



# DMINewssette

*To Jesus through Mary*

DMI

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July - September 2009

## DMI Area Conferences Held

Two major DMI events took place during the third quarter of 2009 – the Visayas Area Conference in Cebu City on August 8, 2009 and the Luzon Area Conference in Olongapo City on September 5-6, 2009. The conferences revolved around the same theme: "Acting with Integrity, Serving with Love, Working for Peace".

### *Visayas Area Conference*

The Visayas Area Conference hosted by the Archdiocese of Cebu took place at the Park Lane Hotel in Cebu City.

A break in the weather that Saturday, August 8 after days of rains was very much welcomed by the conference delegates, some 150 of them. This number, while comparatively small compared to the number of delegates in the Mindanao and Luzon area conferences can be explained thus: the Visayas region is composed of several island-provinces that makes travel difficult and quite dangerous during the typhoon season. This was particularly true early last August when Typhoon Kiko (international code name: Morakot which wrought havoc in Taiwan) struck and inter-island travel by ferry was restricted.

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*Visayas Area officers with members of the International Board and committee chairpersons, from left: Sisters Sally Estrada, Helen de Leon, Perla Arguelles, Carmen de la Torre, Jean Velarde, Narcing Pepito, Mila Villanueva, Milde Tong and Sonia Manlapig.*

### *Luzon Area Conference*

It was starting to rain that day (September 5) as Tropical Depression Maring was starting to form in the South China Sea northwest of Zambales. As early as 7:00 a.m. at the Olongapo Convention Center, Deputy Representative for Region III Sis. Ludy Amita and her group were ready to welcome the first delegates to arrive for the Luzon Area Conference.

By 8:00 a.m., more than 700 delegates had filled the convention hall as preparations for the Eucharistic celebration to be presided by DMI Asst. Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz got underway. The DMI-KC Choir of Sta. Rita Circle provided liturgical music during the Mass.

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*Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Jerome Cruz opened the Luzon Area Conference.*

# A Special Prayer Against Storms

*(This prayer is from our International Regent, Sis. Jean Velarde which she recommends to be prayed not only during typhoons and other natural calamities but for all storms that may come in one's life.)*

*Jesus Christ, a King of Glory has come in Peace. +  
God became man, + and the Word was made flesh. +  
Christ was born of a Virgin. + Christ suffered. +  
Christ was crucified. + Christ died. + Christ rose  
from the dead. + Christ ascended into Heaven. +  
Christ conquers. + Christ reigns. + Christ orders. +  
May Christ protect us from all storms and lightning. +  
Christ went through their midst in Peace, + and the  
word was made flesh. + Christ is with us with Mary.  
+ Flee, you enemy spirits, the Lion of the Generation  
of Juda, the Root David, has won! + Holy God! +  
Holy Powerful God! + Holy Immortal God! +  
Have mercy on us. Amen!*



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## *From the International Regent*

### MESSAGE



7 o my dear sisters in Mary Immaculate:  
God's love and peace be yours!

The onslaught of the two typhoons, Ondoy and Pepeng which ravaged and inundated many provinces in Luzon has brought grief and pain to all of us as we witnessed the sufferings of our affected unfortunate brothers and sisters. We have felt their fears while hurdling the rising waters, their sorrows in losing beloved family members as well as their desperation for lost properties and belongings. We have felt their numbness in the cold without food nor water and nobody else but God to cling to.

On the other hand, we praise and thank God for He lives in the hearts of men! God is good and all good emanates from Him. Young and old, men and women, rich or poor, including our DMI Regional Representatives led by Sisters Lydia Ordonez, Tesy Villarino and others, sincerely lent a hand. extended help, sent food, medicines, clothing to provide relief to our affected countrymen. Once again, these events challenge us to selflessness and to our faithfulness to do the spiritual and corporal acts of mercy which are God's "requirements" to enable us to attain eternal bliss in the life to come.

Act now! It is never too late. Never stop giving even if it hurts . . . until it hurts. Our sisters from Region IX, Aklan, Capiz and San Carlos City have notified me of their remittances. Send cash donations thru our bank account, BPI-Intramuros Account #004955-8137-53, then text/notify Sis. Josie Halog for acknowledgment of your remittance by an official receipt; or material things to our DMI Office, Lot 5, Block 3 Kathleen Place, Fernando St., Pasay City. I have received word from Sis. Tesy that they have provided lunch for 600 evacuees in Marilao, Bulacan. Past International Regent Sis. Sonia V.Mayo personally delivered cash and goods from the circles in Batangas. Sis. Lydia purchased towels and blankets for distribution in Marikina and other locations. May God reward the kind-hearted a hundredfold.

May God bless all that we do. Holy Mary, pray for us!

Yours to Jesus thru Mary,

**SIS. JEAN M. TEJADA VELARDE**

What was lacking in quantity though was more than compensated by the close attention and enthusiastic participation of the delegates in the conference proceedings.

The day's program started with a concelebrated Mass by DMI Asst. Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz and Msgr. Cayetano Gelbolingo, PA, VG.

In his homily, Fr. Jerome dwelt on the conference theme, exhorting his listeners to reflect on it and live it out. He said that the main reason for one's membership in the

DMI is her commitment to Jesus. It requires knowing who one is – as follower and disciple of Jesus. He cited Mother Teresa who never got tired in serving because she saw Jesus in all those she served. He also said that personal integrity is a measure of how much one loves Jesus.

The program proper started with the traditional opening ceremonies – the parade of circles, the *Pambansang Awit* and Pledge to the Flag. Vice International Regent for the Visayas Sis. Carmen de la Torre officially welcomed the delegates and guests from

the International Board led by International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde. Sis. Lucille Bajarias, diocesan regent of the Archdiocese of Cebu presented the conference delegates.

In her inspirational message, Sis Jean Velarde first congratulated the conference hosts and the delegates. She then cited the second and fourth Luminous Mysteries (Miracle at the Wedding Feast at Cana and the Transfiguration of Jesus at Mt. Tabor) to underscore the need for DMI members "to do what He tells you" and "listen to Him". She said that

these are required in heeding the call of the CBCP in its Pastoral Exhortation for lay participation in ransformation.

The conference keynote speaker was Msgr. Dennis Villarojo who said that integrity is rooted on truthfulness, sincerity and spirituality which requires speaking the truth to one another (talk **to** her, not **about** her) and meaning well all the time. Integrity is being one body or wholeness, taking into consideration not only one's good but also the good of others. Keeping in mind the question: "What



Area Conference Organizing Committee mans the registration table.



Msgr. Cayetano Gelbolingo and Fr. Jerome Cruz, Mass co-celebrants



An intermission number presented by the Sto. Nino de Cebu Circle.



Coronation of Sis. Cecille Freno as Queen of the Night. With her are the contest runners-up.





The International Chairpersons of the DMI missions presented their respective programs. From left: Sisters Helen de Leon, Sonia Manlapig, Milde Tong and Mila Villanueva (shown at right receiving her plaque of appreciation from Sisters Jean Velarde and Carmen de la Torre).

*"Let go and forgive," Msgr. Villarojo admonished his listeners, "for when nobody gives in, when no one is gratuitous, paralysis in relationships takes place." He also said that people must be weaned away from the mindset of "What's in it for me?"*

must I do for the Lord's sake?" will take us out of our dilemmas.

Seeing with love (gratuitousness) means providing goods and services for free and done out of generosity, and seeking nothing in return. "Let go and forgive," Msgr. Villarojo admonished his listeners, "for when nobody gives in, when no one is gratuitous, paralysis in relationships takes place." He also said that people must be weaned away from the mindset of "What's in it for me?"

The international chairpersons of the DMI missions present – Sisters Helen de Leon for Pro-Life, Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims, Sonia Manlapig for Morality in Media and Mila Villanueva for Squirettes of Mary – presented the current programs and projects of their respective thrusts that they suggest to be cascaded down to the local circles. These are:

**Pro-Life** – Projects addressing global warming, setting up of hospice care (care of terminally-ill patients) and continuing campaign against the Reproductive Health Bill pending in Congress.

**Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims** – Various forms of assistance (educational, spiritual, financial, social) that are simple, doable and sustainable which the DMI can extend to prisoners' families and prisoners' victims.

**Morality in Media** - Continued campaign for good and wholesome media that

promote good family traditions and values, the effective use of modern communications technology as tools for uplifting the moral, spiritual and social values of the community and vigilance against bad media.

**Squirettes of Mary** – Nationwide membership campaign to recruit SMI members and organize more circlettes as a venue to prepare young girls for future leadership roles in the community.

The closing remarks by Sis. Narcing Pepito, deputy representative for Region X brought the conference to a close.

Sisters Fely Domingo and Lily Martin hosted the day's conference sessions.

The Fellowship Program after dinner started with a moving rendition of "The Prayer" by two young boys, champions of a singing contest in Mandaue City which served as the evening's invocation.

Main feature of the fellowship program was a fund-raising

contest for a Queen of the Night with DMI circles sponsoring a candidate each. Sis. Norvic Laroa, chair of the fund-raising committee, announced the contest rules – envelopes were to be sent in with at least P1,000 for the first counting. Intermission numbers were provided by the San Narciso Circle of Consolacion, Cebu and the Sto. Nino Circle of Cebu City.

At the final counting, the following were declared winners:

1<sup>st</sup> Place - Sis. Cecille Freno of *Virgen sa Regla* Circle

2<sup>nd</sup> - Sis. Matilde Ceniza of Sto. Nino Circle

3<sup>rd</sup> - Sis. Remedios Mauro of Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Circle

4<sup>th</sup> - Sis. Vicky Familiar of San Lorenzo Ruiz Circle

5<sup>th</sup> - Sis. Elizabeth Calinas of San Narciso Circle

Fellowship Program emcee Sis. Ching Larrazabal helped make the evening's affair truly fun-filled and memorable.

The conference opening ceremonies followed afterwards. Region III Representative Sis. Connie Macomb officially welcomed the International Officers present led by International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde (The International Board held their quarterly meeting on the evening of Sept. 4 at the Subic Holiday Villas where they were billeted.) and the delegates numbering some 720 at the time (and still counting as registration was still going on at the foyer of the Convention Center). Vice-Regent for Luzon Sis. Alice Capiral delivered the opening remarks, expounding a bit on the conference theme.

Fr. Jerome in his inspirational message said that integrity is wholeness, the totality of who one is inside and out, citing Jesus as the model of total integrity and Mary, His first disciple, whose integrity is her identification with Jesus. He also said that, as DMI members, we must be identified with Mary, and then posed the questions, "Are you like Mary?" and "Do you pride yourselves to be called daughters of Mary?"

"Service is part of being human; serving and being served is part of humanity," Fr. Jerome stated. As a Christian community, we are born into service with love. Working for peace, he said, is a character of the presence of God in us. When the Messiah comes, there will be peace.

Fr. Jerome asked his listeners to reflect on the conference theme and told them about the two-phased Members' Formation Program being considered by the International Board for prospective DMI members to ensure their commitment to being a DMI member and a continuing formation program for DMI members to sustain such commitment.

Msgr. Crisostomo Camacho, DMI chaplain of the Diocese of Iba, was the next speaker. His topic: "*Buhay na Lingkod ng Kapayapaan at Pagbabago sa Gabay ng Ebanghelyo*".

The good Monsignor said that service is what life is all about, service after Jesus's example, which is unconditional service. "One who follows God lives peace, serving and loving not only his friends but also his enemies," he continued. He likened such a person to a rainbow which is a symbol of hope and peace, uplifting and peaceful. Invoking the virtues of friendship and charity, he said that DMIs must be disciples of peace and renewal, anchored on the Word of God which purifies, obligates and renews. He concluded his speech with the message: "As DMIs, commit yourselves to be SERVANTS of Mary, of Jesus and of others."



*The traditional Parade of Circles during the opening ceremony*



*International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde*

*Prof. Bernadette Abrera of the University of the Philippines, guest speaker*



*The two guest bishops during the conference - Bishop Pablo David of the Diocese of San Fernando and Bishop Florentino Lavarias of the Diocese of Iba with a group of DMI sisters.*





*The break-out sessions for the DMI missions. Clockwise from top, left: Pro-Life, Upliftment of Women Workers, Morality in Media, Assistance to Prisoners' Families & Their Victims and Squirettes of Mary.*



The last speaker during the morning session was Ms. Maribi Mapa-Garcia, co-founder and president of Bethesda, who spoke on "Women Empowerment Thru Inner Healing". Ms. Garcia is author of best-selling books, notably "Healing Presence", published by St. Paul Publications, and one of the prime movers in *Buklod ng Pag-ibig*, a healing ministry.

In Ms. Garcia's presentation, she underscored the following messages that hold the key to empowerment: 1. God made you special; 2. You are precious, unique and

special; 3. You have an important role in this world; 4. You don't have to be in power to be empowered; and 5. The need for inner healing.

INNER HEALING, she said, is the healing of the inner man, a renewal of one's mind, emotions, painful memories, dreams and aspirations. It, too, is a psycho-spiritual process setting one free of traumas, unresolved issues from the past and present, negative feelings such as resentment, rejection, anger, fear, anxiety, worry, self-pity, depression, guilt, sorrow, hatred,

condemnation, feelings of inferiority and worthlessness.

"You cannot move forward if you still carry a lot of heavy baggages of unresolved emotions and issues from the past," Ms. Garcia pointed out. "People and situations and places can push emotional buttons in us from our unresolved past that could affect our

peace and security; that is why we need to confront this, get healed and go beyond."

Bethesda, Ms. Garcia said, uses the Erikson Framework as one of the very effective instruments of psychological healing consisting of eight stages of

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human emotional development which presents the needs of every person at every stage of growth, the negative consequences of deprivation of the needs and the positive effects of being provided those needs.

She challenged those needing inner healing "to confront your (7) fear-demons. These fears are: fear of what people will think, fear of criticism, fear of not pleasing God, fear of making the wrong decisions, fear of missing God's point, fear of change and fear of sacrifice.

The inner healing process, Ms. Garcia said, consists of 12 steps to wholeness and inner healing. These are:

1. Acknowledgment of the problem
2. Diagnosis of roots and causes
3. Acceptance of the truth
4. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses
5. Openness to encouragement
6. Surrender and let go
7. Forgiveness

8. Repentance and desire to change
9. Goal-setting and action plan
10. Openness to serve others
11. Patience and perseverance
12. Prayer and faith in each step

In going through the inner healing process, Ms. Garcia said that one is able to reap the fruit of the spirit and empowerment: love, joy, peace, gentleness, self-control, patience, generosity, faithfulness and kindness.

The afternoon program started with break-out sessions for the five DMI missions. International chairpersons for the missions facilitated the sessions, each starting with opening statements for their respective missions: Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-Life, Sis. Linda Castillo for Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Sonia Manlapig for Morality in Media, Sis. Sally Estrada, editor of the *DMI Newsette*, substituting

for Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims, and Sis. Ruby Macario, vicarial regent of the Diocese of Cubao, substituting for Sis. Mila Villanueva for Squirettes of Mary. Sisters Milde and Mila were then out of the country.

The break-out sessions centered on reports and information exchange among participants regarding activities that local circles in the eight regions of Luzon are undertaking for the missions. Issues and concerns were also surfaced for resolution. One positive outcome of the break-out sessions was the delegates coming away better clarified about the objectives of the DMI missions and their role in the parish community concerning the missions, learning from circles in other dioceses/regions about their successful projects that can be replicated in their locality, etc.

The lone speaker in the afternoon session was

Bishop Pablo David of the Diocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) who spoke on "Social Transformation". He tackled his topic from the standpoint of stewardship, stating that God entrusted to us the resources of the earth, particularly material resources, for us to be responsible and accountable for.

"Money per se is not evil," Bishop David stated, "but how it is handled spells the difference." Money, he continued, is not a guarantee of happiness; it may even be a source of so much unhappiness. As God's stewards, goods entrusted to us should be used for the common good.

In the prayer "Our Father", Bishop David said that Jesus bids us to live life on earth as in heaven and challenges us: "*Simulan mo ang langit dito sa lupa*". How? Through values, principles and rules of conduct (collectively taken as ethics) in life in order to be able to handle earthly treasures in accordance with



*Intermission numbers during the Fellowship Night were dance presentations by the different regions.*





*The Ms. DMI Luzon '09 candidates representing the eight regions of Luzon*



*Ms. DMI Luzon '07, Sis. Ofelia Lucas, does her farewell walk.*



*Sis. Jean Velarde (at left) crowns Ms. DMI Luzon '09, Sis. Ma. Teresa Sarmiento.*

God's command; i.e. be able to subordinate earthly to heavenly treasures, providing the following guides for its attainment:

1. Love God and love your neighbor.
2. Make a difference for social change.
3. Compassionate action for the least, the lost and the last.

At this particular time in our country, Bishop David called on the laity to be involved in governance and politics. The country's urgent need, he said, is **principled politics** for the common good. His final message to the conference delegates was: "Be more serious about working for peace-building and transformation."

The dinner and evening fellowship featured the selection of a Ms. DMI Luzon, a fund-raising event, from among candidates

from the eight regions of Luzon. They were:

**Region I**

Sis. Myrna de Vera of Queen of Mercy Circle, Andangan, Isabela

**Region II**

Sis. Noemi Sibuyan of St. Nicholas of Tolentine Circle, Cabanatuan City

**Region III**

Sis. Julie Ajeto of Sta. Rita Circle, Olongapo City

**Region IV**

Sis. Baby Bartolome of Rosa Mystica Circle, Diocese of Malolos

**Region V**

Sis. Amy Orbin of Immaculate Conception Circle, Marikina City

**Region VI**

Sis. Teresita Banzon of Theresian Circle of Los Banos, Laguna

**Region VII**

Sis. Ma. Teresa Sarmiento of Mina de Oro Circle, San Jose, Occ. Mindoro

**Region VIII**

Sis. Aida Pinto of Holy Family Circle, Daet, Camarines Norte

Sis. Ma. Teresa Sarmiento of Region VII eventually won the MS. DMI Luzon '09 title.

Sis. Ofelia Lucas, Ms. DMI Luzon '07 and now Region I representative to the International Board, relinquished her cape, crown and scepter to the new queen. Sis. Baby Bartolome was 1<sup>st</sup> runner-up and Sis. Julie Ajeto, 2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up.

The Ms. DMI Luzon contest raised a total of P138,175 a major portion of which will go to the DMI Building Fund. Groups representing the regions provided intermission numbers consisting of song and dance presentations.

Program hosts during the fellowship were Sisters Linda Crispin and Lita Lacuesta of the Queen of Angels Circle.

A Eucharistic celebration by Bishop Florentino Lavarias of the Diocese of Iba opened the second day of the conference with the St. Cecilia's Choir of the Columban Circle providing liturgical music.

The morning session speaker was Ms. Bernadette Abrera, a sociology professor of the University of the Philippines, who spoke on "The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality". Human sexuality, she said, is the longing to express and receive love which is present in the human person from the time he was born until his death.

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# Fr. Jerome Celebrates Birthday

**D**MI Vice-International Chaplain Rev. Fr. Jerome Cruz celebrated his birthday last September 30, 2009 with a Mass at the San Ildefonso Parish Church in Navotas City of which he is pastor. Special guest during the occasion was the “father” of the Diocese of Kalookan, Bishop Deogracias Yniguez.

The DMI was represented by Region V Representative Sis. Lydia Ordonez and the

officers of the Diocese of Kalookan led by Diocesan Regent Sis. Lorie Manalansan, Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Myra Sevilla, Vicarial Regent Sis. Sylvia San Pedro and Circle Regents Sisters Cathy Pineda and Flor Limbo. DMI Secretariat’s Sis. Josie Halog was also present.

In his homily, Bishop Yniguez exulted Fr. Jerome and ended his talk by saying that like his namesake, St. Jerome, Fr. Jerome is a blessing to his parish and his community. In response, the celebrator



*Fr. Jerome Cruz with his well-wishers led by Bishop Deogracias Yniguez and the DMI officers led by Region V RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez (at left).*

thanked his well-wishers and called on everyone to help the victims of Typhoon *Ondoy* by providing assistance in cash and in kind, particularly those residing within the diocese identified as needing help.

Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas Cities comprise the Diocese of Kalookan.

After the Mass, Fr. Jerome invited his guests to a simple dinner in the parish dining hall.

## *Luzon Area Conference Held... Cont'd from Page 9*

The capacity to love does not diminish with age, Prof. Abrera stated. Love has two aspects – physical involving the body and its senses and spiritual which is non-biological, involving the soul and its faculties (will and reason giving man the capacity to think and decide). The difference between the male and female bodies is complementary. Love is a gift from God Who is

the Author of life. In love, man gives his entirety as a human person, both his body and soul, requiring him to develop relational capacity – understanding, sensitivity and tenderness.

Sis. Jean Velarde in her closing address called on the DMI sisters present to imitate the Blessed Mother, to give back the love she has given us. The DMI acronym, she said stands for the following: **D** for the desert

experience of Jesus (“Find time to read the Bible”, for discernment and for discipline, **M** for the mysteries revealed in memory of the Son of God and for mission; and **I** for God’s invitation for us to be united to Him (as branches to the Vine) and for involvement.

In closing the conference, Sis. Connie Macomb thanked the conference working committee for their hard work and the delegates for

attending the conference in spite of the rains. Fr. Jerome gave his final blessing after the closing prayer.

## Circle News Round-Up

*From Malolos City*

### Immaculate Conception Circle Supports Medical Mission '09

The Immaculate Conception Circle of Malolos City took part in a Pro-Life project when it supported the two-part Medical Mission of Malolos San Vicente Hospital last July 26 and August 9, 2009. The circle members encouraged people from their areas to participate in the project. The circle also provided food and refreshments to the participants.

The project provided free Pap smear, CBC, urinalysis, mass evaluation, ECG, Xray, FBS, Bone Screening and cataract screening. The mission also provided free pediatric, internal medicine, surgical, OB-Gyne, EENT and Ophtha consultation and medication.

Around 500 cases were served by 16 volunteer doctors, including DMI's Sis. Cora Villano, circle regent and Sis. Siony Santiago. Helping out were ten nurses, two med-techs and one rad-tech.



*The members of the Immaculate Conception Circle with some participants in the Medical-Dental Mission*

*From Obando, Bulacan*

### Sta. Clara Circle Sponsors Mariology for SMIs

by Sis. Elena P. Cruz, SMI Lady Counselor  
Vicariate of St. Martin of Tours & St. Francis of Assisi



As part of the DMI mission, the Sta. Clara Circle of Obando, Bulacan conducted a spiritual activity for members of the Squirettes of Mary Sta. Clara Circlette last July 18, 2009.

It was a fundamental religious slide presentation on Mariology. The purpose of the activity was to instill among the Squirettes the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary as mother of Jesus and to bring them closer to her so that they may be fruitful in their faith and to

guide them in their daily lives.

Fifteen young ladies participated in the half-day activity. Some members of the Sta. Clara Circle were also present. Souvenir items such as rosaries, pamphlets and medals bearing the image of Mary were given to the participants, courtesy of DMI Sis. Tess Bondoc who was a speaker during the activity. She is the present chairperson of the Commission on Formation of San Pascual de Baylon Parish.



*From Sta. Maria, Bulacan*

## Holy Child of Parada Circle's Day with Orphans

by Sis. Marivic Santos, Circle Regent

**M**embers of the Holy Child of Parada Circle in Sta. Maria, Bulacan spent a day with the orphans of *Bahay Kalinga ng Bukal* in Malamig, Bustos, Bulacan headed by Sis. Letty Mendoza. They gave donations consisting of rice, groceries, clothes, toiletries and toothbrushes. They also gave cash to support the

school expenses of the children.

As a sign of gratitude, the children sang for the DMI sisters, accompanied on the guitar by Sis. Letty. The circle members visit the orphanage at least twice a year.



*Orphans of Bahay Kalinga ng Bukal with the DMI sisters*

### PHOTO NEWS



## Rosary of Mary for Many

**M**embers of the Holy Child of Parada Circle led by Circle Regent Sis. Marivic Santos make rosaries as their gift to Mama Mary. The rosaries will be distributed to parishioners in October during the celebration of the Month of the Rosary.

*From Marikina City*

## St. Paul of the Cross DMIs Are Storytellers

**B**attling the media moguls who are responsible for the "immoral" state of media today is next to impossible. It is the children who should be protected first and foremost from bad media.

Accepting this reality and realizing the need for a pro-active stance to stem the adverse effects of bad media, the members of St.

Paul of the Cross Circle led by Regent Sis. Lou Biason and Chairperson for Morality in Media Sis. Milette Loreno have launched a series of storytelling sessions in the elementary schools in Marikina City. The innovative project seeks to 'go back to basics' in its effort to promote this specific DMI thrust.

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*From Quezon City*

# Mary All Beautiful Circle Visits Ilocos Region

Officers and members of the Mary All Beautiful Circle recently toured the Ilocos Region visiting the famous churches of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia, notably the Asuncion de Sta. Maria

Church, a Cultural Heritage site.

The DMIs took time out to plant trees in Bgy. Sabangan in Santiago, Ilocos Sur. The group included Circle Regent Sis. Linda Miranda, Vicarial

Regent Sis. Lily Capili, Past Regents Sisters Mila Florentino and Mameng del Rosario, Sisters Cristy Calaquian, Leah Phildamian, Anggie Guiang, Meldy Palad, Cely Dario, Marina Navarette, Gloria de los

Reyes, Lorie Moreno and KC Bros. Florante de los Reyes and Magdaleno Miranda.

The visit was hosted by KC Bro. Magdaleno and DMI Sis. Linda Miranda.



*The group poses before the Asuncion de Sta. Maria Church.*



*Tree-planting in Bgy. Sabangan in Santiago, Ilocos Sur.*

## *St. Paul of the Cross Circle...Cont'd from Page# 12*

Members of the committee go to the elementary schools of Marikina every Monday morning and right after the school's flag ceremony, school children are told stories with relevant moral lessons dwelling on some virtues like Love of God, Love of Country, Honesty, etc. With each storytelling session, moral lessons which are taught in the classrooms are further reinforced so the children are motivated to practice

them in their daily lives. It is hoped that these lessons will help mold the children's spiritual well-being and they will be able to discern what is morally right or wrong.

The project is well-received by the school authorities in Marikina and is on its second year now.



*The St. Paul of the Cross Circle members during one of their storytelling sessions . . .*



*. . . while the children listen in rapt attention.*



## Updates From Our Lady of Fatima Circle



**Operation "Tule".** Members of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila conducted Operation "Tule" last April 18, 2009 providing free circumcision to young boys of Our Lady of Fatima Parish. The Pro-Life Committee led by Sis. Virgie Mendoza spearheaded the activity.



**Livelihood Project.** The Upliftment of Women Workers Committee sponsored a free demo on how to prepare peanut butter, achara and pastillas as a livelihood project. Committee Chairperson Sis. Dang Barrameda conducted the demo attended by women from the community and some DMI and SMI members.



**Morality in Media Campaign.** Members of the Morality in Media Committee headed by Sis. Marlene Lopez, distributed posters to sidecar drivers as part of their campaign "Ibasura Malalaswang Babasahin at Panoorin. Kinabukasan ng Anak Mo'y Isipin". The two-day campaign took place on April 19 and May 17, 2009. In photo at right, circle members proudly display copies of the poster they distributed during the campaign.



### From San Diego, California, USA

Sis. Virginia Aragoza, regent of St. Charles Circle in San Diego, California, USA, reported a number of activities that the circle has undertaken.

Every year since 2006, the Parish of St. Charles holds a Week-end Bazaar which is its biggest fundraiser. The bazaar is held every first week-end of June. Many

volunteers come forward to make the event possible. The DMI supports the activity by sponsoring the Corn-on-the-Cob Booth which last June garnered a gross income of \$1,365.00 and a net of \$735.15. The circle hopes to do better next year.

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## Reports From St. Charles Circle



The DMI Corn-on-the-Cob Booth at the Annual Parish Bazaar.



# DMI Scholar Off to a Good Start

*As for the Risen Christ Circle's scholarship program, the Candelaria and Borines children are still in school and being provided monthly allowances by the Circle.*

One of the nine scholars of the Risen Christ Circle of the Holy Eucharist Parish in Paranaque City is now gainfully employed after graduating last April, 2009.

Janlin Manondo, 19 years old, completed a two year course in Electronics Technology from the Paranaque City College of

Science and Technology. Course completion required a number of hours of on-the-job (OJT) training which he got from Witelite Philippines Corporation, an electronics and power supply company with a number of hospitals and banks as clients.

Janlin must have performed quite well, for after finishing his OJT, the company hired him as an employee.

Janlin's mother, Josie who does dress beadwork for a living, happily informed Sis. Clem Mahinay, chairperson of the Circle's Committee on Assistance to Prisoners' Families and their Victims, that Janlin now helps with the schooling of his 17-

year-old sister (Josie has two children) who is enrolled at the Pamantasan ng Pasay taking up Hotel & Restaurant Management.

Janlin's father was a victim of a crime. He was stabbed to death in 1997 by a neighbor over an old grudge. Josie recalled the difficult time she had raising two children, aged 7 and 5 years, all by herself.

Janlin was the first beneficiary of the scholarship program that the Risen Christ Circle started last schoolyear. The assistance extended to him was not much really, just P800 allowance per month for his transpo expenses from the Circle's funds, his mother having been able to cover his tuition fees. But it was a big help according to Josie. Her income from dress beading varies from month to month and the financial assistance from the Risen Christ Circle took away the burden of worrying about where to get his *baon*.



*Janlin Manondo (at right) with a friend during his graduation.*

Janlin has dreams. He now looks forward to an opportunity to work in Taiwan and be able to provide a better life for his mother and sister. Get married? He said it is not yet part of his future plans; after all he is only 19 years old and there's plenty of time for that later.

As for the Risen Christ Circle's scholarship program, the Candelaria and Borines children (Write-up on the scholarship program came out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 2008 issue of the *DMI Newssette*), are still in school and being provided monthly allowances by the Circle.



*Janlin and his mother, Josie, with officers and members of the Risen Christ Circle*

## Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Circle Sponsors Candle-Making Seminar

The Upliftment of Women Workers Committee of the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Circle, Capitol Parish in Cebu City sponsored recently a candle-making seminar that benefited 17 women who want to earn additional income by selling

colored and scented candles. Committee Chair Sis. Mila Cipres spearheaded the activity during which the participants had hands-on experience in the candle-making process.



From Oroquieta City

## Holy Cross Parish Circle Supports National Pro-Life Campaign vs. RH Bill



Officers and members of the Holy Cross Parish Circle of Oroquieta City pose beside the tarpaulin they put up in support of the National Pro-Life Committee Campaign against HB 5043, known as the Reproductive Health Bill.

## RR Visits

### Diocese of Butuan

Sis. Rose Pimentel, regional representative of Region XII, visited Butuan City recently. In a meeting with the Queen of Peace Circle, she gave a comprehensive overview of the thrusts and activities of the DMI concerning its missions. She later installed Sis. Charito Canete as vicarial regent. Flanking them in photo are Past Int'l Regent Sis. Lulu Taruc and Diocesan Regent Sis. Lina Jandug – By Sis. Pelagia Joven, Regent

From Butuan City



From Zamboanga City

## Our Lady of Fatima Circle Celebrates Mother's Day at WCC

The members of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Putik, Zamboanga City visited the Women Crisis Center in Sta. Barbara on May 17, 2009 to celebrate Mother's Day with residents of the Center.

Mrs. Carmen Luna, head officer of the Center said, "The Women Crisis Center is a temporary shelter for disadvantaged women who are battered wives, single mothers and sexually abused women."

In pursuance of the DMI thrust Upliftment of Women Workers, the members of the circle prepared a program to honor and bring joy to the disadvantaged women residents of the Center. They also brought

food like fresh chicken meat, pork, eggs, canned goods, milk and sugar as well as dry goods like soap and used clothing and other items to supplement what are provided to them in the Center.

The program started with a doxology followed by the singing of the *Pambansang Awit* led by Sis. Juliet Villaflo. Mrs. Luna then officially welcomed the DMI sisters. Diocesan Regent Sis. Laura Fuerte gave an inspirational message, praised the members of the Circle for coming up with the activity and promised to invite other circles in the Diocese to visit the Center. Vicarial Regent Sis. Monina Siasico led a Question and Answer Quiz with prizes awarded to those who were able to give correct



DMI members give flowers to Center residents who are mothers.

answers. The DMI sisters also gifted Center residents who are mothers with flowers. Sis. Belly Gutierrez then serenaded them. The residents of the Center responded and expressed their appreciation by presenting an interpretative dance number to the tune of "Tanging Yaman".

The visit was highlighted by the distribution of gifts led by Sister Monina, Past Regent (now Vicarial Regent) Sis. Chiriki Natividad and Circle Regent Sis. Jasmine Piolo. The Center's Gina Nisperos thanked the DMI members on behalf of the residents. The program ended at 12:30 p.m. with a closing prayer.

## Circle Reaches Out To 50 Indigent Families

A Pro-life activity was conducted at St. Anthony of Padua Parish by the members of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle last August 16, 2009 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Putik Church in Zamboanga City.

Fifty households in the barangay identified to be indigents were the recipients

of the goods sponsored by Circle members.

There was a short program during the activity. Rev. Fr. Bobby Pimentel, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, gave the opening prayer and prayed over the DMI birthday celebrators for the month of August – Sisters Julie Marinduque, Juliet Villaflo and Cion Sotto. Vicarial Regent

Alternate Sis. Chiriki Natividad gave a welcome message and explained how and why the Circle came up with the activity. Circle Regent Sis. Jasmine Piolo led the distribution of the goods assisted by circle members. Each bag contained rice, noodles, soy sauce, vinegar, sugar and powdered detergent.

Everybody enjoyed the *arroz caldo* and *bijon guisado* hosted by the parish, the birthday celebrators and the Regent. Sis. Belly Gutierrez serenaded the group with beautiful songs. Circle Chancellor Sis. Laiding Saavedra led the closing prayer.

The beneficiaries of the activity went home with bags laden with goods and a smile on their faces. (By Sis. Alice M. Rivera)



# Our Lady of Loreto and The Shrine of The Holy House

by Sis. Mathy Ramos, Past Regent, Risen Christ Circle

*The famous Shrine of Mary's Holy House provides the pilgrim*

*with an opportunity and an invitation to meditate on the supreme*

*theological and spiritual messages*

*tied to the mystery of the Incarnation*

*and the annunciation of Redemption.*

## Introduction

The Holy House of Loreto, the first shrine of international renown dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, has been a true Marian center of Christianity for several centuries (*John Paul II*).

According to ancient tradition, now confirmed by historical and archeological research, the Shrine of Loreto preserved Our Lady's home in Nazareth. Mary's home consisted of two parts: a grotto dug out of the rock

which is still venerated in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, and a stone house which was in front of the grotto.

Tradition says that in 1291 when the Crusaders were finally expelled from Palestine, Our Lady's stone house was transported "by angels" first to Ilyria (Tarssetto in modern Croatia), then to Loreto (10 December 1294). Recent documentary indications, however, seem to confirm that the stones of the Holy House were transported to Loreto by ship through the efforts of a noble family called Angeli that ruled Epirus.

The "holy stones carried away from the House of our Lady the Virgin Mother of God" later formed part of the bride's dowry given to Philip of Taranto, fourth son of Charles II of Anjou, King of Naples.

The technical comparison between the Holy House and the Grotto of Nazareth has indicated that the two parts were contiguous and coexisted.

In its original form, the Holy House has only three walls because its eastern side, where the altar stands, opened onto the Grotto. The three original walls rise only to a height of three meters. The masonry grave, made of local bricks, was added



*The author in front of the Shrine of Our Lady of Loreto inside the Holy House*

later including the vault (1536) to make the place more suitable for worship.

The marble casing that surrounds the walls of the Holy House was commissioned by Julius II and built by well-known Italian Renaissance artists according to a design by Bramante (c1507). The statue of the Virgin with Child, in cedar wood from Lebanon, replaces the 14<sup>th</sup> century one which was destroyed by fire in 1921.

Over the years, numerous artists have worked to embellish the Shrine, which has become the favored destination of millions of pilgrims and whose renown has spread rapidly throughout the world.



*A full view of the Basilica of Our Lady of Loreto*

The famous Shrine of Mary's Holy House provides the pilgrim with an opportunity and an invitation to meditate on the supreme theological and spiritual messages tied to the mystery of the Incarnation and the annunciation of Redemption.

### My Visit to the Shrine of the Holy House (Loreto)

It was a Holy Year (2000) when I decided to join a one-month tour of Europe in November, 2000 which included some religious places. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, while in Rome and scheduled for a city tour, a group of five co-pilgrims invited me to join them instead in visiting the Shrine of the Holy House in Loreto, Italy. Considering my deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin and inasmuch as I have never been to Loreto before, I immediately decided to join the group. We hired a Filipino tour guide with a van for hire. At exactly 8:00 a.m., we left the hotel in Rome and after a six-hour trip overland, we arrived at the small town of Loreto. The town is located in the Province of Ascona, rising in a hill overlooking the Adriatic Sea, and with a small population of 11,000.

Our group went straight to the Basilica where a huge bell tower made of bricks and erected in the 16<sup>th</sup> century stands. In front of the Basilica is the Plaza de la Madonna where a beautiful and large fountain is located.

Upon entering the Basilica through its huge solid brass doors, one will have to pass through 13 small chapels along the



*The six Filipino pilgrims in front of the Basilica*

right aisle before reaching the "Holy House". As such, the throng of pilgrims proceeding thereto are provided with the opportunity to contemplate and meditate in the most solemn manner. The Holy House is actually situated on higher ground and well-illuminated by large windows.

The interior of the Holy House is a chapel which is traditionally identified as the dwelling place of the family of Jesus in Nazareth. This little chapel, as it actually appears, consists of a room measuring 9.5 meters by 4 meters with small stone walls which originally came from Nazareth. The lower part of the chapel is made of bricks. On the other hand, the walls behind the Holy House do not belong to the original structure. The vault is made up of brick

walls and placed higher over the altar. The altar is where the image of Our Lady of Loreto is enshrined.

As I looked at the Holy House inside the Loreto Basilica, it espoused the hope that all members (parents and children) belonging to the human family may have a home. The Holy Family of Nazareth is a model and stands as the Guardian of all Christian families.

This is the reason why devotees invoke the Our Lady of Loreto as the Patroness of the Family and the Home. At Loreto, through the ancient tradition of the Holy House, one of the fundamental mysteries is that the only begotten Son became flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary. One of the chosen places for Marian devotion is Loreto because of the direct connection with the saving grace of the Word Incarnate. In addition, it also provides for a place of unending meditation and eternal worship of Christ, our Lord and Redeemer.

After prayers and meditation and tour of the Basilica for almost two hours, we proceeded to visit the convent and Basilica of Sta. Clara in Montefalco, Italy. We were back in Rome at around 10:00 p.m.. The trip was tedious but a memorable one. What came to mind is that the House of the Holy Family in Loreto is the first temple, the first church in which the Mother of God shed the light which comes from the great mystery of the Incarnation of her Son, Jesus Christ.

### Reports From St. Charles Circle...Cont'd from Page 14

Three new DMI sisters were welcomed to St. Charles Circle after their exemplification on July 18, 2009. The new members are Sisters Terry David,

Lita Sebastian and Mely Tesoro.

The circle also took an active part in the Third Degree Exemplification of the Knights of Columbus.

The DMI sisters conducted a faith-sharing session for the wives while their husband-knights were being exemplified. The sisters who participated in this activity were Sisters Lolita

Salamanca, Nida Tamayo, Nita Marientes, Aida Alfaro, Masing Alviz, Josie Francisco and Aileen Barretto who acted as facilitator.

## "Mary's Haus" House Rules

At No. 5, Block 3 of Kathleen Place, the complex of townhouses on Fernando St., Pasay City is an address that the DMI can now proudly call its own. The place has acquired a name: MARY' HAUS.

The third floor of Mary's Haus consisting of two fan-cooled bedrooms has been furnished to accommodate DMI sisters from out of town needing a place to stay while in Manila for DMI business. Bedroom No. 1 has three trundle beds that can accommodate six persons; the second has a double bed (for 2). Each room has its own toilet and bath.

A minimal fee of P300 per person per night will be charged for guests at Mary's Haus to cover the cost of utilities (water and electricity), maintenance and other costs.

House guests shall be covered by the following set of house rules:

1. Advance reservation is a MUST on a first-come-first served basis.
2. Mary's Haus is a self-help and self-catering venue. Basic utensils are provided in

the kitchen only for this purpose. No cooking of meals is allowed. The kitchen is equipped with a coffeemaker and a microwave oven for heating of cooked food and water for coffee or tea.

### 3. What to bring:

- \* Your own towels, toiletries and extra pillows if you need more than one
- \* Your own food, coffee, tea, bottled drinking water, sodas, snacks. (There are a number of fast food restaurants a few meters away from Mary's Haus, along Gil J. Puyat Ave. where you can buy your meals.)

### 4. Other amenities available:

- \* The conference room at the second floor is primarily intended for meetings of the International Board; however, other DMI groups may use the venue when convenient. All they need to do is to make a donation of P500 for the first 3 hours and P100/ hour thereafter.
- \* Long distance and overseas calls via the house landline telephone are not allowed except during emergencies to be charged individually as billed.

\* The fax machine may be used for free within Metro Manila and to be charged as billed outside the area.

\* The internet may be used free of charge.

### 5. Sister-guests are expected to observe the following:

- \* Ensure that the room is cleaned before leaving.
- \* Wash utensils used during your stay and return them to their proper receptacles.
- \* All utensils on the House inventory list are accounted for.
- \* Treat the bathroom as your own. Leave it clean.
- \* Turn the key over to the designated House officer and pay your bill prior to departure.

We hope you enjoy your stay at Mary's Haus while in Manila. The amenities are simple but quite comfortable.

## A Song to Mary

by Sis. Bella Salem Marcelo

*I will sing a song to Mary of joy, gratitude and hope, the virtues of humility and unselfishness will lead us to salvation.*

*O Mary. . . Mary, the humble handmaid, great promises have been fulfilled in you, His mercy and fidelity, you made visible to everyone as the Virgin Mother of your only Son.*

*I will sing a song to Mary, her heart so pure, immaculate and holy, "Be it done to me according to Your Word", marked her trust in His wisdom.*

*O Mary, through your obedience to God's will, turn away our pride and self-centeredness; free us from sin and fear of death, pour unto us the gifts of the Holy Spirit.*