



Goodbye, Fr. Serge and Fr. Ricky

Fr. Serge Maniba and Fr. Ricky Montañez celebrated their last CTK Eucharistic celebration last July 2, Monday, at the Divine Mercy Chapel, before they left for their UP Holy Sacrifice Parish reassignment to join Fr. Bong Tupino.



The mass, co-celebrated with Bishop Raul Martinez, Msgr. Antonio Mortillero and incoming priest Fr. Giovanni 'Jojo' Gatdula, was also a thanksgiving mass for the two priests. Both priests gave short from-the-heart talks at the end of the mass. Sensing the sadness of the parishioners at seeing them leave, Fr. Serge said, 'UP is very close by so I still expect to see most of you'.

Fr. Serge had been a regular guest priest at Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows since July 11, 2016, or two years ago. He had been a diocesan priest at the Diocese of San Jose, Antique, the same province

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Diocese Breaks Ground on Casa de Silencio



Answering the long-voiced call for a retirement home to house aging and retired members of the clergy, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cubao, headed by Bishop Honesto F. Ongtioco DD, finally broke ground last Monday, August 27. The long-wished-for retirement home for retired and sick priests is located in Barangay Santol near Araneta Avenue, in the block previously donated to the archdiocese by the Araneta family. The groundbreaking

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Diocese Launches Eight-Point Agenda for 2018-2025



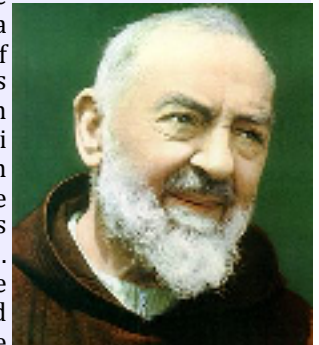
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CTK Stopover for Philippine Tour of Padre Pio Relics

The sacred relics of San Pio of Pietrelcina, more known to Filipinos as Padre Pio, were viewed by thousands last September 7 Friday, at the CTK main church, right after the evening mass.

The arrival of the relics was brought on by the invitation extended by the Volontariato di San Pio in Manila to P a d r e

Gian Maria DiGiorgio of the St. Pio's Sanctuary in San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy, where the remains are kept. P a d r e DiGiorgio had accepted the



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Message From Our Parish Priest

EVANGELIZATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

by Rev. Fr. Steven C. Zabala



In my first meeting with the Parish Pastoral Council last June 16, the members introduced themselves and their ministries or groups to which they belong. Sis. Lulay dela Cruz, stood up to introduce herself and her village, and to the group's surprise, unfolded a tarpaulin with a caption, "**Tuloy po kayo sa aming munting tahanan, from the happy St. Ignatius Village Family!**" Some teasing and shouting followed as the group burst into laughter!

"**Tuloy po kayo**" pretty much summarizes the reception I received during my first few months in CTK.

I would encounter more people and groups, sit down in meetings, get invited to meals or snacks, interview parishioners, say masses in the main church and the different villages (Corinthian Gardens, Corinthian Hills, White Plains, Acropolis, Saint Ignatius, Libis), facilitate a Bible Sharing in Greenmeadows, give a talk in one LSS weekend, and many more. I truly felt the warmth of the welcome given by the community to its new parish priest! The people are friendly, engaging, and supportive. I found out for myself the truth to what Fr. Bong Tupino said, "**You will like it here, Steve. Mababait ang mga tao dito.**"

My first few months were spent getting to know the people and familiarizing myself with the rhythm and culture of this community. So many people have mentioned their names to me, and believe me, I have and still am struggling to remember them all!

As I continue establishing relationships with people, the pastoral work and activities in this parish moves on.

I came in when the parish is about to formulate its plans and programs for

next year. Parishes, just like any other organizations, need to have a vision and direction for all their plans and activities.

Luckily, our Diocese, on its 15th anniversary, last August 28, launched the Diocese of Cubao Priority Agenda for 2018 to 2025.

The parishes are scheduled to simultaneously do serious planning sessions next year (summer time) to come up with objectives, goals and action plans to implement these Priority Agenda in their communities.

Admittedly, it might be too soon to include these Priority Agenda in this year's planning process, but it would be good if the planners can already be aware of them and incorporate what they can into their plans.

The following are the eight Priority agenda of the Diocese:

1. Integrating Families in the Life of the Church
2. Animating Parish Life
3. Developing Effective, Committed, and Renewed Witnesses of the Catholic Faith
4. Upholding Human Dignity and Integrity of Creation
5. Engaging the Youth
6. Molding Shepherds after the Heart of Jesus
7. Maximizing New Media for Evangelization
8. Embracing Stewardship as a Way of Life

It also states the Diocesan Goal: "With the period of 7 years (2018-2025), the Bishop, priests, religious and laity of the Diocese of Cubao, moving together as a community of disciples, having been renewed, will undertake the mission of new and integral evangelization; thus, becoming a vibrant local church committed towards total human development."

And of course, it is good to be reminded of our Diocese's Vision Statement: "A community of Christ-like disciples empowered and sent through effective servant-leadership moving towards becoming a Church of the poor."

CTK Pastoral Expectations

The pastoral expectations for CTK, based on the Priority Agenda, seem to be obvious: animation of the parish, formation and evangelization of the community with special emphasis on families and the youth. Stewardship has been a core feature of CTK parish life for many years now. I have heard some leaders proudly telling me, "CTK, Father, is a stewardship parish."

Animating the parish can mean many things, including: deepening the faith life of the community; establishing deeper fellowship among the parishioners; and enhancing their active participation in the life of the parish.

There are various ways to achieve this. The different ministries can provide good and meaningful services, programs and activities for the parishioners: churchgoers experiencing a beautiful liturgy when they come for Sunday masses; formation sessions about the Bible and the teachings of the Church; or renewal programs that enhance one's relationship with God and fellow believers.

Most activities in the parishes happen in the "center" or in the parish grounds, where people come to the church for Sunday masses and attend meetings, formation and fellowship sessions. However, the parish is not only the one in the "center". If we believe that the Church is the People of God, how do we animate the parish at the level of people?

The greater challenge therefore is how to grow the faith when people leave the church grounds (the center) and go back to their neighborhoods, where the people are. The only ones living in the parish grounds are the priests; parishioners are there in their own homes with their own families. How then do we animate the homes, families and the neighborhood?

Evangelization of the Neighborhood

If faith, fellowship, formation and active participation are brought to the level of the neighborhood, our parish will be animated on a wider scale.

One way to do this is to invite parishioners to form "clusters" of faith at the neighborhood level, where five to eight parishioners gather regularly to pray and to care for each other as a small church community.

A cluster could be a Bible sharing group where members regularly open the scriptures, reflect on it and share how they apply these teachings in their lives. In this case, God's Word brings them together!

Bonded by God's Word, formation and fellowship happen in the clusters, right in the very neighborhood.

The programs and activities of the ministries therefore should be able to support the formation and enrichment of these clusters with a conscious effort to "evangelize the neighborhood". ■

Fr. Steve Zabala's First CTK Mass and Parish Fellowship, June 17

Newly-designated Parish Priest for Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows, Rev. Fr. Steve Zabala, conducted his first CTK mass, concelebrated with outgoing parish priest Fr. Bong Tupino last June 17 at 9 am.



The offertory involved the Mustard Seed Ministry children offering their hand-drawn illustrations to Fr. Steve. Fr. Steve



Little girls and boys of the Mustard Seed Ministry gang up around Fr. Steve to hand him their religious artwork.

was clearly touched by the innocence of the 'little ones' even as they kept pushing their artwork onto Fr. Steve and kept tugging at his sutana.

The new Altar Servers, brothers John Elroy & Kristof Isaac Aragon, joined the



Above left, Vocation Ministry co-head Louie Laudico plays emcee role at the altar server commissioning. John Elroy Aragon and Kristof Isaac Aragon get their new frocks. Bottom, Fr. Bong blesses and commissions the 45 altar servers.



43 current Altar Servers, who were also commissioned during the same mass. Proud parents Chi and Jp Aragon put on the Altar Server frocks on their children,

with help from senior Altar Server John Juat. Vocation Ministry co-head Louie Laudico did the commissioning rite announcements.

Fr. Bong gave Fr. Steve a warm welcome and introduction and true to his reputation, Fr. Steve reciprocated with both praise and funny stories that had



CTK PPC officers, led by Coordinator couple Bert and Marie Anne Santos, below; Assistant Coordinator couple Henry and Joyce Tañedo, top; Secretary couple David and Fely Ong, above, and Treasurer Elise del Rosario, also below.



the massgoers laughing out loud. But at the end, Fr. Steve acknowledged that whenever he was stumped with a problem, he'd inevitably call on Fr. Bong who almost always would give him sound and wise advice.

June 17 was also Fathers' Day and both Fr. Bong Tupino and Fr. Steve Zabala



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Fr. Steve Zabala's first CTK Mass and Parish Fellowship . . .



Fr. Bong, Fr. Steve and Fr. Jim take turns in blessing the fathers on Fathers' Day



Fr. Steve joins the parishioners at the Coffee After Church that followed the 9 am mass service. Everyone wanted to meet, greet and take photos with the new parish priest.



blessed the fathers who came to the front of the altar near the end of the mass.

The Coffee After Church, or CAC, that followed at 10 am was set up at the Parish Social Hall in anticipation of possible light rain. It was hosted by Couples for Christ-CTK chapter headed by Glen and Girlie Ubaldo and Ed and Cecille Salonga. Additional food was also brought in by EMHC head Albert Cuadrante and village coordinators Irene



Robles, Maan del Rosario, and Eileen de Leon.

Fr. Steve Zabala, CTK's new parish priest, clearly enjoyed his first time to meet and greet the CTK parishioners who, in turn, were also very eager to shake the hands and get their selfies taken with Fr. Steve. Everyone admitted that it was the biggest CAC crowd ever.



New Pastoral Center for Fr. Steve's Previous Parish, Lord of Divine Mercy

Last June 23, a week after his first CTK mass, Fr. Steve Zabala participated in the 6:00am mass and blessing of the new Parish of the Lord of Divine Mercy's (PLDM) Parish Pastoral Center by Cubao Diocese head Bishop Honesto F. Ongtioco DD.



The center had been a 'from the ground up' project, borne squarely by Fr. Steve while he was parish priest of PLDM. It had cost a total of Php80M and nearly all the money had been raised, save for the last P10M. Even though Fr. Herbie Santos has now taken over as parish priest of PLDM, Fr. Steve is still contributing to the 'last mile' of fund raising by giving away 'free' copies of his biography, 'KSP:



Kuwento ni Fr. Steve according to Posadas', written by author Sylvia Posadas in exchange for donations of at least P500.



Fr. Steve autographs copies of his biography, 'KSP', with donations to be used to help finish the PLDM pastoral center construction



Goodbye, Fr. Serge and Fr. Ricky; 'Hindi Namin Kayo Makakalimutan'



Below, posing with the parishioners are Fr. Jojo Gatdula, Fr. Ricky Montañez, Bishop Raul Martirez, Fr. Serge Maniba, and Msgr. Tony Mortillero.



our well-loved Bishop Raul Martirez hails from Fr. Serge had been taking up his PHD in Theology, majoring in Missiology at the Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia (ICLA). Fr. Serge is no stranger to U.P. since he had been

assigned there as guest priest back in 2008-2009 while he was pursuing his MA.

Fr. Ricky, on the other hand, had been a guest priest at CTK just a few months later than Fr. Serge and is with the Augustinians of the Assumption order.

The PPC, through Worship Ministry head Leila Banico, hosted the despedida breakfast at St. Mark-St. Matthew Rooms. Several CTK parishioner friends of Fr. Serge and Fr. Ricky attended both the thanksgiving mass and the despedida breakfast including several EMHCs, lectors-commentators, village coordinators, and ministry heads. Young violinist and Mustard Seed Ministry guardian Nicky Maza played several of her favorite pieces while the guests were having their breakfast.

At the end of the breakfast, both priests were successfully coaxed into singing at least two favorite songs apiece. St. Ignatius village coordinator Lulay dela Cruz and PPC Lay Coordinator Bert Santos then led a serenade of Frs. Serge



and Ricky by the PPC members, with the songs 'Hindi Kita Malimot' and 'Minamahal Kita'.



CTK Parish Pastoral Council Bids Adieu to Fr. Jun Arvie Bello

Fr. Arvie Bello, visiting guest priest of CTK since mid-July, officiated his last mass at Christ the King Greenmeadows last August 16, Thursday. This was followed by a simple fellowship breakfast at St. Luke Room. Fr. Steve Zabala had invited all the PPC members

embarrassed that we were giving him a despedida. And I told him that it's because he's special, that he's one of the most talented priests in the diocese and the parishioners here are very happy to have him, even if only for a month. As the diocese expert in canon law and the

the other dioceses in the country. Fr. Arvie is also the very first to be sent by the Diocese, using Diocese funds, for further studies.'

Fr. Arvie, addressing the large CTK crowd that attended, replied in turn that 'the memory of your friendship, the memory of your affection and your love will keep me warm during winter', in reference to the movie, *An Affair to Remember*. And he asked everyone to continue praying for him as he starts his advanced studies in Canon Law.

Fr. Arvie has enrolled in the doctorate program at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (PUST) in Rome, Italy, also known as the Angelicum, in honor of its patron, Doctor Angelicus Thomas Aquinas. The Angelicum is one of the pontifical universities in Rome and is administered by the Dominicans. This is the same school where Bishop Ongtioco finished his Licentiate in Spirituality. Fr. Arvie studied at the University of Santo Tomas and belonged to the fraternity of Dominican priests. 'My training has been Dominican so I should be at home in Angelicum', said Fr. Arvie.



to join him for both the mass and breakfast. Fr. Arvie is a former parish priest of San Isidro Labrador and was scheduled to pursue further studies in Rome. He left for Rome last August 22.

judicial vicar, Fr. Arvie created the diocese marriage tribunal and created the criteria for selection of pre-judicial counselors who would be the first-line of review before meritorious cases are passed on to the tribunal. This format and protocols are now being copied by

Fr. Arvie will be remembered for completely demolishing his church structure at San Isidro Labrador Parish and building a new and beautiful church within seven months. Last July 2 was the Solemn Dedication of the parish church and the Consecration of the Altar by Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, witnessed by more than 20 priests and lay people. At the same time, Fr. Arvie's San Isidro Labrador Quasi-Parish was formally elevated to a full-fledged parish. The Canonical Erection of the San Isidro Labrador Parish, located behind the SSS and LTO buildings in East Avenue, was also included among the rites officiated by Bishop Ongtioco.



He was replaced by Fr. Robert Reyes as parish priest at San Isidro Labrador.

At the end of the August 16 farewell mass, Fr. Steve gave a short tribute for Fr. Arvie. 'Fr. Arvie had been



The post-graduate program in Canon Law at Angelicum is a three-year program and Fr. Arvie is expected to be in residence for the whole three years. 'Of course, the Bishop is expecting me to finish in less than three years, to save the diocese some money,' Fr. Arvie quipped.

While in Rome, Fr. Arvie will be staying in Pontificio Collegio Filipino. Inaugurated by Blessed Pope John XXIII in 1961, the Collegio is the "Home in Rome" of Filipino secular diocesan

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GTK Parish Pastoral Council Bids Adieu . . .



Ongtioco for advice who convinced him to take Canon Law. And that's why Fr. Arvie pursued his Licentiate in Canon Law from UST. That took three years, from 2011 to 2014, and in 2014, just prior to completing his Licentiate, Fr. Arvie was ordained.

No sooner had he been ordained when the diocese established the marriage tribunal in 2015. Pope Francis had the vision of having a judicial pastoral service in every parish which would both counsel, attempt to reconcile, assess, and where meritorious, facilitate the filing of



documents needed for the annulment process. 'We started with 14 judicial counselors and now we have graduated 50, in three batches. We're proud that the Diocese of Cubao is actually able to assign a judicial counselor per parish in the diocese,' Fr. Arvie said.

San Isidro Labrador in Pinyahan was Fr. Arvie's first assignment after being ordained. The parish priest had fallen ill so he was assigned for a year as Administrator. Little did he know that he would spend the next four years in that quasi-parish.

We asked how difficult it was to say goodbye to his Isidro Labrador parishioners. 'It was really difficult,' Fr. Arvie answered. 'Not only was I there for four years, it was also my first assignment - and we went through significant community bonding due to the church construction. So while we

were building the church, we were also building the community.'

Fr. Arvie was quick to emphasize that the entire community pitched in with their time, skills, or money, in true stewardship fashion. 'We're one of the poorest parishes,' Fr. Arvie confessed. He then narrated a touching story. 'After the mass, a woman approached me and she asked me if I accepted 'barya', to which I said - oo naman syempre tumatanggap kami ng barya. And then she said she had saved a little each day from January to December so I asked the sacristan to go with her to the squatter shanty where she lived. She gave him one large 'garapon ng barya'. When we counted all the coins, it was more than P3,000! This was an informal settler wife for whom that amount could have placed food in the table, paid for electricity, paid for water but she chose to give it to the church. I was stunned. Especially when you compare it to the caroling that our PPC did with the wealthier families in the parish - on average, they got only P200 per household.'

'Let me tell you another heartwarming story,' Fr. Arvie continued. 'Everyone in the PPC was soliciting and one of them solicited from a neighbor. What she didn't know was that the neighbor was in fact a Protestant. When she was told by the other PPC members that she had solicited from a Protestant, she was so embarrassed so she quickly went back to her neighbor to return the donation. Her neighbor told her 'No, you don't have to return the money - we have the same God and that's for the house of God.' So I look at these two examples and it dawned on me that the Lord wanted to give me a lasting memory of his providence and to reinforce my faith in humanity. When times get difficult, and they will almost certainly do in life, I will have faith that the Lord will never forsake me. I'm so thankful for the experience of building the church.'

When asked how much the church cost in total, Fr. Arvie replied, 'Approximately P7 million. With all the donations we received, I'm proud to say that we reached that total without assistance from the diocese. In fact, I'm proud to say that we actually had a little bit left over so we donated to the Casa de Silencio fund.'

priests, carefully chosen and formally sent by their respective bishops to pursue further studies in the different ecclesiastical centers in Rome. The Collegio administrators report directly to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, which has an Episcopal Commission on the Collegio. Collegio priests interact with priests from different continents and cultures. During their Roman sojourn, whenever their academic commitments allow, the priests of the Collegio make themselves available to exercise their ministry with the Filipino diaspora and seek to know and obtain a most useful pastoral experience with the local Churches in Italy.

When asked why he thought he was selected by Bishop Ongtioco to be the first diocesan priest to be sent for further studies, Fr. Arvie could only hazard a guess. 'I suspect it's because of the needs of the diocese. With so many marriage cases in the docket, and with a very new marriage tribunal, perhaps the diocese needs a Doctor in Canon Law so we can competently fulfill our responsibility.'

Asked how he was informed of the scholarship award, Fr. Arvie answered, 'It was really like a Lenten experience for me because Bishop Ness informed me on Ash Wednesday but at the same time asked not to tell anyone just yet. He finally announced it during the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday - that was 40 days later! I couldn't say goodbye to my parishioners, I couldn't tell my parents. It was agony!'

By way of history, Fr. Arvie Bello had completed his Master's Degree in Philosophy before he studied Theology. Fr. Arvie wanted to pursue a doctorate in Philosophy, his first love - in fact, he was already writing his thesis for doctoral dissertation. But he asked Bishop

Diocese Launches Eight-Point Priority Agenda for 2018-2025 at 15th Diocesan Anniversary Mass

The final version of the Diocese of Cubao's Eight-Point Priority Agenda for 2018-2025, or DCPA8, was unveiled at the celebratory mass for the diocese's 15th anniversary last Tuesday, August 28, at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Lantana, Cubao.

celebrated by no less than diocese head Bishop Honesto F. Ongtioco DD. Preceding the mass was a traditional Caracol dance, or religious procession at 5:30 pm.



The crafting of the 2018-2025 Diocesan Pastoral Agenda began with General Assembly in Tagaytay (attended by CTK's Bert Santos, David and Fely Ong, and

danced in front of the crowd to get them applauding for the agenda launch at the end of the mass. There was also a short video that highlighted the problems of modern society - rampant violence, killings of priests, floods resulting from environmental degradation, falling church mass attendance (63% in 1991 to 37% by 2013), disregard for human rights, suicide and drug abuse in youth, fake news, etc. - and the diocese response via the eight-point priority agenda.



Among those attending for Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows were PPC Lay Coordinator Bert Santos, PPC Secretary David Ong, PPC Co-Treasurer Bing del Rosario, Stewardship Committee heads Benjie and Wins Mirasol, Youth Ministry coordinator Althea Geronilla, and Knights of Columbus chief Cen Hernando.

Attended by a majority of the diocesan priests and a huge number of PPC representatives from each of the parishes, the 6 pm anniversary mass was

covered in the June 2018 issue of The Herald) where the Diocese performance from 2011-2017 was reviewed. This was followed by a series of workshops with the Technical Committee and finally, consultations with the Consultores of the Diocese. After several revisions based on the recommendation from the Cubao Clergy, final approval was given by Bishop Ongtioco on August 22, 2018.



Bishop Ongtioco formally launched the 2018-2025 Priority Agenda during his homily. 'Our new Pastoral Plan, DCPA8, will set our direction as a Diocese in the coming years,' he announced. 'Let us journey together in carrying out the agenda.' He then enumerated the eight-point agenda and ended with the battlecry, 'Bago Ito! Atin Ito! Cubao Ito!' The same slogan was printed on the shirts of the volunteers who

Above, among those representing CTK at the Priority Agenda launch were Lay Coordinator Bert Santos, Formation Ministry head David Ong, and Stewardship heads Benjie and Wins Mirasol.



2-Page Primer: Diocese of Cubao Priority Agenda 2018-2025

DCPA NO. 1: INTEGRATING FAMILIES IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The socio-economic-political and cultural changes contribute to the breakdown of marriage, relationships and values within the family; which ultimately affect church life. The phenomena of migration, cohabitation, same-sex union, teenage pregnancies, divorce, single-parenting, contraceptive mentality, LGBT demands for acceptance, and poverty are some of the issues that families are faced with.

We believe parishes should have inclusive and concrete pastoral programs to journey with couples and families, offering hope, encouragement and strength, leading towards fuller participation and integration in the life of the church.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, the Diocese of Cubao will be a local church where Parishes, as FAMILY of FAMILIES will create an environment of hope, trust, transparency and communion thru proactive sustainable small-group discipleship programs leading towards fuller integration of families in the life of the church.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To integrate family-oriented programs and ministries in the parish pastoral programs.
2. To develop and train Pastoral workers in becoming truly authentic servants and witnesses of the Gospel.
3. To equip families with knowledge of Scriptures and Catholic doctrines to help them become living witnesses of God's love.

DCPA NO. 2: ANIMATING PARISH LIFE

Parish life has considerably weakened in the course of years despite the many efforts of renewal in the Church. This is easily seen in the decrease of mass attendance and participation in parish activities; the "un-churched Catholics" remains a great challenge.

Unless addressed, the weakening of parish life may lead further to the disintegration of parish life and erosion

of faith and morals of the parishioners, already affected by secular mentality and religious indifference.

This situation calls for a concrete plan of action to animate the parish life, in which parishioners claim their parish as their community, where they feel belongingness and participate in its mission through the lifestyle of stewardship.

GOAL: By the year 2025, the Diocese of Cubao will be a local church where parishioners claim their parish as their community, where they experience belongingness and participate in its mission of new evangelization.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To intensify a sense of identity & community as a parish through activities that encourage fellowship.
2. To systematize participation through ministries in the spirit of stewardship.
3. To strengthen communion and mission in the parish through BEC.

DCPA NO. 3: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE, COMMITTED AND RENEWED WITNESSES OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Majority of Filipino Catholics lack basic knowledge and understanding of Catholic Faith. There is a need to deepen our faith so that we gain the confidence and skill to profess and share their faith. That is why it is important that the Diocese develop, implement, and institute sustainable and continuing formation programs for the faithful to make them effective, committed and renewed witnesses of faith.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, The Diocese of Cubao will develop the Christian faithful of the Diocese to become effective, committed, and renewed witnesses of Catholic faith.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop lay formation programs on Basic Catholic Faith.
2. To recruit, train and sustain committed lay evangelizers from the ranks of the faithful.

3. To synergize formation programs and resources leading to the institutionalization of pastoral development.

DCPA NO. 4: UPHOLDING HUMAN DIGNITY AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

We are witnesses to the neglect of the value and dignity of the human person, especially of the poor and marginalized sectors, whose rights are constantly threatened and attacked. Our Catholic faith emphasizes our responsibility to uphold and respect the basic dignity of our fellow humans. Therefore, we strive to maintain a Catholic community where everyone enjoys basic human dignity and respect, and lives without prejudice and discrimination.

In addition, this is in response to Pope Francis' challenge to "protect our common home". It is also our responsibility as Catholics to address environmental problems, especially if they affect the poor and vulnerable people.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, the Diocese of Cubao will be a local church with a fully-developed social action arm with the capability and resources that respond to current socio-political and environmental issues and challenges.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To conduct Basic Orientation and capability building formation for both Clergy and Lay Leaders, highlighting the importance and current trends in advocacies for social apostolate and environmental protection.
2. To institutionalize the necessary offices/desk to serve the cause of the poor and the environment with collaboration among these ministries: SSDM, RJM, PAM, CARITAS, Urban Poor Ministry, the YOUTH, and the Ecology Desk.
3. To strengthen the linkages with GOs, NGOs and Private Sectors for partnership endeavors in response to the needs of the Poor.
4. To identify available resources and programs that protect the rights of the sectors that experience discrimination

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2-Page Primer: Diocese of Cubao Priority Agenda 2018-2025

and abuse on account of their imprisonment, mental and physical and gender, age, and ethnicity.

DCPA NO. 5: ENGAGING THE YOUTH

The Filipino youth today faces different issues such as increasing suicide rate, premarital sex, illegal drugs, depression, identity crisis and family problems that greatly affect their emotional, social, spiritual, physical and moral wellbeing. These situations hinder their involvement and active participation in the life-mission and work of the church. Therefore, it is vital for young people to be properly informed and formed about the Catholic faith and Christian values and empower them to be Christ-centered servant leaders and active proponents of change.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, the Diocese of Cubao will be a local church where the youth are Christ-centered servant leaders and active proponents of change.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To empower young people through intensive leadership training and formation programs focusing on virtue, learning, spirit and service towards SELF-TRANSFORMATION.
2. To formulate programs and activities that engage the youth in the life-mission and work of the church which will help them become proponents of change.
3. To establish relationship and collaboration with other ministries that provide opportunities for growth and development of the young.

DCPA NO. 6: MOLDING SHEPHERDS AFTER THE HEART OF JESUS

In the likeness of Christ, the Good Shepherd who is willing to lay down his life for his sheep, our priests are committed to lead the flock of the Christian faithful to receive God's salvation. They are faced daily with the challenge of making God's abounding love concrete and alive by answering not only the spiritual needs of people but also the other facets of their lives.

In order to fulfill this Divine mission, it is

vital that our clergy continue to enrich and deepen their faith life and achieve competence in discharging their priestly responsibilities. We look towards a future where the clergy "know their sheep" and the faithful see them as dedicated, compassionate and effective shepherds, thereby providing the inspiration to attract and inspire vocations.

GOAL: By the year 2025, the Diocese of Cubao will be a local church where the clergy are more dedicated, compassionate and effective shepherds, who are able to attract and inspire vocations.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To pursue the on-going formation of the clergy, focused on strengthening pastoral zeal.
2. To foster fraternal mentoring on shepherding (by vicariate).
3. To enhance relationship with parishioners.

DCPA NO. 7: MAXIMIZING NEW MEDIA FOR EVANGELIZATION

In an age when social and other forms of digital media are significantly shaping and reshaping public views and opinions, Pope Benedict's call to "evangelize the digital continent" is an affirmation of the Catholic Church's recognition of the potential of digital communication for evangelization. We endeavor to establish a stronger new media presence for our local parishes in order to spread the Gospel and Catholic values to a much wider audience.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, The Diocese of Cubao will be a local church where new media and technology are fully maximized for evangelization.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To establish, train and equip the parish media ministry in every Parish.
2. To disseminate the gospel and Catholic teachings through the production of creative media.
3. To establish a system that will facilitate communication within the Diocese.

DCPA NO. 8: EMBRACING STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE

Stewardship involves the principles of Ownership (Psalm 24), Responsibility, Accountability (Parable of the Talents), and Reward (Colossians 3:23-24).

We are all called as God's stewards to manage that which belongs to God. We are all stewards of the resources, abilities, and opportunities that God has entrusted to our care. Those who faithfully undertake this responsibility can expect to be rewarded fully in the next life.

In the present time, we need to embrace this biblical view of stewardship, which goes beyond financial matters and building projects. We need to be faithful stewards of all that God has given us within the opportunities presented through his providence to glorify him, serve the common good and further his Kingdom.

It is imperative that we work towards applying the concepts of "faith, work, and economics" to where we can support the mission and apostolate of the Church.

GOAL: By the end of 2025, all parishes in the Diocese of Cubao are "Stewardship Parishes" where parishioners live out the spirituality of stewardship, recognizing the graciousness and generosity of God calling us to be "good and faithful servants" (Matthew 25:21), acknowledging the gift we have received and sharing them gratefully and generously.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To review the CBCP PASTORAL LETTER ON STEWARDSHIP and study the possible ways of implementing appropriate and effective guidelines suited to the context of the Diocese of Cubao.
2. To create a program of parish involvement through systematization of parishioners' participation in the parish life and activities that encourage sharing of their time, talent and treasure.
3. To implement activities designed to help parishioners understand and appreciate the spirituality of stewardship as the means to demonstrate gratitude through generosity in sharing one's blessings.

Diocese Breaks Ground on Casa de Silencio

ceremony, attended by most of the 47 parish priests of the diocese plus over a hundred guests, most of whom are officers of the 47 parish pastoral councils, plus prominent friends of the diocese, including Barangay Santol chair Eduardo Nieto. It was held at the Most Holy Redeemer Parish compound headed by parish priest Fr. Michel Joe Zerrudo.



Top, Monsignor Dan Sta. Maria does the opening remarks for the groundbreaking ceremony. Above and below, Bishop Ness Ongtioco leads the Rite of Blessing.



CEO of HDC, the selected builder-contractor.

A copy of the signed plans was included in the time capsule, which also included personal possessions of two retired priests – Rev. Msgr. Antonio Mortillero

who gave the rosary that he has been carrying since his pilgrimage to Mexico and Rev. Fr. Bong Cabrera who gave the cross that he regularly wears around his neck – as well as a young priest and a deacon – Rev. Carlo Narvasa who gave the book that has inspired him the most



Below, Rev. Carlo Narvasa doing the readings during the Blessing Rite. Carlo also gave a personal item that went into the time capsule, which Bishop Ness Ongtioco later stuffed with the signed architectural plans and a copy of the day's newspaper, above.



At the ceremony, which started at 10 am, retired Vicar General and project head Msgr. Daniel B. Sta. Maria opened with an introductory message. Diocese of Cubao head Most Rev. Bishop Honesto F. Ongtioco DD followed with the Rite of Blessing of the new building site. The building plans were then formally signed by Bishop Ongtioco, former Vicar General and project head Rev. Monsignor Daniel B. Santa Maria, current Vicar General Rev. Santa Maria, current Vicar General Rev. Father Steven C. Zabala, diocese construction committee in-charge and parish priest of Our Lady of Pentecost parish Rev. Father Herbel Torres, and Engr. Hermando dela Cruz,

– The Life of St. Bridget - and Rev. Fr. Jover Domanico. Bishop Ongtioco himself placed one of his skullcaps into the time capsule. For the concrete pouring, the group was joined by Most Holy Redeemer parish priest Fr. Zerrudo, project manager Ping Aliling's mother Evelyn, and co-founder of HDC Marylou dela Cruz.

The event concluded with a touching message from Msgr. Mortillero followed by an inspiring call to action from Bishop Ongtioco. The proceedings were moderated by Bing del Rosario and Rev. Fr. Joey Maborang, who is a member of

Diocese Breaks Ground on Casa de Silencio Project



Top, the VIPs led by Mrs. Aliling, mother of Project Manager Ping Aliling, and Fr. Dodot Torres, Construction Committee head, lead the lowering of the time capsule. Above, Fr. Jojo Zerrudo and Fr. Steve Zabala pose with their shovels. Below, Bishop Ness and winning bidder Hermando dela Cruz put in final shovelful of cement.



the Order of Carmelites Discalced, the parish priest of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish National Shrine, and concurrently the diocese's Episcopal Vicar for the Religious.

The retirement home will be appropriately called Casa de Silencio, the name taken from one of the streets bounding the lot on which the home is to be built. The lot is also bounded by Brixton Hill, Landargun, and Lunda Streets and is just a block away from busy Araneta Avenue. The plans call for 25 retired-sick priest rooms. At the moment, five diocesan priests have already retired and the diocese calculates as many as an additional five retirees by 2025, with possibly another eight more before 2030. The home will have a dining room, an entertainment-recreation room, a fitness-therapy-rehab room, a nurse's station with a mini-infirmary, and a sala-library. The lobby will have sufficient space and privacy for

the retired priests to entertain former parishioners and to provide private counseling.

The diocese has estimated that the cost of running the retirement home will be quite high, hence the decision for the facility to also be a renewal center where



Fr. Joey Maboran of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is master of ceremonies.

meetings, conferences, and overnight retreats can be held in exchange for donations to cover facility upkeep. Priority will be given to the parishes, the religious orders, mandated organizations and prayer movements, and the parochial schools. Therefore, the plans now include a 3rd and 4th floor, each with 25 smaller rooms for overnight retreatants. Provisions have also been made for conference rooms plus a multi-purpose open space that can be converted for large dining or fellowship events. A stand-alone chapel has also been designed to accommodate special masses for outside groups.

'This retirement home is already overdue,' according to former Diocese of Cubao Vicar General Monsignor Daniel B. Sta. Maria, who recently turned 75 and recently retired. 'Several dioceses have put up retirement homes for their aging and sick priests, like the Archdiocese of Manila with their St. Loreto, Sampaloc home, or the dioceses of Tuguegarao, Cagayan; Palo, Leyte; Dumaguete, Negros; Balanga, Bataan; Caceres, Camarines Sur, and so on.'

The new Vicar General, Fr. Steve Zabala, who is also concurrently parish priest of Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows, confessed that retirement is very difficult for priests. 'As you know, as our priests retire, they have to leave the parish rectory to make way for the new parish priest. In a few cases, priests may not have yet reached retirement age but are forced to drop out early

due to permanent or long-term illness or disability. And since the diocese of Cubao has no official retirement home, retired parish priests who have spent several decades living in their parish rectory have no choice but to look for rectory bed space in other parishes, or rent an apartment, which is often beyond their means, or try very hard to look for relatives who will shelter them during their remaining years. Failing that, they look to generous ex-parishioners to provide them a small room in their homes.'

Fr. Bong Tupino, parish priest of UP Holy Sacrifice Parish, and currently on study sabbatical, earlier explained the psychology involved. 'Faced with these issues, some younger priests, even early on in their ministry, become anxious and insecure that they too might grow old without anybody to take care of them. They then become preoccupied about earning and saving for their retirement. So the diocese, by providing them a sense of security through a retirement home, hopes that the priests will no longer be overly-concerned with material matters and distracted from their priestly tasks. That instead, they will be constantly focused and zealous in their priestly ministry of caring for souls.'

'We hope to complete this project in 20 months,' said Monsignor Sta. Maria. 'So, keeping our fingers crossed, we expect the retirement and renewal facility to be up and running by mid 2020. In fact, we suspect we can move in some of the retired priests as early as fourth quarter 2019.'

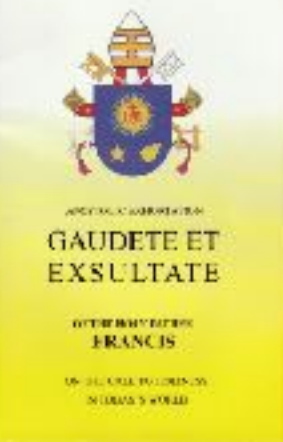


The CTK contingent, above and below.



Fr Bong Delivers Farewell Formation Talk at EMHC Assembly

Fr. Bong Tupino gave his last Formation talk at the regular monthly meeting of the Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion (EMHC) last June 21. As with the Lectors and Commentators,



he discussed Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation: Gaudete et Exsultate, which called for holiness in today's world.

Pope Francis' latest opus, written in March this year, is composed of 177 paragraphs divided into five chapters. Fr. Bong read aloud very pertinent passages from the book which he then reflected on.

From Chapter One:

My modest goal is to re-propose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. (2)

Holiness is present in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families; very often, it is a holiness found in our next-door neighbors, those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence. (7)



To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious. We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife. Do you work for a living? Be holy by laboring with integrity and skill. Are you in a position of authority? Be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain. (14)

From Chapter Two:

Even when someone's life appears completely wrecked, even when we see it devastated by vices or addictions, God is present there. We must try to find the Lord in every human life. (42)

In every one of our brothers and sisters, especially the least, the most vulnerable, the defenseless and those in need, God's very image is found. (61)

From Chapter Three:

The Beatitudes are like the Christian's identity card. If anyone asks, 'What must one do to be a good Christian?', the answer is clear - do in our own way what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount. The word 'blessed' thus becomes a synonym for 'holy'. (63)

Indeed once we are rich, we can become so self-satisfied that we leave no room for God's word, for the love of our brothers and sisters, or for the enjoyment of the most important things in life. (68)

If we are constantly upset and impatient with others, we will end up drained and weary. But if we regard the faults and limitations of others with tenderness and meekness, without an air of superiority, we can actually help them and stop wasting our energy on useless complaining. (72)

Holy persons discover the meaning of life by coming to the aid of those who suffer, understanding their anguish and bringing relief. They feel compassion for others in such a way that all distance vanishes. (76)

The yardstick we use for understanding and forgiving others will measure the forgiveness we receive. The yardstick we use for giving will measure what we receive. (81)

Peacemakers build peace and friendship in society. They embrace those who are different, difficult, odd, demanding. (88)

When St. Thomas Aquinas was asked which external works best show our love for God, he answered unhesitatingly that they are the works of mercy towards our neighbor, even more than our acts of worship. (106)

From Chapter Four:

Inner strength enables us to persevere amid life's ups and downs but also to endure hostility, betrayal and failings on the part of others. They do not desert others in bad times; they accompany them in their anxiety and distress,



even though doing so may not bring immediate satisfaction. (112)

Christian joy brings deep security, serene hope and a spiritual fulfillment that the world cannot understand or appreciate. It is usually accompanied by a sense of humor. (125)

Look at Jesus. His deep compassion reached out to others. It did not make him hesitant, timid or self-conscious. His compassion made him go out actively to preach and to send others on a mission of healing and liberation. Boldness and apostolic courage are an essential part of our mission. (131)

We are inspired to act by the example of all those priests, religious, and laity who devote themselves to proclamation and to serving others with great fidelity, often at the risk of their own lives and certainly at the cost of their comfort. Their testimony reminds us that, more than bureaucrats and functionaries, the Church needs passionate missionaries, enthusiastic about sharing true life. (138)

Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others. Sharing the word and celebrating the Eucharist together fosters fraternity and makes it a holy and missionary community. (142)

From Chapter Five:

We should not think of the devil as a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea. The devil poisons us with the venom of hatred, desolation, envy and vice. When we let down our guard, he takes advantage to destroy our lives, our families, and our communities. (161)

Discernment is more than intelligence or common sense. We can grow in this spiritual endowment by developing it with prayer, reflection, reading and good counsel. The gift of discernment has become all the more necessary today since contemporary life offers immense possibilities for action and distraction, and the world presents all of them as valid and good. (166)

At the time of the talk, Fr. Bong had already formally transferred to the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice at UP Diliman. ■

ABCs of Spiritual Warfare by the Country's Top Exorcist

Rev. Fr. Jose Francisco 'Jocis' Syquia gave a well-received talk on 'Spiritual Combat: Being a Warrior for Christ' at the EMHC Monthly Formation Talk Series last Thursday, August 16, at 7 pm. The talk was open to the Lectors & Commentators Ministry as well.

Fr. Jocis is the Chief Exorcist of the Archdiocese of Manila and Secretary General of the Philippine Association of Catholic Exorcists. He is the director of the Office of Exorcism and Commissioner for Extraordinary Phenomena. He has been an exorcist for 16 years and had written-published five books on exorcism, with a sixth on the way.

He set the mood for the talk by citing two popes:

- ▶ St. John Paul II said, 'We are now facing the final confrontation between the church and the anti-church, of the Gospel vs. the anti-Gospel.'



EMHC head Albert Cuadrante introduced Fr. Jocis Syquia



- ▶ And from Pope Francis himself: 'Some of you have said that I'm old-fashioned to speak of the devil in the 21st century. But look out, because the devil is here - even in the 21st century!'

And just exactly who is the adversary,

asked Fr. Jocis. It is Lucifer, the fallen angel, aka Satan aka the devil, the seducer 'p a r excellence'. He reminded everyone that Satan successfully t e m p t e d

Adam and Eve, persuaded a third of the angels to join him, and from the eternal fire that is hell, he will do everything in his power to regain what used to belong to him.

Make no mistake, Fr. Syquia warned. It is a battle, and there is no neutrality, no mutual co-existence. Jesus himself was unequivocal, 'Who is not with me is against me.'

The devil attacks in several ways, said Fr. Jocis. The most common way is through temptation. When we are emotionally weak and least expecting it, the devil offers temptation. But he reminded the listeners that the most effective way to overcome temptation is to do the precise opposite, e.g., speaking well of a person



when tempted to criticize; giving generously when tempted to be selfish; prolonging prayer when tempted to abandon it.

Fr. Syquia gave special warning regarding temptation. Even the strongest will succumb when senses are aroused, the imagination is excited, passion is strongly stirred, appetites stimulated, and self-control lost.

Beyond temptations, the devil is also at work using extraordinary demonic attacks, or what Fr. Syquia labels as 'oppression' and 'obsession'. This includes:

- ▶ attacks on the five senses, e.g., frightening apparitions or hearing suicidal and blasphemous voices in your head.
- ▶ attacks on your health, such as sudden deterioration, erratic blood pressure, tumors, freak accidents.
- ▶ sleep issues, including night terrors, incubus and succubus attacks
- ▶ work problems

The worst attack will have to be 'possession'. This is defined as the full takeover of the body and its senses, hence the effectiveness of the sacramentals. And the victim will usually have no recollection once the state of crisis is over.

Extraordinary demonic activity can center on a person, or animal, or a place like the home. Fr. Syquia talked about infestation of evil spirits in the home, making the point that every sin attracts more and more spirits, with every additional demon creating a stronghold in the infested home. Some signs of demonic infiltration in a home:

[continued on next page](#)

ABCs of Spiritual Warfare . . .

- ▶ generations of sin and bad luck for families living in the home
- ▶ outbreak of paranormal and psychic phenomena
- ▶ burdensome, miserable life-draining sufferings

To keep this in check, he reminded the attendees to: pray; allow God's peace and healing to flow in and remain in one's heart; practice the virtues of love, faith, confidence, and trust; have new homes blessed; and use the sacramentals and prayers of liberation. Sacramentals include: holy water, exorcised oils and salts, blessed candles and blessed incense and St. Benedict's medal.



The problem of possession is exacerbated by the practice of occultism where people invoke preternatural forces, make contact with deities and ancestors, and practice rituals to obtain and manipulate power. These occultists are called different names:

- ▶ those grieving from loss of loved ones turn to spiritists or mediums;
- ▶ the sick call on faith healers, witch doctors, psychic healers, shamans;
- ▶ those plagued with anxiety look to fortune tellers, palm readers, tarot card readers;
- ▶ those who feel victimized and desire vengeance seek witches, black magicians, voodoo practitioners; and
- ▶ the lonely call on sorcerers

The church and its catechism are clear - all practices of magic, sorcery, witchcraft by which one attempts to tame occult powers so as to place them at one's service and have supernatural power over others - even if this were for the



sake of restoring their health - are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. The problem is that by being called out in occult practices, evil spirits are given the right over the person for having used their 'services'. Fr. Jocis advised that everyone be wary of elemental or ancestral spirits. St. Paul himself reiterated the same principle. 'See to it that no one deceives you through any empty seductive philosophy, a philosophy based on cosmic powers rather than on Christ.'

Fr. Syquia then went through a few popular manifestations of occultism: 1) feng shui or geomancy which deciphers hidden presence of positive and negative currents in the physical world; and 2) energy or pranic healing, which utilizes the flow of life force energy to heal patients; and 3) third eye, via psychics.

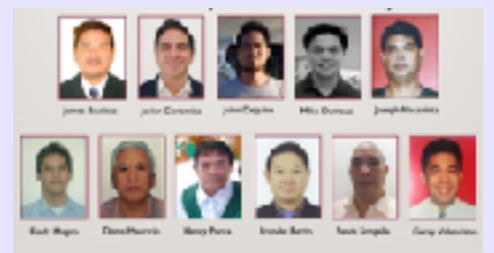
When possession happens, exorcism is the only solution. Exorcism, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, is 'when the Church asks publicly and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ that a person or object be protected against the power of the Evil One and be withdrawn from His Dominion.'

Eleven New EMHCs Commissioned

Eleven new Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion (EMHC) were commissioned last August 19 at the 10:30 am mass, presided over by new parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala.

The new '11 disciples' included: James Bautista, Javier Coromina, John Dequina, Michael Dumauual, Joseph Macavinta, Ferdz Magno, Dems Mauricio, Henry Porca, Frandel Recto, Sands Songalia, and Gerry Valenciano.

The EHMC is headed by Albert Cuadrante, assisted by Manny de Leon.



Lectors and Commentators Hold August General Assembly

Fr Jun Arvie Bello, CTK guest priest until his departure for Rome last August 22, gave the formation talk to the CTK lectors and commentators at the LeCom General Assembly last August 1, a Wednesday.

Fr. Arvie began by stressing that as lectors, God speaks to us and through us. Thus, the challenge for lectors: as proclaimers of the Word of God, how can we be “in sync” with what we are proclaiming if we have not read the source of the scriptures, i.e., the Holy Bible? He gave a pop quiz by asking the lectors questions like - who authored the Book of Genesis? Leviticus? Exodus? how about the Acts of the Apostles? Revelation? (answer: Tradition credits Moses as the author of Genesis, as well as Exodus, Book of Leviticus, Numbers, while the Acts of the Apostles is by Luke and Revelation is by John, the Apostle)

Fr. Arvie first talked about the four gospel writers. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the Synoptic Gospels because they include many of the same stories, often in a similar sequence and sometimes even identical wording. They stand in contrast to John, whose content is comparatively distinct. Current theory is that Matthew and Luke copied from Mark. Evidence includes:

1. St. Mark's gospels are difficult reading, shows little evidence of editing, uses crude and rough language as if his writings were giving a personal account or directly from an eye witness. On the other hand, Matthew and Luke have eloquent work, editing and embellishing Mark's work.
2. Only Mark gives details. For example, in the calming of the storm, only Mark cites “there were other boats” and that “Jesus was sleeping”.
3. He gives names, like Bartimaeus, the blind man, and Salome, daughter of Herodias, whereas the other gospels refer to them simply as “blind man” and “girl”.

Fr. Arvie also talked about the depiction of the symbols of the four Evangelists, based on the opening verses of their accounts.

1. Matthew begins with the genealogy pertaining to Jesus' incarnation and humanity. Matthew, as the author of the first gospel account, is symbolized by a winged man, or

(synoptic) gospels. He speaks of “The Word”, which is highly theological, and evidence that he sees directly into the identity of Christ. Thus the eagle, a creature of the sky, and believed by Christian scholars to be able to look straight into the sun. This symbolizes that Christians should look on eternity without flinching as they journey



angel. This signifies that Christians should use their reason for salvation.

2. Mark begins with John the Baptist, the roaring lion, proclaiming one greater to come. The winged lion is a figure of courage and monarchy and also represents Jesus' resurrection (because lions were believed to sleep with open eyes, a comparison with Christ in the tomb), and Christ as king. This signifies that Christians should be courageous on the path of salvation.
3. Luke's account begins with the duties of Zacharias in the temple; it represents Jesus' sacrifice in His Passion and Crucifixion. Luke speaks of Zechariah offering a sacrifice, and the ox is an animal of sacrifice, service and strength. The ox signifies that Christians should be prepared to sacrifice themselves in following Christ.
4. John starts with an eternal overview of Jesus the Logos and goes on to describe many things with a “higher” Christology than the other three

towards their goal of union with God. He lived to old age as part of his mission to record Revelation.

So Fr. Arvie asked the lectors to ask themselves: am I merely reading or am I proclaiming? How can you proclaim the scriptures if you haven't studied the scriptures? So the study of scriptures is essential in our service.

He also made a strong point of lectors living the life fitting to what is proclaimed. What is read and who is reading must be in synch. He asked the lectors if there is a formal persona which we project and a real one that comes out in unguarded moments. ‘Iba ang nagsimba, iba ang uuwi sa bahay’, Fr. Arvie commented. ‘How sad if people went to heaven because of what the lector read but the lector himself was not able to enter heaven.’

Fr. Arvie Bello ended with the admonition, ‘Preach what you read - and practice what you preach. Let the Word not just be heard but seen in the very life of the lector.’

New LeComs Commissioned

Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows welcomed a dozen new Lectors and Commentators for 2018. In the commissioning ceremony last August 12 during the 9 am mass, Fr. Steve Zabala, CTK parish priest, formally commissioned 11 of the 12.

In photo with Fr. Steve, posing left to right - Fe Gerona, Girl Valencia, Jill Yu, Eileen de Leon, Regina Polancos, Rose Ong, Miguel de Leon, Lupo Basilio, Daniel Remo, Maielle Montayre, and Che Garcia. Not in photo is Mai Supetran who also completed Basic Formation but was indisposed for the Sunday commissioning. The group had just completed their whole-day Basic Formation at the Obispado in Lantana, Cubao the day before, August 11. ■



Diocese Conducts Renewal Seminars for Lay Liturgical Ministers

Continuing Lay Liturgical Ministers (which includes Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Lectors and Commentators, and Greeters and Collectors) have started to attend the mandatory renewal seminars to be able to continue to perform their ministerial duties in 2019.

Lectors and Commentators had the earliest renewal dates, starting September 1, then September 15 and finally September 22, with either the morning (8 am to 12 noon) slot or afternoon slot (1 pm to 5 pm). Although there are specific dates and time slots suggested per parish - CTK LeComs are recommended to attend the September 22 afternoon session

- those who cannot make it at the suggested time can still attend the other dates and time slots although they should not expect to see their parish mates.

The EMHCs have a later date series - October 13, October 20 and October 27. The Greeters and Collectors, since they have the least number, can choose from two slots on November 10 or the



First weekend 'renewers' included the Banico family and the del Rosario family.

morning slot of November 17. All the renewal sessions are held on the 3rd floor of the Obispado in Lantana, Cubao. Altar servers, on the other hand, have their renewal sessions in their respective parishes. ■

Diocese Holds First Youth Forum

Last July 28, 2018, the Diocese of Cubao Ministry for Youth Affairs (MYA) had its 1st Diocesan Youth Forum, held in the Obispado De Cubao, gathering youth reps from all the parishes as well as

document was drafted for presentation to Pope Francis.



The first forum activity was an ice-breaker in order for participants to get to know each other and the work that they do for their parishes, organizations, and-or ministries.

One of the highlights of the forum was the panel discussion with members of the clergy, including Fr. Rey Paglinawan and Fr. Gelo Parlan, the youth represented by Gerald Rey Coquia, Family and Life Ministry couple leaders, as well as the coordinators of the MYA. Participants were asked to prepare questions for the panelists on issues and concerns they faced in their parishes, e.g., budget, relationship with elders, relationship with their parish priests, getting the parish youth engaged, Diocesan activities for the Youth, etc.



different Campus Ministries and Transparochial Youth Organizations.

The main goal of the Youth Forum was to simulate the meeting in Rome, held last March 2018, of the different youth all over the world who are preparing for the Youth Synod in October, in which a

There was also a talk on the Meeting for the Preparatory Document for the Youth Synod which was presented by Mr. Gerald Rey Coquia, one of the Philippine representatives to Rome.

Participants were divided into different groups that include youth from different parishes and vicariates (no two from the same parish in the same group) including a youth animator from the Ministry for Youth Affairs. These groupings were made to foster sharing of experiences that the youth in the Philippines face, their concerns about the youth in their communities, and how these can be addressed.

The issues and concerns raised at the Diocesan Youth Forum were to be brought up at the Diocesan Youth Ministry Planning that was to be held three weeks later in Iloilo. The ideas and suggestions brought up should also help the Diocese Ministry for Youth Affairs craft its 2018-2019 programs and activities to strengthen the youth community and engage the Diocesan youth more effectively. ■



Vicariate Youth Ministry Holds 2018-2019 Youth Planning

The Vicariate Youth Ministry (VYM) of Our Lady of Perpetual Help had its annual planning last July 14-15, 2018 at the St. Camillus Pastoral Care Center, Varsity Hills, Quezon City.

The VYM Planning gathered 12 youth leaders from the seven parishes of the Vicariate to plan for the year 2018-2019. The parishes represented were Christ The King Greenmeadows, Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish, San Roque Parish, Saint John Paul II Parish, and Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Parish.

The 2018 VYM Planning began with updates from each parish, what projects they had done successfully since the



2017 planning, as well as their future plans given the new assignments of Parish Priests for five out of the seven parishes.

The major projects taken up were the Vicariate Youth Day, Jesus and Me (JAM) CAMP for the youth leaders of the Parishes, Formation Programs to be led by the VYM such as Liturgical, Financial, Health, and Environment, VYM Outreach, and VYM Fundraising Projects.

The first day of the planning was devoted to formation and spiritual activities to help foster the youth leaders' personal growth in the youth ministry and in their lives. The resource speaker from the Diocese of Novaliches shared the structure of their Diocesan Youth Ministry and Parish Youth Ministries and how they engage their youth to be more active and involved in the service of the young people. Capping off the first day was a prayer activity, the Walk of Prayer, to boost spirituality and relationship with Christ.

The second day of the VYM planning focused on VYM plans and activities for 2018-2019, including the Diocesan Youth Forum, Vicariate Youth Day, Diocesan Youth Day, and 2019's Year of The Youth. In addition, two guest speakers were invited to speak about



1) Youth of Today and Human Sexuality: HIV and AIDS Awareness, and 2) Living our Vocation in the Youth Ministry.

At the conclusion of the VYM Planning, the new VYM officers were announced - 1) Fredy Narvasa from San Roque Parish, 2) Arianna Carlos from San Roque Parish, and 3) Yna Jabonero from Saint John Paul II Parish. The new officers will assist the Elected Officers, Dan Joseph Ignacio (Coordinator) from Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish, Anton Justo (Coordinator) from Nativity of Our Lord Parish, and Jam Lambong (Secretary) from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, in ensuring that all the plans and activities of the VYM will be executed and will be aligned with the mission and vision of the Diocese of Cubao and each of the Parishes in the Vicariate.

The participants also formulated and adopted the new Mission and Vision statement of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Vicariate:

MISSION:
In witnessing, we commit ourselves to Christ, with our Lady of Perpetual Help, to use our youthful spirit in bringing Jesus to the young people.

VISION:
A community of courageous young people, matured in the Christian faith and united in the mystical body of Christ-committed in serving the Lord by welcoming youth of all backgrounds especially those in the periphery. ■

OLPH Vicariate Youth Ministry's Cake Raffle

Last August 26, 2018, the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Vicariate, composed of the parishes - Christ The King Greenmeadows, Nativity of Our Lord, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Transfiguration of Our Lord, San Roque,



Saint John Paul II, and Our Lady of Miraculous Medal, held its first ever Cake Raffle at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish. The cakes were donated by various sponsors from the different parishes. The main purpose of the the Cake Raffle was to raise funds for future activities and programs.

Each parish was given 50 tickets to be sold at 10 Pesos each. Six out of the seven parishes in the Vicariate participated. Members of Christ The King Parish's Parish Pastoral Council bought a total of 120 tickets while the other parishes sold their allotted 50 tickets.

A second cake raffle is planned for October 14 later this year.

Receiving the cakes were Bert Santos, PPC Coordinator for CTK; Bang Gayomali for Transfiguration of Our Lord Parish; - Ms. Bang Gayomali; Ms. Raquel Villafuerte for Nativity of Our Lord Parish; Carolina Icasiano for St. John Paul II Parish; and Leslie Panganiban for Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish. ■

CTK Starts Series on Rediscovering Our Catholic Faith

Fr. Jerome 'Jigs' Rosalinda, Parish Priest of Parroquia Dela Nuestra Señora dela Paz y Buen Viaje in Old Balara, Quezon



City, kicked off the monthly catechetical series - Rediscovering Our Catholic Faith - last June 21, a joint undertaking between CTK's Formation Ministry and Couples for Christ. The Catechism of the Catholic Church-based series is scheduled every third Thursdays of the month, at 7 pm.

The June 21 session was an introduction to and history of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, or CCC. Among the many things Fr. Jigs shared:

- ▶ 'Catechism' comes from the greek word 'katekeo', which means word of mouth, and sharing with others.
- ▶ The first recorded was the Catechism of the Council of Trent in 1556, the first universally accepted catechism, the writing of which was driven by the need to systematize teaching to combat the heresy of protestantism. The Catechism of the Council of Trent was addressed to clergy; there were no seminaries yet and priests were untrained so the catechism was promulgated to serve as manual for priests.
- ▶ Vatican II had three areas of focus: publication of the Liturgy (completed in 1976), completion of the Canon Law in 1983, and the publication of the Catechism in 1992, which completed the work of Vatican II. The 26-year old Catechism is a summary of what we believe as Catholics; it is a systematic

presentation and has structure and organization. The 1992 catechism is targeted for everyone.

- ▶ The CCC started in 1985 when John Paul 2 convened the extraordinary synod of bishops which concluded that a catechism was needed. He then put up a commission of bishops, headed by Cardinal Ratzinger that drafted a catechism and circulated among bishops for suggestions and comments. In 1992, the CCC was promulgated and has not been edited since.
- ▶ The CCC is divided into four parts: Profession of Faith (creeds); Seven Sacraments; Morals (10 Commandments, Beatitudes); and Prayer (The Lord's Prayer). Each part has two sections: basic principles, and how to practice the doctrine in real life. Each section has chapters, each chapter is made of articles, each article is made up of paragraphs. All in all, CCC has 2,865 paragraphs.

This was followed by a second session last July 19. Among the important chapters shared by Fr. Jigs:

- ▶ CCC 27: Desire for God. Man desires meaning. There is an emptiness in us that can only be filled by God
- ▶ CCC 31-35: Ways of Knowing God. Everything around us points to a Supreme Being. God is the unmoved mover.
- ▶ CCC 36-38: Knowledge of God. Because it's not easy or enough to know God through reasoning, there is the need for divine revelation to enter into a personal knowledge of God through Jesus.
- ▶ CCC 39-43: Speaking of God. We can speak of God but in a limited and in a human fashion.
- ▶ CCC 51-53: Revelation of God's Goodness. He reveals Himself to give us access to Him. He invites us to come to Him. God revealed himself to Adam, had a covenant with Noah, chose Abraham to form the people of Israel, and gave us Jesus Christ, in the fullness of revelation.
- ▶ CCC 54-55: In the Beginning. Adam and Eve were clothed with grace and justice. God's design was destroyed because of sin but he promised redemption

The third Rediscovering Our Catholic Faith session was last August 9. Among the things shared by Fr. Rosalinda:

- ▶ The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life. God alone can make it known to us by revealing Himself as Father, Son and Spirit. The Incarnation of God's Son reveals that God is the eternal Father and that the Son is consubstantial with the Father, which means that, in the Father and with the Father, the Son is one and the same God. The mission of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in the name of the Son and by the Son 'from the Father', reveals that, with them, the Spirit is one and the same God. The Father created us, the Son redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit sanctified us.
- ▶ God created the world to show and communicate His glory and for His creatures to share in His truth, goodness



and beauty,

- ▶ To human beings, God granted free will, the ability to cooperate freely with His plans.
- ▶ The fact that God permits physical and even moral evil is a mystery that God illuminated by His Son Jesus Christ who died and rose to vanquish evil.
- ▶ Angels are spiritual, non-corporeal beings and have existed since creation and throughout the history of salvation. The angels are servants and messengers of God. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life. The angels surrounded Christ here on earth and after His resurrection and ascension.

A large number of parishioners have regularly followed the series and plan to continue attending the next monthly meetings. ■

Catechetical Ministry Gathers More Volunteers

CTK's Catechetical Ministry, headed by Alma Yeh and Sheryl Coronel, conducted a ministry orientation and catechist formation workshop last June 29 for eight volunteers. The objective is to



Catechetical Ministry co-heads Alma Yeh, left, and Sheryl Coronel, right

create a larger cadre of catechetical speakers and facilitators who can take on the full year's schedule, which includes the near weekly catechism classes for scholars of both Ladies of Charity (LOC) and Knights of Columbus (KOC), the daily May religion classes for Libis youth, and the preparatory weekend classes for First Communion and Confirmation from September to November.

Volunteers who attended last June 29 included: Ivy Yeh, Girl Valencia, Bunny Gerochi, Ronnie Guerrero, Mary Jugo, Joy Schallenberg, Eileen de Leon, and Nino Mendoza. They joined earlier volunteers Beth Monedero, Christine Bernardo, Joy Schallenberg, Christianne Pasquin, Monette Najar, Elsbeth Llama, and Jane Aldeguer.

Sheryl and Alma began by explaining what the CTK Catechetical Ministry does, which is to provide catechetical instruction and to prepare parishioners for specific sacraments, i.e., first communion, confirmation and adult baptism). They teach catechism to scholars of Ladies of Charity and Knights of Columbus, from grades 7 to 12 as well



Catechetical session with the Ladies of Charity scholars

as college), the Libis children, ranging from 8 to 12 years old, the First Communicants, Confirmands, parents and sponsors of children and youth receiving the sacraments, and converts to the Catholic faith.

Knights of Columbus scholars have their

basic catechism lessons every 4th Sunday from 9 am to 11 am. The Ladies of Charity scholars have sessions on the 1st Saturday (10 am to 12 noon, with grades 7-9 being given basic catechism while grades 10 to college given Year of the Clergy lessons from the Diocese) and 3rd Saturday (bible readings and reflections from 9am to 11 am) of each month. All these classes are from June to March, which coincides with the school year.

The Flores de Mayo Classes, on the other hand, take place during school summer break, on all the weekdays of May. The kids from Libis are annually invited to



attend, and classes are assisted by Libis youth leaders. The CTK catechists provide simple themed lessons based on Bible stories, lives of saints, gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc. They also get to do arts and crafts and play religious-themed games. The month long 'school' is capped by graduation rites at the end of the month.

The other major activity is the parish-wide First Communion and Confirmation in November, which involves five to six Sunday catechetical sessions in October



Above, first communicants at First Communion; below, confirmands confirmed by Monsignor Mortillero.



prior to the actual rites. Topics usually include: salvation history, grace and sacraments, Holy Eucharist, the Mass,

Communion, and Penance. Ditto with Confirmation, which would have more or less the same preparatory class schedule as First Communion but would include the specific topics of confirmation and discipleship. Occasionally, the CTK Catechetical Ministry heads are able to invite San Jose Seminarians to assist with small group reflections. In addition to an overview of topics covered during the confirmand classes, parents and sponsors of confirmands are given sessions to remind them of their responsibilities. The Ministry also arranges and organizes the actual First Communion and Confirmation Rites.

Once in a while, there will be converts to the Catholic faith and Sheryl and Alma will take the lead in preparing them for adult baptism, confirmation and first communion. This usually involves a half day session.

Other opportunities exist but are currently not yet being pursued due to lack of manpower. Those identified to date are:

- ▶ two Thursdays a month catechism class at Libis Elementary School;
- ▶ catechetical outreach for St. Vincent Home for Abused Girls; and
- ▶ two days a month regular catechism offerings for kids in international or secular schools, in collaboration with the Youth Ministry.

Alma and Sheryl then talked on 'Why Be a Catechist', which required a four-part answer. Their short first answer was 'that people may come to faith'. A second answer was - to defend our Catholic faith from attacks'. Here, the ministry heads talked about Catholic Apologetics, which is the theological art and science of presenting, explaining, and justifying the Catholic faith to atheists, agnostics, deists, Protestants, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, skeptics, critics, the ignorant and the confused. The third answer was - to defend against moral relativism. And fourth answer was to be a part of God's army in the spiritual warfare against the powers of darkness.

The Catechetical Ministry heads concluded with the following advice: know your faith. Read the Bible. Read the Catechism of the Catholic Faith. Then teach the faith. ■

CTK Youth Ministry Teams Up With Living Hope's Timothy Ministry for August 11 'Day of Sacraments'

CTK's Youth Ministry, headed by Louie and Lei Abando, teamed up with the Timothy Youth Ministry, headed by Trixie Andres, for the 'Day of Sacraments' last August 11, Saturday, from 1 pm to 3 pm



at the Divine Mercy Chapel. CTK young parishioners from 13 years old and up were invited to two hours of adoration, confession, worship, blessing and fellowship. Over 60 teenage youth and young professionals attended. Leading the faith-filled devotion that afternoon was Fr. Norman Kagaoan, a former military chaplain and currently assigned to Cainta.

The Timothy Ministry is the youth arm of the Living Hope Catholic Charismatic Community and they meet every Saturday from 3 to 6 pm at Christ the King. The journey of 'Living Hope' began in 1998, when three parishioners who were active in CTK back then, Pauline Peronilla-Cauton (daughter of Conse Peronilla) Garett Cabrera, Liza Famador



(daughter of Ben and Linda Famador) came together to establish a community

that would minister to single professionals. Today, Living Hope reaches out not only to single professionals, but to married couples and individuals, single parents, separated individuals, teens and young kids as well, both here and abroad.

The Timothy Ministry of the Living Hope



Fr. Norman Kagaoan officiates Living Hope's Timothy Ministry's Day of Sacraments



Catholic Charismatic Community brings together young men and women (ages 13-21) who want to spend their youth in the best possible way: by knowing, loving and serving God.

Aware that, youth at this age are subject to a lot of distractions, the ministry aims to give direction and guidance to young people so they can make everyday decisions in the light of their faith. The Timothy Ministry meets every Saturday 3-6 pm at Christ the King. They begin with fellowship and worship followed by a talk from an adult from the community. The participants are then divided into groups to share among themselves, their reactions to and comments on the talk. Examples of topics are cardinal and spiritual virtues, Sacrament of reconciliation, Eucharist.

The name 'Timothy' is lifted from the Ministry's guiding verse, Timothy 4:12 -

'Let no one disregard you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in the way you speak and behave, in love, in faith and purity.'

Last August 11's afternoon event, called Day of Sacraments, was intended to bring the youth closer to the Eucharist. That morning, the volunteers held an outreach

activity in Pineda, Pasig. Children from this impoverished purok comprise the adopted community of Living Hope since 2004. The volunteers then proceeded to CTK for Eucharistic adoration and confession. Before confession, the participants were also encouraged to go to the intercessory ministry of Timothy, to pray with them as they lift up their current concerns.

That day was a day to meet Christ in the poor and in the Sacraments.

Sonny and Mina Mejia had been members of Living Hope for quite some time and they introduced Trixie Andres, Timothy Ministry Adult head, to Lei and Louie Abando. Their rationale was that since the group meets every Saturday at CTK, they may be able to help CTK's Youth Ministry in gathering and animating the youth of the parish, since starting a movement had proven to be a challenge. Already, a number of CTK parish volunteers from Mustard Seed have started to attend the weekly prayer meeting.

Currently, the members of Timothy come from different schools - Ateneo, Las Salle, Assumption Antipolo, Poveda and St. Paul. A number of them are regular CTK massgoers and Mustard Seed Ministry volunteers.

Recently, in meetings between Living Hope's Timothy Ministry with CTK's Catechetical Ministry represented by co-heads Alma Yeh and Sheryl Coronel, a suggestion was made to have the candidates for confirmation attend the weekly prayer meetings of the Timothy Ministry. ■

Seniors Encouraged to Look Good, Feel Good

It was a fun morning for seniors when the Sunrise Ministry conducted its 2nd General Assembly for 2018 last August 25, 2018 at the CTK Formation Center with the theme: "Looking Good and Feeling Good."



The event commenced with a Prayer-Meditation led by Dan and Vinchu Lapid.

A warm welcome by Ministry heads Doy and Estrelle Lopez followed. They gave



Prayer by Vinchu Lapid; Welcome and Program Overview by Doy and Estrelle Lopez



an overview of the entire morning's activities and assured everyone that it would be a fun-filled morning, with everyone going home looking and feeling good.

Fr. Steven Zabala expressed his joy to be with the seniors of the parish and shared how his own 94 year-old father longs for the company of friends and classmates, most or all of whom are sadly no longer around. Fr. Steve dwelt on and emphasized the seniors' need for camaraderie and fellowship to counter



their loneliness. He thus expressed his thanks to the leadership and members of the Sunrise Ministry for organizing this apostolate.

The Feeling Good segment began with a video demonstrating the positive effects of dancing, particularly on slowing down the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The seniors immediately put to practice what they just learned by enthusiastically dancing, with choreographer Mark Reniva leading. Everyone was up and swaying, including Fr. Steve and the super seniors.

A 10-minute lecture about the benefits of massage by Ms. Zeny Palisoc of DermCare gave the participants a breather. She explained that massage increases blood circulation and helps in detoxification by facilitating the release of trapped waste products of muscular metabolism.

Then another dancing session, this time a tutorial on basic ballroom dancing by Mark and CTK's own Auring Santos. Everybody grabbed a partner and followed the simple samba dance moves.

To calm the dancers down, Bon Intengan demonstrated tai-chi, with the seniors copying his moves. It was so much fun



Laughter Yoga by Bon Intengan imitated by senior participants



with Bon's next subject: Laughter Yoga. St. Matthew and Mark's rooms resounded with so much laughter from the Sunrise participants.

Part 2, Looking Good, started with a short video presentation on the aging skin and how to remain looking good, courtesy of DermCare, which also had skin care giveaways for the participants. A volunteer "model" was selected from the audience for a free make-up session – and was presented later with a short discussion on how the make-up was



Nell Laudico with her "made-up" model: Dativa "Diding" Macarilay

applied to enhance her features.

The much-awaited 'main event' was a fashion show by CTK seniors – couples and singles – which was coordinated by Nell Laudico and annotated by Loung Cuartero with background music by Mon Cuartero. The senior models sashayed



The CTK Seniors fashion models: front from left: Regina, Baby Banal, Estrelle Lopez, Lulu del Mundo, Lulay dela Cruz, Auring Santos (partly hidden). Back: Linda Dayrit, Jorge Banal; Doy Lopez, Louie and Nell Laudico, Norma Chico, Nina and Bon Intengan

down the aisle in senior-appropriate ensembles for different occasions.

As with previous Seniors' assemblies, everyone went home with big smiles on their faces.



Seniors get re-energized with a hearty snack of arroz caldo and turon

Dry Run for Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) Sets the Tone for Future Gatherings at Greenmeadows 1

Last August 29, a Wednesday, the newly-formed Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC) of Greenmeadows 1 had its third meeting (now monthly, from its previous every other month format).

As with the first six GM1 BEC meetings, BEC coordinator Eileen de Leon, a First Greenmeadows resident, identified specific homeowners to facilitate their bible study group. But what was different this time was that she invited the other Village Coordinators - of Acropolis, White Plains, St. Ignatius, Libis, Corinthian Gardens, and Enclave - to observe, especially since Fr. Steve Zabala, CTK's parish priest, was going to help facilitate and model how he thinks the BEC in the exclusive villages might work, centered around study of the Bible.



Thirty people attended the August 29 BEC meeting at Greenmeadows 1. In the meeting, Fr. Steve first explained what BEC meant - 'basic' which meant it should start at the grassroots; 'ecclesial', meaning it had to be connected to the church; and 'community', which meant there must be a gathering of people.

Fr. Steve discussed his dream that there will be an active BEC in each of the gated subdivisions; that eager and willing neighbors gather to listen to the Word of God; and that there would be ideally one structure or format for all the villages. And what would that look like?

- ▶ A facilitator would be assigned for each bible meeting, who will start with an opening prayer.
- ▶ Play appropriate music to set the mood for prayer and a deeper encounter with the Lord.

- ▶ Read the Scripture. That could be today's gospel or whatever the group decides.
- ▶ Everyone reflects on the reading. Did everyone understand the reading? What verses struck you or resonated with your own experiences? can you identify with any of the characters involved? Does it trigger other questions that lead to more discussion?
- ▶ Everyone shares relevant personal experience. But note that these sharing should be completely confidential so that members will continue to share in the future.
- ▶ End with a prayer and fellowship.

For that evening, Fr. Steve walked them through and guided the participants in the BEC bible study, using the gospel for the day, the 'beheading of St. John the Baptist', as the focal point of the gathering. Fr. Steve's own reflection - John the Baptist was beheaded because he wasn't afraid to speak the truth. With his beheading, his disciples may have lost their leader but it did pave the way for them to follow Jesus.

In the printed material that he provided, it became clear to the attendees that:

- ▶ the BEC was neighborhood-based
- ▶ the BEC is centered in the Word of God
- ▶ the BEC is not inward-looking but responds to the community's socio-political-economic needs
- ▶ the BEC is tightly linked to the parish church

'It was a great evening, a good 'dry run' for how future BEC gatherings in the other villages might take shape,' explained Eileen. 'Fr. Steve explained the gospel, guided the participants through the meditation, and facilitated the sharing. This structure or pattern could be adopted by the other villages.'

When asked what her most ardent wish was as far as her new role as BEC Coordinator was concerned, Eileen answered, 'Simple lang. I would like to see increased awareness for BEC.' ■

BEC Libis Meets with Fr. Steve



BEC Libis held its first meeting with Fr. Steve Zabala last August 30, Thursday morning, to get a clearer direction as to his expectations regarding BEC in the Libis community. The BEC leaders from the six sitios, led by Ching Botero, were introduced by CTK BEC Coordinator Eileen de Leon to Fr. Steve. ■

Fr. Steve Meets and Greets the New PPC Members

Fr. Steve Zabala met with the newest group of incoming Parish Pastoral Council members last Saturday morning, September 8, at 10 am.

In his opening prayer, Fr. Steve thanked the Lord for the new volunteers. The group had coffee and snacks with Fr. Steve before they formally introduced themselves to him and to each other.

The incoming PPC members included:

- ▶ Cen Hernando, Grand Knight of CTK Knights of Columbus
- ▶ Tonette Arizabal of CTK Ladies of Charity
- ▶ Chit Pascual of CTK Legion of Mary, Immaculate Heart of Mary Presidium
- ▶ Carol de Jesus of CTK Legion of Mary, Mary Queen of Peace Presidium
- ▶ Cerrie Paterno and Virgie Abastillas, village coordinators for La Maison Townhomes
- ▶ Beth Monedero, joining Jeanette Cagurangan as co-head of Greeters and Collectors
- ▶ Charito Barredo, replacing Baby Banal as village coordinator for St. Ignatius, joining Lulay de la Cruz
- ▶ Marius & Ellen Cobarrubias, replacing Mon and Loung Cuartero as head of Diwanihan Kristiyano CTK effective January 1, 2019.



St. Ignatius Celebrates and Reaches Out

Saint Ignatius Village celebrated its feast in honor of village patron saint St. Ignatius de Loyola last July 29. The SIV homeowners association, headed by Jorge Banal and assisted by the barangay and various mandated organizations including Buklod ng Panginoon (BNP), gathered as a community to organize the Fiesta Mass and Community Breakfast Celebration, capping the nine-day novena masses for St. Ignatius. This year's celebration theme was 'Unity in the Community'.



The fiesta mass was celebrated by none other than new parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala. The community breakfast followed.

Last July 14, St. Ignatius Village-based renewal movement Buklod ng Panginoon or BnP, held its medical outreach program in cooperation with ProLAB. Priced very low, the medical exam attracted so many from the village who came to avail of the services. BNP offered



cheese bread, spanish bread and coffee for the clients and arroz caldo for the medical and village staff. BnP president Cita



Pabillo was assisted by Myrna Delena, Fe Reyes, Mameng Rivera, and other members of BnP. ■

CTK Christian Family Movement Holds General Assembly



The Christian Family Movement, CTK Chapter, held its General Assembly last July 2 at St. Luke Room, from 8:30 to 10:00 am. Their guest speaker, Grace Marquez, shared her reflection on finding and giving meaning to prayer. She referred to her short reflection as 'A Stopover in Our Prayer Journey'. Fr. Steve Zabala dropped in to listen to Ms. Marquez's message.

Have you ever wondered why we pray, and have you ever stopped to think how we can make it better? That was what Grace tried to answer when she shared her reflections on finding and giving meaning to prayer. She called her short

reflection, 'A Stopover in Our Prayer Journey', or, 'Relearning How to Pray'.

Grace Marquez is a professional staff at the Ruben Tanseco Center for Family Ministries where she is involved in its Parenting Cluster and its Resilience Program team. Apart from giving talks, recollections and short programs on family and pastoral themes, Ms. Marquez also does counseling. Starting 2018, she began teaching at the MFI Polytechnic Institute, formerly the Meralco Foundation. In 2017, Grace earned her MA in Pastoral Ministry, specializing in Family Ministry and Counselling at the Ateneo de Manila University. ■

Life In the Spirit Weekend

The 2018 Life in the Spirit Seminar Weekend was held last September 15 and 16, Saturday and Sunday, at the CTK Parish Social Hall with 49 participants. The LSS Seminar Weekend was conducted by Fr. Larry Tan SVD and was the 15th such weekend since it started at CTK.



LSS 15 was sponsored by the CTK Life in the Spirit Community, a prayer group that meets every Monday evening at the Divine Mercy Chapel for worship and healing prayer. The Monday evening prayer are open to the public. The prayer group is currently headed by Bobby and Margie San Juan.

There were three major talks - on salvation, on Gods' gifts (Saturday, both by Fr. Larry Tan), and on growth (Sunday, by Fr. Steve Zabala). There were also several testimonial sessions - by singles, couples, and a solo parent. Group discussions were part of the lunches, snacks, and Saturday dinner.

The 49 attendees, or 'lambs', some of them DermCare employees, had signed up for orientation and shepherding at one of the Monday evenings leading up to LSS Weekend.

The Life in the Spirit weekend ended with the Commissioning Rites that included the distribution of salt, candles and pins.

Both days began with anointing of the several dozen 'shepherds', most being members of the LSS prayer community or graduates of previous LSS weekends, followed by registration-breakfast.

Aside from the San Juans, major movers of LSS 15 included Pepe and Billie Pilar, Jess de la Fuente, Gigi Mantaring, Vinchu Lapid, Mila del Fonso, Zeny Palisoc, Jun and Techie Yumul. ■

LOC Starts Another Housekeeping Livelihood Program

The CTK Ladies of Charity began their third 2018 livelihood training, the Housekeeping Training Course, at Barangay E. Rodriguez, last July 2, with an orientation talk that drew 18 participants from the barangay. The



livelihood program is headed by Teri Floro, Tonette Arizabal, Narcing Malatuba.

Recently, LOC conducted catechism classes for the trainees. Teaching them were Ronnie Guerrero, Eileen de Leon, and Beth Monedero.



Eileen de Leon pose with livelihood participants after catechism class

It will be recalled that the LOC ladies already had two back-to-back Hilot Massage livelihood programs in 2018. The first batch graduated last April 3. The second batch, held for Barangay Krus na Ligas, completed their training in June and had their 'graduation' at CTK last July 2, with Fr. Serge Maniba giving the inspirational talk. Most of the graduates had already found employment with the Teachers Village branch of Nuat Thai.

As before, training was in partnership with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, or TESDA. The training is being held every Wednesday and Friday from 8 am to 5 pm and will wrap up by late September. September 28 has been identified as the TESDA graduation date.

LOC Elects New Officers

Last August 4, the newly-elected officers of the Ladies of Charity - Christ the King Chapter - had their oath taking at the Divine Mercy Chapel, by CTK parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala.

Elected President was Tonette Arizabal,



replacing Fe Pery. Mambie Aquino was sworn in as Vice President, Beth Monedero took her oath as Treasurer, and Lynne Rodriguez assumed the position of Secretary. Eileen de Leon and Christine Bernardo were also sworn in as Assistant Secretaries.

Ladies of Charity Resumes Feeding Program

The Ladies of Charity started their 2018-2019 feeding program at Libis Elementary School upon the resumption of classes last June. LOC officers Mila Bangco, Tessie Fajardo, Elvie Balmeo, and Eileen de Leon met with the new principal, Ma'am Janice Palaran.



Libis Elem feeding recipients learn to wash their hands before eating.



Below, LOC officers Mila Bangco, Tessie Fajardo and Elvie Balmeo with LES principal Janice Palaran



An innovation introduced was requiring the grades 1 and 2 pupils to wash their hands before eating. In addition, the feeding center was recently screened up, courtesy of LOC's Sonia Ongkiko.



Welcoming Fr. Jojo Gatdula to the CTK Fold

If you've noticed a new priest giving several of the weekend masses and most of the weekday afternoon masses and speaking in very crisp and clear English, then you've seen, and heard, Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows' newest resident guest priest, Fr. Giovanni 'Jojo' M. Gatdula, a Diocesan priest of the Apostolic Vicariate of San Jose, which covers Occidental Mindoro.



Since May, 2014, Fr. Jojo had been the parish priest of San Isidro Labrador Parish in Tagbac, Lubang, Occidental Mindoro. Then, last year, he was asked by the newly-installed Apostolic Administrator, Bishop David William Antonio, to pursue his Licentiate in Canon Law at the University of Sto. Tomas, Manila. Through the kindness of Rev. Fr. Aris Sison, then Rector of Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Fr. Jojo was introduced to Bishop Honesto Ontioco who accepted him as a guest priest, temporarily assigned to the Cathedral. After just a year, he was transferred to Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows. 'I am truly grateful to Fr. Steve Zabala for accommodating me in this parish while finishing my studies,' said Fr. Jojo.

When asked how and when he first heard God's call, Fr. Jojo answered, 'I entered the seminary at the age of 12. My only objective then was to study. But as time went on, the call to the priesthood grew louder and harder to ignore. The possibility of serving the Church, becoming a servant-leader to God's

people, and helping build ecclesial communities inspired me to go on. My drive towards the priestly life has also been encouraged by the presence of the other priests in our local church, especially the SVD missionaries.'

Fr. Jojo was ordained a priest by Bishop Antonio P. Palang, SVD DD on March 25, 2004 at the Holy Cross Parish, Sta. Cruz, Occidental Mindoro. After ordination, he was assigned as parochial vicar at the Cathedral of San Jose, Mindoro. The following year, he was given his own parish - St Joseph, Spouse of Mary Parish, Central, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro - where he stayed on as parish priest for eight years. Concurrently, he served as parochial school director of the Holy Family Academy parochial school.

'The assignment to San Isidro Labrador Parish was unexpected, Fr. Jojo admitted. 'I hesitated but out of obedience to the bishop's will, I complied. It turned out to be my most rewarding assignment.'

When asked what gave him the most rewarding moments in his relatively young career, Fr. Jojo quickly answered: 'Every liturgical celebration of the Holy Mass is rewarding. So is the formation of lay leaders. There were two projects that gave me great satisfaction. One was the introduction of informal tithing in my parish, which we called 'Pondong Pastoral'; the other was the construction of the new parish building.'

On what he sees are the major challenges of the church, Fr. Jojo quickly cited - time management on the part of the priests; lack of lay volunteers and support personnel; and on-going formation and catechesis.

Fr. Jojo has two more years left to his Licentiate program. 'I plan to stay at the CTK for the duration of my studies. Yes, I am happy and privileged to serve CTK as resident priest.' And after that? 'After my studies, I'm going back to our local church - the Apostolic Vicariate of San Jose,' Fr. Jojo answered.

Fr. Jojo had only positive words regarding his impressions of Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows. 'CTK is a

lively parish. There are committed lay leaders; parish pastoral programs are carried out. There has been on-going formations for the parishioners especially on the doctrine of the Church.' As for the parishioners, Fr. Jojo said, 'Parishioners, in general, are kind and generous. I have already met several parishioners involved in the service of the church who are persons of goodwill. They strike me as pious, disciplined and obedient in terms of practicing the Catholic way of life.'

He continued, 'The church itself is very conducive for liturgy. The parish environment is a good place for reflection, meditation and prayers.'

We asked Fr. Jojo what he thought of his new parish priest. 'Fr Steve is like brother to me,' he explained. 'He has the capacity to understand the person in his particular condition. He can show great empathy towards the person. He is a seasoned pastor and administrator.'

We turned to the topic of family life. 'My father was a government employee turned politician until his tragic death in 2004. My mother is a retired teacher. I am the third of nine siblings - five boys

Fr. Jojo Gatdula with the EMHCs who served at his first CTK mass



and four girls. It has been the family's dream and challenge that we should all finish college. And it was fulfilled. Though financially hard-up, my parents were able to find ways to fulfill that goal.'

When asked why and how he was given the name 'Giovanni', Fr. Jojo answered, 'My father named me Giovanni after the Italian author, poet, scholar and one of the founders of the Renaissance, Giovanni Boccaccio, who wrote the world-famous Decameron.'

CTK Stopover for Philippine Tour of Padre Pio Relics

invitation in order to encourage the sick and devotees of Padre Pio. The first time for his relics to be brought over was in 2016. This year is deemed special since it's both 100 years of his stigmatization (which began in September 1918) and it's 50 years since his death (September 1968).



Old photo of Fr. Pio with stigmata

St. Pio was a friar, priest, stigmatist, and mystic, now venerated as a saint of the Catholic Church. Born Francesco Forgione, he was given the name of Pius (Pio in Italian) when he joined the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin.

Padre Pio became famous for exhibiting stigmata for most of his life, thereby generating much interest and controversy. He was both beatified (1999) and canonized (2002) by Pope John Paul II.



The Sanctuary of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina is located in San Giovanni Rotondo,



Province of Foggia, Italy.

On September 20, 1918, while hearing confessions, Padre Pio had his first occurrence of the stigmata: bodily marks, pain, and bleeding in locations corresponding to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus Christ. This phenomenon continued for fifty years, until the end of his life. The blood flowing from the stigmata purportedly smelled of perfume or flowers, a phenomenon mentioned in stories of the lives of several saints and often referred to as the odour of sanctity. Though Padre

Pio said he would have preferred to suffer in secret, by early 1919, news about the stigmatic friar began to spread in the secular world.

The visit of his relics began last July 31 at the St. Pio Chapel in Libis. This was followed by visits to - ABS-CBN; St. Michael in BGC; St. James in Ayala Alabang; Resurrection of Our Lord in BF Homes, Paranaque; Our Lady Of Lourdes, Caloocan; Valle Verde 6 chapel; Lourdes Church, QC; Tarlac Cathedral; Baguio; Bacolod City; Iloilo City; Cebu; Bohol; Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park; Don Bosco, Makati; Greenbelt Chapel; Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills; Our Lady of Beautiful Love, Merville; Sacred Heart Parish, Alabang - before the visit to Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows last September 7. CTK was the last visit

before the relics were brought back to St. Pio Chapel in Libis prior to going back to Italy. The CTK visit was organized and arranged by Couples for Christ - CTK chapter. It just so happened that one of the Voluntariado de Manila officers was Venette Bertulfo, also a CFC CTK member who was able to insert CTK as the

last stop for the relics.

The first class relics displayed include Padre Pio's scabs, nails, and locks of hair



CFC-CTK Chapter's crowd management marshals in full force



CTK Stopover for Philippine Tour of Padre Pio Relics

continued from previous page



Top, CFC CTK Chapter head Glen Ubaldo confers with marshal on crowd flow. Below, CFC-CTK's PPC representative Eddie Salonga and Alex Albert, CFC CTK's music ministry head.



while the second class relics include his gloves and the cloth used to clean his wounds from the stigmata.

The evening mass before the display was celebrated by Fr. Jojo Gatdula together with Msgr. Antonio Mortillero and Fr. GianMaria. At the end of the mass, Fr. Jojo, on behalf of parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala, thanked Fr. Gian for bringing the relics over and giving the parishioners a chance to view them.

An estimated two thousand people came last Friday, September 7. But since the

Couples for Christ personnel had organized their crowd management effectively, there was no disorder and the two thousand pilgrims were 'processed' in just one hour. It was so efficient that several people who stayed on were able to view the relics twice or thrice. 76 CFC members attended, most of whom volunteered as marshals, for crowd control. Other CFC groups included CFC-Mary the Queen Chapter, CFC-Meralco Chapter, and the 29 AD Choir.

CFC-CTK Chapter is led by Glen and Girlie Ubaldo and represented in the Parish Pastoral Council by Eddie and Cecile Salonga.



Above, the 29 A.D. Choir. Below, the CFC marshals pose with Fr. GianMaria. Rightmost is Venette Bertulfo of Voluntariado.



Coffee After Church Snapshots



Sept 2, hosted by BEC team of Eileen de Leon, Irene Robies, Maan del Rosario, and Leila Banico



Aug 26, hosted by Life in the Spirit group headed by Bobby San Juan & Margie San Juan



Aug 19, hosted by Diwanihang Kristiyano of Mon and Loung Cuartero



Aug 12, hosted by Christiana Family Movement headed by Leo and May Nitorreda



July 29, hosted by Catholic Women's League head Alma Yeh and BEC head Eileen de Leon



July 15, hosted by Legion of Mary - Mary Queen of Peace presidium headed by Carol de Jesus

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

As the first HERALD to be published under new parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala, it's fitting to feature his very first official mass at CTK and his fellowship with the parishioners who were excited to meet their new 'shepherd', on page 3.

If there's to be only one headline, it would have to be the launch of the eight-year eight-point priority agenda of the Diocese of Cubao. Hence we cover not only the launch on page 8 but provide a two page summary (page 9) of 'DCPA 8'. But also as newsworthy was the groundbreaking for the Casa de Silencio priest retirement home and renewal center project, see page 11.

In July, the parishioners said goodbye to two guest priest stalwarts, Fr. Serge Maniba and Fr. Ricky Montañez, page 5. We did say hello to Fr. Jun Arvie Bello (see page 6), but only to say goodbye again in August as he left for further studies. The good news is - we have a new resident guest priest, Fr. Jojo Gatdula, whom we introduce on page 26.

There were several exceptional talks during the quarter just passed. Fr. Arvie gave a scholarly talk at the LeCom General Assembly on the Gospels and their writers (see page 16); Fr. Bong Tupino, just before he left, discussed Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation: Gaudete et Exsultate, which called for holiness in today's world, at the EMHC Monthly Formation Talk Series, on page 13; and Chief Exorcist Fr. Jocis Syquia ensured an unforgettable evening as he talked on 'Spiritual Combat: Being a Warrior for Christ' the following month, also for EMHC, page 14.

The Formation Ministry launched the Rediscovering Our Catholic Faith, a monthly series of talks by renowned catechist expert Fr. Jigs Rosalinda (covered on page 19). The Sunrise Ministry had another field day with its 'Looking Good, Feeling Good' seniors' assembly, page 22. Our top feature story, on page 27, was the visit of Padre Pio's relics at Christ the King Parish Church Greenmeadows, the last stop before the relics went back to Italy.

There were so many other stories that we used up the maximum 28 pages. As usual, we thank all our report and photo contributors - Althea Geronilla, Estrelle Lopez, Leila Banico, Eileen de Leon, Agnes dela Cruz, Cita Pabillo, Sheryl Coronel, Wins Mirasol, Fely Ong, Leo Nitorreda, Albert Cuadrante, and Mina Mejia.

Bing and Elise del Rosario
Media In-charge