

# DMI Newsette

*To Jesus through Mary*

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October - December 2014

## 2015-16 DMII Int'l Officers, Board Installed

Fr. Jerome could only stare in awe! The color and glitter that greeted him as he entered the Banquet Hall of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Manila was a complete departure from the sea of blue he sees each time he attends DMI assemblies and conferences. The event was the Installation of the 2015-2016 International Officers and Board last Nov. 30, 2014.

Some 150 DMI sisters came to the installation garbed in their Filipiniana best. The mood was jovial and very Christmas-y, the event being the last for the DMI Board for the year and many brought Christmas gifts to give away. Four past International Regents graced the occasion – Sisters Myrna Zapanta, Perla Arguelles, Jean Velarde and Lyding Ramirez.

A Eucharistic celebration by DMI International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz preceded the dinner and the evening's program.

In his homily, Fr. Jerome dwelt on the meaning and significance of Advent leading to man's Redemption. He said that Advent is a spiritual check-up. The four weeks before Christmas give us the time to reflect on the very



*Incoming International Regent Sis. Rebbie Pacanan receives a bouquet of flowers from DMI International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz and International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva.*

meaning of our life. "God loves us so much that He gave His only Son. Yet, we fail to recognize God in one another."

Past International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez gave the opening remarks after which the incoming International Officers and Board led by International Regent Sis. Rebbie

*Turn to Page 4*



*The newly-installed 2015-2016 International Officers and Board with Fr. Jerome Cruz. From left: Sisters Adeline Lee, Fely Gallardo, Virgie Terrado, Letty Gano, Elvie Arambulo, Annie Ty, Fr. Jerome, Sisters Rebbie Pacanan, Cora Afuang, Pureza Guzman, Alma Cagampang, Yolanda Dagandan, Gloria Caminero, Lenny Larrazabal, Laura Cespon and Angie Baes. Not in photo: Sis. Terry Viola.*

# DMII 2015-16 International Officers & Board, Mission Chairpersons

## Executive Officers

Sis. Rebbie Pacanan - International Regent  
Sis. Cora Afuang - Vice-Int'l Regent for Luzon & Region V Representative  
Sis. Pureza Guzman - VIR – Visayas & Region IX Representative  
Sis. Annie Ty - VIR – Mindanao & Region XII Representative  
Sis. Alma Cagampang - International Secretary & Region II Representative  
Sis. Elvie Arambulo - International Treasurer & Region VI Representative  
Sis. Yolanda Dagandan - International Advocate

## International Chaplain

Rev. Fr. Jerome Ma. J. Cruz

## Regional Representatives

Sis. Letty Gano - Region I  
Sis. Virginia Terrado - Region II  
Sis. Fely Gallardo - Region IV

Sis. Ma. Adeline Lee - Region VII  
Sis. Terry Viola - Region VIII  
Sis. Gloria Caminero - Region X  
Sis. Lenny Larrazabal - Region XI  
Sis. Laura Cespon - Region XIII  
Sis. Angie Baes - Region XIV

## Mission Chairpersons

Sis. Carmen Baquilid - Pro-Life  
Sis. Edna May Landicho - Morality in Media  
Sis. Juliet Cruz - Upliftment of Women Workers  
Sis. Mary Ann Jabines - Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims  
Sis. Cathy Pineda - Youth Welfare

## DMI Newsette Editor

Sis. Sally Estrada



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## Executive Officers

Sis. Mila A. Villanueva - Int'l Regent  
Sis. Paulita M. Canonizado - Vice-Int'l Regent - Luzon  
Sis. Evelyn D. Aquino - Vice-Int'l Regent - Visayas  
Sis. Cecilia O. Apura - Vice-Int'l Regent - Mindanao  
Sis. Corazon T. Afuang - Int'l Secretary  
Sis. Amelia C. Castaneda - Int'l. Treasurer  
Sis. Miriam O. Angot - Int'l Advocate

Rev. Fr. Jerome Ma. J. Cruz  
**International Chaplain**

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Sis. Sally T. Estrada  
**Editor**

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Sis. Carmencita D. G. Arce	Sis. Ruby P. Macario
Sis. Julieta V. Cruz	Sis. Perla R. Malazarte
Sis. Helen B. de Leon	Sis. Aurora C. Manangan
Sis. Leticia O. Gano	Sis. Ma. Clotilde R. Tong
Sis. Pureza M. Guzman	Sis. Annie O. Ty
Sis. Ma. Adeline A. Lee	Sis. Teresita L. Viola
Sis. Violeta C. Luna	Sis. Mylene Segundera-Bass

*From the International Regent*

## MESSAGE



My dear DMI Sisters,

My two-year term as your International Regent has brought a lot of emotions and as it ends, a sense of wonder how I had been able to measure up to the daunting task. As I write this message for the last time for the DMI Newsette, a feeling of nostalgia engulfs me as I look back to the many occasions of meeting our DMI sisters as far north as Cauayan City, Isabela to down south in Surigao.

I had been enthralled by your heartwarming welcomes, by your humble selves, by your efforts in ensuring that each and every Sister who attends these assemblies and conferences comes away with new learnings and new meanings to further enhance our tasks as daughters of our Heavenly Father and our Mother Mary and as service-oriented citizens of our country. And as we go about our tasks, unmindful of earthly rewards such as popularity or superiority and focusing instead on our heavenly rewards to ensure our berths.

Gone are the days of competition. Now are days of cooperation . . . of complementation . . . of friendship par excellence. This strong spirit of close kinship and sisterhood that pervades our organization today continues to inspire, encourage and empower us as we serve in the DMI missions.

We have several projects that shall come into fruition by year end. We have raised funds for ten permanent homes in Palo, Leyte for 'Yolanda' victims in coordination with the CBCP-NASSA's housing project. We have likewise instituted a Calamity Fund to support our Sisters in need. Attendance in our regional assemblies, area conferences and biennial conventions has increased significantly. We have more Squirettes of Mary circlettes organized and more SMIs in our membership roster. SMI area conferences in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have also been instituted.

Congratulations, Sisters! You have done so well.

And so, as time moves from day to night, so, too, shall our organization move with certainty to accomplish the projects we have worked on. So, too, shall we move ahead to do more . . . to pray more and to love more!

In the end, "what will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others to emulate your example" (a quote from Michael Josephson).

Let us all stay as ideals and as true Daughters of Mary Immaculate.

Thank you very much!

Yours in Christ and Mary,

**SIS. MILA A. VILLANUEVA**  
**International Regent, 2013-2014**

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***2015-16 DMII Int'l Officers, Board Installed ...Cont'd. From Page 1***

Pacanan had their oath-taking before Fr. Jerome. Sisters Lydia Ordonez and Biennah Villanueva acted as marshals. The induction of Diocesan and Vicarial Regents then followed. The mission chairpersons also received their respective appointments from Sis. Rebbie Pacanan.

During the turn-over ceremonies, Sis. Mila Villanueva as outgoing IR said that it is with mixed emotions that she relinquishes her position to incoming IR Sis. Rebbie Pacanan. She also said that during the past two years, she was able to learn and realize the true meaning of the Year of Faith. She prayed, learned, played and laughed with her DMI sisters in assemblies and conferences that she attended in the 14 regions of the country, memories that she will forever treasure.

Sis. Mila also cited some

changes in the internal rules of the organization such as the term of mission chairpersons and the holding of area conferences in-between SMI biennial conventions. The fund-raising for the DMI's donation of permanent houses for 'Yolanda' victims and the Calamity Fund for emergency purposes is proceeding quite well. She later distributed plaques of appreciation to the outgoing International Board and Mission Chairpersons who served with her.

Sis. Rebbie Pacanan then received the DMI gavel symbolizing her acceptance of the responsibilities from Sis. Mila as the 2015-2016 International Regent. In her acceptance speech, Sis. Rebbie said that the position seeks the person, her election as IR in Bohol seemingly providential. She related that there had been obstacles that would have prevented her from

attending the convention, such as being a victim of Supertyphoon 'Yolanda' as well as a wound on her foot that doesn't heal. On the day of the

convention, however, she felt well enough to go to Bohol and later be elected as International Regent. She said of the gargantuan task that lies ahead: "There



***Welcome remarks by Past IR Sis. Lyding Ramirez.***



***The Vice-International Regents - Sisters Cora Afuang for Luzon, Pureza Guzman for Visayas and Annie Ty for Mindanao are presented by Marshals Sisters Biennah Villanueva and Lydia Ordonez to Fr. Jerome for their oath-taking.***



***Fr. Jerome Cruz delivers his homily during the Eucharistic celebration.***



***Fr. Jerome administers the oath of office to the Regional Representatives composing the DMII International Board.***





*The diocesan and vicarial regents are installed into office.*



*Incoming Mission chairpersons, from left: Sisters Juliet Cruz, Carmen Baquilid, Edna May Landicho, Mary Anne Jabines and Cathy Pineda and Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada as they are about to take their oath.*



*The Past International Regents with IR Sis. Mila (2nd from left), Fr. Jerome (at center) and Past Region XII RR Sis. Lelis Pimentel (3rd from right.) They are from left: Sisters Perla Arguelles, Jean Velarde, Lyding Ramirez and Myrna Zapanta.*



*Sis. Mila delivers her valedictory address.*



*A bouquet of flowers is handed to Sis. Mila by Fr. Jerome.*



*Plaques of appreciation were presented to Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada and outgoing Mission Chairs Sisters Juliet Cruz, Milde Tong, Ruby Macario and Helen de Leon. Not in photo is Sis. Chit Arce.*

is no failure in the DMI if we have the heart and mind of Mama Mary", then

exhorted the new Board: "Let us shape DMI's future together. The

organization's success or failure is in our hands. Let's keep DMI alive."

After her speech, Sis. Rebbie gave small replicas of the DMI gavel to

*Turn to Page 6*

***2015-16 DMII Int'l Officers, Board Installed ...Cont'd. From Page 5***



***The outgoing Board and Mission Chairs in a group photo.***



***Incoming International Regent Sis. Rebbie Pacanan delivers her acceptance speech.***



***The evening's intermission was provided by Vevel de Asis, a very talented entertainer.***



***Sis. Josie Halog, DMI Office staff, receives a surprise appreciation gift from Sis. Mila on behalf of the DMI Board. With them are Sis. Lita Canonizado, Fr. Jerome (partly hidden) and Sis. Lyding.***

members of the new Board and mission chairpersons as symbols of authority of their respective positions.

Adding more color to the evening was the presence of a very talented entertainer, Vevel de Asis who sang popular songs by Michael Buble and impersonating Filipino song divas with brisk changes of costumes during the

show. Sis. Ruby Macario hosted the program.

After Fr. Jerome's short inspirational message, Past IR Sis. Myrna Zapanta officially closed the night's program, thanking the outgoing Board for their committed service and congratulating the incoming Board who will be at the helm of the organization in the next two years.



***Closing remarks by Past IR Sis. Myrna Zapanta.***

***Trivia on Pope Francis: Pope Francis is believed to have been a serious contender at the 2005 conclave which eventually elected Pope Benedict XVI. Leaked documents after the conclave show that Pope Francis received 40 votes in 3rd ballot but this was reduced to 23 in the final one. He was very popular at the time and it is likely that this popularity was one of the reasons for his election in the year's conclave.***

## Diocese of Iba Hosts Region III Assembly

*By Sis. Maria Rose Geronimo, Queen of Angels Circle, San Jose Vicariate, Olongapo City*

The Regional Assembly of Region III held at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone on Nov. 15, 2014 was a "blockbuster", being one of the best-attended in the Region's history.

Held at the Golden Dragon Restaurant in Subic, Olongapo City, close to 500 delegates representing 38 circles from the Archdiocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) and the Dioceses of Tarlac, Balanga (Bataan) and Iba (Zambales and Olongapo City) attended the event. The assembly's theme was "DMII: Evangelized and Evangelizing Towards Building the Church of the Poor".

As early as 6 a.m., assembly delegates from the provinces comprising Region III started arriving at the venue. The registration of delegates was ably handled

by the Registration Committee headed by Vicarial Regent Sis. Lourdes Felicano of St. Joseph Vicariate.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Erlinda Crispin of the Diocese of Iba, the host diocese, opened the assembly, warmly welcoming the delegates and guests from the International Board led by International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva and thanking the working committee of the Assembly who worked very hard to ensure the success of the event.

The entrance of the Regional officers headed by Region III RR Sis. Amy Castaneda and the Parade of Circles signaled the start of the Assembly. This was followed by the invocation led by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Purisima Tuliao, the Pambansang Awit led by

San Sebastian Vicarial Regent (VR) Sis. Letty Santos and Pledge to the Flag by San Andres VR Sis. Norma Raguine.

Olongapo City Mayor Rolen Paulino graced the occasion. Welcoming the assembly delegates to his city, he said that it is a source of great pride and pleasure not only for the DMIs of the Diocese of Iba but also for the city government and the people of Olongapo City that Subic was chosen as venue for this year's DMI Regional Assembly.

The Eucharistic celebration was officiated by Fr. Audie Mozo who, in his homily, mentioned his apprehension regarding the poor response early on when the Organizing Committee launched its campaign for attendance, coming close to canceling the

reservation for the venue. But the Committee worked doubly hard and prayed harder still. Their efforts had not been in vain, for on the day of the assembly, the venue was filled to capacity. The event indeed was one of the best-attended in many years!

The day's first resource speaker was Fr. Kenneth Masong on the topic "Poverty According to the Bible". He said that there are a lot of reasons why there is poverty, one of which is injustice. "But the poor are the privileged heirs of God's Kingdom," he added. He exhorted the DMIs to be fully aware that the heart of poverty is sharing and caring.

Msgr. Crisostome Cacho then gave an inspirational message. He said that the

*Turn to Page 8*



*Guests from the International Board, seated from left: Sisters Milde Tong, IR Mila Villanueva, Helen de Leon, Ruby Macario and Amy Castaneda with Fr. Kenneth Masong (at center), guest speaker. Behind them are members of the Assembly Working Committee.*



*The assembly delegates listen intently to a guest speaker.*



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## *Diocese of Iba Hosts Region III Assembly ...Cont'd. From Page 7*

turn-out of the assembly – the delegates' attendance and the well-managed program of activities for the day – is very inspiring.

The second guest speaker was Fr. Roque Villanueva who was introduced by Regent Sis. Merinnisa Ligaya of Immaculate Conception Circle. Speaking on the topic "Live Christ, Share Christ", Fr. Villanueva gave a testimony on how one's faith is sometimes put to a severe test. Even priests are not spared from this, drawing from his own personal experience. His listeners were moved to tears when he related how his mother helped him through his personal crisis, eventually enabling him to rise above it and regain and strengthen his faith. The speaker captured and held the interest of his audience despite the unholy hour of his talk (after lunch).

International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva in her message congratulated the Regional and Diocesan officers for holding a very successful regional assembly. She also announced the DMII's donation of ten houses in Palo, Leyte for 'Yolanda' victims. Her parting word to the delegates: "Live and choose a life that matters."

International Mission Chairpersons Sis. Ruby Macario for Youth Welfare, Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-Life and Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims also rendered reports regarding their respective Missions' projects and activities.

Region III RR Sis. Amy Castaneda thanked the delegates for their presence and the Diocese of Iba for very ably handling and managing the Region III Assembly. She also

announced that the incoming DMI International Board and Diocesan and Vicarial Regents will be installed on Nov. 30, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Manila.

The assembly ended at 5:30 p.m. with lucky delegates bringing home prizes they won in the raffles conducted by Sisters Linda Crispin and Nene Ligaya.

Composing the Region III Assembly Working Committees are the following:

**Steering Committee**  
DR Sis. Linda Crispin,  
Chairperson

**Finance Committee**  
Diocesan Treasurer Sis.  
Violeta Abado

**Program & Invitation Committee**  
VR Sis. Lulu Felicano

### **Registration Committee - Dioceses of Tarlac & Iba:**

VR Sis. Lourdes Felicano and Circle Regents Sisters Mabel Cruz, Evelyn Arlega, Lolita Quintos and Merlita Matias

### **Archdiocese of Pampanga:**

VR Sis. Letty Santos and Circle Regents Sisters Bernadette Degala, Irma Polangco, and Eleanor Venturero

### **Diocese of Balanga (Bataan):**

VR Sis. Norma Raguine and Circle Regents Sisters Sarah Cobatsa and Magdalene Perez

### **Food & Raffles Committee**

VR Sis. Merinnisa Ligaya

### **Mass Servers**

Sisters Maria Rosie Geronimo and Violeta Abado

### **Choir**

Immaculate Conception Parish Choir

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## *Four Pinoys Working for Pope Francis*

VATICAN CITY – Thousands of people from different parts of the world visit Vatican City daily, hoping to catch a glimpse of Pope Francis. Four Filipinos have however been blessed with the opportunity not only to see the pope, but also to live and work inside the Vatican and serve him.

Sister Ana Capito and Sister Rosalina Aldea, both from Quezon province, were assigned to the Vatican by

the Missionary Catechist of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

They are tasked to assist Italian Cardinal Francesco Monterise.

Sister Ana can never forget her first encounter with Pope Francis. He was walking down one of the hallways in the Vatican, and her first instinct was to hide. "I hid because I know that when the pope is passing, one



should not just go and approach him. I didn't know if I should hide or walk away

quickly, but while I was confused about what to do, the pope suddenly greeted me with, 'How are you sister?' So I came nearer and kissed his hand," Sister Ana recounted.

According to Sister Rosalina, Pope Francis loves to walk from his home at Santa Marta to his office at the Apostolic Residence, more than a hundred meters away.



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# Region XI Assembly Held Oct. 25, 2014

*By Sis. Beatriz Belonias, Vice-Regent, Our Lady of the Immaculate Heart Circle*

**T**he HSP Formation Center of the Holy Spirit Parish in Baybay City, Leyte was the venue of this year's Regional Assembly of Region XI on October 25, 2014.

Hosting the event were the two DMI circles in Baybay City, the Our Lady of the Immaculate Heart Circle of the Holy Spirit Parish in Visca and the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Poblacion. The assembly theme was "Proclaim Jesus' Words . . . Emulate Mama Mary's Virtues . . . Make DMI a Way of Life".

Some 120 DMI sisters representing nine circles attended the assembly. Sts. Peter & Paul Circle of Ormoc City sent the largest delegation of 28 sisters.

A concelebrated Mass with Fr. Bryan Flandez of the Holy Spirit Parish was the main celebrant. With him were Fr.

Dennis Felix Cagantas and Fr. Roberto Ebisa. The CFC Music Ministry of the Holy Spirit Parish provided the liturgical music during the Mass.

A procession by the DMI sisters from the church to the Holy Spirit Formation Center followed. Region XI Representative Sis. Perla Malazarte officially opened the assembly, welcoming the delegates and acknowledging the presence of guests from the International Board led by International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva. Baybay City Mayor Carmen Cari, a former DMI herself, also welcomed the delegates to her city.

The morning's first speaker was Fr. Roberto Ebisa, general manager of Radio Veritas Asia who talked on Morality in Media. Fr. Ebisa underscored the all-embracing impact of the modern means of social communication that



*The Assembly delegates during the procession from the church to the HSP Formation Center.*

presents challenges to Christians trying to keep the faith in Jesus alive through Mary.

Fr. Dennis Cagantas was the resource speaker for Pro-Life. In his talk, Fr. Cagantas stressed the value of life and the DMI's role in upholding life.

The two speakers had to leave early for their next appointments and necessitated adjustments in the day's program. Keynote speaker IR Sis. Mila Villanueva gave way to the

two and delivered her keynote address in the afternoon.

Introduced by Incoming RR Sis. Lenny Larrazabal, Sis. Mila talked about the ten evangelical virtues of Mama Mary, namely, most pure, most prudent, most humble, most faithful, most devout, most obedient, most poor, most patient, most merciful and most sorrowful. She also announced the DMI Board's resolutions to donate ten permanent

*Turn to Page 10*



*Assembly speakers Fr. Dennis Cagantas and Sis. Ma. Cecilia Tapang receive Certificates of Appreciation from Sisters Perla Malazarte and Lenny Larrazabal.*



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**Region XI Assembly Held Oct. 25, 2014...Cont'd. From Page 9**

houses to victims of 'Yolanda' through the CBCP-NASSA and to set up a Calamity Fund to be utilized for future emergencies.

The third mission, Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims, was discussed by Sis. Ma. Cecilia Tapang, counselor of the Life in the Gospel Community (LGC) based in Cebu, who proxied for Fr. Martin Ando Banoc who was not able to come. As part of a religious community serving the poor, including prisoners, Sis. Cecilia said that she could feel their pain and their need for understanding, love and assistance. She urged her audience to devote some time to visit, talk to and assist them and their families. She said that not all prisoners are guilty of crimes. The innocent does not deserve punishment.

International Regent-elect Sis. Rebbie Pacanan discussed Upliftment of Women Workers. A lawyer, Sis. Rebbie stressed the need to be aware of women's rights in and out of the workplace. She said that as DMIs, we should uphold our rights and those of other women in the communities we serve.

International Chairperson for Youth Welfare Sis. Ruby Macario reported on the activities of the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate such as the holding of area conferences starting this year. She encouraged the DMI circles to form SMI circlettes in their parishes. She also announced that the



**Fr. Roberto Ebisa talks on Morality in Media.**

SMI already has its own SMI Hymn composed by her son and now available on YouTube. She ended with her signature dance to the song "I Have a Dream" which the DMI sisters gamely joined in.

The evening's dinner and fellowship featured a contest for the Most Popular DMI 2014. Candidates were fielded by seven circles – Sts. Peter & Paul, Julio Cardinal Rosales, St. James the Greater, Sto. Nino, Our Lady of the Immaculate Heart, Our Lady of Fatima and Tower of Ivory. A fund-raising event, winners were adjudged by the number of votes the candidates are able to turn in. Winning the title of Most Popular DMI 2014 is the candidate of Tower of Ivory Circle with P70,740 worth of votes. Julio Cardinal Rosales Circle placed second and Our Lady of the Immaculate Heart Circle, third. Crowning the winner was IR Sis. Mila Villanueva assisted by Sisters Perla Malazarte and Lenny Larrazabal.

A contest for the best dance presentation was won by the Julio Cardinal Rosales

Circle with their rendition of "Pandango sa Ilaw. The other presentations were performed by theSto. Nino Circle and the Tower of Ivory Circle. The Sts. Peter & Paul Circle also sang a medley of folk songs. Special awards were given to Sts. Peter & Paul Circle for sending the largest

delegation, and the Sto. Nino Circle of Tacloban who won the Early Bird Award.

The day-long event ended with the awarding of Certificates of Participation to the circles present by Regent Sis. Catalina Pascual of the host circle.



**Keynote speaker IR Sis. Mila Villanueva is presented tokens of appreciation by Sis. Perla and Sis. Rebbie Pacanan.**



**Sis. Ruby Macario receives her Certificate of Appreciation from Sisters Catalina Pascual and Teresita Balbarona.**



**The Most Popular DMI 2014 and her court**



## First DMI Circle Organized In Illinois, USA

We now have a DMI circle in Chicago, Illinois. The Our Lady of Fatima Circle of St. Albert the Great Parish is the very first to be organized in Chicago, Ill., USA. It received its charter on October 11, 2014, made possible with the full support of Rev. Fr. Michael Soufal, pastor of the parish.

Sis. Beth Salmon, Past International Treasurer and Past Diocesan Regent of the Archdiocese of Zamboanga, was on hand to welcome the candidates and orient them on the DMI organization, vision and and missions and the virtues of DMI members. She also assisted in the

exemplification rites and installation of the circle's charter officers. Sis. Adele Gonzales, past regent of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of San Antonio de Padua Parish, Zamboanga City assisted Sis. Beth in the conduct of the exemplification rites. Sis. Adele was later unanimously elected as regent of the new circle. She is married to a very supportive husband, Bro. Isidro Gonzales, a fourth degree Knight of Columbus of St. Joseph Parish, Zamboanga City. The couple, now based in Chicago, is very active in St. Albert the Great Parish.

Congratulations and welcome, DMI sisters!



*Sis. Beth Salmon presides over the exemplification rites for the charter members of Our Lady of Fatima Circle.*



*The newly-installed officers of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle with Fr. Michael Soufal. To his left is Sis. Adele Gonzales, charter regent of the new circle.*

*From San Diego, California*

## Update from St. Charles Circle

Past International Treasurer and Past Zamboanga Diocesan Regent Sis. Beth Salmon visited the St. Charles Circle of San Diego, California last November, 2014. She was a special guest on November 13 during the installation of officers of the circle for 2015.

Sis. Erlinda Aquino is the incoming regent of St. Charles Circle with Sis. Aida Alfaro as vice-regent and Sis. Aida



*The newly-installed officers of St. Charles Circle with Sis. Beth Salmon (seated 5th from right).*

McColgan as past regent. Vicarial Regent Sis. Josie Francisco was the installing officer.

Sis. Beth and Past International Regent Sis. Beling Panganiban organized St. Charles

*The Circle has remained very active in the Parish of St. Charles and had been instrumental in the formation of another circle in California*

Circle nine years ago. She reported that the Circle has remained very active in the Parish of St. Charles and had been instrumental in the formation of another circle in California, the St. Joseph Circle of Westmorland.



*From the Diocese of Antipolo*

## **Our Lady of The Abandoned Circle Opens Pre-Natal Clinic**

*By Sis. Rita Lucena, Regent, Diocese of Antipolo*



*Fr. Rommel Felizardo during the inauguration and blessing of the OLA Pre-Natal Clinic which the DMI sisters helped put up.*



It was a dream-come-true for the Our Lady of the Abandoned Circle of the Diocese of Antipolo.

The circle's long-planned pre-natal clinic, a project of the circle's Pro-Life Committee, is now a reality with the inauguration and blessing of the clinic last May 3, 2014 after the circle's first Saturday Mass.

Located at the rear of the Basilica of the Our Lady of the Abandoned in Marikina City, the clinic will render free pre-natal services to indigent women of the parish. When it is time for the patient to give birth, she will be referred to a hospital for free delivery.

Dr. Belen Santos, an obstetrician-gynecologist who heads the circle's Pro-Life Committee will be the clinic's

chief administrator and will be assisted by other circle members. Clinic hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. every Friday.

A call for volunteer doctors has been made in the parish in order to sustain and expand the operations of the clinic which was made possible through the generous donation of circle members, among them Sis. Elena Mendoza, from whom a big bulk of the equipment came.

Rev. Fr. Reynante Tolentino, DMI chaplain and parish administrator, and Fr. Rommel Felizardo blessed the clinic. A sumptuous breakfast was shared by the sisters who attended the event.

*Located at the rear of the Basilica of the Our Lady of the Abandoned in Marikina City, the clinic will render free pre-natal services to indigent women of the parish.*

*Trivia on Pope Francis: Pope Francis is the first pope to reign with this title. He selected the name in memory of St. Francis of Assisi. Interestingly, another Francis is St. Francis Xavier - the co-founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) - the other founder was St. Ignatius. The Jesuits are considered to be very liberal but Pope Francis was one of the rare conservative members of the society.*

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*From the Diocese of Paranaque*

## **Risen Christ Circle Sponsors Intergenerational Healing Seminar**

A total of 37 participants composed of DMI sisters and SMIs of the Risen Christ Circle and Circlette of the Holy Eucharist Parish in Moonwalk Village, Paranaque City attended a two-day Intergenerational Healing Seminar last June 12-13, 2014. The seminar was held at the HEP Parish Center. The seminar was spearheaded by International Pro-Life Chairperson Sis. Helen de Leon and organized by Circle Regent Sis. Helen Balmores and the Circle's Pro-Life Committee chaired by Sis. Linda Chincuanco.

The seminar was conducted by the Healing Missionaries of the Holy Spirit whose mission is to bring about the wholeness of the person through the healing grace of God that would lead to the wholeness of the family.

On the first day, the seminar participants were divided into small groups after praying before the



*The DMI sisters of the Risen Christ Circle who participated in the Intergenerational Healing Seminar.*

Blessed Sacrament and introductory talk by Sis. Joy Dee, the Mission's head servant. The small groups were then assigned separate locations not within hearing of each other. A trainer is assigned to each group who encouraged the participants to open up and express what's in their minds, including their pains and hurts. The head servant, an expert in anger management, helps in processing the participants' thoughts and feelings.

On Day 2, each participant was assigned a randomly-numbered spiritual card. The session took place in the

Prayer Room of the Holy Eucharist Parish. The only human intervention during the exercise was the writing of the participant's name on the spiritual card.

Small miracles of healing had been made manifest during the session with the Holy Spirit seemingly working amongst the participants leading to the healing of many inner wounds and brokenness. According to the participants, they felt a feeling of peace suddenly enveloping them.

Rev. Fr. Elmo Ilao, the Mission's spiritual adviser, gave a talk to the participants before the end of the seminar.

A follow-up session is held a week or so after each seminar for evaluation and assessment of seminar results.

Aside from the healing of a person's inner hurts and pains, the Intergenerational Healing Seminar also involves the healing of the family tree, the healing of memories and re-parenting the child within of an adult person.

This seminar has been approved by no less than Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle.

*The seminar was conducted by the Healing Missionaries of the Holy Spirit whose mission is to bring about the wholeness of the person through the healing grace of God that would lead to the wholeness of the family.*

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*From the Archdiocese of Zamboanga*

## Transfiguration Circle Newest DMI Circle in Zambo

June 22, 2014 was a special day at the Transfiguration Parish in Sinunuc, Zamboanga City. The day marked the birth of the newest DMI Circle in the Archdiocese of Zamboanga.

Spearheading the organization of the circle were Past International Regent Sis. Lyding Ramirez, Diocesan Treasurer Sis. Pinky Saavedra and Regent Sis. Rose Bulawin of St. Joseph Circle. Sis. Tita Penaflor, chairperson for ceremonials, joined the group for the exemplification of charter members of Transfiguration Circle.

Conducting the exemplification ceremonies was the initiating team of St. Joseph Circle composed of Sisters Lyding as vice-regent, Evelyn Balbon as custodian, Rose Tang and Baby Belarmino as guides, Dolly Canizares as chancellor, Edna Wee as monitor, Rose Saavedra as banner bearer, Pinky Saavedra as exemplifying officer, Grace Gonzales as vicarial regent, Pilar Torres as past regent and Rose Bulawin as regent. Sisters Ann Thelmo and Marica Tapua also joined the conferral.



***The charter officers of the Transfiguration Circle with the DMI sisters of St. Joseph Circle headed by Sis. Lyding Ramirez.***

Gracing the exemplification ceremony were Diocesan Regent Sis. Angie Baes and Vicarial Regent Sis. Lowell Tantoco. Sis. Angie delivered an inspirational message after the ceremony.

The new circle which took two months to organize is headed by Charter Regent Sis. Pilarica Ledesma and Vice-Regent Sis. Angelita Diongson.

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*From the Archdiocese of Zamboanga*

## SMI Circlette Organized in Ipil, Sibugay

*By Sis. Monina Siasico, Vicarial Regent*

The newest Squirettes of Mary Immaculate circlette to be organized in the Archdiocese of Zamboanga is the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Circlette of St. Joseph the Worker

Parish in Ipil, Sibugay Province. The organization of the circlette came about through the initiative of Regent Sis. Maria Lladones and Past Regent Sis. Weng Palabrica.



***A group photo of the SMI Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Circlette members after their initiation.***

Fifteen young girls composed the initial members of the circlette who were initiated on June 6, 2014 by the SMI Team led by Ella Ballesteros, SMI president of Our Lady of Purification Parish, Zamboanga City and Sis. Darlene Tandoc, SMI coordinator of the Archdiocese. The election of circlette officers and their installation followed.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Angie Baes thanked the DMIs for recruiting and inspiring the young ladies to become SMIs who

she exhorted to follow in the footsteps of their elders as future DMIs. Ten ladies were also exemplified as new members of the St. Joseph Circle of Ipil by the initiating team of the Our Lady of Purification Circle led by Sis. Mila Navato. Sis. Angie congratulated the circle's officers for ably managing both activities as well as the sisters from Zamboanga City for being readily available even within very short notice. Ipil is six hours' drive away from Zamboanga City.



*From the Archdiocese of Manila*

## ***Snapshots from All Over***

### **Food Processing Demo**

**Bacood, Sta. Mesa.** The Upliftmen of Women Workers Committee of the Our Lady of Fatima Circle of Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila headed by Chairperson Sis. Dang Barrameda recently conducted a food processing demonstration for women of Barangay 625. The 25 participants who composed the initial batch of trainees learned how to process *tocino*, *longanisa* and deboning *bangus*. Women from the other barangays have requested for repeats of the food demo as part of their livelihood program.

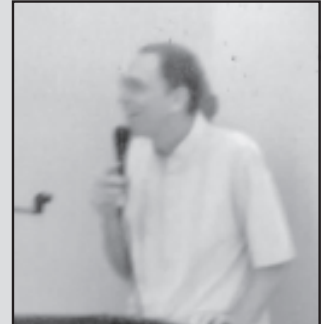


*From the Diocese of Paranaque*

### **Diocesan Recollection Held**



The diocesan, vicarial and circle officers of the Diocese of Paranaque held a diocesan recollection on Nov. 15, 2014 at the Knights of Columbus Hall of the Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish in Merville, Paranaque. Recollection master was Fr. Daniel Healy, director of the Anawim Community in the Philippines located at BF Resort Village, Las Pinas City. Diocesan Regent Sis. Sol Eugenio welcomed the 85 DMI sisters who attended the day-long recollection with the theme "Reaffirm our Love for Jesus Through Mary as DMIs".



***Trivia on Pope Francis: Pope Francis is considered to be amongst the conservative faction of the Church. In the early 1900s (some might even say earlier) a heresy arose called modernism. Essentially, the people who subscribe to this view believe that the Church can - and should - reverse previous dogmas and strip the Church back to a simplistic form as seen in the early years.***

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*From the Diocese of San Jose (N. E.)*



**Basket-Weaving Demo Seminar**

**San Jose City, Nueva Ecija.** The Upliftment of Women Workers Committee of San Jose Circle conducted recently a demo-seminar on basket-weaving for mothers in the barangay as a means of generating additional income for the family. The project was spearheaded by Circle Regent Sis. Rebecca Salvador who is a council woman of her barangay.



**Micro-Financing Project**

**Guimba, Nueva Ecija.** The Sta. Cecilia Circle of Guimba, Nueva Ecija turned over funds to Ms. Grace Corpuz to start her small *carinderia* in the form of an interest-free loan. Ms. Corpuz is the first beneficiary of a micro-financing project by the Circle under its Upliftment of Women Workers thrust. Vicarial Regent Sis. Aida Paguio, Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Lilia Martires and Regent Sis. Remedios Antonio are shown turning over the fund to Ms. Corpuz.

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*From the Archdiocese of Jaro*



**Archdiocesan Tree-Planting**

Diocesan Regent Sis. Emma Victoria led 70 DMI sisters from the Archdiocese in planting 250 fruit tree seedlings (*guyabano*, *mabolo* and jackfruit) in Barangay Botong, Oton, Iloilo last July 7, 2014. This pro-life activity was in partnership with DENR-CENRO's urban greening program.



**Feeding Program for 1,719 Children**

**Jaro, Iloilo City.** The St. Joseph Husband of Mary Circle of Jaro, Iloilo launched a supplementary feeding program for 1,719 pupils of nine public elementary schools in Iloilo. The program will run for four months with the children getting their supplemental feeding once a week. The Century Pacific Group, maker of canned tuna products, through the RSPo Foundation is the circle's partner in this pro-life project.

# Gone Too Soon!

## (My Alarm Clock)

By Em Cuartero

*(This is a story about Squirette Alyssandra Cuartero of the SMI Divine Mercy Circlette, Tandag City, Surigao del Sur (Region XII) who passed away last August 2, 2014. Author Em is Alyssandra's mom. - Ed.)*

**H**esitated doing this article all because I will be writing a portion of the story of my child. It's not supposedly this way. Nature designed children to bury their parents and not the other way around. When children lose their parents, we call them orphans. But what do we call a parent/s who lost a child/children? Nothing.

*Perhaps it is better left unsaid.*

Alyssandra, who we fondly call ALEX is a smart, funny and beautiful 15-year-old who was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis 1. Alex, in her young life and devastating condition had hopes for a future – she said she will never have children so no one will inherit NF. She could've become a hotshot neurosurgeon (who may have discovered the cure for NF, who knows). She was 15 but had the mindset that will put to shame people who are much, much older than she is.

*"If given the chance to live, I will serve the church and be a doctor and a nun at the same time."*

Neurofibromatosis is a genetic disorder that disturbs cell growth in your nervous system, causing tumors to form on nerve tissue. These tumors may develop anywhere in your nervous system, including in your brain, spinal cord and nerves.

*Please tell God to help us find a cure for Neurofibromatosis. Hug Daniella so*

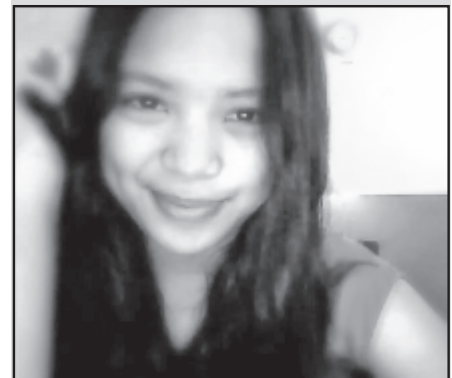
*tight for everybody who missed her.*

Alex was diagnosed in 2011. From then, her whole life changed. She had since stopped school and stayed home. And in a span of three years, the bright and sunny teenager who was about to be admired by young boys retreated to her "sick" world, became depressed (who wouldn't be) and with no vision of a future. She used to be the top of her class, consistently in the honor list and then it all just stopped.

*Alex is the second daughter that I have lost. Daniella was a stillborn baby and my fourth child.*

On August 2, 2014, exactly 4:44 p.m. (angel sign), my Alex was in heaven. *Anak*, you have not lost your battle, it just ended, like anyone else's. Sleep now, my dear. It's pain-free, happy and peaceful. We set you free to move along in your journey. Shine on, *Ate*. You have touched so many lives, especially mine. Your short life was meaningful and well-lived. The things that you have taught your siblings will carry on. The courage you have shown us will go a long way.

*In our hearts, you will live forever.*





## *An Introduction*

# The SMI National Officers 2013-2015

*By Sis. Ruby Macario, Int'l Chairperson for Youth Welfare*

**M**et the National Officers of the Squirettes of Mary Immaculate. They had been chosen among the best during the 14<sup>th</sup> SMI Biennial Convention in San Mateo, Rizal in May, 2013.

They were there during the Luzon Area Conference in Candaba, Pampanga in March 2014 and the Visayas Area Conference in Aklan in May, 2014. These events were the very first to be held as a result of a resolution passed during the 2013 Convention regarding the holding of area conferences in-between biennial conventions. The purpose is to provide the SMIs who are future leaders additional exposure to DMI's beliefs, practices and spirituality and the



**Maria Caroline Soliven**  
**SMI National President**  
**Immaculate Conception of**  
**KarangalanCirclette,**  
**Antipolo**

opportunity within their area to be exposed to area conferences. That they have been able to measure up to the new tasks the conferences require is concrete proof of their commitment to the responsibilities as servant-leaders.

Next year, they will be the moving force during the 15<sup>th</sup> SMI Biennial Convention in D'Leonor Inland Resort & Adventure Park, Bgy. Communal, Davao City on May 16-18, 2015 where their successors will be elected to the next term of office.

The difference between success and failure is a great team. Let us congratulate this batch of officers for a successful job.

I am **Maria Caroline B. Soliven**, 21 years of age, currently teaching Statistics and Analytic Geometry among Grade 9 students in an all-boys school. I am proud to say that I have been serving God for more than a decade which includes nine years as a Squirette of Mary. As an educator, I know that I cannot just teach students to be academically prepared but to be men of values. When I was elected as SMI National President, I realized

that this is what Mama Mary wants me to do. Following her footsteps in praising the Lord gave me reasons to know Him more, love Him more and being of service to Him and others.

My name is **Justine Losantas Calderon**, 20 years old and a fresh graduate of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management at Centro Escolar University – Manila last April 7, 2014.

From serving as Circlette President for three years, I served as National Treasurer from 2011 to mid-2013 after being elected to the position during the 13<sup>th</sup> SMI Biennial Convention in Boracay in 2011. I find it a great honor to be elected as National Vice-President for Luzon during the 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention at Ciudad Christia, San Mateo, Rizal last year.

My experience as a Squirette has made me realize a lot of things that helped deepen my faith and to know more about Mama Mary. I feel grateful and so blessed to be part of this organization. I am proud to be a Squirette.

I am **Jessany Yap**, the SMI National Vice-President for the Visayas. I am currently



**Justine L. Calderon**  
**National Vice-President -**  
**Luzon**  
**Immaculate Conception of**  
**KarangalanCirclette,**  
**Antipolo**



**Jessany Yap**  
**National Vice-President -**  
**Visayas**  
**Our Lady of Lourdes**  
**Circlette, Aklan**

enrolled at the University of San Agustin in Iloilo City where I am taking up Bachelor in Medical Laboratory Science. I am also the Associate Editor of our school's official publication. Regarding my being a Squirette, let me

quote from a piece I wrote before: "The Squirettes of Mary has brought me to places. Our life is a journey and SMI has made it possible for a lot of us to make it worthwhile and meaningful. We may be miles apart but Someone up there makes it possible for us to cross paths once in a while and appreciate life's blessings."

I am **Liezle Pauline Sta. Cruz Espiritusanto**, second year student of Ateneo de Zamboanga University taking up Bachelor of Science in Management Accounting. Having been elected as SMI National Vice-President for Mindanao has given me the chance to perform and to lead in the SMI tasks such as spiritual, social, civic and sports activities and at the same time, to assist in the DMI missions. As a member of the SMI initiating team, I have helped in the formation of six SMI circlettes in our Archdiocese that now number 19 among the 27 DMI circles. A recent civic project that we launched is the "Pulot BasurasaTabi ng Dagat". We also undertake team-building seminars and sports events.

I am **Krysta Elaine Abel**, SMI National Secretary. I am in my senior year as a BSBA student majoring in Management Accounting at the University of Batangas. I have been serving God for a decade now. I strongly believe that, to be a good leader, one must be a good follower. Being a Squirette is not only an opportunity but also a responsibility. At 19, I



**Liezle Pauline  
Espiritusanto**  
*National Vice-President -  
Mindanao*  
*Our Lady of Purification  
Circlette, Zamboanga*



**Krysta Abel**  
*National Secretary*  
*Mater Purissima Circlette,  
Lipa*

feel privileged serving as a national SMI officer which to me is quite an achievement.

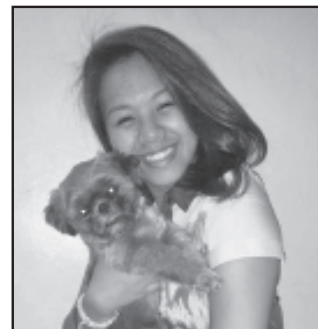
My name is **Melody Lanuza**, the National Treasurer of the SMI. I am currently taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Filipino and proud to say that I have been serving God for six years. I will be graduating a few months from now and, with Jesus' and Mary's guidance, I may be able to achieve my dream to be a teacher, to inspire my future students in learning new things and to inspire them to have good

moral values.

I am **Abbie Gail C. Villanueva**, 17 years old, and currently a sophomore at the University of the Philippines - Diliman, taking up BS Computer Engineering. Becoming a Squirette is truly one of the best things that ever happened to me. My SMI family has played a huge role in helping me find myself as I continue to grow up to be the best that I can be. The SMI is an organization I feel really blessed to be a part of and will never ever want to lose.



**Melody Lanuza**  
*National Treasurer*  
*Ina ng Grasya ng Diyos  
Circlette, Malolos*



**Abbie Gail Villanueva**  
*Chancellor*  
*Medalya Milagrosa  
Circlette, Cubao*

### *Quotes from Pope Francis*

"A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just."

"Human rights are not only violated by terrorism, repression or assassination, but also by unfair economic structures that create huge inequalities."

"Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. you have to trust God."

"Let us all remember this: one cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one's life."

## **MADONNA AND CHILD:** *Mirrors of Greatness and Humility*

*By Sis. Luz A. Gendrano, Past Regent, Risen Christ Circle*

**L**ong, long ago, amidst myriads of little stars, a bright light appeared in heaven, angelic voices were heard. "Gloria . . . Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" The bright light reflected the radiance of the Madonna and Child in Bethlehem. It was the first Christmas! The maiden was the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Child was Jesus, the Emmanuel (God Who is with us!) He was the promised Messiah.

The bond existing between Mary and Jesus is a divine bond. Mary's divine motherhood is a mystery. She has a unique role in the work of our salvation. It took a while for the Church to affirm this. In 431 A.D. at the Council of Ephesus, the Church conferred on Mary the title Theotekos (God bearer).

From the moment of conception, the bond between Mary and the Child Jesus never stopped growing. She never stopped growing closer to Jesus because she loved Him more and more. She grew in motherhood unto His crucifixion and even days after the Redemption, man's salvation by our Lord Jesus, the Redeemer.

The Madonna and Child is a picture of contrast, the greatness of the maiden of Nazareth and the lowliness and helplessness of the Son of God. St. Eusebius said "To understand the greatness of Mary's dignity as Mother of God, we would have to understand the greatness of her Son. Mary leads us to Jesus." St. Augustine wrote: "Mary's daily Fiat showed us that only through obedience to God will we find true peace. Mary intercedes for us to Jesus. We see Jesus with His humble and caring Mother." The life of the Madonna speaks of Jesus Christ's teaching that the one

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who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted. The Son of God Himself chose to be poor and helpless. Mary's Magnificat, her "Joyful Song" echoed her virtues which formed and influenced the human qualities and character of her Son, Jesus.

May we always follow Jesus and Mary in our journey of faith. Christmas is in the lowly hearts of the poor in spirit. Only through selfless love can we see Jesus. He lives among the humble, the insignificant and downtrodden. The Child Jesus is hidden in the Madonna's sweet embrace. Seek the Mother and her Child's light and blessings will be infused in you.

***Merry Christmas! May  
Peace, Love And Joy Be  
With You All!***