



DMI Newsette

To Jesus through Mary

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October-December 2009



Façade of the Astoria Regency Convention Center, venue of the 17th DMI National Biennial Convention.

DMI 17TH National Biennial Convention Set *May 21-23, 2010 in Zamboanga City*

"Don't you go, don't you go to far Zamboanga . . ." so goes a Filipino folk song. But GO the DMI sisters will to Zamboanga City on May 21 to 23, 2010 for their 17th National Biennial Convention . The convention venue is the Astoria Regency Convention Center in Pasonanca.

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During the quarterly meeting of the International Board last December 5, 2009, Vice-International Regent for Mindanao Sis. Lydia Ramirez dispelled fears and concerns of DMI sisters, particularly in Luzon, for their security and safety in Zamboanga City. She said: "Zamboanga City is a very peaceful place. The reason the place is mentioned in the news very often is because it is where the news from most of Central Mindanao are dispatched. We are in the western side and very far

from the areas of conflict such as Maguindanao. It is also a shopper's paradise if you care to know."

In her characteristic sense of humor which we find endearing, Sis. Lyding said that the folk song forbids an *estranjero* to go to Zamboanga for the risk of not returning home because of some beautiful woman captivating his heart.

Back to business: Our biennial convention promises to be a memorable experience for

delegates, the promise coming from the tireless chairperson of the Biennial Convention Committee, Sis. Beth Salmon and Asst. Chairperson Sis. Angie Baes.

Day 1 (May 21) of the convention program will feature a talk by the keynote speaker, Most Rev. Archbishop Orlando Quevedo of the Archdiocese of Cotabato, past president of the CBCP, on the convention theme' "Serve with Love, Faith , Charity and Integrity for the

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A group of DMI sisters got together for an advance celebration last Dec. 19, 2009 at the Arsobispado de Manila of the 40th sacerdotal anniversary of Msgr. Francisco Tantoco, Jr.,

DMI international chaplain, which falls due on December 27. Photo shows seated from left: Region V RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Vice-International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz, Msgr. Tantoco and Past International Regent Sis.

Msgr. Francisco Tantoco Celebrates Sacerdotal Anniversary

Sonia Mayo. Standing: Sis. Beth Bongon, past regent of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Quezon City, Diocesan Regent Sis. Josie Sioson of the Diocese of Cubao, Sis. Jessica Santos, regent of Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Quezon City, International Chairperson for Upliftment of Women Workers Sis. Linda Castillo, Diocesan Regent Sis. Lorie

Manalansan of the Diocese of Kalookan and Sis. Josie Halog of the DMI secretariat.

A group of DMI sisters got together for an advance celebration last Dec. 19, 2009 at the Arsobispado de Manila of the sacerdotal anniversary of Msgr. Francisco Tantoco, Jr., DMI international chaplain



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From the International Regent

MESSAGE



My dear DMI Sisters:

"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to your word." Mary Immaculate responded to God's call to be the mother of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, even in the midst of uncertainties. Her response of faith made her part of God's plans for the salvation of man. Thus, she is our model in faith, hope and love. As we have learned from biblical stories about her, she was humble, faithful, obedient, prayerful, pure, patient, generous, gentle, full of wisdom and sacrificing. As her daughters, let us strive hard to be like her. Make true the adage: "Like mother, like daughter."

As a mother to humankind, she has appeared time and again in many places: in Lourdes, Toulouse and La Salette, France; Fatima, Portugal; Guadalupe, Mexico; in Zaragosa, Spain; in Medjugorje, Bosnia- Herzegovina; in Lipa City, Philippines and others. She continually appears to the pure of heart to send God's message for man TO PRAY, TO CHANGE and TO SACRIFICE that we might be saved.

In the midst of these trying times of natural calamities and man-made disasters, we are constantly reminded of our Blessed Mother's message at Fatima to pray, to convert and to sacrifice. She revealed these to the three children there: Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta. Lucia attested to such message and we are to receive such message with so much faith, hope and love. We trust in God's love for humankind as we read in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but may have eternal life." As St. Catherine of Sienna exclaimed: "Such unimaginable love God has for us!"

We are warned about Satan and his cohorts who prowl the earth to tempt man into evil ways and sin. In La Salette, our Mother was weeping for the sins of mankind and called for conversion to avoid God's punishment. She admonished all of us, including our clergy and civil authorities to be on guard against the devil. All along, in all her apparitions, she teaches us how to combat evil. In Medjugorje, she reminded us that just as the young David was given five stones to defeat the giant Goliath, so does our Lord Who is giving us five weapons to defeat Satan, namely: daily rosary, fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, daily Bible reading, monthly confession and Holy Communion where we receive and encounter Jesus Who makes us strong. May we follow her reminders for us and may we also share these to others.

SIS. JEAN M. TEJADA VELARDE

Spiritual Well-Being and Peace of our Land". That's after a concelebrated Mass at 1:00 p.m. by Archbishop Quevedo and Most Rev. Archbishop Romulo Valles of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga at the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and motorcade to the Astoria Regency Convention Center. Registration of delegates starts at 7:00 a.m. up to 12:00 noon. The dinner at 6:00 p.m. followed by a fellowship (dubbed Bienvenido Night) program will feature dances by the diocesan officers and members of circles in the host diocese.

The business meeting is scheduled for Day 2 (May 22) after a Eucharistic celebration at the convention venue by Most Rev. Bishop Martin Jomud of the Prelature of Basilan. The international officers and mission chairpersons will render reports covering the period of their incumbency to be followed by the election of the 2011-12 set of international officers.

Capping the day's program is the Filipiniana Night with presentation numbers from the 13 DMI regions of the country.

Day 3 (May 23) will start with a Holy Mass also at the convention venue by DMI Vice-International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz. The convention closes with the presentation of the 2011-12 international officers and selection of the next convention venue.

That's the 3-day convention program which officially ends before lunch on Sunday. Depending on the delegates' available time, shopping and a tour of Zamboanga's famous tourist spots can be arranged in the afternoon.

The Convention Committee is now in the thick of preparations for the event and has issued the following particulars:

Registration Fees

P2,000 per member if paid on or before Feb. 15, 2010
P2,500 if paid on or before April 15, 2010
P3,000 if paid on or before May 15, 2010
P400 automatic assessment per circle, with or without delegates attending the Convention

(The member's registration fee covers the conference meals, conference kit, certificate of attendance, program stationery and other conference paraphernalias.)

IMPORTANT: All delegates must be **pre-registered**. No walk-in delegates will be accepted.

Contact person:
Sis. Mila G. Navato,
Registration Committee chair person,
Tel. Nos. (062) 991-7510;
Mobile -0917-549-8225

Payment Arrangements

Payment of fees may be made through the following depository banks:



The Astoria Regency Convention Hall

United Coconut Planters Bank
Zamboanga City Branch
Savings Acct. # 401-135109-0

Bank of the Philippine Islands
Zamboanga City Main Branch
Savings Acct. No. 002113-4538-02 under the joint accounts of Sisters Wilhelmina Siosico and Angie Baes.

Accommodations

Delegates take care of their own hotel reservations, a list of hotels, pension houses and inns to be furnished all the circles.

Transportation

Delegates take care of their transportation arrangements to Zamboanga City. However, transportation from their point of entry to their place of stay will be provided by the Convention Committee from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Those arriving earlier than 6:00 a.m. are requested to wait awhile for the Transpo Committee to meet and conduct them to their hotel. For this purpose, circle delegates are requested to communicate with the Biennial Convention Secretariat **two weeks** before May 21 about the

date and time of their arrival, the number of delegates and their point of entry - airport, bus terminal or port area (*pantalan*), etc.

Contact persons for transportation arrangements are:

Sis. Baby A. de los Reyes
Secretariat Chairperson
Tel No. (061) 991-0303
Mobile: 63915-209-7877

Sis. Pinky Saavedra
Transpo Committee Chairperson
Tel. No. (062) 993-2500
Mobile: 63917-723-5118

Those in the meantime are the information delegates need to know. Updates will be provided in the next issue of the *Newsette*.

On page 5 is Sis. Beth Salmon's write-up on Zamboanga titled "Zamboanga Beckons". Please read it and be enchanted. Of course the primary reason we will all be there is for our love for Mama Mary.

Bienvenido a Zamboanga!



Zamboanga Beckons

by Sis. Beth Salmon

(Sis. Beth Salmon is the chairperson of the Biennial Convention Committee, As early as a year ago, she initiated brainstorming sessions in preparation for the 17th National Biennial Convention to be hosted by Zamboanga City in 2010. Today, the convention venue, convention theme and program, speakers and other convention-related activities are already in place with several working committees attending to various details to ensure a truly successful and memorable event. She has written "Zamboanga Beckons" citing the reasons why we should all go to Zamboanga. - Editor)

The DMI 17th National Biennial Convention will be held in Zamboanga City on May 21- 23, 2010 as approved during the 16th Biennial Convention in Cebu City with Sis. Lydia Ramirez, vice-international regent for Mindanao as convention host.

It is barely five months to go before the convention D-day and we have a number of reasons why we are inviting you to come to Zamboanga and join us in the celebration of this big event.

First, Zamboanga is a peaceful city. The Carmelite Monastery where both the late Cory Aquino and later her son Noynoy had their retreats when they needed to make important decisions is in this city. The fear of many about the peace and order situation

in Zamboanga City is unfounded. Most of the conflicts published in the newspapers happen elsewhere far from the city. The news, however, are datelined in Zamboanga because media reporters are based in the city.

Second, Zamboanga is a continental city with people of diverse cultural orientations.

Colorful minarets can be seen along the coastal areas but the cross dominates the city's skyline. The city is essentially Catholic Christian with a majority of the population belonging to different parishes under the Archdiocese of Zamboanga.

Third, Zamboanga has for its patron saint Our Virgin Mary of the Pillar - familiarly known

as *Nuestra Senora La Virgen del Pilar* - regarded as the Protectress of the people of Zamboanga which showcases Zamboanga's devotion to the Blessed Mother and is the central focus of the spiritual life of Zamboanguenos. One of the biggest celebrations in the city is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, patron saint of the DMI, that takes place at the Metro Cathedral.

Fourth, Zamboanga City has picturesque tourist spots, among them the Pasonanca Park with its famous tree-house and beautiful flowers (earning for the city the monicker City of Flowers) especially along its *Paseo de Jardin*, the colorful vintas dotting the bay, the historic Fort Pilar and its *Paseo del Mar* and many

more. It is also a shopper's paradise where beautiful items and other products coming from Malaysia, Indonesia and other countries can be purchased at bargain prices - from the barter trade zone and other shopping areas.

Let us not miss this opportunity of coming to Zamboanga, if not for all the reasons cited above, at least for our love and devotion to Mama Mary and the experience of great bonding among DMI sisters that takes place only once every two years. Let us all **"keep bells ringing while praying, sharing and giving"** and what better place and occasion than to be in Zamboanga for our 17th Biennial Convention!

Please come!

DMI Reaches Out to Ondoy Victims

Tragedy struck Metro Manila and parts of Rizal, Bulacan and Laguna provinces last September 26, 2009 when *Ondoy*, supposedly just a tropical storm, not yet a typhoon, brought intense flooding, the kind that had not been experienced before, wreaking so much destruction of both lives and property.

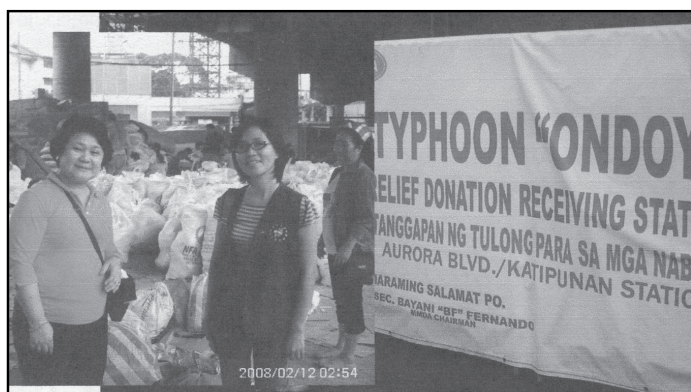
But it is adversities such as this that also spawn shining moments - of selfless love and

sacrifice, of heroism, of overflowing generosity of people. The days and weeks that followed saw long lines of volunteers wanting to be of help, truck loads of relief goods being brought to evacuation centers and still-flooded communities where residents awaited help as well as other forms of assistance.

The Daughters of Mary Immaculate International was one of many religious organizations and NGOs that

responded to the urgent need of the hour. Many DMI circles extended assistance in the outreach activities through their respective parishes. Responding to the call for assistance by International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde, donations arrived at the DMI office, the first from Batangas City through Past International Regent Sis. Sonia Mayo. Donations were received in cash and in kind - clothes, blankets, towels, food, toiletries, etc. Region IV RR

Sis. Tesy Villarino reported providing meals for 600 families in Northville and Marbolan and 150 bags of rice to flood victims in Crossville in Marilao, Bulacan. Sis. Jean designated Region V RR and Int'l Treasurer Sis. Lydia Ordonez as coordinator of DMI's relief effort, a few of which were recorded on camera which accompany this write-up.



San Jose de Navotas Circle's "Kapwa Ko, Sagip Ko" Project. Regent Sis. Cathy Pineda, shown above with Diocesan Regent Sis. Cora Afuang of the Diocese of Antipolo, turned over the Circle's donations to the MMDA Relief Center in Quezon City and to Caritas-Caloocan through the San Ildefonso Parish.



Cause of our Joy Circle of St. Joseph Parish, Tondo, Manila brought their donations directly to Marikina City which was vastly damaged by the floods. Regent Sis. Ruth Batol and Welfare Committee Chair Sis. Nene Ballo turned over the donations to Mayor Des Fernando through Sis. Yoly Concepcion.



Our Lady of the Lilies Circle of Muntinlupa City. Regent Sis. Opel Catacutan reported the distribution of cooked meals to 400 family-evacuees staying at the F. de Mesa Basketball Court in Muntinlupa City.



Sto. Rosario Circle of San Pedro, Laguna. A mother and her son, their house still under water, were recipients of relief goods distributed in Bgy. San Roque (Please see related story on page 13) by Sis. Lydia Ordonez and the officers of the Sto. Rosario Circle.

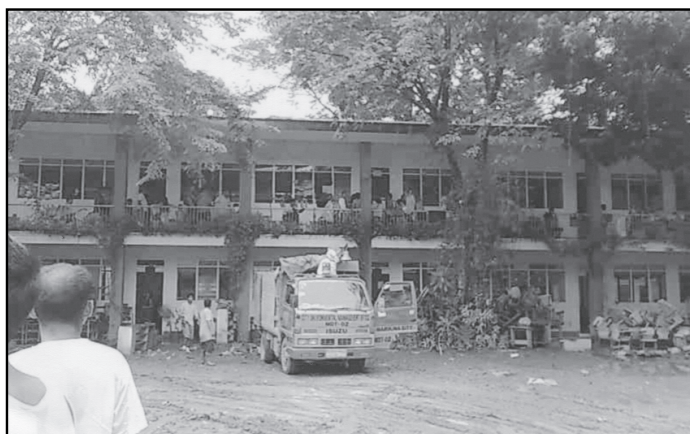
Relief Distribution in the Diocese of Antipolo



Relief goods are being packed at the DMI Office.



Diocesan Regent Sis. Cora Afuang and Region VRR Sis. Lydia Ordonez talk to DMI sisters who are themselves flood victims.



Relief goods are readied for distribution at a relocation center in Marikina City



Flood victims receive the goods from Sis. Lydia Ordonez and other DMIs.

Relief Operation in the Diocese of Malolos



Flood victims in Marilao, Bulacan were recipients of relief goods from DMI Region IV (Diocese of Malolos)



Diocese of Cubao Hosts Region V Assembly

This year's assembly of Region V was held last November 28, 2009 at the Multi-Purpose Hall of the Obispado de Cubao in Quezon City.

Some 315 delegates coming from the six dioceses comprising Region V - the Dioceses of Antipolo, Cubao, Imus, Kalookan, Manila and Paranaque converged at the 10th floor of the Obispado as early as 7:00 a.m.

The conference session started with a Holy Mass officiated by DMI Vice-Int'l Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz. Co-

celebrating with him was Msgr. Claro "Matt" Garcia, pastor of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Tayuman, Tondo, Manila who holds a number of positions in the Archdiocese of Manila, notably as director and vice-chair of the Manila Cathedral School, director of the Marian Youth Movement of the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila and chair of the Manila Archdiocesan and Parochial School Association Commission on Early Childhood Education.

Fr. Jerome, in his homily, dwelt on the theme of the

assembly, "The DMI, Taking After the Hearts of Jesus and Mary". He said that relationships are the most important in life and gave as example the very special relationship between Jesus and Mary. "Do we have that kind of relationship?" he asked. Fr. Jerome also said that love must be expressed in a concrete way in our daily lives as a manifestation of our great love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Love finds concrete expression through service, unselfish service where one loses himself for others.

Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Region V representative (RR) and international treasurer, welcomed the delegates after the traditional parade of colors, singing of the National Anthem and Pledge to the Flag led by Diocesan Regent Sis. Josie Sioson of the Diocese of Cubao and the acknowledgment of circles by Diocesan Regent Sis. Lorie Manalansan of the Diocese of Kalookan.

Main feature of the morning session was the keynote address by Msgr. Matt Garcia

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Assembly delegates' registration



Fr. Jerome Cruz delivers his homily during the Eucharistic celebration. At right is co-celebrant Msgr. Claro "Matt" Garcia.



Msgr. Matt Garcia during his keynote speech.



The assembly delegates enjoy an after-lunch ice-breaker.

who was introduced by Diocesan Regent Sis. Milde Tong of the Diocese of Paranaque. Msgr. Matt cited the theme of the assembly which emphasizes the spirituality of the two hearts in observance of the Year of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He then expounded on the word ROC-K which stands for: R - renewal/reparation, O - oblation/offertory to God, C - conservation/consecration, and K - Kingdom of the Sacred Heart. He said that the reign of God starts here and now.

Noting the age range of his audience, Msgr. Matt also talked on the Ten Commandments for Persons Above 40 Years "to be able to configure your hearts to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary". These are:

1. Value people. (Value the people around you over material possessions.)
2. Be a responsible steward of God's grace. (Manage well the resources made available to you. Teach others how to fish instead of giving them fish.)
3. Live intelligently. (Live for the present. Stop fretting over the past and worrying too much about the future.)
4. Discover responsible enjoyment. (Free yourself of responsibilities that rightfully belong to others. Do not be a full-time baby-sitter for your grandchildren; taking care of them is the responsibility of their mother.)
5. Open yourself to accept the unacceptable. (Aging is an inevitable process. Grow old gracefully.)
6. Don't overwork to avoid stress. (Be thankful for what you have. Do not strive for more when you have enough.)
7. Learn to love. (Be able to love even your enemies.)

8. Learn forgiveness. (Be able to forgive in order to have peace of mind.)
9. Befriend death. (Do not be afraid of dying. Prepare for the eventuality for it means your passage into eternal life.)
10. Befriend God. (Be reconciled with others and with God and be at peace with yourself.)

Msgr. Matt ended his presentation by challenging his audience with these words of St. John Mary Vianney: "The Lord has drawn us to His Heart. He is the One Who has loved us so much. Why shouldn't we love him in return?"

Scheduled to open the afternoon session was a talk by former Optical Media Board Chairman, Edu Manzano, now a vice-presidential candidate. Mr. Manzano was prepared to speak on "The Power and Strong Influence of Media in the Life of Every Filipino". He was, however, not able to make it in time for his presentation as he failed to catch a plane to Manila. (He was with the party of presidential candidate, Gilbert Teodoro, former Secretary of National Defense, in Mindanao.) International Chairperson for Morality in Media Sis. Sonia Manlapig who was assigned to introduce Mr. Manzano extended to the assembly delegates his apologies.

Vice-International Regent for Luzon Sis. Alice Capiral in her message thanked, on behalf of International Regent Sis. Jean Velarde, the generous donors who responded to the call for assistance for victims of Typhoon Ondoy in Region V. She called on DMI sisters to follow the example of Mama Mary in her unconditional love,



Region V RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez and Vice-Int'l Regent for Luzon Sis. Alice Capiral



The diocesan regents of Region V with the keynote speaker. From left: Sisters Josie Sioson and Cora Afuang, RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Msgr. Matt Garcia and Sisters Mimi Gan, Lorie Manalansan and Milde Tong. Not in photo: Sis. Virgie Inigo of the Diocese of Imus.

obedience and humility. "We cannot love without serving and we cannot serve without love", she said. Her parting message to the DMIs: "Let us be a glimpse of God's goodness and love."

The business meeting that followed was presided by RR Sis. Lydia Ordonez during which she provided updates from the National Office and accomplishment report on programs and projects of the region, notably the relief efforts for Ondoy's victims.

Sis. Lydia also informed the assembly delegates about the forthcoming 17th National Biennial Convention to be held in Zamboanga City on May 21-23, 2010. Several delegates

expressed concern over the peace and order situation in Mindanao. This will be raised during the quarterly meeting of the International Board on Dec. 5, 2009.

In her closing remarks, Paranaque Diocesan Regent Sis. Milde Tong thanked the delegates for their active participation in the assembly and the working committee who worked very hard for its success. The closing prayer was led by Diocesan Regent Sis. Mimi Gan of the Diocese of Manila.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Cora Afuang of the Diocese of Antipolo emceed the day-long program.

Cause of Our Joy Circle Launches "Skwela", Gives Free Computer classes

The Cause of Our Joy Circle of St. Joseph Parish, Tondo, Manila recently launched SKWELA under the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS). The program aims to educate out-of-school youth and adults who have not been able to attend regular high schools. Under the program, beneficiaries attend review classes once or twice a week to prepare them for the A & E Test. Once they pass the test, they are awarded secondary certificates and become full-fledged high school graduates.

The Circle also graduated the 30th batch of its 3-month Basic Computer Class last May 9, 2009 at the St. Joseph Formation Bldg. Classes are held every Saturday.

The first recipients of e-learning under the program attended classes at the Sandiwaan Center for Learning at Smoky Mountain in Tondo. The computers being used during classes are donations from generous individuals and organizations such as the Manila Metro Rotary Club, Congressman Jim Lopez, City Councilor Uno Lim



Honor graduates of Basic Computer Class Batch 30 with Cong. Jim Lopez, Councilor Uno Lim, the Circle's Past Regent Sis. Cely Domingo, Regent Sis. Beth Batol and Vicarial Regent Sis. Jean Castaneda.

and Rev. Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD.

The program is coordinated by the Circle's Morality in Media Committee with the Dept. of Education.

PHOTO NEWS



"Watch Your Health"

7 The Cause of Our Joy Circle recently conducted its annual "Watch Your Health" Project that makes available to residents of Gagalangin, Tondo laboratory examinations at minimal

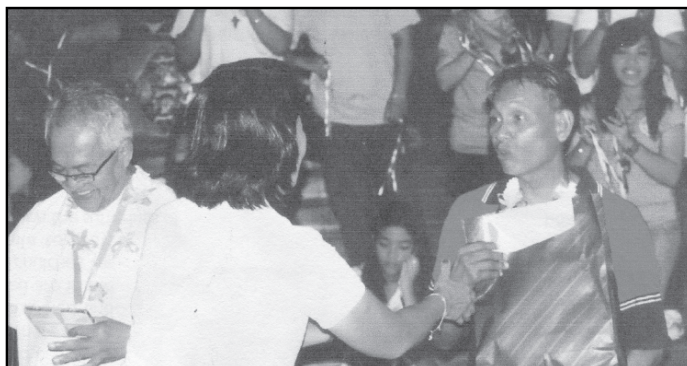
cost. Some 400 residents availed of the service that included free consultation and medicines. Photo shows the DMI sisters manning the registration table.

News Briefs from San Jose de Navotas Circle

Priests' Day Celebrated

In observance of the Year of Priestss, the San Jose de Navotas Circle joined the celebration of Priests' Day in the San Jose Parish in Navotas City last July 31, 2009. The parish priest and assistant parish priests were honored during the dinner and program hosted by the Parish Pastoral Council jointly with the DMI. Simple tokens were also given to the priests.

The following day, August 1st, the officers and members of the Circle attended the Priests' Mass at the San Ildefonso Church officiated by DMI Asst. Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz. The Circle also presented token gifts to Fr. Jerome and his assistant priest.



San Jose de Navotas Circle Vice-Regent Sis. Bery Pruna presents token gifts to Fr. Constantino Conti, pastor of San Jose Parish and his assistant, Fr. Mario.



The circle members with guest speakers Drs. Gelen Fabian and Cristina de la Cruz. (6th and 7th from left, standing).

Wellness cum Medical Project Conducted

A Wellness Information Drive was conducted by the San Jose de Navotas Circle at the Sto. Nino Chapel last Sept. 24, 2009 participated in by mothers and their children aged 2 to 7 years old. Dr. Gelen Fabian of the Malabon-Navotas Medical Society was one of the two guest speakers. She gave tips on wellness and balanced diet and how to avoid lifestyle

illnesses. A presentation on the prevention of children's respiratory illnesses was given by Dr. Cristina Dela Cruz, also of the Malabon-Navotas Medical Society. After the learning session, the DMI sisters assisted the doctors in administering deworming medicines to the children. All the participants were served snacks afterwards.

Rosary Crusade Held in October

The San Jose de Navotas Circle held its annual Holy Rosary Crusade last October. Every night during the whole month of October, the DMIs prayed the rosary at the Sto. Nino Chapel in Daang Hari in Navotas. The activity ended

last October 30 with a simple *salu-salo* and giving of Perfect Attendance awards to those who were able to complete the nightly rosary. The Holy Rosary Crusade is a project of the Circle jointly with the Knights of Columbus.



Regent Sis. Cathy Pineda leads the prayers during the culminating activity of the Holy Rosary Crusade.

From San Pedro, Laguna



The officers and members of the Sto. Rosario Circle with the Installing Team. Seated from left: Sisters Ellen Gonzales, Rose Ramido, Cely Ang, Dhes Ycoy, Lydia Ordonez, Alice Capiral (international vice-regent for Luzon), Fe Aquinde, Rose Celis, Onette Pangilinan, Lita Grey, and Flor Rivera of Our Lady of Fatima of QC Circle. Standing from left: Sisters Alice Sunico, Isabel Aloc, Chelo Sanchez, Lilian Pancho, Ading Reyes, Hermie Palacios, Mary Nario, Bessie Garcia, Tess Bobis, Pat Vermas, Mela Celso, and Lina Tolosa. From Our Lady of Fatima of QC Circle: Sisters Norie Reyes, Beth Bongon and Jessica Santos. Not in photo: Sis. Flor Beramo.

New DMI Circle Organized

The DMI Sto. Rosario Circle of Sto. Rosario Parish, Pacita Complex, San Pedro, Laguna was finally organized last November 12, 2009 after eight months of recruiting, selecting and orienting women who are practicing Catholics through the efforts of Sis. Lydia Ordonez, Region V representative and international treasurer and the Knights of Columbus Kawanggawa Council 9189. The circle's charter officers and members consist of 20 qualified Catholic

women residing in the community.

In compliance with a recent DMI International Board requirement, the members attended the Spiritual Formation Seminar conducted by Rev. Fr. Mario P. Rivera, parish priest of Sto. Rosario Parish last Dec. 19, 2009. The seminar was held at the third floor of St. Mary's Hall, Sto. Rosario Parish from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

The exemplification rites, with all the candidates in

white attire, was held at 4:00 p.m. on December 27, 2009.

The exemplification was conducted by the Exemplification Team from the Diocese of Cubao, Region V with the participation of Sis. Cely Ang, a past international secretary from Region VI. After the 2-hour exemplification ceremonies, there was a short merienda break to give time for members to change into their official DMI uniforms for the formal installation of their charter officers. Family members, friends and some KC members attended the installation.

The Sto. Rosario Circle's charter officers are:

Regent
- Sis. Leofelia Aquinde
Vice-Regent
- Sis. Lourdes Ycoy
Recording Secretary
- Sis. Rosita Celis
Treasurer:

- Sis. Rosemarie Ramido
Financial Secretary
- Sis. Elenita Gonzales
Scribe:- Sis. Emerita Nario
Chancellor
- Sis. Consuelo Sanchez
Custodian: - Sis. Adela Reyes
Sr. Trustee
- Sis. Herminia Palacios
Jr. Trustee
- Sis. Bersabe Garcia
New Trustee
- Sis. Lilian Pancho
Banner Bearer
- Sis. Patricia Bermas
Monitor: - Sis. Alicia Sunico
Guide 1
- Sis. Angelita Tolosa
Guide 2
- Sis. Teresita Bobis
Inside Guard
- Sis. Leonor Pangilinan
Outside Guard
- Sis. Carmela Celso
Organist: - Sis. Isabel Aloc
Charter Members:
Sis. Flocerfida Beramo
Sis. Angelita Grey
Spiritual Director
- Rev. Fr. Mario Rivera



Participants in the Spiritual Formation Seminar with Fr. Mario Rivera, seminar speaker (seated 3rd from left).

From Cabanatuan City

St. Nicholas of Tolentine Circle Installs Officers

by Sis. Rhoda Jugo, Vice-Regent

The St. Nicholas of Tolentine Circle of Cabanatuan City held its 29th Installation of Officers last November 15, 2009 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Burgos Avenue, Cabanatuan City.

Sisters Betty Velarde, Adelaida Beltrab abd Rita Caballero composed the installing team. After the installation ceremonies, Sis. Ma. Lourdes "Ria" Rodriguez-Quijano, the newly-installed regent of the circle, delivered her acceptance speech. She said that through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Mama Mary, she very willingly accepts this call to serve with commitment and dedication. She also appealed to the circle members for their continuous support and cooperation.

Of special interest is the fact that the new regent, in the history of St. Nicholas

of Tolentine Circle, is the first Squirette of Mary member to eventually become DMI regent. Sis. Ria is the daughter of the late Sis. Luz Rodriguez, a past regent and one of the charter members of the circle.

Immediate Past Regent Sis. Noemi Sibuyan also gave her valedictory address. She extended her heartfelt gratitude to all the members who unselfishly devoted their time and resources to all the projects of the circle. Region II Representative Sis. Rita Caballero inspired the new officers and members by sharing insights on how to deepen one's faith within the bonds of unity,

friendship and charity. Diocesan Regent Sis. Aida Beltran congratulated the past and newly-installed officers and reminded everyone to continue to offer themselves to Mama Mary in order to accomplish the missions of the DMI.

The newly-installed officers of the circle are:
Regent

- Sis. Ria Quijano Vice-Regent
- Sis. Rhodora Jugo Treasurer
- Sis. Francie Cruz Financial Secretary
- Sis. Elisa Romano Recording Secretary
- Sis. Emerita Dayao Scribe
- Sis. Leny Chua

- Chancellor
 - Sis. Macaria Gamboa Custodian
 - Sis. Herminia Dondoyano Monitor
 - Sis. Gloria Dela Cruz Sr. Trustee
 - Sis. Justine Teneza Jr. Trustee
 - Sis. Adelaida Ventosa New Trustee
 - Sis. Amanda Paway Banner Bearer
 - Sis. Milagros Feliciano 1st Guide
 - Sis. Elsa Padua 2nd Guide
 - Sis. Emy Mangahas Outer Guard
 - Sis. Osmunda Tinio Inner Guard
 - Sis. Aurora de Joya Organist
 - Sis. Caridad Medina

Sto. Rosario Circle Conducts First Community Service

eing the lone DMI circle organized in the municipality of San Pedro, Laguna, the Sto.

Rosario Circle was tapped to assist in the distribution of relief goods to 100 most needy families in Bgy. San Roque, San Pedro, Laguna by International Treasurer Sis. Lydia Ordonez who has

been appointed to manage the Relief Operation for Victims of Typhoon Ondoy. These families are among the hardest hit during the said calamity as they reside along Laguna Lake.

The circle members joined in the repacking of goods at the Sto. Rosario Parish



The officers of Sto. Rosario Circle wearing Santa caps assist Sis. Lydia Ordonez in the distribution of relief goods.

and accompanied Sis. Lydia in the distribution of stubs in the area. They later assisted in the

distribution of relief goods at the San Roque Elementary School.

Risen Christ Circle Co-Hosts Xmas Treat for Elderly

In keeping with the times, the annual Christmas Treat for the Elderly of the Holy Eucharist Parish held last Dec. 13, 2009 at the PHIMRA Gym was made simpler but festive nonetheless.

The affair was co-sponsored by the couple Angel and Milde Tong with the DMI Risen Christ Circle. The

Golden Years Ministry, BEC Group and Apostleship of Prayer assisted in the event.

Some 250 senior citizens attended the affair with over half of them winning raffle prizes donated by the DMI sisters. Everyone brought home a package of groceries each compliments of the Tong family. Food was provided free by Tita Milde's Catering.

Sis. Milde Tong, a past regent of Risen Christ Circle, is the present diocesan regent of the Diocese of Paranaque and international chairperson for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & Their Victims. Several Risen Christ Circle members led by Regent Sis. Mila Brion were on hand to help conduct the afternoon program.



Some Risen Christ Circle officers with Bro. Angel Tong, event host (at right).



Sis. Milde Tong (middle photo) welcomes the event's guest-honorees, the elderly residents of the Holy Eucharist Parish (right photo).



From Muntinlupa City

Our Lady of the Lilies Circle's ALS Program Yields 25 Grads

Twenty-five of the 53 out-of-school youths who the Our Lady of

the Lilies Circle of Soldiers' Hills, Muntinlupa City sponsored to participate in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) (Please see initial story in the October-December, 2008 issue of

the *DMI Newsette*.) successfully passed the Accreditation and Equivalency Test (A & E Test) that the Dept. of Education conducted in October, 2009.

The successful candidates will be among the graduates of the ALS Program who will be awarded their high school diplomas during the

graduation ceremonies to be held at the Muntinlupa High School on January 14, 2010.

Prior to sitting down for the A & E Test, classes of the ALS participants were conducted weekly at the Mary Cause of Our Joy Parish Center in Soldiers' Hills, Muntinlupa City.

The ALS Program is a continuing activity of the Our Lady of the Lilies Circle.



The graduates of Batch 2009 of the Our Lady of the Lilies Circle's ALS Program with some Circle officers.

From Zamboanga City

St. Joseph Circle Undertakes Medical-Dental Outreach

by Sis. Pinky Saavedra

On the morning of Sept. 6, 2009, members of the St. Joseph Circle together with a medical team of five doctors, three dentists, two medical technologists and ten Western Mindanao State University graduate students of N209 conducted free medical and dental services and diabetes screening at far-flung Bgy. Lanzones in Zamboanga City.

The Philippines, like many countries today, faces a challenging period as a result of the global economic downturn. The issue on the availability and affordability of access to health services is not new to us. Conducting free medical and dental services and diabetes screening was the Circle's response, even in its small way, to the issue.



Patients registering for medical and dental consultation and services.



Dr. Edwina Cabato, volunteer doctor

Dental services were provided by Drs. Joringle Vincent Ong Chua, Maria Shelve Manzo and Olivia Villaruel to 44 patients. Medical technologists Shirley Angeles and Nathaniel Santos performed diabetes screening for 18 clients. Some 118 patients benefited from the free medical consultation and

services provided by Drs. Edwina Cabato, Leilani Ramirez, Pilar Bernardo, Araceli Tan and Marvin Loquias. Free medicines were handed out as prescribed.

The Western Mindanao State University graduate students of N209 (field experience) under Prof. Vera Marie Ansaldo were



Dr. Vincent Ong Chua attends to a dental patient.

Gina de la Cruz, Lujie Fernandez, Mercibel Gosum, Ruthimar Jeyezha, Julkarnain, Ruby Elza Luspo, Josephine Piedad, Myra Oca, Ma. Pinky Saavedra, Palma Sarapuddin and Ella Faith Sergas.

The outreach started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at past noon. Vicarial Regent Alternate Sis. Grace Gonzales coordinated the activity. Lunch was served at the Monte Verde Resort in Culianan, Zamboanga City.



Diabetes screening by Shirley Angeles and Nathaniel Santos, medical technologists.



The charter officers and members of the St. Joseph Circle of Ipil with the Exemplification Team.

From Zamboanga-Sibugay

Ipil Charter Circle -- A Dream Fulfilled

by Sis. Mila G. Navato

“With God, nothing is impossible.” Once again, this passage was proven true by the DMI Exemplification Team of the Our Lady of Purification Circle of Sta. Maria Parish, Zamboanga City when, against all odds, they succeeded in opening a charter circle in Ipil, Zamboanga-Sibugay.

November 14, 2009, a Saturday, was a red-letter and memorable day for the charter officers and members of the new circle of Ipil - the St. Joseph Circle. As for us, the members of the Exemplification Team, the day turned out to be a successful and very satisfying one despite the initial stresses.

On that fateful day, we started out at 5:30 a.m. on board a hired van for the 2 ½-hour drive to Ipil. It was showering, but for us, the showers were a manifestation of God’s blessing and guidance which encouraged us to proceed as planned. Heading the team was our very supportive Diocesan Regent Sis. Beling Panganiban, with Sisters Tita Penaflor, ceremonial chairperson and Laura Fuerte, vicarial regent. Our Vice-Int’l

Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez, who was with us during the initial orientation was not able to join us on this trip because of conflict of schedule.

Many challenges were hurled our way during the preparation and orientation of prospective candidates but the ultimate one came during the Conferral of Degrees when only fourteen candidates were present when it came time to start the ceremonies. This meant we had not been able to meet the minimum number of 15 members to form a new circle.

We prayed hard to overcome this challenge and soon our prayers were answered when a 15th candidate, Sis. Gie suddenly appeared at the door. She said that she was already in church at 8:30 a.m. but found no one until someone directed her to the venue. A miracle? To us, it was! And why not? We were all awe-struck when in the middle of our prayer, we saw Sis. Gie standing there properly dressed for the conferral rites. We were teary-eyed as we finally realized a long-time dream of organizing a circle in Ipil.

The Conferral ceremony went on smoothly, with the Exemplification

Team taking on their respective roles: Sis. Angie Baes as emcee, monitor and briefing officer, Sis. Mila Navato as regent, Sis. Chit Paragas as past regent, Sis. Baby Atilano as vice-regent, Sis. Liling Asesor as chancellor, Sis. Baby Montano as custodian, Sis. Lisa Mae Sedillo as flag and banner bearer, and Sisters Darling Tandoc and Titing Iglesias as marshals.

The new DMI sisters were so touched by the words they heard during the ceremony, especially the Regent’s charges on Sanctity. They said they felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst.

The installation of the charter officers followed after the sumptuous lunch hosted by Sis. Pat Musngi, the new circle’s regent. The other charter officers are: Sisters Consolacion Rocamora - vice-regent, Mary Cris Ragandang - recording secretary, Rose Ragandang - financial secretary, Marmolina Angeles - treasurer, Saturnina Crisostomo, Teresita Poresio, and Jesusa Cuamag - trustees, Marilyn Demegilio - chancellor, Geraldine Recesio - custodian and Elisa La Plana - monitor.

From Malaybalay City

Morning Star Circle Hosts Diocesan Meeting

by Sis. Linda Beltran, Diocesan Regent, Bukidnon

The DMI Morning Star Circle of Malaybalay City sponsored and hosted the meeting of the DMI Diocese of Bukidnon last May 9, 2009.

The conference was held at Haus Malibu with some 200 delegates from all over Bukidnon and guests from the Caraga Region, particularly Surigao, Tandag and Butuan led by Region XII Representative Sis. Rosalinda "Lelis" Pimentel who graced the occasion. The diocesan delegates came from Banisilan and Manilao Cotabato, Wao, Pangantucan, BUSCO, Impasug-ong, Kisolon, Valencia, Manolo Fortich, Musuan and Malaybalay City.

of Bukidnon, commenced the activities with a Eucharistic celebration highlighting in his homily the theme of the conference: The DMI - Servant-Leader for Renewal. The traditional opening program for DMI conferences - Parade of Colors, singing of the National Anthem, the Pledge to the Flag, and welcome remarks - followed afterwards.

The afternoon session started with Sis. Corita Hilario, past representative of Region XII, rendering her accomplishment report and delivering her farewell speech. A turn-over ceremony followed, officially transferring her responsibility as regional representative to Sis. Lelis Pimentel.

During the meeting, Sis. Lelis provided information updates from the International Board including the acquisition of a townhouse unit to house the DMI National Office, payment of dues, the status of the DMI Building Fund, the national programs for the DMI missions and the



Diocesan Meeting host, Morning Star Circle prepares for the meeting.

submission of accomplishment reports by the circles in Region XII before the end of the year. She also urged the delegates to attend the forthcoming Mindanao Area Conference in General Santos City.

It was also during the meeting that the region agreed to adopt the 2,000 Hail Marys to concretize the DMI objective of journeying with Mama Mary starting in Surigao in June, followed by Bukidnon in July, Agusan in August, Butuan in September and Gingoog in October.

The following day (May 10), the group attended a Holy Mass concelebrated by monks and priests at

Most Rev. Honesto Ch. Pacana, bishop of Bukidnon, commenced the activities with a Eucharistic celebration highlighting in his homily the theme of the conference: The DMI - Servant-Leader for Renewal.

the Transfiguration Chapel in San Jose, Malaybalay City. The monks hosted the traditional 2nd Sunday breakfast, serving their guests *binignit* and *umba*, their specialty, as well as other delicacies.

Most Rev. Honesto Ch. Pacana, Bishop

Signature Campaign vs. Reproductive Health Bill Launched in the Archdiocese of Ozamis

The DMI Archdiocese of Ozamis recently passed a resolution calling on all DMI officers and members in the Archdiocese to manifest their spiritual conviction as one Church with one faith by way of a signature campaign expressing their vehement objection to the proposed Reproductive Health and Population Development Act of 2008. The move was adopted from the resolution of the City Council of Ozamis.

The resolution cited the reasons for their objection to the bill: the anti-life contents of the bill detailing the harmful programs being proposed such as the two-child per family policy, free access of individuals including adolescents to abortifacients and contracep-

tives, introduction of inappropriate sex education in schools adversely affecting the wholesome and moral development of students, and imposing penalties such as imprisonment and/or fines of up to P50,000 for those who will not participate in the program.

The resolution also stresses that the bill is unconstitutional, particularly violating Art. II, Sec. 12 of the Philippine Constitution which states: "The State recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception."

The DMI disagrees with the reason for enactment of the bill seeking to curb population growth as a way to eliminate poverty

which avoids focusing on the root causes of the problem, among them graft and corruption, land use and conversion, flawed land reform program, wrong priorities, etc.

The resolution further states that utilizing a fraudulent reproductive health policy to achieve a good end - for government to adopt and enforce measures and policies that truly address the

authentic needs of the communities, of women, mothers, children and young people - is morally wrong. It neglects the

people's right of conscience and does not respect and protect their religious convictions. The measures that the bill proposes also violate the rights of spouses to build a family in line with their religious principles which include the safeguarding of the true and responsible parenthood and the rights of children

The DMI disagrees with the reason for enactment of the bill seeking to curb population growth as a way to eliminate poverty which avoids focusing on the root causes of the problem, among them graft and corruption, land use and conversion, flawed land reform program, wrong priorities, etc.

and the family.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Miriam O. Angot and those present during the Recollection and Orientation Seminar held at the Holy Child Parish in Clarin, Misamis Occidental signed the resolution which jumpstarted the ongoing signature campaign in the Archdiocese of Ozamis against the Reproductive Health Bill.



Our Lady of The Miraculous Medal

by Sis. Sis. Lelita Guzman, Risen Christ Circle

(As part of members' Formation Program, the Risen Christ Circle of Paranaque City recently introduced *Mama Mary's Time* as a regular part of their monthly meetings for the purpose of knowing more about the Blessed Mother who is our model and guide. This article by Sis. Lita was excerpted from her research and sharing about the origin of the Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal whose feast is celebrated on November 27. - Ed.)

I guess not many of us know that the Miraculous Medal came from our Blessed Mother herself. She designed it, revealed it and ordered it propagated throughout the world. These facts are from the testimony of St. Catherine Laboure of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul to whom Mary appeared three times in the year 1830 in Paris.

The First Apparition - July 18, 1830

At around 11:30 that night, Sis. Catherine heard someone calling her name three times. Waking up, she saw a four- or five-year-old child dressed in white who told her: **"Come to the chapel. The Blessed Virgin is waiting for you."**

She quickly followed the child who all the time walked at her left side, lighting up their way with the door almost automatically opening as they approached it. The chandeliers and all the candles in the chapel were lit up when they arrived reminding Sis. Catherine of Midnight Mass. Then the child said, **"Here is the Blessed Virgin. Here she is."** She then heard the rustle of a silk dress and saw the Blessed Virgin seated on the Director's seat. Sis. Catherine quickly went to her side and knelt before her and placed her hands on Mama Mary's knees. The Blessed Virgin said, **"My child, the good God wants to charge you with a mission."** She told Sis.

Catherine of the sufferings and contradictions that she would experience but not to be afraid for she will have grace; to tell everything with confidence and simplicity to him whose task is to direct her. She also told her to come to the foot of the altar and that graces will be poured on all those who ask with confidence and fervor. Sis. Catherine remained kneeling for so long listening to the instructions and when she got up from the altar step, the child said, **"She is gone."** The clock struck 2:00 am when Sis. Catherine returned to her room, the encounter lasting almost 2 ½ hours.

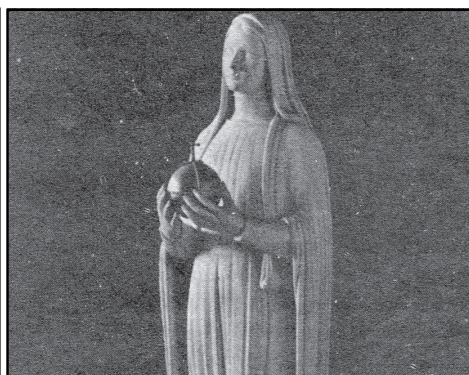
The Second Apparition - November 27, 1830

Our Lady appeared at 5:30 pm that day, dressed in white with silvery blue mantle with veil the color of dawn. Mary was of medium height, indescribably beautiful, her feet resting on a sphere. Her hands, raised slightly above her waist, held a globe, rings on her fingers inset with precious stones. Dazzling rays of light darted from the jewels. The globe represents the world and each person in particular while the rays of light are the symbol of the graces she bestows on those who ask for them. Then an oval frame surrounded the Blessed Virgin, in a semi-circle from the level of her hands up around her head. There appeared in letters of gold

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The first apparition, July 18, 1830



The second apparition, November 27, 2009



The third apparition, December, 1830

the inscription, **“O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee”**. The golden globe vanished, her hands lowered down, remained outstretched. The oval frame turned around and seen on the reverse side were the letter **M** surmounted with a little cross with a bar beneath, and at its foot, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, one encircled with a crown of thorns and the other pierced with a sword. An interior voice said, **“Have a medal struck on this model**. Those who wear it and say a short prayer will be indulgenced and enjoy the special protection of the Mother of God, especially if the medal is worn around the neck.”

The Third Apparition - December, 1830

The Blessed Virgin again appeared at 5:30 pm that day. There was the same rustle of her silk dress, but this time she was at the center of the altar, near and a little behind the Tabernacle. She wore the same high-necked dress with the color of dawn. This third apparition - the second and the last about the Medal - sounded like a farewell, but she left this message: **“You will not see me anymore but you will hear my voice during your prayers.”**

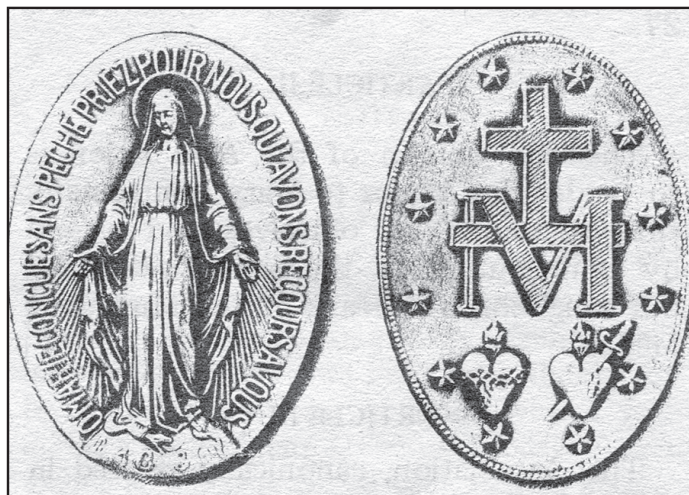
Sis. Catherine's confessor, Father Aladel who seemed cold and indifferent when she first approached him about the Medal, eventually listened and took up the

subject of the apparition with Msgr. Quelen, archbishop of Paris who immediately said, **“I see no drawback in striking this Medal.”**

So in 1832, the medal of the Immaculate Conception was struck with Msgr. Quelen eagerly giving public testimony of his faith in the Immaculate Conception and confidence in the Medal. This later paved the way for the dogmatic definition of Mary's Immaculate Conception. Msgr. Quelen was also instrumental in the inclusion of the invocation **“Mary conceived without sin”** in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

The many marvels of conversion and healing, of peace and protection obtained through the Medal led the people to call it the **“Miraculous Medal”**. In 1836, St. John Mary Vianney, patron of parish priests, consecrated his parish to the Miraculous Medal. Pope Gregory XVI kept medals at the foot of his crucifix and distributed them to visitors. Then, too, the Vincentian Martyrs of China received wonderful favors in mission lands.

Largely because of the devotion awakened by Mary's Miraculous Medal, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was defined by Pope Pious IX in 1854. In 1858, St. Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes who was wearing the medal saw Our Lady with her



The front and rear view of the medal

hands outstretched just like in the Miraculous Medal, before placing her joined hands on her breast, saying, **“I am the Immaculate Conception.”** St. Therese of Lisieux saw the Blessed Virgin's heavenly smile in an image of the Miraculous Medal and was cured from a serious illness. It was also this medal that St. Mary Goretti, the martyr of purity, received as her badge when on her death bed, she became a child of Mary.

Mary's motherly love for us is also manifested on the reverse side of the medal: the **M** and two hearts express this. She is not only Queen; she is also the Mother of Sorrow and Co-redemptrix. Knowing suffering qualifies her to console us in our trials and afflictions. Close to her Son's thorn-crowned Heart is her own pierced heart. In sorrow as in glory, Son and

mother are always together - as in Calvary, she sorrowfully stood beneath her Son's Cross.

From Mama Mary's outstretched hands stream rays of light symbolizing the graces she obtains from her Son, as she promised for all who ask for them. And it would seem that the asking is best done through prayer on her Medal, the prayer that she herself composed and revealed: **“O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.”** The Medal is Mary's gift to us. She wants us to partake of the great graces which she pledged herself to shower on those who, wearing her medal, call upon her for help. May we listen to her voice and dedicate ourselves forever to love her and wear the badge that identifies us as her very own.