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DMII IS “GIFTED TO GIVE”: SHARING OF RESOURCES THROUGH COMMUNITY PANTRIES

*By Sis. Lorie Manalansan,
Region V Newsette Correspondent*

Bringing out the best in people is one silver lining in this long-drawn Covid 19 pandemic. The spirit of bayanihan, a very positive Filipino trait, has carried the country through the hard times that the quarantines impose, particularly on the marginalized sector of our communities.

Since March last year, the generosity of people has been demonstrated in various ways – from simple soup kitchens to distribution of relief packs to the creative ways some random citizens extend help, some even in costumes to bring cheer to their beneficiaries.

Early this year, on Maginhawa Street in Quezon City, a simple cart filled with canned goods, fresh vegetables (purchased from

struggling farmers) and other necessities set up by Ana Patricia Non started a phenomenon that spread quickly throughout the country. “Take what you need; give what you can” written on simple card boards or giant tarpaulins, accompanied the many community pantries, at the time of writing, numbering more than 6,000 and still counting.

The DMIIs, true to their mission of serving the marginalized in their parish communities played an active role in this community project. Featured in this issue are just some of the community pantries that DMI circles set up in their communities.

Turn to page 4





How are You?

My Beloved Daughters of Mary Immaculate,

How are you?

Running into the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, we find ourselves trying to pick up the pieces where we left off. But could we? We discover that the world had changed; we had grown almost two years older without us noticing it. Our ways of relating and doing had changed. Physical contact had suddenly become taboo. Our social interaction and even work are managed over the Internet. Even our religious piety had found new ways of expression. Whoever thought that we will rely heavily on social media to connect with the Sacraments and experience the presence of God in His Word and the Eucharist? And even when restrictions are slowly being eased, we find ourselves cautious, wary and anxious in venturing into the world that we once knew. Deep inside, we want to go out and be active because we are bored and tired of being cooped up in our small world. We want to have a breather from the pain and sorrow of the many losses of loved ones, friends and acquaintances.

So, how are you?

As we convince ourselves that things are getting back to “normal”, may we never forget the lessons of the great pandemic. The time we were forced to spend in relative solitude and quiet afforded us to reflect more deeply on life - our life - and the meaning of it all. We were made more aware of the value of every human life. We experience our own frailty and limitation. We realize that no matter what we have achieved or how much we have acquired, we are not indispensable. Our significance and meaning is attached to the One constant, the eternal and loving God - our origin and our destiny.

We are happy to quote our favorite calming poem of St. Teresa of Avila:

*Nada te turbe, Nada te espante
Todo se pasa, Dios no se muda.
La paciencia todo lo alcanza
Quien a Dios tiene, Nada le falta
Solo Dios basta.*

*(Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you
All things pass away
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
He who has God
Finds he lacks nothing
God alone suffices.)*

May God bless and protect you and your loved ones always.


Rev. Fr. JERONIMO MA. J. CRUZ
DMII International Chaplain

Changing of the Guards



My beloved sisters,

The story of DMI began in 1978 when His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin changed its name from Daughters of Isabela to Daughters of Mary Immaculate, “a monument to the apostolic zeal and relentless dedication of some generous women who banded themselves together into another organization imbued with the same ideals and spirit.” The word “International” was later appended to the original name, having spread its mission to foreign lands. The seed of faith was planted, bore roots, spread its branches, and continues to grow through and within each one of us.

Fast forward to 2021. DMIs all over are busy with the election of their leaders, after the pandemic put a stop to it in 2019 and having proven that circles are able to effectively and diligently operate and dispense their mandated missions despite the lockdowns and other calamities. Our “foremothers” have realized the importance of continuing leadership early on. For this reason, tenures of office are dictated in our rules and regulations, especially the rotation of top leadership every two years in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

This year marks a milestone because, with the aid of technology for most of us, we are able to peacefully choose our rightful officers and go about our business as usual. Changing of the guards has always been a process respected by all – discerning the ones who will inspire and unite us, committed to DMII’s vision and mission, and believing that love and respect is the mantra to live by.


Throughout DMII’s journey, God’s blessings have been apparent. Our Mother Mary Immaculate has always been with us as we cheered the sick and the lonely, sheltered the homeless, fed the hungry, families of persons deprived of liberty and those in the peripherals of our community, awakened women of their rights and uplifted their confidence to fend for themselves and their families, became vanguards of media and their growing effects on society, especially the youth, whose spiritual growth and development we protect. We DMIs have been stewards of faith and an army to contend with in providing better communities in our respective areas.

Come year-end, we pass on the baton to our newly elected officers. There will be changing of guards, a poignant moment, with a twinge in the heart for most of us. Let us all join in prayer for guidance and blessing.

I myself will be ready. With heartfelt thanksgiving to all of you, my beloved sisters, for your hard work and generous support, I will relinquish my post with a sense of peace and hope that you will extend to our new International Regent the same love, respect, understanding, and help.

God bless us all.

Sincerely,


Sis. Ruby P. Macario
International Regent

DMII is “Gifted to Give”... from page 1

ARCHDIOCESE OF LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN



Miraculous Medal Circle - Provided rice and groceries for the community pantry of the St. John the Evangelist Cathedral Parish in Dagupan City on April 24, 2021

DIOCESE OF CUBAO (Region V)



Regina Mundi Circle – Launched a community pantry on April 21, 2021 in partnership with the BEC Ministry of the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mt. Carmel. It is still ongoing at Block 5, Bgy. Damayang Lagi in Quezon City – Sis. Vilma C. Valera

DIOCESE OF ANTIPOLLO (Region V)



Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle – Conducted their first compantry on May 21, 2021 at the residence of Sis. Evelyn de la Paz in Marikina City. One hundred tricycle drivers received goods from the pantry.



Holy Family of Parang Circle – Held their community pantry on the four Sundays of May at the Sto. Nino Chapel in Marikina City serving 800 beneficiaries.



St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows Circle - Set up and manned their own community pantry on May 2nd serving 180 families in their community in Marikina City.

Sta. Cecilia Circle – Participated in the community pantry in the Vicariate of Arranzasu with the theme “Tulong ng SCP sa San Mateo” on June 5. Two hundred individuals received goods from the pantry. The circle is in Sta. Cecilia Parish in San Mateo, Rizal.



Nuestra Senora de la Paz Y Buen Viaje Circle – Joined the community pantry set up at the Antipolo Cathedral. The circle donated rice distributed to 90 families. The circle belongs to the Vicariate of St. John the Baptist.

DIOCESE OF KALOOKAN (Region V)



San Jose de Navotas Circle – Donated cash and goods to the community pantry dubbed “Kusina ni San Jose” of the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of San Jose in Navotas City. The pantry is open every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning. Coupons worth 150 points are distributed to beneficiaries, with each item assigned certain points. The DMI sisters headed by Regent Sis. Benny Pruna also volunteer to man the pantry on certain days of the week. Beneficiaries were encouraged to donate recyclable materials to the parish as part of its cleanliness and recycling campaign. The proceeds from the sale of the recyclable materials were used for the daily expenses of the parish - Sis. Cathy Pineda.



Mother of Divine Grace Circle – Heeding the call of Fr. Mariano Bartolome, the circle set up a community pantry on three separate days at the patio of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Malabon City. Regent Sis. Yolly Domingo led the non-senior members of the circle to man the pantry. A special compantry was held on July 23 to celebrate Fr. Bartolome’s 27th sacerdotal anniversary. The sisters braved the rains to distribute grocery bags, rosaries and face masks to their co-parishioners.

DIOCESE OF IMUS (Region V)



Sto. Nino de Molino Circle – Conducted a community pantry at Espeleta II in Bacoor City on April 21, 23, 29 and May 3, 2021. The project was initiated by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Emelie Ramos.



Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle – Called “Hapag ni San Jose”, the circle’s community pantry was held at the Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Bacoor City. The Squirettes participated in the activity by way of their “Food for the Soul” project, distributing prayer pamphlets to the beneficiaries. - Sis. Veronica Bambilla, Circle Regent



Our Mother of Perpetual Help Circle – Joined other parish organizations of Inang Maria ng Magnificat Parish in Bacoor City to help the pandemic-hit families in the community by providing basic food needs. - Sis. Agnes Manuel, Circle Regent



St. Anthony of Padua Circle – Started a community pantry on May 2, 2021 at the Centro Pastoral de San Antonio de Padua with the support of Priest Administrator Fr. Samuel Lubrica. The residents of Bucal 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Maragondon, Cavite were the project beneficiaries. - Sis. Eva Bertulano

ARCHDIOCESE OF MANILA (Region V)



Cause of Our Joy Circle – Conducted a community pantry as part of their 40th Anniversary celebration. Headed by Circle Regent Sis. Nanette Morales, the event was done in coordination with officials of Barangay 148, Zone 13 in Tondo, Manila.



Our Lady of the Rose Circle – Conducts the community pantry at the Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Makati City every Wednesday. Other days of the week are assigned to other parish ministries/organizations. Recipients are some 150 families of Barangays Valenzuela and Olympia and Grab and tricycle drivers. Sis. Mila Trinidad is the circle regent.



Jubilee 2000 Circle – Set up their community pantry at the Holy Cross Parish in Makati City last July 4, 2021 assisted by the Squirettes of Mary. Seventy-five beneficiaries received rice and groceries from donations of circle members and funds solicited from friends.

DIOCESE OF NOVALICHES (Region V)



Good Shepherd Circle – The circle's compantry is conducted at the corner of Pontiac and Regalado Streets in Fairview, Q.C. with jeepney and tricycle drivers who cannot ply their routes as beneficiaries. The circle also has its Bigay-Bigas: Pag-asa Bukas Project for indigent families of Sitio Q.L.A.W.S. and the Sacred Heart Center wards for patients with Down Syndrome. The activity took the place of the free consultations and medicines the circle used to provide with the help of volunteer doctors.



Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit Circle – Participated in the parish community pantry headed by Fr. Daniel Godefroy, SC., pastor of Jesus of Nazareth Parish. Circle Regent Sis. Ali Conde and circle members held two fund drives generating P17K and P35K, respectively with which they purchased sacks of rice and other basic goods for 500 indigent households in Luzon and Commonwealth Avenues, Q.C.

Mater Dei Circle – Supports two community pantries in its area – Barangay Lagro and Ascension of Our Lord Community Pantry. The support comes in cash and in kind.



DIOCESE OF PARANAQUE (Region V)



Our Lady of the Pillar Circle – Set up three community pantries in Las Pinas City on three separate days. The pantries were located at Aguirre Ave. cor. Gold St., Iron St. and near the PVHA Clubhouse. Partnering with the DMI sisters were church and community workers and some family volunteers.



Risen Christ Circle - Launched a weekly community pantry at the Holy Eucharist Parish starting on April 18 and every Sunday thereafter until June 20. Initiated by Past Regent Sis. Mossette Don, IVR-Luzon Sis. Milde Tong and Regent Sis. Lelith Cervantes, the major donors were the circle members themselves and generous homeowners of Bricktown Village and Moonwalk Village.. Recipients of the donated goods were the residents of mission areas along their villages.



Our Lady of Buensuceso Circle – Regent Sis. Babygirl Cruz reported that the circle reached out to 300 individuals who received food and other items at the community pantry they set up on the campus of St. Paul College-Paranaque.



Mary Mother of the Church Circle – Led by Int'l Chairperson for Upliftment of Women Workers Sis. Sol Eugenio and Regent Sis. Emma Hansol, the circle set up a community pantry to help a developing community at Sunshine Ville in BF Resort Village, Las Pinas City. Some Religious Sisters and barangay officials assisted in the distribution of goods to 100 families.



Mary Immaculate Circle - Participated in the “Handog sa Hapag” Parish Community Pantry in Levitown, Paranaque City conducted on all Saturdays of May. The Squirettes helped in the repacking of goods and as marshals to ensure order during the actual distribution. The circle headed by Sis. Sonia Bables also served breakfast to the project volunteers.



Our Lady of the Assumption Circle - Had their community pantry at the San Roque Parish in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. This was spearheaded by the Commission on Services to Human Promotion of which Paranaque Diocesan Regent Sis. Linda Pacursa is a vicarial coordinator. The sisters helped in the project by packing 500 to 1,000 relief bags and helping in the distribution.

DIOCESE OF PASIG (Region V)



Immaculate Conception-Karangalan Circle – Set up a community pantry at the parish patio after securing the approval of Fr. Errol Mananquil, the parish priest. The sisters donated their own funds as well as solicited funds from friends to purchase rice, eggs, noodles, vegetables and face masks which they distributed from 7 to 10 am on four consecutive Tuesdays. - Sis. Lina Reyes



Queen of All Hearts Circle – The circle's community pantry was set up with the assistance of the barangay in Pateros, Rizal. Grocery items and vegetables were distributed to needy neighbors in their community while at the same time strictly observing IATF's health protocols.

APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF PUERTO PRINCESA (Region V)



St. Peter Circle – Conducted its own community pantry at the San Pedro Parish in Puerto Princesa City where the DMI sisters gave out eggs, vegetables and other basic needs of their community.

ARCHDIOCESE OF DAVAO (Region XIII)



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle – Partnering with the NSTP of Mindanao Kokusai Daigaku, Davao City of which Sis. Laura Cespon, Int'l Chairperson for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims, is Dean of College, the circle held community pantries for four Wednesdays of May starting on May 5. Five hundred beneficiaries composed of housewives, tricycle and jeepney drivers and janitors in the surrounding establishments in Bgy. Angliongto, Lanang, Davao City lined up to receive the goods. Sisters Gina Eser, regent, Delilah Banderado, Sonia Bonite and Shirley Limbing helped in the activity.

PHOTO NEWS



St. Charles Circle, San Diego, California. The St. Charles Circle of St. Charles Parish in San Diego held a Bake-Sale/Membership Drive on August 6, 2021. An annual project, the activity this year was the first face-to-face meet-up by the DMI sisters since the Covid 19 lockdown. - *Sis. Josie Francisco, vicarial regent*



Holy Name of Jesus Circle, Woodbury, Long Island, New York. Charter Regent Sis. Lorelei Onglengko reports that the circle is now in the midst of a Membership Campaign. Photo shows the DMI sisters during their Summer Campaign. The circle was officially organized on December 8, 2020, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. - *Sis. Mila A, Villanueva, past International Regent*



DMII STAR CIRCLE AWARDEES

Congratulations to the following DMII Star Circle awardees that were inadvertently not included in the list published in the January-June, 2021 issue of the *DMII Newsette*:

Gold Star Award

MEDALLA MILAGROSA CIRCLE, Diocese of
Cubao, Region V

MOTHER OF DIVINE GRACE CIRCLE,
Diocese of Kalookan, Region V

MARY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH CIRCLE,
Diocese of Paranaque, Region V

MINA DE ORO CIRCLE, Diocese of San Jose,
Occ. Mindoro, Region VII

OUR LADY OF FATIMA CIRCLE, Archdiocese
of Davao, Region XIII

Silver Star Award

ROSA MYSTICA CIRCLE, Diocese of Malolos,
Region IV

ST. JOSEPH SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY, Archdiocese of Zamboanga,
Region XIV

SAN JOSE CIRCLE: LUNCH FOR VACCINATORS

By Sis. Evangeline Ruanto, Circle Scribe

The San Jose Circle of the Diocese of San Jose (NE) sponsored packed lunches for the Vaccinators Team of San Jose City composed of the City Health Office staff and some volunteers.

Several religious groups and NGOs take turns in providing free lunch to the Vaccinators Team. Coordinating with the San Jose City Government, the circle sponsored the lunch of the team at the Pag-asa Hall of the San Jose City government on July 5, 2021 consisting of a two-course meal complete with dessert and drinks.

A major part of the fund used for the project came from the circle with donations in cash and in kind from some generous members such as Sisters Yoly Buenaventura, Regent Jo Carino, Liza Latonio and Juliet Ramboyong.

The vaccination program of San Jose City started in March, 2021 with the registration and first vaccination of individuals in the A category as prescribed by the IATF consisting of health workers, senior citizens and persons with comorbidities. The pace of the vaccination programs depends on the availability of vaccines given by the National Government to the LGU.

The Vaccinators Team thanked the San Jose Circle for the donation, an activity of its Pro-Life Committee. The team was led by SJC Executive Asst. II Rommel Ramos, City Health Officer II Dr. Marissa Bunao and members of the Sanitation Team Ednalyn Salonga, Emerlita Calderon, Danilo Pacis and Lawrence Hulinganga.



The DMI sisters with the Vaccinators Team, from left: Sis. Juliet Ramboyong, SJC Exec. Asst. Rommel Ramos, Sis. Ederlinda Dantis, City Health. Officer Dr. Marissa Bunao, Circle Regent Sis. Jo Carino and Past Regent Sis. Conchita Amurao.

DIOCESAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD

By Sis. Mercy Ong, Diocesan Regent

Amidst the Covid 19 pandemic, the Diocese of Antipolo held its first virtual General Assembly via Zoom on June 19, 2021 to report on its strategies, projects and activities organized mostly via the internet and social media applications such as group chats, virtual meetings and video conferencing.

The virtual event was attended by 89 DMI sisters from the 11 circles comprising the Diocese of Antipolo. Gracing the event were International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario, IVR for Luzon and Region V Representative, Sis. Milde Tong and International Mission Chairpersons Sis. Cora Afuang for Pro-Life, Sis. Cathy Pineda for Morality in Media, Sis. Sol Eugenio for Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Laura Cespon for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims and Sis. Biannah Villanueva for Youth Welfare/SMI. Also present were Luzon Coordinators for Upliftment Sis. Lorie Manalansan and Sis. Evelyn Alcantara for Youth Welfare, Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Ellen Malto and DMI Office Secretary Sis. Josie Halog.

DR Sis. Mercy Ong reported the past diocesan activities and initiatives followed by the reports of the Diocesan Mission Chairpersons – Pro-Life's Sis. Susan Ong, Morality in Media's Sis. Catherine Ong, Upliftment's Sis. Lhynne Sarmiento, Prisoners' Families' Sis. Digna Lico and Youth Welfare's Sis. Cleofe Baggayan.

The pandemic activities of the Diocese included conduct of virtual Sunday Rosary, prayers, recollections and blessing of DMI markers, livelihood webinars, donations, setting up of community pantries and feeding programs.

Two circles from the Diocese received Gold Circle Awards – St. Paul of the Cross and St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows Circles. St. Paul of the Cross Circle was also awarded the Best Mission Practice Award for its Upliftment of Women Workers project for kasambahays.



Sis. Mercy Ong
Diocesan Regent



Sis. Loida Solidum,
Vicariate of Our Lady
of the Abandoned



Sis. Julie Lodia,
Vicariate of Arranzasu



Sis. Precy de Dios,
Vicariate of St. John
the Baptist

Vicariate of Our Lady of the Abandoned



Sis. Susan Ong
Our Lady of the
Abandoned Circle



Sis. Catherine Ong
St. Paul of the Cross
Circle

Vicariate of Arranzasu



Sis. Lourdes Cruz
Immaculate Conception of
Marikina Circle

Vicariate of St. John the Baptist



Sis. Digna Lico
Nuestra Senora de la
Paz y Buen Viaje Circle



Sis. Lhynne
Sarmiento
Sta. Cecilia Circle



Sis. Cleofe Baggayan
St. Gabriel of Our Lady
of Sorrows Circle



Sis. Dalisay Francisco
Nativity of Our Lady
Circle



Sis. Carie Cruz
Our Lady of the Most
Holy Rosary Circle



Sis. Nila Florentino
Holy Family of Parang
Circle



Sis. Nelia Mauban
San Andres Apostol
Circle



Sis. Shirley Gongora
Our Lady of Light
Circle

STO. NINO DE MOLINO CIRCLE'S INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

By Sis. Catherine Longcob,
Past Circle Regent

June 12, 2021, Philippine Independence Day, was made doubly significant for the DMI sisters of Sto. Nino de Molino Circle in Bacoor City, Cavite. The day being a national holiday with Cavite playing a very important role in the history of Philippine Independence, the circle has other reasons to celebrate – the 37th Founding Anniversary of Sto. Nino de Molino Parish and the warm welcome they extended to their new pastor, Rev. Fr. Conrad Amon, plus of course the country's Jubilee

Celebration of the 500th Year of Christianity in the Philippines

A Thanksgiving Mass was officiated by Fr. Amon during which he exhorted those present to be active in participating in parish life, particularly attendance at Masses in the parish church.

During the pandemic, activities in the church had been limited but the DMI sisters nonetheless remained constant in enriching their spiritual life by being Prayer Warriors with their families at home.



The Sto. Nino de Molino Circle sisters with their new pastor, Fr. Conrad Amon.

VIRTUAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLESSED MOTHER ON HER BIRTHDAY

By Sis. Vicky Binua

The Our Lady Queen of Peace Circle celebrated the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary via a virtual birthday tribute on Sept. 8, 2021.

The celebration was spearheaded by Sis. Vicky Binua, the circle's chairperson of the Committee on Devotion to Mama Mary and the four Divine Mercy Prayer Groups. Joining the activity were Diocesan Regent Sis. Zenia Velasco, Vicarial Regent Sis. Veronica Bambilla and Circle Regent Sis. Susan Yongoyong.

The program started with the singing of Marian songs and opening prayer led by Circle Chancellor Sis. Genie Perlas followed by spiritual gifts of prayers, devotions and consecration to the Blessed Mother.

Offerings of flowers, candles and food such as ice cream and cake were made, placing them on the Blessed Mother's altar set up in individual homes of participants. Closing the program were the prayer led by Sis. Beth Oandasan and the singing of the Salve Regina invoking her guidance and protection in these trying times.



Screenshots of participants in the Birthday Tribute to Mama Mary

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE PARISH CHURCH

Diocesan Regent Sis. Zenia Velasco of the Diocese of Imus wrote informing the DMI Newsette that the present official name of the Marian Shrine in Bacoor City (featured on page 5 of the Marian Shrines in the Philippines Special Supplement, January-June, 2021 issue titled Nuestra Senora Reina de la Paz) is Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Church. The church's exterior was designed by Architect Gervasio Amistoso, Jr.



NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE SAN JOSE DE NAVOTAS CIRCLE

By Sis. Cathy Pineda,
Int'l Chairperson for Morality in Media

POSTER-MAKING FOR MORALITY IN MEDIA.

During the last week of April, a DMI sister, Sis. Erly Soriano held a poster-making project for Morality in Media with her grandchildren in their family compound. The project theme was “My Social Media and Digital World at Pandemic”. The participants each received a sanitizer spray with the DMI logo.



The contestants and the posters they designed.

PARISH CHURCH BECOMES DIOCESAN SHRINE, CIRCLE CELEBRATES 43rd ANNIVERSARY. The fiesta of San Jose de Navotas Parish is celebrated every May 1st. During the fiesta celebration this year, the parish church was elevated as a diocesan shrine and is now called San Jose Diocesan Shrine & Parish of Navotas City.

The San Jose de Navotas Circle donated funds and prepared food packs for the guest priests and others from parishes within the Diocese of Kalookan as well as those who served during the fiesta mass.

The DMI sisters came in their special Filipiniana attire as the day was also a special occasion for the circle, its 43rd anniversary. Happy that they were able to see each other again face-to-face, they took great care to strictly observe pandemic health protocols.



Some DMI sisters before the image of San Jose.

A VISIT TO NANAY AMPARING. The circle did a back-to-back activity for Pro-life and Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims when they visited Nanay Amparing on May 9, 2021, Mother's Day. Nanay Amparing is close to the DMI sisters as she used to be an active partner when the circle conducts week-end catechism for children at

the barangay center before she suffered a stroke.



Nanay Amparing (seated) with a DMI sister.

The sisters brought Nanay Amparing food that she could share with the family including her grandchildren who stay with her as their father, her son, is now in jail for drug abuse.

FLORES DE MAYO CELEBRATED. The San Jose Diocesan Shrine and Parish celebrated Flores de Mayo simply during Mama Mary's month. The rosary and May Flower devotion were conducted by the circle in coordination with other parish organizations. They led the Rosary prayer and offered flowers on May 8 and 28, 2021.



DMI sisters pray and offer flowers before the flower-bedecked altar of the Blessed Mother.

DIOCESE OF SAN PABLO HOLDS ON-THE-SPOT ON-LINE BALIK POSTER-MAKING CONTEST

By Sis. Nina M. Cadiz,
Region VI Correspondent

The DMII Diocese of San Pablo organized an On-the-Spot Online Balik Poster-Making Contest last June 20, 2021 with the theme “My Social Media and Digital World During the Pandemic” via Google meet.

The eleven SMI circlettes in the Diocese were represented by two Squirettes each. The top three winners were awarded cash prizes and a certificate of recognition while the non-winners among the 22 participants received consolation prizes and certificates of appreciation.

Contest judges were Fr. Ritchie Fortus, parochial vicar of the Our Lady of the Pillar Parish in Alaminos,

Laguna, Teacher Eric Sotomayor of Almanza Elementary School in Las Pnas and Teacher Jayson Castro of Las Pinas East National High School – Equitable Annex.

The contest was a joint project of the Diocesan Youth Welfare/SMI Committee chaired by Sis. Liza Miguela Arpon and Morality in Media Committee headed by Sis. Bennie de la Cruz. Guests during the event were Region VI Representative Sis. Isabel Ticzon, Past RR Sis. Elvie Arambulo, Diocesan Regent Sis. Iliminada Lagunda, Past DR Sis. Loreta Santos, SMI Lady Counselors, Circle Regents, Vicarial Regents and other DMI sisters in the diocese.



A screen shot of the Board of Judges, contest participants and DMI sisters present.

THERESIAN CIRCLE CELEBRATES SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION

Every August 15, the Theresian Circle celebrates the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. Due to the pandemic this year, a virtual panel discussion on the Solemnity of the Assumption was held in lieu of the celebration usually held in church. Conducted via Zoom, a panel-type discussion on how the Blessed Mother had touched the lives of the sisters was the main feature of the activity.

A presentation by Sis. Alma Cid on "What Is the Solemnity of the Assumption?" served as a springboard of the discussion. The panel discussants were Sisters Restie Robles, Cely Alejar, Elnie Antonio, Lita Canonizado, Rita Laude and Ninfa Roxas. The biblical basis and dogma of the Assumption were also discussed.

As shared, the story of the Assumption does not appear in the Holy Scriptures but in apocryphal records dating back to the 3rd century. The Assumption is a dogma proclaimed by Pote Pius XII on Nov. 1, 1950 and has since then been observed as a holy day by the Catholic Church.

Guests during the activity were Region VI Representative Sis. Isabel Ticzon, Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Loreta Santos and

some sisters from other circles - Sisters Brigie Alican, Neysie Capinpin and Nene de Leon.



Participants in the panel discussion

For Upliftment of Women Workers

VEGETABLE GARDENING PROJECTS ROLLED OUT

The Theresian Circle of Los Banos, Laguna rolled out a Container Gardening Project in Bgy. Putho-Tuntungin. The circle and some member-donors provided gardening materials such as plastic bags and containers, garden soil, etc. and vegetable seeds procured from the Municipal Agriculture Office. In early August, 25 starter kits donated by the Agricultural Training Institute were also distributed to project participants.

The project started in February, 2021 with only five women participants at a vacant lot that was lent by its owner for free. The project has now grown to include more women in the barangay as well as youth groups whose interest in gardening grew as the project started producing good results in providing nutritious food as well as saving part of their food budget.

The Mother of Life Circle provided vegetable seeds to fifteen of its members to start their backyard vegetable garden. On May 9, 2021, the Bureau of Plant Industry through Circle Regent Sis. Editha Eusebio provided the participants seeds of okra, eggplant, tomatoes and bottle gourd as well as printed pamphlets on how to plant and grow them.

The pandemic has taught many Filipinos to go back to basics, including raising their own food for the table.



Theresian Circle's Sis. Elvie Talatayod teaches participants how to set up their container garden.



Donated plastic containers are delivered to the container garden site.



Mother of Life Circle Regent Sis. Editha Eusebio gives seeds to some DMI sisters.

MIAG-AO PARISH CELEBRATES FEAST OF PATRON SAINT

*By Sis. Pureza Guzman,
Past International Regent (2016)*

On the feast of St. Thomas de Villanueva on September 22, the town of Miag-ao, Iloilo celebrates its fiesta.

The St. Thomas of Villanova Circle is one among the groups in the parish that are actively involved in the fiesta preparation and celebration.

The main activity during the occasion is a “Reception for the Poor” or “Pakig-ambot sa mga Pinasulabi in Sto Tomas de Villanueva”, the saint having been known in his lifetime as a patron of the poor. The special reception is traditionally held for three days before the fiesta.

The reception starts with a Holy Mass at the Miag-ao Parish Church followed by a program at the Miag-ao Cultural Hall to entertain the beneficiary-guests. The program consists of songs and dances and games with prizes. A sumptuous lunch is served before the distribution of gift packs containing groceries, toiletries and other items.

This year, however, no reception took place because of the pandemic. The liturgical celebration was held at the church. The gift packs were instead delivered to the houses of the beneficiaries..

The St. Thomas of Villanova Circle worked closely with the Social Action Ministry of the parish during the occasion.



Gift packs are readied for distribution to indigent families of the parish.



A beneficiary receives a gift pack from DMI sisters.

HOME FOR THE HOMELESS

The St. Thomas of Villanova Circle of Miag-ao Iloilo donated funds for the purchase of construction materials for a house for Pat Fabra whose one-room house burned down last June 30, 2021.

The house was put up with Kagawad Quichoy of Bgy. Ubos Ilaya providing labor and the Miag-ao Riders led by Kent Noble Mupada donating materials that were lacking.

The house, 8m X 8m in area, consists of a bedroom, receiving/ living area, kitchen and bathroom. The house was blessed by Miag-ao Parish Pastor, Fr. Raul Dayaday last August 21 before Pat moved in. The house came equipped with a bed, an altar, blankets, pillows, towels, plates and other utensils as well as groceries and toiletries. - Sis. Pureza Guzman



Housing beneficiary Pat Fabra stands at the threshold of his new house.



The DMI sisters of St. Thomas of Villanova during the blessing of Pat's house.

Nativity of Mary Celebrated at St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral

*By Sis. Sionee Naraga,
Region X Representative & Newsette Correspondent*

The San Jose de Tagbilaran Circle of the Diocese of Tagbilaran led the celebration of the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary last September 8, 2021. The day-long celebration started with an early dawn serenade by the Cathedral Fathers and the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate followed by a Holy Mass.

In the afternoon, a Living Rosary participated in by the religious organizations in the Diocese took place. Fr. Jayson Yecyec provided theological input on the religious exposition of the Blessed Mother. DMII's Sis. Beyay Sarmiento, circle regent, Sis. Liza Yu, vicarial regent and Sis. Sionee Naraga, Region X representative were the sharers. They gave personal testimonies and

witnessing to their devotion to Mama Mary.

A pontifical Mass presided by Bishop Abet Uy of the Diocese of Tagbilaran preceded the procession of the Blessed Mother's image around the city, the grand finale of the celebration.

The San Jose de Tagbilaran Circle has taken charge of the annual celebration of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This year, Circle Regent Sis. Beyay, Vicarial Regent Sis. Liza and Diocesan Regent Sis. Inday Lim led the DMI sisters in the planning and implementation of the activity in coordination with the different religious organizations in the Diocese.



The San Jose de Tagbilaran DMI Circle and SMI Circlette flank the special altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Tagbilaran Cathedral.

LECTURE FOR ZAMBOANGA PAROLEES ON NUTRITION, SPIRITUALITY

*By Sis. Marilyn de Asis,
Diocesan Regent*

The DMII Archdiocese of Zamboanga in partnership with the Dept. of Justice Parole & Probation Administration of Zamboanga City headed by Mr. Jason Garcia celebrated 45 Years of Relationships in July, 2021 in observance of Nutrition Month. The event was held at the Sta. Barbara Hall. Because of the pandemic, attendance was limited to just 45 parolees.

The activity consisted of lectures, the first by Ms. Shane Go who talked about The Importance of Nutrition during the Pandemic and the second, by Sis. Sonia Garcia of St. Ignatius of Loyola Circle about Spiritual Development. The participants were given tips on proper nutrition as well as raising their own food through backyard gardening. On the spiritual aspect, Sis. Sonia stressed the importance of forgiveness and forgetting to attain spiritual and emotional well-being.

The DMII-Zamboanga was one of the recipients of a Plaque of Appreciation from the DOJ Parole & Probation Adm National Office in recognition of 45 years of its being a project partner of the government agency.

From 1996 up to 2013, the Zamboanga DMIs then led by Sis. Marilyn de Asis, diocesan chairperson for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims (APFV) and Diocesan Regent Sis. Paciencia Manalac

started the “Sulat Mo, Padala Ko” Project. Every month, the DMIs collected letters from the detainees at the San Ramon Penal Colony and mailed them to addressees, mostly their families, at the DMI's expense. They also celebrate Prisoners' Month every October by distributing gift packs and providing lunch to the prisoners and their families.

After the Zamboanga siege, the DMIs started looking after the parolees in the city. The present APFV Chairperson is Sis. Maritess Go. All the circles in the Central, Eastern and Western Vicariates assist in the activity.



The parolees listen to the lecturers.



The DMI sisters flank the tarpaulin streamer announcing the project

NATIVITY OF MARY CELEBRATED IN ZAMBOANGA AND BASILAN

A nine-day novena and Holy Masses preceded the celebration of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin by DMI circles in the Archdiocese of Zamboanga as well as in the Prelature of Isabela de Basilan. Aside from live activities by some circles, others conducted the activity online consisting of the Rosary and blended prayers to enable DMI families and Squirettes of Mary to participate. Here are some photos of circle activities to celebrate Mama Mary's birthday.



St. Joseph Circle - Blessing of Mama Mary's newly restored image mounted on a special altar in front of the church.



Sta. Isabel Circle of the Prelature of Isabela de Basilan - Circle sisters surround the altar of the Blessed Mother.



San Isidro Labrador Circle – Praying the Rosary and distributing rosaries on Mama Mary's birthday. The parish priest, Fr. Louie Alejandro, a Marian devotee led the Rosary before her altar.



Transfiguration Circle - The DMI sisters with their parish priest after the Holy Mass.



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle – Praying before the altar of the Blessed Mother.



Our Lady of Penafrancia Circle – Distribution of gift packs to indigent families



Nuestra Senora la Virgen del Pilar Circle – Rosary and devotional prayers at Mary’s shrine at Fort del Pilar.



Mother of Perpetual Help Circle – Circle sisters flank the Blessed Mother’s altar which they helped put up.



St. Ignatius of Loyola Circle – A special altar to honor the Blessed Mother



Metropolitan Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Circle - A group of circle members poses for a photo during the celebration.



St. Therese of Mampang Circle – Floral offering to the Blessed Mother. Two Squirettes carrying candles lead the offerors during the processional.

A Pro-Life Webinar

MENTAL HEALTH AND COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR OTHERS

DMIs from the Central, Eastern and Western Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga attended a webinar on July 4, 2021. The topic with Diocesan Regent Sis. Marilyn de Asis as resource speaker was “Mental Health and Compassionate Care for Others”, chosen for its relevance in these pandemic times.

The topic was broken down into four sub-topics: Family Harmony at Home, Stresses in our Life, The Bright Mind and Mental

Health and Well-Being. States of mental health were also identified through colors in YANA – You Are Not Alone. The colors Red for “I am doing really good and excited”, Orange for “I am doing pretty good”, Yellow for “I guess I am okay and Purple for “I am depressed now”. States of mental health differ from one person to the next and depends on one’s present situation.

Well-being is very important and when disturbed, one needs to talk to someone immediately.

Some positive actions to do: a) Do not panic, b) be precise when communicating, c) show empathy, and d) practise dialogue to connect to others deeper. At the end of the webinar, participants were asked for their impressions on the question “Who Am I?”:



STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE

By Sis. Cora Afuang,
Int'l Chairperson for Pro-Life

Another DMI activity was successfully undertaken last July 17, 2021 spearheaded by the International Pro-Life Committee.

A total of 425 sisters participated in the webinar on “Stewardship as a Way of Life” conducted via Zoom. More than 600 DMIs from the 14 regions nationwide registered for the activity but the recurrent problem in internet connectivity prevented quite a number from attending the webinar. A few used the livestream on Facebook to be able to participate.

International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario welcomed the participants that afternoon exhorting them to share their blessings as the 500th Year of Christianity in the Philippines is celebrated this year and to give till it hurts.



Sis. Angelica Vilorio, resource speaker

Pro-Life Chairperson Sis. Cora Afuang introduced the resource speaker, Sis. Angelica Vilorio, head of the Stewardship Committee of the Christ the King Parish in Greenmeadows Subd., Quezon City.

Sis. Angelica gave the attendees some beautiful insights of what stewardship is all about, such as:

- It is a Christian response to God’s infinite Love for us and for all the blessings we receive from the Lord;
- It is a Way of Life characterized by Gratitude, Responsibility, Generosity and
- giving back to the Lord even more;
- It is Living a Life of Service;
- It is loving extravagantly; and
- It is living and loving like Jesus.

She also gave tips on how to practice stewardship in one’s parish and gave the Stewardship Program of Christ the King Parish as an example.

Finally, noting that the webinar attendees came from all over the Philippines, she expressed the hope that the Stewardship Program will spread to the other parishes that have not yet embraced stewardship as a way of life.

Based on the reactions of most of the participants, it was an afternoon well spent, save for a few distractions created by some participants who have yet to get accustomed to using Zoom in on-line conversations and meetings – to MUTE their devices when listening to someone talking.



A screenshot of some webinar participants

OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALISTS AND THEIR MARIAN DEVOTION

*By Sis. Juliet Cruz,
Int'l Auditor for Membership*

A post on social media from a friend touched and elated me so much that I had to share it with my Marian devotee-friends in our own group chat.

Winning the GOLD is every athlete's dream at the Olympics. Most would depend on their trainers, coaches and fellow athletes for their wins.

But some believe that miracles are also at work as the athletes compete in various events, attributing their wins to the Blessed Virgin Mary whose medal or a rosary they bring to the competitions. Cited in this article are five of them who show to the world that our Blessed Mother listens to the petitions of those who believe in her.

Top on the list is our very own champion weightlifter **HIDILYN DIAZ** who made a historic feat at the recently-concluded Tokyo Olympics as the first Filipino Olympic Gold Medalist after our 92 years of participating in this world sports event.

Quoting past CBCP President Archbishop Romulo Valles of the Archdiocese of Davao, "Her victory was captured through many lenses and in one of those photos was her holding the gold medal and wearing a Miraculous Medal of our Lady on her chest. We admire her devotion to our Blessed Mother as she carried in her victory her great faith in God. Hidilyn is a true weightlifter who draws her strength from her love for her country and a deep Catholic faith."

USAIN ST LEO BOLT is a track and field champion from Jamaica. In the 2008 Olympics, he earned his share of the spotlight by claiming the title "the fastest man alive". He won the gold medal in the 100- and 200-meter dash, becoming the first man to win in both races in three consecutive Olympics Games.

Usain is a Catholic. He is also devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary and wears her Miraculous Medal. Before he competes, he makes the sign of the Cross and wears the Miraculous Medal in the competition.

KATIE LEDECKY is from the USA. She is one of the best swimmers in the world having won seven Olympic gold medals and 15 world championship gold medals. "I do say a prayer or two before the race. The Hail Mary is a beautiful prayer and it calms me," she had said.

SIMONE BILES of the USA competes in the gymnastics events winning a combined total of 32 Olympic and world championship gold medals. "My mom got me a rosary at church. While I say just a short prayer before I compete, I have my rosary with me, just in case."

MESERET DEFAR is a long-distance runner from Ethiopia. She has won gold medals as a long-distance runner both at the Olympics and the world championship games. During the Olympic Games in London, she pulled out from under her jersey a picture of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, showed it to the cameras and held it up to her face in deep prayer as she accepts her gold for winning in the Women's 500m finals.

There are many more Marian devotees in the Olympics such as the boxers, pole vaulter and other Pinoy athletes who competed in the other events. While I had not been able to closely watch the games on TV, there are those who showed their devotion to Mary crediting the Blessed Mother for their wins. There was even an article I read titled, "Mary at the Olympics".

Very inspiring! How much more for us? As daughters of Mary Immaculate, everything we do we offer for the glory of God through her.. I would like to believe that if she was at the Olympics, she is with us day by day as we offer everything that we do for the love of her.

It is very heartening to know that these Olympics athletes hold on to their Marian devotion as they hone their skills. I see them not only as champions in their respective sports but also as champions in their faith.



Hidilyn Diaz
Philippines

Usain St Leo Bolt
Jamaica

Katie Ledecky
USA

Simone Biles
USA

Meseret Defar
Ethiopia

BEING A SQUIRETTE WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF ME

By Justine Calderon,
Past SMI National Treasurer

(Editor's Note: Squirette Justine Calderon of the Immaculate Conception – Karangalan Circlette was SMI National Treasurer in 2011. She finished a course in Tourism Management and is now a Flight Attendant for American Airlines based in Philadelphia, PA and commutes from Hawaii.)

To know, to love and to serve, the motto of the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate has been deeply ingrained in my heart and mind that will stay with me throughout my life.

I had been a Squirette of Mary for seven years, from 2008 until 2014, which was indeed a most wonderful time for me. I was president of the Immaculate Conception – Karangalan Circlette, Diocese of Pasig for two years and later became SMI National Treasurer. During those SMI years, I became very involved in the activities of the association – its biennial conventions and conferences and once hosted one Luzon Area Conference program with my best friend. In SMI there are a lot of activities that I enjoyed so much such as the circlette investiture, foundation anniversary celebrations, Christmas parties, sports events, leadership and other skills training, even our monthly meetings.

As circlette president, I felt very honored looking after my fellow Squirettes, guided by my Tita DMIs especially our Lady Counselor and serving during Sunday masses with my co-Squirettes. Being together and working with them built a strong and special bond that I will always cherish.

Being a Squirette is one of the best parts of my life's journey. It helped me grow as the woman that I am now. I gained sisters and mothers (my Tita DMIs) who are always there for me, even now that I am a thousand miles away from them. I am happy that we remain connected, not only with my Karangalan circlette but also with other Squirettes all over the country.

I am now a flight attendant for American Airlines and remain proud to be a Squirette.

I look forward to the day when I shall be able to attend one of the Squirettes activities again and meet our new Squirettes.



Sis. Evelyn Alcantara, SMI coordinator for Luzon meets up with Justine in Philadelphia in November, 2019.



Justine in her American Airlines FA uniform. She holds an SMI Convention bag, a 'pasalubong' from Sis. Evelyn.

SPIRITUALITY IN MID-LIFE: GROWING GRACEFULLY IN THE PANDEMIC

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

To commemorate May as Mary's Month and as a tribute to DMI sisters/mothers, a talk on how to face the challenges of the pandemic and grow emotionally and spiritually during these trying times was conducted by the Upliftment of Women Workers Mission on May 12, 2021.

The virtual event started with an opening prayer led by Morality in Media International Chairperson Sis. Cathy Pineda followed by the welcome address by Upliftment of Women Workers International Chairperson Sis. Sol Eugenio.

International Regent Sis. Ruby Macario gave a short inspirational message reminding everyone that the pandemic is a time for all to rise above our fears and anxieties and see the positive side of things. She also reminded that this is the time to think of the 7Cs of Laudato Si:

1. Care for the Common Home (moving from I/me/my to we/ tayo);
2. Continuity (caring not only for others but for the environment too);
3. Collegiality (acting together with the Church);
4. Conversations (talk to others, virtually, with plans of action);
5. Care for others (stewardship);
6. Change (be part of the cycle for improving the earth); and
7. Contemplate (celebrate with a prayer)

In her talk, the webinar speaker, Sis. Ida Tionko, began with a reminder that we are what we think we are. If we think we are beaten, then we are because it's all in the mind.

She reminded the participants that our goal in life is to be enlightened and empowered in any situation, that we should consider ourselves as such because we are filled with God's grace. With this, we are commissioned to go out and share of ourselves as Daughters of Mary Immaculate.

Being empowered means taking charge of our lives and we should not be swayed by what is happening around us. It is also a choice that we make: whether to be meaningful or mediocre, worthwhile or whimpy. Likewise, we are the source of our own feelings and it is our choice on how we react and respond that spells the difference.

When something is changing, it is normal to feel uncomfortable, awkward or even afraid. Oftentimes, we set our own limits. However, it is best to move out of our comfort zones and continue to move and grow.

With the pandemic, we set our goals and we do this by identifying where we want to be. From hereon, we move from the actual situation to the ideal situation. And answer the questions: How did we respond? Did we just go with the flow and kept quiet? Did we refuse and come up with defense mechanisms? Or did we change?

turn to page 26



About the Speaker

Sis. Inocencia "Ida" S. Tionko graduated from the University of Sto. Tomas with a degree in Nursing and has a Masters degree in Health Professions Education from the University of the Philippines. She was a medical-surgical and intensive care nurse practising here and in New York, USA. Venturing into the teaching profession upon retirement, she "finds teaching Spirituality in Nursing as the most fulfilling". This was the result of having been a catechist from high school to an adult catechist in parishes.

She is currently involved in the teaching ministries of Bukas-loob sa Diyos Covenant Community. The Family Renewal Movement, the Communio et Missio Formation Institute and the Mariology Movement where she got most of her formation. Today she continues to give recollections, formation workshops and motivational talks to students, professionals and lay people.

Spirituality in Mid-life... from page 25

To grow, we must change and aim for perfection. Perfection is something we can achieve in the next life with God because we have improved and made full use of our lives by sharing it to others, too.

So how do we create lasting change?

1. We raise our standards – don't be content with mediocrity.
2. Have a sense of certainty.
3. Change our strategy. A lot of people don't want to go out of their comfort zone; thus their methods become Jurassic.

However, for those who have embraced the paradigm of change, they should:

1. Have that constant awareness (check your conscience).
2. Acceptance
3. Take action
4. Evaluate
5. Refine plans

Different actions bring about different results. The one that brings the best result will be that which will be implemented. So how have we taken action in this pandemic?

As mentioned, we have the power of choice and it is our decisions, not the conditions surrounding us that determine the course of our life, our destiny.

We have habits and these are things that we should check. When we practice bad habits repeatedly, these become vices. Meanwhile good habits become our virtues. So if we want to grow in gracefulness, what habits should we cultivate? These should be habits that lead us closer to God.



The good news is that we can choose to change. The most beautiful gift that God has given us is the gift of free will. This gift is best expressed in making the choice of following God's will for us. If we follow His commands, we will have everlasting life. Revelations tells us, we are neither hot nor cold. Never lukewarm. If we are lukewarm or being in the middle, we will be spewed out of His mouth. The choice is always there.

The difference between a good and a bad day is our attitude. Quoting Romans 8:28 "All things work for good to those who love and serve God."

The participants were then asked to do a self-analysis because according to Socrates, "The most important knowledge is the knowledge of oneself." This was done in the form of a visualization and each was asked to answer questions as a way of reflection:

Who am I? Who is the real me? What is the purpose of my life? What is God's purpose for me? How am I doing in this belief (of God's purpose for me)? What does being in DMI make of me? Who is Jesus to me whom I serve particularly during this pandemic?

Have I ever thought hard of what God has done for me? How have I responded? Is it with gratefulness? Or complaints?

From the visualization, Sis. Ida asked each one to think about and bask in God's love. She emphasized that we have to experience God's love to be able to show and share it.

And as we continue to share His love to others, the experience of His love in us continues, too. Pretty much like the love of St. Teresa of Calcutta for the neglected people on the streets which she explains, "Because God loves me; I just have to share and cannot keep it to myself." To her, it was not just her but God's love overflowing out of her.

Sis. Ida also reminded the participants that the soul of the apostolate as DMI should be that desire to share the love to another. The more love you give, the more you remain in God's love. Does that mean that God will love you more than others? No, God loves us equally but it all depends on how we grow in that love.

God's love has been revealed in His Incarnation and the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. The person with the love of God will always be happy regardless of the situation. The joy stays in the heart, knowing that God loves us

Jesus enjoys Himself! He rests in His own Goodness. He gets into our boat to share His life with us as He did with the apostles when the boat was rocked by strong winds.

And during this pandemic, Our Lord has been knocking at our door wanting to come in, to join our life. Have we let Him in? Have we spent time with Him? Knowing He gave us all the time to enjoy His presence.

Sept. 1 to Oct. 4 is Season of Creation 2021

On August 23, 2021, CBCP President Archbishop Romulo Valles of the Archdiocese of Davao issued an apostolic letter designating Sept. 1 to October 4, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, as the Season of Creation.

The celebration of the beauty and goodness of creation began in 1989 with the Ecumenical Patriarchate's recognition of Creation Day on September 1 that has now been embraced by the ecumenical community worldwide.

In 2003, through the Pastoral Statement of the Permanent Council "in celebrating Creation Day and Creation time", CBCP called for the observance of Creation Time. Pope Francis formally added the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in 2015 to the Catholic Calendar and in 2016 invited all Catholics to celebrate the full season.

This year's theme for the Season of Creation is "A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God".

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has declared the latest IPCC Assessment Report as a "Code Red for Humanity". The Report shows that the world is dangerously close to irreversible global warming unequivocally caused by human activities. We celebrate the Season of Creation in this context.

Two important meetings are to take place this year – the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 15) which gathers nations around the world to face the problem of biodiversity loss and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) to address the urgency of the climate crisis. Biodiversity and climate change are two issues that are intricately connected, with the latter becoming an increasingly important driver for the former.

In the words of Pope Francis, "this time of creation offers individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live".

Drawing inspiration from past pastoral letters and Pope Francis' *Laudato Si*, the CBCP through Archbishop Valles enjoins everyone to:

1. Celebrate the Season of Creation with your families, communities and parishes. To help you with the celebration, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/CBCPLaudatoSi>.

turn to page 28



Season of creation... from page 25

2. Participate in the activities organized through the National Laudato Si Program to roll out the Laudato Si Action Platform - a seven-year journey together towards living the vision of Laudato Si.
3. Sign the Healthy Planet, Healthy People Petition. Invite your families and friends to sign this petition for the upcoming two big meetings on Biodiversity and Climate Change.

The CBCP calls for urgent action as our common home is in the brink of catastrophe. The Season of Creation is “a call to action to ensure that all creation will have a safe and healthy home to flourish and participate in renewing the oikos of God.



Erratum

In the page 1 story, “41st National Officers’ Meeting Held”, of our January-June, 2021 issue, the continuation of the International Regent’s Report on page 5, right column should have read:

“A DMII Membership Database has also been established which shows the membership profile of the DMII – **15,080** (not 50,080) members in 520 parishes nationwide and 147 members in five circles abroad.”



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