



# Manila Priory Bulletin

Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing  
St. Scholastica's Priory Manila, Philippines

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January - March 2024

## MANILA PRIORY WELCOMES GENERALATE VISITATORS

By Sr. Amanda Marie Fondevilla, OSB

Mother Maoro Sye, OSB, Prioress General of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, landed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila in mid-morning of February 7, 2024. Mother Mary Thomas Prado, OSB, Prioress of the Manila Priory, together with Sr. Lumen Gloria Dungca, OSB, Vicareess General, and Sr. Rosalina Fajardo, OSB, Sub-prioress, went to the airport together to fetch Mother Maoro. They arrived at St. Scholastica's College at a little past 12:00 noon.

### A JOYOUS WELCOME FIT FOR A K-POP STAR



Gathered at the pergola gaily decorated with “banderitas” and a styrofoam jeepney were Sisters of the Priory House and Manila Communities, teachers, personnel, students, the Sr. Battig Chamber Orchestra and St. Scholastica's College marching band. Everyone erupted into loud cheers and applause as soon as Mother Maoro alighted from the car. She appreciatively watched the marching band dance to the music performed by the Battig orchestra. The whole assembly sang “We Say Mabuhay”, while the sisters one by one handed her a single red rose each.



## VISITATION OF THE STATIONS

Sr. Lumen Gloria, who had arrived in the Philippines one month prior to Mother Maoro's arrival, visited the Angeles (January 19), Pambujan (January 22-24), Bacolod (January 26-28), and Mati (January 29 – 31) Communities.

Mother Maoro and Sr. Lumen Gloria had some time to talk with the Junior Sisters on Sunday morning, February 11, before heading to Tagaytay for the Cluster Workshops. The Cluster 1 workshop was held on February 12 – 13, with the Manila, Westgrove, Tagaytay, Baguio, and San Fernando communities. The Cluster 2 workshop was held on February 15 – 16, with the Priory House, Formation House, Marikina, Legazpi, and St. Benedict's Home communities. The Visitators stayed for a couple of days in each community, except for Legazpi, who had a short session with them in Tagaytay.

March was dedicated to the cluster workshops and visitations of the Visayas and Mindanao communities. The Cluster 3 workshop was held on March 5-6, with the Tacloban School, Tacloban Hospital, Ormoc and Pambujan communities. The Cluster 4 Workshop was held on March 12 – 13, with the Tabunok, Bacolod, Mati, Marihatag, and Tagbilaran communities. The Visitators returned to the Priory House on March 15.





## THE BENEDICTINE GAME

Even though they were very busy, Mother Maoro and Sister Lumen Gloria found time to teach the Benedictine Game to each community they visited. It is similar to the more familiar Snakes and Ladders, and features 73 squares that represent the chapters of the Rule of Saint Benedict as well as Benedictine values.

At the Priory House community room, the Sisters gave little screams of delight or dismay as the dice rolled, and hoped the pawn would not land on a “bad” square that could send the player back to the beginning! It was clear that everyone was happy with the game.



## THE RECESS

On Tuesday, March 19, 2024, Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary, the Canonical Visitation of the Manila Priory was formally brought to its conclusion. Sisters from the Luzon communities gathered at the Priory House Chapel for the Closing Ritual at 10:15 a.m. A beautiful offering ceremony was carried out, where items that symbolized our Benedictine Treasures were offered: a Liturgy of Hours book and an old bicycle wheel for Monastic Life of Prayer and Community, a framed icon of Jesus for our missionary vocation to Bring Christ to the World, and a globe for our Call to Embrace Diversity. After the ritual, the Sisters processed to the Community Room for the Recess, the evaluation and recommendations of the two Visitators, who also showed a video looking back on their entire Visitation in pictures and video clips.

A sumptuous lunch was followed by an entertaining closing program. The Priory House Sisters sang “One Heart, Many Faces”, an original song of the SVD Fathers. The Pampanga communities sang “Handog ng Pilipino sa Mundo”, and gave a rendition of “So Long, Farewell”, from the movie “The Sound of Music”. The Marikina Community sang with the elderly Sisters St. Benedict’s Home and they also chose a song from “The Sound of Music” – “Edelweiss”, followed by “So Long, Farewell”.

Intercultural dance numbers were performed by selected Sisters who danced not their own national dance but that of another nationality, with a few sisters acting as “coaches” – Sr. Daisy Taurus, AC, coached for the Indian dance, Sr. Seraphina Wanjii, OSB, for the African dance, Sr. Caritas Flor, OSB, for Filipino, and even Mother Maoro, OSB for Korean. Mother Mary Thomas, OSB added a dash of humor to the Filipino dance by acting as a backdrop with her palm tree. As a surprise number, the emcees invited all the “coaches” to also dance, including Mother Maoro, whose elegance and grace captivated the audience. After the dance performances, the BeneComm showed a video looking back on their Visitation. Mother Maoro, OSB and Sr. Lumen Gloria, OSB were very appreciative of the entire program and conveyed their heartfelt gratitude in their response.

## A LINGERING FAREWELL

The day after the recess, March 20, was their scheduled flight back to Rome. A good number of Sisters volunteered to escort the Visitators to the airport, aboard the Priory House coaster. The Manila Community Sisters were also present to see them off. At the airport, the Sisters waited until they were able to check in and waved good-bye to them as they headed for their boarding gate. Thank you for the blessing of your presence in Manila, Mother Maoro and Sister Lumen Gloria. Until we meet again!



## Sr. Lumen Gloria Celebrates Her Feastday in Manila

By Sr. Maria Caritas Flor, OSB

After more than a decade of being a missionary on an international mission, Sr. Lumen Gloria Dungca, OSB, Vicareess General, celebrated her feastday in her home Priory on February 2, 2024, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and the World Day of Consecrated Life. Sr. Marialuz Dungca, OSB shared the limelight with her because it was also her feastday.

The Eucharistic celebration of this special feast was officiated by Rev. Fr. Carmelo “Jek” Arada, Jr., parish priest of Santissima Trinidad Parish, Malate, Manila. The long yet meaningful homily on gratitude and generosity captured the essence of the feast and the joy and warmth of the celebration it brought to the sisters of the Priory House and Manila Communities, especially to the celebrants.

The Sisters from different nearby communities in Luzon who came for the celebration in the afternoon filled the day with singing, greetings, and laughter. After praying Vespers in the big chapel, the short program followed after everyone had settled down in the refectory of the Priory House. It was lively and beautifully hosted by Sr. Angeline Arceo, OSB. Each community presented its creativity; the Angeles Community danced a jovial ‘*Pandango sa Ilaw*,’ a Philippine folk dance, and the Sisters of the Marikina Community presented a song and dance entitled “This Little Light of Mine,” which made us remember our childhood years. We sang along with the sisters of the San Fernando Community their song, “*You Light Up My Life*” by Debbie Boone. Sr. Pauline Triviño, OSB sang and played the guitar of her original composition, while Sister Marianne Shilengifa, OSB performed a Namibian dance, representing the Sisters from St. Scholastica’s Center of Spirituality. It felt like we were watching a professional comedian show when sisters from the Westgrove community had a choral reading of a poem interspersed with a song medley. The Sisters and Formandees of the Formation House community came out with a creative musical drama about Sr. Lumen’s vocation story. It was heartwarming to listen to the sisters of St. Benedict’s Home, the community of our elderly sisters sing a beautiful song entitled, “*Que Sera Sera*,” (Whatever will be, will be) by Doris Day accompanied by Sr. Hilda Buhay, OSB on the guitar. A standing ovation was given to them after their number. The final number was the choral rendition of the song, “*Go Light Your World*” the Candle Song, by the Sisters of the Priory House and Manila Communities which gave a message to the celebrants and to everyone present to carry and hold out our candle to light our darkened world.

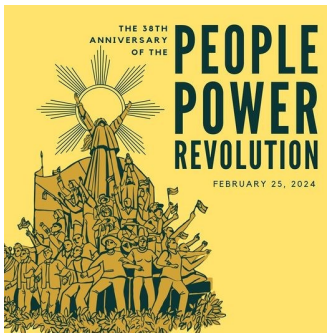
Gratitude is the memory of the heart. Generosity is love in action. We thank the Lord for the gift of the persons and the vocation of Sr. Lumen Gloria, OSB and Sr. Marialuz, OSB to the Manila Priory and our Congregation and for being always grateful and generous in witnessing to the Light especially to those in need.





## Celebration of the 38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution Held

By Sr. Isabel Orito, OSB



Triggered perhaps by the recent events like the signature campaign for the People's Initiative and the ongoing deliberations in Congress regarding Charter Change, a good number of our people, including our Sisters, heeded the call of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCCP) and of the Kalipunan ng Kristiyanong Kabataan sa Pilipinas to attend the rally at EDSA on Sunday afternoon, February 25, 2024.

Fourteen Sisters, including Mother Mary Thomas Prado, OSB and Sr. Rosalind Tanhueco, OSB plus four of our employees, filled up two cars from the Priory House while another car had as its passengers, the Sisters of the Manila community. When they arrived at the assembly place: JB Music, formerly Barrio Fiesta at EDSA, Ortigas, there were already many groups standing by, holding streamers with the theme: "Tuloy ang Laban ng EDSA! Biguin ang Cha-Cha!" or variations of it. We greeted the DC, RGS, La Sallete Sisters and the OCarm, CSSR, MJ priests and La Salle brothers. The Benedictine Sisters had the biggest number of attendees among the religious who were present. A big truck with an open back served as a temporary stage where the young people with booming voices kept alive the spirit of EDSA by chants and songs. When all the expected participants were more or less accounted for (Kadamay, ACT, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, Anakpawis, PISTON, Kabataan Partylist, Katribu, Student Christian Movement of the Philippines, to mention a few), the truck led all the way to the intersection near the EDSA Shrine where the program was to be held. It opened with an ecumenical prayer led by a representative of each church group, one of which is our own Sr. Lydia Villegas, OSB who read her own prayer composed for the occasion. All the emcees were young and were not yet even born during the 1986 People Power Revolution. Nevertheless, they spoke with the same passion and dedication like that of the speakers they introduced like our own Sister Mary John Mananzan, OSB, Director Joel Lamangan, Atty. Neri Colmenares, Renato Reyes, Antonio Tinio, Raoul Manuel and the former Senator and human rights activist, Leila de Lima. There was to be a mass at the Shrine to conclude the activity, but the Priory House Sisters opted to go home instead. With aching legs and feet due to prolonged standing and walking, yet the Sisters felt invigorated by what they heard, seen and imbibed through the experience.



## SSC-Manila Unveils Historical Marker

By Sr. Therese Bulatao, OSB

February 8, 2024 was a momentous occasion for St. Scholastica's College- Manila (SSC-M) and for the Manila Priory as well on account of the unveiling of an important cultural property marker wherein the National Museum of the Philippines designated five buildings of St. Scholastica's College as national cultural heritage. These buildings are: St. Scholastica Building, St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Hildegard Building, St. Benedict Building and the



St. Scholastica's Chapel. The gifted architects who designed and crafted masterfully these structures which have stood the test of time, were: Andres Luna de San Pedro, Cesar Concio, Sr., and Ramon del Rosario. Sr. Lydia Villegas, Vice President for Administration led the invocation and the singing of the national anthem followed. The signatories for the Certificate of Turnover and Acceptance of ICP marker were: Mother Prioress General Maoro Sye, OSB, Mother Prioress Mary Thomas Prado, OSB, Sr. Christine Pinto, OSB, President of SSC-Manila, Atty Maria Rosenne Flores Avila, the Guest of Honor and National Museum Deputy General Director for Administration, Dr. Emmanuel Franco Calairo, Chairman of the National Historical Commission.



As proxy of the Manila Mayor, Vice Mayor John Marvin Nieto came. Intermission numbers were performed by our very own music artists of the School of Music. Rev. Fr. Anselm Manalastas, OSB did the blessing of the markers. Prof. Rebecca Marquez gave some historical nuggets on the architectural design of the buildings. Dean Faye Rafael was host of the entire program.

Sr. Christine gave the acceptance and response message; she specifically showed the audience the site of the cornerstone of St. Scholastica building which is located at the bottom of the newly unveiled marker. According to National Museum officials, this cornerstone was laid in this site in 1914, 110 years ago. Through the effort of our Priory and College Archivist, Sr. Mary Samuelle Formoso, OSB, an article from Cable News American was obtained wherein was written the announcement of "the laying of the cornerstone of SSC located at Calle Sandejas and Vito Cruz, Malate will be performed with appropriate ceremonies this morning, today, being the feastday of St Scholastica, patron saint of the institution." Thus the site of the unveiled marker is also the site of the presumed cornerstone, the small square with a PAX at the bottom of the newly unveiled marker.



From the invocation prayer was the refreshing breath of joy and hope :

*Hail to you, St Scholastica's College, we salute your noble aims and beg the Lord to remain with us, to help us in this time of educational and financial crisis, this time of raising at our altars convenience and profit, moral decadence and mediocrity. Your hallowed buildings remind us of integrity, discipline, hard work and love of family, community, country and God who is the source and summit of all our noble aspirations. Gracious and loving God, we stand*



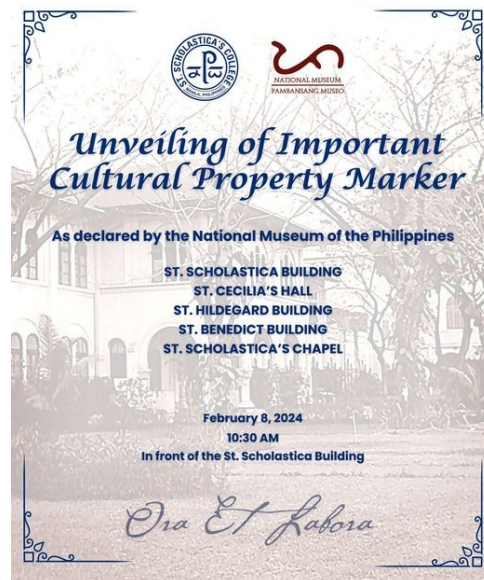
*before these markers, humbled and proud at the same time for you have chosen us, Missionary Benedictines and the Scholastican family, unworthy though we are, as your stewards to uphold you and your presence in these beautiful buildings. May we welcome all who come here ; welcome them to your heart as you dwell among us. Bless them and inspire them to be true, noble good and beautiful, that in all things, you our God may be glorified”.*

And the message of the Guest of Honor, Atty Ma. Rosenne Flores Avila, gave a definitive stamp for SSC’s reason for being:

*Each of the declared buildings, unique in its beauty and integrity, through the years reflects the unending flow of grace and blessing that has been bestowed upon this institution of learning....*

*The innate spirituality found in the details of its walls, columns, arches and halls is radiated in our Philippine society by generations of Filipinos and Filipinas who were moulded by St. Scholastica’s College. The motto of the Benedictine Order, Ora et Labora is exemplified in your community’s commitment to faith and passion for service and social justice.*

*May our gathering this morning allow us to celebrate not only this institution’s long history but also the fact that this school’s legacy continues to bear fruit not only among its alumnae but also in every student who is proud of this cultural heritage and look forward to a bright future for our country.*



## Sisters Attend a Synodal Lenten Recollection

By: Sr. Rosalina Fajardo, OSB

The Association of Women Religious in the Archdiocese of Manila (AWRAM) organized an annual Lenten recollection for its members. The invitation was to seek God and grow closer to Him as they journey through forty days toward the Risen Christ at Easter. On the second Sunday of Lent, 25 February 2024, one hundred sixteen (116) women religious from different congregations gathered at the Daughter of St. Paul Convent in FB Harrison in Pasay City.

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist presided over by Rev. Fr. Roberto San Diego, OFM Capuchin started the day’s affair. This was followed by a conference given by Fr. Roberto on the story of Jesus’ transfiguration and the pilgrimage with Jesus to the Cross. Sharing of personal experiences of participants concluded the talk.

After lunch, Msgr. Gerry Santos shared the Synthesis Report prepared by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Manila, entitled, “*Translacion: A Synodal Church in Mission.*” In summary, three priorities were chosen to be discussed and discerned during the consultation through Conversation in the Spirit with various sectors especially those in the peripheries, namely: “*People in Poverty, Church is Mission and Towards a Listening and Accompanying Church.*”

Each community was asked to conduct among their members the Conversation in the Spirit to discern and identify practices on how the Church can become a Listening and Accompanying Church to the Poor and how the image of the Translacion can best describe the Church in the Archdiocese of Manila.



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## NEWS FROM STATIONS

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### PRIORY HOUSE

#### Hands Off the 1987 Constitution! No to Charter Change!

By: Sr. Rosalind Tanhueco, OSB

*Oppression upon oppression, deceit upon deceit!  
They refuse to know me, says the Lord. (Jeremiah 9:6)*

Sisters and members of the Socio-Pastoral Apostolate (SPA) attended the forum on “**Hands Off the 1987 Constitution! No to Charter Change!**” on February 17, 2024 at Sta. Isabel College, Manila. This was an activity sponsored by **One Nation, One Faith, One Voice** – a network of Church people founded on the principles of truth, justice and peace.



The first speaker was Fr. Ben Alforque, MSC of the “Movement Against Tyranny” who took up the Biblico-Theological Reflection. He said, “*Do not dance the Cha-Cha of the Ruling Class. Follow the prophetic stance of Jesus. Encounter him among the poor and their struggle for a better future. Dance and sing their musical steps for new life.*”



The second speaker was Atty. Neri Javier Colmenares, Adviser to the National Executive Board of National Union of People’s Lawyers who discussed the **Hands Off the 1987 Constitution!** The latest maneuvers for a questionable ‘People’s Initiative’ or other methods of amending the 1987 Constitution are a danger to our democratic rights and freedoms as well as a threat to our sovereignty and the protection of our national patrimony. We join in One Voice to say: No to Cha-Cha!

The participants were Sr. Theodora Bilocura, OSB, Sr. Aurora Bravo, OSB and Sr. Rosalind Tanhueco, OSB, Bernaliza Lablabong, SPA staff, Jocelyn Campos, Tuluyan staff, and Maria Luisa D. Melo, CDC – Taal staff. The participants from the SPA service areas were Aeta of Potrac, Pampanga, Dumagat of Tanay, Rizal, youth, women and men from Taal, Lemery and San Luis, Batangas. In the afternoon, Sr. Rosalind, OSB met the participants from Batangas in the Subiaco garden for sharing of their insights on the forum and for call to action when they go home.

On February 27, 2024, the Priory House community in coordination and partnership with Sr. Christine Pinto, OSB, and President of St. Scholastica’s College held the same forum on Charter Change with Atty. Neri Javier Colmenares as resource speaker. It was held at Kuniberta Hall from 2:30 to 4:30 PM and well attended by more or less 384 participants.



They were Sisters from the Manila community, SSC administrators, faculty, staff, maintenance personnel, student representatives and research students from the University of Santo Tomas (UST). M. Mary Thomas Prado, OSB together with other Sisters, the drivers, maintenance personnel, caregivers, kasambahays and farmers from Tanay Farm, headed the participants from the Priory House community. Likewise, the homeless from Tuluyan ni San Benito participated. After the input, followed the open forum. Then the resource speaker shared some suggestions on what could we do, as follows: organize fora to discuss the proposed Charter Change through social media platforms and to form a coalition on Anti-Charter Change. *That in all things God may be glorified.*

## ST. SCHOLASTICA'S COLLEGE—WESTGROVE

### SSC-W Top 2 in DepEd's NAT for Gr 12 Cavite Province By Ms. Carmen Yao

St. Scholastica's College -Westgrove (SSC-W) earned the 2<sup>nd</sup> Place among the Top 10 Schools with the Highest Results in Grade 12 National Achievement Test in the Province of Cavite in the areas of Problem Solving, Media Literacy, and Critical Thinking. The test was administered to Grade 12 students by the Department of Education nationwide on January 30-31, 2023.

The result was presented and announced during DepEd Cavite MANCOM for Private Schools in the Province of Cavite at Tanza National Trade School, Tanza, Cavite on February 22, 2024. The meeting was attended by the Heads of Schools and Administrators. Mrs. Leah M. Sacay, SSC-W Assistant Principal attended the said meeting.

Congratulations to the Administration and Faculty of SSCW and to the Gr. 12 students of batch 2022-2023 for this excellence in academics!



## ST. SCHOLASTICA'S ACADEMY—MARIKINA

### SSA- Marikina Reaps Awards By Sr. Edna Quiambao, OSB

St. Scholastica's Academy of Marikina has long been renowned for its commitment to academic excellence, holistic development, and nurturing a culture of achievement. Over the years, the academy's students have consistently demonstrated their outstanding abilities and talents, garnering numerous awards and accolades across various fields. Here, we celebrate the remarkable achievements of St. Scholastica's students, highlighting their excellence and contributions to their respective fields.



St. Scholastica's Academy-Marikina reaps recognition for reaching Proficient Level in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022.

The Academy also bagged the champion title, one after another at the World Supremacy Battlegrounds 2024 High School Division. After a long day, they quoted, "we went home full of new knowledge, encouraging greetings and heartwarming recognition. This inspires us to be better individuals and a better team.



Note: ( For our article this issue, I would like to lift some excerpts from the article in the school paper, The Agnesian. It is heartwarming to know the minds of our youth regarding current issues. This time we take from the article written by our young staffer, Carlene Manalo.) Sr. Celine, OSB

## Colmenares Warns Albayanos against Deceptive Reforms with Cha-Cha Talk

by Carlene Manalo | News Editor THE AGNESIAN

Faced with regressive constitutional reforms, Bayan Muna Chair Atty. Neri Colmenares prompts Albayanos to actively oppose legislative abuse in a forum on Charter Change held in the SAA Centennial Gymnasium on February 2, 2024.

Amidst proposed amendments and revisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, constitutional law experts assert the possibility of underlying motives from the government. These include term extensions, pro-alien policies, reduced labor incentives, unauthorized demolitions, removal of minor constituents in the Local Government Unit, abolishment of the senate, and abandonment of efforts to recover ill-gotten wealth.

In response to this, Colmenares expressed the urgency for organizations and institutions in Legazpi to advocate against Charter Change in his talk entitled “**Bicolanos: Expose and Oppose Cha-cha**” hosted by St. Agnes Academy (SAA).

Among the groups present were the Diocesan Social Action Center, Good Shepherd Home, Perpetual Help Shrine Redemptorist Mission Center, Bicol University, Kabataan Partylist Bicol, Bicol Coconut Planters Association Incorporated, Albay People’s Organization, and Organisasyon ng mga Magsasaka ng Albay alongside Thomas Lagman and Senior High School and Grade 10 students from SAA.

Compelling the youth to act, Colmenares advised students and campus journalists to utilize social media as a platform to educate, publish stances, join forums, and form coalitions.

“Kung hindi ninyo sosolusyonan ang korapsyon at hindi niyo tatanggalin ang kontraktwalisasyon, walang mangyayaring pag-unlad sa ating bayan kahit sampung beses kayong mag Cha-Cha taon-taon.” said Colmenares in his talk.



## SSCS Opens New year 2024 Events

By M Irene Dabalus, OSB

Cool days and showers ushered the New Year 2024 in St. Scholastica's Center of Spirituality and environs. These brought as well spells of coughs and fevers in the community, yet this did not dampen the flow of retreatants and guests to the Center. Some not-so-usual events marked this first quarter of the year.

### Lakbay-Dasal

A big group of junior high school students from St. Agnes Academy in Legaspi numbering some 100 students made SSCS a point of encounter for their pilgrimage-exposure on January 11, 2024. It was only a sacred hour they spent in the chapel and the cave of St. Benedict



to learn about the Saint and the impact of his life and holiness in our world. They arrived at 9.30 a.m. and left renewed at 10.30 a.m. after learning about the programs for spiritual growth and formation offered by the Center. Even if the stay was brief, it was a novel idea to bring them into contact with the Benedictine approach to prayer and solitude with us.

### A first-ever Community-sponsored LDS

Mother Mary Thomas Prado, OSB challenged each community to hold its own search-in, independent of the yearly priory search-ins organized by the vocation team. This was meant to boost vocation contacts in the entire Priory and to attract more young women to know our Benedictine way of life. Sr. Pauline Triviño, OSB reported on our first-ever CBS community-sponsored Life Direction Seminar in 2024, held from January 13, 4:00 PM, to January 14 until after lunch.



The participants were eleven ladies: 1) 4 children of our SSC staff who were presently junior and senior high school students; 2) Perlie Fabro, former caregiver in the Priory, who was waiting for her next OFW assignment in Hongkong; and 3) 6 ladies who were Staff members at the Center for Musculoskeletal Services in a clinic in



Quezon City, recruited by Sr. Ana Maria Raca, OSB: one administrative staff, one nurse, and four physical therapists.

The seminar carried the theme: *"find your heart...live your path."* In *"Life's Blueprint"*, Sister Marialuz Dungca, OSB discussed the CALL: recognizing it and responding to it. This was the first time the participants attended such a seminar. During the sessions, they were very receptive and participative. All of them expressed joy for having been invited and were happy they came. One senior high school student, the daughter of Jerry, a staff member, openly expressed her desire "to become a sister".

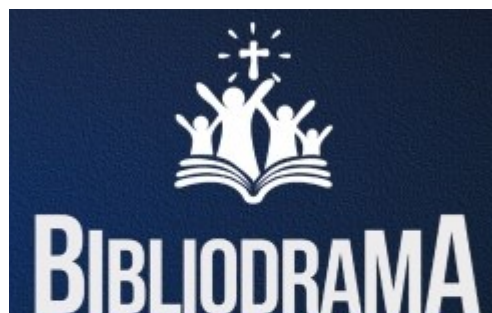
### **SHENG ZHEN Meditation**

From February 20-25, some 60 members of an international society called Sheng Zhen held their meditation practices on our grounds. They were composed of people coming from different countries with different religious affiliations, including Catholic Filipino women who came to join us for daily mass. Their life's vision was to be devoted to the practice of unconditional love. They ran under the direction of the Chinese Master and Founder Li Junfeng, the principal teacher of Sheng Zhen meditation practice. They were vegetarians and held to strict dietary rules, adding extra hours of duty on our kitchen and maintenance staff.



### **Bibliodrama Workshop**

On the weekend of March 1-3, SSCS hosted a bibliodrama workshop, attended by some 24 teachers from our nearby schools and by parish workers in the diocese. This was the first course in the line-up of events of our newly opened Benedictine Institute organized by Sr. Pauline Triviño, OSB, Sr. Ana Maria Raca, OSB and Sr. Marianne Shilengifa, OSB joined the group. A coordinator, Karlo Lara, Lakbay Biblia founder, and three other facilitators with him led the workshop: Patricia Herras, Ma. Edna Merin and Minerva Dacanay, members of *Communio et Missio Lay Formation* Group dedicated to the service of the Church. The weekend workshop presented the theme: *"Pilgrims of Light- A Biblical encounter with Jesus, our Light and Hope."* It provided the participants with an intimate experience of the Word of God through different elements of the Bibliodrama, leading them into the joys and fruits of biblical reflection.



## Medical Mission in Pambujan Hospital

By Sr. Amadea Donadilla, OSB

On January 28 to February 9, 2024, St. Scholastica's Hospital in Pambujan, Northern Samar, in collaboration with the ISM (International Surgical Mission) from USA, composed of 22 medical staff – doctors, nurses and technician and the Nuestra Senora de Salvacion Charity Foundation headed by Dr. Hil Dineros, conducted ten days of Surgical Mission.

Three hundred thirty five patients needing medical attention were attended to and operated on. The 334 surgeries consisted of 127 major procedures, 152 minor ones and 55 endoscopy and colonoscopy cases.

This was the 2nd year that the ISM (International Surgical Mission) and NSSCF (Nuestra Senora de Salvacion Charity Foundation) came to Pambujan. The first was in 2023. The services were free of charge. The team brought all the medicines and supplies they needed and left some for use at SSH (St. Scholastica's Hospital)

On February 13, 2024 St. Luke's Global Medical Center (SLGMC), initiated by Dr. Lora Tansengco, and her batch, HS 1982 of St. Scholastica's College, Manila (SSC-M), performed medical assessment to 96 patients who need surgery. There were 2 doctors who came, she and Dr. Melissa Young, an anesthesiologist. The Director of St. Luke's Global Medical Center (SLGMC), Leia Regala Teodoro joined them. They made an ocular inspection and planning in our Operating Room and wards. They will come back for their surgical mission on April 10 to 13 to do the actual procedures. The St. Luke's team will be composed of 30 medical staff – doctors, nurses and technician. They proposed to accommodate 100 surgical cases, both major and minor.

The Church, the Local Government Unit (LGU), private individuals and groups were generous to provide food and accommodation when they were asked to help. As a whole, the patients and our donors were grateful and they appreciated the medical assistance provided by our medical missionaries and St. Scholastica's Hospital (SSH). In this way, they helped us fulfill our mission of continuing the healing ministry of Jesus, especially to the poor, even if we are not financially viable. We served as a bridge between those who want to help and those who needed help. That in all things God may be glorified!



At Catarman Airport, departure area. From left: Dr. Melissa Young, Ms. Leia Teodoro and Dr. Lora Tansengco. Representatives of St. Luke's Global Medical Center



The patients who underwent major operations. The procedures were removal of hernia, goiter, breast mass and cancer, hydrocele, parotid and large cysts.



The ISM (International Surgical Mission) in the Operating Room of St. Scholastica's Hospital



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## JUNIORATE UPDATES

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### International Juniorate Program 2023 (IJP) Experience

By Sr. Maria Caritas Flor, OSB

For eleven months ( February 2023 – January 2024) and two days of my stay in the Casa as one of the nine participants of the 2023 International Juniorate Program, I have learned many things from classes, manual work inside the house, gardening, and pilgrimages to different significant and historical places. The encounter that I



have experienced with my fellow Junior Sisters from different priories, Sisters in the Casa Community, IWE participants, ITM Participants, guests and house staff, made my stay a very enriching and a fulfilling one. This proves that our differences, may they be of culture, color, race, language, accent, food and the like, are not a stumbling block to striving to live interculturally. In fact, these are essential ingredients for growth and development in a personal and communal dimension. Not knowing the English language is not a barrier for we have a common language of mercy, compassion and love that transcends beyond words.

I cannot forget how heart-warming and accommodating the Sisters were to me and to all of us. Hospitality was evident. I have been telling our Junior Directress how I felt at home and welcomed right away the day I arrived. Everyone was always ready to help and assist whenever I was uncertain of something.



Whenever we went out for pilgrimage, we were like having a marathon.

We had to keep pace in walking and sometimes running specially when we had to catch the train. I realized at first that it was very tiring but later I found it healthy, environment friendly and pocket friendly at the same time. When tired, you don't have to go anywhere to buy your food, but just find a corner to put your small mat to sit on and put out your packed food to eat.

If you would ask me what I miss living in the Casa, my answer would be the celebration of the Liturgy specially the singing of Gregorian Chants and hymns during Mass and Liturgy of the Hours, and also the community as well.

What stands out during my stay was the simplicity of the people, the lifestyle and the dedication of the Sisters to their assigned tasks in keeping the house clean and orderly without Ate and Kuya to help them. I remember when I first passed by the corridor from the chapel to the refectory, I was stunned by the cleanliness of the floor. It was literally shining and shimmering. Another important virtue which is very evident in the community is humility. The Generalate manifests this virtue

concretely, seeing them helping in washing the dishes, mopping the floor, planting vegetables in the garden, feeding the cats and foxes and birds, cooking and the like. I cannot describe everything in words but my heart feels it and my eyes see it. They were really a good example before us.

In the end, the words of Mother Birgitta before she died which she said three times, “*love of sacrifice and love of sacrifice, love of sacrifice and faithfulness in little things*” are evident in the Sisters who are missioned to live in the Generalate House. For me, this is a lesson to imbibe and a great opportunity to practice love of sacrifice, that is why even before I entered I said to myself that I want to become a missionary. I realize that in order to become one, I have to make love of sacrifice a natural attitude within me by constantly practicing it every day and by being ready anytime to help and serve others.

Finally, I am very grateful to the Manila Priory especially to Mother Mary Thomas Prado, OSB, my prioress and her council and my formators for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that was given to me to participate in the International Juniorate Program and to Mother Maoro Sye, OSB and the Generalate and all the sisters in the Casa Santo Spirito Community for leaving an imprint of love, warmth, humility, simplicity, hospitality, mercy and compassion in me. And to God, the Almighty for without His presence in my life, all these are nothing. For all that has been, thanks!

*Dio ti benedica sempre, non dimenticare di pregare per me mentre io prego per te. Grazie mille!* May God bless you. Don't forget to pray for me as I do for you.

Thank you very much.





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## VOCATION

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### VOCATION UPDATE: JANUARY – MARCH 2024

By: Sr. Marialuz Dungca, OSB

The Vocation Animators from various communities joined forces to establish our presence in different localities and to promote our congregation, particularly the Manila Priory, among students and young female professionals. They conducted Life Direction Sessions and participated in various Vocation Talks, Campaigns and Jamborees. Here are some of the activities in which they were involved:

For the month of January, our sisters of the Tagaytay Community organized a Life Direction Session last January 13-14, 2024, facilitated by Sr. Pauline Triviño, OSB, and Sr. Marialuz Dungca, OSB, at our St. Scholastica's Center of Spirituality Retreat Center. The session was attended by the daughters of our retreat house staff, a former caregiver of the Priory House, as well as physical therapists and nurses invited by Sr. Ana Maria Raca, OSB.



One participant expressed one of the key takeaways from the session: Arvy Fajardo shared, “participating in the Life Direction Session was entirely new to me, yet after the session, I felt fulfilled. I am happy to have taken the time to listen to myself and to address the questions in my mind. I feel I have taken a step forward in prioritizing what truly matters to me. I am grateful for the opportunity provided by the Benedictine Sisters.”

For the month of February, our Vocation Animators from Legaspi Community, Sr. Celine Saplala, OSB Sr. Judith Diaz, OSB and Sr. Eunice Pornela, OSB attended the Association of Consecrated Persons (ACPIL) Vocation Jamboree at Trinitas, Bacacay, Legaspi City on February 3 and 4, 2024. While on February 8, 2024, the Tabunok Community animator Sr. Antonia Santiago, OSB, with some of her school staff,



participated in the activities of the Archdiocese of Cebu with the title, "ACWC Support DVP Cebu: Taboan Sa Bokasyon," . They set up a simple vocation booth and enthusiastically engaged themselves in the vocation campaign.

Then on February 17, 2024, the Vocation Animators from the Priory House and Angeles Community attended the Archdiocese of San Fernando, Pampanga, “VOCARE 2024” held at the Mother of Good Counsel Seminary. Sr. Margaret Mary Mirate, OSB, Sr. Stella Marie Martinez, OSB, and our junior sister, Sr. Amanda Marie Fondevilla, OSB, together with Sr. Marialuz witnessed a remarkable turnout of participants that even exceeded the



organizers' expectations.

On February 22, 2024, five (5) Sisters from the Priory House community came together for a Life Direction Session with the personnel and staff of BDO at the Bank de Oro (BDO) Towers Valero, Makati. During the session, they encountered some familiar faces, such as an alumna from SSA-San Fernando and from our other communities who recognized their previous Directress and Guidance Counselor.



To conclude the month of hearts, the Vocation Animators participated in another Vocation Fest sponsored by the Holy Angel University Youth Ministry in Angeles City held on February 28, 2024. Representatives from the Priory House, Angeles Community, and San Fernando Community attended the event.

For the month of March, the Vocation Animators of the Priory House participated in the San Beda University Vocation Jamboree on March 13, 2024. The event was graced by the Benedictine family: the Benedictine Monks of San Beda, two Nuns of the Reparatrix of the Sacred Heart of Mexico Pampanga, two sisters from the Benedictine Sisters of the Eucharistic King of Cubao, and we, the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing, Manila Priory.



The CLE Department and the Guidance Center of St. Scholastica's Academy in San Fernando, Pampanga organized another Vocation Jamboree on March 22, 2024. Sr. Marialuz and Postulant Rolly Teng from the Benedictine Monks of the Abbey of Monserrat in Mendiola delivered a Vocation talk. Then in the afternoon, Sr. Marialuz and Sr. Maria Caritas Flor, OSB together with the San Beda Post. Rally and Post. Earnie went on a room-to-room vocation campaign.

The other Vocation Animators of the different communities joyfully poured out their efforts and made ways in different forms of vocation campaigns despite the demands of their apostolates.

As we move forward in our religious journey, we echo the prayer that our good Lord may continue to bless us abundantly with vocations and courageous professional young ladies willing to say "Yes" amidst the allure of today's world. That in all things God may be glorified.



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## INTER PRIORY SHARING

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Welcome to SISTER SERAPHINA WANJURU WANJIL, OSB, a junior from Nairobi Priory, who will have a one-year exposure of intercultural living in Manila Priory. She is assigned in our Retreat House in Baguio City.



### CONGRATULATIONS TO SR. ROSARIO OBINIANA, OSB & ST. SCHOLASTICA'S COLLEGE, TACLOBAN:

#### Basic Education Level

- 2024 District Festival of Talents: Read-A Thon Competition - March 6, 2024  
Storytelling (Gr. 3) Myrnel Zane Petilos – Champion
- Area Read - a Thon - March 15, 2024 - Myrnel Zane Petilos - 2nd Place
- Oral Reading Interpretation (English, Gr. 6) - Anthony Jose Delgado - 2nd Place

#### Tertiary Level

1. PRISAA Tacloban Cluster Meet 2024 - Volleyball Women - 1st Place
2. PRISAA Tacloban Cluster Meet 2024 - Badminton Women Doubles - Champion
3. PRISAA Tacloban Cluster Meet 2024 - Women's Badminton Team - 2nd Runner Up
4. PRISAA Tacloban Cluster Meet 2024 - Men's Badminton Team - 3rd Runner Up

#### BOARD PASSERS SIX (6) STUDENTS

**MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE/ MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIST LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS - March 21-22, 2024 - 100% PASSED -FIRST TAKERS**



CONGRATULATIONS TO SR. MA. EZEKIEL FERNANDEZ, OSB & ST. SCHOLASTICA'S ACADEMY,  
BACOLOD:

Junior High School for having been re-accredited for 5 years  
effective February 2024 – February 2029.



CONGRATULATIONS TO SR. MARY IGNATIUS AQUINO, OSB & ST. SCHOLASTICA'S ACADEMY,  
SAN FERNANDO:

- GRAND CHAMPION in the ENGenium Cup 2024, an Interschool Grand Prix (Robotics Competition) held last March 13, 2024 at De La Salle University
- CHAMPION in the WORD FEST Contest held last February 21, 2024 at Holy Angel University
- CHAMPION in the Extemporaneous Speech Contest held last January 30, 2024 at Don Bosco Academy, Mabalacat

### MANILA PRIORY BULLETIN TEAM

#### EDITORIAL TEAM:

SR. ROSALINA FAJARDO, OSB, SR. ISABEL ORITO, OSB,  
SR. MARY PETER MACKAY, OSB & SR. IMELDA HALILI, OSB

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** 1) Original image of the Philippine flag used for the Nameplate / Masthead: [https://www.pngitem.com/middle/iorJTJi\\_high-resolution-philippine-flag-printable-hd-png-download/](https://www.pngitem.com/middle/iorJTJi_high-resolution-philippine-flag-printable-hd-png-download/) 2) Title Font: Morris Roman - Downloaded free from <https://www.dafont.com/morris-roman.font>