



# THE HERALD

CHRIST THE KING PARISH • GREENMEADOWS

FATHER'S HEART TODAY

## EMBRACING THE JUBILEE YEAR WITH GRATITUDE AND RENEWAL

Dear Beloved Parishioners of Christ the King,

As we embark on this momentous Jubilee Year, my heart is filled with gratitude and hope for our parish family's journey. This sacred time invites us to pause, reflect, and rejoice in the countless blessings God has poured into our lives while also renewing our commitment to live as faithful stewards of Christ.

The concept of a Jubilee has deep biblical roots, originating from the ancient tradition of dedicating every fiftieth year as a time of forgiveness, restoration, and celebration of God's providence. This Jubilee is more than a commemoration for us at Christ the King Parish—it is a call to transform our hearts and lives, embrace gratitude, and renew our mission to love and serve.

### Gratitude for God's Blessings

The Jubilee Year encourages a spirit of gratitude, reminding us that everything we have is a gift from God. In a world that often encourages a mentality of scarcity—where we constantly strive for more—the Jubilee invites us to pause and reflect on what we have already received. In the book of Psalms, we read, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1). The Jubilee Year is an invitation to thank God for His enduring love, for His provision, and for the peace and freedom that come from living in alignment with His will.

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# CTK AT 45: A WELCOMING, STEWARDSHIP PARISH FOR OTHERS

By Albert Cuadrante

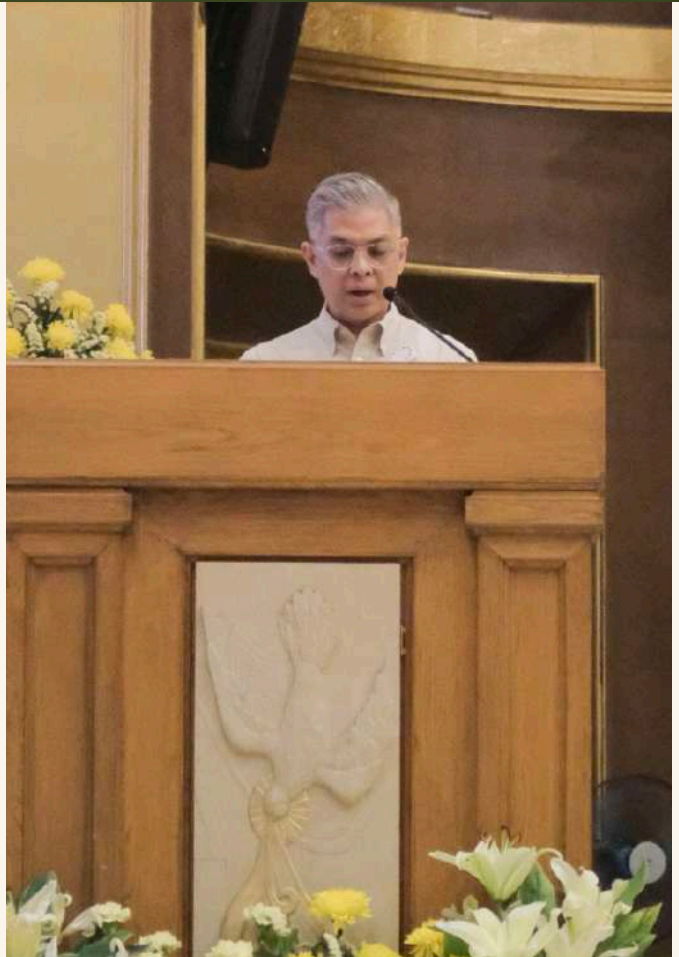
(Excerpts from fiesta message of Parish Pastoral Council coordinator Albert Cuadrante)

Many of you have probably been parishioners of CTK since its foundation 45 years ago, and have seen and been part of how it has grown and flourished into the great community that it is today.

Over the years, with the guidance of its parish priests, CTK has become known as a stewardship parish and, most recently, as a Parish for Others. The parishioners of CTK have always looked outward, even beyond our geographic borders, to actively seek opportunities to extend help to those in need with their trademark generosity in sharing their time, talent, and treasure. What I want to share, however, is an aspect of this parish that is not often talked about, but is certainly also one of its endearing qualities—how CTK is such a welcoming parish.

We became parishioners of CTK when we moved here from San Juan in 2012. We rented a house in Acropolis before finally moving into our permanent home in White Plains. We didn't know anyone who lived in the area and thought that it would take time to establish friends. But after only several days of going to Mass at CTK, we were warmly approached by some parishioners who would not only make us feel so welcome in the community, but also be the instruments by which we would be inspired and encouraged to actively serve as well.

Joining the various ministries and one of the many parish-based organizations like the Christian Family Movement (CFM) also helped us quickly expand our friendships to people we now consider as our second family. They journeyed in faith with us and made us feel God's loving presence in a very profound yet real way. And I hear the same stories other parishioners. Did you know that there are many men and women who actively serve in our ministries who don't even live within the geographic jurisdiction of CTK—some living as far as Antipolo and Taguig? They have come to consider CTK their "parish" and choose to hear Mass, receive sacraments, and serve here after also feeling the warm welcome and friendship of the parishioners they have met.



Albert is the coordinator of the Parish Pastoral Council of Christ the King together with his wife, Joy.

So, as we celebrate our fiesta and look back at our 45-year faith journey as a parish, I want to thank the OGs—the original parishioners—who welcomed us with their smiles, friendly greetings, and words of encouragements. Thank you, too, to all the shepherds God sent our way to lead and build CTK both as a physical church and as a vibrant community of stewards. CTK as a parish is what it is today because of the many people you wholeheartedly welcomed.

And to our new joiners, especially our new parish priest, Fr. Aytoy Opinano, and our resident guest priests—Father Rex, Father Mike, Father Pal, Father RL—I hope that after experiencing CTK's trademark welcome, you now also feel like you are very much part of this growing family.

As we conclude our fiesta celebrations and prepare to write a new chapter in CTK's life, let us keep building Christ's kingdom here on earth as a stewardship parish, a Parish for Others, and a welcoming parish.



Bishop Antonio Tobias, Bishop Emeritus of Novaliches, was the second parish priest of CTK from 1982 to 1983. He celebrated the Fiesta Mass on November 25 and is flanked by Father Aytoy on the right and other resident guest priests of the parish.



White Plains Chapel was the first center of worship before the parish had the main church at Greenmeadows Avenue. For this reason, CTK always has a Holy Hour at White Plains Chapel.

The Holy Hour was followed by a Blessed Sacrament Procession to the Main Church and Benediction before the Fiesta Mass.



Knights of Columbus process in full regalia behind the vehicle carrying the Blessed Sacrament.

## 61 CANDIDATES AT KUMPILANG BAYAN

By Sheryl Coronel



Former parish priest Fr. Steve Zabala administers the Sacrament of Confirmation.

On November 16, Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows held the Kumpilang Bayan 2024, a solemn event where 61 candidates received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Among the confirmands were four inspiring converts: Suzette Mercado, formerly of the Iglesia ni Cristo, Sarah Joy Gaquit, a former Jehovah's Witness, and Rica Mae Baldestamon and Janine Casino, former Aglipayans. Fr. Pal Berdos baptized Suzette and Sarah and led all the converts as they professed the Catholic faith and were formally received into the Catholic Church.

The confirmands, aged 12 to their 30s, underwent comprehensive catechism classes in Tagalog or English, covering Salvation History, Church teachings, and the Sacraments, with additional lessons on Church History and Marian dogmas for the converts.

Dressed in white, the confirmands embodied the purity of their faith. The rites were officiated by Fr. Steven Zabala, Vicar General of the Diocese of Cubao and former parish priest of Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows. In his exhortation, Father Steve encouraged the confirmands to more actively participate in the Church's mission of evangelization and defense of the faith.

Particularly moving was witnessing the four converts receive the Holy Eucharist for the very first time, in their white veils and kneeling before the Lord.

Kumpilang Bayan 2024 was a profound testament to the enduring strength of faith and the power of unity in Christ. May these new soldiers for Christ live out their mission faithfully as heralds of the Gospel in word and deed.

Fr. Steve Zabala and Fr. Edrylle Dayrit with some of the newly confirmed candidates



## FIRST HOLY COMMUNION



Every year, CTK holds biannual First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion rites. The latest batch received their First Holy Communion last November.

## FIESTA RECOLLECTION

By Trix Deleña



This year's Fiesta Recollection, held on November 20 at the Divine Mercy Chapel, was facilitated by JesCom's executive director Fr. Emmanuel "Nono" Alfonso, SJ. The theme "Christ the King: Reigning in Prayer, Preparing in Hope" was highlighted in the context of Ignatian prayer and how it helps one achieve close friendship with God. Attendees were challenged to examine their comfort level with silence and solitude, which are core aspects of Ignatian prayer and necessities for embarking on a spiritual journey. Father Nono also encouraged the audience to harness their creativity in contemplating the life of Christ, approaching the Lord with an attitude of humility and growing in fondness for our God who is loving, personal, and merciful. It was an enlightening session that invited those present to a more profound encounter with Christ our King through the form of prayer devised by St. Ignatius of Loyola.



# FIESTA DINNER

Sine Nomine choir member Monica Uy and Social Media minister and altar server JG Gonzales sang for the guests.



The foursome who just bonded. Thanks to (L-R) Ryle Matthew Rellosa, Louie Padrinao, Monette Najar, and Atty. Mailla Montayre who did a fabulous job of emceeing the fiesta dinner. So professional and energetic!



The Ladies of Charity always regales with their performance—this time dancing to a medley of iconic Madonna songs.



CTK's priests ready to serve!



It's not a CTK celebration if there's no dancing!

Photo below shows retired lector-commentators Margie Villarante, Kang Goco, Mambie Aquino, Ellen Manansala and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, Manny Cortez and Deimtz Mauricio (represented by Benjie Jimenez) holding their Christ the King statues given for their years of faithful service.





# MOLAVE YOUTH ADVENT RECOLLECTION

By Cita Pabillo

One hundred seventy-five young people at the Molave Youth Prison Ministry had an Advent retreat and received gifts through a joint program of Verbum Dei and CTK. Social Services Development Ministry coordinator Cynthia Rodriguez and members of the Parish Pastoral Council were on hand to help. We also thank Joyce Tañedo and the new parish priest, Fr. Aytoy Opiniano for their continuing support.



The choir in Libis rehearse for their Saturday vigil Mass at their social hall. From a once-a-month Friday Mass to a weekly Saturday Mass that started last September, the goal is for more families to fulfill their Sunday obligations.



October 5 was Pet Blessing Day to commemorate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4. The saint is known for his love of animals and creation. Animals received free rabies shots while their owners were treated to free snacks and other goodies.



Fr. RL Orate led the blessing for the pets.



Fr. Ricky Montañez, former CTK resident guest priest, with other parish servants at the Chapel of the Archangels in Opus Mall

Sunday Masses at the Opus chapel are usually full.

Fr. Dennis Cagantas with Sine Nomine choir and other CTK servants



## GOING TO WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE

By Tessa Mangahas

The Diocese of Cubao recently turned over the administration of liturgical services of the new Chapel of the Archangels in Opus Mall Bridgetown to Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows. Blessed and launched on July 10, 2024 by then Cubao Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, DD, the chapel has Masses on weekdays and Sundays to cater to mall goers, and office workers in nearby establishments, particularly the BPOs in the area. It has a seating capacity of 250 to 300 and is located at the sixth floor of the mall. More of the faithful (and those with pets) can be accommodated in the garden of the chapel's exterior.

Fr. Aytoy Opiniano, parish priest of Christ the King Parish Greenmeadows, expressed optimism that this chapel will soon be the bed of a thriving faith community in itself because of the increasing number of mall visitors. Bishop Nes Ongtioco also believes that the local church has embraced the concept of worship in the malls because the “church goes to where the people are.” He is also happy that places of worship in the mall are able to preserve the solemnity and dignity of Eucharistic celebrations.

Fr. Aytoy admits that the additional Masses pose a challenge to the existing roster of liturgical ministers of CTK parish. He enjoins the faithful who frequent the Opus Mall to be part of its growing group of ministers. At the same time, he sends his appreciation to the current crop of CTK church workers who strive to bring the liturgy to the people in a most vibrant way, thanks to the valiant efforts of Opus Mall coordinators Buh Malonzo

and Monica Uy. Mass schedules at the Chapel of the Archangels in Opus Mall are as follows:

- Monday to Friday: 6:00 P.M.
- Saturday: 12:15 P.M. | 6:00 P.M.
- Sunday: 11:00 A.M. | 12:30 P.M.  
5:00 P.M. | 7:00 P.M.

Volunteers are needed to serve the growing community. These include the following baptized Catholics:

1. Altar Servers, open to boys who are at least 10 years old;
2. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, open to men who are at least 25 years;
3. Greeters & Collectors and Lectors & Commentators, open to men and women who are at least 16 years old;
4. Choirs

If interested, please fill out the application form available at the chapel entrance or contact Ms. Buh Malonzo at 09173266860.

**Feedback from Opus massgoer:**  
 “Ang ganda ng service ng 6pm mass in Opus Mall. Fr. Pal presided after rushing from 4:45 pm mass in Libis. Loved his sermon and singing of mass prayers. Galing din ng choir. Parang so special for the first Sunday of Advent. Male and female choir singing an all-Filipino repertoire with live organ music. 🙌❤️🙌”

# CASA RISES: THE HOMESTRETCH LAUNCHED

Casa de Silencio, the retirement home for Cubao Diocese’s elderly and sickly priests is rising.

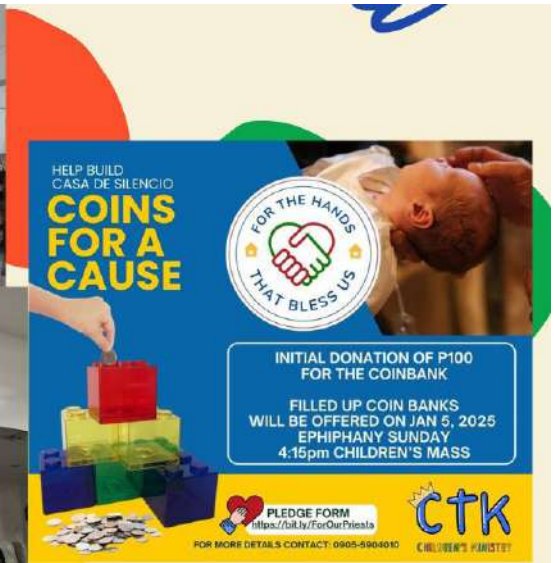
CTK launched its “Casa Rises: The Homestretch fundraising campaign” to reach the parish’s target to donate P40 million for its completion in 2025.

The Casa Team spearheaded by Fr. Aytoy Opiniano and composed of Jaime and Elise del Rosario, Cynthia Rodriguez, Eileen de Leon, Ellen Chua, and Tessa Mangahas helped re-launch the campaign on the Feast of the Archangels on September 29, 2024. In less than two months, CTK parishioners and other donors were able to hit the first target of P20 million in total donations four days before the parish fiesta on November 24, 2024. By the first quarter of 2025, CTK hopes to complete its target of P40 million in donations.

There are many ways to help. Please call or approach the parish office for more information on how you can give. There are Casa volunteers at the entrances of the main church every Sunday to accept donations and answer your queries.



Casa volunteers await generous hearts by the doors of the main church every Sunday.





The construction of the retirement home for Cubao priests stalled during the pandemic but is now steadily rising. Photo shows the newly-installed Most Rev. Elias Ayuban, Jr., CMF, DD, JCD Bishop of Cubao and Most Rev. Honesto Ongtioco, DD, Bishop Emeritus of Cubao sharing moments of fellowship and gratitude with the dedicated workers of Casa de Silencio and some members of the Cubao clergy.

## CTK CASA TEAM VISITS CONSTRUCTION SITE

By Bing del Rosario

Last November 14, the CTK Casa de Silencio relaunch fundraising team visited the Brixton Hills construction site of the planned retirement home for Cubao diocesan priests to check the status of the project. The team, consisting of Bing del Rosario, Tessa Mangahas, Eileen de Leon, Cynthia Rodriguez, and guest Lorie Santos (they were missing Elise del Rosario who had another engagement), were met by the ASEC contractor team, led by Arch. Gerry Esquivel and Fr. Marti Espenido, the clergy designated to monitor construction, and other members of the project team.

Fr. Marti and Arch. Esquivel directed the Casa team through the various rooms on the ground floor. After walking through the lobby space, the team walked through the nearly finished 11 retirees' rooms, the bishop's room, kitchen and dining hall, medical treatment ward, and caregivers' facility. On the second floor, the team were shown the three guest priest rooms, two conference halls, two meeting rooms, the retirees' recreation and entertainment room, pantry, and the Casa staff quarters. Climbing up to the third floor, the team was led through the 25 retreatants' rooms, as well as the lounge area in the center. The fourth floor roofing was already being installed at the time of the visit. Fr. Marti informed the team members that the open space was going to be used for retreat meetings and prayers, as well as special events and dinner celebrations.

As the team went back down, they also saw the shafts on both sides of the building where the elevators were to be installed. Fr. Marti also pointed out the future site of the planned chapel, beside the Holy Redeemer basketball court that was going to be renovated as part of the project.

CTK has successfully breached its first "target"

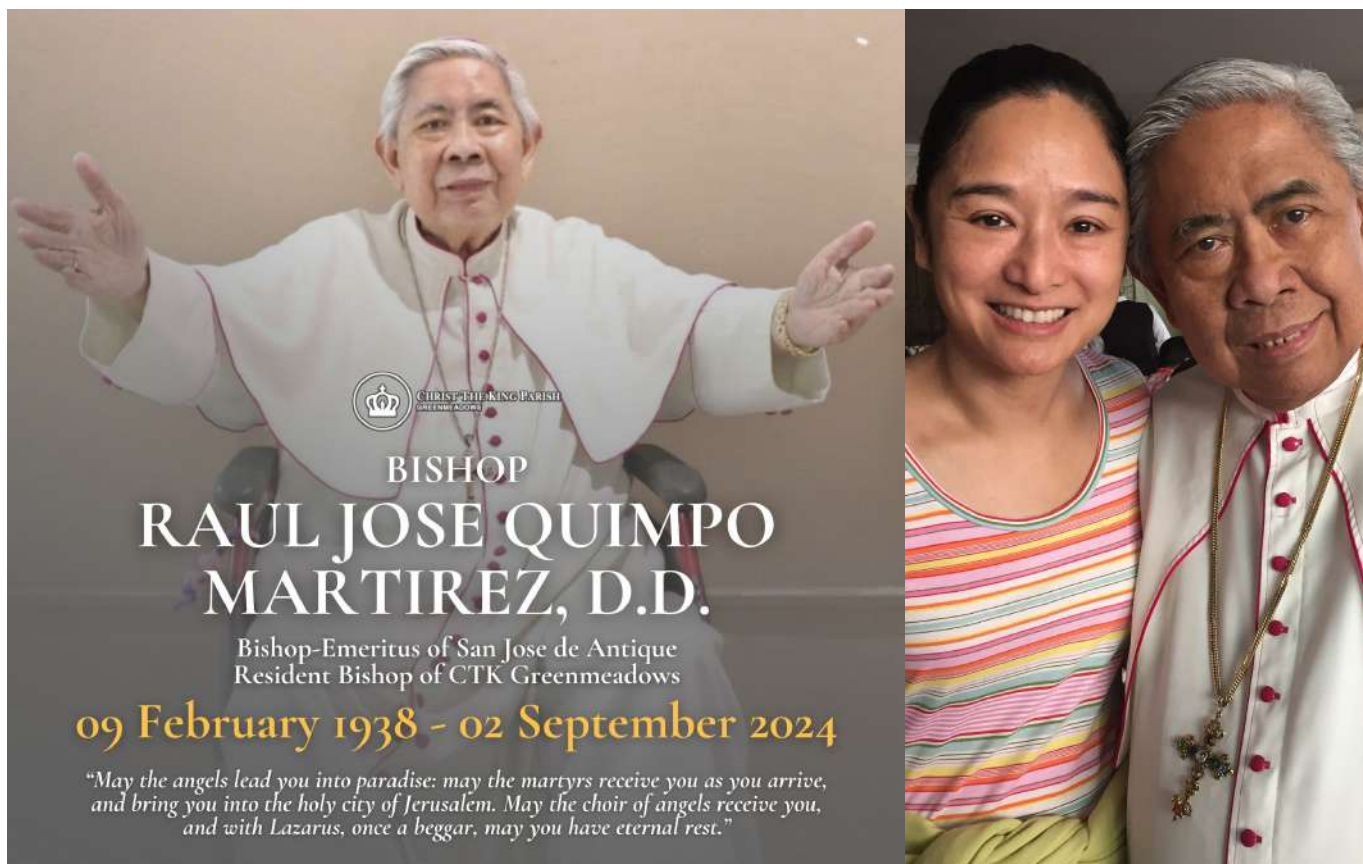
amount in its campaign. On November 20, four days before the parish fiesta, the community hit more than P20 million in donations. We hope that sharing actual photos taken during the CTK Casa Team site visit will inspire more to help Casa de Silencio's completion by first quarter of 2025. Thank you very much for your generous hearts!



(L-R) Bing del Rosario, Arch. Gerry Esquivel, Fr. Marti Espenido, Eileen de Leon, Cynthia Rodriguez, Ellen Chua, Tessa Mangahas, and Lorie Santos.



Roofing on the fourth floor was already being installed during the visit.



Rissa with Bishop Raul taken during his birthday in 2016.

## HEALED BY HOPE

### A Parting Gift from Bishop Raul

By Rissa Kawpeng

If you're a frequent parishioner at Christ the King before the pandemic, you would surely have encountered the joyful presence of Bishop Raul Martirez. Bishop Raul was the retired bishop of Antique who lived in Christ the King Parish-Greenmeadows for many years. He was a sociable person known for his generous hugs and gifts. Whenever I'd visit him at the rectory, I would never leave without a stampita, medallion, or book from his vast collection.

When he had a stroke last August, I had been depressed for more than two weeks. There was no trigger. I just woke up one morning feeling disconsolate and with no appetite for living. So, I didn't want to visit him in the hospital thinking that I'd slip deeper into despair.

But not wanting to have any regrets, I did go. After I prayed the rosary at his bedside, I whispered to him my thanks and goodbye. I left his room and closed the door. Then the miracle happened. My spirit lifted. I experienced instant healing! I thought, "Bishop! Even in a coma, you still gave me something before I left!"

On September 2, the Lord took Bishop Raul home to His bosom. The wake and funeral Mass was such a joyful and spirit-filled event in the parish. There were more smiles and laughter than tears, not because we wouldn't miss him, but because we all knew that he was in Jesus' warm embrace.

As I reflected on what happened to me, I treasured the gift of *joie de vivre* that I felt each day. The ability to smile without any reason and feel joy that I didn't have during those dark weeks was something I didn't want to lose.

But I later realized that more than joy, what entered into my heart and booted out depression was hope. As we enter into the Jubilee Year this Christmas with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope," let's heed Pope Francis' exhortation to "fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty."

Thank you, Bishop Raul, for the gift of joy and hope. My life has been so much richer because I knew you.



Bishop Eli promises to carry on Bishop Nes' best practices while innovating when needed.



Bishop Eli's motto: "Misericordes sicut Pater," "Merciful like the Father" (Luke 6:36).

## NEW CUBAO BISHOP READY TO SMELL LIKE THE SHEEP

By Tessa Mangahas

His own parents could hardly buy him a pair of new shoes when he was young.

But on Tuesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2024, in a rite that lasted more than three hours, Elias Lumayog Ayuban Jr. stepped into huge shoes which he says, "has a lot of empty spaces." That's because on the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi on October 4, Pope Francis announced Ayuban's appointment as the second bishop of the Diocese of Cubao.

In his message of thanks during the Episcopal Ordination and Rite of Canonical Possession, the 56-year-old bishop revealed that one could glean what to expect from his style of shepherding in the letters of his own name. He said it will be E-empowering, L-listening, I-inclusive, A-accountable, and S-synodal.

Bishop Eli said the evangelizing is authentic only when it empowers. He also promised to listen to people, even if at times, he doesn't agree with the sentiments of the other party. He also aims his shepherding of the diocese to be inclusive, a stance that he shares with Pope Francis. The new bishop also says he enters his office without bringing in his own staff but will be working with the current roster in the diocese. That said, he will also ensure that there is accountability in the actions taken by priests and regular employees. Finally, very much in the spirit of the Holy Father, Bishop Eli said he will pursue the spirit of synodality, which means journeying with the people as they grow in faith.

The new prelate expressed gratitude to his predecessor, Bishop Honesto Ongtioco who served as Cubao's first bishop for 21 years. He said that he will continue to ask his predecessor for insights as he faces the "life-changing role as the shepherd of the Diocese of Cubao." Bishop Eli also said that he will continue the best practices culled from Bishop Nes's term even as he promises to innovate when necessary,

in order to be responsive to the evolving needs of the faithful and the changing times.

Bishop Eli's curriculum vitae is impressive as it is humble. Born on January 1, 1968, in Parang Maguindanao del Norte, Bishop Eli is "a Claretian Missionary priest from Loay, Bohol who holds a doctorate in Canon Law from the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome. Prior to his election as Provincial Superior of the Claretian Missionaries of the Philippine Province that comprises the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar and Australia, he worked as a canon lawyer in the Vatican, in the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life."

The little boy from Loay Central Elementary School, who was once teased by his classmates because of the mispronunciation of his name (he clarifies that it is pronounced with three syllables, Eh-lee-yas, and not Eh-lay-yas) has indeed come a long way. He entered Claret Seminary in 1985 and was ordained in 1996. He was parish priest in Tungawan's Risen Christ Parish and eventually rector of the college seminary and provincial superior of Fr. Rhoel Gallardo Province. He got his Licentiate and Doctorate in Canon Law from the Pontifical Lateran University, both as Summa cum laude. He worked with Pope Francis in Rome for seven years (2012-2019) as the Official of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. A professor in Canon Law, Bishop Eli has authored several books and published articles.

Although he calls his new post as life-changing, Bishop Eli was a picture of tranquility a day before his ordination as Cubao's new shepherd. He says that while he realizes the huge task at hand, he is at peace with the realization that God is in control. He says he doesn't compete with God hence his motto, he promises to be accessible to the faithful, to visit them even unannounced and unheralded. This missionary orientation resonates very much like Pope Francis' call for priests to "smell like the sheep."

With Bishop Eli at the helm of the diocese, the flock in Cubao is hopeful for this new chapter in their spiritual journey.

*Habemus Episcopum Novum! We have a new bishop!*  
Welcome to Cubao, Bishop Eli!

## BY THE BONFIRE

Cardinal Ambo David's Homily for the Ordination of Bishop Elias Ayuban on December 3, 2024



Thank you for delegating to me the task of preaching this homily, Cardinal Joe Advincula, upon the request of Bishop Eli. It is a joy to be with you all in this Eucharistic celebration, dear sisters and brothers, on this solemn occasion of the ordination of our dear Claretian brother Elias Ayuban, Jr. to the episcopal ministry. Thank you, dear Claretians, for being here for him. Today you lose a provincial but you are contributing a new bishop to the Philippine church. I hope the other religious congregations are listening.

We are honored to have with us the Archbishop of Manila as principal consecrator and Bishops Nes Ongtioco and Abet Uy as co-consecrators, along with the representative of the Holy Father, our beloved papal nuncio, Archbishop Charles John Brown, and the archbishops and bishops of the Philippines. Let me wear my hat now as CBCP president and take advantage of this opportunity to thank Bishop Nes Ongtioco for his 21 years of dedicated ministry as bishop of Cubao from its very inception in 2003.

Let me share some thoughts now on the famous appendix to the Gospel of John whose original ending according to Bible scholars was the end of chapter 20. I think of chapter 21 of John's Gospel as some kind of a postscript, such as when we add some afterthoughts to a letter we had already closed and signed. People sometimes ask me what Jesus did during those 40 days after he was raised from the dead, before he ascended into heaven. My simple answer is, he needed time to also raise His disciples back from the dead. As we all know, something about them had died also, after their leader and master was crucified.

The stories in the Gospels about the apparitions of the risen Jesus to His disciples have a common pattern—He is restoring them. Remember how two of them had fallen out and broken away already? Those guys were not just routinely traveling to Emmaus; they were running away. And the risen Jesus incognito had to intercept them to reroute their journey back to Jerusalem, to reunite them with the community.

There was one of them who was not in speaking terms with the rest. I am of course talking about Thomas. John says in a cryptic way he was “not with them” when Jesus first appeared in the upper room. He had to touch Jesus' wounds first before his own wounded relationship with his community could be healed. Mary Magdalene and the other women had to struggle with the sexist attitudes of these androcentric, patriarchal male disciples who wouldn't trust their testimony just because they were women.

The disciples were all actually in a deep state of trauma and grief. They were too bewildered and confused to even understand the instruction of the angels that Jesus was asking them to return to Galilee and meet Him there. So they huddled together like scared dogs in Jerusalem licking their wounds. Jesus had to break into that upper room to be able to get them out and liberate them from their collective fear.

In today's Gospel, we have the reversal of the denial scene which happened at sundown. This one is happening at sunrise. I use my imagination and I am inclined to believe that there was also a rooster crowing, not to announce the coming of darkness but to welcome the breaking of dawn by the sea of Tiberias. There is also a bonfire, by the way, to remind us of that infamous bonfire where Peter was warming his hands when a servant girl asked him three times if he was not one of the disciples of the man from Nazareth who was under trial for sedition.

John has a very interesting way of intensifying the drama of this Easter Encounter of Jesus with Peter, a similar scene that would lead to the removal of the black veil that covered his heart and soul. But first he had to answer the question, “Do you love Me?” Not once, but three times. Enough to be able to bring back to Peter's memory the three times that he had said, “I do not know Him.” It is Jesus' way of raising Peter back from the dead—by inviting him to say one word of love, for every word of denial. I call it a renewal of vows.

John tells us Peter was grieved after Jesus asked him a third time. The Greek word is *elupetbe*. Other versions translate it differently—like, Peter was “distressed,” “saddened,” or “deeply hurt.” I do not think it was because he felt that the Lord was doubting him. Rather, he was doubting himself all over again.

I imagine that Peter was in tears when he said, “Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you.” I try to read his heart and I have a feeling that what he wanted to say was, “Lord, you know how weak, how consistently inconsistent I have been since that day when we first met. Didn't I fall on my knees when you filled up my boat the first time and tell you, ‘Leave me Lord, I am a sinful man?’ And when you showed up again by the shore and filled my boat a second time, and John said it was you, didn't I jump into the water to hide my face from you in shame? I have told you over and over again, I am not worthy, I am not qualified, I am weak. I can only say, I love you, in spite of myself.”

In Japan, they have this art of putting together the pieces of a broken ceramic bowl using 24-carat powdered gold mixed with lacquer, as glue. The binding agent is more expensive than the bowl itself. The whole thing is done like a religious ritual. The owner of the bowl does it with utmost care. He restores the broken bowl but in a manner that does not hide the cracks. It is precisely the cracks that will turn the broken bowl into a precious piece of art. Isn't that beautiful?

We are all wounded people. Christianity was never meant only for the holy and deserving. The Eucharist is not an exclusive meal for the righteous but a Body broken for broken people. That's why Jesus says, “This is the new covenant in My blood poured out for you and for many so that sins may be forgiven.”

Look, the one who received the first morsel of bread was Judas. It was Jesus' way of transforming a meal of betrayal into a meal of forgiveness. We are all like broken bowls ourselves. But the good news is—there is no brokenness that cannot be healed by the precious blood of the Lamb. It is a more precious binding agent than gold. Jesus healed Peter before he could turn him into a minister of healing. What restored Peter was an invitation to make an act of faith: Do you love me? One word of love for every word of denial. Only then can we truly start following Him and representing Him.

If I were to give a title to the Gospel narrative that Bishop Eli has chosen for his ordination, I'd propose to call it: “The Story of Peter's Resurrection.” He had to learn to be a lamb, before he could grow into a Shepherd. He had to allow himself to be fed, before he could feed the flock. And before he could lead the Church, he had to learn to die to himself and to allow Jesus to lead him by the hand like a little child.

I will tell you one secret—all of us bishops and priests, and I am sure including Pope Francis himself—we draw a lot of consolation from this Gospel passage. Sometimes, like Peter, we are also tempted to despair about ourselves when we are confronted by our own weaknesses. Remember Paul asking the Lord to remove his “thorn in the flesh,” only to be told, “My grace is enough for you, for in weakness power reaches perfection; it is when I am weak that I am strong.” This passage is consoling for us because it assures us that with Jesus, even if our commitments are breakable, they are also renewable. He just wants to make sure that if we go on with our mission to feed the lambs, it is for no other reason than for the love of the Shepherd to whom they belong.



# ORDINATION AND CANONICAL POSSESSION OF BISHOP ELIAS AYUBAN, JR. CMF, DD. (SECOND BISHOP OF CUBAO DIOCESE)



The Bishop of Cubao, Bp. Elias Ayuban, Jr. CMF, DD sits in the cathedra and takes possession of his diocese.

The priests of the Diocese of Cubao and bishops were in attendance at the installation.



Bishop Eli prostrates before the consecrator Archbishop Jose Advincula (middle) and co-consecrators Bishop Nes Ongtioco (left) and Bishop Abet Uy.



A new bishop is ordained by at least one bishop, and their ordinations can be traced back to the Twelve Apostles.

Quezon City mayor Joy Belmonte welcomes Bishop Eli at a civic reception before the ordination rite.



Diocesan priests process at the start of the Eucharistic celebration.

MISERICORDIA  
Sicut in Patre

**MOST REVEREND  
ELIAS L. AYUBAN,  
JR. CMF, DD**



Parishioners flank Father Aytoy and Bishop Nes during the former's installation as CTK's 8th parish priest on October 15.

*continued from cover...*

Gratitude is a powerful force that can transform our hearts. When we focus on what we have—rather than what we lack—we open ourselves to God's blessings in ways we may not have recognized before. Embracing the Jubilee Year with gratitude means acknowledging both the tangible and intangible gifts in our lives and recognizing God's faithfulness in both seasons of plenty and times of need.

As we look back, we see the hand of God guiding us through challenges, uplifting us with His grace, and uniting us as one body in Christ. This year, we celebrated our 45<sup>th</sup> Parish Fiesta with great solemnity and joy—a true testament to your unwavering faith and dedication. Your generosity deeply moves me to support initiatives like Casa de Silencio, where together, we have achieved significant progress toward our goals.

Moreover, the dedication of our parish volunteers and ministries is a constant source of inspiration for me as your shepherd. Whether you are serving at Mass, leading community outreach, or supporting parish programs, your selfless contributions breathe life into our shared mission. I am deeply grateful to each of you for your commitment, patience, and perseverance. You are truly a blessing from God to the CTK Parish Community.

### **Renewal in Faith and Mission**

The Jubilee Year also carries the theme of renewal, where God's people are encouraged to start anew. It is a time for spiritual, emotional, and relational renewal. Jesus Himself embodied the ultimate Jubilee when He proclaimed, "**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor... to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor**" (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus' ministry marked the fulfillment of the Jubilee promise, offering

freedom, healing, and redemption to all who would accept His invitation.

The spirit of renewal in the Jubilee Year calls us to examine our hearts and actions. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, we are reminded, "**If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!**" Embracing the Jubilee is an opportunity to let go of past mistakes, forgive ourselves and others, and take steps toward reconciliation. Whether through personal prayer, acts of kindness, or seeking to restore broken relationships, the Jubilee invites us into a renewed sense of purpose and wholeness.

### **Living Out the Jubilee Today**

As modern-day Christians, we are not bound by the specific requirements of the Old Testament Jubilee, but its principles are timeless and still relevant. The spirit of the Jubilee is one that calls us to live with a renewed sense of justice, freedom, and compassion toward others.





Members of Fr. Aytoy's family which include two priests, and personal friends flew in from abroad and his hometown to share the joy of his installation.

It challenges us to forgive those who have wronged us, to offer help to the marginalized, and to be generous in our relationships.

This year, I encourage all of us to focus on three pillars of renewal:

1. **Faith:** our CTK parish is a faith-filled parish. Let's strengthen our spiritual life through prayer, Scripture reading, and active participation in the sacraments. Let the Eucharist be the center of our lives, the source of nourishment for our souls.
2. **Service:** Our CTK Parish is a parish for others. Let's share our time, talents, and resources for the good of others, especially the least and the lost. Let us work together to make Christ's love visible in our parish and beyond.
3. **Community:** Our CTK parish is a stewardship parish. Let's build bridges of connection and fellowship within our parish. Let us extend our love and care to one another, fostering a spirit of unity that reflects God's love.

### Moving Forward Together

As we journey through this Jubilee Year, let us do so with hearts full of hope and trust in God's providence. I firmly believe that as we embrace gratitude and renewal, we will

experience God's abundant blessings in our lives and in our parish.

I invite each of you to actively participate in the many opportunities we will offer this year for spiritual growth, community building, and service. Together, let us make this Jubilee Year a transformative time for our parish, where we rediscover the beauty of our faith and live out our mission with joy and purpose.

I pray constantly for your good health, safety, and spiritual well-being. Please know that the Lord needs you, and so does our parish. Christ the King Parish is not just a place; it is a vibrant family of believers united in love and faith.

May this Jubilee Year bring you and your families peace, joy, and renewed hope. Let us walk together in faith, embracing this sacred time with gratitude and open hearts.

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year! May the peace and love of Christ fill your hearts and homes this season and always.

*With my blessings and prayers,*

Fr. Aytoy Opiniano  
Parish Priest  
Christ the King Parish



Cubao clergy came in full force to witness the installation of Fr. Aytoy in CTK.



Outgoing Bishop Nes with incoming Bishop Eli

## WELCOME BACK HOME TO CTK, BISHOP NES!

By Tessa Mangahas

On Wednesday, December 4, just a day after the Cubao Diocese installed its second bishop, CTK got its own blessing—Cubao’s first bishop Honesto “Nes” Ongtioco and CTK’s fourth parish priest (2004-2006) celebrated his first Mass in the parish as its resident bishop.

Cubao Cathedral’s rector Fr. Steven Zabala, its parochial vicar, Fr. Edrylle Dayrit, and Fr. Arvie Bello accompanied Bishop Nes on December 3 to his new home in our parish. Fr. Steve and Fr. Edrylle also concelebrated Bishop Nes’ first Mass as resident bishop along with CTK clergy: parish priest Fr. Aytoy Opiniano, guest priests Fr. Rex Jeba, Fr. Mike Cabangisan, Fr. RL Lopez and deacon Rev. Errol Salcedo CJM (Eudist Congregation).

In his homily, Fr. Steve talked about the four stages of retirement with some tips from experts on how to deal with these phases. These are the (1) honeymoon stage—ideal, fun, relaxing, fun, no pressure, anything-goes phase; (2) disenchantment stage—the vacation mode wears off and there is an experience of loss of routine, identity, relationships, power, and purpose when one feels guilty about being unproductive; (3) reorientation stage—retiree has hits and misses in reinventing himself to find a renewed sense of identity, and mission; (4) stability phase—retiree has settled and found a renewed sense of meaning in the new chapter of his life. Fr. Aytoy added a fifth phase saying that Bishop Nes’ stay in CTK will be the “best and happiest chapter of his life.”

Cubao’s new Bishop Elias Ayuban, Jr. sent a specially recorded message thanking CTK community for warmly welcoming Bishop Nes back to its fold. He also said he was grateful for the best practices Bishop Nes initiated in shepherding Cubao for the past 21 years and promised to visit him from time to time. He had a Christmas message for CTK saying that Bishop Nes’ return to CTK espouses the Christmas spirit of coming home to family.

During the brief breakfast reception, parishioner Monica Uy rendered a touching song for Bishop Nes. Host



Fr. Steve Zabala (kneeling) with Fr. Arvie Bello (leftmost) brought Bishop Nes to his new home.

Leila Banico also introduced the prelate’s new “personal bodyguards” in the form of the sacristans.

And as Bishop-Emeritus Nes said in Mass, “CTK is the best grace given to me... it is good to be home.”

### Note:

*For appointments and invitations to our Bishop Emeritus Nes, kindly direct all your communications to his new Appointment Secretary Mr. Noel Miro (+639083654255). Just take note that he has plenty of appointments/invitations until January 2026.*



Monica sings, “lingatan ka, aalagaan ka,” to Bishop Nes as CTK’s promise to him.



Fathers Steve and Aytoy welcome Bishop Nes at the breakfast in his honor.



## THE PRECIOUS GIFT OF PRIESTHOOD: A JOURNEY OF GRATITUDE

By Fr. Rex Jeba, SDB

The priesthood is a profound calling to serve God and His people with unwavering dedication. Celebrating my 10<sup>th</sup> sacerdotal ordination anniversary, I reflect on this sacred vocation's beauty and significance, grateful for the journey that brought me here.

My path has been a testament to God's guiding hand. Inspired by St. John Bosco, I joined the Salesian Congregation, embracing his mission of loving kindness and service to poor youth. I made my first profession in 2004, perpetual vows in 2010, and was ordained on December 27, 2014—a moment that sealed my commitment to God's work.

Since ordination, God has blessed me with opportunities to grow in pastoral ministry and stewardship, starting as a parochial vicar and parish treasurer in a Marian Shrine. Serving at Don Bosco institutions deepened my understanding of our mission to educate and uplift marginalized youth. To expand my capacity to serve, I pursued a licentiate in counseling and psychotherapy, helping individuals find healing and peace—one of my ministry's most fulfilling aspects. Further, my doctorate program in clinical psychology is enriching my understanding of human behavior and strengthening my resolve to serve compassionately.

I am deeply grateful to God, my family, Fr. Aytoy, and you, dear parishioners of Christ the King. Your faith, devotion to Mary, and love for the sacraments inspire me daily. As I celebrate this milestone, I am reminded that the priesthood is not just a personal gift but a gift to the community. It is through your prayers, support, and faith that I find the strength to live out this calling. Together, we journey in faith, striving to bring God's love and mercy to the world.



## THE EMMANUEL'S FIRST MOVE

By Fr. Pal Berdos

The cold breeze at dawn, the tiredness from a night of work—none of these can keep us from flocking to the church for the nine-day novena mass, Misa de Gallo or Simbang Gabi, here at Christ the King Parish. This year's celebration is particularly special as we commemorate our 45<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary with the theme "Reigning in Prayer, Preparing in Hope."

In every Advent season, we journey with the three Magi, who tirelessly search for Emmanuel, guided by the star. This year, as we prepare with hope, we reflect on a profound shift: instead of us finding the baby Jesus, it is He who finds us first, breaking bread with us in the Eucharistic meal. Here, we experience God's "First Moves" time and again. God, as the First Mover, initiates the act of love, allowing His Son Jesus to be reborn among us, alongside the newly born children.

Simbang Gabi, Misa de Aguinaldo, or Misa de Gallo began in 1668, initiated by an Augustinian friar with early dawn masses for farmers, and received formal recognition from the Holy See in 1961. Its meaning has evolved today. Neither hectic schedules nor exhaustion from a full day's work can stop the faithful from being found again by the true Light, the baby Jesus.

I pray that you may always find the radiant light of the child Jesus illuminating your path, filling you with the same awe and wonder as if you are seeing His face for the very first time.

May this season overflow your heart with boundless hope, profound joy, and the steadfast presence of God's unwavering love. Let His light guide you through every moment, bringing peace and warmth to your soul.



A sure way to get everyone together is to take a photo! The Ladies of Charity huddle for a group picture during their annual convention.

## LOC ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

By Buh Malonzo, *LOC President*

The Ladies of Charity-AIC Philippines conducted its 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Convention in Royce Hotel, Clark, Pampanga on April 12-14, 2024 with the theme “Inner Care, Outer Love: Gracefully and Graciously Serving in the Synodal Church of the Poor.” Thirty-six LOC members from the CTK unit participated in this momentous event, which succeeded in imparting to the participants the value of their service to the poor. Fr. Steve Zabala, Fr. Rowan Rebutillo and Fr. Dennis Cagantas expressed their full support to LOC with their presence on the first day.

Fr. Roland A. Tuazon, CM, who is the LOC national spiritual adviser, said, “The mission to serve that we have all received from Christ through our founder, St. Vincent de Paul challenges us to be graceful and gracious in our life. First, we become graceful as individuals imbued with inner joy, peace, and strength as we allow ourselves to be embraced, loved, and blessed by our Lord on whom alone we depend and surrender our will. Second, having experienced the profound love of God in our lives, we then become gracious as He is. We reach out in solidarity with love of and service to our fellow human beings, especially those in the margins

of society. To constantly keep the balance of being rooted in God and responsive to others, we pay attention to the call of inner care and outer love.”

The highlights of convention included the fellowship night with the theme Graceful Barbie Ladies where the CTK unit represented the NCR region in the group presentations together with then parish priest, Father Steve. Then there was the San Vicente de Paul Sarsuela by the Philippine Stagers Foundation.

The Loyalty Award for the CTK Unit was given to Aurora Santos for her 40 years of service, and Tessie Saulog for 35 years.

The participants were filled with joy and love on the experience and spiritual learnings gained from all the talks and activities.

Congratulations, Ladies!



LOC members serve and have fun together.



CTK Unit as Graceful Barbie Ladies



## CTK LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM

By Buh Malonzo

The Recognition Day for graduates of Basic Computer Literacy and Contact Center Services from San Isidro Labrador Parish with 14 graduates (c/o the Ladies of Charity) and Barangay Camp Aguinaldo with 15 graduates (c/o the Social Services and Development Ministry) was held on October 4 at CTK with Fr. Aytoy Opiniano, Fr. Rowan Rebutillo, QC SSDD officers, Brgy. Camp Aguinaldo officials, and the LOC Livelihood Team. The training was conducted from July to September equipping the graduates to work in call centers or offices as clerks or encoders.



## KOC AND LOC COLLAB IN BGY. LIBIS FEEDING PROGRAM

By Buh Malonzo

The Knights of Columbus (KOC) holds a feeding program in Brgy. Libis in collaboration with the Ladies of Charity that started last August. The recipients are 40 kids from Libis. The collaboration was in response to KOC's commitment to feed children with a balanced diet for good health and better academic performance.

Every feeding activity was attended by KOC's Faith Director, Adrian Navarro, Jr., George Samson and Henry Porca and other KOC members with the support of Grand Knight Manny de Leon. Buh Malonzo and Eileen de Leon of the LOC worked on this partnership and are hopeful that this collaboration continues.

As servant leaders, the experience has opened their eyes to the realities of life that we are blessed and need to share these gifts with those that have less.



Members of LOC assist in feeding the children.



The Knights of Columbus with the beneficiaries of the feeding program.



Kids wait for their healthy meal.





EMHC (above) and lectors and commentators (below) renew their commitment to serve the parish for another year.



## COMMUNITY COMMUNION OF THE SICK HELD IN LIBIS

By Benjie Jimenez

The first Community Communion of the Sick (COS) Visit in Libis was held last November 14. The team was composed of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, as well as Libis BEC volunteers. A total of six households were visited.

This activity was a follow-up to the Anointing of the Sick visit in Libis of Fr. Aytoy Opiniano last November 6. In our Community COS visit, we not only prayed and gave them Communion, but also gave them a rosary, scapular, and prayerbook.

In our first Community COS in Libis, I was accompanied by Kuya Henry Porca and Kuya George Samson. The BEC, led by Eileen de Leon, identified the households in Libis to be visited. We plan to do this activity at least once every month. It is our hope that we get many EMHC volunteers to sign up for this activity. The more volunteers we get, the more Community COS activities we can do.



A dialysis and diabetic patient receives communion.



Receiving the Holy Eucharist is a personal encounter for this 86-year-old stroke victim.



A hip operation may prevent her from going to church but Jesus visited this woman in the form of His body.



## BAGUMBAYAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM

By Manny de Leon

The Knights of Columbus (KOC) recently held another outreach program at Bagumbayan Elementary School with the kind permission of its principal, Ms. Lerma Tuazon. The event coincided with the birthday of Bro. Knight Jimmy Hernandez who decided to celebrate his natal day with the faculty and children by donating 300 raincoats, office supplies such as reams of bond paper, printer ink, laminating film, and even an encyclopedia set. The Jollibee Children's Party was held at the basketball court where the KOC distributed Chicken Joy meals and drinks. A Jollibee mascot added to the children's delight. In return, the school dance group also performed.



Jimmy Hernandez celebrated his birthday in a meaningful way.



Elementary students receive gifts from the KOC.



Newly painted fence and gates at the church parking lot (above) and driveway (below).



## REPAIR OF CTK IRON GATE AND PAINTING OF FENCES

The Knights of Columbus was requested to fix the defective iron gates of the CTK driveway. After checking the defects, some KOC members and metal workers fixed the gate. The group decided to top this donation with a paint job at the gates, guardhouse, and security office.



## LEARNING TO LISTEN

By Loung Cuartero

Safe Space of the Public Affairs Ministry provides help for persons to explore their thoughts and release their feelings in a climate of safety, respect, and confidentiality.

Safe Space recently organized a Basic Listening Skills Workshop with Katrina Santos, a CEFAM pastoral counselor, as the speaker. The discussions delved on current issues and challenges regarding safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (like those who suffer from sexual harassment or misconduct, verbal and physical abuse, spiritual abuse, etc.). The group also discussed policies and protocols to address these issues and challenges as well as the minister's duties and responsibilities.



## PAREFORM WORKSHOP

The Public Affairs Ministry in collaboration with Barangay Libis and CEFAM held a five-part workshop called PAREFORM: Workshop on Reintegration of Persons in

Recovery. This was given to families at the Barangay Libis Meeting Hall. The sessions which were conducted from October to November tackled different topics ranging from family issues such as awareness, effective communication, concrete plans on enhancing family relationships, and improving self-image.



**Oct 26, 2024:** Paunawa sa Ating Sitwasyon; Tulay ng Pangarap (Goal Setting)

**Nov 9, 2024:** Pagsusuring Ugnayan sa Pamilya (Family awareness of their interaction, roles, etc)

**Nov 16, 2024:** Matiswasay na Pakikipag-usap sa Isa't-isa (Effective Communication among family members)

**Nov 23, 2024:** Matapat na Pagpapahayag ng Niloob; Pagpapakilala ng Sarili (Concrete plans for changes in the family relationship)

**Nov 30, 2024:** Integration & Family Ritual (to foster a positive view of self and their family)

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# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2024

## WITH CTK GREENMEADOWS



**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
01 DECEMBER 2024

**Regular Sunday Mass Schedule**  
Lighting of the First Advent Candle in all masses

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
08 DECEMBER 2024

**Regular Sunday Mass Schedule**  
Lighting of the Second Advent Candle in all masses

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
15 DECEMBER 2024 | *Gaudete Sunday*

**7:30AM | 9AM | 10:30AM | 12NN | 4:15PM | 5:30PM**  
Lighting of the Third Advent Candle in all masses

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
22 DECEMBER 2024

**7:30AM | 9AM | 10:30AM | 12NN | 4:15PM | 5:30PM**  
Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle in all masses



**SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**  
09 DECEMBER 2024 | MONDAY

**7AM | 12NN | 6PM**

**EVENING SIMBANG GABI**  
**DEC. 15-23 | 8PM**

No 6PM Mass on Dec. 16-21, 23  
No 7PM Mass on Dec. 15 & 22

**MORNING SIMBANG GABI**  
**DEC. 16-24 | 5AM**

No 6AM Mass on Dec. 22

**SOLEMNITY OF THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**  
*Holy Day of Obligation*

**CHRISTMAS EVE | DEC. 24**  
**6PM | 8PM | 10PM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY | DEC. 25**  
REGULAR SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE,  
BUT **NO 6AM MASS.**



**SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD**  
*Holy Day of Obligation*

**DEC. 31, 2024 (TUESDAY)**  
**7PM | 9PM**

**JAN. 1, 2025 (WEDNESDAY)**  
REGULAR SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE,  
BUT **NO 6AM MASS.**

**DEC. 26 | THURS**  
**NO PUBLIC MASSES**

*To give the parish staff time off with their families.*

**JAN. 2, 2024 | THURS**  
**NO PUBLIC MASSES**

*To give the parish staff time off with their families.*

## REGULAR SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

**6PM SATURDAY VIGIL MASS | 6AM (FILIPINO) | 7:30AM | 9AM | 10:30AM | 12NN | 4:15PM (CHILDREN'S MASS) | 5:30PM | 7PM**