



EAST ASIA

MARIST LIFE Newsletter

January 31, 2024, Volume 02, Issue No. 26

PALAWAN COMMUNITY: MARIST MISSION IN THE PHILIPPINES

Philippines

Our community is a mission area for the poor Indigenous People of Palawan in the Philippines. Our brothers' community resides in the Southernmost part of Palawan Province. We are living with the community of the Indigenous People where we teach in the preparatory school. We prepare and make the young children go to the formal school system. Currently, we are supporting around 230 students.

Many things happened during the year. Among the many events that took place was the event attended by Br. Frank in Rome. He was in Rome for two months for his renewal course. It was also a time for him to reflect on the events that took place in his life for the past sixty plus years. Br. Albert was the only one left in the community for that period. Br. Frank came back from Rome in November 22, 2023.



The month of October in the Philippines is dedicated to the celebration of the Indigenous Peoples' month. It is a month long celebration to give honor, importance, and highlight the role that the Indigenous People have in the society. It is an Indigenous People's celebration of life, traditions, and practices. The celebration culminated on October 22 with a Mass officiated by our Vicariate Bishop - Bp. Socrates Mesiona, MSP, DD. He emphasized the importance of loving and being proud of the Indigenous Palawan Culture and being proud of their roots. He also said that he saw the Indigenous Peoples struggle of expressing themselves before the Marist came. He was thankful and appreciative of the Marist presence in Palawan as one of the stakeholders in promoting and preserving the culture of the I.Ps. He also acknowledged the important role that the Brothers play in educating the children of the I.Ps.



A Forum was conducted by the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa in Sitio Sicud, Brgy. Candawaga, Rizal, Palawan. It was attended by the participating I.Ps coming from the different tribes located in the Southern part of Palawan. We sent four of our students and six of our parents and they showcased their cultural prowess in dancing "TAREK". TARUK, is a traditional Palaw'an dance, executed by tapping the feet at the sound of "BASAL" using tradition "SANANG" and "AGONG" musical instruments. In our community, we had our annual "Palarong Katutubo" which we conducted every I.P Month culmination. Palaro like, Supok (Traditional Blowgun), "Pating", (Tradition Tree climbing using Yantok - Calameae) Tugda Sasad (Planting Rice, corn, etc) "Kardang Isap" and the forgotten activity (we didn't do) "Lubok." We do this annually so that the younger generations of the Palawan I.Ps will never forget the traditions and customs they have.



Below is the sharing of experiences of Rose Ann A. Buntang, an IP who participated in the Forum:

“Ang aking natutunan sa aming pakikilahok sa simbahan ay una, kung paano sumayaw ng aming katutubong sayaw na TARUK sa harap ngunaraming tao na hindi nahihya. Kung paano mag alay papuntang altar at kung paano makisalamuha sa mga taong hindi ko kilala. Pangalawa, ang batas tungkol sa IPRA LAW na ipinaliwanag ng mga tao sa forum na dinaluhan namin. Kung paano pahalagahan ang lupang ninuno at ang kultura ng isang katutubong Palawan na katulad ko. Huwag ikahiya at kalimutan sa halip, ito’y pagyamanin at mahalín. May natutunan din ako sa ibinahagi ni G. Gerald Pusgo na isang Agriculturist. Ito ay tungkol sa Climate Change o ang Pagbabago ng klima o panahon. ang polusyon na nagmumula sa mga sunog na nagaganap dito sa lupa na tayo ang may gawa, katulad ng pagsusunog sa kaingin ag mga usok na nagmumula sa mga sasakyan at mga pagawaan. Sa araw na iyon, napagtanto ko na mahalaga na ako ay nakikiisa sa pagdiriwang ng buwan ng mga katutubo upang mas labo kong madama na dapat kong mahalín at ipaglalaki ang aking pinagmulan ang ang Tribong Palaw’an.

I apologize for the Tagalog language but I will try to translate to you the important bits and pieces of what she said. She expressed her happiness in attending such occasions since only on this occasion that she could show and be proud of her culture and traditions. It was her first time dancing the traditional dance since most often, the older I.Ps teach the young girls the dance. She expressed that it was very informative since the forum explained the rights of the I.Ps stipulated in the IPRA LAW. She also expressed her awareness of climate change and its effects on the environment. Lastly, she expressed that she needs to be proud and give importance to her roots as a Palaw’an. This is one of the effects of our advocacies in Palawan particularly in Education. We could not be prouder as missionaries to Palawan. Why? Our 23 years of presence there are bearing fruits in the lives of the Indigenous People we serve in the mission. Education is the long-lasting legacy that the Marist Mission will mold in the lives and the hearts of the people.

We are currently preparing for the 25 years of our mission in Palawan. We started in the year 2000 during the commemoration of the Jubilee year. We chose Palawan as part of our response to the calls of our chapter to have a mission with the poor, particularly the Indigenous People. We came to Palawan 24 years ago because this area where the Indigenous Peoples are present was hardly reached by other Religious Brothers by then. This year is meant to prepare us for our celebration of 25 years of presence in the Palawan mission.



Photo News



Last January 25, Marist-NDEA team finalized schedule of programs on advocacy against online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) for NDEA member schools. Upcoming activities will give focus on parents' awareness and their role in combatting threats in cyberspace and increasing awareness among students on the issue of online abuses affecting their well-being.



January 24:
Seoul Community Evaluation Meeting



Last January 25, Br. Crispin P. Betita, FMS, Chairperson of the Child and Youth Protection Desk and Angela Petenzi of FMSI, Rome, met via Zoom for project monitoring updates, following the developments in the implementation of the Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC).



On January 27, Ms. Leann Rosali, East Asia lay participant to the Marist International Mission in El Escorial in Madrid, Spain on April 8-14, 2024 met with the laity leaders to discuss process of generating reflections pertinent to the MIMA-III event.



January 30:
Br. Robert Teoh welcomed a group of visitors from Xi An China Visitors led by Fr. Dominic Kong, CDD and Fr. Paul Hu, CDD. They had a short tour of Saint Joseph International School.



January 29:
Br. Anthony Tan celebrated his birthday together with the Brothers in the Hong Kong Community along with some Marist Lay teachers and fiends.



January 29:
The Hostel students studying at Saint Joseph International School.

Webinar on Synodality



Maristi
di Champagnat
EAST ASIA PROVINCE

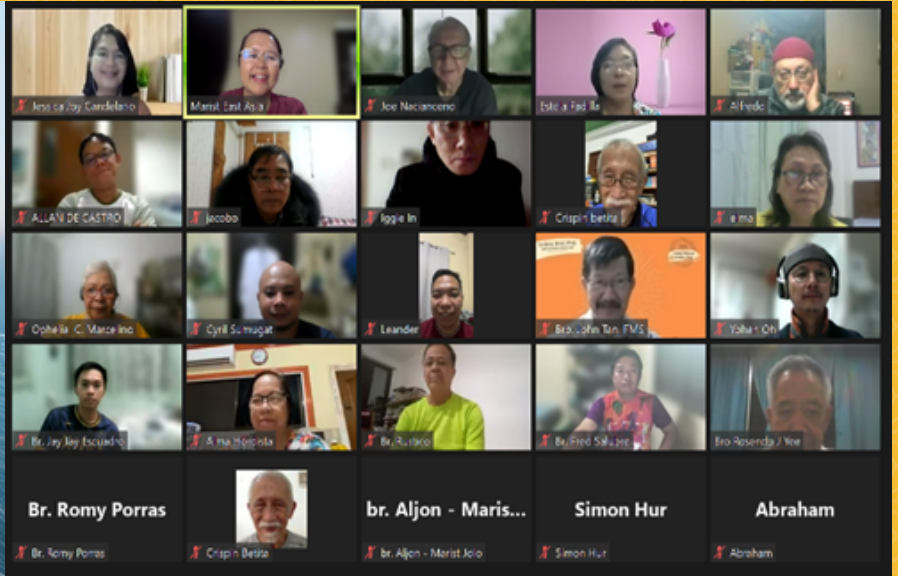
YOU'RE INVITED
TO A WEBINAR ON
Synodality

Speaker: **Dr. Estela Padilla**

as part of the continuing reflection on the Statements
of the 6th Provincial Chapter of the East Asia Province

JANUARY 26 (FRIDAY) | 7:00 P.M.
PHILIPPINE TIME

Meeting ID: 872 1563 2679
Passcode: 885543



Last January 26, around 26 Marists of Champagnat gathered in Zoom for a webinar on Synodality. The resource person was Dr. Estela Padilla, a Filipina theologian who heads the FABC Office of Theological concerns and who was recently appointed as one of the lay voting members the Synod on Synodality. With her was Ms. Jessica Joy Candelario, formerly a Youth Desk Executive Secretary of the Asian Bishop's Conference. With the theme on Synodality that is, "Communion, Participation, and Mission", the speakers raised challenging questions such as: "As Marists, what blocks you from walking together? What blocks you from discerning and taking communal decisions? and, what blocks you as Marist community from walking with humanity to be in service to mission?"

The reflections via zoom held once a month is part of the continuing reflections on the Statements of the East Asia Province.



Br. Lloyd Gamboa, Vocation Director of Marist Brothers of East Asia Province, facilitated the formation training of the altar servers themed "Servants of the Sacred: A Day of Altar Knight Encounter" last January 27, at MAPAC (Marist Asia-Pacific Center). Joining Br. Lloyd in giving formation to the altar servers were Josh Nathaniel and Chona Manalili. The Campus Minister, Ms. Marjorie Rañeses, noted that these "participants were inspired by the deep interest and joy in serving."

Kimberly Arguez Camiring's Journey

A Chronicle of Volunteering, Reflection, and Community Impact

From Lavalla200>Mt. Druitt Community to Global Inspirations: A Narrative of Growth, Collaboration, and the Lasting Ripple of Positive Change



Kimberly Arguez Camiring's return for a 30-day vacation brings with it not just the warmth of relaxation but an inspiring tale of volunteerism that unfolded in the heart of Lavalla200>Mt. Druitt. In a heartfelt debriefing session, Kimberly shares the highs and lows of her extraordinary Year of Volunteering within the vibrant Lavalla200>Mount Druitt community. Her reflective journey highlights personal growth, the conquest of challenges, and the beauty found in meaningful moments. As Kimberly continues her vacation, the community eagerly awaits the chapters yet to unfold, celebrating her commitment to nurturing community and fostering camaraderie.

On January 20, 2024, a select group, including Brothers and the Marikina lay Marists, gather to immerse themselves in Kimberly's impactful narrative. Her stories become a compelling bridge for cross-cultural learning and collaboration, showcasing a deep commitment to service and community building. Day 2 of the debriefing session

takes a forward-looking turn as Kimberly explores future aspirations and a sustained commitment to service post-vacation. Her comprehensive exploration draws on insights gained from the challenges, triumphs, and lessons learned



over the past year, inspiring those around her to reflect on their own positive transformations.

Commendations for Kimberly's exceptional qualities reverberate through the community, from her arrival in General Santos City to her eventual presence in Marbel. Acknowledging her unwavering commitment to personal growth, these praises underscore the significance of remaining grounded in the cherished Marist principles of humility and simplicity. As Kimberly conscientiously documents her reflections during a well-deserved vacation, her journey emerges as a guiding light of inspiration, harmonizing with the core Marist values, growth, and resilience. The profound impact of her volunteerism extends well beyond Lavalla200 in Mt. Druitt, leaving an enduring imprint on hearts and catalyzing a ripple effect of positive change.



"As Kimberly's stories weave through cultures and communities, they illuminate the path of service and collaboration, proving that the bridges we build are stronger than the challenges we face."

MARCELLIN FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 33rd FOUNDATION ANNIVERSARY

Last January 28, the Marcellin Foundation celebrated its 33rd Foundation Anniversary. Marcellin Foundation continues its commitment to help the children in need, at risk, and those in conflict with the law and form them with values and life skills, for them to have better chances in moving on with their lives. The following article is a testimony of once a 16-year-old boy, given hope at Marcellin Homes, and now, promoting peace in the community as he takes the lead in doing a policeman's responsibility.

"Marcellin Boy" turned an Educator and now a Maritime Law Enforcer.

I am Roger Matanoy Agodania, 45 years old, married, and a resident of Isabella Homes, Brgy. San Isidro, General Santos City. My wife and I are blessed with a son. I am currently a bonafide member of the Philippine National Police- Maritime Group, assigned in Malapatan. I take pride in being designated as the leader of our Maritime Law Enforcement Team.



Roger Matanoy Agodania
(former Marcellin Boy)

I am called, a "Marcellin Boy". I entered St. Marcellin Foundation in April 1995 at the age of 16. Life was very difficult by then. All I was hoping for in my poverty-stricken reality was to continue schooling, hoping to finish College level. Coming to this dream was not easy at all.

I still remember when I first met Br. Crispin. He inquired about me and what life had been like. Soon after the interview, I was told that I could stay at the Marcellin Foundation on the condition that I follow the Marcellin Foundation's rules and regulations. Leaving the area where our conversation took place, I still could remember the warmth of the tears running down my cheeks. They were tears of joy for having given me the hope of making my life better.

At Marcellin, we felt we belonged to a family as we experienced things that we didn't experience with our own family. Br. Crispin taught us how to become responsible individuals by giving us tasks we could accomplish. He cared for us by correcting us when we made mistakes. With him, there were endless offers of second chances, hoping that we would change to become good individuals or even far better.

Br. Crispin emphasized the value of simplicity that all of us at Marcellin learned to live simply. In the year 1998, the El Niño crisis hit us badly. We experienced a shortage in finances and we had milled corn for our meals. Br. Crispin was one with us. "Kung ano kinakain naming lahat yon din kinakain nya."

I learned from Br. Crispin the democratic way of leadership. An example of this was when he solicited ideas on what we were going to name our vinegar product. We arrived at the decision that we would name the brand of our vinegar "EL NIÑO VINEGAR". It was, for us, a great experience feeling that we were listened to. He wanted us to get involved in the process of coming up with decisions.

For all the help, teachings, and encouragement of Bro. Crispin, I graduated my college education in 2001 with the degree of Bachelor in Elementary Education. After my graduation, I applied and was hired at Notre Dame of Dadiangas University. I started the job in May of 2001 and ended in the year 2008. Such a decision was for a good reason.

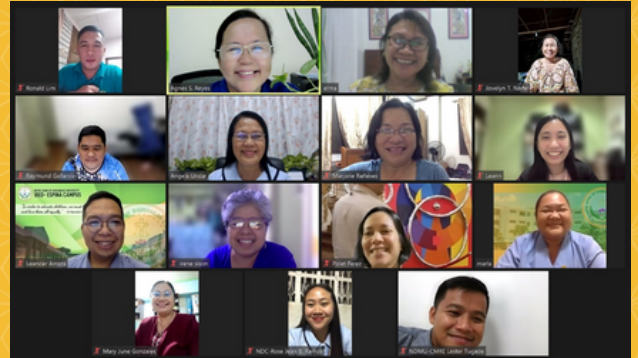
I entered the Philippine National Police (PNP) service in December of 2001 to this day. I am happily serving the community as a team leader in our police specifically at the Maritime Law Enforcement Team. With a deep sense of conviction and sense of pride, I now continue to do my work with the values of St. Marcellin and always, in the way of the Marist.

From my heart, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, Br. Crispin Betita, FMS, all of those at St. Marcellin Foundation, and the Marist Brothers. Maraming Salamat po sa inyo!

LAITY DESK UPDATE:

Laity Leaders Meet for 2024 Priority Action Plans

Fifteen (15) Laity Leaders of the Philippine Sector, East Asia Province were convened by Ms. Elma Rafil, Chairperson of the Laity Commission last January 25 for a meeting to discuss priority programs for this year. The action points they prioritize to work on during the year are as follows:



- Lay Marist Formation rescheduled to be implemented on March 15-17, 2024.
- Guidelines for the renewal of CMMF membership and its ongoing vocational formation itineraries
- Intensify continuing programs for the Friends of Marcellin and involve MAREX (former brothers) in the Marist laity initiatives.
- The laity leaders look forward to a year of more formative experiences for the growth of Marist lay life.

CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION TEAM MEETS FOR 2024 PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Convened by Br. Crispin P. Betita, FMS, the core members of the Child and Youth Protection Team met last January 24. The meeting agenda includes the review of the Key Result Areas (KRA) of the East Asia Strategic Plan, particularly on the area of “provision of a safe and secure environment for the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our communities and ministries.” Among others, the important priorities discussed were:

1. Coming up with an evaluation of the extent of implementation of the child protection policies in all Marist schools and ministries.
2. Proposal to integrate Child Protection into the curriculum.
3. Setting schedules for schools to have seminar/workshop with parents and students on keeping children safe from all forms of threats in cyberspace.

During the meeting, the extent of the first-year implementation of the Misaan Cara – FMSI assisted project on Advocacy against Online Sexual Abuse and Protection of Children (OSAEC) was presented as follows:

- 5 Marist personnel and 1 from the Social Action Office of the Diocese of Marbel were trained in Cybersecurity by the Asean Foundation.
- A total of 396 youth participated in the cascading of the modules on Cybersecurity.
- 276 school administrators from 61 NDEA member schools participated in the seminar-workshop on Cybersafe Schools.
- 221 student leaders from 46 NDEA member schools participated in the Cyberyouth Empowerment Program.

For 2024, the advocacy on OSAEC targets the increase of awareness among parents and students on keeping our homes and schools safe from all forms of threats online. A continuing seminar-workshop is currently being arranged in collaboration with Dr. Evelyn Dollete, the NDEA Executive Director.



SCHOOLS CELEBRATE MARIST MISSION PARTNERS' DAY

Marist Mission Partners' Day was celebrated by the Notre Dame of Dadiangas University last January 26. The celebration began with a Eucharistic celebration officiated by Fr. Jomer Candido. Fun fare games deepening interactions and family bonding followed thereafter.



On January 29, Notre Dame of Cotabato celebrated the unwavering commitment and tireless efforts of all their mission partners. Spearheaded by the Student Council Representatives, the celebration was a meaningful expression of deep appreciation and acknowledgment of the collective impact and consistent dedication of the school mission partners in creating an environment where knowledge blooms, compassion flourishes, and community thrives.



THE GENERAL HOUSE OF THE MARIST BROTHERS

May 24th celebrates the official arrival of the Brothers to the new General House. On that day, in 1961, the Superior General, Br. Charles-Rafaël, expressed his desire "that the spirit of La Valla should reign over the house in EUR - Rome - as it had reigned over Saint-Genis and Grugliasco. He proposed this motto: "The new General House will be a house of work, work filled with Marial and supernatural spirit " (Brother Juan Jesús Moral Barrio, History of the General House,2011).

The History of the General Houses

Father Marcellin Champagnat founded the congregation of the Marist Brothers on the 2nd of January 1817, in La Valla, treasured today as the Cradle of the Institute. La Valla was the centre of the congregation until 1825, the year in which Marcellin decided to transfer the community to l'Hermitage, as the Mother House of the Institute.

In 1858, when the number of Brothers had increased and the l'Hermitage house was too small to accommodate everyone, the General House was transferred to Saint-Genis-Laval.

In 1903, when the persecution of secularism reached the Institute, the Brothers transferred the house from Saint-Genis-Laval to Grugliasco, near Turin. But this only lasted for 36 years, before returning to Saint-Genis-Laval.

After a century of permanence in this place, the Provinces and the Districts increased, and the Institute had then to look for a much larger house, from which to administer all the communities and their works.

And so, in February 1958, following the decision adopted at the meeting of the 31st of May 1957 and authorized by indult No. 853-57, the General Council decided to purchase a parcel of land in Rome, for 55.000 m2, located in a quiet area of EUR (Universal Exhibition of Rome), for 500 million liras.

Months later, on the 27th of October 1958, the president of the Italian Republic signed the ordinance authorizing the Brothers to purchase the land. On the 30th of December 1958, Cardinal Micara granted permission for the Brothers to transfer the General House from Saint-Genis-Laval to Rome.

The following year, on the 18th of February 1959, the definitive contract for the sale of the property was signed.

On the 24th of May 1961, after several months of arduous work and expectation, the Brothers arrived officially at the new General House. On that day, Brother Vicente Lorenzo, the man behind the construction work, made the presentation of the new house to the Superior and offered him the symbolic key. The Superior General, Br. Charles-Rafaël, then said: "If Divine Providence has brought us to Rome and prepared us for such a pleasant stay, we should not forget the simplicity and the harshness of La Valla, the humility and the wildness of the l'Hermitage valley, but constantly return to its spirit".

Source: <https://champagnat.org/en/the-general-house-of-the-marist-brothers/>

Provincial's Schedule



January 27 - February 5, 2024

Meeting with Vicar General and Assistant Econome General at China Sector

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

February 1:

Br. Engel Freed S. Java

February 3:

Br. Ernie G. Sentina

February 6:

Br. Mark Robert R. Laurea

February 15:

Br. Timothy Song (Hyo-seob)

February 17:

Mrs. Romula Oyao
(Affiliate Member)

Prayer Intentions:

- For God's abundant blessings to our church leaders as they continue their pastoral service.
- For the government authorities that they lead the people with integrity and justice.
- For all of us Marists that we grow deep in appreciating and living out our charism.
- For the children at risks that they find generous hearts to support them in all their needs.
- For the protection of those suffering from natural calamities.

Let us join Pope Francis in his prayer intention for the coming month of February:

For the terminally ill:

"We pray that those with a terminal illness, and their families, receive the necessary physical and spiritual care and accompaniment."