

# DMI Newsette

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July - September 2013

## Butuan Hosts Mindanao Area Conference



*The DMI International and Regional Officers with the Mass celebrants before the altar of St. Joseph Cathedral. From left, front row: Sisters Miriam Angot, Chit Arce, IR Sis. Mila Villanueva, Fr. Jerome Cruz, Msgr. Ruel Lasco, Bishop Juan de Dios Pablos, Bishop Nereo Odchimar, Msgr. Isidro Irizari, Sisters Lelis Pimentel and Annie Ty. Second row: Sisters Juliet Cruz, Ruby Macario, Cecille Apura, Lydia Ramirez, Milde Tong and Helen de Leon.*

More than 700 delegates from DMI circles representing Regions XII, XIII and XIV in Mindanao attended the Mindanao Area Conference on April 27-28, 2013 at the Malvar Hall of the Balanghais Hotel and Convention Center in Butuan City. The Diocese of Butuan headed by Diocesan Regent Sis. Pelagia Joven and the Our Lady of Peace Circle of St. Joseph, Butuan City hosted the conference.

A Eucharistic celebration was attended by the delegates at the St. Joseph Cathedral before the formal opening of the conference. Main Mass celebrants were Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos, D.D. of the Diocese of Butuan and Bishop Nereo Odchimar, D.D. of the Diocese of Tandag with Rev. Fr. Jerome Cruz, DMI international chaplain and Msgr. Ruel Lasco,

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## Stage Set for Luzon Area Conference; Rep. Leni Robredo to Grace the Event

Vice-International Regent for Luzon Sis. Lita Canonizado as Conference chairperson bared the final program for the Luzon Area Conference on October 18-20, 2013 at the Villa Caceres Hotel in Naga City with over 800 registered delegates from all over Luzon as of mid-September.

Congresswoman of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District of Camarines Sur, Atty. Ma. Leonor "Leni" Gerona Robredo, widow of the late DILG Secretary Jesse Robredo, has accepted DMII's invitation to be one of the speakers on the conference theme "The Role of Women in Nation-



*Congresswoman Leni Robredo is flanked by Vice-IR for Luzon Sis. Lita Canonizado and Vicarial Regent Sis. Elmy Antonio. Photo was taken at the Robredo home in Naga City.*

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## PHOTO NEWS

*From Roxas City*

### Gift-Giving by the Immaculate Conception Circle

The Immaculate Conception Circle of Roxas City organized a year ago held an outreach activity during which gifts were distributed to children in Baybay, Roxas City. Photo at left shows the

happy recipients of gifts from circle members. At left is a group picture of the charter officers and members of the circle.



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*From the International Regent*

## MESSAGE



The third quarter of the year had kept your International Board busy, as all of you had also been, in order that we may all grow spiritually through deepened faith in God and the Blessed Mary Immaculate.

In the past three months, we have attended five regional assemblies: the Region V Assembly in Puerto Princesa City on July 12-14, the Region II Assembly held in Cauayan, Isabela on July 26-27, the Region VII Assembly in Nasugbu, Batangas on August 24, the Region IV Assembly in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan on September 14 and the Region III Assembly in Angeles City on September 21. In all these assemblies, I had the full support of the Mission Chairpersons, our Newsette editor and our secretary at the DMI National Office who did all the pre- and post-arrangements.

I likewise wish to commend the Regional Representatives and their Diocesan Regents who all worked together to ensure the smooth flow of the assembly program. Noteworthy, too, was their focus on our vision to enhance our spirituality and to deepen our faith as may be seen in the themes of these assemblies.

As regards our mission of forming a DMI circle in Hongkong that I mentioned last issue of the DMI Newsette, a group composed of Fr. Jerome Cruz and Sisters Lydia Ramirez, Milde Tong, Miriam Angot, Ruby Macario, Juliet Cruz and myself went back to Hongkong for the installation of a new circle. This did not push through, however, due to a new rule in the parish that does not allow dual memberships in parish organizations. This has not discouraged us as we know that in Mama Mary's time we shall be able to find another group in another parish in Hongkong who shall find the DMI missions relevant in their community.

Let us continue our work in our missions, ensuring that whatever we know is shared with the members of the communities we live in.

As the Year of Faith nears its end and the Year of the Laity begins, let the strength of our faith in God, in the Blessed Mother and in ourselves be our inspiration and motivation to do more and accomplish more.

Let us also pray for peace in Zamboanga and the safety of all our sisters there.

Thank you and may God bless you and keep you always safe as you go about your work in the DMI missions.

**SIS. MILA A. VILLANUEVA**  
**International Regent**



pastor of St. Joseph as co-celebrants. The opening ceremony started with the enthronement of the Blessed Virgin Mary which included a dance offering in her honor. Past Region XII Representative Sis. Rosalinda "Lelis" Pimentel then called the conference to order followed by the presentation of delegates by Regional Representatives – Sis. Miriam Angot for Region XIV, Sis. Cecille Apura for Region XIII and Sis. Annie Ty for Region XII. Guests from the International Board led by International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva graced the occasion. Past International Regent Sis. Lydia Ramirez was also present. Sis. Cecille, concurrent Vice-International Regent for Mindanao welcomed the delegates.

An intermission number, a Kaliga-an Dance, was performed by some DMI sisters with the FSUU Dance Company of the Fr. Saturnino Urios University headed by Dr. Pepito Mosquito.

An inspirational message by Sis. Mila Villanueva closed the opening program. Introduced by Sis. Lelis Pimentel, Sis.

Mila expounded on the conference theme "DMII Serving with Love, Charity, Faith and Integrity for Spiritual Upliftment in the Year of Faith". She called for real conversion and serving in the DMI missions with humility, an unwavering faith taking after the Blessed Mother, and love and charity, the greatest of the three Christian virtues.

The plenary session in the afternoon started with a message from Fr. Jerome followed by the presentation by the International Mission Chairpersons of their 2013-14 programs and action plans for the five DMI missions.

Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-Life said that the DMI will continue to stand up for life, persist in the campaign against the evils of contraception and the DEATH bills and push for the protection and conservation of the environment. She introduced a new ministry called **Bereavement** that would help mitigate the devastating effects of losing a loved one. Drawing from her own experience of losing her husband two years ago, she said that the time spent and assistance



*The International Officers and Chairpersons are welcomed at the Butuan City Airport by the conference hosts, the sisters from the Diocese of Butuan.*



*The officers and members of the Our Lady of Peace Circle, the host circle of the Mindanao Area Conference.*

given to her by sisters from her circle helped a lot in easing the pain of her loss. She suggested that circles introduce bereavement ministry in their respective parishes.

Sis. Chit Arce for Morality in Media underscored the power of media to affect a child's development and the importance and urgency of empowering parents through media awareness to protect their children from the

adverse effects of media. She cited statistics from a survey conducted by Cartoon Network which showed how much time children in various ages consume media (TV, internet, radio, etc.) and their increasing vulnerability to them.

The committee's action plans include educating parents to be able to guide their children, commending groups promoting wholesome





*The Mission Chairpersons during the presentation of their 2013-14 programs and plans of action. From left: Sisters Helen de Leon, Chit Arce, Juliet Cruz, Ruby Macario and Milde Tong.*

media, exercising vigilance against morally reprehensible, violent and pornographic media programs and materials, networking with other groups to boost the DMI's position in promoting good media and strengthening the organization's advocacy and campaign for good media.

In ending, Sis. Chit called on DMIs to be empowered as media gatekeepers by being equipped with skills to be able to train and teach the good and adverse effects of media to families and communities.

Sis. Juliet Cruz, chairperson for Upliftment of Women Workers, said that the Committee's thrust for 2013-14 are as follows: make financing available through cooperatives and Grameen-style institutions to be able to actualize

the livelihood programs that DMI circles sponsor as additional source of income for the family, provide counseling service within parishes for women in crisis, include spiritual formation and Scripture reading as a component of DMI projects especially during the celebration of the Year of Faith, and create a monitoring system to measure the effectiveness of projects and activities being undertaken under this thrust.

Sis. Ruby Macario, chairperson for Youth Welfare, gave a report on the organization of more SMI circlettes all over the country and an update on the 14<sup>th</sup> SMI Biennial Convention to be held on May 24-26, 2013 at Ciudad Christia 9Waves Resort in San Mateo, Rizal.

Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to

Prisoners' Families & their Victims gave an update report on the Committee's flagship program, a Ten-Year Scholarship Program called "Educ a Child, Educ for Life, Educ Program for the DMI, Dream Come to Life". She urged the conference delegates to grant more and more scholarships to deserving children of prisoners and victims to provide them with a better future life.

Inputs on the DMI missions were also provided by outside resource persons – Rev. Fr. Amado Ecarma, pastor of Ampayon Parish, Butuan City for Pro-Life, Bishop Zacarias Jimenez, pastor of Sr. Sto. Nino Parish for Morality in Media and Atty. Josefe Ty, dean, FSUU College

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*Dance presentations by DMI sisters of Region XII during FellowshipNight.*

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### ***Stage Set for Luzon Area Conference; ...Cont'd. from Page 1***

Building, through the Family, with Mary as Model". The Congresswoman is also the chairperson of the Liberal Party in her province.

Day 1 of the Conference (Oct. 18) will start with the consecration of the image of the Blessed Mother and the traditional DMI Conference opening ceremony. The international chairpersons of the five DMI missions will then present their 2013-14 plans and programs. Separate forums for each mission will follow, the result of which will be reported in plenary at the end of the conference session.

As conference hosts, the DMIs of Region VI (Laguna) will provide the evening's fellowship program.

Two speakers are slated to give talks on Day 2 (Oct. 19) which starts with a message from International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva. They are Rev. Fr. Wilmer Tria of the Chito Madrigal Foundation, Ateneo de Naga in the morning and Congresswoman Robredo in the afternoon.

A Eucharistic celebration, an anticipated Mass, to be celebrated by Archbishop Rolando Tria Tirona of the Archdiocese of Caceres and DMI International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz will end the Day 2 session.

Representatives from seven (of eight) regions of Luzon will showcase their singing and dancing talents in a contest for the best regional presentation. Region VI will not participate in



***Archbishop Rolando Tria Tirona of the Archdiocese of Caceres with the Region VI officers who made a courtesy call at his office in Naga City. From left, VR Sis. Isabel Ticzon, the Archbishop, Vice-IR for Luzon Sis. Lita Canonizado, Diocesan Secretary Sis. Fe Aquinde, Diocesan Regent Sis. Elvie Arambulo, and VR Sis. Lorie Santos.***

the contest. The motif is Filipiniana.

The conference will officially end on the morning of Sunday, (Oct.20). The delegates will then have the opportunity to visit Bicol's many scenic attractions and to shop for souvenirs to bring home.

The Organizing Committee of the Luzon Area Conference is exerting all efforts to make the conference another unforgettable event for the delegates.

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### ***Butuan Hosts Mindanao Area Conference...Cont'd. from Page 5***

of Law for Upliftment of Women Workers.

The open forum that followed was moderated by Sis. Alma Eleazar.

The *piece d' resistance* during the dinner and fellowship program was a contest for the best presentation with an international motif. Dances of various countries were showcased during the contest by representatives from selected circles of the dioceses of Region XII – the Dioceses of Agusan del Sur, Bukidnon, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Gingoog and Surigao.

The following morning, Sunday, a Eucharistic celebration

was held at the conference venue with Msgr. Marcelino Caldoza, DMI spiritual adviser of Nasipit, Surigao del Norte and Rev. Fr. Carlito Tiu, parish priest of Bacuag, Surigao del Norte as Mass celebrants.

Sis. Annie Ty then opened the bidding for the next conference which the Diocese of Tagum won. The 2015 Mindanao Area Conference will be held in Tagum City, Davao del Norte.

In closing the conference, Sis. Lelis Pimentel thanked the Conference Working Committee and the delegates for the success of the 2013 Mindanao Area Conference.



# Region V Assembly Held In Puerto Princesa

Nature-blest Palawan was the venue of this year's assembly of Region V held on July 12-14 at the A & A Plaza Hotel in Puerto Princesa City, the peaking southwest monsoon (*habagat*) notwithstanding. (Like in other DMI conferences, the Blessed Mother's intercession brought

the sun out during the three days of the conference.)

From the very beginning, the atmosphere at the regional assembly was one of reverence and awe, as the assembly delegates witnessed the entry and enthronement of the Blessed Virgin Mary signaling the start of

the conference. The solemnity of the opening ceremony and the moving prayer invoking the intercession of the Blessed Mother seemed to have touched everyone's heart, bringing some tears to the eyes of many.

International Secretary and Region V

Representative Sis. Cora Afuang officially welcomed and acknowledged the 293 delegates of 44 circles from the dioceses comprising Region V: the Dioceses of Antipolo, Cubao, Kalookan, Imus, Manila, Paranaque and the Vicariate of Palawan.

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*International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva (at center) enters the conference hall with the image of the Blessed Mother for the enthronement ceremony.*



*Bishop Pedro Arrigo, D.D., bishop of the Vicariate of Palawan was Mass celebrant and keynote speaker.*



*Conference Chairperson, Region V RR Sis. Cora Afuang welcomes the delegates to the Assembly.*



*Assembly resource speakers, Palawan Vice-Governor Dennis Socrates and Fr. Eugene Elevera, pastor of Sta. Lourdes Parish and formator of Seminario de San Jose.*



*The Region V Assembly Working Committee headed by Sis. Cora Afuang.*





*The Mission International Chairpersons, from left, Sisters Helen de Leon, Milde Tong, Juliet Cruz, Ruby Macario and Chit Arce with Sis. Cora Afuang (3rd from left) and DMI Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada (2nd from right).*

Most Rev. Pedro Arrigo, D.D., bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa who was presider in the Eucharistic celebration, was the keynote speaker on the assembly theme "The DMIs: Faithful Evangelizers Inspired by the Love of Jesus and Mother Mary". He was introduced by Sis. Lily Gatchalian, past vicarial regent of Puerto Princesa.

Bishop Arrigo first

welcomed his audience to the "City of the Living God". He then said that the world has now become a dangerous place and that the mission of evangelization is not easy and as such, the DMIs are among the "endangered species". But with the Holy Spirit working in us and through prayer, the soul of the work of evangelization, he exhorted his audience to be the living example of faithful evangelizers.



*Vice-Governor Dennis Socrates accepts a token of appreciation from Sis. Cora Afuang and IR Sis. Mila Villanueva on behalf of the Palawan Governor for hosting the closing dinner of the Assembly.*

Bishop Arrigo enumerated the objectives of the Year of Faith: 1. **Integral faith evangelization** - faith must be imparted in all aspects, especially political and economic, through an integral faith formation; 2. **Renewal of the clergy** - the urgent need to renew the Church through renewal of the clergy leading to renewal of society; 3. **Lay empowerment** - the need for lay formation, the laity which makes

up 90% of the Church at this point is a "sleeping giant"; 4. **Enkindle the missionary spirit** - the need to reach out to the unchurched, Catholics who have drifted away for lack of a solid faith foundation.

"Evangelization is proclaiming the Gospel," Bishop Arrigo said. It is not simply a teaching of doctrines but the proclamation of the Person of Jesus Who is the expression



*DMI sisters of Palawan showcase the art and culture of their province via songs and dances.*

of God's love for us. "God has loved us first; our love for Him is but a response to the love that we experience." His final message "Live out your being Christians at home and at work. Our faith is not for ourselves alone but must be shared. Be proclaimers and witnesses of your faith through action. You are the salt of the earth and light of the world. You are being sent forth to bear fruit. Be a joyful witness."

The evening fellowship on Day 1 was provided by the circles of the Vicariate of Puerto Princesa. Vicarial Regent Sis. Nitz Austria welcomed the delegates. Traditional songs and dances showcasing Palawan's culture and art were then performed: choral renditions by the sisters of St. Peter, St. Michael and St. Bernadette Circles and Coro Immaculata, a joint DMI-KC choir of Quezon, Palawan, a song number by Sis. Marietta Director of St. Peter Circle and cultural dances such as "Pagdiwata", "Kaingin" and "Pagtatanim"

depicting the agricultural life of the people of Palawan. It is worth mentioning how much time and effort our DMI sisters in Palawan put into the night's cultural presentation, some traveling as long as 16 hours from Brooke's Point, Quezon, Cuyo and other points to put together the night's program.

On Day 2 (July 13), updates were provided by the International Mission Chairpersons on their programs for the five DMI missions for 2013-14 - Sis. Chit Arce for Morality in Media, Sis. Helen de Leon for Pro-Life, Sis. Juliet Cruz for Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims and Sis. Ruby Macario for Youth Welfare. (Please see "Butuan Hosts Mindanao Area Conference", pp. 1 to 6 for details of the 2013-14 programs and action plans for the DMI Missions.)

Sis. Ruby gave a report on the 14th SMI Biennial Convention attended by 182



*The Capitol Performing Group of Palawan during their cultural presentation.*

Squirettes and 88 DMIs at Ciudad Christia 9Waves Resort in San Mateo, Rizal on May 24-26, 2013. During the convention, resolutions were passed on the holding of meetings and conferences. The SMI circlette shall hold monthly meetings on designated dates and places agreed upon and area conferences in-between conventions. She announced that in 2014, area conferences shall be held separately in Luzon in March, the Visayas in July and Mindanao in October. The 15th SMI Biennial Convention shall be held in Mindanao, possibly

in Davao or Cagayan de Oro.

The other two speakers on Day 2 of the Assembly were Rev. Fr. Eugene Elevera, pastor of Sta. Lourdes Parish and formator of Seminario de San Jose, whose topic was "Faith and Poverty in Mary" and Hon. Dennis M. Socrates, vice-governor of Palawan who is very active in the Opus Dei, on the topic "Seeking God In Secular Activities".

Fr. Elevera said that Mary is part of Anawim, poor people who trust in God and who possess the virtue of faith, i.e., believing in God and all that He has said. Mary all her life manifested the virtue beginning

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with the Annunciation when she declared to Gabriel "Be it done unto me according to thy word" (Mary's *fiat*). Mary loved being poor,

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***Vice-Governor Socrates declared that the very reason or the very end of human existence is man's union with God. Being created in God's image, man is gifted with intellect and free will. "Finding God is the fulfillment of one's happiness through seeking out the truth by one's free will or freedom to choose." Freedom of choice is not absolute. It entails responsibilities. The commitment to do God's will, in accordance with His commandments is a call to holiness.***

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cherished being poor. "Because of her faith in God, she could afford to be poor."

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During the International Regent's time, Sis. Mila Villanueva said that the celebration of the Year of Faith is a call for renewal and true and authentic conversion to the Lord. She also called on the DMI sisters to serve in the DMI missions with humility, accepting their inadequacies and resolving to improve themselves and by asking for forgiveness as they learn to forgive

others. She also noted the very heartwarming response of delegates to the assembly's program - a balanced mix of solemnity punctuated at times by their hearty laughter while interacting with their co-delegates and listening to the speakers.

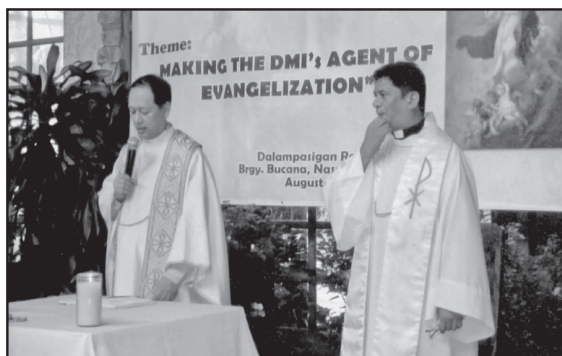
An Anticipated Mass was celebrated by Fr. Elevera assisted by Fr. Mateo.

In the closing ceremonies, Conference Chairperson Sis. Cora Afuang acknowledged the members of her Organizing Committee who worked very hard for the success of the Assembly: Sisters Ruby Macario, Nitz Austria, Rita Lucena and Josie Halog and the dioceses of Region V headed by their Diocesan Regents - Sisters Rita Lucena of Antipolo, Lydia Ordonez of Cubao, Zenia Velasco of Imus, Agripina Castaneda of Manila, Sylvia San Pedro of Kalookan, Sol Eugenio of Paranaque and Nitz Austria of the Vicariate of Puerto Princesa. Program hosts were Sisters Alma Luces and Rowena Sandoval.

The Provincial Government of Palawan hosted the closing dinner and fellowship. Vice-Governor Socrates who represented Palawan Governor Jose Chavez Alvarez and his wife Judge Rowena Pangalangan-Socrates graced the occasion. The Capitol Performing Group from the Provincial Capitol performed a one-hour cultural presentation. Afterwards, the delegates, no matter their age (from their 30's to the 80's), danced the night away. It seemed nobody wanted to leave even after the last strains of dance music had faded away.

The following morning, good-byes were said as the DMI sisters promised to see each other again at the Luzon Area Conference in October and the 18th Biennial Convention in Bohol in 2014. A tour of the Underground River and island-hopping in Honda Bay came next in many delegates' Palawan itinerary.





*Fr. Jerome Cruz and Fr. Timoteo Balita, Mass celebrants.*



*The assembly speakers, from left: Region VII RR Sis. Ma. Adeline Lee, Fr. Jerry Perrocho, SVD, keynote speaker and Fr. Jerome Cruz.*



*Fr. Perrocho (in left photo) and Fr. Jerome (in right photo) receive plaques of appreciation from Sisters Charito Apacible, Adeline Lee, Evelyn Roberto and IR Mila Villanueva.*

## *“Making the DMI as Agent of Evangelization” Region VII Assembly Theme*

Twenty circles from the four dioceses comprising Region VII were represented by 253 delegates during their Regional Assembly held in Nasugbu, Batangas last August 25, 2013. The region's four dioceses are the Archdiocese of Lipa (Batangas), and the Dioceses of San Jose (Occidental Mindoro and Oriental Mindoro), Gumaca and Lucena (Quezon).

Held at the lush garden setting of Dalampasigan Restaurant, the assembly was hosted by the Our Lady of Peace Circle of Nasugbu, Batangas headed by Regent Sis. Charito Apacible, the incumbent mayor of Nasugbu.

Guests at the Assembly included International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva, DMI International Chaplain Fr.

Jerome Cruz, International Chairperson for Youth Welfare Sis. Ruby Macario, DMI Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada, Past International Regent Sis. Myrna Zapanta, Past Region VII Representative Sis. Norma Lontok and Past International Chairperson for Upliftment of Women Workers Sis. Linda Castillo.

The day's program opened with a doxology by Squirette Carla Panganiban of the SMI Our Lady of Peace Circlette followed by the presentation of participants by Sis. Evelyn Pedrajas who was the day's master of ceremonies. Diocesan Regent Sis. Cora Gonzales of the Archdiocese of Lipa and

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*“Making the DMI as Agent of Evangelization”*  
*...Cont’d. from Page 11*

Sis. Charito welcomed the delegates followed by a message from Region VII Representative Sis. Ma. Adeline Lee. Sis. Adeline exhorted the DMI sisters present to be inspired by love, patience and trust in Mama Mary. “Let the Word of God triumph in our work of evangelization,” she said.

Rev. Fr. Jerry Perrocho, SVD, superior of the Society of the Divine Word, Agusan and Surigao District, was the assembly keynote speaker on the theme “Making the DMI as Agent of Evangelization”.

Introduced by Vicarial Regent Sis. Evelyn Roberto, the delegates learned that Fr. Perrocho works among the indigenous peoples of Mindanao with the current mission to organize formal and non-formal education among the Manobos.

In his keynote address, Fr. Perrocho called on the DMIs to be women of faith, underscoring their vital role as “multi-taskers” in the work of evangelization. “You play many roles in the home, community and church,” he pointed out.

He then continued to cite the many women both in the Bible and in history who played key roles in the Church and the world during their time: the biblical women Ruth, Hannah, Queen Esther, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the women saints, St. Catherine of Sienna and St. Therese of the Child Jesus among them, and in recent history, Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement and the late President Cory Aquino who was noted for her piety. “The faith of women carries weight,” he said.

Fr. Perrocho's final message was: “Celebrate your life of witnessing; celebrate each other. Go out and be the light for others. Make the difference in the world and the Church with the Blessed Mother as your guide.”

DMI International Chaplain Fr. Jerome Cruz came next with a short talk on Morality in Media. Fr. Jerome hosts the program “Hello, Father” over Radio Veritas. He cited the impact of media on people's lives, among them, creating culture (a group of people acting in a particular manner over a period of time) and



*Sis. Ruby Macario receives a plaque of appreciation after her presentation.*



*IR Sis. Milla Villanueva with the Regional Officers and Assembly hosts.*

needs (by way of advertisements and other promotional media tools). There is a need, he said, for people to have the capacity to discern, to decide and to act in accordance with what is true and good.

“Media reflects life and life reflects media,” he continued. “Stand up for what is right. Let it be your personal and the DMI's crusade to make the world a better place.”

A Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Jerome and Fr. Timoteo Gameline Balita, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish, ended the morning session.

Fr. Jerry Perrocho opened the afternoon session with a talk on Pro-Life. Quoting the Blessed Mother Teresa, he said that “the greatest destroyer of peace in the world is abortion”. He then cited statistics showing how far-reaching the practice of abortion has become in some countries in the world, the number growing by the day. He named the countries where abortion and other anti-life measures and procedures such as embryo experimentation (cloning/creation of

hybrids) and euthanasia (deliberate termination of human life) have been legalized. He also noted that a different view of human being has emerged – a mechanistic or utilitarian view – where man is not seen as created in God's image with innate dignity but on the basis of his use to society.

In this Year of Faith and New Evangelization, Fr. Perrocho said that evangelization is the

responsibility of the entire people of God. Everyone must strive for a Christ-centered life, starting at home, making the family a domestic church, and in the parish and the community.

The Year of Faith is a call to conversion (pray for the grace to see the ways in which our lives are aligned with Christ's mission), a call to reconciliation (forgiveness), and a call

to communion (pray for the grace to obtain justice, peace and integrity of creation).

International Chairperson for Youth Welfare Sis. Ruby Macario rendered a report on the 14th SMI Biennial Convention last May and announced that resolutions were passed during the convention calling for the holding of monthly meetings by SMI circlettes and of area conferences in-between biennial conventions.

The first area conference will be held in 2014 – March in Luzon, July in the Visayas and October in Mindanao. The 15th SMI Biennial Convention will be held in Mindanao in 2015.

The final speaker was International Regent Sis.

Mila Villanueva who noted the cheerful countenance and open-mindedness of DMIs which contribute to the strong fraternal ties among the sisters. She provided updates from the International Board such as the revision of the DMI handbooks to include the amendments ratified during the National Officers' Meeting in May.

The intermission numbers during the day's program were provided by the SMI Our Lady of Peace Circlette, the Marian Circle of Lian and the Our Lady of Peace Circle of Nasugbu. Plaques of appreciation were given to the guest speakers.

The day's program ended with a closing prayer led by Sis. Dalisay Rodriguez.



*An intermission number by the Marian Circle of Lian, Bastangas.*

***"Mary has the authority over the angels and the blessed in heaven. As a reward for her great humility, God gave her the power and mission of assigning to saints the thrones made vacant by the apostate angels who fell away through pride. Such is the will of the almighty God who exalts the humble, that the powers of heaven, earth and hell, willingly or unwillingly, must obey the commands of the humble Virgin Mary. For God has made her queen of heaven and earth, leader of his armies, keeper of his treasure, dispenser of his graces, mediatrix on behalf of men, destroyer of his enemies, and faithful associate in his great works and triumphs."***  
***-Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin***



## Region IV Assembly Held Sept. 14

**T**he Diocese of Malolos (Region IV) held its Regional Assembly last Sept. 14 at the Vista Grotto Hotel in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan. Hosting the assembly was the Vicariate of Sta. Maria I and San Jose headed by Vicarial Regent Sis. Lita Lumba and composed of the Rosa Mystica, Holy Mary, Holy Child of Parada and St. Gabriel de Archangel Circles. The assembly theme was "The Great Faith of Mama Mary Inspires and Uplifts Us".

More than 250 delegates from 21 circles in the Diocese of Malolos attended the assembly headed by their vicarial regents – Sis. Adela Hilario of the Vicariate of Sta. Maria II and San Agustin, Sis. Felicitas Coronel of the Vicariate of St. Anne, Sis. Tita Galvez

of the Vicariate of St. Martin of Tours and St. Francis of Assisi, Sis. Nerie Concepcion of the Vicariate of Our Lady of Fatima, Sis. Lyn Millora of the Vicariate of Sto. Nino, the Vicariate of the Immaculate Conception and the host vicariate.

Gracing the assembly were members of the International Board – International Regent Sis. Mila Villanueva, Mission Chairpersons Sisters Chit Arce of Morality in Media and Juliet Cruz of Upliftment of Women Workers, and DMI Newsette Editor Sis. Sally Estrada and from Region IV, Past Regional Representatives Sisters Prising Hermogenes, Piling San Juan and Flor Barcial.

The Assembly started with the traditional DMI opening ceremony with



*Diocesan Regent Sis. Fely Gallardo acknowledges the presence of circle delegates.*

Sis. Lita Lumba officially welcoming the delegates. Diocesan Regent Sis. Fely Gallardo then acknowledged the circles represented and exhorted the delegates to follow the signposts that lead to Jesus through the Blessed Mother.

In her message to the delegates, Region IV Representative Sis. Violy Luna said that the Diocese has many



*A message from Region IV RR Sis. Violy Luna*

graces and blessings to thank the Lord for and requested Sis. Piling San Juan to lead the assembly in a special prayer for peace in Zamboanga and the safety of the many DMI sisters there. She also gave special mention of a new circle that has just been organized in the Diocese through the efforts of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Circle of Barasoain – the San Isidro de Labrador Circle.



*The International and Regional officers at the presidential table. From left: Sisters Chit Arce, Violy Luna, Mila Villanueva, Fely Gallardo and Juliet Cruz*



*Doxology by Sis. Baby Bartolome and her group*



*Plaques of appreciation were received by Sis. Chit Arce (left photo) and Juliet Cruz (right photo) from Sisters Violy Luna, Fely Gallardo and Lita Lumba after their presentations.*



*Msgr. Albert Suatengco officiates at the Eucharistic celebration.*



*IR Sis. Mila Villanueva, keynote speaker*



*The San Isidro Labrador Circle formally receives its DMI Charter during the assembly.*



*Intermission numbers by the St. Gabriel de Archangel Circle and the SMI Rosa Mystica Circlette.*



Sis. Chit Arce then presented her programs and action plans for Morality in Media saying that the Committee's main agenda is to protect children from the harmful effects of media and urged DMIs to be equipped with the required skills as media gatekeepers in their parishes and communities.

For Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Juliet Cruz said that the Committee aims to actualize the livelihood programs that DMI circles have been conducting for marginalized women in their parishes by providing much-needed capital to set up a small business. This can be achieved through membership in

cooperatives and networking with Grameen-style institutions. She also stressed the urgent need for counseling services for women in crisis and spiritual formation as a component of the Committee's various activities.

The afternoon session

opened with the keynote speech of IR Sis. Mila Villanueva who was introduced by Sis. Prising. Sis. Mila said that faith which means confident belief is the single most important element over the enemy. "The Blessed Mother is the epitome of faith, her faith being more

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# *Immaculate Conception Circle Donates Books to Public School Libraries*

*By Sis. Feliciana Aldaba, Past Circle Regent*

**T**he Immaculate Conception Circle of Mololos City remains committed to the DMI missions. It was in pursuance of these missions that the Morality in Media Committee responded to the message of Hon. Christian Natividad, Malolos City mayor, that the nine new barangay high schools and eight barangay elementary schools that he had established need libraries. The circle's response to the call, a part of the continuing tripartite (church, government, and academe) cooperation existing in the city, came in the form of book donations, 85 boxes of new books and periodicals for use by the students, from pre-school to high school.

The success of the project was the result of the Circle's networking with libraries - both public and private - and some book stores from which the DMIs solicited the books and periodicals. The

*From Malolos City*



*Malolos City Mayor Christian Natividad receives the books donated by the Immaculate Conception Circle during the formal turn-over of the donation on June 6, 2013.*

Immaculate Conception Circle is headed by Regent Sis. Zorina Agustin. It is the home circle of Region IV Representative Sis. Violy Luna.

A ceremonial turn-over of the donations was held at the Mayor's Office on June 6, 2013. The donations were in turn sent to the Division Superintendent of City Schools in Malolos. All the 17 new schools received allocations of the books. A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to the Circle last August in grateful acknowledgment of the book donation.

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## *Region IV Assembly...Cont'd. from Page 15*

than the faith of men and angels together." Mary's unwavering faith saw the greatness of Jesus in His humble state – being born in a stable in Bethlehem, while growing up as a carpenter's son in Nazareth and His passion and death on the Cross.

Sis. Mila's personal testimony manifesting the mantle of protection with which Mama Mary covered her and her husband while in an extremely dangerous situation touched many of her listeners' heart, many of them also recalling times in their life when big and small miracles happened when they prayed for the Blessed Mother's intercession.

Plaques of appreciation were awarded to the speakers.

A Eucharistic celebration by Msgr. Albert Suatengco, DMI diocesan spiritual adviser, came next. September

14 being the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Fr. Albert's homily centered on the Cross, which used to be a symbol of shame and death, that had become a symbol of life, and Christ enshrined on the Cross, a symbol of eternal life.

Wrapping up the assembly were the inspirational message of Sis. Piling San Juan, the treasurer's report rendered by Diocesan Treasurer Sis. Leonie Francisco, the closing remarks of Sis. Tess Labilles, regent of the Rosa Mystica Circle and the closing prayer led by Past Regent Sis. Baby Bijasa.

Intermission numbers were provided by the St. Gabriel de Archangel Circle and the SMI Rosa Mystica Circlette. The program hosts were Sisters Brigs Abela and Maricar Victorio.



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*From Region V*

## Marian Recollection Held

Last August 26, 2013, a group of DMI sisters from Region V gathered at the Sta. Rita de Cascia Parish Center in Philamlife Homes, Quezon City to listen to a half-day recollection given by Fr. Deo Layug, a former SVD priest who has since become a diocesan priest. Currently, he is the Vicar General of Batanes and is kept busy giving talks and recollections in various places the whole year round. What was originally planned as a recollection only for the Region's Officers and Board ballooned to 191 attendees.



*Recollection speaker Fr. Deo Layug before the recollection participants.*

Since the date of the recollection was between two important feasts of the Blessed Mother (Feast of the Assumption on August 15 and the Nativity of Our Lady on Sept. 8), Fr. Deo talked about the Blessed Mother and her impact and influence in the lives of Filipinos. His talk was peppered with his personal experiences which clearly proved the presence of the Blessed Mother and how she takes care and looks after our welfare. Among other things, Fr. Deo pointed out that Filipinos are confirmed Marian devotees, proof of which is the fact that Mama Mary is the Patroness of the Philippines. Each month of the year, a feast of the Blessed Mother is being celebrated in various parts of the country.

The recollection was capped by a celebration of the Holy Eucharist and after a simple lunch, the participants went home happy and spiritually renewed. Everybody agreed that despite being avowed Marian devotees and followers, there were still new and interesting learnings about Mama Mary that they discovered that day. Indeed the recollection was a worthwhile spiritual exercise.

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*From the Diocese of Paranaque*

## ***"Iwas-Bukol" Project Held May 28***

"Iwas-Bukol", a breast cancer-awareness project, was sponsored by the Diocese of Paranaque last May 28, 2013. The project was spearheaded by the Mary Mother of the Church Circle of BF Resort Village, Las Pinas City through the initiative of Diocesan Regent Sis. Sol Eugenio and Regent Sis. Susan Biluan with the Gift 2Life Foundation as project partner.

Dr. Cristina Santos, head of the Gift 2Life Foundation and a team of doctors conducted free clinical breast examination, breast cancer risk factor assessment, one-on-one breast consultation and breast biopsy as needed. More than 50 women benefited from the project.

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## Diocese of Paranaque Has New DMI Circle



*Regent Sis. Pauline Villaflor is flanked by Past Diocesan Regent Sister Milde Tong and Diocesan Regent Sis. Sol Eugenio.*

**D**iocesan Regent Sis. Sol Eugenio reported that a new circle has just been born in the Diocese of Paranaque. The diocese's 15th circle is named Mary Immaculate Circle with address at Mary Immaculate Parish in Moonwalk Village, Las Pinas City. The new circle was organized through the initiative of Mary Mother of the Church Circle.

An exemplification team from the Risen Christ Circle of Moonwalk Village, Paranaque City headed by Past Diocesan Regent Sis. Milde Tong



*The charter members of the Mary Immaculate Circle during the exemplification ceremony.*

performed the exemplification rites. The 25 charter members of the circle were exemplified and the officers later installed on June 8, 2013. Among the circle's officers are Sis. Pauline Villaflor - regent, Sis. Minda Vega - vice-regent and Sis. Emma Pacis - chancellor.

Rev. Fr. Fidel Fabile, pastor of Mary Immaculate Parish gave an inspirational message and later blessed the circle's charter officers and members.

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### *"Iwas-Bukol" Project Held May 28...Cont'd. from Page 17*



*The DMI sisters of the Mary Mother of the Church Circle who spearheaded the project. Diocesan Regent Sol Eugenio and Circle Regent Sis. Susan Biluan stand 2nd from right and right, respectively.*



*Msgr. Dick Aquino, parish priest, awards a certificate of appreciation to Gift 2Life Foundation head Dr. Cristina Santos.*

## Diocesan Sympo on DMI Missions Held

The Diocese of Imus sponsored a symposium last August 25, 2013 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Sto. Nino de Molino, Bahayang Pag-asa, Bacoor, Cavite. It was attended by 53 DMI sisters and Squirettes of Mary from the Sto. Nino de Molino and Our Lady Queen of Peace Circles headed by Regent Sisters Siony Merhan and Zenia Cruzada, respectively.

Special guests were Mission International Chairpersons Sis. Milde Tong for Assistance to Prisoners' Families & their Victims and Sis. Juliet Cruz for Upliftment of Women Workers. The purposes of their talks were to update the circles on new projects and activities for the two missions that the National Organization is launching for the next two years and to bring the international officers closer to the circle members for better interaction and rapport.

Vicarial Regent Sis. Inday Ramos welcomed the symposium participants. Sis. Siony introduced Sis. Milde

while Sis. Lydia Limcolioc introduced Sis. Juliet. Sis. Milde stressed the need for moral support, spiritual guidance and counseling, and scholarship for prisoners' and victims' children and recommended the creation of linkages and coordination with principals of public schools for identification of possible scholars. She also informed the group that modules on Evangelization of Prisoners are being finalized for distribution quite soon.

As for Upliftment of Women Workers, Sis. Juliet urged the circles to launch an integrated program of skills and livelihood training and capital sourcing for small business through membership in cooperatives. She also underscored the need to provide moral and spiritual guidance and counseling to depressed and burdened women.

The open forum that followed gave participants a chance to engage the speakers in a dialogue during which they fielded questions regarding the two



*Sis. Milde Tong receives a token of appreciation as symposium speaker.*



*Symposium participants listen intently to the speakers' presentations.*

missions. The mood was family-like where everyone felt accepted, welcomed and at ease with the speakers. Certificates of appreciation and simple tokens including rosaries made by the sisters of the Sto. Nino de Molino Circle were later given to the guests.

Diocesan Regent Sis. Zenia Velasco officially closed the symposium.

As a whole, the event was very successful and productive enhancing among the participants the spirit of unity, friendship and renewed enthusiasm to support the DMI missions. Everybody looks forward to more activities to be conducted by the Diocese of Imus as part of an active formation program for DMI members.



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*From Iriga City*

## Little Flower Circle Holds Pro-Life Seminar

The Little Flower Circle sponsored a seminar-workshop titled "A Challenge in the Year of Faith: Understanding Life, Gender Sexuality and Spirituality" at the St. Anthony of Padua Parish Center in San Francisco, Iriga City last May 1, 2013.

The seminar was attended by 68 participants consisting of DMI sisters from the Little Flower, Our Lady of Penafrancia and St. Goretti Circles, members of the Squirettes of Mary and other youth organizations.

The keynote speaker, Msgr. Luis Joni Aguirre, H.P., pastor of SAPP and DMI spiritual adviser, whose message centered on "The Challenge of the Year of Faith to the Church", told the participants how they can help the Church in its mission of evangelization. He stressed the need for Catholics, especially young people, to be taught how to pray and to strengthen and live out their faith.

The two resource speakers were Fr. Rosauro Lunaria, parochial vicar, on the topic "Understanding One's Spirituality by Following Jesus the Lord" and Dr. Josefina Parentela, consultant on adolescent female health and vice-chair of the National Program Committee of the Girl Scouts of the Phils. on "Appreciating Your Gender and



*Msgr. Luis Joni Aguirre, keynote speaker.*

Sexuality". Dr. Parentela is also the Dean of Graduate School and Social Work and Director of Research & Development of the Sacred Heart College in Lucena City.

The activity was a project of the Pro-Life Committee of Little Flower Circle headed by Sis. Sol Vargas. Regent Sis. Nina Damot lent her full support to the project. Sis. Star Oliva emceed the program. The day ended with a presentation of action plans for the Circle's Pro-life mission.



*The officers and members of the DMI Little Flower Circle and SMI Circlette with the resource speakers Dr. Josefina Parentela and Fr. Rosauro Lunaria.*

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*From the Diocese of Bacolod*

## Diocesan Recollection Held

A whole-day Lenten Recollection attended by 49 officers and members of six circles in the Diocese was held last March 23, 2013 at the Punta Taytay Retreat House. The group was headed by Diocesan Regent (DR) Sis. Celia Ferrer and Vicarial Regents (VR) Sisters Lourdes Cascaro and Nenita Manzo. Recollection speakers were Fr. Raymond Asoy and DMI Spiritual Adviser Msgr. Victorino Rivas.

