



## PROVINCE UPDATES:

### BR. ROMY CELEBRATES HIS 73<sup>RD</sup> BIRTHDAY

The Lagao Community, together with the Province Center personnel celebrated Br. Romy's 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday last September 17. A treat for a sumptuous barbeque dinner with cakes, ice creams, and wine was prepared for all to enjoy.



## VIRTUAL VISIT TO THE COMMUNITIES OF KOREA/JAPAN SECTOR

Br. Ador visited virtually all the 6 communities in the Korea/Japan sector last September 16-18. He gave the members of the communities an update with regards to what is going on in the province. At the end of the updates, time was given for questions and clarifications.



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*Br. Ador with the members of Kobe community. (Clockwise: Br Ador, Br. Allen, Br. Bernard, Br. Joseph and Yohan.*

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### DADIANGAS COMMUNITY

Br. Nino Pizarro, FMS

Br. Manuel de Leon was tested positive of covid-19. He had his RT-PCR test last September 8 after knowing that Br. Paterno Corpus whom he was in contact with was covid-19 positive. The rest of the community members were informed about the case of Br. Pat and eventually with the positive result of the swab test of Br. Manny. Since the community was one of the first contacts of these two brothers, we were put under quarantine starting September 9 as instructed by the school nurse and the Rural Health Unit (RHU). Our constant coordination with the school nurse and the RHU has been helping us in managing the situation. Also, it paved the way for a smooth arrangement of our swab testing. Indeed, after 7 days under quarantine, we had our swab test. The result, as of this time, has not come out yet. We are expecting that it will be out sometime on September 20-21, 2021 and favorable to all of us. In the electronic form that the RHU requested us to fill up in preparation for the swab testing, we indicated that the rest of the members of the community were not manifesting any symptoms of covid-19. Until now, everyone is in good condition and has no symptoms of covid-19.

Our quarantine days will end on September 22. We continue to ask your prayers for all of us especially for Br. Manny. Everything seems to be fine with him except for his intermittent coughing and nasal congestion. He mentioned that his body temperature and oxygen saturation level are good. Also, he said lately that his sense of smell is back. These are some indicators that tell us that he is getting better. Just to be sure, from time to time he is in constant contact with us, his medical doctor and the school nurse for medical help. Lastly, we are very thankful for the care and support of everyone, for their prayers and for the help that they've extended to us here.

## MAPAC COMMUNITY

Br. Dave Rano, FMS

The Marist Brothers MAPAC community is on 14-day-quarantine at this moment. It is due to the fact that our dear Br. Bill McCarthy tested positive last September 11; he took the PCR test for his supposed flight back to Australia. Since we had a farewell celebration for him the night before receiving his result and all the brothers including our neighboring priests had contact with him, we were all advised to do self-isolation and swab tests. Our employees and workers also were not allowed to enter MAPAC premises and advised to do quarantine and swab testing. In the meantime, MAPAC and Marist School are closed. MAPAC daily masses, evening prayers, mealtime and classes and all other community activities were cancelled.

The day after Bro. Bills' COVID-19 positive result, the brothers had their PCR test, and the good news is that all were negative. We are now finishing the quarantine period as advised us by health authorities. Meanwhile, Bro. Bill is still in isolation at La Valla Fraternity. He is in good condition and still in recovery. As of now, we are waiting for Br. Simon's update about his second swab test.



*Farewell Celebration the day before Br. Bill tested positive for COVID 19*

Let us always pray for one another in this time of pandemic and we ask you to pray for the fast recovery of Br. Bill.



Swab testing of the MAPAC Brothers the day after Bro. Bill tested positive for COVID 19

## **MARBEL COMMUNITY**

Br. Karl Angelo Labio, FMS

This year, the Marbel Community is comprised of eight members namely, Br. Paterno Corpus (Community Superior), Br. Roy Deita (Assistant Community Superior) Br. Dionesio Acosta (Community Treasurer), Br. Noel Fernandez, Br. Rene Reyes, Br. Mark Iwu, Br. Petero Navuku, and Br. Karl Angelo Labio. The members of the community have designated responsibilities in the ministry. Br. Pat is the NDMU President while Br. Roy is the Director of the CM-RE. We also have brothers who work at NDMU-IBED. Br. Noel is the School Director, Br. Dionesio is the Social Sciences Subject Coordinator in Senior High School Department and Br. Karl is assigned to teach the Grade 7 ESP/RELIGION Subject in Junior High School Department. Brs. Mark and Petero are both studying in NDMU.

The community also formulated a new Community Life Plan which focuses on building a network of compassion amidst the pandemic. With pandemic being mentioned, it is unfortunate that four of our brothers are diagnosed positive with the COVID-19. Nevertheless, necessary steps were taken, and protocols were followed to prevent further transmission of the virus. They are currently isolated in our school facilities and are being monitored by the University Clinic and the LGU of Koronadal. All of the members are currently on a 14-day quarantine which started on September 8, and will end on September 21. This is the present situation of the brothers in Marbel Community. We are thankful for your support and prayers.

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## **FORMATIVE SESSIONS FOR ASPIRANTS**

On September 18, 2021, the formative sessions for the Aspirants began. The program is scheduled every Saturday morning, throughout the academic year. The formative sessions aim to develop among the aspirants intra and interpersonal skills with the intention of equipping them with tools for self-care, community living, and leadership for ministry. Ms. Agnes S. Reyes accompanies the aspirants in this experience.



# THE ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

## #48

Br. Romulo L. Porras, FMS



*The following article is lifted up from the unpublished book of Mr. Julio Gabriel G. Ubas<sup>1</sup> titled MARISTA FILIPINAS (pages 32-37) on the occasion of 60 Years of Marist Presence in the Philippines (1948-2008) in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Marist Brothers of the Schools in the Philippines.*

### **THE BEGINNINGS OF NOTRE DAME OF LAGAO AND NOTRE DAME OF DADIANGAS**

In 1952, the Marist Brothers took over yet another Notre Dame school from the Oblate Fathers, this time the Notre Dame of Lagao in the city of General Santos. ND Lagao was founded by Fr. Joseph Milford, OMI and served as the school's first Director. It was the first high school in Lagao. Earlier in the year, the Marist Brothers received a contract for the school from Bishop Mongeau. The contract was approved by the US Provincial Council on May 24, 1952 and submitted to the General Council for their approval. The General Council conferred its approval on June 7, 1952. Br. Teston, Br. Paradis, Br. Henessy and Br. O'Keefe took over ND Lagao with Br. Teston as Director.

ND Lagao is a 16 hectare property<sup>2</sup>; back in 1952 it was composed of a parish church, a rectory, the Girls Department classrooms, the Sisters' convent, and a residence for the Marist Brothers. Back in the early 1950's, Lagao may well be considered as the center of South Cotabato. The Marist Brothers ran both the Boys and Girls Department in 1952. It was not until the following year that the Dominican Sisters took over the Girls Department and runs it to this day. (*ND Lagao Girls department transferred in 2008 to its new campus at San Isidro, Lagao*).

Being builders as well as educators, the Marist Brothers during their first year in ND Lagao labored to have the nipa, bamboo and sawali classrooms replaced with more permanent materials. By 1953, they had seven classrooms made of concrete and hollow blocks to accommodate their 180 students.

One of the more significant events in the course of history of the Marist Brothers in the Philippines happened in 1952. It was on this year that the Marist Brother in the Philippines sent aspirants to become Brothers to Tyngsboro, Massachusetts in the United States for their novitiate formation. The first group of Filipino Marist Aspirants was composed of Domingo Bendero and the Brothers Agustin and Santiago Cabrera. After two years the aspirants went to Marian College in Poughkeepsie, New York to take a course in Education, also known as Marist Scholasticate Formation.



*Notre Dame of Lagao, Class 1954*

Around the same time that the Marist Brothers came to South Cotabato (Marbel and Lagao), Br. Dumont and the Oblate Fathers started a local mission funded by the Bishop. The mission was aimed towards the ethnic group, B'laans from the neighboring area of Bolul, almost ten kilometers from Marbel. It sought to bring catechism to the B'laans as well as other ethnic groups in the nearby areas. Other Marist Brothers who joined in this local mission were Brs. Regis Creegan and Felix Gilligan. They were joined by volunteers from ND Marbel. Later on, the Passionist Fathers replaced the Oblate Fathers in the Bolul Mission. It was the Passionist Fathers who founded the Notre Dame of Bolul.



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*The Juniors who were studying at Notre Dame of Lagao in 1962 with an unknown Brother and Br. Bernard Curtin, FMS.*

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In 1953, the Marist Brothers in the Philippines sent more Filipino Marist Aspirants to the United States for their formation. One of the aspirants, Br. Fernando Armendez, still vividly recalls his trip to New York. Upon reaching port, their ship's captain wired the Marist Brothers. The aspirants were requested to stay onboard for one more night, as the Brothers could only pick them up the following morning. Br. Fernando<sup>3</sup> is currently the eldest living Filipino Marist Brother, affectionately called Br. "Pops" in the community. Although Br. Pops points out that he earned his moniker way back in his Novitiate as he was the eldest of his batch.

Also in 1953, the Brothers founded and opened their own school in South Cotabato: Notre Dame of Dadiangas, found almost two kilometers from ND Lagao. ND Dadiangas is the first Marist school in the Philippines to be founded by the Brothers on their own. The in-joke in the Marist Communities in the Philippines being that ND Dadiangas is the “illegitimate child” of Br. Teston. According to Br. Teston himself, back when ND Lagao was just starting, the bulk of its student population came from Dadiangas. Some of its students also came from the neighboring barrios of Lagao, others came from as far as Kiamba, Glan and Tupi. To study in ND Lagao, students had to bear the kilometers-long walk to and from the school; sometimes under the glaring heat of the sun, others under the rain’s downpour. Initially, to help their students the Brothers rented a truck that served as a school bus to pick up the students and then bring them home after school. While the rented truck was of big help, the Brothers saw that it would soon be not enough. This was considering that sometimes the Brothers would also need to use the truck for errands and that it could only serve so many students.

The classrooms of ND Lagao were also filled to capacity, prompting the Brothers to consider building some more. And since the Brothers wanted to build more classrooms anyway, Br. Teston thought why not build classrooms in Dadiangas and make it an annex school of ND Lagao. The problem was under the law at that time, the Brothers could not expand the total area of any school under their care. To build an annex school for ND Lagao they needed to acquire a permit from the National Land Settlement Administration (NLSA) in Manila.

With the help of a local doctor, Dr. Sergio Morales, Br. Teston flew to Manila and met with Mariano Roque, then Executive Secretary of the Philippine Government, to seek help in letting the Marist Brothers build an annex school. In that meeting, Sec. Roque suggested to Br. Teston that instead of building an annex school, why don’t the Marist Brothers build another school entirely? Br. Teston liked the idea and agreed to it. After meeting Sec. Roque, Br. Teston received a permit for the Marist Brothers to build a new school in Dadiangas.

Br. Teston immediately wrote to the General Council in Rome, even before he left Manila to return to Mindanao to relay his intention of building a new school in Dadiangas and ask for the council’s permission. But early on the General Council was not very receptive of Br. Teston’s desire. Even the US Marist Province was not very keen of Br. Teston building a new school in the Philippines. They saw it as a very ambitious project that the Marist Mission in the Philippines would have difficulty supporting. It also didn’t help that Br. Teston already acquired a permit from the Philippine Government to build a school without first having the project approved by the General Council.

In the end however, Notre Dame of Dadiangas came to be in 1953. Its operation was supported by Rev. Mongeau. The first class was done inside the parish church with students reaching 65 in number. The current Girls Department of ND Lagao<sup>4</sup> was the first formal location of ND Dadiangas which was headed by Br. Paradis as School Director. By 1954, two Brothers, Br. O’Keefe and a new comer to the Philippine Mission, Br. Robert Baptist Goetze (Henry Joseph Henbel Goetze, b. October 11, 1925), FMS, joined ND Dadiangas. They were joined by another newcomer in 1955: Br. Alfred George (Robert Lavigne Quellette, b. May 20, 1929), FMS. At first the Brothers, who were staying in Lagao, had to take public transportation every day to and from the annex school. Later on, the Brothers rented a house along Beatiles Street, not far from the school.

To this day, ND Dadiangas is known as Br. Teston's "illegitimate child" and whenever asked about it, Br. Teston would reply that he is "very proud" of ND Dadiangas. # # #

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Julio Gabriel Galzote Ubas is a graduate of the University of the Philippines, Diliman in Quezon City with a Bachelor's Degree in History. A proud Marist Notre Damean, Julio Gabriel is an alumnus of ND Marbel University IBED, batch 1988 (Elementary) and 2002 (High School). "Marista Filipinas" is based from the BA Thesis of Mr. Ubas at UP Diliman (February 2007). It was originally written in Filipino.

<sup>2</sup>An update on the land area of Lagao property: 40,223 sq. meters for NDDC IBED; 8,859 sq. meters for Province Center and Aspirancy House (the future Marist Care Home location); and 3,518 sq. meters for the SMSM Convent. Total land area is 52,600 sq. meter.

<sup>3</sup>Br. Pop Armendez died in General Santos City on August 28, 2016.

<sup>4</sup>The author, Mr. Ubas, might be referring to ND Dadiangas Girls, and not ND Lagao Girls. In 1982, Notre Dame of Dadiangas Boys Department began to merge with the Notre Dame of Lagao to become Notre Dame of Dadiangas College High School Department Lagao Campus. In 2007, the Elementary Training Department moved to Lagao and both the high school and elementary departments then began to be called the NDDU Integrated Basic Department Lagao.



**"In order to educate children,  
we must love them."**

**-St. Marcellin Champagnat**

## INFORMATION:

- Our Brothers (Br. Pat Corpus, Manny de Leon., Br. Dionesio Acosta, Br. Mark Iwu, Br. Petero Navuku, Br. Bill McCarthy at MAPAC, Br. Juan Castro of MDA in Davao) who have Covid are recovering from their sickness. Let us continue to pray for their fast recovery.
- We are expecting the Province Sondage to arrive at the end of this month. We will distribute them to the different communities as soon as we receive them from Rome.
- The Provincial Council has finalized the schedule for the Province Assembly. It will be on October 8, 2021. You can find the program below.



<b>MARIST EAST ASIA ON-LINE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY</b>	
Friday, October 8, 2021	
8:30 AM-5:30 PM	
THEME: <b>DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU.” (JOHN 2:5)</b> “RESPONDING BOLDLY TO EMERGING NEEDS AS GLOBAL FAMILY IN THIS NEW BEGINNING.”	
FACILITATOR: DR. ANDRES MAGALLANES JR. PHD	
<b>PROGRAM</b>	
8:00-8:30	OPENING OF THE LINK AND PRELIMINARIES
8:30 – 8:45	OPENING PRAYER (SPIRITUALITY COMMISSION)
8:45-9:00	PROGRAM ORIENTATION
9:00-9:25	PROVINCIAL’S ADDRESS (COMMUNITY LIFE AND SIRTUALITY COMMISSION)
9:25-9:50	MISSION COMMISSION (BR. ALLAN J. DE CASTRO, FMS)
9:50-10:15	FORMATION COMMISSION (BR. MANUEL V. DE LEON, FMS)
10:15-10:40	LAITY COMMISSION (BR. DOMINGO LEE, FMS)
10:40-11:05	FINANCE COMMISSION (BR. ANDREW CHAN, FMS)
11:05-11:45	OPEN FORUM (DR. ANDRES MAGALLANES, PHD)
11:45-12:00	MARIAL PRAYER (LAITY COMMISSION)
12:00-2:00	LUNCH BREAK
2:00-2:10	OPENING PRAYER (FORMATION COMMISSION)
2:10-5:10	STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL
5:10- 5:15	CLOSING MESSAGE/WORDS OF GRATITUDE (BR. ALLAN J. DE CASTRO, FMS)
5:15- 5:30	CLOSING PRAYER (MISSION COMMISSION)

## *Birthday Greetings to:*



September 21  
Br. Fred A. Salubre



September 22  
Br. Danilo M. Sevilla



September 23  
Br. Paterno S. Corpus



September 26  
Ms. Norma Segocio



September 26  
Ms. Thelma Almonicar

## *Death Anniversaries:*

- September 22, 1908 – Br. Marie Arthur died in Beijing.
- September 22, 1924 – Br. Pierre Marcel died in Beijing.
- September 25, 1926 – Br. Joseph Yen, a junior died in Chala, China.
- September 25, 1989 – Br. Paul Sebastian died in St. Genis-Laval.
- September 27, 1995 – Br. Eustache died in Beijing.
- September 30, 1906 – Br. Joseph Amien died in Hong Kong.



*Let us pray for  
the following:*

- For the mother of Br. John Allen Timola who is in critical condition due to sepsis.
- For a meaningful celebration of the Season of Creation that will inspire us all to take an active role in responding to the call of caring for our common home.
- For our brothers and Marist laity affected by the Covid-19 pandemic that they may feel the comforting presence of Mary our Good Mother.
- For those who have lost their jobs and means of livelihood.
- For the well-being of those who are anxious and suffering mental health issues.
- For those who are celebrating their birthdays this month of September.

