especially the seniors. Some families also cannot cope with the stress of having all the kids home and doing their work at the same time. So, a call to these people who need comforting words and prayers over the phone can be an option to help. This way we can reach out to them personally and find out their personal needs to be able to live comfortably and bring them some hope and joy.

We also discussed our hope to do something this Christmas, but with the still-rising cases of Covid 19, it only makes it harder to fulfill our dream of bringing Christmas joy to our co-parishioners.

The moment has now come to look at the light and follow the star that will guide us in our new endeavors. We continue to trust the Lord, and with the intercession of Mama Mary, we ask for continued blessing of good health and strength in this journey.

One of the fun parts of the meeting was receiving the white short-sleeved shirt and pins, our uniform in the meantime. Posing for "groupie" pictures through our cellphones was also fun, no need for a photographer among us. Just a wave, a smile and voila, we have a beautiful group picture! A little fellowship followed while we were filling out our application forms.

As we look forward to our next meeting on January 6, 2021, we continue to pray hard that we will be able to invite more women to join us and meet with no restrictions about numbers (now, group gatherings should not be more than ten). We also plan to do the installation of officers formally but the date will depend on forthcoming pandemic guidelines. Please keep us in your prayers as we keep you in ours.

We thank our sisters in the DMII Family led by International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario and International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz for their kind words and warm welcome. And may we greet you in advance: A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL! May our anticipation of Mama Mary's giving birth to our Savior, Jesus Christ bring hope to all humanity and may this be the most meaningful one that will convert many lost souls in today's chaotic world. Stay safe and God bless.

In union with Mama Mary,

SIS. LORELIE DE GUZMAN-ONGLENGKO
Charter Regent



The charter members of the Holy Name of Jesus Circle during their first official meeting on December 8, 2020.

IMPACT IF THE SOGIE BILL BECOMES LAW

By Sis. Lorie S. Manalansan, Region V Newsette
Correspondent & Luzon Area Coordinator for
Upliftment of Women Workers

In a nationwide ZOOM webinar that the DMII Pro-Life International Committee headed by Chairperson Sis. Cora Afuang spearheaded on September 29, 2020, Bro. Anselmo Beluso, a distinguished personality, talked about "The Social Impact of the LGBTQI+ Agenda (Implications if the SOGIE Bill Becomes Law)". LGBTQI+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex.

Bro. Anselmo is most knowledgeable on the topic having been gay once who later decided to be "man" enough to embrace his Catholic faith and lead an exemplary Christian life. He now uses his experience to help others. He pointed out that the problem with the Sogie Bill (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression Bill) is that -

- * It is not about the problem of discrimination against the LGBTQI+ Community
- * It is not about fostering social equality
- * It is a political device to promote the gay agenda which –
 - Advocates social acceptance and normalization of non-heterosexual orientations
 - Pushes to change government policies and laws on LGBTQI+ rights-related issues
 - Recruits heterosexuals into the homosexual lifestyle

In promoting the gay agenda, the social implications include -

- Curtailing enforcement of policies on admission, hiring and firing, promotion, wearing of uniform, use of hygiene facilities, permissible programs and activities, socially acceptable behavior, etc.
- Inhibits teaching of religious and moral values even by parents

Bro. Anselmo was a showbiz writer and reporter and now hosts a talk show over Radio Veritas, "Digma ng Buhay". He is also a much-sought-after motivational speaker and life coach for persons with same-sex attraction, Board member of Pro-Life Phils. and servant-leader of the Missionary Families of Christ.



- Weakens society's ability to instill discipline and affects the power of authorities to maintain peace and order.

Likewise, the problem with the Sogie Bill insinuates discrimination when in fact, the Philippines belongs to the Top Ten Gay Friendliest Countries in the world.. Even famous hair-stylist, Ricky Reyes tells his fellow gays: "Ilagay natin ang ating sarili sa lugar." as he refuses to support the bill, along with his other peers.

The Sogie Bill is said to be initiated by the gay activists because they are well-funded. Part of the agenda aims to control population growth alongside with its support of women's reproductive rights on her choice whether to have a child or not or to even abort; and other activities contrary to moral laws.

With this bill, Sex Education as a subject becomes part of the school curriculum where a presentation on perverted sexual acts are part of the materials. These are not to be brought home by the child so parents will not have access to what is being taught. In justifying exposure of the children to these, the proponents explain that they do not educate the children to do those acts but just so they are informed as these are part of their human rights.

With the Sogie Bill, a lesbian student cannot be forced to wear the prescribed uniform, otherwise, the school can be sued.

So, why as Catholics, are we resisting the Sogie Bill?

1. It is against Divine Law – God made man and woman.
2. It is against Natural Law – Gender is defined by chromosomes
3. It is against Moral Law – Sexuality is not a matter of choice.
4. It is against the Constitution – Simply because the Constitution aims to protect the rights of the family.
5. It is redundant - We have a lot of laws protecting the rights of individuals. If a gay is assaulted, he can use his rights as a citizen. If a gay becomes incapacitated, he is entitled to the rights of a PWD (person with disability).
6. It is unnecessary – Filipinos love gays.
7. It is against Filipino culture – If the Sogie Bill is in place and your faith does not allow its practice, charges can be filed against the Church. In short, it runs counter to the fabric of Filipino culture.
8. It harms the LGBTQI+ people themselves. In latter years, a gay looking for a same sex partner may end up alone and exposed to the 3Ds: Danger, Disease and Death.
9. It discriminates against the majority of the population and promotes inequality among the people.
10. It paves the way for same-sex marriages – Right now, bills are passed for same sex and if a solemnizing officer refuses to officiate over the rights, he can be charged.
11. It will reconfigure Philippine society as Filipinos are defined by faith, values and morals which will be desecrated.
12. It perverts the truth and will foster a culture of lies, deceit and duplicity in the life of our nation.

The challenge to pro-lifers is to unite and fight the lies propagated by Satan – divorce, Sogie Bill, abortion, euthanasia, etc.

During the question and Answer portion, Bro. Anselles explained that while we are against the Sogie Bill, Pope Francis has taught us to respect members of the LGBTQI+ community. Doing so may enable us to win the supporters of the bill over to our side, if we show our love despite the resistance to have the bill passed.

Currently, Congress has approved the Sogie Bill and is now in the hands of the Senate and despite the assurance that a good number of senators will not approve, we still need prayers that these senators will not be tempted to change their minds.

Even if it is not passed, we can expect the bill to be re-filed every year and thus, Pro-lifers must be relentless in stopping its approval. This can be done by -

- Sending letters to Congressmen and Senators explaining our stand

- Put up advertisements
- Use the art of persuasion through connections to reach the lawmakers
- Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In uniting to fight the bill, we are putting to practice what St. Paul wrote to the Colossians in 1:24 which says: "I rejoice in what I am suffering for you and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the Church."

For us to achieve Christ's victory on the Cross, we have to be obedient to the will of the Father by following His Commandments through Evangelization, by putting to practice the Missions and spreading the Truth.

On the reason as to how some individuals turn out to be gay, Bro. Anselles points out to a trauma which a child has experienced when he was a toddler (18 months to 3 years old) when there is already a father/son or mother/daughter conflict. If injury is not addressed, there comes a gender transference and all of these work in the subconscious mind.

Another possible reason is the "Smothering Mother Syndrome". This happens when the mother fills in what she perceives to be a lack of fatherly concern or father figure in the life of a boy, so she makes up for this. Only another male can fill in the shoes of the father.

Acute sensitivity at an early age is another root cause. This is when some habits of the child (like crying too often or being drawn to stereotyped colors of the opposite sex) is mistaken for being gay and the parents themselves assume that the child is gay and treat him as such.

As far as peers are concerned, conflict with same sex friends can draw the child to the company of the opposite sex until he/she really believes that she belongs to the opposite sex.

Early sexual orientation which can be traumatic can be another reason for a child to turn out gay.

The 3-hour webinar ended with International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario thanking Bro. Anselles Beluso for his very enlightening talk and acknowledging Pro-Life International Chairperson Sis. Cora Afuang for this project.

To recap, Sis. Ruby's parting words reinforce Bro. Anselles' talk citing: "Gender is a gift and we can appreciate God's gift and blessing. We should enrich it to the best that we can. Relationship is the key coupled with respect, trust and love. The best relationship is that which will bring out the best in a person. When we appreciate the goodness in every person, we fulfill God's purpose for us to be perfect in His image and likeness. So DMIs, let us go forth and celebrate God's blessings and gifts."

UPDATES FROM ST. CHARLES CIRCLE

By Sis. Josie Francisco, Vicarial Regent

The St. Charles Circle of St. Charles Parish in San Diego, California, is the first circle to be organized in the United States. The circle received its charter on December 17, 2005 after Past International Regent Sis. Beling Panganiban and Past International Treasurer and Zamboanga Diocesan Regent Sis. Beth Salmon conducted an orientation of prospective circle members 25 of whom were eventually exemplified to become the charter members of the new circle. The installation of the circle's officers led by Charter Regent Sis. Josie Francisco followed.

The St. Charles Circle has since then been very actively involved in several projects and activities in pursuing the DMI missions as well as serving in various ministries of the parish.

The circle's official newsletter, the *DMII News*, chronicles the events and activities that the Circle undertakes, some of which are held jointly with the Knights of Columbus Council No.7903 of St. Charles Parish. The DMI sisters meet every last Thursday of the month after the Corporate Mass they hold jointly with the KC.

Among its projects and activities that the circle has undertaken are the following.:

- Bereavement services such as memorial masses and praying the Rosary for departed relatives of DMI sisters and other parishioners of St. Charles.

(Early in 2020, the sisters held bereavement services for the late husband of Sis. Josie, Bro. Knight Herminio Francisco.)

- Hosting dinner for residents of the Inter-Faith Shelter.
- Bake Day Sale/Parish Bazaars as fund raiser for various circle projects and in support of some parish ministries. Circle members bake cakes and pastries and sell them at the church courtyard to parishioners during Sundays. The event doubles as membership drive for the circle.
- Managing and manning the St. Charles Parish Religious Articles Store and entertaining parishioners who seek counseling when they drop by as well as teaching children how to pray the rosary.
- Christmas Card Project by the Committee on Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims. The circle donates Christmas cards that the Diocese of San Diego distributes to prisoners to be sent to their families during Christmas.
- Spearheading the Mother of Life Conference, a Pro-life activity, on August 14, 2010 at the San Diego State University in support of life from womb to natural death. The speakers were former US House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his wife Calixta.
- *Visita Iglesia* in observance of a Filipino Lenten tradition.
- Parish Stations of the Cross and Lenten recollection/retreat, the last held in March, 2020 with Fr. Ronald Kelso as retreat master.
- The circle's Nursing Home Consolation Ministry regularly visits nursing and convalescent homes such as the Birch Patrick Convalescent House to bring cheer to the residents. The last visit was done on February 23, 2020 just before the pandemic.
- Lent support to the St. Charles Parish Knights of Columbus during the 3rd Inter-Council Fraternal



Virtual celebration by the St. Charles Circle of the 38th Anniversary of the Priestly Ordination of St. Charles Parish Pastor Fr. Burt Boudoin and Archbishop Cordileone on July 9, 2020.

Convention held at the St. Charles Parish Hall on Sept. 1, 2007.

- Year-round Rosary devotion//block rosary with the image of the Blessed Mother moved from one household to the next every two weeks
- Organized an exemplification team to perform long conferrals for new DMI recruits. As of November, 2007, circle membership had risen to 48.
- Signature campaign to support the California Human Rights Amendment.
- Giving of the “Family of the Month” and “Daughter of the Month” awards to deserving circle members.
- Active involvement in the ministries of the St. Charles Parish such as supervising children during Sunday Masses as they attend the Liturgy of the Word for Youngsters.

- Organized through California Vicarial Regent Sis. Josie Francisco a new circle in Westmorland, the St. Joseph Circle.
- Celebration of the 14th Anniversary of the circle in December, 2019 with a Latin Mass celebrated by Fr. Burt Boudoin and fellowship afterwards.
- 2020 Walk for Life in February, to celebrate Pro-Life Month held at Balboa Park with the theme “Live, Serve and Embrace Life”.
- Daily Block Rosary online during the pandemic to pray for world peace, an end to the pandemic and for the safety and welfare of families and loved ones.

At this point, the St. Charles Circle members conduct their meetings and other activities online. The circle’s mission projects and service in some parish ministries are put on hold as the pandemic rages.



St. Charles Circle Bake-Sale/Membership Drive, January 26, 2020



DMI sisters serve a meal at the Interfaith Shelter, January 18, 2020



St. Charles Christmas Party, December 26, 2019



14th Anniversary celebration of St. Charles Circle, December 8, 2019. (Some members had already left when this photo was taken.)

SIS. LYDIA P. ORDONEZ



On September 6, 2020, the Daughters of Mary Immaculate International lost one of its pillars. SIS. LYDIA P. ORDONEZ. Mass gatherings being prohibited during the quarantine, her sisters in the DMII International Board as well as many others in the organization had not been able to bid her a fitting good-bye via our ceremonial for a departed sister. A memorial service via ZOOM was held instead participated in by more than 50 DMIs led by International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario. International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz celebrated the memorial mass after which short eulogies were given and flowers offered by those who participated in the service. The response of Sis. Lydia's family was delivered by Atty. Levy Ordóñez, her son, on behalf of her husband, Ladrillo and children Lenard, Lloyd, Leilani and Lyla. The DMI sisters' eulogies have been summed up by Sis. Cora Afuang, International Chairperson for Pro-Life, who worked with Sis. Lydia in various capacities for many years.

>>Sis. Cora Afuang's Eulogy:

The task of giving a eulogy for a friend is not an easy one for me. First of all, it is a sad task. Secondly, it is a fruitless undertaking.

It is a sad task because it is done in memory of a departed loved one. What makes it more sad for me is that during the pandemic we are in, I was not even able to pay my last respect to Sis. Lydia personally. Secondly, I find giving eulogies fruitless because it

cannot be appreciated by the person to whom the eulogy is intended. Hence, these emotions..

I have known Sis. Lydia way back in the early 2000s when I became involved with the activities during the preparations for the DMII Silver Anniversary celebration. She was then already a known figure in Region V as she was closely working with Sis. Fely Villaruz who was then the Region V Representative. Sis. Lydia succeeded Sis. Fely as Region V RR, and I became her successor at the end of her term.

During my years of close association with Sis. Lydia, I noted her several virtues that stood out: her humility, high sense of responsibility, sincerity and trustworthiness. She was not one to brag about her achievements. Not too many know that apart from her activities in the DMI, she also occupied a high position in the Board of Investments (BOI) in addition to her numerous activities in the Association of Government Internal Auditors of the Philippines (AGIAP). She was also involved in some ministries in her parish and in her community.

Sis. Lydia was one DMII officer who really took to heart her duties and responsibilities. Notwithstanding her busy schedule, she always found time to attend important events of the circles under her jurisdiction. I remember she never missed an invitation from my circle, the St. Paul of the Cross in Marikina City. This despite its distance from her residence in San Pedro, Laguna. Most times, she used public transport to be present at DMI meetings and other activities. Her home circle is the Our Lady of Fatima in Quezon City but she was also active in the circles in San Pedro some of which she helped organize, alongside one circle in Baguio and another in Ilocos Sur.

She was sincere. This trait can be gleaned whenever she was asked to give a speech. One would know that her words came from the heart as she tended to become emotional, her voice cracking once in a while as the words touched her.

She was trustworthy. For many years, she was the favorite finance officer during many DMI events and activities, be it on the regional or national level. She handled money matters very well and was always transparent.

She was very helpful. She was one of my advisers when I took over as Region V RR. She was always available to extend a helping hand to any sister who needs her advice in many DMI matters.

She was very friendly. Always one with a smile on her face, she would easily win the Miss Friendship award in the DMI family. She was a friend in the real sense of the word, having never heard her speak ill of another person.

She was very pious and a staunch devotee of Mama Mary, taking after our patroness in her simple ways and looks.

Sis. Lydia had other wonderful traits that escape me at the moment. But one thing sure, her unexpected passing has made the DMII world one very good member/officer less.

DMI's loss is Heaven's gain.

Good-bye, my dear sister. Rest peacefully in the arms of our Lord and in the company of Mama Mary. We will truly miss you.

DMII DONATES RELIEF ASSISTANCE FOR TYPHOON ULYSSES VICTIMS IN ISABELA

By Sis. Marlin Abratique, Region I Correspondent

The DMII through International Secretary and Region I Representative Sis. Marlin Abratique donated relief goods and cash assistance from various circles nationwide for victims of flooding caused by Typhoon Ulysses. Sis. Marlin turned over the donations to Our Lady of the Pillar and Our Lady of Atocha Circles at the Our Lady of the Pillar Parish Church in Cauayan, Isabela on December 5, 2020.

The donation consisted of 2,500 kilos of rice, 50 boxes of Vitamin C, 5 boxes of multivitamins, 5 boxes of calcium, 45 pieces of upcycled washed blankets from Kumot Kolektib and 300 bottles of bottled water. Cash assistance was also given to the affected circles for their own relief drives for members of their community.

The relief outreach was made possible through the joint efforts of DMII Regions I and II, Past IR Sis. Lelies Pimentel, the Knights of Columbus Council No. 5379 of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Baguio City, Baguio Market Vendors Multi-purpose Coop., 5th Infantry

Division of the Philippine Army and the Baguio City Government.



Sis. Marlin turns over the DMII donation to the sisters of Our Lady of the Pillar and Our Lady of Atocha Circles.

IMMACULATE HEART CIRCLE NEWS ROUND-UP

By Sis. Ruby Santiago, Circle Regent

Operation Good Stewards. Stewardship is a way of thanking God for all the blessings by returning a portion of the time, talent and treasure we receive. Our Love Offerings during Holy Mass are expressions of stewardship. During the lockdown, we continue giving our love offerings so *Pisamban Maragul* can continue her mission of evangelization and projects for the poor, retired priests and seminarians. Likewise with our Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to take care of our needy children. Now more than ever, the Holy Rosary Parish and the Children's Home need us to be active stewards.

Though we cannot be in church and attend only live-streamed Masses, we continue giving our love offerings. As good stewards we have made monthly pledges of at least P500 for the parish and P200 for the Children's Home starting July, 2020 until the end of the pandemic.

Visits to Children's Home. The DMI sisters visited the Home on Sept. 10, 2020 and again on October 16 to donate reading materials for the children.

Urban Gardening. Starting September 10, 2020, we started

growing our own vegetables such as mustard and others. The experience of seeing the plants grow gives us such pleasure in addition to providing the children nourishing meals.

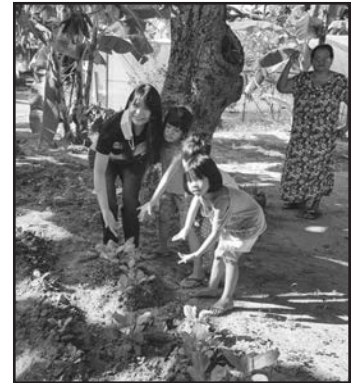
Fiesta Mass. On October 11, the circle sponsored the La Naval Fiesta Mass which we attended at the Holy Rosary Parish Church after seven months of quarantine.

Regular On-line Group Prayer. The DMI sisters pray the Rosary with Gospel readings and reflections. Some of the time, physical exercises end the activity. The image of the Blessed Mother is transferred from house to house for the group prayer.

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Visit to Children's Home



Urban Gardening



La Naval Fiesta Mass sponsored by the Immaculate Heart Circle



Business meeting of the circle officers



On-line Group Prayer

DIOCESE OF BALANGA RESPONDS TO APPEAL OF THE BAHAY PUSO APOSTOLATE FOUNDATION

By Sis. Melissa Lourdes Z. Reyes, Past Regent, St. Joseph Circle

The Bahay Puso Apostolate Foundation, Inc. in Balanga City is a home for the aged taking care of 33 elderly persons from Bataan and outlying provinces. Recently, the Foundation called for help as its resources had run low. Bataan Diocesan Regent Sis. Digna Banzon was informed about its plight. She responded immediately calling on the DMI circles of the Diocese to extend needed help.

The home is run by the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres (SPC) and caregivers and volunteers take turns caring for its residents. It is maintained through donations from benefactors and earnings from rental of its small but beautiful chapel bounded by green trellises for events such as baptisms and weddings.

The DMI sisters from various circles in Bataan visited the shelter bringing with them articles for use by the residents and much-needed cash. The circles that responded are the following: St. Joseph Circle of Balanga, St. Francis of Assisi of Limay, St. Michael the Archangel and Mary Queen of the Apostles of Orion, St. Dominic de Guzman of Abucay. St. John the Baptist of Dinalupihan and St. Catherine of Alexandria of Bagac led by Regent Sis. Julita Agcaoili.



The DMI sisters with their donations in kind.



Residents of the Bahay Puso Foundation Center bid the sisters good-bye with messages of gratitude.



The Sto. Rosario Circle sisters turned over their donation to the administrators of the Bahay Puso Foundation on August 27, 2020. Shown in photo are Sisters Olga de la Cruz, Carmelita Santos and Vicarial Regent Anna Arit of the St. Dominic de Guzman Vicariate. - Sheryl Villarico, Circle Scribe

3RD QUARTER, 2020 UPDATE REPORTS FROM THE STO. ROSARIO CIRCLE

By Sisters Anna Lourenda C. Arit, Vicarial Regent,
St. Diominic de Guzman Vicariate and Sheryl Villarico, Circle Scribe

“Kapamilya ang Dentista Ngayong Pandemya”

Promotes Dental Health. On July 29, 2020, the Sto Rosario Circle of Orani, Bataan conducted a dental mission jointly with the Philippine Dental Association – Bataan Chapter. Dubbed “*Kapamilya ang Dentista Ngayong Pandemya*”, the project, according to PDA President Dr. Karen de Pano, aimed to educate young children and their parents regarding proper oral hygiene particularly during the pandemic when visiting a dentist for dental treatment is a big challenge.

Personal hygiene kits sponsored by the Sto. Rosario Circle through the kindness of Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Ellen Magpantay were also distributed to the children and will be replenished every three months. A dentist will be assigned to each child who will be monitored online for one year.



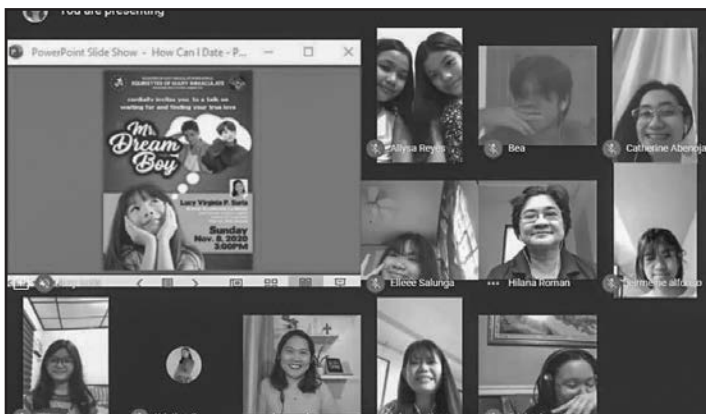
DMI sisters and dental mission partners from the PDA - Bataan Chapter. From left: Dr. Katherine Gonzales, chair, Public Health, Dr. Karen de Pano. Chapter president, Vicarial Regent Sis. Anna Arit, three of the 12 parents of the mission beneficiaries, Circle Regent Olga de la Cruz, and DMI Sisters Teresita Magpoc, Emma Atanacio, Josephine Gutierrez and Carmelita Santos

Immaculate Heart Circle... from page 12

On-line Pep Talk with the Squirettes. The talk, held on November 8, centered on preparing young girls to find their Mr. Dream Boy, a topic they found of great interest.

Cash Assistance. Members' cash donation were given to families of prisoners as well as to the victims of Super Typhoon Rolly in Bicol.

Business as Usual. An election of circle officers for 2021 and a short conferral for new members has been scheduled in December, 2020.



On-line pep talk with Squirettes

ORANI, BATAAN PARISH CHURCH REFURBISHED THROUGH STO. ROSARIO CIRCLE DONATION



The St. John the Evangelist Parish Church in Tapulao, Orani, Bataan is lighted up and its patio reconstructed after Fr. Raymond Gutang, parish priest, received the Sto. Rosario Circle's donation for the project through Circle Regent Sis. Olga de la Cruz.

LA SALLETTE CIRCLE NEWEST TO BE ORGANIZED IN REGION IV

By Sis. Mely de la Pena,
Region IV Correspondent

After a series of meetings between Fr. Dennis Espejo, KC Grand Knight Marlon Gregorio and DMII Diocesan Regent Sis. Teresita Labilles, Vicarial Regent Sis. Brigida Abella and Rosa Mystica Circle Regent Sis. Nida Abejuela that had gone on for close to two years, the efforts of the Rosa Mystica Circle finally paid off when 25 ladies in the San Isidro Labrador Parish, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan signed up as charter members of La Sallette Circle.

On account of the pandemic, the exemplification of the new DMI sisters had been pended for a later date. Instead, they took their oath before Fr. Espejo during a Holy Mass on February 21, 2020 and presented to the parishioners of the San Isidro Labrador Parish church.

The long conferral ceremony and formal installation of the circle's officers as prescribed by the DMII ceremonials will be held as soon as permissible under the on-going quarantine rules.



The newly elected officers and mission chairs led by Charter Regent Sis. Espie Sabalo were installed by Region IV Representative Sis. Aida de la Cruz in the presence of sisters of the Rosa Mystica Circle led by DR Sis. Teresita Labilles

OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION & CINCTURE CIRCLE: 3 P's PROJECT FOR PRO-LIFE

By Sis. Mely de la Pena

Regent Sis. Melita San Juan Bundoc reported that the Our Lady of Consolation and Cincture Circle of Paombong, Bulacan held its pro-life activity on September 30, 2020. Dubbed as the 3 Ps – Papel, Pantawid, Pag-aaral under the Brigada Eskwela Program of Dep-Ed, the circle donated several reams of bond paper to the different public schools in the municipality to be used for the students' modular learning. Funds for the project came from donations from DMI members. The beneficiaries of the project are San Jose Elementary School, Pinalagdan Elementary School, Pinalagdan High School, Paombong Central School and Lantad Elementary School.

The circle's Pro-Life Committee is headed by Sis. Millet Milanés.



SMI's VIRTUAL CATECHISM ON OBEDIENCE, COMPLIANCE AND CONFORMITY

By Sis. Mely de la Pena



The Squirettes of Our Lady of Consolation & Cinture Circlette, Region IV held a virtual catechism on obedience, compliance and conformity via Zoom last Sept. 5, 2020 at the St. James the Apostle Parish in Paombong, Bulacan with the participation of some SMI Circlette members and DMI national and diocesan officers.

SMI President Gerri Mae Cruz and 24 circlette members organized the activity with Fr. Bernard Pascual as resource speaker. Fr. Bernard is the present resident guest priest of the parish and a part-time instructor of La Consolacion University Phils. Graduate School among other assignments.

The catechism focused on obedience, compliance and conformity with the objectives of providing an opportunity to experience God's loving presence more intimately through prayer and reflection, quenching one's spiritual thirst, thus allowing her to grow in faith

and spiritual life and strengthening one's identity and sense of responsibility.

Fr. Bernard said that obedience is a form of social action that involves performing an act under the orders of an authority figure while compliance involves changing of behavior at the request of another person and conformity involves changing of behavior in order to go along with the rest of the group. "Our Blessed Mother is the Perfect Disciple who exemplified these social actions throughout her life beginning with the Annunciation when she submitted to God's will by humbly declaring 'I am the handmaiden of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your Word' and all throughout her life up to the foot of His cross."

The catechism likewise delved on the subject of prayer, the seeking of union with God and the raising of one's mind and heart and/or requesting for graces from God. "Humility is the foundation of prayer," Fr. Bernard said. "It is only in humbly acknowledging that we do not know how to pray as we ought to are we ready to receive the gift of prayer in its many forms – blessing, adoration, intercession and thanksgiving.

Another topic that Fr. Bernard discussed was Stewardship Ministry. Stewardship is how we use our time, talent and treasures in partnership with God. A steward is a person who manages the affairs of God on earth. God has made each of us a steward gifted with abilities that are unique enabling us to share in God's plan in our own way.

DMI SISTERS PROMOTE BACKYARD GARDENING



Members of the Our Lady of Consolation & Cinture Circle led by Regent Sis. Melita S. Bundoc and Upliftment of Women Workers Committee Chairperson Sis. Paulina de Regla distributed vegetable seedlings to housewives in Paombong, Bulacan to be planted in their backyards to promote eco-friendly/organic gardening as well as to provide free vegetables for the table. Excess produce are either sold or given free to needy neighbors. The circle also sells garden soil, loam soil and seedlings to add to the Circle's funds.

NEWS BRIEFS FROM INA NG GRASYA NG DIYOS CIRCLE

The Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos Circle continues to undertake projects and activities for the DMI missions during the pandemic. Region IV Correspondent Sis. Mely de la Pena sent these news briefs:

PRO-LIFE. The circle distributed face shields to tricycle drivers in Lias, Marilao, Bulacan on September 14, 2020.



ASSISTANCE TO PRISONERS' FAMILIES & THEIR VICTIMS, Cash assistance was given to the families of two persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) residing in Sta. Rosa and Loma de Gato in Marilao on Sept. 16, 2020. The mothers of the detainees' families lost their job during the pandemic. The circle also continues to grant monthly allowance to its present scholar, Alma Ramos.

UPLIFTMENT OF WOMEN WORKERS. The pandemic boosted on-line buying and selling of household and personal needs as people are required to stay home to curb the transmission of COVID 19. DMI sisters and women parishioners engage in online

business to augment family income. Cooked food, groceries and other kitchen needs, general merchandise, plants and gardening supplies were made available to the community by various means of delivery, via courier or pick-up.

MORALITY IN MEDIA. The circle posted a tarpaulin within the vicinity of the Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Meralco Village, Lias, Marilao to promote awareness regarding personal and community health protocols as protection against COVID 19.



YOUTH WELFARE/SML. Catechism videos were shown online on Sept. 6, 2020 for the Squirettes to enrich their spiritual values and enable them to share their spiritual insights as they view the videos.



REGION V HOLDS PRE-ADVENT RECOLLECTION

A virtual Pre-Advent Recollection via Zoom was held on November 23, 2020 organized by the International Pro-Life Committee headed by Sis. Cora Afuang co-hosted by Sis. Biannah Villanueva of the Youth Welfare Committee.

The recollection master was Rev. Fr. Hans Mandurulang, parochial vicar of San Felipe Neri Parish in Mandaluyong City. A total of 229 participants from various circles in Region V attended the online recollection, fluctuating internet connections notwithstanding.

Father Hans, who dwelt on the topic "Looking at Hope", said that the soon-to-start Advent Season (November 29) which is a preparation for the end time is instead a season for new beginning, of being transformed. It is not a depleting moment, but a defining one for us and the Church.

He said that the quarantine may be considered as the longest Lent in Church history. While Satan may be rejoicing for the closure of churches and the absence of people in them, the pandemic has instead built a bigger and more vibrant church elsewhere – in the homes where families pray, love and care for one another. The lockdown is the best time to be a Christian and obedience becomes an act of charity.

Referring to the Gospel reading on Christ the King Sunday, Father Hans said that Jesus changed the concept of greatness

and power. - by a person who does right. "We are judged not only by what we do right but also by what we do not do right."

In ending the first part of the recollection, he quoted St. Mother Teresa: "You only live once, but if you make it right, one is just enough."

A Eucharistic celebration followed. Father Hans made his homily Part 2 and the concluding part of the recollection. The theme of his homily was "Survive and Thrive". We must be Christ-like as we hurdle today's trials. "Carry your cross and follow Jesus", he exhorted. And for the blessings received, show gratitude. "The best way to be grateful is to be generous." How? By loving, sharing and sacrifice. He ended his homily with yet another quote from Mother Teresa: "The world is full of good people, If you can't find one, be one."



STO. NINO DE MOLINO PARISH'S CARILLON BELLS: *TUNOG NG PAG-ASA*

By Sis. Catherine Longcob,
Past Regent, Sto. Nino de Molino Circle

Mama Mary's birthday on September 8, 2020 was celebrated at the Sto. Nino de Molino Parish in Bacoor City, Cavite with the blessing of the new carillon bells donated to the parish. The bells were blessed by Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista of the Diocese of Imus following the Eucharistic celebration that he presided.

Fifteen DMI sisters from the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle attended the event. For them, the sound of the bells was a sound of hope (*Tunog ng Pag-asa*) that affirms the presence of the Lord.

The carillon bells form a set of musical electronic instruments hung and fixed in the bell tunnel of a church

that consist of 24 cast bronze, cup-shaped bells played together using a keyboard that produce melody.

During Bishop Evangelista's homily, he said that the carillon bells summon parishioners to Mass and other religious activities, encourage the faithful to pray, call the prayers of the dead and inform the community of impending calamities and alert them of their danger.

During this pandemic, the DMI sisters keep on praying the 2000 Hail Marys, The Divine Mercy chaplet and Oratio Imperata at 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. daily. The sound of the carillon bells helps deepen their faith and hope even more.



Bishop Rey Evangelista views the carillon bells after blessing them.



The Sto. Nino de Molino Circle sisters pose beside the carillon bells.

WARM SEND-OFF FOR PAROCHIAL VICAR

Rev. Fr. Ned Nazareno, parochial vicar of the Sto. Nino de Molino Parish, was given a warm send-off by the DMI sisters prior to his transfer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Bucandala, Imus City on August 29, 2020. Father Ned's legacy to the Sto. Nino de Molino Parish is the creation of the Parish Lyre Band composed of 38 students whom he patiently mentored.



Fr. Ned Nazareno with some Sto. Nino de Molino Circle sisters.

STO. NINO DE MOLINO CIRCLE'S PRO-LIFE MISSION: CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY IN ACTION

FREE MEALS FOR GARBAGE COLLECTORS.

Past Diocesan Regent and currently DMII Vice-Chairperson for Local Membership Sis. Emelie Ramos leads the Pro-Life Committee of the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle in reaching out to the Bacoor City garbage collectors by providing complete meals for a

day regularly every month since the pandemic started. Sis. Emelie even uses her personal funds to be able to continue what has now become a personal advocacy – acts of mercy for those in need and consequently help them rise above the feeling of rejection, discouragement and fear.



The Sto. Nino de Molino Circle sisters with some garbage collectors. Sis. Emelie stands second from left.

FLU IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM FOR DMI SISTERS' FAMILIES. On July 15, 2020, the circle launched the Flu Vaccination Program for DMI sisters and their families to enhance their immune system and reduce the risk of getting hospitalized for flu-related illnesses.



A young boy receives flu vaccination.



Circle sisters with the health volunteers who administered the flu shots.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF A BUDDING SMI LADY COUNSELOR

By Sis. Catherine Longcob

Esperanza Nabor Apolinario was a young Squirette of the Sto. Nino de Molino Circlette some years back. She took an active part in the various programs and activities of the Circlette and eventually became SMI president which she did with dedication and commitment.

With the help of the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle, Espie was able to finish her studies as a scholar of the circle.

Upon graduation, she was taken in by Sis. Corazon Zabala, a past regent and currently treasurer of the circle, as a staff member in the Auditing and Accounting Services firm that she runs in Makati.

During part of her schooling, Espie was “adopted” by Sis. Cora, accommodating the young girl at her home and treating her as her own daughter. To the young girl, she is Nanay Cora.

Espie proved her worth as an employee. Her competence and trustworthiness paid off when she was promoted as Human Resources Officer of Sis. Cora’s company.

In 2019, having “come of age”, Espie moved up from being a Squirette to become a full-fledged DMI sister of Sto. Nino de Molino Circle. It is now her turn to serve as the circle’s SMI Lady Counselor, a potentially good one, drawing from her experience as a Squirette of Mary and being moulded by SMI’s formation program in leadership and other skills to make a Squirette a real

lady and a real DMI with the Blessed Mother as model and guide.

Editor’s Note: *Sister Espie Apolinario’s story is just one of the many Squirettes’ who have become successful in their chosen careers. We encourage other circles to send success stories of their Squirettes to inspire other young girls to join the SMI and be trained as future DMIs and leaders of the community.*



Sis. Espie with her mentor and benefactor, Sis. Cora Zabala.



At left, Sis. Espie in her SMI uniform. At right, she now proudly wears the DMI uniform.

DIOCESE OF SAN PABLO HOLDS REGION-WIDE 2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION TO CELEBRATE ROSARY MONTH

*By Sis. Fortunata Aquino,
Region VI Correspondent*

In celebration of Rosary Month, the DMI sisters of the Diocese of San Pablo held a day-long prayer vigil on October 3, 2020 anchored on the 2000 Hail Mary devotion being propagated by the organization.

The activity was the result of several virtual meetings of the Regional Officers to draw up the day-long program. Preceding the activity was a dry-run held on October 1. The Google Meet app was used with the Vicariate of St. John the Baptist led by Sis. Norma Eusebio as host.

The program of activities consisted of two parts. Part 1 started with a unison prayer – opening prayer by Sis. Fortunata Aquino, the Joyful Mysteries by Region I Representative Sis. Isabel Ticzon and Sisters Rosy Garcia and Minda Belen, the Sorrowful Mysteries by Past RR Sis. Elvie Arambulo and Sisters Norma Eusebio and Carol Santillana, the Luminous Mysteries by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Luming Lagunda and Sisters Lily Banilan and Adora Abe and the Glorious Mysteries by Past DR Sis. Lorie Santos and Sisters

Mina Luna and Liza Arpon. Past Region VI RR Sis. Alice Capiral and Sisters Rose Rabajante and Bennie de la Cruz led the Litany and Past RR Sis. Lita Canonizado, the Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The unison prayer ended with Marian songs.

Part 2 of the activity was the praying of the 2000 Hail Marys separately by the participating circles. For one, the Theresian Circle, using FB Messenger, formed 20 groups who prayed 100 Hail Marys each guided by a monitor. At 3 pm, the sisters reconvened, again via Google Meet, to pray the Hour of Great Mercy led by Sis. Elvie Arambulo.

The culminating activity for the day was a live-streamed Eucharistic celebration in their respective parishes during which the burning of petitions took place.



NEWS ROUND-UP FROM THE DIOCESE OF SAN PABLO

By Sis. Fortunata Aquino

Diocese of San Pablo's *Brigada Eskwela* Project

The vicariates under the Diocese of San Pablo each adopted a school providing school supplies such as bond paper, alcohol, printer, etc. for use by the teachers for their online and modular classes.



Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary Celebrated

The Theresian Circle celebrated the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary via a virtual meeting last August 16, 2020 hosted by Sis. Restie Robles during which the sisters shared their experiences as Marian devotees – Sis. Ateng Aquino's promotion of devotion to Our Lady of Fatima whose pilgrim image was entrusted to her by Sis. Norma Eusebio leading to the formation of the Mayondon Block Rosary Group, Sis. Lita Canonizado's Marian travels and Sis. Elmie Antonio's pilgrimage with her daughter to the Shrine of Our Lady of Piat in Cagayan on her feast day and the miraculous healing of her daughter.



Theresian Circle's Support for the Crisis Center for Women and Children

Despite the pandemic, the Theresian Circle of Los Banos continues to support the Crisis Center for Women and Children in Calauan, Laguna. On July 9, 2020, the circle through its Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims Committee led by Sis. Angelita Umali provided lunch for the Center's 22 residents and seven staff members.



Sis. Angelita Umali with the staff of the Center

Streamers on Safety Precautions Against Covid 19

The circles in the Diocese of San Pablo put up tarpaulins and streamers in their respective church patios, plazas and public markets to remind the community to observe health protocols against Covid 19 to stem its transmission.

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Sis. Brigee Alican, Regent of St. Paul the First Hermit Circle beside a poster on Covid 19 health protocols.

MORNING STAR CIRCLE PLANTS TREES IN MEMORY OF 'GREEN PRIEST'

By Sis. Sol Simbulan



The KCs and DMIs during their tree-planting activity.

A tree-planting activity was undertaken by the Morning Star Circle of Malaybalay, Bukidnon in Bgy. San Jose in Malaybalay on June 20, 2020 in celebration of Earth Day.

Led by Regent Sis. Herminia Kee and Past ARR Sis. Lota Gamboa, tree seedlings solicited from the DENR

were planted along the streets of the city to provide shade and to beautify the surroundings.

This annual pro-life activity is held in memory of their 'Green Priest', Fr. Neri Satur for his defense, vigilance and protection of the forest and later lost his life for his conviction. He was supported in his advocacy by then Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, another environmentalist.

On October 14, 1991, Fr. Satur intercepted truckloads of timber brought down from the mountains of Bukidnon, causing the ire of illegal loggers. Hired killers shot him pointblank with a rifle.

The Knights of Columbus and the Daughters of Mary Immaculate honor his martyrdom each year by planting trees on his death anniversary.



DIOCESE OF SURIGAO'S OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR INDIGENOUS FAMILIES

By Sis. Sheila Peji, Region XII Correspondent

An outreach activity was undertaken by the Diocese of Surigao on September 12, 2020. Spearheading the activity were Diocesan Regent Sis. Luz Almeda and Vicarial Regent Sis. Virginia Chua. Three circles initiated the outreach – the Mystical Rose Circle of the Cathedral Parish, Surigao City headed by Circle Regent Sis. Gay Cotiangco, Divine Grace Circle of San Vicente

Parish led by Circle Regent Sis. Lolina Ebuna and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Circle of Bilangbilang Parish. The activity was held at Bgy. Cagtinae, Surigao del Norte with 50 recipient families receiving rice, canned goods, noodles Milo, milk and sliced bread. Other indigenous families in Bgy Malimono were also recipients of relief goods.



The DMI sisters distribute relief goods to indigenous families.

BEATING THE PANDEMIC: THE UNSTOPPABLE OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CIRCLE

By Sis. Gina Eser, Circle Regent

Committed and dedicated to service, we, the members of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle of the Archdiocese of Davao went out of our way despite the scare brought about by the pandemic to carry out our mission. Following are some of the activities we have undertaken for the DMI Missions, ordinary but done extraordinarily.

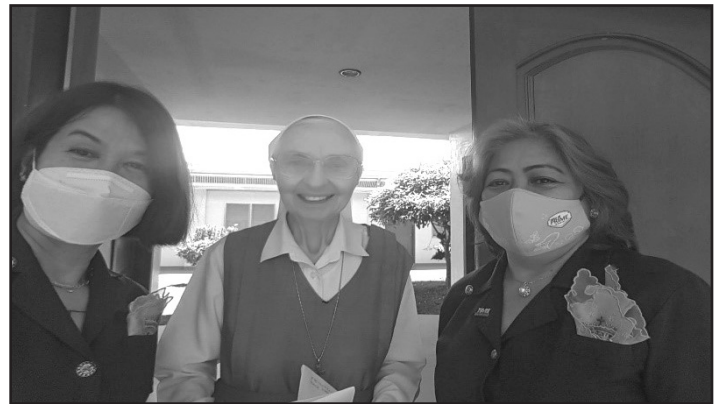
FOR THE SPMC FRONTLINERS. To empower and boost the morale of our indefatigable frontliners at SPMC stationed in one of the government-provided facilities, we pooled our resources to provide food and grocery items to them last April and May, 2020. In our own little way, we have allayed their fears of being contaminated by sharing not only food but also ourselves by making them realize that we will always support them in their effective and efficient delivery of frontline services.



FOR STRANDED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS at Malagamat, Panacan Area, we brought rice, eggs and groceries. Photo shows sisters carrying food packages on their way to the construction site



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ANAWIM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. We donated P10,000 to the Anawim Elementary School to augment needed funds for the purchase of tech gadgets for use by the teachers and students. The school has been adopted by the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle. It gives free education to less privileged children. It is run by the Trinitarian Sisters. Photo shows the DMI sisters with a Trinitarian nun.



CONTINUING OUR SPIRITUAL MISSION. In celebration of the month of the Holy Rosary, the younger members of our circle led the dawn Rosary during the launching and culmination of the month-long celebration at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in La Verna Hills Subd., the circle's home parish. Rev. Fr. Pedro Lamata, pastor of the parish, is shown with the DMI sisters.

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PHOTO NEWS FROM ST. JOSEPH CIRCLE

By Sis. Pinky Saavedra, Past Diocesan Regent

PROPER HYGIENE FOR KIDS

The Pro-Life Committee of St. Joseph Circle of Zamboanga City distributed hygiene kits to 40 Grade 4 pupils of Sta. Barbara Elementary School with a printed guide on proper hygiene. The kits were distributed with the Dep-Ed modules before the opening of classes on October 5, 2020.. A monthly Monitoring Card accompanied the kits to be collected every end of the month. To motivate the children and their parents, prizes will be given to three students who will be able to best comply with the requirements detailed in the Monitoring Card..The project had been arranged with Sis. Edwina Wee during the circle's Zoom meeting on July 20, 2020.



GIFTS FOR THE CHILDREN OF FATIMA

On the occasion of Mama Mary's birthday on Sept. 8, 2020, the St. Joseph Circle prepared and distributed give-aways for the Children of Fatima, a group of children who pray the Rosary every first Saturday of the month. The DMI sisters distributed school supplies and hygiene kits to the children. Additional gifts were also given as raffle prizes.



SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT FOR CHILDREN

The Morality in Media Committee distributed booklets to the children of Boalan and Luyahan through their mothers such as Jesus Bible coloring books, Biblical Connect the Dots for Kids and others aimed at their spiritual enrichment while in quarantine. The booklets contain subtle messages to the children through simple cognitive mind plays. The MIM Committee's Sis. Alnie Rivero initiated the project.

'THE MIND-TWISTING EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA – AN MIM SYMPO

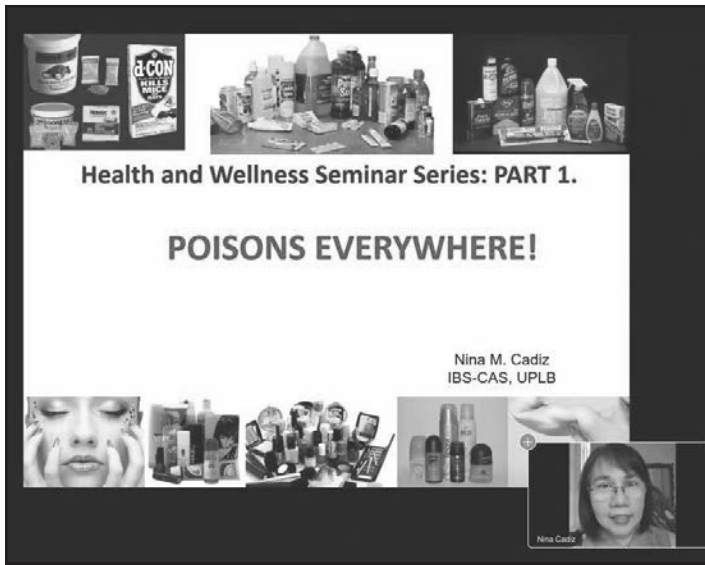
A Morality in Media diocesan activity hosted by the St. Joseph Circle was held on July 26, 2020. It was a virtual symposium via Zoom participated by 60 DMI sisters.

The resource speaker of the symposium titled "The Mind-Twisting Effects of Social Media was Ms. Genevieve Kulong.



Talk on Health and Wellness

During the Theresian Circle's regular meeting via Zoom on August 21, 2020, Sis. Lina Cadiz was speaker on Health and Wellness, warning the sisters to take extra precaution in the use of beauty products the contents of which are harmful. She taught the sisters how to make fermented rice that has become popular as an organic beauty product.



Masks for Frontliners from the Vicariate of San Antonio de Padua

The San Antonio de Padua Circle spearheaded the Vicariate's project of making and distributing face masks to frontliners of Bgy. Sta. Clara Norte and Sur in Pila, Laguna. The Upliftment of Women Workers Committee made the masks starting on April 10, 2020 and the Pro-Life Committee took care of distributing them. The Vicariate of San Antonio de Padua is headed by VR Sis. Lilia Banilan.



Beating the pandemic... from page 25

SERVING ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, On November 29, 2020, our circle served during the Mass at the Sto. Nino Chapel, Diamond Village, Mamay Rd., Lanang, Davao City. This chapel belongs to La Verna Parish. The circle also helped defray expenses for breakfast and snacks as well as the stipend of the Mass celebrant. A DMI sister is shown serving as lector during the Mass.



PROPAGATING WELLNESS: OUR HERBAL GARDEN. Together with our SMI, we bought herbal seedlings from the cash prize won in the SMI Hugot Challenge. (The circlette won third prize.) Thus was born our Herbal Garden beside our Mary's House within the Carmelite Monastery Compound. Some circle members also donated their potted herbs. The sisters harvest the herbs for their own use which eventually they will share with the community.



PURSuing DMI MISSIONS DURING LOCKDOWN

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

The DMI sisters of San Isidro Labrador Circle, Talon-Talon, Zamboanga City continue to pursue the DMI missions during the 6-month lockdown. The mission activities are:

UPLIFTMENT OF WOMEN WORKERS. Learning new skills and evaluation of skills already learned such as sewing, embroidery and crocheting, producing such items as *chaleco*, centerpieces, curtains, table runners, aprons, etc. and other income-generating activities.

PRO-LIFE.. Sisters keep busy by gardening, planting vegetables and decorative plants, baking, on-line selling, etc.

MORALITY IN MEDIA . The committee assists and gives lectures to grade school learners, focusing on appreciation of the value of Making the Home an Effective Learning Environment.

ASSISTANCE TO PRISONERS' FAMILIES & THEIR VICTIMS. The committee provides face masks for families of PDLs (persons deprived of liberty).



An array of items that the DMI sisters produce.

Will there be Christmas?

By Fr. J. Leoz, Pastor,
San Lorenzo Parish, Pamplona, Spain

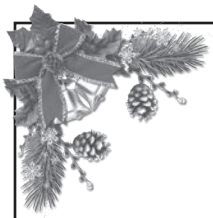
(Editor's Note: This poem is an English translation of a poem written by Fr. Leoz who got a surprise call from Pope Francis a few days after it was published by the news outlet Navarra.com. The Pope told Fr. Leoz that he had read the text about Christmas during the corona virus pandemic. He said he appreciates the poem's message that Christmas would be "more purified" because of the health crisis and how the Christian spirit of those days had been progressively stolen from us.)

**Will there be Christmas?
Of course!
Without streets overflowing with people
With our hearts burning for the One
Who is about to arrive.
Without noise of festivals, complaints or
stampedes
But living the Mystery without fear
Of the "Covid Herod" that tries to rob us
Even of the dream of waiting.**

**There will be Christmas
Because God is on our side
And He shares, as Christ did in a manger,
Our poverty, trials, tears, anguish and
orphanhood.**

**There will be Christmas
Because we need a divine light
In the midst of such darkness.
COVID 19 will never be able to reach the
heart or soul
Of those who put their hope and their high
ideal in Heaven.**

**THERE WILL BE CHRISTMAS!
WE WILL SING CHRISTMAS CAROLS!
GOD WILL BE BORN
AND WILL BRING US FREEDOM!**



COME, LORD JESUS, COME!



By Sis. Ma. Theresa G. Curia, Past International Secretary &
Region IV Representative

Yes, it is Christmastime once again and I am preparing for the *Simbang Gabi*, *Noche Buena* and the December 25 celebration. I have already put up my Christmas tree and lanterns, brought out my miniature Santas, set the Christmas-themed table right after November 2 and showcased them on Facebook. I have already wrapped gifts and even sent some of them to my friends, ordered food for our *salo-salo* Christmas Eve and on Christmas day. Oh, I forget . . . I was not able to buy poinsettia, as the one I bought last year did not last long. Is there anything that I still missed?

BUT, will Christmas be the same this year?

Physical distancing will not allow us to *mano*, or hug and kiss our parents, elderly and loved ones. This is so saddening but we need to sacrifice to protect each one against the virus. We shall continue to wear face mask and face shield. The festive community during the *Simbang Gabi*, children knocking on houses in the neighborhood for *aguinaldo*, the band or *musiko* will no longer be a common joyful ornament.

Zoom, FB, Messenger, Google Meet, Viber, Skype, YouTube and other Chat tools and communication apps are available for seeing, talking and interacting with our families, relatives, friends and loved ones and hearing Masses, attending retreats, Bible study and other religious functions. Gcash and online banking are used more often for monetary transactions. Shopee and Lazada are common shopping avenues where you can have practically anything and everything you need and you can have the gifts delivered at the doorsteps and I am also able to order some gifts from live selling on FB. The things that we did previously can still be done this year, only devoid of the physical warmth of a human "touch"!

BUT the question still remains: Will Christmas be the same this year?

Not everything is cheery, as I see people suffering from mental fatigue due to prolonged isolation, restricted movements and loss of loved ones. I remember some of our DMI sisters, colleagues, friends and relatives who passed away this year at their earlier years, our

loved ones battling for their lives in the hospital or in their homes, their families who barely have money left for their daily needs. Business closures, bankruptcy, retrenchments, terminations aggravating the dimmed plight of an increased number of Filipinos. And while this pandemic is getting closer and closer to Christmas, we continue to hold firmly on the promise that God made in Matthew 11:28-40: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden light."

Christmas can still be the same, but we need to do our part. With all the changes and sacrifices I mentioned in this article, Yes! I say, we can still make it the same this year. Here's how: We should dig deep in our hearts and remember what Christmas truly means for us in the first place. Is it just the physical gathering at the table to share a meal? Or is it the stories and laughter we share? This season may be different in some ways but it is up to us, to keep its true meaning. We should remember that Christmas is love and love is sacrifice. We let go of some old ways to show that we are able to sacrifice for our elderly, our children, our grandkids and all our relatives. This, too, shall pass in God's grace.

Meanwhile, let us make the best of what we have to see them through technology, and still share the stories, laughter and love. Let us see the beauty that this pandemic has in a way reinforced solidarity as we continue to help our brothers in need. I could not help but remember the traditional Santa Clause who became so popular due to his generosity, but added to this is his nobility which never prevailed over his modesty. To feel for the family and the community at large, empathy and action are signs of Love. As Pope Francis said, "To come out of this pandemic better than we went in, we must let ourselves be touched by others' pain." Let us retell the most beautiful Love Story on earth which is Christmas. The love that God the Father shared with mankind through His Son was meant to give meaning that love is cherished more if it comes with great and joyful sacrifice.

2021 YEAR OF *MISSIO AD GENTES*

In celebration of 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines, the CBCP has proclaimed 2021 as Year of *Missio ad Gentes* ((Mission to the People) with the theme “Gifted to Give”. Leading the year-long celebration of *Missio ad Gentes* is the CBCP Commission on Missions chaired by Bishop Socrates Mesiona of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa.

The year-long program of activities of *Missio ad Gentes* includes a series of cataphesis over Radio Veritas, online virtual pilgrimages and webinars on missions for target sectors (including the youth, ecclesial movements and Christian Life formators, the clergy, women religious, pastoral workers and parish leaders and BECs), and online celebration of *Pista ng Pananampalataya*

at *Misyon*. The culminating activity will be the 2nd National Mission Congress to be held in Cebu in April, 2022.

The Year of *Missio ad Gentes* was launched last November 28, 2020 on the eve of the first Sunday of Advent which featured a book “Go Teach, Make Disciples” authored by Fr. James Kroeger of the Maryknoll Missionaries which advocates deeper awareness and commitment to evangelization . . . the Filipinos as Christian missionaries to Asia and the world.

- From *CBCP News*

MISSION PRAYER

God our loving Father
You sent Your Son into the world
To proclaim the Good News of Salvation to all:
To sinners, the poor, oppressed, the sick,
The abandoned and neglected.
He gave His life on the Cross for us
And rose again to new life
To redeem us and reconcile us with You.
You sent your Holy Spirit to the Apostles
To continue the work of Your Son
And to lead all to salvation.

We thank you, Father
For bringing us from darkness to light
Through Your loving plan 500 years ago.
Missionaries came to our land to proclaim
The Gospel of Jesus your Son to our ancestors.
That made us Your people and the Church.
The gift of faith has accompanied us
Through both darkness and lights,
Defeats and victories of our history as Your people.
Our faith has become for us true light
That shines in the darkness.

Renew in us the grace of your Spirit
That impels us to be witnesses of Jesus your Son,

To a world broken by greed, violence, injustice,
sickness and suffering.
May our faith bring us to unity as Your children
To care for and love one another.
May the Holy Spirit empower us
To be proclaimers of the Good News
To our brothers and sisters in Asia and to all nations.
Give us the sincere desire to help others
To come to faith in the Lord Jesus
To share in Your joy and life.

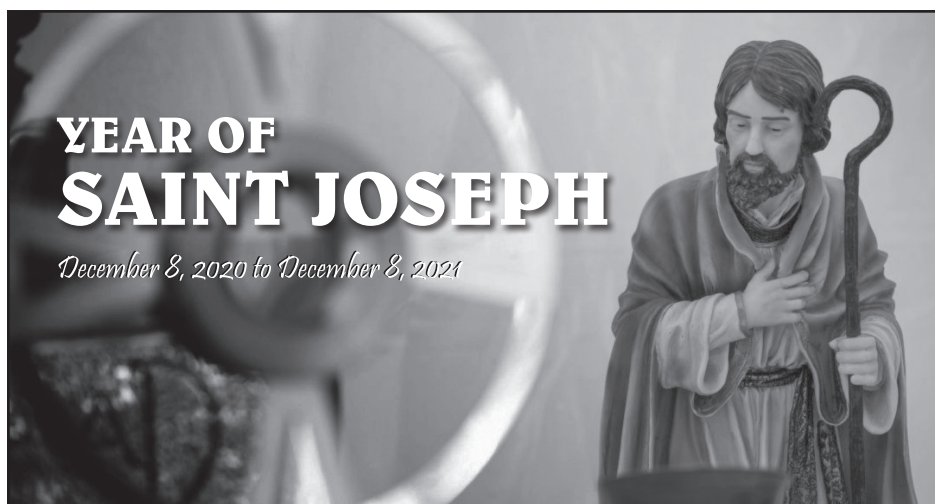
May the Blessed Mother, the Star of Evangelization
Accompany us and pray for us
As we live and share our faith with others.
May our strong love and devotion to her
As our Mahal na Ina
Form us to be true disciples
And witnesses of Jesus to all,
Always ready to be sent,
And to be obedient to what Jesus asks of us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity
Of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever.
Amen.

Pope Francis proclaims 2021 as Year of St. Joseph

Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Letter, *Patris corde* (“With a Father’s Heart”) has proclaimed 2021 as the Year of St. Joseph. The Letter marks the 150th year of Blessed Pope Pius IX’s declaration of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.. In celebration of the anniversary, Pope Francis proclaimed a special Year of St. Joseph from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021.

The Pope wrote *Patris corde* against the backdrop of the Covid 19 pandemic which, he says, helps us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary people” who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope everyday, thus resembling St. Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence” who nonetheless played an incomparable role in the history of salvation”.



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