



Marist Brothers East Asia Province



News Bits

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April 11, 2021

April 11, 2021 DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY



In 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized St. Faustina Kowalski and, during the ceremony, he declared that throughout the Church, the 2nd Sunday of Easter will be called the **“Divine Mercy Sunday”**. The significance of the celebration of this feast is expressed in the diary of St. Faustina when she had an encounter of the apparition of Jesus.

“My daughter tells the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will contemplate My love and mercy throughout eternity. The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy.” (Diary §699)

Dear fellow Marists, may our celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday serve to remind us of our commitment to a spirituality deeply rooted in our passion for God and to our mission that spreads compassion for humanity, deeply rooted in Jesus’s tenderness and great mercy.

A blessed Divine Mercy Sunday to all!

BR. DOMINADOR A. SANTIAGO, FMS

UPDATES:

RENEWAL OF VOWS

Lagao, General Santos City

Five Brothers from the East Asia sector (Br. Rechie Dean Bagsican, FMS, Br. Lloyd Gamboa, FMS, Br. Joseph Pedalizo, FMS, Br. Karl Angelo Labio, FMS, Br. Jay-Jay Escudro, FMS) and one Brother (Br. Guangzhao Pedro Zhang, FMS) from the Marist District of Asia renewed their vows last April 5. The mass was officiated by Fr. Ronald Plomillo, DCM, the Lagao Parish Priest. The celebration was attended by the Brothers from Kidapawan, Cotabato, Lagao, Marcellin, Dadiangas, and Fourviere communities, by the Marist Missionary Sisters and some friends. After the mass, dinner was served at the Marist Province center.



The Renewalists with all the Brothers who attended the celebration!

*Perpetually Professed
Brothers renewing their
commitment!*





Photo taken after the renewal of vows of our young Brothers on Monday, April 5, 2021. Standing from L-R are Br. Ador Santiago, Provincial, Br. Richie Dean Bagsican, Br. Dave Becislao, Br. Jay-Jay Escudro, Fr. Ronald Plomillo, Mass Celebrant, Br. Lloyd Gamboa, Br. Joseph Pedalizo, Br. Karl Angelo Labio and Br. Pedro Zhang



Perpetually Professed Brothers renewing their commitment.

Notre Dame of Cotabato, Cotabato City

Two young Brothers assigned in Cotabato Notre Dame of Cotabato renewed their vows last April 8 at the Holy Family Chapel of Notre Dame of Cotabato. Fr. Jay Virador, OMI officiated the mass. During his homily he proudly informed the attendees that Br. Jick de Leon FMS, is his close relative. Brothers from the Novitiate, Lagao, and Fourviere, some personnel of NDC and friends of the Brothers attended the celebration. Lunch was served at the Marist Brothers residence.



*Brothers Jick and Aljon with
Fr. Jay Virador, OMI*



*Brothers Jick and Aljon
renewing their vows..*



*Brothers Jick and Aljon with
Fr. Jay and Br. Ador.*



*Brothers Jick and Aljon with
All the Brothers who attended the
celebration.*

MARIST BROTHERS KUCHING, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

Br. John Emil Alada, FMS renewed his vows on April 6 at 6:30 PM in the community of Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Br. Robert Teoh received his vows in behalf of Br. Ernesto Sanchez, the Superior General. Fr. Ramon Borja, SDB presided over the mass. Two (2) St. Joseph International School student boarders attended the celebration. After the celebration they went to Kopitiam restaurant for their celebratory dinner.



Br. Emil signing the contract as
Fr. Borja, SDB looks on.



Br. Emil, Br. Robert, and Fr. Borja,
after the mass.



Br. Emil, Br. Robert, and
Fr. Borja, with the two (2)
students from St Joseph
International School. after
the mass.

JOINT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION FOR BRS. EDGAR AND GABE

Br. Edgar (April 10) and Brother Gabe (April 12) jointly celebrated their birthday on April 11. The event started at 5:30 PM with a prayer led by Br. Romulo Porras, FMS the Marist Lagao community leader. Brothers from Dadiangas, Fourviere, and Marcellin Homes, were present during the celebration. The delicious meal was prepared by Lisa, the Chef of Marist Lagao Community.



MARIST PROVINCE PERSONNEL BONDING DAY

The personnel of the Marist Province Center went to Glan last April 9-10 for their bonding activity. Br. Edgar accompanied them with Jason, the Marist Province Center Working student. All of them enjoyed the beach and the sumptuous meals prepared by all the Marist Province staff. A lechon was served for dinner on the 9th. The personnel serenaded and greeted Br. Edgar happy birthday in the early hours of April 10.

The Marist Province Personnel with Br. Edgar at the Marian Beach Resort, Tulan, Glan, Sarangani.



SUNDO SA BACUSANON AND FIELD TRIP OF BACUSANON PARISH LEADERS

Br. Dionesio Acosta, Br. Jeffrey Guino-o, Br Aljon Yonder, Br. Lloyd Gamboa and friends of Br. Fred went to Bacusanon on April 7 to take Br. Fred to Lagao. On April 8 at 7:30 in the morning, they left Bacusanon together with 13 Bacusanon Parish leaders who were making a field trip to visit the different ministries and communities of the Marist Brothers. The parish leaders went to Lagao, Dadiangas, and Marbel, and stayed overnight in Lake Sebu. Brs. Fred and Dean acted as their tour guide.

Pictures during the Sundo!



The Brothers and friends before leaving Bacusanon!



Pictures during the Field Trip of Bacusanon Parish Leaders





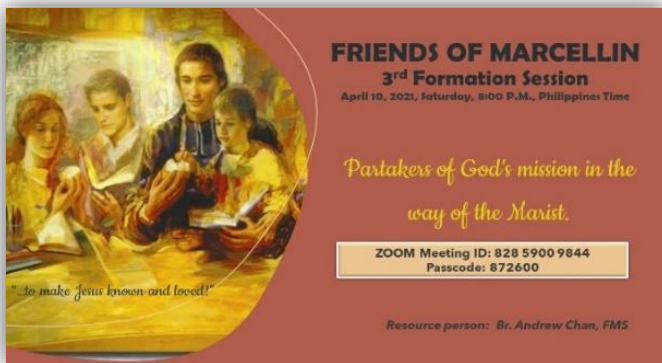
LAITY FORMATION CONTINUES ON



April 7. The Laity Committee of Philippine Sector met to plan for the **National CMMF Encounter** to be held on June 6, 2021. Convened by Ms. Elma Rafil, the group brainstormed on the program for the big day.

The event adapted and contextualized the theme of the International Forum of the Vocation of the Marist Laity, that is, “CMMF Encounter: “Welcoming, Nurturing, Living, Sharing our Vocation.”

April 9, The 2nd monthly meeting for the on-going formation of Lay Marists leaders under the guidance of Br. Graham Neist, FMS. The reflections and sharing points were centered on learning contemplative stance, our understanding of Trinity in communion, receiving and giving forms, and the dynamics of “holy-holey-wholly”. It was an enriching experience for all because what was learned encouraged practical application. Kindly distinguish between laity and lay...laity is a noun. Therefore, “laity leader” is technically incorrect. Lay, on the other hand, is an adjective. Therefore, it is more correct to say “lay leaders”. More research on your part will be useful.

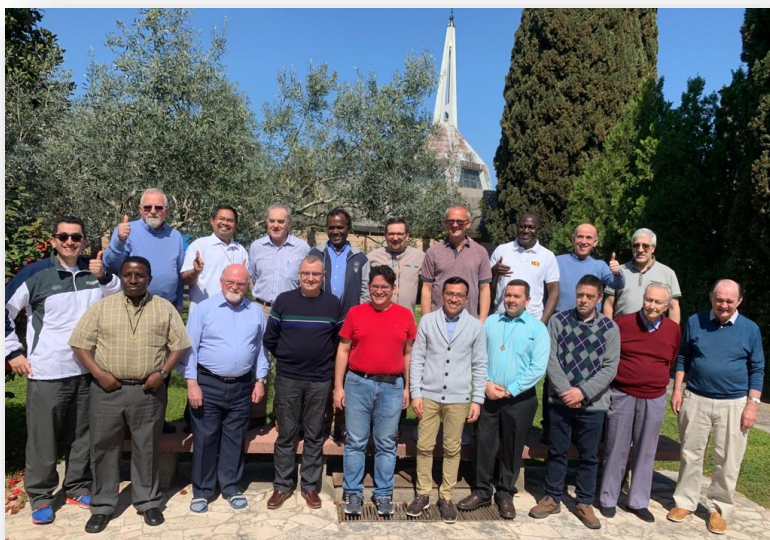


April 10, 2021. The Friends of Marcellin met for their 3rd Formation Session on Marist Mission. Br. Andrew Chan was the Resource Person. His presentation included a synthesis of the history of the Marist Brothers, some Marist Documents on Mission, statistics and the Marist Brothers and laity in the world today and the invitation to partake in God’s mission as

he sends us to be co-workers in His Kingdom. In the breakout groups, participants shared what touched them in the presentation of Br. Andrew. They further shared on how they are called to partake in God’s mission as lay Marist. The session ended with expressions of affirmation on the richness of the sharing.



GENERAL HOUSE COMMUNITY



General House Community
2020-21: 17 Brothers, 2 Priests,
12 Countries, 13 Administrative
Units.



The following is a four-series article written by Br. Ted Fernandez, fms to commemorate the Marist presence in the Philippines for the last 60 years. Later, Br. Lindley Sionosa, fms continued the chronicling of the events as they happened.

A Brief History of the Marist Presence in the Philippines

First of the Four Series

The blessing of the jubilee is encapsulated in Leviticus 26:11-12: “I will set my dwelling among you, and I will not cast you off. I will live in your midst; I will be your God and you shall be my people.”

We look back at the past with loving remembrance so that we can appreciate how a loving God dwelt with us and touched our lives for the past 60 years.

In 1945, shortly after the Liberation, the Marist Brothers (in the United States) received a renewed urgent appeal from the Oblate Fathers to join them in their missionary activity in Mindanao particularly in the Christian education of the young men and women in the diocese of Cotabato.

In answer to this appeal Brother Louis Omer Duprez, who was then Provincial of the American Province, flew to Cotabato in 1947 to make an ocular survey of the conditions in this part of the world. Records would bear his testimony when he recalled: “Measured in terms of teaching facilities or material worth, Cotabato was one of the most forlorn spots on the face of the globe. But the people were good and the need for Catholic teaching is great. Working with the good Oblate Fathers there was a great opportunity for apostolic work among untold numbers of God’s children in a land that almost seems to have been forgotten.”

The Provincial Council of the American Province approved the establishment of the Mission and in 1948 a call was issued for volunteers to serve in this new and distant land. Out of a host of volunteers, four Brothers were selected to form the nucleus of this first Mission. They were Br. Maurus James Doherty from St. Ann’s High School in New York City; Br. Peter Leonard Thommen from Central Catholic High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts; Br. Joseph Damian Teston, also from St. Ann’s High School in New York; and Br. Herbert Daniel Dumont from St. Agnes High School in New York City.

On June 21, 1948, they landed in Cotabato City to start their first apostolate. The conditions which the Brothers found upon arrival in Cotabato, were indeed gloomy. Brother Maurus James, director of the group, in writing of the new home in which they were to live said, “We were prepared for the worst and that’s what we got. The house was built in a marshy hole. Mosquitoes, lizards, ants and all types of insects abound. The exterior walls and roof were made of nipa leaves common to a popular type of native house. The interior walls separating the rooms were made of discarded boards and crating. One look at the kitchen and you lose your appetite.”

The following eye-witness description will give us an idea of the school building in which the first Brothers were to begin their teaching apostolate: “We were actually shocked when we saw the school. It must be the most primitive in the world. It is a long, low building with nipa-leaf walls and roof. The floors are the plain ground—hilly in some places, muddy in others. We don’t sweep the floors here, we rake them. The blackboards are made from old corrugated GI roofing which has been beaten down to bumpy smoothness. The desks are long benches with armrests for writing, carved out of wood by one of the natives. The roof of the school leaks everywhere.”

In a letter sent by Rev. Fr. Gerard Mongeau, OMI, who was then Provincial of the Oblate Fathers in the Philippines, to the Marist Provincial, he said: “The days when the four Brothers arrived was a very happy day for me. I knew that the education of our boys was in good hands. It was a sacrifice that your Congregation made. I know that you could have had much better and bigger school in the States. May God bless your congregation for having so generously accepted this work among the poor. May He send you especially, more vocations to replace the Brothers who are doing splendidly well here. They have tackled the work with the real spirit of self-sacrifice.

In 1950, the Brothers took over Notre Dame of Marbel, Boys’ Department in Koronadal, South Cotabato from the Oblate Fathers and Bro. Edmund Conrad Paradis was appointed Director. With him were Brothers Anthony Bernard Richardson and Regis Xavier Creegan. The RVM Sisters were replaced by the OP Sisters of Siena, who took over the management of the girls. The school building was of cogon roof, sawali walls and dirt floor. The desks were of benches with carved wooden boards for writing. Each bench was divided into five sections separated by these writing boards. To prevent dust from accumulating, wet sawdust was sprinkled on these floors. Two years later, the Brothers started replacing these classroom buildings with cement hollow blocks with GI roof.

In 1952, four Brothers, with Br. Joseph Damian Teston as Director, took over Notre Dame of Lagao in General Santos City, again from the Oblate Fathers. Lagao was then the center of the town and Dadiangas its suburb, so to speak. With him were Brothers Edmund Conrad Paradis, Michael O’Keefe, and Denis Herman Liuzzo. On the same year, Br. Herbert Daniel Dumont with the Oblate Fathers started a mission among the B’laans in the hilly Bolul about 10 kilometers away from Marbel. Brothers Felix Gilligan and Regis Xavier Creegan together with some volunteer students from both the Boys and Girls’ Departments conducted regular catechism instructions there as well as in the surrounding areas of Marbel. Later on, the Passionist Fathers (CP) through Father George Nolan took over the mission and worked at converting to Christianity practically the whole settlement while developing the Notre Dame of Bolul there. It was also this year that the Brothers sent the first group of Filipino aspirants to the United States. They were Domingo Bendero, Agustin Cabrera and Santiago Cabrera.

In 1953, the Brothers started Notre Dame of Dadiangas about two kilometers away as an annex of Notre Dame of Lagao. The Brothers lived in Lagao and commuted daily to Dadiangas for their classes. At this time, the 2nd group of Filipino aspirants was sent to the United States. They were Fernando Armendez, Sergio Dignadice, Santiago Sonza, and Jaime Posadas who, sad to say, did not continue his studies there but came back just after a year.

In 1954, the Brothers took over Notre Dame of Kidapawan from the Oblate Fathers. Br. Maurus James Doherty was appointed Director. On the same year, Brothers Alfred George Ouellette, Michael O’Keefe, and Robert Baptist Goetze of Lagao community decided to reside in a rented house in Biateles Street not far from the annex school in Dadiangas. Thus this annex school formally became the Notre Dame of Dadiangas. The year saw also the 3rd group of Filipino aspirants leave for the United States. They were Mariano Buenavides, Isabelo Chaves, Delfin Riego de Dios, and Nicomedes Conta.

(To be continued.)

Birthday Greetings to:



April 10
Br. Edgar Ceriales



April 10
Br. Rechie Dean Bagsican



April 12
Br. Gilbert B. Bogacia



April 13
Br. Rustico S. Lumbo



April 13
Ms. Herminigilda Diaz



April 16
Br. Joseph Yoshida



April 17
Br. John Allen V. Timola

Death Anniversaries:

- April 10, 1961 – Br. Joseph Avit died in St. Genis-Laval.
- April 10, 2009 – Br. Timoteo M. Cabangon died in the Philippines.
- April 12, 1980 – Br. Malya Bosco died in Changsha, China.
- April 16, 1976 – Br. Paul Gabriel died in Hong Hong.
- April 16, 1989 – Br. Joseph Valentin died in Sri Lanka.
- April 16, 2000 – Br. John Moh died in P.J., Malaysia.

Prayers please...

- # For the repose of the soul of Dr. Imelda Cruel, 86 years old, a former Grade School principal of Marist School, Marikina.
- # For all the departed and dearly missed Brothers, Affiliated Members, Family Members, Benefactors and friends.
- # For those who are sick, suffering, or struggling with any hardship, that they would find healing and comfort.
- # For our Brothers working in other countries.
- # For the vocation of young Brothers in the Formation.
- # For our schools / universities, students, teachers, administrators and alumni.
- # For the continues blessings of those affected by the pandemic and calamities that may God continue to provide their needs.
- # For all those in authority, that they would govern wisely and fairly.
- # For our community, that we would proclaim the love of Christ in word and deed.
- # For all the birthday celebrants for the month of April.
- # For our own needs and personal intentions.



O living Host, my one and only strength, fountain of love and mercy, embrace the whole world, fortify faint souls. Oh, blessed be the instant and the moment when Jesus left us His most merciful Heart! – Saint Maria Faustina Diary, 223

DIVINE MERCY

