



EAST ASIA

MARIST LIFE

Newsletter

February 29, 2024, Volume 02, Issue No. 28

ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY

NDDU-IBED Campus, Lagao, General Santos City, Pilippines

The Retirement Community is indeed adapting to its new structure as a “home for the aged” and a “care home”. The busiest person in the community is Br. Romy. He handles the community finances, daily menus, groceries, medicine purchases, and workers’ management along with Br. Manny and accompaniment with the patients to the doctors at an appointed time. With or without the vehicle he manages to travel on his own, especially in going to groceries. Br. Manny Uluan is our new community leader. He replaces Br. Rosendo who is now assigned to the Marikina community.

Since our vision states that our community “is a home that cares, heals and nourishes life just like the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph in Nazareth”, our mission then is “to provide a home for all the Marist Brothers who need a place to renew, refresh, and rest...” Some Brothers, both seniors and young, avail of this. Young Brothers who are sick and need medical attention do come to put “freshness” in our conversation; others come for medical check-ups and sheer body rest. Some do come to attend meetings and need to stay a while. Many teachers do come to visit their former school heads and others like the SM Fathers’ novitiate community from Toril with their novices, and lately, the SM Sisters of Mintal, Davao City with their superior general, Sr. Sylvette did drop by to say hello and visit our set-up. We are very grateful for those visits.

Due to his continuing illness (a throat infection and vertigo feeling) Br. Provincial decided to put Br. Edgar in confinement and under supervision. He then becomes a St. Joseph Community member until his recuperation is addressed. We welcome Br. Edgar!

Despite his confinement, he was able to meet with Miss Camering who came in from Australia for her much-needed vacation. Br. Edgar facilitated her re-entry to Australia in a prayerful environment at Lake Sebu last week. He also met with some interested individuals for the lay volunteer program.

The Community Outing with the chaplain, 2 caregivers & driver at Sarangani Highlands:

(Standing left to right):

Br. Ted Fernandez, Br. Manny Uluan, Br. Romy Porras, Mr. Gerald Christian Duzon (Br. Pius’ caregiver). Br. Allan de Castro (provincial), Father Count Roosevelt Rozario, CHC (community chaplain, a Holy Cross priest from Bangladesh currently taking up masters in guidance and counselling at NDDU) and Br. Edgar Ceriales.

(Seated from left to right):

Br. Eugene Pius Tajo, Br. Danny Sevilla (Econome), Br. Wency Calimpon, John Mark Salazar (Br. Wency’s caregiver).

(Not in the picture) the driver, Mr. Milo Sanciañez, and Br. Ed Mallorca, who resides in Buda.



General Administrators Visit China Sector

January 28 to February 5, 2024

With the aim to work collaboratively, two brothers from the General Administration namely Br. Luis Carlos Gutierrez, the Link Councilor for Asia and Br. Goyo Linacero, the Assistant General Economy visited the China Sector particularly the communities in Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong on January 28 – February 5, 2024.

The agenda of their visit to the brothers and Lay Marists in the different communities and ministries were, among others, the promotion and enhancement of Marist life and mission and the assessment of the actual situations of the different Marist schools and non-school ministries. They take into consideration the dwindling number of Brothers due to the crisis of religious vocation.

Br. Allan J. de Castro, Provincial Superior and Br. Anthony Tay, China Sector Coordinator accompanied the Brothers from Rome during their 10-day visit. It was indeed a fraternal moment for the Marists of Champagnat in the Sector to be updated about the General Administration's 2017-2025 Strategic Plan specially around International Marist Mission Networks and Marist Legal Structures.

Photos during the visit:



PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN JOLO COMMUNITY

The members of the Provincial Council decided to hold its 14th Meeting in Jolo, Sulu, on Feb. 26-28, 2024. Normally, it is a combination of meeting, recreation, and opportunity to meet the Brothers and mission partners. On the day of arrival, after an overnight boat ride from Zamboanga City, we visited Notre Dame of Jolo College and met Fr. Ed Santoyo, OMI, the school president. He toured us to the Heritage Hub, where the artifacts and historical records of the provinces of Sulu and Tawi- Tawi including the OMI Missions, are on display. We also visited the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena at Kasanyangan, Indanan, where we were served Tausug delicacies for merienda.

On the second day, we dedicated the day to the Provincial Council meeting. We also had a meeting with Sulu Governor Abdusakur M. Tan, who prides himself as an alumnus of the Marist Brothers at Notre Dame of Jolo for Boys. In the evening, Bishop Charlie Inzon hosted a dinner for the priests and religious in the Vicariate.

On the 3rd day, we went for a swim with the Brothers, some school administrators, and the PATA Officers. Fr. Ramil Janguin, the episcopal vicar, also joined with the OP Sisters and Cynthia Triumfante, who is in Jolo for the 60th Anniversary of her auntie, a Carmelite Sister. The place we went to was Tanduh Beach Parang, around a 40-minute ride from Jolo. It is considered one of the most beautiful white beaches in Sulu.

One of the major decisions reached with the Bishop is the acquisition of the Associate of Notre Dame (AND) house for the future residence of the Brothers. Details are still being finalized.

Photo Collage



Photo Collage



Photo News



February 24:
Simple birthday celebration of Bro. Moses Cho.



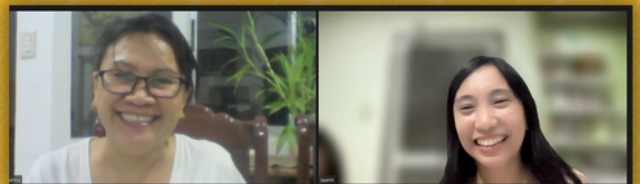
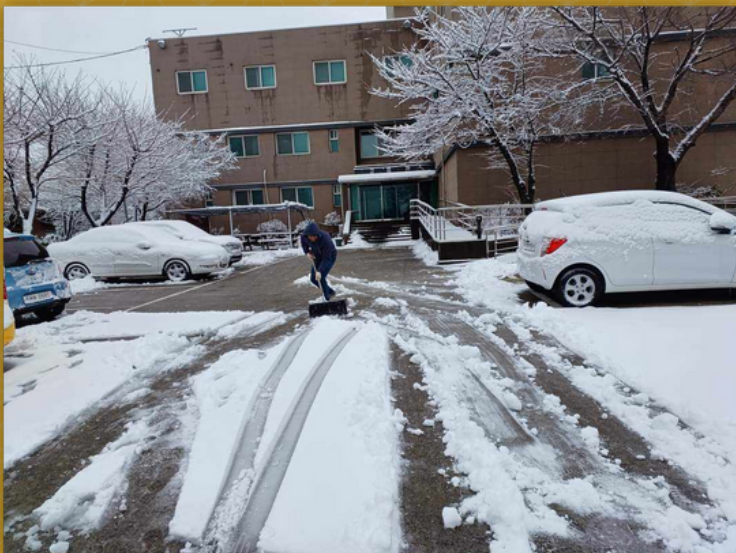
February 24:
Bro Robert Teoh leading the St. Joseph International School (SJIS) Chinese New Year Assembly.



February 22: Seoul Community Manualia



Dr. Alma Hordista and Mr. Ruben Tugari met with Br. Danny Sevilla, FMS to look into resources they can refer to in the making of Notre Dame of Dadiangas University history.



Ms. Elma B. Rafil, Chair of the Laity Committee, met with Ms. Leann Jester Rosali to finalize activities for the Laity Gathering on March 15-17. Ms. Leann will represent the East Asia Province during the 3rd MIMA Gathering on April 8-14 in El Escorial, Madrid, Spain.

LAITY LEADERS MEET TO FINALIZE UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

The Philippine Sector laity leaders met last February 26 to discuss the upcoming programs for the continuing animation of the Marist laity. Two major activities are currently being prepared: the Lenten Week-end Retreat on March 2-3 and the Laity Gathering for the reflections on MIMA III documents on March 15-17. Part of the team's commitment is to prepare modules for the



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NDEA COTOBATO CLUSTER SCHOOLS MEET FOR CONTINUING OSAEC ADVOCACY

Last February 24, the Principals and the Child Protection Officers from the 11 NDEA member schools Cotabato cluster were convened to review the first-year implementation of the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) program and to plan for the succeeding advocacy activities for the year 2024.



During the meeting, Br. Crispin Betita, FMS and Agnes S. Reyes shared inputs on the following topics:

1. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 11930 which is the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM).
2. Understanding online "red flags."
3. Dynamics of "grooming" in cyberspace; and
4. Safeguarding as a ministry of caring and relational safety.

Notre Dame of Dulawan, Inc., one of the participating schools represented in the meeting, expressed appreciation for the OSAEC advocacy programs implemented because it enabled them to organize their own "Cyber Knights," a group of student leaders empowered to take an active role in the making of their school safe from all forms of cyber threats. Cyber Knights aims to achieve a cybercafe community through media and information education, monitoring, guidance, and cybersecurity. The organization further aims to promote a cyberbullying-free institution.

The NDEA participating schools are currently revising their Child Protection Policies for the inclusion of the terms on Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children. Priority activities for the second year of the Anti-OSAEC Advocacy Program include Digital Parenting and the awareness formation of all students in their respective schools.

ANSWERING THE CALL TO SERVE

Marist Volunteers Embark on a Transformative Journey: Challenging Humanity's Call to Action

Marist volunteers' journey is a transformative experience that goes beyond personal growth and service. It is about inspiring others to make a difference and creating a more just and equitable world.

Top 10 Poorest Countries in the World

Below is a ranking of the ten poorest countries, starting from the country ranked tenth poorest and progressing to the country ranked as the top poorest in the world for 2023. For the complete ranking of the world's countries from poorest to richest, [click here](#).

Rank	Country/Territory	GDP-PPP (\$)
10	Madagascar	1,907
9	Chad	1,807
8	Liberia	1,789
7	Malawi	1,668
6	Mozambique	1,584
5	Niger	1,579
4	Democratic Republic of the Congo	1,579
3	Central African Republic	1,109
2	Burundi	890
1	South Sudan	476

Global Finance's 2023 report

In the heart of Africa, amidst the echoes of despair and the flicker of hope, lies Malawi—a nation grappling with its past, navigating its present, and yearning for a future defined by justice and progress. The recent Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Malawi, dated February 25, 2024, serves as an urgent appeal, piercing through the veil of complacency and demanding action in the face of adversity.

The bishops' courageous critique of the status quo lays bare the harsh realities endured by ordinary Malawians—corruption, nepotism, and a pervasive lack of accountability corroding the fabric of society. Yet, amidst the bleakness, their letter offers a glimmer of hope—a roadmap towards renewal and redemption, grounded in principles of integrity, justice, and compassion.

As we heed this call to action, our thoughts turn to individuals like Liz Igoy from Marist School in Marikina, Philippines and her fellow members of the Lavalla200>Malawi community—a shining example of resilience and sacrifice, embodying the spirit of service in the face of daunting challenges. Liz and her community's journey as Marist Volunteers in Malawi illuminate the stark realities confronted by those on the front lines of humanitarian efforts—financial strain, professional hurdles, and personal sacrifices that push the boundaries of human

endurance.

However, Liz's narrative, along with that of her Lavalla200>Malawi community, transcends mere individual experiences; it serves as a thoughtful introspection of the broader collective struggle for justice and dignity in Malawi and beyond. Their journey underscores the profound truth that the quest for a more equitable world demands not only courage and determination but also calls for unwavering solidarity and boundless compassion.

Thus, an urgent call to action - to Marist Volunteers and humanity at large. May we answer the call to serve, not with passive sympathy, but with active solidarity. We may stand with Liz and her Lavalla200>Malawi community, offering our unwavering support and encouragement as they navigate the complexities of service in some of the world's most challenging environments.

May we uphold the values of justice, compassion, and integrity, not as lofty ideals but as guiding principles that inform our actions and shape our collective destiny. Let us join hands across borders and boundaries,

transcending differences of race, religion, and nationality, to build a world where the cries of the marginalized are heard and answered, and where hope shines bright even in the darkest of times.

For Liz and her devoted Lavalla200>Malawi community, and for all those who dare to dream of a better tomorrow—let us rise to the occasion and be

the change we wish to see in the world.



“ Answering the call to serve isn't reserved for the few; it's a challenge extended to all humanity—to rise above self-interest and embrace the power of collective action. - Lauren Thompson ”

Glimpses of the Past

General Santos City Celebrates Its 85th Founding Anniversary

General Santos City is the nerve center of East Asia Province since its Marist Province Center is located in this city. General Santos City, known as GenSan in short, is the southernmost city of the Philippines. Its airport runway (3,227 meters long) is the third longest after Manila and Cebu. It ranks as the 15th most populous city (705,819 estimated in 2024) among the 149 cities in the country. This article is issued in connection with the 85th founding anniversary of the city on Feb. 27, 2024.

General Santos is named after Paulino Torres Santos, Sr. (June 22, 1890 – August 29, 1945). He was a military officer who became the Commanding General of the Philippine Army from May 6 to December 31, 1936. Upon his retirement, he served as a civilian administrator under President Manuel L. Quezon. He is the namesake of this city, which was renamed from Buayan in 1954.

General Santos was born in Camiling, Tarlac. He was married to Elisa Angeles of Bulacan, with whom he had seven children, including Rosa Santos Munda.

As a soldier, Santos served in the Lanao campaign in 1916, where he sustained wounds from a Moro spear, and in the Bayang Cota campaign in 1917, where he was wounded anew, but this time by bullets. As government cannons were bombarding the Muslim bulwark of Lumamba, Lieutenant Santos led his platoon in penetrating the formerly secure redoubt, through an opening made in the barricade, and immediately erected a ladder to scale the first kota. Immediately, he and his men engaged its defenders in a bloody hand-to-hand combat, killing 30 of them, and thus preserving the lives of government soldiers. For this exceptional military feat, Governor General Frank Murphy bestowed on him the Medal of Valor, the highest Philippine military award for "gallantry in action", just before the inauguration of the Commonwealth government in 1935. He was named President Quezon's aide for the inaugural ceremony. He served as ex-officio Justice of the Peace at large for the Provinces of Lanao and Sulu, and then Deputy Provincial Treasurer of Lanao, before finally becoming Provincial Governor of Lanao. He was appointed Director of the Bureau of Prisons in 1930, serving thus until 1936, founding the Davao Penal Colony in 1932 and transferring the Bilibid Prisons from its old site to a new one in Muntinlupa, Rizal.

In 1936, he was recalled to military service through his appointment as brigadier general and assistant chief of staff of the Philippine Army by President Quezon. Before the year's end, however, he was named Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army with the rank of major general.

In 1937, President Quezon gave him the difficult and dangerous task of minimizing, if not eliminating the problem of Moro piracy in the south through the destruction of the pirates' kotas, particularly Kota Dilausan, in Lanao. His term as Army chief of staff ended in December 1938. In January 1939, he was named general manager of the National Land Settlement Administration. He served in this capacity until 1941 when World War II broke out. In 1917, Paulino Santos became the first provincial commander of Lanao and Sulu. As commandant and governor, improvements in agriculture, education and communication were achieved in the region. Serving as deputy governor up to 1924, he acted as the auxiliary justice of the peace in the municipal districts of both Lanao and Sulu at the same time.

Later, Santos was appointed as the assistant commander of Southern Luzon and was given the rank of lieutenant colonel. In October 1930, he was designated as assistant chief of the Philippine Constabulary, where he served for more than 20 years. After his retirement, Pres. Manuel Quezon persuaded him to become the Director of Prisons in 1936. Santos then established the Davao Penal Colony and sped up its transfer to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa. Although the jurisdiction Bureau of Prisons was transferred by law in 1937 to the Department of Justice, Santos remained its director, as requested by Quezon, while simultaneously performing his army duties. He was also the first head of "Estado Mayor ng Hukbong Pilipino" and became the administrator of the Land Settlement Administration.

With orders from Pres. Quezon, led the first group of 200 migrants from Luzon and the Visayas who transformed the primeval Lagao area in Koronadal Valley into a productive and progressive colony of six communities on Feb. 27, 1939. Being the man of action that he was, Santos usually stayed with the men in the field, constantly exhorting them to give their best to the arduous task with discipline and high purpose, together with his aide Eliodoro M. Pantua.

During the Japanese occupation, the Japanese occupied the upper Koronadal and Allah valleys. GM Santos decided to cooperate with the Japanese to prevent further bloodshed. Santos and the Japanese Commander agreed to "not molest or abuse civilians in all districts of Koronadal valley but with the condition that the people will cooperate and never commit any wrong move otherwise, they will feel the repressive force of Japanese displeasure". He accepted to serve as manager of the Koronadal and Allah Valley projects under Japanese orders. In 1943, he became Commissioner for Mindanao and Sulu.

In August 1944, he was called by Pres. Jose P. Laurel to go to Manila. There, he was appointed as Commanding General of the Bureau of Constabulary. He was appointed to survey Northern Luzon since the Americans started bombing the Philippines. He went to Nueva Ecija accompanied by his aide, Sgt. Juan "Johnny" Ablan. He not only supplied the people with food, water, etc. but also aided the guerilla groups operating in the North. He was taken prisoner by Major General Kenshichi Masouka (1888-1964), The Japanese General In-Charge of keeping watch over Gen. Santos and his aide. He and his men forced Santos and Ablan to the North, first to Nueva Vizcaya, and then to Sitio Tamangan in the Ifugao mountains of Kiangan, Mountain Province, where the Japanese forces had retreated.

While taken prisoner by the Japanese, General Santos fell ill, mostly due to effects of inclement weather and his desire to refrain from taking full meals because of food shortage. General Masouka refused to take the sick general to an American hospital, a few kilometers from Kiangan. Finally, on August 29, 1945, Santos died of pneumonia at the age of 55.



Monument of Gen. Paulino Santos in General Santos

Paulino Santos' record as an officer was one of distinctive achievements. As a soldier, Santos served in the Lanao campaign in 1916, where he sustained wounds from a Moro spear, and in the Bayang Cotta campaign in 1917, where he sustained a near-fatal wound at the back of his head after he and his men performed a suicidal mission in which they had to place ladders beside the fortified cottas. It was in the latter campaign that he demonstrated extraordinary courage and leadership. Under his term, he established six settlements in South Cotabato namely Koronadal, Banga, Cotabato namely Koronadal, Banga, Tupi, Tampakan, Polomolok, and Buayan, thus, increasing the Christian population in the region.

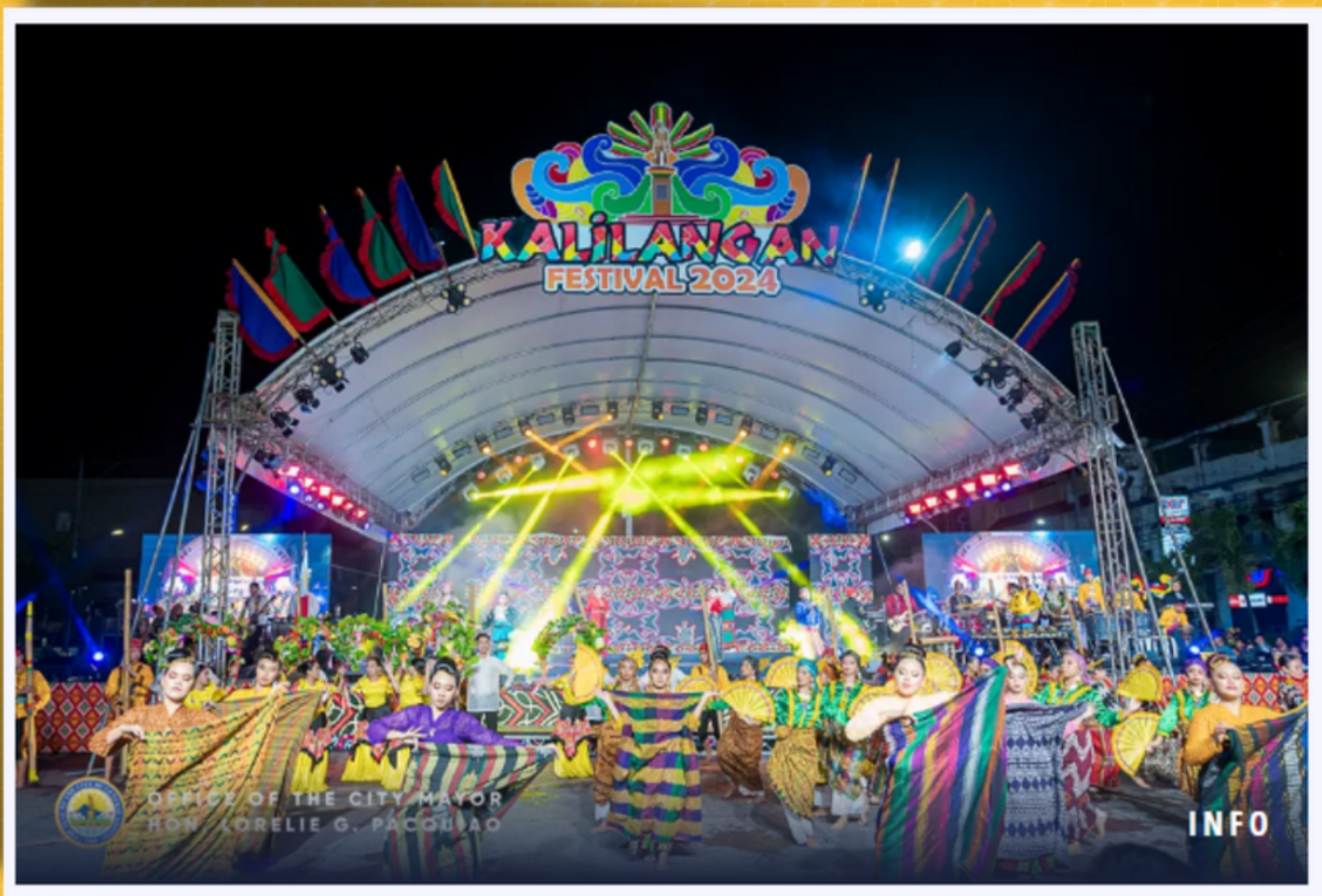
As a tribute to his legacy in the area, the municipality of Buayan (formerly Dadiangas) was renamed General Santos in June 1954,[2] which, by virtue of Republic Act No. 5412 signed on July 8, 1968, was declared a city. A grave and monument of Gen. Paulino Santos was unveiled in front of its City Hall on September 5, 1981, in General Santos, South Cotabato.

The Koronadal section of the South Cotabato-Sarangani Road was also named "General Santos Drive", while the radial road leading to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa was also named "Gen. Paulino Santos Avenue" as an honor for his service as a former Director of the Bureau of Prisons. He was instrumental in the transfer of the prison to the present area. Taguig's main avenue, fronting Camp Bagong Diwa of the Philippine National Police, also a former Philippine Constabulary camp, the Hall of Justice, and the Department of Science and Technology was also similarly named "General Santos Avenue".

*One of the urban Barangays of Koronadal is named after him using the initials of his rank and name, called Barangay GPS, City of Koronadal (GPS - General Paulino Santos)

As Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army, Major General Santos is a pioneer in the Self Reliance Defence concept as early as the 1930s. Maj. Gen. Santos intended to have all supplies for the new Commonwealth army made if possible in the Philippines.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulino_Santos#:~:text=Paulino%20Torres%20Santos%20Sr.,Quezon.



The Kalilangan festival honors the arrival of the first 62 Christian settlers, led by General Paulino Santos on February 27, 1939, on the shores of Sarangani Bay

While General Santos City is known for its Tuna Festival, the city also flourishes with the Kalilangan Festival, held annually in February. This vibrant celebration commemorates the city's founding anniversary, weaving together cultural threads to highlight the rich tapestry of GenSan.

Kalilangan is derived from the Maguindanaon term “kalilang,” which means celebration. Kalilang could be a wedding, merrymaking, or even the enthronement of traditional leaders.

According to the City Government of General Santos City, the festival honors the arrival of the first 62 Christian settlers, led by General Paulino Santos, in Dadiangas (GenSan's former name) on February 27, 1939, on the shores of Sarangani Bay. These settlers were welcomed by the Blaan and Maguindanaon communities, laying the foundation for harmonious coexistence among Christians, Blaans, and Maguindanaons.

Through the years, the Kalilangan Festival has become one of the largest events in the city. This year's theme, “Sa Kultura at Saya Tayo ay Sama-sama” (Together in Culture and Joy), marks the 35th Kalilangan Festival and the 85th Founding Anniversary of the city. The festivities began on February 23 and will conclude on February 27, 2024.

Source: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/mindanao/general-santos-city-kalilangan-festival-2024/>

Provincial's Schedule



March 2 - March 12, 2024

March 03
Br. Dominador "Ador" A. Santiago,

March 2:

**Marist School & Sagip Ka
BOT Meeting in Marikina**

March 3-12:

**Meeting of the Provincials in
France - ND Hermitage**

Prayer Intentions:

- For the Church: That during this season of Lent, we may grow in faith, hope, and love, and that our journey towards Easter may deepen our commitment to living the Gospel.
- For World Leaders: We pray for leaders around the world, that they may be guided by wisdom and compassion as they make decisions that impact the well-being of their nations and the global community.
- For Those Facing Illness: We lift up those who are sick. May they experience God's healing presence, and may healthcare workers be strengthened in their tireless efforts to care for the sick.
- For the Poor and Vulnerable: We remember those who are marginalized and struggling. May we, as a community, find ways to reach out and provide support to those in need, offering them hope and dignity.
- For the Environment: As stewards of God's creation, we pray for the protection of the environment. May we work towards sustainable practices that preserve the beauty of the Earth for future generations.
- For Students and Educators: We ask for God's guidance and wisdom for students facing exams, and for educators as they inspire and shape the minds of the next generation.

Let us join our hearts in prayer for these intentions, always trusting in God's love and mercy.