

# MCBCPonitor

MAY 13 - 26, 2019, VOL 23, NO. 10

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## PPCRV to look into poll glitches

By Roy Lagarde

**A church-backed poll watchdog has requested data from the transparency server of the Commission on Elections amid glitches.**

The Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) said the situation calls for transparency to erase doubts among the people.

Myla Villanueva, PPCRV chairperson, said the data would help them determine if the data will match with results from the central server.

"For me as a tech person, what is important is to see why it happened in the first place. Second, the data from the central and transparency server should match," Villanueva said.

But she said they would wait for the right time "because that is post-forensic".

"It is a way of auditing," Villanueva said. "We do not want to disrupt the transparency server because it is still receiving data."



Volunteers at the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) command center in Manila continue the manual encoding of the printed election results May 15. The church-based poll watchdog has managed to mobilize around 300,000 volunteers for the May 13 midterm elections.

### Logs

The PPCRV would also like to see the logs of transparency server which stopped sending election results for several hours on Monday night.

"We will insist on the logs," Villanueva said.

"This has never happened before, that's why I want to see the logs in order that we can avoid it ever happening again," she added.

The delay in transmission

raised public concern and fuelled speculation that there might be tampering of votes.

The PPCRV also asked the poll body to allow stakeholders and independent groups to document any troubleshooting of the transparency server.

Villanueva said they would share their recording with the IT community for them

to further scrutinize the

information. As of 2pm May 15, the transparency server shows that 84,633 out of 85,769 clustered precincts have been counted.

The PPCRV, meanwhile, has received around 10 percent of physical election returns, mostly from the cities in Metro Manila.

### Suspend proclamation of senators

For the Church's social

justice arm, the Comelec must suspend the proclamation of senators until allegations of election fraud is cleared.

Caritas Philippines particularly demanded for an independent and impartial investigation into the allegations.

"We are calling to suspend the proclamation of winning senatorial candidates until the allegation of fraud is

Glitches / A6

## Bishops to poll winners: Live up to people's expectations



Voters look for their names on a list outside a polling precincts in Manila on May 13, 2019. CBCP NEWS

CATHOLIC bishops urged the winners of this year's midterm elections, especially the country's new senators, to live up to the expectations of the electorate.

Bishop Ruperto Santos of Balanga hopes that elected officials will "truly" work for the service of the people, not for certain person or political party.

"It is our prayer and hope that they will not fail us, nor fail us again," said Santos, who chairs the bishops' Commission on Migrants and Itinerant People.

"Given a fresh mandate, let us pray they will live up to our expectations, and we will not be sorry we have

elected them," he said.

Allies of President Rodrigo Duterte are on their way to dominate the Senate race, partial results from the May 14 polls showed.

The prelate said this only showed that many people still place their trust and future to the Duterte administration.

"Our people has spoken. It is their will, and we have to respect it," Bishop Santos said.

"We appeal that we all work together for peace and prosperity of our country, for better and improved lives of our people," he added.

Bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon, however, could

not hide his frustration over the results of the senatorial race.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) had earlier appealed to voters to preserve checks and balances in the government.

The bishops warned that in the country today, such system in governance are being "undermined".

So far, they said, the Senate is the government institution that is holding out "as our country is inching out towards total control".

For Bishop Bastes, the outcome was simply "very disappointing". (CBCPNews)

## Bishop hits attempts to suppress press freedom

A CATHOLIC bishop has joined calls for greater press freedom in the country and deplored actions to suppress it.

Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos said the Church promotes freedom of the press as he stressed the importance of truth in journalism.

"Promoting the truth is promoting life. We join the call of respecting press freedom, respecting the truth and respecting human life," Alminaza said in a statement to mark World Press Freedom Day.

The prelate also thanked the journalists who continue to fight for the truth "amidst the darkness".

He particularly paid

tribute to journalists who were persecuted and killed for doing their jobs.

"Justice for those who were jailed and killed but continue to inspire and their witnesses shines forth amidst the darkness," Alminaza said.

The bishop added that he is also praying for the "conversion" of those "who allowed themselves to be used to spread lies, sow fear and terror, abuse our freedom of expression, divide rather than unite for the common good".

For its part, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) has called for courage as press freedom is currently "under siege".

Suppress / A6

## Bishop on rampant vote buying: 'Disheartening'



A voter is helped by an election worker as he casts his vote during mid-term polls in Manila on May 13, 2019. CBCP NEWS

A CATHOLIC bishop has expressed displeasure over the rampant and open buying of votes during this year's midterm elections.

Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos noted that while the elections were generally peaceful, vote-

Rampant / A6

### ANALYSIS

## 'Vos estis' and 'vulnerability'

POPE Francis' recently promulgated policy on sexual abuse allegations made against bishops, Vos estis lux mundi, offers a new and much expanded interpretation of what constitutes a canonical sexual crime by a cleric.

That interpretation has raised real questions about how the law is to be applied, at the Vatican and in diocesan chanceries.

The new policy recognizes as explicitly criminal the abuse of authority in coercive sexual relationships, a move called for often in the wake of the Theodore McCarrick scandal. It also offers a new definition for "vulnerable" adults, a legal category of persons who could be subject to criminally coercive abuse.

The universal law of the Church previously defined a "vulnerable adult" as one who "habitually lacks the use of reason."

The new definition classifies a "vulnerable adult" as "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense."

That definition could seem to cover a very broad swath of situations, which would be quite distinct from each other. Some Vatican and diocesan officials have told CNA they are concerned that the potentially broad applicability of the new definition could cause unjust expectations, and uncertainty about how to proceed in individual cases.

Specifically, some worry that Vos estis could foster a sense that nearly any sexual act committed by a priest is expected to be treated on a par with the sexual abuse of minors, and lead to his removal permanent removal from ministry.

In a Church committed to zero-tolerance for sexual abuse, the new definition for "vulnerable adult" could make clergy discipline a decidedly more complicated undertaking.

It seems clear, for example, that a priest who has had a sexual relationship with a traumatized victim of abuse who comes to him for spiritual direction has committed a most grave offense, and should face the fullest measure of justice - civil and canonical.

But can the same be said for a newly ordained priest who, while still coming into maturity, kisses a parishioner with whom he is friends in a moment of indiscretion, after they both have a few drinks, and then immediately puts a stop to things?

Both are serious offenses that impact the good of souls and the public good. In both situations, the other party was impaired in some way, and could seem to meet the definition of vulnerability. Both

Analysis / A6

## Vatican Briefing

### Pope invites young people to pledge to build a new economy

Pope Francis has invited young economists and entrepreneurs around the world to help create a “new and courageous culture” that finds new ways to do business, promote human dignity and protect the environment. “We need to correct models of growth incapable of guaranteeing respect for the environment, openness to life, concern for the family, social equality, the dignity of workers and the rights of future generations,” the pope said in a letter inviting young people to take part in a new initiative. The initiative, to be launched at an event in Assisi March 26-28, 2020, invites young men and women studying or working in the field of economics or business to join the pope and “enter into a ‘covenant’ to change today’s economy and to give a soul to the economy of tomorrow.” (Carol Glatz/CNS)

### Be merciful ministers of Christ, pope tells new priests

The priesthood is not a “cultural association or a union,” but a ministry of mercy anchored on Christ’s mission to bring hope to the downtrodden and comfort to those who suffer, Pope Francis told new priests. “The Lord wished to save us freely. It was he who told us, ‘Give freely what you have received freely.’ The celebration of the Eucharist is the culmination of the Lord’s gratuitousness. Please, do not dirty it with petty interests,” he said. Celebrating Mass May 12 in St. Peter’s Basilica, Pope Francis ordained 19 new priests: 11 who studied at three different diocesan seminaries in the city and eight from the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross, an association of diocesan clergy associated with Opus Dei. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

### Hope and mercy needed to combat indifference, pope tells foundation

In a world marked by violence, conflict as well as material and spiritual poverty, men and women need the Gospel message of hope, Pope Francis told members of the U.S.-based Papal Foundation. Speaking to foundation members May 10, the pope thanked them for their contributions and work that “helps to bring the Gospel message of hope and mercy to all who benefit from your commitment and generosity.” “For this I thank you, and I pray that you will be renewed in your purpose to help build the church in unity and advance her charitable outreach to the least of our brothers and sisters,” he said. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

### Pope: Without Holy Spirit, dioceses can become worldly businesses

A diocese that cares more about being an organized workplace rather than announcing the good news can fall prey to clericalism and distance itself from Christ, Pope Francis said. In creating a “functionalist diocese,” the pope said, local churches are in danger of transmitting a “new ideological colonization that seeks to convince others that the Gospel is wisdom and doctrine but not an announcement, not a kerygma.” Pope Francis addressed over 1,000 diocesan leaders, both clergy and laity, May 9 at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Diocese of Rome. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

### Never lose hope for a better future, pope tells Gypsy communities

Members of Italy’s Gypsy communities must look to God to hold on to the hope of a future where they are no longer discriminated against or segregated, Pope Francis said. Speaking to 500 members of the Roma, Sinti and Gypsy communities during a May 9 prayer service in the Clementine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the pope said he was moved by the testimonies of mothers who continue to hold on to the hope they see in their children’s eyes. “Hope can disappoint if it is not true hope. But when hope is concrete, as in this case, in the eyes of the children, it never disappoints, it never disappoints! When hope is concrete, in the true God, it never disappoints,” he said. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

### Pope names relator general, special secretaries for Amazon synod

Pope Francis has chosen Brazil’s Cardinal Claudio Hummes to serve as relator general of October’s Synod of Bishops on the Amazon. The nomination of the 84-year-old retired Archbishop of Sao Paulo was announced at the Vatican May 4. The relator is responsible for providing a comprehensive outline of the synod’s theme at the beginning of the meeting and for summarizing the speeches of synod members before work begins on concrete proposals for the pope. Scheduled for Oct. 6-27, the synod will focus on “Amazonia: New paths for the church and for an integral ecology.” Cardinal Hummes currently serves as president of the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network, a Catholic organization founded by Caritas Internationalis that “promotes the rights and dignity of people living in the Amazon.” The pope has also named two special secretaries for the synod: Bishop David Martínez De Aguirre Guinea, the apostolic vicar of Puerto Maldonado, Peru, and Jesuit Fr. Michael Czerny, undersecretary of the Migrants and Refugee Section of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

### Respect rights of indigenous people, culture, pope tells mining industry

A “fallacious” economic model that exploits the earth’s resources while disregarding the rights and cultures of indigenous people has left the planet in a precarious condition and requires a change of heart that places the common good before financial gain, Pope Francis said. Addressing participants of a two-day conference at the Vatican May 3, the pope said that like all economic activities, mining “should be at the service of the entire human community,” especially indigenous people who are often pressured “to abandon their homelands to make room for mining projects which are undertaken without regard for the degradation of nature and culture.” “They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed,” he said. (Junno Arocho Esteves/CNS)

## EWTN to launch African news agency



Fr. Don Bosco Onyalla, editor of ACI-Africa, stands with the image of Mother Mary Angelica, foundress of EWTN. FILE PHOTO/CNA

ROME, Italy— EWTN Global Catholic Network announced Friday that it will launch a news service for the African continent.

ACI-Africa will be a Nairobi, Kenya-based Catholic news agency, publishing content in English, French and Portuguese.

EWTN Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Michael P. Warsaw formally introduced the project during a May 10 event at EWTN’s Vatican bureau. The news agency will officially begin operations on August 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption, the same date on which EWTN Founder Mother Angelica launched EWTN in 1981.

“The Church in Africa is vibrant and continues to see exponential growth. My hope is that this new service from EWTN will help continue to build up the African Church and also ensure that the voice of the African Church is heard more clearly around the world with content that is shared through EWTN’s other news platforms.”

ACI-Africa will be headed by Father Don Bosco Onyalla, a priest of the

Diocese of Rumbek in South Sudan.

Onyalla is a journalist who established and previously oversaw the Catholic News Agency For Africa (CANAA), a project of the African bishops conference. Onyalla’s work has included producing websites, newsletters and social media updates for the bishops, as well as working with diocesan, national and regional episcopal communication directors throughout Africa. He speaks English, French, and Swahili, as well as the local languages of Luhya and Dinka.

“I look forward to interacting with fellow Catholic journalists under the EWTN umbrella, to facilitating the telling of Africa’s story by Africans, and to the challenges involved in setting up a news agency in the vast and multi-cultural context that is Africa,” Onyalla said.

ACI-Africa will be a part of the ACI Group which was acquired by EWTN in 2014 and includes ACI Prensa, the world’s largest Spanish-language Catholic news organization with headquarters in Lima, Peru; ACI Digital, the Rio de Janeiro, Brazil-

based news organization, which serves the Portuguese-speaking world; and ACI Stampa, the Italian-language news organization based in Rome. ACI Group is part of the larger EWTN News, Inc. division, which also includes Denver-based Catholic News Agency (CNA), the German language news service, CNA Deutsch, and several other Catholic news outlets.

“We were honored to welcome Vatican officials, journalists, and distinguished guests to our event announcing the birth of ACI-Africa,” said Alejandro Bermudez, Executive Director of the ACI Group.

“This new agency aimed at covering all Africa for Africa and the world is an expression of the growing role African Catholicism is having in the universal Church. This is a significant step forward for the ACI Group as well as for the larger EWTN News family.”

The launch of ACI-Africa is the latest development in EWTN’s efforts to continue to expand its news presence in the global Catholic digital and multimedia marketplace, EWTN representative said. (CNA)

## Faith leaders call for an end to solitary confinement

ALBANY, N.Y.— New York’s faith leaders gathered in protest of solitary confinement this week, pushing for a bill that seeks more humane ways to treat prisoners.

“We believe solitary confinement is a form of torture, and it has been vastly overused historically in New York State. Even with some recent reforms, not enough has been done,” Dennis Poust, communications director for the New York State Catholic Conference, told CNA.

Thirty-five faith leaders and 30 others rallied in support of the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Confinement Act in the New York Capitol Building in Albany on May 7.

Attendees included representatives from the National Religious Campaign Against Torture,

T’ruah the Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, and New York State Council of Churches - a coalition of numerous denominations.

The New York State Catholic Conference was not present at the event, but it expressed strong support for the HALT bill, which has not yet been debated on the Senate or House floor. The conference issued a memorandum in support of the act in January.

The bill seeks to “limit the time an inmate can spend in segregated confinement, end the segregated confinement of vulnerable people, restrict the criteria that can result in such confinement, improve conditions of confinement, and create more humane and effective alternatives to such confinement,” according to the statement.

If passed, the law would restrict solitary

confinement to 15 days or less. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture has denounced solitary confinement that exceeds more than 15 days as a form of torture.

On any given day, there are an estimated 3,000 inmates in solitary confinement in New York’s state prisons. Prisoners in solitary confinement are isolated in 6-by-10 foot cells for 23 hours at a time.

After a 2016 settlement in a lawsuit challenging New York’s widespread use of solitary confinement as a punishment, the state reformed its prison system to limit the solitary confinement of pregnant women, youth and the disabled.

Solitary confinement can have serious consequences for prisoners’ psychological health, leading to an increase in depression or even suicide, Poust told

CNA.

“It’s not necessary in modern society and modern prison systems to take this action. We are asking the state to look at its historic overuse of this policy and to present these prisoner with more humane conditions,” he said.

Poust drew attention to the care of the imprisoned prescribed by the Old and New Testaments. He said it is the responsibility of Christians to express solidarity with incarcerated people.

“Prisoners don’t lose their innate human dignity when they are sentenced. While there are many prisoners who present a danger to society and must be incarcerated, the idea that they should be treated as less than human is anathema to what we as a society should be striving for,” he said. (CNA)

### After Vatican-China deal, Chinese bishop imprisoned for 23 years is not yet released

BEIJING, China— The nephew of a Chinese bishop who was arrested 23 years ago has said he does not know where his uncle is incarcerated, or even whether he is still alive.

“His whereabouts are unknown and I don’t even know if he is alive or not. I am upset with tears every time I think of this 87-year-old man. Please pray for him,” Su Tianyou told UCANews recently.

His uncle is Bishop James Su Zhimin of Baoding, in China’s Hebei province, southwest of Beijing.

In 1996, the bishop was arrested during a procession, and charged with conducting “unregistered” religious activities: Su had refused to join the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the government recognized Catholic Church in China, and was instead a member of the “underground” Church in communion with Rome, and appointed a bishop by Pope St. John Paul II, but unrecognized by the Chinese government as a bishop.

It was not the first time Su was arrested. According to the U.S. House of Representatives’ Human Rights Commission, Su has spent 40 years in prison, “without charge, without

trial.”

“Before being arrested in 1996, Bishop Su Zhimin was held off and on for 26 years either in prison or forced labor camps. The Chinese government deemed him as ‘counterrevolutionary’ because, since the 1950s, he has refused to join the Patriotic Association,” the Human Rights Commission says.

Su reportedly escaped Chinese detention in 1997, but was rearrested.

“In November 2003, his family discovered him by chance at a hospital in Baoding, surrounded by police and public security. He has not been heard or seen from since, despite repeated international inquiries,” according to the Human Rights Commission.

Su’s nephew, Su Tianyou, told UCANews that he met in 2015 with Guo Wei, a Chinese official who told him that the bishop might be released if there were an improvement in Vatican-China relations.

In September 2018, Beijing and Vatican officials signed a provisional agreement on bishop appointments, that was intended to unify the underground Church and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association.

According to Su Tianyou, neither Vatican nor Chinese officials have indicated whether Su might now be released.

In October 2018, Hong Kong’s Bishop Michael Yeung said that his diocese continued to pray for Su, and hope for his release.

“Whether he is in prison, or kept secret in some other place, or whether he has already died, nobody really knows,” Yeung told Reuters.

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom’s latest report, issued April 29, noted that despite last year’s Vatican-China deal on the appointment of bishops, “repression of the underground Catholic Church increased during the latter half of the year.”

The commission, known as the USCIRF, is a bipartisan group that advises the President, Congress, and the Secretary of State on international religious freedom issues.

Among the report’s inclusion of commissioners’ “individual views” were those of Johnnie Moore, who called the deal “one of the most alarming incidents as it relates to religious freedom in the entire year.” (CNA)

## Sri Lanka holds first public Masses since Easter attacks



Sri Lankan Catholics visit the St. Sebastian's Church after it was partially opened for the first time since the East Sunday attacks. COURTESY OF ST. SEBASTIAN CHURCH

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—The Sri Lankan Catholic Church on May 12 held its first public Sunday Masses since suicide bombers claimed more than 250 lives and injured hundreds of others on Easter.

Attendees at the Masses saw heightened safety precautions, including full-body searches, ID checks, and street patrols by military and police forces, according to The Guardian. At the churches' gates, volunteers kept an eye out for suspicious people.

Earlier, President Maithripala Sirisena told the Associated Press that "99%" of suspects related to the bombings have been arrested and explosive material has been seized.

Church leaders are considering reopening Catholic schools on Tuesday, the AP reported.

As a security measure, all public Masses had been cancelled for the two weeks following attacks by eight suicide bombers on two Catholic churches, a protestant church, three hotels, a residence, and a zoo on April 21.

On the Sunday following the attacks, a televised Mass was held at the private residential chapel of Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the archbishop of Colombo. A private ordination Mass quietly went ahead as planned April 30 in the village of Thannamunai, with attendance lower than had originally been anticipated.

On Monday, several social media platforms were banned indefinitely by the government amid concerns surrounding hateful speech and fake news. Facebook,

Whatsapp, and Youtube among those sites blocked, according to CNN.

Other safety precautions undertaken by the government include enforcement of curfews and banning face veils. The government has also sought to suppress the jihadist group National Thowheeth Jama'ath, whom the police say was responsible for the attacks. ISIS leaders have also claimed responsibility for the bombings, saying the local jihadists had pledged loyalty to the Islamic State.

According to The Guardian, 56 people have been arrested in connection with the attacks, 13 safe-houses have been discovered, and 41 bank accounts belonging to the bombers have been found. However, police officials have continued to caution people about potential threats.

Since the attacks, Catholic charity groups have provided aid to the victims and their families. UCA News reported that Caritas Sethsarana has been funding medical services, transportation assistance, legal support, and home repair.

"We have identified those who have been heavily traumatized, and counseling by professionals is underway," said Father Claude Nonis, an organizer for these church-run operations.

"I was inspired by what I saw Caritas doing," a policeman at one of the hospitals told UCA News.

"They were right there with the families, helping them to identify the bodies, and they stayed with them until all the necessary arrangements had been made." (CNA)

## Not ruling on apparitions, pope allows pilgrimages to Medjugorje



A statue of Mary is seen outside St. James Church in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in this Feb. 27, 2011, file photo. Pope Francis has decided to allow parishes and dioceses to organize official pilgrimages to Medjugorje; no decision has been made on the authenticity of the apparitions. PAUL HARING/CNS

VATICAN— Parishes and dioceses are now allowed to organize official pilgrimages to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, but it must be clear that the Catholic Church has not recognized as authentic the alleged Marian apparitions there.

Polish Archbishop Henryk Hoser, the pope's apostolic visitor to Medjugorje, and Archbishop Luigi Pezzuto, the nuncio to Bosnia-Herzegovina, announced the pope's decision to lift the ban on official pilgrimages May 12.

Alessandro Gisotti, the interim director of

the Vatican press office, confirmed the change, but said care must be taken to ensure the pilgrimages are not "interpreted as an authentication of well-known events, which still require examination by the church." Therefore, he said, church-sponsored pilgrimages must "avoid creating confusion or ambiguity from the doctrinal point of view."

In 1981, six young people from Medjugorje claimed that Mary had appeared to them. Some of the six say Mary still appears to them and gives them messages

Pilgrimages / A7

# Pope issues new norms on mandatory abuse reporting, bishop accountability

VATICAN— Pope Francis has revised and clarified norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable in protecting minors as well as in protecting members of religious orders and seminarians from abuse.

The new juridical instrument is meant to help bishops and religious leaders around the world clearly understand their duties and church law, underlining how they are ultimately responsible for proper governance and protecting those entrusted to their care. For this reason, the new document establishes a clearer set of universal procedures for reporting suspected abuse, carrying out initial investigations and protecting victims and whistleblowers.

The new document, given "motu proprio," on the pope's own initiative, was titled "Vos estis lux mundi" ("You are the light of the world"), based on a verse from the Gospel of St. Matthew (5:14).

"The crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual damage to the victims and harm the community of the faithful," the pope said in the document, released by the Vatican May 9. The norms go into effect June 1.

In order to stop all forms of abuse from ever happening again, not only is "a continuous and profound conversion of hearts" necessary, there must be "concrete and effective actions that involve everyone in the church," he wrote.

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, said the new norms ascribe a new role to heads of dioceses by making them responsible for alerting the proper Vatican authorities of all forms of suspected abuse, including the possession, distribution or creation of pornography involving a minor.

He told Vatican News May 9 that the norms respond to Pope Francis' continued insistence for concrete and effective measures to ensure bishops and religious superiors have a very clear understanding of what their obligations are and what they should and should not do when it comes to safeguarding.

It also requires all priests and religious to report suspected abuse or cover-ups and encourages any lay person to report through a



The dome of St. Peter's Basilica is seen at the Vatican Oct. 9, 2017. Pope Francis has revised and clarified norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable in protecting minors as well as in protecting members of religious orders and seminarians from abuse. PAUL HARING/CNS

now-mandated reporting "system" or office in each diocese.

How the office or "system" works will be up to each diocese, but "the idea is that anyone who has suffered abuse can have recourse to the local church, while being assured they will be well received, protected from retaliation, and that their reports will be treated with the utmost seriousness," Andrea Torielli, editorial director of the Dicastery for Communication, told Vatican News.

The new norms now stipulate:

- Procedures for the investigation of bishops, cardinals, patriarchs, religious superiors and all those who lead—even temporarily—a diocese or particular church, including personal prelatures and personal ordinariates.

- Leaders will be held accountable not only with suspected cases of committing abuse themselves, but also accusations of having interfered with, covered up or failed to address abuse accusations they were aware of.

- When the accused individual is a bishop, the metropolitan will receive a mandate from the Holy See to investigate or delegate a person in charge of the

preliminary investigation. A status report must be sent to the Holy See every 30 days, and the investigation completed with 90 days with some exceptions. Vatican offices are also held to specific timeframes and prompt action.

- By June 2020, every diocese in the world must create an office or "public, stable and easily accessible systems" for reporting suspected abuse against a minor or vulnerable person, failure of compliance of abuse guidelines by bishops or superiors, and cases of interference or cover-ups in either a civil or canonical investigation of suspected abuse.

- All priests and religious that become aware of abuse or its cover-up must alert their bishop or religious superior promptly.

- A minor is anyone under the age of 18 and a vulnerable person is "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want to otherwise resist the offense."

- The definition of child pornography as any representation of a minor, regardless of the media used, "involved in explicit sexual activities,

whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes."

- Bishops and religious superiors will be accountable not just for protecting minors against abuse but also for protecting seminarians, novices and members of religious orders from violence and sexual abuse stemming from an abuse of power. The norms apply to reports of "delicts against the sixth commandment" regarding clerics or members of religious orders and "forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts."

- Those who report abuse cannot be subjected to pressure, retaliation and discrimination or told to keep silent. The seal of confession, however, remains inviolable and is not affected by the new norms.

- Procedures for carrying out the preliminary investigation include the bishop immediately requesting from the Vatican that he or a delegate be assigned to begin the preliminary investigation. If he considers an accusation is unfounded, the papal nuncio is informed. The Vatican will have 30 days to respond to the request and the bishop sends a status report to the Vatican every 30 days.

- When the investigation is complete, the bishop sends the results to the proper Vatican office, which then follows existing canon law.

- The continued obligation to respect civil laws regarding mandatory reporting.

- Those who reported suspected abuse or cover-up will be told of the outcome of the investigation if they request to be informed.

- A fund can be set up by bishops' conferences, synods and church provinces to cover the costs of investigations.

The document is a follow-up to Pope Francis' 2016 document, "As a Loving Mother," on transparency and accountability of bishops and religious superiors.

The two documents together are meant to correct what had been a lack of or unclear procedures for investigating the way a bishop complies with already established norms against abuse and clearly expressing the consequences of noncompliance or cover-ups. (CNS)

## Online missionaries reach out to youth

MANILA— Lay Catholic missionaries in the Philippines are using the internet as a tool for what they fondly describe as "online evangelism."

The Youth Pinoy group uses social media as a "conduit to reintroduce Christ and create spiritual exchange online."

Michael Laxina described the group as a community of lay missionaries whose vocation is to use social media for "new evangelization."

They publish stories from members and other Catholic youth organizations on social media platforms Facebook and Twitter.

"We do this to remind the youth that Christ is present even in social media," said Laxina.

The group's Facebook account has more than 107,000 followers who get news and information about events, memes and statements from church leaders.

"We care about the youth who consume every content of our site," Laxina said, adding that they aim to contribute to the "formation of the young."

Unlike other missionaries who go to far-flung places to spread the Good News, Youth Pinoy members use their skills "to bear witness to their Catholic faith through creative means." They use their talent in writing, music,

photography, film and art to reach out to the youth.

"It all began at the onset of social media in the Philippines," said Monsignor Pedro Qutorio, head of the media office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and spiritual adviser to Youth Pinoy.

Msgr. Qutorio said he formed the group in 2009 when he was trying to understand online publishing. "I read an article that said if you want to address youth, then you must go to social media," he said.

After consulting members of the media office on how to engage youngsters in cyberspace, Msgr. Qutorio led the formation of a national youth organization that will perform apostolate online.

Youth Pinoy was launched at the University of Santo Tomas when members branded themselves "online missionaries of God."

Since then, the organization has become a community that "echoes the stance of the Catholic Church on religious and political issues."

### Role of youth in evangelization

Father Roy Bellen, who serves as vice-president for operations at church-run Veritas 846 radio station, said young people have an important role to play

in sharing church teachings.

"They are more skilled than more mature generations in the use of digital platforms," said the priest. "They know very well its dynamics, language and trends."

Being lay people, the young Catholics can package the message of the Gospel in a more relevant and catchy form, said Father Bellen.

Father Jeffrey Segovia of Lingayen-Dagupan Archdiocese said the Church's presence in cyberspace is "an important step to bring the youth from purely online to the physical church."

He said social media pages like Youth Pinoy's have the "power to persuade people" to not just rely on what they read online but attend Masses, youth events and church activities.

Father Segovia, however, said evangelization through social media is not an alternative to visiting communities and living with the people.

Msgr. Qutorio said church media groups need to appreciate diversity and "open ourselves to so many expressions" to reach out to more online users.

"As long as we do not go beyond our parameters in our doctrines and morals, we can dominate cyberspace ... that is new evangelization," said the priest. (Mark Saludes/UCAN)

## EDITORIAL

## Were those glitches merely technical?

SUSPICIONS surrounding the 2019 midterm elections are mounting. Although the Commission on Elections (Comelec) has assessed that this political exercise was quite a success, there is a growing speculation that it may have been rigged.

For one, people are asking why after the first volley of data transmissions at election night, the transparency mirror servers were suddenly halted for about seven hours. Early morning of the following day the transparency servers recorded 92.89% of the nationwide elections returns. But then at about 5:50 AM, GMA News reported that the ERs posted at the same servers recoiled back to 49.76%. Reportedly, the tech guys of Comelec blamed the snafu on “java error”. How on earth could a very serious nationwide tally be so technically irresponsible and backward in a time and age when even kids in school know coding and the facility of the programming language?

After 3 automated elections or 9 years of cuddling the vote counting machines (VCM), the technical glitches have worsened. In 2010, only 205 VCMs malfunctioned. This year, the 4th of automated exercise, 600 VCMs conked out, as if the billions of pesos budget were not enough to refurbish the machines that are used only once in every three years. Add to these woes were about 1,665 secure digital (SD) cards that did not work and, therefore, had to be replaced during these elections. In 2016 presidential elections only 120 SD cards were faulty. SD cards are not simple computer parts that can be bought openly from third party suppliers, because they can be preformatted to cause pre-programmed and even erroneous data memory.

Despite these serious technical glitches, Comelec has trivialized them saying that they did not destroy the integrity of the political exercise. But one malfunctioning VCM that was not replaced for one reason or the other, could easily have disenfranchised a good number of voters and, therefore, could seriously affect the close margins of democratically competing candidates. The glitches of these technical tools should never be dismissed as if they were a small percentage of the total number of VCMs. They have major political and credibility implications.

But how we wish and pray that those glitches were merely technical—and not indeed political.

## Teaching piety to today's youth

THIS may indeed sound like a pipe dream or an illusion, given the way many young people nowadays are, but this simply has to be done. We know that without piety, we would be like branches detached from the vine. Death, spiritual more than physical, would just be a matter of time. So, no matter how impossible things may look, we just have to do whatever we can to teach piety to today's youth.

We doubtless cannot underestimate the complexity of the challenge. Today's youth, at least a good number of them, are dominated by all sorts of isms and anomalies—materialism, technicism, agnosticism, atheism, plus pornography, drugs, alcoholism, etc. These are some of the demons we have to contend with. They certainly are formidable, but let's remind ourselves that with God's grace, nothing is impossible, and if we do things with trust and love for God, everything, including our mistakes, will work out for the good. (cfr. Rom 8,28)

We just have to make sure that we, as elders, lead a genuine life of piety. That's simply because we cannot give what we do not have, nor teach what we do not know, nor show what we do not live ourselves. Let's hope that with our presence alone, many of today's youth can feel edified and get inspired and encouraged to be pious themselves. If we really are pious, having a vibrant and intimate relationship with God, we cannot help but also feel the urge to help the others, especially the young ones, to know, love and serve God as well as to do the same to the others. This urge is one clear proof that we have genuine piety. Otherwise, we have reason to doubt about our piety.

Among the concerns that we have to tackle is the effort to adapt things to the way the young ones are nowadays. We have to accept and deal with them the way they are, much like what Christ did to bring us to him. We have to learn how to speak their language to be able to connect with them, and to present the doctrine of our faith and the practices of piety in the way they can understand, appreciate and make as their own.

We should not ignore the very conspicuous fact that many of the young people today find the doctrine of our faith quite abstruse, way above their head. They seem unable to connect and relate. Or their understanding of it is shallow and with a lot of gaps. The same with the many practices of piety which they often find to be anachronistic to their current lifestyle. Many young people today have the bias that these practices of piety are only for some 'special' people.

Let's hope and pray that we the elders can have the versatility and creativity that genuine piety can actually give. We need to loosen up for this very exciting 'game' of teaching piety to the youth. Let's take advantage of the new technologies and growing amount of literature that can help us adapt ourselves to the young ones.

We may have to organize games, camps, excursions. But give special attention to winning their friendship and confidence and entering into their private individual lives in order to help them. As true friends, we should give and share with them the greatest good we can have, and that is to bring them to God and to make them see and feel all the goodness and love of God.



## Why an independent Senate

Panaghoy

Bp. Broderick Pabillo



POWER is intoxicating. It is insatiable. Once one has it, one wants to have more of it. For this reason, power has to be controlled. This is especially true of power over people. There is then great wisdom that there should be checks and balances for the proper exercise of power in governance. In a democracy these checks and balances are institutionalized in the different branches of the government. Hence, we have the legislative, the executive and the judiciary which are supposed to be independent of each other and should check each other. We also have other institutions which scrutinize the exercise of power, like the press and the civil societies, and individual citizens who care for the common good.

Dictators do not want the checks and balances of power because they want total control. They do not want to be hampered in their exercise of power. This is why they tend to control the other institutions of governance either by buying them out, or by curtailing their activities through laws, by breaking their will through coercion and intimidation,

or plainly through elimination by killing them, by jailing them or by exile.

Is this not happening in our country now? The Lower House of Congress is in general subservient to the President who buys them out through favors and pork barrel allocations. The Supreme Court is now under the control of the President by ousting the Chief Justice and in the process taming the other justices. Senator Delima is now two years in jail for unproven allegations. The Ombudsman and the Comelec Chairman are appointees of the present President. The military and the police are being wowed by increased salaries and political appointments of retired generals in civilian positions; business is being threatened by the controls of the bureaucracy; press freedom is threatened by spurious allegations and false news. Even the church and civil societies are fair game for vicious jokes and outright threats. In this time the Senate is still showing its independence. But for how long? This coming election is crucial. If we are able to elect independent minded people who

are courageous and truthful in serving the country, we have a fair chance of preserving democracy in the land. If not, then we fall into de facto control of the President who is bent on exercising power without any control and who is very sensitive to criticisms.

The bishops of the CBCP had seen this already back in January. They came out with their pastoral letter on the May elections entitled: Seek the Common Good. It stated: “The year 2019 is not just an ordinary election year. The midterm election in May 13 is in itself already crucial. In our country today the checks and balances in the government are being undermined. So far the senate is the institution in the government that is holding out as our country is inching towards total control. It is very crucial therefore that we elect candidates who are principled, courageous, and who have the common good as their main concern and not their own political interests.” In this election then let us vote for candidates who can assure an independent senate.

Panaghoy / A6



## And That's The Truth

Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

TWO days after the midterm elections, the air still crackles with comments and complaints about the conduct of the democratic exercise—mostly revolving around the disconnect between Comelec's claim of the “successful and peaceful” election and the voters' contrary observation regarding the 600 malfunctioning vote-counting machines (VCM).

Whether our bets won or lost, we will all continue losing if we dismiss these irregularities as “normal”, especially since the deals with Smartmatic have long been under question. They are worse than mere “technical

glitches”, because it's human beings, not machines that close deals leading to such unfortunate developments. And like it or not, they sow doubt and suspicion in the mind of voters.

Would you not smell something fishy that the malfunctions and the delays in the transmission of results, et al, would be explained away by a simple “Java error”, or “walang signal” in the area? Or by the claim that the SD cards were “defective” because they were “not bundled with the Smartmatic package?” Maybe we can shrug off a dozen or so malfunctioning VCM as lemons, but not 600! A

monumental amount of 10.18 billion pesos of taxpayers' money was allotted to COMELEC for this year—voters deserve explanations, not excuses that insult their intelligence. Those involved should be transparent and open their documents for public scrutiny—or risk repeating the same rotten mistakes.

On the upside? Political dynasties have reportedly been toppled, with former Goliaths downed by emerging Davids. Really? Look again—four members of the Marcos clan won in Ilocos Norte; and the Cayetanoes are lording it over in Taguig. And aren't the newly elected leaders mostly

descendants of TRAPOS, too? Wait a few years—dynasties die hard.

Lest we forget that life goes on outside of our puny political concerns, we turn our attention to “the world outside”, recall the news and read the message behind events.

At the beginning of this year, on January 27, the Our Lady of Mount Carmel cathedral in Jolo was bombed, killing 22 worshippers, as Mass was being celebrated. Last Easter Sunday, three churches in Sri Lanka were attacked, again killing worshippers that numbered to hundreds. Last May 12, during Mass, an

And That's the Truth / A6

## Let's build a beautiful world

Candidly Speaking

Fr. Roy Cimigala



THIS should be our burning desire. And we should put all our strength in this direction. To be sure, it is for the good of all. Yes, we can and should build a beautiful world. But we have to start with our own selves, and then from us, let's spread the fever around.

And by starting with our own selves, we mean that we have to make sure our spiritual life is first of all in order. That's because failing in this, no matter what we do outside us, it is not going to be a beautiful world we will be building, no matter how we manage to project some signs of beauty in it.

We have to understand that beauty, the real beauty that can take on any condition we can find ourselves in this world, can only be found in God. And

for his part, he is most willing to share that sense of beauty with us who are his image and likeness and children of his.

To build a beautiful world, we have to learn to connect the often hidden dots between the material and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal, the mundane and the sacred, the inside and the outside. We have to learn to find meaning in every situation in our life, be it pleasant or unpleasant, joyful or sorrowful. The big problem we have today is precisely our failure to connect these dots.

As St. Paul would put it, “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation,

whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” (Phil 4,11-13)

We need to understand that beauty is a matter of love that comes from God and that brings us back to him, transforming us into his image and likeness. Beauty is not just mainly physical or mathematical. It's not simply a matter of proportion, of texture, of feelings and the like. It's a matter of love. It's not meant to fade and die. It's meant to last in eternity.

With this love, we would know how to derive good from evil, how to purify what is dirty, how to supernaturalize what is simply natural. We would know how to deal with our limitations and

Candidly Speaking / A7

## CBCP Monitor

PROTAGONIST OF TRUTH, PROMOTER OF PEACE

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The CBCP Monitor is published fortnightly by the CBCP - Media Office with editorial and business offices at 3rd Floor, CBCP Compound, 470 General Luna Street, Intramuros, Manila. Email Address: cbcppmonitor@areopaguscommunications.com, Business: (632) 404 - 1612. ISSN 1908-2940.



## By the Roadside

Fr. Eutiquio 'Euly' Belizar, Jr. SThD

"Reports of vote-buying are massive throughout the country." —Gen. Albayalde, PNP, CNN Philippines, May 13, 2019

"VOTE-BUYING has been an integral part of an election in the Philippines. Yang pagboto, lahat yan walang di nagbibili ng boto dito, maniwala ka (in voting, not one of them does not buy votes, believe me)..." — President, Republic of the Philippines, after having voted, Davao City, Rappler, May 13, 2019.

Is this among the reasons behind the results? Does this justify the violation of the country's election laws prohibiting as illegal vote-buying as defined by art. 181.1 of Section 15 on Election Offenses? Or was election vote-buying so massive it was decided by other factors, such as the high popularity of the president comparable to the so-called "Cory magic" of the 90s?

While local elections have varied results, in the national race for the senate, the administration candidates are poised to win all twelve vacant seats, effectively excluding all opposition bets. Naturally the chief executive and his supporters are ecstatic and take this to be a concrete expression of the very high popular support to his administration and its advocacies. The president's spokesman even attributes the administration bets' victory in the senate race to the people believing more the narrative of the president on the "matrix" and other issues (EJKs, drug war, TRAIN law etc.) than those of his political enemies.

1. As a gut sense, it goes without saying that the administration's "political enemies" could include the Catholic Church's hierarchy. The president's incessant tirades are more than enough proof of this. The overwhelming victory of the presidential bets despite

efforts of both "discerning" clergy and "enlightened" Catholic lay leaders to campaign for the opposition bets "in order to preserve an independent senate", the Filipino electorate massively ignored their voices and took the side of the incumbent leader and chose his anointed candidates. I remember our own diocesan strong and consistent campaign against vote-buying, myself taking it up actively in my parish assignment and in our newly-reopened media outlet. The realities on the ground feel like a heavy slap on our faces, as most of our voices now appear to have effectively fallen on deaf ears. Most of our voters, who are mostly poor, chose to sell their votes rather than heed the call of their spirits.

2. The terribly disappointing massive character of vote-buying, not to say the defeat of perceived "more principled and more capable choices" should serve as a reality check for the Church. It is, first of all, a lesson in humility. Not because the ordained are recognized spiritual leaders should they assume to be entitled to receptivity, let alone submissive obedience. We need to re-examine our approaches to resolving vote-buying and persuading the voting faithful to make good, moral choices. Rather than appear condescending to the flock for our high moral stand, we should also take pains to see where they are—abject poverty or lack of adequate education—and how these factor in their choices. They certainly do not doubt the sanctity of their votes; but they cannot likewise deny the urgent grumblings of their material needs.

3. The now familiar (constant, too) verbal attacks by the president against the Catholic Church and its bishops and priests could very well have conditioned many Catholics against her and their receptivity to whatever moral-spiritual

## Dealing with the aftermath

guidelines her leaders provide their flock. As a strategy or tactic, it seems to be paying off. That is to say, despite its being reminiscent of the Hitlerian dictum that "a lie repeated many times becomes truth". Just as the personal attacks against the opposition bets are acknowledged even by pro-government analysts to have negatively impacted their campaigns, so must the hierarchy realize how the verbal abuse against the Church and the faith has eroded her pastors' credibility and effectiveness as agents of social renewal. There must be a humble acknowledgement of our failures but also a renewed commitment to preach the Good News in the socio-political arena "in season and out of season, reproving, entreating, rebuking, with all patience and doctrine" (2 Tim 4:2).

4. The massive vote-buying in Philippine elections is usually paired with our massive poverty. I have no doubt there is much grain of truth to it. But this could also be overstated. The poor are not incapable, first of all, of obeying the law of the land that prohibits vote-buying or vote-selling. They certainly are to be persuaded to bear in mind that being followers of Jesus Christ includes obedience to duly constituted human authority. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except that from God, and those that exist come from him" (Rom 13:1). Moreover, although it is true that our people being mostly poor, they easily succumb to vote-buying, vote-buying itself is anti-poor. For moneyed candidates to take advantage of our people's poverty by giving them cash or other goods to get their votes is to mock their humanity. The words of Proverbs are in point: "Whoever despises the poor

By the Roadside / A7



## Collection Box

Fr. Jerome R. Secillano, MPA

## What elections mean for change

THE election this week is again another crucial test for Filipinos to exercise prudence and wisdom in choosing candidates for elective positions. Different lay groups and movements endorsed candidates who they claimed passed the criteria or standards that are most beneficial to the country and to the millions of poor Filipinos.

These groups studied the issues confronting the nation and identified the candidates who they believe can best deliver the hopes of the suffering citizenry. But while they are very persistent in pushing for their advocacy, there may be millions of voters out there who are simply waiting to have their votes bought and thus basically throw away whatever noble objectives these groups have.

In a meeting with top officials of the Philippine National Police (PNP), it was again pointed out that vote-buying is very rampant and has taken on varying forms and degrees. The most common is for candidates have a barangay or community leaders identify whose votes to buy, delivering the money right on the voter's doorstep on the eve of the elections or on election day itself.

The practice is hardly surprising as it is already part of Filipino culture come election time. The PNP officials admitted that law enforcement alone is not enough to stop it and that education and formation of voters may be beneficial in the long run.

The PNP has, therefore, launched a movement called ASIN (Ang Suhol Iwaksi Natin) and ILAW (Itaguyod ang Legal at Wastong pangangampanya) in partnership with different religious sects, which unfortunately did not include the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

The program is focused on educating the electorate about the disadvantages of vote-selling and a campaign to have candidates shun vote-buying. It hopes to form a culture of honesty, one that is against political patronage that has permeated politics in our country.

The Catholic Church, through the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), has been vigorously involved for years in voters' education and formation but still saw the practice constantly recurring come election time. I believe in the power of education to transform mindsets and principles, but the poverty of hapless Filipinos is just simply too difficult to overcome. Grabbing the opportunity to earn something even just for a day is considered nobler than voting for the right and best candidates.

Part of this education should perhaps focus on "reclaiming" God's presence in public life. The world has been very much secularized. The Philippines is not spared from it. We see and hear people shun God and disrespect Him in public discourses. Hitting religion and the Catholic Church have also become the favorite pastime of some. Worse part is the applause and seeming support of the public each time the Church is bashed.

It is not that we should spare the Church from criticisms, but the attacks are baseless, false, and exaggerated. The motive is obviously to discredit the Church and to reduce her influence in society. People are relentlessly fed with wrong information. Critics repeat these lies at every turn that they now appear to be true, hence, seem worthy of people's belief.

When some churches, therefore, do not allow funeral Masses on Sundays, it is not because the one requesting is poor but simply because liturgical laws do not allow it. Not too many people know that Sunday liturgy takes precedence over other liturgical celebrations, hence, funeral Masses are usually scheduled on other days of the week. To put it plainly, social status is not the real issue here but the liturgical laws that the Church is bound to follow. Unfortunately, some pea-brained Filipinos chose to believe the spin, thus, making the Church look like an inconsiderate and elitist institution that is incapable of serving the people without monetary consideration.

At some point, the propaganda is working. But real truth cannot be hidden for long. People who truly love our country should find ways to make the truth known by unmasking layers and layers of lies propagated by the true enemies of the State whose callousness knows no bounds and is certainly beyond the principles of ethics and decency.

So, who is truly capable of serving without the usual financial windfall? The politicians who will do everything come hell or high water just to be elected? Only stupid people would believe that these politicians have their eyes on public service and not on the prize that goes with elective positions.

Collection Box / A6

## One who did not vote intelligently has no right to complain

AS of press time, all the candidates in the mid-term elections on May 13, 2019 are doing their "huling hirit" (last hurrah or last minute campaign). Political parties are staging motorcades and holding "miting de avance". By the time you read this column, winners might have been proclaimed by the Comelec in the local level like the provincial, city and municipal, and congressional district representatives who would sit in the House of Representatives.

It might, however, take a week to know who would be the winners in the national level. The chairman and members of the Commission on Elections sitting en banc, shall compose the National Board of Canvassers for senators and party-list representatives. It shall canvass the results by consolidating the certificates of canvass electronically transmitted. Thereafter, the national board shall proclaim the winning candidates for senators and party-list representatives.

The Comelec accredited the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting or PPCRV as its citizen-arm during the May 13, 2019 elections, Aside from conducting voters' education, poll watching and voters' assistance (to locate their respective polling

places), PPCRV will also conduct unofficial parallel count. It will receive transmissions of results through its transparency server and compare these results with the 4th copy of election returns which its volunteers nationwide will secure from the Comelec.

PPCRV campaigns for One Good Vote, to have Clean, Honest, Accurate, Meaningful and Peaceful (CHAMP) elections. We, the PPCRV volunteers, hope and pray that all the Filipino voters will vote intelligently the candidates who are pro-God, pro-country, pro-poor, qualified, and were never involved in graft and corruption and plunder cases. When we vote for senators and representatives, we must vote those who are qualified to craft laws, defend the West Philippine Sea, knowledgeable on whether to have charter change. Let us vote for those who oppose Death Penalty, Divorce, Euthanasia or mercy killing, Abortion, Total population control, Homosexual or same sex union, anti-family, anti-life, anti-Church, anti-Religion bills which had been filed and may be filed in Congress. We pray that the voters discern who among the senatorial candidates they will vote because more than ever, we need an independent

## Duc in Altum

Atty. Aurora A. Santiago



senate at this point in time.

Let us observe due diligence that our vote is counted by the machines. Watch out for notorious persons who are out to thwart the will of the people. The voice of the people is the voice of God. We pray that the 2.5 Million new voters will go out and vote the right candidates. These new voters are the young people who will inherit the government that we elect. They should be responsible enough to discern whom to vote, since "we deserve the government that we get."

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Two days before election day, Bishop Pablo Virgilio "Ambo" David of the Diocese of Kalookan released a video sharing his view on how to vote. Bishop Ambo said "Ang pagboto ay hindi lang isang importanteng sangkap ng demokrasya. Ito ay paraan din upang mapanatili ang demokrasya sa pamamagitan ng pagpili ng mga tamang kandidatong ang pangunahing paninindigan ay para sa saligang batas at sa ikabubuti ng nakararami at hindi para sa interes ng mga patron at mga kapartido sa pulitika, lalo na ng mga nasa kapangyarihan na."

Duc in Altum / A7



## Whatever

Fr. Francis Ongkingco

MEDIAVAL religious representations of our Lord had him wearing some sort of straw hat and shouldering a hoe. As Jesus walks on, he has his head inclined, looking down at a kneeling woman who seems to be stopping him from going on: the Magdalene.

It isn't difficult to understand why they conceived this catechetical representation of our Lord: the Gospels after all, attest that Mary Magdalene thought that Jesus was the gardener who was in-charge of the tomb's surroundings.

Why did she mistake him for the gardener? Archaeological findings explain that Mary was kneeling at the tomb's lower level. Jesus, however, was standing on ground level when he approached her from behind. Thus, when Mary turned around, she was only be able to see

Jesus' feet from where she was.

It was only when our Lord greeted her in his familiar tone that Mary was able to recognize Him. We could imagine how she embraced his feet, unwilling that he should ever again escape from her sight. This great devotion of Mary must have moved our Lord's merciful heart.

Our Lord represented as a gardener, however, can give us many spiritual insights. Indeed, Jesus is the divine gardener of the soul who wishes our good ground to produce a rich harvest. It is up to each one, however, to consider how to invest his time and talents in making his spiritual garden fruitful.

This reminded me of a saying we Filipinos have of nag-tatanim. The expression usually has a

negative connotation and often related to anger and revenge. How unfortunate that such a positive term as sowing would be connected to something as vengeful and vile.

On the other hand, the concept of sowing is so wonderful. Our Lord often uses it in his parables and encourages us to sow well so that the seeds of our blessings will reap a hundredfold. This is very important if we also consider another parable of Jesus referring to the enemy who sowed bad seeds.

Jesus warns us that if we are not vigilant, the devil himself will sow bad seed in our souls. From these vicious seeds, we will not reap anything good and will gradually affect and infect others to sowing bad seeds.

Instead of sowing bad seeds let us focus on the seeds that

Jesus our gardener wants us to cooperate in sowing in our lives, in the Church and in other souls. This is a wonderful adventure of coming out with our own brand of holiness that Pope Francis encouraged all youthful souls to consider.

"(...) you won't become holy and find fulfillment by copying others. Imitating the Saints does not mean copying their lifestyle and their way of living holiness: "There are some testimonies that may prove helpful and inspiring, but that we are not meant to copy, for that could even lead us astray from the one specific path that the Lord has in mind for us (Gaudete et Exsultate, #11)". You have to discover who you are and develop your own way of being holy, whatever others may say or think. Becoming a saint means

becoming more fully yourself, becoming what the Lord wished to dream and create, and not a photocopy. Your life ought to be a prophetic stimulus to others and leave a mark on this world, the unique mark that only you can leave. Whereas if you simply copy someone else, you will deprive this earth, and heaven too, of something that no one else can offer." (Christus vivit, #162)

Rather than be burdened by the possibility of sowing bad seeds, let us take the lead in discovering the good seeds that only we could sow while we live. This is the divine invitation and journey that the divine gardener calls us to. May we cling to Him firmly, so that His presence in our lives will always help sow good seeds. This would be ultimately the best way of understanding nag-tatanim!

## Bohol dioceses lead clean-up of campaign trash



Bishop Alberto Uy leads a clean-up drive in Tagbilaran City on May 14, a day after the country's midterm elections. COURTESY OF THE DIOCESE OF TAGBILARAN

CATHOLIC leaders and lay people in Bohol province headed to the streets on May 14 to clean up and dismantle campaign materials.

Holding brooms and garbage bags, Bishop Alberto Uy of Tagbilaran led a group of volunteers to clean the streets of trash generated during Monday's elections.

The prelate lauded those who joined the initiative, and promised to lead more of such exercises to keep the environment clean.

"Let's help each other... by doing this, we also give good examples to other people in our country," Bishop Uy said.

The same initiative is also being done in the adjacent Diocese of Talibon led by Bishop Daniel Parcon.

Bishop Uy also appealed to winning and losing candidates to take down their campaign materials.

Regardless of the outcome of the elections, he said that candidates should lead the cleanup and up-cycling activities.

"This may also reduce the election fever and help us move on and move forward," the prelate said.

"Win or lose, please help us," Bishop Uy appealed. **(CBCPNews)**

### Suppress / A1

"Let us take courage in the knowledge that no matter how despots strive to stifle freedom of expression and thought, the media, the truth, the people, will outlive them," the NUJP said a statement.

Foreign correspondents based in Manila also urged their fellow journalists to

"close ranks" amid efforts to muzzle the media in different parts of the world.

"When we lose our freedom to report the truth, everyone loses. We lose our dignity. We lose our soul," the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (FOCAP) said. **(CBCPNews)**

### Pananaghoy / A4

Already bills on death penalty, on the lowering of the age of criminality to 12 years old, and on Constitutional Change have been passed by subservient Congress. It is the Senate which stop them from becoming laws of the land. Pork Barrel insertions were done by the Lower House and it is the Senate who called the attention of the nation to these insertions. The President is making a lot

of international agreements with China behind the backs of the Filipinos. It is within the competence of the Senate to question these international deals. Where would we be if the President's people and allies fill up the senate hall?

We need strong opposition to preserve our democratic space. We need a strong senate who can prevent the onrush of totalitarianism.

### And That's the Truth / A4

attack on a Catholic church in central Burkina Faso left six persons dead, including the priest; it was the third attack on a church in five weeks in that country.

In Germany, at least eight churches have been vandalized and damaged since early April. Apparently random attacks have also been noted in Scotland, England, Poland, Spain, Italy and Austria, and continued attacks on churches in France have been reported despite the national outpouring of grief that followed the fire that devastated Notre Dame Cathedral April 15.

The sacrilegious acts include the decapitation of a statue of the Virgin Mary; bashing a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; stealing crucifixes, candlesticks, and consecrated hosts; overturning and smashing statues of Saints; defacing church doors with anti-Catholic slogans; and setting sacristies on fire.

A desecration of a different kind took place during last Easter Mass in the church of San Giovanni in Trieste, Italy, when a man who was receiving communion responded to the traditional formula "the Body of Christ" by saying "Thanks" and then asking "What part of the body is this?" Before the shocked congregation he walked away, carrying the consecrated host and denouncing the Catholic religion.

For the longest time the Church has been rocked by sex scandals—all over the world priests have had to face charges and allegations of pedophilia and sexual abuse. The Church has had to defrock high-profile Cardinals for the same offenses, and during the

summit on clerical sex abuse held in Rome last February, Pope Francis promised an end to cover ups.

So what's new? Such scandals as recorded in history books have been there since time immemorial, but now with the internet and social media, news of one offense is magnified millions of times over, and it hurts the soul in ways that may scar it for life. What is the Church to do?

"At that time news reached me of the harm being done in France and of the havoc the heretics had caused and how much this miserable sect was growing. The news distressed me greatly, and as though I could do something or were something, I cried to the Lord and begged Him to remedy this great evil...The world is on fire. Men try to condemn Christ once again, as it were, for they bring a thousand false witnesses against Him. They would raze His church to the ground. Are we to waste our time asking for things that if God were to give them we'd have one soul less in Heaven? No...this is no time to treat with God for things of little importance."

These are the words of the great saint from Avila, Teresa of Jesus. Today, after almost 500 years, they ring relevant, timely, and true. Face to face with the attacks on the Body of Christ, do we have more time to waste on our mundane businesses? Are we to continue trusting in partisan politics and things that lure us away from Christ? Divorced from the cross of Christ even the most brilliant political platforms on earth cannot save us. And that's the truth.

## Nun who fought for social justice dies

SISTER Crecencia "Cres" Lucero, a known human rights defender, has died on May 15. She was 77.

Sr. Lucero, a missionary from the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, died after suffering a stroke the week before.

The nun was attending a convention on human rights with Forum-Asia in Jakarta, Indonesia when she had a stroke, which caused cerebral hemorrhage.

She was rushed to Gatot Soebroto Army Hospital where she underwent surgery the following day.

Sr. Lucero was a long-time advocate for the oppressed and marginalized, and a fighter for human rights, peace and justice in the Philippines.

For many years, she led the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines as chairperson of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the



Sister Crecencia "Cres" Lucero, SFIC

Philippines (AMRSP).

She was also part of the Forum-Asia family for a long time, including serving as a member of the executive committee.

"We cannot express what a loss the passing of Sister Cres is for the human rights movement in the Philippines and in the rest of Asia," the

Forum-Asia said.

"We can only commit ourselves to continuing her struggle, and honor her by standing with, for and behind the grass-roots communities that she so wholeheartedly supported," it added.

The AMRSP said Sr. Lucero was an inspiration

for all those working for human rights and ecological advocacies.

"Her passing away is big loss for us, for the Church, and for our country especially in this dark time of our society," said Fr. Angelito Cortez, AMRSP coexecutive secretary. **(CBCPNews)**

### Rampant / A1

buying marred the polls.

"Reports of vote-buying with pictures of money and shaded sample ballots are just so disheartening," Alminaza said.

In the Philippines, vote-buying has been part of every election despite laws restricting it.

The bishop said he's starting to believe that some politicians and rich people "don't really want to alleviate people from poverty so they can always control them".

"I'm having doubts how truly free and informed are the votes cast and how reflective or indicative of the people's

will are the results," he said.

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) admitted that vote buying incidents in this year's polls are worse than the 2016 elections.

Comelec Commissioner Rowena Gananza also noted that the amount of bribe in exchange for votes has increased.

After a 10-hour voting period, polling stations closed in most part of the country at 6pm on Monday.

The elections, however, were marred by glitches, including technical issues related to vote-counting machines

(VCMs) that malfunctioned.

The Comelec said there were about 400 to 600 VCMs that malfunctioned and had to be replaced.

These make at least a 220 percent increase in malfunction cases than the 2016 polls.

The Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) also monitored such incidents.

But PPCRV executive director Maribel Buenaobra said they are still collating all incident reports before making a general assessment of the elections. **(CBCPNews)**

### Analysis / A1

should be addressed directly by ecclesiastical authorities. But ought those situations be treated the same?

Applying the Church's new policy, some canonists have said, requires that Church officials clarify that different kinds of offenses will, and should, merit different kinds of penalties.

At the close of the global summit on sexual abuse in February, the organizing committee announced that the follow-up from the meeting would include a *motu proprio*, now published. They also said that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would produce a *vademecum*, a practical and procedural handbook, outlining for bishops their responsibilities.

Many in Rome and in diocesan chanceries have told CNA they hope that such a manual will address these concerns, spelling out or at least acknowledging

an escalating gradation of crimes and correspondent penalties.

It is not clear when the CDF might publish such a document, or even if it will address these questions. But those concerns might be addressed by other Vatican or diocesan offices.

It is possible that bishops might soon request guidance from the Congregation for Clergy, the curial department which receives the vast majority of cases involving priestly misconduct and requests for laicization. Given that the Congregation for Clergy has long handled clerical sexual issues not defined as sufficiently grave to be sent to the CDF, its experience could prove valuable to bishops trying to understand new canonical definitions and their implications.

At the same time, bishops themselves might begin to act to bring the provisions of Vos

estis into force in their own dioceses.

Bishops like Baltimore's Archbishop William Lori have already begun taking independent initiatives, like setting up third party reporting mechanisms, to address the current crisis. Bishops might soon decide to also establish localized policies reflecting the norms of Vos estis.

Bishops are canonically free to establish their own guidelines on how they will be applying the new norms of Vos estis, offering what many of the faithful say they want most to see: clear, concrete, steps towards reform in their own home dioceses.

Diocesan norms could also provide the reassurances that many priests are hoping for regarding their rights in the face of accusations, credible or otherwise, and the assurance that "zero-tolerance" will not be a byword for summary justice.

Before the February summit, Pope Francis repeatedly stated his intention not to provide a universal and comprehensive canonical solution to the sexual abuse crisis. Rather, the pope's stated aim was to provide a global framework which supported bishops in their own responsibilities.

Despite Francis's insistence that he is providing a foundation for local dioceses to build upon, many bishops are still tempted to look to Rome or the national bishops' conference to tell them what to do next.

In the same way that no investigative model or review board can insulate the Church from individual episcopal negligence, no papal decree of conference policy can substitute for conversion and leadership by individual bishops. Rome has spoken, and bishops will now face the challenge of carrying out the pope's direction.

### Glitches / A1

resolved," said Fr. Edwin Gariguez, Caritas executive secretary.

The bold call was made after reports of possible fraud were received by Caritas due to major technical glitches involving vote counting machines and transparency servers.

In 2016, only 188 VCMs were reported to malfunction nationwide. In 2019, this number increased to 400-600 VCMs.

### Unresolved issues

Earlier, the Automated Election

System (AES) Watch stated that "unless glaring vulnerabilities of the automated election system and the non-compliance of the critical provisions of RA 9369 are resolved, the 2019 elections will create credibility issues."

It said that major constraints left unresolved by Comelec and Smartmatic are the absence of public access to election data, the lack of comprehensive and credible source code review, and the lack of digital signatures.

The Comelec, since September 2018, has

initiated 82 enhancements of the automated machines to ensure integrity and accuracy of the 2019 mid-term elections.

"However, we have seen how some of these enhancements still failed during the May 13 elections resulting to the alarming perception of election fraud," quipped Gariguez.

"Therefore, it is but imperative for the Comelec to postpone the proclamation of the winners for the senatorial race until the alleged fraud-tainted results are validated and cleared," he said.

### Collection Box / A5

It is, therefore, paramount to really consider what Cardinal Chito Tagle suggested in one of our clergy meetings, to establish an institution, a formation center that will educate, train, and form future leaders on the true essence of public service. The focus is not on the academic aspect of it, the University of the Philippines (UP) and other schools have that already, but the formation of conscience and the heart that will make politicians true public servants who will truly serve the interests of the people. He came across one such institution in one of his

visits to Germany and mulled over the idea of having one in the Philippines. Who will do it? Maybe the Church can.

Politics in the Philippines is an enterprise. It is a business investment that usually yields huge returns through corruption and political patronage. The money used for buying votes is just a small amount compared to what politicians will get once elected. Well, not all politicians are corrupt or soul-less, but the many years they spent in public service with public funds in tow should have at least by now produced some change in the life of the people.

However, when I asked some senatorial and local candidates about the problems people tell them during the campaign, they said they are the same as before, like unemployment, health issues, etc. This simply tells me that for all the years that they are supposed to be serving the people, they've not been able to solve these problems and could only offer endless promises which people naively believe even without the assurance of being fulfilled.

Change is indeed difficult to achieve. The present administration won during the 2016 elections on the pretext of change

but has not truly delivered on that promise almost three years after. What we are seeing right now are sporadic small changes that the administration would forcefully pass on as significant achievements but have, in fact, not made even the slightest impact on the life of the people. Many are still poor, unemployed, uneducated, homeless, and some lifeless!

After this election, the winners will be many times richer but the losers won't surely be poor much like the rest of poor Filipinos.

# Bishop chides Villar for backing coal plant in Negros



Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos. FILE PHOTO

SAN CARLOS City—A Catholic bishop has chided reelectionist Senator Cynthia Villar for supporting the construction of coal-fired power plants in Negros Occidental.

Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos said it was the least he expected from Villar, who chairs the Senate committee on environment and natural resources.

“We are strongly disappointed with the Senator’s statement throwing support for the proposed coal-fired power plant,” Alminaza said.

The bishop said the lawmaker “merely echoes the lies” sold to the public by the project’s proponents and its supporters in the government.

The senator was in Victoria City on

May 7 for the inauguration of a biomass power plant.

At a press conference, Villar said that coal is attractive for poor countries like the Philippines because they produce cheaper electricity.

She said it’s about time for the country to study new technology that will make coal more acceptable like in the US.

San Miguel Corp. (SMC) Global Power is planning to install a 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant in San Carlos City.

Bishop Alminaza said that Villar’s position only showed her “gross ignorance and incompetence” and her “lack of foresight, vision and care for the environment”.

“And there is no such a thing as ‘clean coal,’” he said.

The prelate also said that Villar is “out of touch” for saying that coal plants are in countries where there are high prices of electricity.

He cited the case of Iloilo which has at least three coal-fired power plants but has one of the most expensive power rates in the country.

The bishop also refuted the senator, saying that coal plants have already been closed in many places in the US, Germany and other European countries.

As of press time, Villar was leading the Senate race based on partial counts, both official and unofficial. **(CBCP News)**

## Religious, rights groups fight ‘red tagging’

A RELIGIOUS group of nuns and priests have asked the Philippines’ highest court for legal protection against threats to their lives after they were tagged as having links to terror groups by the military.

The Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP) joined other human rights organizations in filing a petition on May 6 for writs of amparo and habeas data before the Supreme Court.

The writ of amparo (protection) was instituted by the Supreme Court in 2007 as a legal remedy to any person who felt that his life, liberty and security were threatened by an unlawful act or omission of a government official.

The writ of habeas data (access to information) was introduced by the Supreme Court in 2008 to give individuals the right to find out what information is being kept about them by the government, and to demand its updating, rectification or destruction.

The RMP, an organization of priests, nuns and lay people, claimed that one of its members was a victim of extrajudicial killing while others have been detained.

Australian missionary nun Patricia Fox, a member of the RMP who drew the ire of President Rodrigo Duterte for joining protest rallies, was forced to leave the country after failing to get her visa extended.

The missionary



organization has been identified as a “terrorist front” in flyers handed out by suspected military personnel in the southern Philippines.

“This is a response to the worsening attacks, terrorist tagging by the military and the ongoing smear campaign against human rights defenders,” said Elisa Lubi, chairwoman of rights group Karapatan.

“Human rights advocacy is not a crime, yet human rights workers are being killed, threatened, harassed and jailed on trumped-up charges.”

The groups named Duterte, officials of the presidential palace and security officials as respondents to the petition.

They submitted to the Supreme Court six public

speeches by Duterte where he tagged the organizations as “communist fronts.”

Lubi said 48 human rights workers have been killed by government forces from 2001 to 2019 while several rights leaders and members have received death threats.

“Petitioners who are legitimate organizations recognized both here and abroad, including their officers and members, have become open targets of human rights violations,” read the groups’ petition.

It said the “glaringly numerous incidents of threats, harassment and killings” are aimed at curtailing their rights to freely exercise their advocacies.

“The red tagging ... further

aggravated the threats against the life, liberty and security of the petitioners,” it added.

Aside from the writs, petitioners also asked the court for a temporary protection order for their members.

The groups appealed to the Supreme Court to see “the merit of our petition, the dangers of our work, and eventually decide in favor of human rights defenders.”

On May 3, the Supreme Court granted a similar petition by the National Union of People’s Lawyers and ordered the Court of Appeals to hear on May 14 the group’s petition for a protection order. **(Joe Torres/UCAN)**

### Duc in Altum / A5

(Voting is not only an important feature of democracy. It is a means to keep democracy by electing the right candidates who defend the Constitution and the good of everyone, not for his vested interest and that of his backers or political party, especially those who are already in power.)

Bishop Ambo clarified why bishops and priests avoid public endorsement of candidates. He stated that “our leadership is in the moral and spiritual aspect. Involvement in politics is more appropriate for the laity who are majority in the church. After the period when the people were divided by politics, one of our duties is to unite the citizens as one family of God. We will have difficulty to do this duty if we would publicly endorse a particular candidate and political party.”

On the issue of whether we can maintain or not the freedom and democracy in our

country, Bishop Ambo said “Ang sagot, nasa atin din mga kamay sa darating na halalan.” (The answer is in our hands this coming election).

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Some quotable quotes this election.

John Kennedy - “The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all.” Og Mandino— “Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough.” Franklin Roosevelt— “Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely.” Also from Pres. Roosevelt— “The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country.” Robert Kennedy— “Elections remind us not only of the rights but the responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy.” The one

quote I like most is from an American writer Louis L’Amour— “To make democracy work, we must be a nation of participants, not simply observers. One who does not vote has no right to complain.”

By the way, for the record, Malacañang declared May 13, 2019 as a special non-working holiday to enable the people to properly exercise their right to vote.

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To my everdearest Inay, Gloria Angles Santiago, I wish you a Happy Mothers’ Day in Heaven. More than ever, we terribly missed you and we love you! Happy Mothers’ Day also to my sisters Violeta Rosales and Flordeliza Imperial, to my sisters-in-law Nisa, Baby and Jinky Santiago, and niece Mary Gretchen Rosales-Castro who had just given birth to their second child Catrione Gaelle which means Pure Joy, a real pure joy to our family.

### Pilgrimages / A3

each day, while others say they see her only once a year now.

Diocesan commissions studied the alleged apparitions from 1982 to 1984 and again from 1984 to 1986, and the then-Yugoslavian bishops’ conference studied them from 1987 to 1990. All three commissions concluded that they could not affirm that a supernatural event was occurring in the town.

In 2010, retired Pope Benedict XVI established a papal commission to study the alleged apparitions. The commission’s report has not been made public, although some of its points

were revealed after Pope Francis spoke about the commission’s work.

Pope Francis acknowledged that pilgrims to the Marian site deserve spiritual care and support, but he also expressed doubts about claims that the apparitions have continued for more than 35 years.

During his flight to Rome from Fatima, Portugal, in May 2017, the pope told journalists that, regarding the Medjugorje commission’s work, “three things need to be distinguished.”

“About the first apparitions, when (the ‘seers’) were young, the report more or less says that the investigation needs

to continue,” the pope said, according to the English translation posted on the Vatican website.

“Concerning the alleged current apparitions, the report expresses doubts,” he said. Furthermore, “personally, I am more ‘mischievous.’ I prefer Our Lady to be a mother, our mother, and not a telegraph operator who sends out a message every day at a certain time—this is not the mother of Jesus.”

Pope Francis said his “personal opinion” is that “these alleged apparitions have no great value.”

The “real core” of the commission’s report, he

said, is “the spiritual fact, the pastoral fact” that thousands of pilgrims go to Medjugorje and are converted. “For this there is no magic wand; this spiritual-pastoral fact cannot be denied.”

The decision to allow organized pilgrimages, banned by the local bishops’ in 1991 and confirmed by the Vatican in 1996, recognizes the need to provide spiritual accompaniment and care to the tens of thousands of Catholics who travel to Medjugorje each year, Gisotti said. It also is a recognition of the “abundant fruits of grace” those pilgrims have experienced. **(Cindy Wooden/CNS)**

## New bishop ready to face threats

DAGUPAN City— A new Catholic bishop in the northern Philippines has expressed his readiness to face threats after recent attacks against church leaders in the country.

Bishop Fidelis Layog, auxiliary bishop of Lingayen-Dagupan, called on members of the clergy not to fear for their lives.

“Being threatened and attacked has always been the experience of the Catholic Church from the very beginning,” said the new prelate during his ordination on May 8.

“The Church has faced persecutions in the past and even up to this time. Let us not fear, knowing that we are never alone. God is with us. God will prevail.”

Several members of the clergy who have been outspoken about human rights abuses in the Philippines say they have received death threats in recent months.

Among them were Bishop Pablo Virgilio David of Kaloocan, the diocese where most drug-related killings have occurred, and Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, a critic of the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte.

### By the Roadside / A5

rebukes his Maker; whoever rejoices in the ruin of another will not go unpunished” (Prov 17:5).

5. Reports regarding clergymen campaigning “from the pulpit” and “using the pulpit” to advance the candidacies of opposition bets to the senate have been heard and even aired on television, the radio and the social media in the name of “keeping the senate as an independent institution”. It really does not take too much to sympathize with them and many people do, this writer included. But the pulpit is no place for partisan political campaigning, whatever the fruit of one’s discernment. Just as vote-buying violates the sanctity of the ballot, partisan campaigning using the pulpit equally tramples underfoot the real purposes of the homily, which is the proclamation of the Good

News, not the promotion of particular persons with particular political views. The homily is the proclamation of the Word to summon all sinners to conversion, not to favor certain sinners as more deserving of the faithful’s votes. There other avenues for that. Moreover, this approach, rather than persuade, turns the faithful off and even induces a reverse action. The current election results are a case in point.

We in the Church are, again, confronted with realities that invite soul-searching, but never surrendering our responsibility to her basic evangelizing mission. There are real dangers to the Lord’s flock, one of which is that of being more docile to voices other than his.

Let us just set and apply ourselves on Him whose voice we are tasked to bring,

### Candidly Speaking / A4

weaknesses, temptations and sins.

With this love, we would know how to handle the many differences that we can have among ourselves. These and even our unavoidable disagreements and conflicts would not compromise our charity towards others. We would be most understanding, compassionate and forgiving. In fact, we would try our best to be helpful to others without expecting any reward.

Yes, these are some ways we can build beauty in this world as we should, because the world itself comes from God and thus also belongs to him. We have a tremendous responsibility in bringing it back to God as he wants it

Authorities have offered to provide security to the bishops and members of the clergy, which was declined.

In 2018, gunmen shot dead three Catholic priests. Fr. Mark Ventura was killed in the town of Gattaran in Cagayan province on April 29, four months after Fr. Marcelito Paez was killed in Nueva Ecija province. In June, Fr. Richmond Nilo was shot dead in the city of Cabanatuan.

Bishop Layog, however, said the foundation of the Church “has been tested for a long time now and up to the present.”

“We must accept and face these challenges because it builds a stronger Church and a deeper faith. It leads us to a deeper relationship with God,” he added.

He said it is time for church people “to show how strong we are in faith and how strong the foundation of our Church is.”

Bishop Layog is the 30th bishop appointed by Pope Francis in the Philippines since 2013.

An estimated 2,000 people attended his ordination at the St. John the Evangelist Cathedral in Dagupan City. **(Joe Torres/UCAN)**

News, not the promotion of particular persons with particular political views. The homily is the proclamation of the Word to summon all sinners to conversion, not to favor certain sinners as more deserving of the faithful’s votes. There other avenues for that. Moreover, this approach, rather than persuade, turns the faithful off and even induces a reverse action. The current election results are a case in point.

We in the Church are, again, confronted with realities that invite soul-searching, but never surrendering our responsibility to her basic evangelizing mission. There are real dangers to the Lord’s flock, one of which is that of being more docile to voices other than his.

Let us just set and apply ourselves on Him whose voice we are tasked to bring,

to be.

The beauty of the world depends on the love-driven beauty of each one of us. We have to help one another in pursuing this goal of building a beautiful world. Thus, we have to do a lot of apostolate, mainly through friendship and confidence even as we take

advantage of the many technologies now available that can facilitate our relation with others.

Let’s be sowers of goodness and love, for this is how we can truly build a beautiful world. In other words, we simply to have to become genuine saints, because that is the only way we can such sowers.

# Pope names new Malolos bishop

POPE Francis has appointed Cebu Auxiliary Bishop Dennis Villarojo as the new bishop of Malolos.

The appointment was announced May 14 to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines by the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila.

At 52, he will be the fifth head of the Malolos diocese, succeeding Bishop Jose Oliveros who died at the age of 71 in May 2018.

For a year that the diocese has been without a bishop, it was managed by Bishop Honesto Ongtioco of Cubao, who was its concurrent apostolic administrator.

A native of Cebu City, Villarojo finished philosophy at San Carlos College Seminary of Cebu and theology at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

He was ordained a priest on June 10, 1994.

After his ordination, he served as the personal secretary of the late Cardinal Ricardo Vidal, who was then the Cebu archbishop.

The bishop also studied at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome from 1998 to 2001 where he obtained a doctorate in Philosophy.

After his studies in Rome, he returned to Cebu and continued serving as Vidal's secretary until 2010 when he eventually became a parish priest.

In 2015, the Vatican appointed him as General Secretary of the 51st International Eucharistic Congress held in Cebu in January 2016.

Few months later that year, he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Cebu, receiving the episcopal



Bishop Dennis Villarojo. SAMMY NAVAJA

consecration the following August 10.

Since April 2019, he's been the lone assistant bishop of Archbishop

Jose Palma after Bishop Oscar Florencio was installed to the Military Ordinariate of the Philippines. (CBCP News)

# Auxiliary bishop ordained for Pangasinan



Thousands gather for the episcopal ordination of Auxiliary Bishop Fidelis Layog of Lingayen-Dagupan at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Dagupan City May 8. COURTESY OF SABINS STUDIO

PANGASINAN'S more than a million Catholics have a new auxiliary bishop, Fidelis Layog.

About 2,000 people attended on May 8 the more than two-hour liturgy where the new bishop promised to be a "companion shepherd".

"Hence, I am a companion priest brother, a companion among families," Layog said.

"As a bishop, I am chosen as a broken servant made whole through my trust in God's mercy," he said.

The ordination at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist was led by Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan.

In his homily, the archbishop said that with position comes power and responsibilities.

But the reality, he emphasized, is that "none of those powers can ever be used for yourself".

"The episcopacy is not meant for enjoyment. Use your powers only with love, for love," Villegas said.

"You will know the real character of that man when you give him great powers. How you will use that power will show who you really are," he said.

Pope Francis on March 18 appointed Layog to assist Archbishop Villegas with the ever-growing number of Catholics in the archdiocese.

A priest of the same archdiocese, he was serving at the Our Lady of Purification Parish in Binmaley, Pangasinan upon his appointment.

Layog, 50, studied philosophy at Mary Help of Christians College Seminary and theology at the Immaculate Conception School of Theology in Vigan City.

After his priestly ordination in 1996, he spent the first four years of his ministry as Prefect of Discipline at the Mary Help of Christians High School Seminary in Dagupan City.

In 2003, he also obtained a degree in Biblical Theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome, Italy. (CBCP News)

## New Intramuros museum features Catholic evangelization



The Museo de Intramuros found on the former site of San Ignacio Church along Arsobizpado St. in the Walled City, features the history of Catholic evangelization in the country. INTRAMUROS ADMINISTRATION

THE Intramuros Administration (IA) on May 2 opened to the public the Museo de Intramuros found on the former site of San Ignacio Church along Arsobizpado St. in the Walled City, which features the history of Catholic evangelization in the country.

The IA is the government cultural agency managing the various cultural and historical places and artifacts within the heritage district of Intramuros under the Philippine Department of Tourism

"This collection of the Intramuros Administration is extremely valuable because it represents the first real attempt to collate and preserve within the Philippines an important aspect of the country's cultural heritage," said Dr. Esperanza Gatbonton who curated the exhibit together with Gino Gonzales, Dr. Cecilia Pilar, and Martin Tinio.

One of the major pieces of the collection is the La Purisima Concepcion de

Intramuros, the ivory image of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is the centerpiece of the annual December Intramuros Grand Marian Procession.

### Reinvented Church structure

Officially refurbished and opened by the IA, San Ignacio Church was the mission house of the Society of Jesus or the Jesuits and was one of the seven churches of Intramuros during the Spanish era. Among these churches only the Manila Cathedral and San Agustin Church remain. According to IA Associate Aide Johhan Joseph Ararao: "The structure of the new Museo de Intramuros has the neo-classical style of the Jesuit Casa Mision Convent and San Ignacio Church is no longer built [with] adobe but [with] concrete due to the need for easier materials."

He said the Church artifacts that have been collected and curated through the years by IA have now all been transferred to the site. Ararao also said: "The Casa Mision is the first site of the exhibit. We have an initial structure for

the church, but it is not yet open to the public because the exhibits in the church replica have not yet been organized."

### Philippine Church history exhibited

IA's new museum features six (6) exhibits presenting the story of the evangelization of the Catholic faith in the Philippines comprising:

- Immaculate Conception, showing various wood-carved images of the Principal Patroness of the Philippines;
- Religious Orders, displaying the images of the saints of the first religious orders that came to the Philippines, namely the Augustinians, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Jesuits and the Augustinian Recollects;
- The Patronato Real, which presents the different early parishes and artworks from the said parishes that were forwarded to the Department of Tourism;
- Religious Colonial Paintings, collected from ruins of old colonial churches from Luzon to the Visayas;
- Exhibits of liturgical

items and vessels and

- The Indio Response, showing urnas and relieves which have been expressions of Filipino artisans to the Catholic evangelization

### Future plans

Accordingly, the second phase of the Museo de Intramuros involves the refurbishing of the interior of San Ignacio Church replica and the completion of its belfries. Ararao pointed out: "For the future, Museo de Intramuros hopes to present more museum items, especially for the preservation of cultural heritage items which are in need of rehabilitation."

As the country celebrated National Heritage Month this May, the Museo de Intramuros is open with free admission. The reconstruction of San Ignacio Church and Convent is a part of the Php900-million Intramuros Rehabilitation Program funded by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone (TIEZA). (Kendrick Ivan Panganiban/CBCP News)

## Chastity Project founder Jason Evert to speak in Manila forum

WORLD-RENOWNED Catholic author, blogger and speaker Jason Evert is returning to the country for "Love #NoFilter", a conference on chastity, love, and human sexuality at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Forum in Pasay City on May 25.

Organized by Catalyst for Character Formation Association (Catalyst), the conference will tackle issues confronting the youth.

Mann Rentoy, former Executive Director and now Board Member of Catalyst, said this is the fourth time that they're bringing Evert back to Manila. "The need continues to be there," he said.

"Anyone as powerful as Jason in addressing teens must be made to speak to the youth as often as possible because of the obvious crisis in chastity and purity among the young (and not so young) today," Rentoy said.

Evert founded Totus Tuus Press and Chastity Project, an organization that promotes chastity primarily to high school and college students.

Evert has masters in Theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, with undergraduate degrees in theology and counselling, with a minor in philosophy.

In 2013, he, along with his wife and fellow speaker Crystallina, spoke at "Real Love Revolution", a pro-life conference in Manila and was attended by around 8,000 students.

"In effect, this is our way of addressing the crisis in character, which is what my organization is all about," Rentoy said.

The Episcopal Commission on Youth (ECY) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) also endorsed the event.

In a statement, ECY chairman Bishop Leopoldo Jaucian of Bangued encouraged the youth, parents, educators and youth ministers to "join, learn and

deepen their understanding of what true love is through this conference."

He sees this as an opportune moment especially since the Church in the Philippines is celebrating the Year of the Youth, "to intensify promoting more possibilities of enriching our youth, particularly on the theme of love."

Topics to be covered in the conference include: Understanding the real meaning and beauty of chastity; Helping young people discern real, authentic, and lasting love; Equipping parents and educators with stories, strategies to effectively talk to teens about sexuality; Equipping schools, parishes, and organizations to effectively form the youth in the area of chastity and relationships; Addressing depression due to failed relationships; and Finding one's soulmate without losing one's soul and more.

The event will feature three conference sessions for three core groups. The morning session is for students, the afternoon is for young adults and the evening session is for educators and parents.

A free special session for school administrators, parish workers, and community leaders will also be held on May 23, from 1.30 pm - 3.00 pm at St. Therese Parish Hall across NAIA Terminal 3.

"In my experience giving chastity talks around the country, young people yearn to know how to discover love that lasts and this conference may just be the starting point of their journey in pursuing love that is true and authentic-with no filters," said Bernz Ordoñez Caasi, an educator, speaker, and mentor from PAREF Northfield School for Boys in Quezon City, which leads the promotion of the conference.

For inquiries and bulk orders with free tickets, email conferences@parefnorthfield.edu.ph or by calling 928 59 56 local 106.

(The 56th annual World Day of Prayer for Vocations was celebrated this year on May 12, 2019, the 4th Sunday of Easter, the Good Shepherd Sunday—Ed)



Pope Francis celebrates an ordination Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican May 12, 2019. The pope ordained 19 new priests. CNS/STEFANO SPAZIANI, POOL

# The courage to take a risk for God's promise

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 2019 World Day of Vocations

DEAR Brothers and Sisters,

After the lively and fruitful experience of the Synod devoted to young people last October, we recently celebrated the Thirty-fourth World Youth Day in Panama City. These two great events allowed the Church to be attentive both to the voice of the Spirit and to the life of young men and women, their questions and concerns, their problems and their hopes.

Building on what I shared with the young people in Panama, I would like to reflect, on this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, on how the Lord's call makes us bearers of a promise and, at the same time, asks of us the courage to take a risk, with him and for him. I will do this by reflecting briefly with you on these two aspects – promise and risk—as they appear in the Gospel account of the calling of the first disciples by the sea of Galilee (Mk 1:16-20).

Two pairs of brothers—Simon and Andrew, and James and John—are going about their daily tasks as fishermen. In this demanding work, they had learned the laws of nature, yet at times, when the winds were adverse and waves shook their boats, they had to defy the elements. On some days, the catch of fish amply repaid their efforts, but on others, an entire night's work was not sufficient to fill their nets, and they had to return to shore weary and disappointed.

Much of life is like that. Each of us tries to realize his or her deepest desires; we engage in activities that we hope will prove enriching, and we put out on a "sea" of possibilities in the hope of steering the right course, one that will satisfy our thirst for happiness. Sometimes we enjoy a good catch, while at others, we need courage to keep our boat from being tossed by the waves, or we are frustrated at seeing our nets come up empty.

As with every call, the Gospel speaks of an encounter. Jesus walks by, sees those fishermen, and walks up to them... The same thing happened when we met the person we wanted to marry, or

when we first felt the attraction of a life of consecration: we were surprised by an encounter, and at that moment we glimpsed the promise of a joy capable of bringing fulfillment to our lives. That day, by the sea of Galilee, Jesus drew near to those fishermen, breaking through the "paralysis of routine" (*Homily for the XXII World Day for Consecrated Life*, 2 February 2018). And he immediately made them a promise: "I will make you fishers of men" (Mk 1:17).

The Lord's call is not an intrusion of God in our freedom; it is not a "cage" or a burden to be borne. On the contrary, it is the loving initiative whereby God encounters us and invites us to be part of a great undertaking. He opens before our eyes the horizon of a greater sea and an abundant catch.

God in fact desires that our lives not become banal and predictable, imprisoned by daily routine, or unresponsive before decisions that could give it meaning. The Lord does not want us to live from day to day, thinking that nothing is worth fighting for, slowly losing our desire to set out on new and exciting paths. If at times he makes us experience a "miraculous catch", it is because he wants us to discover that each of us is called—in a variety of ways—to something grand, and that our lives should not grow entangled in the nets of an ennui that dulls the heart. Every vocation is a summons not to stand on the shore, nets in hand, but to follow Jesus on the path he has marked out for us, for our own happiness and for the good of those around us.

Embracing this promise naturally demands the courage to risk making a decision. The first disciples, called by Jesus to be part of something greater, "immediately left their nets and followed him" (Mk 1:18). Responding to the Lord's call involves putting ourselves on the line and facing a great challenge. It means being ready to leave behind whatever would keep us tied to our little boat and prevent us from making a definitive choice. We are called to be bold and decisive

in seeking God's plan for our lives. Gazing out at the vast "ocean" of vocation, we cannot remain content to repair our nets on the boat that gives us security, but must trust instead in the Lord's promise.

I think primarily of the call to the Christian life which all of us received at Baptism. It teaches us that our life is not a fluke but rather a gift: that of being God's beloved children, gathered in the great family of the Church. It is precisely in the ecclesial community that the Christian life is born and develops, especially through the liturgy. The liturgy introduces us to God's word and the grace of the sacraments; from an early age, we are taught the art of prayer and fraternal sharing. In the end, the Church is our mother because she brings us to new life and leads us to Christ. So we must love her, even when we see her face marred by human frailty and sin, and we must help to make her ever more beautiful and radiant, so that she can bear witness to God's love in the world.

The Christian life thus finds expression in those decisions that, while giving a precise direction to our personal journey, also contribute to the growth of God's kingdom in our world. I think of the decision to marry in Christ and to form a family, as well as all those other vocations associated with work and professional life, with the commitment to charity and solidarity, with social and political responsibilities, and so forth. These vocations make us bearers of a promise of goodness, love and justice, not only for ourselves but also for our societies and cultures, which need courageous Christians and authentic witnesses of the kingdom of God.

In encountering the Lord, some may feel the attraction of a call to the consecrated life or to the ordained priesthood. It is a discovery that can excite and at the same time frighten us, since we feel called to become "fishers of men" in the barque of the Church by giving totally of ourselves in commitment to faithful service of the Gospel and our brothers and

## Prayer for World Day of Prayer for Vocations

HOLY Spirit, stir within us the passion to promote vocations to the consecrated life, societies of apostolic life, diocesan priesthood, and permanent diaconate.

Inspire us daily to respond to Your call with boundless compassion, abundant generosity, and radical availability.

Help us to remember our own baptismal call to rouse us to invite the next generation to hear and respond to Your call.

Inspire parents, families, and lay ecclesial ministers to begin a conversation with young Catholics to consider a how they will live lives of holiness and sacred service.

Nudge inquirers and motivate discerners to learn more about monastic life, apostolic life, missionaries, cloistered contemplative life, and evangelical Franciscan life.

Ignite our Church with the confident humility that there is an urgent need for religious sisters, brothers, deacons, and priests to live in solidarity with those who are poor, neglected, and marginalized.

Disrupt our comfortable lives and complacent attitudes with new ideas to respond courageously and creativity with a daily 'YES!'

Amen.

sisters. Such a decision carries the risk of leaving everything behind to follow the Lord, to devote ourselves completely to him, and to share in his work. Many kinds of interior resistance can stand in the way of making this decision, especially in highly secularized contexts where there no longer seems to be a place for God and for the Gospel. Places where it is easy to grow discouraged and fall into the "weariness of hope" (*Homily at Mass with Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Movements*, Panama, 26 January 2019).

And yet, there can be no greater joy than to risk one's life for the Lord! I would like to say this especially to you, the young. Do not be deaf to the Lord's call. If he calls you to follow this path, do not pull your oars into the boat, but trust him. Do not yield to fear, which paralyzes us before the great heights to which the Lord points us. Always remember that to those who leave their nets and boat behind, and follow him, the

Lord promises the joy of a new life that can fill our hearts and enliven our journey.

Dear friends, it is not always easy to discern our vocation and to steer our life in the right direction. For this reason, there needs to be a renewed commitment on the part of the whole Church – priests, religious, pastoral workers and educators – to provide young people in particular with opportunities for listening and discernment. There is a need for a youth ministry and a vocational promotion that can open the way to discovering God's plan, above all through prayer, meditation on God's word, eucharistic adoration and spiritual accompaniment.

As was made clear several times during the World Youth Day in Panama, we should always look to Mary. Also in the story of this young woman, vocation was both a promise and a risk. Her mission was not easy, yet she did not allow fear to prevail. "It was the 'yes' of someone

# Sexual misconduct of some priests: Cases for the declaration of nullity of sacred ordination

(Part II)

By Fr. Jaime B. Achacoso, J.C.D.

LAST 7 May 2019, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter, *Motu Proprio*, entitled *Vos estis lux mundi* (“You are the light of the world”), containing very specific Norms for the reception and investigation of allegations of sexual misconduct by clerics and members of institutes of consecrated life. To enter in force on 1 June 2019, this Apostolic Letter caps a serious study conducted by the Holy Father with the help of the Episcopate from all over the world, to address this issue once and for all, at the face of continuing revelations—veritable public scandals—of such sexual misconducts by clerics at all levels, committed decades ago for the most part.

Thankfully, the Church in the Philippines has in general been spared of such scandals. Nevertheless, despite the lack of notoriety, such cases do occur and the Pastors are often at a loss on how to proceed: to prosecute the erring cleric (as a matter of penal justice) or to try to rehabilitate him in the ministry (with the attendant risk of provoking a possible scandal in the future, should the victims come out openly)?

The question bears a closer look, as it opens both theologico-pastoral and canonical issues.

## A Radical Solution: Declaration of Nullity of Ordination

As we saw in Part I of this article, if the root of the problem is the ordination of men who were not qualified for the priesthood, then the radical solution would be to “undo” that wrong move. Certainly, a valid ordination cannot be invalidated: once a priest, always a priest. Even more than the irrevocable nature of a valid matrimonial consent, a valid ordination imprints an indelible character that makes the ordained a priest forever. But what if the ordination was invalid?

More than once, confronted with these problems of sexual misconduct by clerics, I have heard people say—bishops and priests included—that perhaps the erring cleric should never have been ordained. And that is the point: if they should never have been ordained, might it not be juridically proven that they were not validly ordained? That is the process for the declaration of nullity of sacred ordination, regulated in cc.1708-1712 of the **Code of Canon Law**. It is something similar to the declaration of nullity of marriage: it is not a breaking of the bond (tantamount to divorce), which goes against the indissolubility of the marriage covenant. Rather, it is a declaration—after judicial process—that the ordination never validly took place; therefore, the cleric is not such after all.

There is a Spanish proverb that says: *muerto el perro, se acabó la rabia*. “With the dog dead, there goes the rabies.” In effect, by declaring the nullity of ordination of the erring cleric, the following ends are accomplished:

1<sup>st</sup> He is taken out of circulation from the sacred ministry, thereby removing any possible harm that he can further inflict by being there. In



Pope Francis prays in front of a candle in memory of victims of sexual abuse as he visits St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Dublin Aug. 25, 2018. Pope Francis has revised and clarified norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable in protecting minors as well as in protecting members of religious orders and seminarians from abuse. PAUL HARING/CNS

a certain way, this could even bring a better closure for the victims, who—if they had been dealt with pastorally—would normally not be vindictive, but rather just concerned for the common good.

2<sup>nd</sup> This clears the way for the rehabilitation of the erring person, who could now address his issues without the burden of the priesthood.

3<sup>rd</sup> All these, without the character of being a punishment for the erring person, which would be the case if a penal process were initiated and a sanction meted on him. In short, the juridic pretension of taking him out of the clerical state is accomplished, without it being a sanction.

### Theologico-canonical doctrine

The theological principle underlying this process is that a valid sacred ordination can never be annulled, since it marks a person with an indelible character. However, the validity of sacred ordination can be impugned on the following grounds: (1) the subject was not a validly baptized male (cf. cc.849, 1024); (2) the minister was not a consecrated bishop (cf. c.1012); (3) there was a substantial defect of rite (cf. c.1009, §2); (4) there was a defect of intention on the part of the ordaining minister; (5) there was a defect of intention on the part of the subject.

On the other hand, factors that concern only the *licit* reception of sacred ordination (cf. cc.1025 sq)—e.g., the existence of an irregularity or impediment or a serious unsuitability on the part of the

candidate—do not affect the validity of the ordination, but may affect the validity of the obligations arising from such ordination, thereby giving ground for the subject's eventual petition for dispensation from such obligations.

For the scenario under consideration—i.e., sexual misconduct of clerics for reasons of gender confusion or unresolved chastity issues—factors 1-3 above are irrelevant. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> factors that bear closer scrutiny.

### Defect of intention on the part of the ordinand

The causes presented to the Holy See have normally involved an alleged defect of intention on the part of the subject. Now the canonical and theological doctrine concerning the intention required for the valid reception of ordination seems to point at a parallel in the doctrine concerning the intention sufficient for the valid reception of baptism—i.e., a person who has reached the use of reason must have at least the habitual intention to receive the sacrament. If there is no such intention, the ordination is not validly received.

If the subject simulates the intention to receive ordination itself, the sacrament is not validly received, but if he has the intention to receive ordination while simulating his intention to assume the obligation of celibacy arising from the ordination (cf. c.1037), the ordination is still valid, and the obligation of celibacy is still considered binding, if not by

the force of the promise, at least by force of the law of the Church.

But what if the simulation is about an essential quality of a sacred minister itself? This would be the case of the ordinand who is aware of a serious lack of aptness—e.g., same sex attraction (SSA) or a homosexual orientation, unresolved issues of chastity (like addiction to pornography, self-abuse or even addiction to sex), or even paedophilia—but nevertheless fraudulently hides such fact from his formators or from the bishop or superior. In this case, the invalidity would not arise from the serious lack of aptness itself (which as we had seen would cause illicitude but not invalidity), but rather from the lack of a valid will for ordination, since what is being willed is a sacred ministry falsely understood as compatible with such vices.

### Defect of intention on the part of the ordaining minister

The object of the intention of the ordaining minister is obviously the ordination of the suitable ordinand. Thus, if the ordinand is in fact unsuitable, one can speak of a defect of intention on the part of the ordaining minister due to an erroneous object. Furthermore, if such an error were brought about by fraud—i.e., the deliberate concealment by the ordinand of such a serious unsuitability, for the purpose of illiciting the intention of the ordaining minister—one could really argue for the invalidity of the ordination.

This is something similar to the case of fraud—regarding a quality which by itself could render marital life difficult—invalidating matrimonial consent. In the case of sacred ordination, the ordaining bishop obviously has the common good of the Church in mind in intending to promote the ordinand to sacred orders (to be at the service of such Church). Hence, the deliberate concealment of a quality that would render the candidate seriously unsuitable for the sacred ministry, should vitiate the intention to a point that it is invalid, and therefore rendering the ensuing sacred ordination invalid.

### Who can impugn the validity of sacred ordination?

Can.1708: *The right to impugn the validity of sacred ordination is held by the cleric himself, or by the Ordinary to whom the cleric is subject, or by the Ordinary in whose diocese he was ordained.* This is because it is a question of the cleric's own status as a person in the Church (cf. c.1501), which he is entitled to choose freely (cf. cc.219 and 1026). On the other hand, the Ordinary would ordinarily raise such a petition because he suspects the invalidity of the ordination and does not want to re-ordain the subject, for reasons of the common good.

Can.1709:

§1: *The petition must be sent to the competent Congregation, which will decide whether the*

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## Using a ciborium as a chalice

(Father Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy and dean of theology at the Regina Apostolorum university, answers the following query:)

**Q:** In an emergency, can a ciborium be used as a chalice? I understand that the chalice is used for the Precious Blood and the ciborium for consecrated hosts, but given their similar design (excepting that the ciborium has a lid), could one be used for the purpose of the other in the event that a chalice or ciborium be broken or damaged, affecting its use? — M.P., Emporia, Kansas

**A:** This is the kind of question in which common sense rather than liturgical norms come into play — basically because liturgical law does not attempt to foresee every eventuality.

We are clearly not before a grave emergency such as a clandestine Mass for persecuted Catholics in a prison camp in which all liturgical norms cannot be applied. We are rather in a kind of last-

minute emergency when somebody damages the chalice before Mass and it cannot be replaced in a reasonable time.

In such cases, I would say that it is permissible to use a chalice-like ciborium in lieu of the chalice proper. Both vessels would probably have been properly blessed to contain the sacred species, and so the ciborium could legitimately be used to contain the Precious Blood.

Indeed it is even possible to confuse them. Not so long ago I celebrated Mass in a South American country. While purifying the “chalice” I noticed a small rise or bump at the bottom of the cup that caused me some doubt. The inside curvature of a chalice's cup is usually smooth whereas ciboria often have a small rise or bump at the bottom that apparently makes it easier to distribute communion

by impeding that the hosts lie perfectly flat. Whatever the cause, I mentioned my doubt to the priest in charge, and a quick exchange of the lid on the “ciborium” in the tabernacle quickly revealed that my intuition was correct and that somebody had inadvertently switched the two sacred vessels.

Since common sense is the general rule, it means that there is no general principle in play. It is obvious that a low ciborium, or one from which it would be difficult to drink without spillage, should not be used even in an emergency.

The rules for making chalices used to be relatively strict, even though various forms were allowed. For example, it was required that the base be wider and heavier than the cup and that the chalice stem's central knob be manageable, hence

not be overly ornate.

Excessive height was to be avoided so as not to impede making the signs of the cross over the chalice, and the border of the cup that is touched by the priest's lip had to be smooth. Most of these norms take into account the rubrics of the extraordinary form in which the priest makes many signs of the cross over the chalice, and above all is required to keep thumb and index finger together from the consecration until the purification including while holding the chalice.

The fact that this gesture no longer exists in the ordinary form, as well as the introduction of concelebration, has led to many innovations in chalice design with generally larger cups, smaller bases and sometimes no chalice stem as such because the priest can easily

hold it up with both hands-free.

The common preference for administering Communion using hosts consecrated in the same Mass, rather than from the tabernacle, has led to wider use of smaller tabernacles and this has also led to a reduction in the size of the ciborium which in many cases no longer bears any resemblance to a chalice.

The above are examples of how some aspects of the liturgy, in this case, the design of chalices and ciboria, are not permanently fixed but practically adapt to conform to current liturgical practice and law.

Only rarely do they transgress the law. For example, in some Roman stores, one still sees for sale fragile ceramic chalices or chalices with a pouring spout even though pouring the Sacred Species is explicitly forbidden in liturgical law.

# “Voc estis lux mundi”

Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio by the Supreme Pontiff Francis

“YOU are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Mt 5:14). Our Lord Jesus Christ calls every believer to be a shining example of virtue, integrity and holiness. All of us, in fact, are called to give concrete witness of faith in Christ in our lives and, in particular, in our relationship with others.

The crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual damage to the victims and harm the community of the faithful. In order that these phenomena, in all their forms, never happen again, a continuous and profound conversion of hearts is needed, attested by concrete and effective actions that involve everyone in the Church, so that personal sanctity and moral commitment can contribute to promoting the full credibility of the Gospel message and the effectiveness of the Church's mission. This becomes possible only with the grace of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts, as we must

the faithful.

I desire that this commitment be implemented in a fully ecclesial manner, so that it may express the communion that keeps us united, in mutual listening and open to the contributions of those who care deeply about this process of conversion.

Therefore, I decree:

## TITLE I GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Art. 1 – Scope of application

§1. These norms apply to reports regarding clerics or members of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life and concerning:

a) delicts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue consisting of:

- i. forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts;
- ii. performing sexual acts with a minor or a vulnerable person;

representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes.

### Art. 2 – Reception of reports and data protection

§1. Taking into account the provisions that may be adopted by the respective Episcopal Conferences, by the Synods of the Bishops of the Patriarchal Churches and the Major Archiepiscopal Churches, or by the Councils of Hierarchs of the Metropolitan Churches *sui iuris*, the Dioceses or the Eparchies, individually or together, must establish within a year from the entry into force of these norms, one or more public, stable and easily accessible systems for submission of reports, even through the institution of a specific ecclesiastical office. The Dioceses and the Eparchies shall inform the Pontifical Representative of the establishment of the systems referred to in this paragraph.

§2. The information referred to in this article is protected and treated in such a way as to guarantee its

methods referred to in the preceding article, or by any other appropriate means.

§3. When the report concerns one of the persons indicated in article 6, it is to be addressed to the Authority identified based upon articles 8 and 9. The report can always be sent to the Holy See directly or through the Pontifical Representative.

§4. The report shall include as many particulars as possible, such as indications of time and place of the facts, of the persons involved or informed, as well as any other circumstance that may be useful in order to ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.

§5. Information can also be acquired *ex officio*.

### Art. 4 – Protection of the person submitting the report

§1. Making a report pursuant to article 3 shall not constitute a violation of office confidentiality.

§2. Except as provided for by canons 1390 CIC and 1452 and 1454 CCEO, prejudice, retaliation

### application

The procedural norms referred to in this title concern the conduct referred to in article 1, carried out by:

- a) Cardinals, Patriarchs, Bishops and Legates of the Roman Pontiff;
- b) clerics who are, or who have been, the pastoral heads of a particular Church or of an entity assimilated to it, Latin or Oriental, including the Personal Ordinariates, for the acts committed *durante munere*;
- c) clerics who are or who have been in the past leaders of a Personal Prelature, for the acts committed *durante munere*;
- d) those who are, or who have been, supreme moderators of Institutes of Consecrated Life or of Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical right, as well as of monasteries *sui iuris*, with respect to the acts committed *durante munere*.

### Art. 7 – Competent Dicastery

§1. For the purposes of this title,



A prelate reverences the crucifix during a penitential liturgy held as part of the meeting on the protection of minors in the church at the Vatican Feb. 23, 2019. The summit brought together the pope and 190 church leaders -- presidents of bishops' conferences, the heads of the Eastern Catholic churches, superiors of men's and women's religious orders and Roman Curia officials. CNS/VATICAN MEDIA

always keep in mind the words of Jesus: “Apart from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5). Even if so much has already been accomplished, we must continue to learn from the bitter lessons of the past, looking with hope towards the future.

This responsibility falls, above all, on the successors of the Apostles, chosen by God to be pastoral leaders of his People, and demands from them a commitment to follow closely the path of the Divine Master. Because of their ministry, in fact, Bishops, “as vicars and legates of Christ, govern the particular churches entrusted to them by their counsel, exhortations, example, and even by their authority and sacred power, which indeed they use only for the edification of their flock in truth and holiness, remembering that he who is greater should become as the lesser and he who is the chief become as the servant” (Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 27). What more closely concerns the successors of the Apostles concerns all those who, in various ways, assume ministries in the Church, or profess the evangelical counsels, or are called to serve the Christian People. Therefore, it is good that procedures be universally adopted to prevent and combat these crimes that betray the trust of

iii. the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography, as well as by the recruitment of or inducement of a minor or a vulnerable person to participate in pornographic exhibitions;

b) conduct carried out by the subjects referred to in article 6, consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious regarding the delicts referred to in letter a) of this paragraph.

§2. For the purposes of these norms,

a) “minor” means: any person under the age of eighteen, or who is considered by law to be the equivalent of a minor;

b) “vulnerable person” means: any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence;

c) “child pornography” means: any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any

safety, integrity and confidentiality pursuant to canons 471, 2° CIC and 244 §2, 2° CCEO.

§3. Except as provided for by article 3 §3, the Ordinary who received the report shall transmit it without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the events are said to have occurred, as well as to the Ordinary of the person reported, who proceed according to the law provided for the specific case.

§4. For the purposes of this title, Eparchies are equated with Dioceses and the Hierarch is equated with the Ordinary.

### Art. 3 – Reporting

§1. Except as provided for by canons 1548 §2 CIC and 1229 §2 CCEO, whenever a cleric or a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or of a Society of Apostolic Life has notice of, or well-founded motives to believe that, one of the facts referred to in article 1 has been committed, that person is obliged to report promptly the fact to the local Ordinary where the events are said to have occurred or to another Ordinary among those referred to in canons 134 CIC and 984 CCEO, except for what is established by §3 of the present article.

§2. Any person can submit a report concerning the conduct referred to in article 1, using the

or discrimination as a consequence of having submitted a report is prohibited and may constitute the conduct referred to in article 1 §1, letter b).

§3. An obligation to keep silent may not be imposed on any person with regard to the contents of his or her report.

### Art. 5 – Care for persons

§1. The ecclesiastical Authorities shall commit themselves to ensuring that those who state that they have been harmed, together with their families, are to be treated with dignity and respect, and, in particular, are to be:

- a) welcomed, listened to and supported, including through provision of specific services;
- b) offered spiritual assistance;
- c) offered medical assistance, including therapeutic and psychological assistance, as required by the specific case.

§2. The good name and the privacy of the persons involved, as well as the confidentiality of their personal data, shall be protected.

## TITLE II PROVISIONS CONCERNING BISHOPS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS

### Art. 6 – Subjective scope of

“competent Dicastery” means the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, regarding the delicts reserved to it by the norms in force, as well as, in all other cases and as far as their respective jurisdiction is concerned, based on the proper law of the Roman Curia:

- the Congregation for the Oriental Churches;
- the Congregation for Bishops;
- the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples;
- the Congregation for the Clergy;
- the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

§2. In order to ensure the best coordination, the competent Dicastery informs the Secretariat of State, and the other Dicasteries directly concerned, of the report and the outcome of the investigation.

§3. The communications referred to in this title between the Metropolitan and the Holy See take place through the Pontifical Representative.

### Art. 8 – Procedure applicable in the event of a report concerning a Bishop of the Latin Church

§1. The Authority that receives a

Voc / B3



Clerical sex abuse survivors and their supporters rally outside Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome Feb. 21, 2019. PAUL HARING/CNS

report transmits it both to the Holy See and to the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province where the person reported is domiciled.

§2. If the report concerns the Metropolitan, or the Metropolitan See is vacant, it shall be forwarded to the Holy See, as well as to the senior suffragan Bishop by promotion, to whom, if such is the case, the following provisions regarding the Metropolitan apply.

§3. In the event that the report concerns a Papal Legate, it shall be transmitted directly to the Secretariat of State.

#### **Art. 9 – Procedure applicable to Bishops of Eastern Catholic Churches**

§1. Reports concerning a Bishop of a Patriarchal, Major Archiepiscopal or Metropolitan Church *sui iuris* shall be forwarded to the respective Patriarch, Major Archbishop or Metropolitan of the Church *sui iuris*.

§2. If the report concerns a Metropolitan of a Patriarchal or Major Archiepiscopal Church, who exercises his office within the territory of these Churches, it is forwarded to the respective Patriarch or Major Archbishop.

§3. In the preceding cases, the Authority who receives the report shall also forward it to the Holy See.

§4. If the person reported is a Bishop or a Metropolitan outside the territory of the Patriarchal, the Major Archiepiscopal or the Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*, the report shall be forwarded to the Holy See.

§5. In the event that the report concerns a Patriarch, a Major Archbishop, a Metropolitan of a Church *sui iuris* or a Bishop of the other Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*, it shall be forwarded to the Holy See.

§6. The following provisions relating to the Metropolitan apply to the ecclesiastical Authority to which the report is to be forwarded based on this article.

#### **Art. 10 – Initial duties of the Metropolitan**

§1. Unless the report is manifestly unfounded, the Metropolitan

immediately requests, from the competent Dicastery, that he be assigned to commence the investigation. If the Metropolitan considers the report manifestly unfounded, he shall so inform the Pontifical Representative.

§2. The Dicastery shall proceed without delay, and in any case within thirty days from the receipt of the first report by the Pontifical Representative or the request for the assignment by the Metropolitan, providing the appropriate instructions on how to proceed in the specific case.

#### **Art. 11 – Entrusting the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan**

§1. If the competent Dicastery considers it appropriate to entrust the investigation to a person other than the Metropolitan, the Metropolitan is so informed. The Metropolitan delivers all relevant information and documents to the person appointed by the Dicastery.

§2. In the case referred to in the previous paragraph, the following provisions relating to the Metropolitan apply to the person charged with conducting the investigation.

#### **Art. 12 – Carrying out the investigation**

§1. Once he has been appointed by the competent Dicastery and acting in compliance with the instructions received, the Metropolitan, either personally or through one or more suitable persons:

- collects relevant information regarding the facts;
- accesses the information and documents necessary for the purpose of the investigation kept in the archives of ecclesiastical offices;
- obtains the cooperation of other Ordinaries or Hierarchs whenever necessary;
- requests information from individuals and institutions, including civil institutions, that are able to provide useful elements for the investigation.

§2. If it is necessary to hear from a minor or a vulnerable person, the Metropolitan shall adopt appropriate procedures, which take

into account their status.

§3. In the event that there are well-founded motives to conclude that information or documents concerning the investigation are at risk of being removed or destroyed, the Metropolitan shall take the necessary measures for their preservation.

§4. Even when making use of other persons, the Metropolitan nevertheless remains responsible for the direction and conduct of the investigation, as well as for the timely execution of the instructions referred to in article 10 §2.

§5. The Metropolitan shall be assisted by a notary freely appointed pursuant to canons 483 §2 CIC and 253 §2 CCEO.

§6. The Metropolitan is required to act impartially and free of conflicts of interest. If he considers himself to be in a conflict of interest or is unable to maintain the necessary impartiality to guarantee the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to recuse himself and report the circumstance to the competent Dicastery.

§7. The person under investigation enjoys the presumption of innocence.

§8. The Metropolitan, if requested by the competent Dicastery, informs the person of the investigation concerning him/her, hears his/her account of the facts and invites him/her to present a brief in defence. In such cases, the investigated person may be assisted by legal counsel.

§9. Every thirty days, the Metropolitan sends a status report on the state of the investigation to the competent Dicastery.

#### **Art. 13 – Involvement of qualified persons**

§1. In accordance with any eventual directives of the Episcopal Conference, of the Synod of Bishops or of the Council of Hierarchs regarding how to assist the Metropolitan in conducting the investigation, the Bishops of the respective Province, individually or together, may establish lists of qualified persons from which the Metropolitan may choose those most suitable to assist in the investigation, according to the needs of the individual case and, in particular, taking into account the

cooperation that can be offered by the lay faithful pursuant to canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO.

§2. The Metropolitan, however, is free to choose other equally qualified persons.

§3. Any person assisting the Metropolitan in the investigation is required to act impartially and must be free of conflicts of interest. If he considers himself to be in a conflict of interest or be unable to maintain the necessary impartiality required to guarantee the integrity of the investigation, he is obliged to recuse himself and report the circumstances to the Metropolitan.

§4. The persons assisting the Metropolitan shall take an oath to fulfil their charge properly.

#### **Art. 14 – Duration of the investigation**

§1. The investigation is to be completed within the term of ninety days or within a term otherwise provided for by the instructions referred to in article 10 §2.

§2. Where there are just reasons, the Metropolitan may request that the competent Dicastery extend the term.

#### **Art. 15 – Precautionary measures**

Should the facts or circumstances require it, the Metropolitan shall propose to the competent Dicastery the adoption of provisions or appropriate precautionary measures with regard to the person under investigation.

#### **Art. 16 – Establishment of a fund**

§1. Ecclesiastical Provinces, Episcopal Conferences, Synods of Bishops and Councils of Hierarchs may create a fund, to be established according to the norms of canons 116 and 1303 §1, 1° CIC and 1047 CCEO and administered according to the norms of canon law, whose purpose is to sustain the costs of the investigations.

§2. At the request of the appointed Metropolitan, the funds necessary for the purpose of the investigation are made available to him by the administrator of the fund; the Metropolitan remain duty-

bound to present an account to the administrator at the conclusion of the investigation.

#### **Art. 17 – Transmission of the documents and the votum**

§1. Having completed the investigation, the Metropolitan shall transmit the acts to the competent Dicastery, together with his *votum* regarding the results of the investigation and in response to any queries contained in the instructions issued under article 10 §2.

§2. Unless there are further instructions from the competent Dicastery, the faculties of the Metropolitan cease once the investigation is completed.

§3. In compliance with the instructions of the competent Dicastery, the Metropolitan, upon request, shall inform the person who has alleged an offence, or his/her legal representatives, of the outcome of the investigation.

#### **Art. 18 – Subsequent measures**

Unless it decides to provide for a supplementary investigation, the competent Dicastery proceeds in accordance with the law provided for the specific case.

#### **Art. 19 – Compliance with state laws**

These norms apply without prejudice to the rights and obligations established in each place by state laws, particularly those concerning any reporting obligations to the competent civil authorities.

*The present norms are approved ad experimentum for three years.*

*I establish that the present Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio be promulgated by means of publication in the Osservatore Romano, entering into force on 1 June 2019, and then published in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis.*

*Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 7 May 2019, the seventh year of my Pontificate.*

FRANCIS

# Letter sent by the Holy Father for the Event “Economy of Francesco”

(The event will be held on March 26-28, 2020)

TO Young Economists and Entrepreneurs Worldwide

Dear Friends,

I am writing to invite you to take part in an initiative very close to my heart. An event that will allow me to encounter young men and women studying economics and interested in a different kind of economy: one that brings life not death, one that is inclusive and not exclusive, humane and not dehumanizing, one that cares for the environment and does not despoil it. An event that will help bring us together and allow us to meet one another and eventually enter into a “covenant” to change today’s economy and to give a soul to the economy of tomorrow.

Surely there is a need to “re-animate” the economy! And where better to do so than Assisi, which has for centuries eloquently symbolized a humanism of fraternity? Saint John Paul II chose Assisi as the icon of a culture of peace. For me, it is also a fitting place to inspire a new economy. There Francis stripped himself of all worldliness in order to choose God as the compass of his life, becoming poor with the poor, a brother to all. His decision to embrace poverty also gave rise to a vision of economics that remains most timely. A vision that can give hope to our future and benefit not only the poorest of the poor, but our entire human family. A vision that is also necessary for the fate of the entire planet, our common home, “our sister Mother Earth”, in the words of Saint Francis in his *Canticle of the Sun*.

In my *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’*, I emphasized that, today more than ever, everything is deeply connected and that the safeguarding of the environment cannot be divorced from ensuring justice for the poor and finding answers to the structural problems of the global economy. We need to correct models of growth incapable of guaranteeing respect for the environment, openness to life, concern for the family, social equality, the dignity of workers and the rights of future generations. Sadly, few have heard the appeal to acknowledge the gravity of the problems and, even more, to set in

place a new economic model, the fruit of a culture of communion based on fraternity and equality.

Francis of Assisi is the outstanding example of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology. I think of the words spoken to him from the Crucifix in the little church of San Damiano: “Go, Francis, repair my house, which, as you see, is falling into ruin”. The repair of that house concerns all of us. It concerns the Church, society and the heart of each individual. Increasingly, it concerns the environment, which urgently demands a sound economy and a sustainable development that can heal its wounds and assure us of a worthy future.

Given this urgent need, each one of us is called to rethink his or her mental and moral priorities, to bring them into greater conformity with God’s commandments and the demands of the common good. But I thought especially of inviting you young people, because your desire for a better and happier future makes you even now a prophetic sign, pointing towards an economy attentive to the person and to the environment.

Dear young people, I know that you can hear in your hearts the ever more anguished plea of the earth and its poor, who cry out for help and for responsibility, for people who will respond and not turn away. If you listen to what your heart tells you, you will feel part of a new and courageous culture, you will not be afraid to face risks and work to build a new society. The risen Jesus is our strength! As I told you in Panama and I wrote in my *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Christus Vivit*: “Please, do not leave it to others to be protagonists of change. You are the ones who hold the future! Through you, the future enters into the world. I ask you also to be protagonists of this transformation... I ask you to build the future, to work for a better world” (No. 174).

Your universities, your businesses and your organizations are workshops of hope for creating new ways of understanding the economy and progress, for combating the culture of waste, for giving voice



The Basilica of St. Francis is seen in Assisi, Italy, Sept. 6, 2011. Pope Francis has invited young economists and entrepreneurs to take part in an initiative to be launched in Assisi March 26-28, 2020. The initiative seeks to find new ways to do business, promote human dignity and protect the environment. PAUL HARING/CNS

to those who have none and for proposing new styles of life. Only when our economic and social system no longer produces even a single victim, a single person cast aside, will we be able to celebrate the feast of universal fraternity.

That is why I would like to meet you in Assisi: so that we can promote together, through a common “covenant”, a process of global change. One in which not only believers but all men and women of good will, beyond differences of creed and nationality, can participate, inspired by an ideal of fraternity attentive above all to the poor and excluded. I invite each of you to work for this covenant, committing yourselves individually and in groups to cultivate together

the dream of a new humanism responsive to the expectations of men and women and to the plan of God.

The name of this event—Economy of Francesco—clearly evokes the Holy Man of Assisi and the Gospel that he lived in complete consistency, also on the social and economic level. Saint Francis offers us an ideal and, in some sense, a programme. For me, who took his name, he is a constant source of inspiration.

With you, and through you, I will appeal to some of our best economists and entrepreneurs who are already working on the global level to create an economy consistent with these ideals. I am confident that they will respond. And I am confident above all in you

young people, who are capable of dreaming and who are prepared to build, with the help of God, a more just and beautiful world.

Our meeting is planned for 26 to 28 March 2020. Together with the Bishop of Assisi, whose predecessor Guido, eight centuries ago, received the young Francis in his house when he made the prophetic gesture of his stripping, I count on receiving you myself. I await you and even now, I greet you and I give you my blessing. Please, do not forget to pray for me.

From the Vatican, 1 May 2019  
Memorial of Saint Joseph the Worker

FRANCIS

## UN Forum on Forest

(Statement by H.E. Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See, during Fourteenth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests; New York, 6 May 2019)



Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Vatican’s permanent observer to the United Nations. GREGORY A. SHEMITZ/CNS

MR. Chair,

The Holy See is pleased to participate in this Fourteenth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests to address the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030. Per the Forum’s Quadrennial Programme of Work, this Session will be devoted to technical discussion. My Delegation is hopeful that the practical issues deliberated in the next several days will lead to concrete steps translating the goals of forest protection into reality.

Mr. Chair,

It is becoming increasingly clear that forests need attention and protection — both in themselves and because of the many contributions they make to the rest of the human and natural environments. Indeed, there is still so much unknown and yet to be learned about the forests of the earth! Yet the rapid destruction of forests in our times is depleting their biodiversity so quickly that the full extent of our loss might never be known. The species that call the forests home also risk extinction. As Pope Francis noted last year, “The loss of jungles and forests means not only the loss of species, which could also be extremely important resources for the future, but also the loss of vital relationships that could end up altering the entire ecosystem.” As the majority of the world’s population [1] now lives in urban areas, it is increasingly easy to overlook the vital, irreplaceable role played by forests. It is our hope that the work of this Forum will again refocus our attention on the crucial need for sustainable forest management.

At the same time, great human suffering arises from wanton destruction of the forests. Many depend on the forests for their dwelling, livelihood, cultural heritage, and social structure. The loss of forests can fall disproportionately on such people. Yet, in a cruel paradox, great poverty can also drive this destruction.

Desperation can lead to the destruction of forests for industrial development and agricultural use that may yield short-term benefits but inflict long-term costs. “A true ecological approach,” as Pope Francis has reminded us, “always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry

of the poor.”[2]

The Holy See is convinced that the decisions that we make must be undertaken with the full and meaningful participation of those who will be most impacted by them.

Conservation of the forests cannot be realized at the expense of those communities who have been living there for centuries. Indeed, their lives experienced in harmony with nature very often contribute positively to demands of intergenerational solidarity and the universal destination of the goods of the earth. These communities must become protagonists of environmental conservation and their rights and values must be respected. The forests will be sustainably managed only with “the constant and active involvement of local people from within their proper culture.”[3]

Mr. Chair,

My Delegation is particularly concerned with the fate of the Amazon, also in view of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region, which will be held in the Vatican this October. The upcoming Synod has as its theme, “New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology.” Last year, on his visit to Peru, Pope Francis spoke of the Amazon and its unique position as “the largest tropical forest and the most extensive river system on the planet. This ‘lung’, as it has been called, is one of the world’s regions of great biodiversity, as it is home to a vast variety of species.”[4] For this reason, “We have to break with the historical paradigm that views Amazonia as an inexhaustible source of supplies for other countries without concern for its inhabitants.”[5]

Since human beings are part of the ecosystems that facilitate the relationships giving life to our planet, caring for them

— since everything is interconnected — is fundamental to promoting the dignity of each individual, the common good of society, social progress, and care for the environment. In the Amazon Basin, integral ecology is key to responding to the challenge of caring for the immense wealth of its environmental and cultural biodiversity.

In fact, the Amazon Basin encompasses the last great rainforest, which, despite the harmful intrusions it has suffered and continues to suffer, remains the largest forested area in our Earth’s tropical zone. Recognizing the Amazon territory as a basin that transcends the borders between countries facilitates a unified view of the region and is essential for the promotion of integral development and ecology.

Mr. Chair,

My Delegation heartily supports the efforts of this Forum to bring about an integral improvement in the quality of human life, especially of those left behind, which entails considering the settings in which people live, including forests. Better management of our forest resources is a crucial part in our care for our common home and for those who live in it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1. Pope Francis, Meeting with Authorities, the Civil Society and the Diplomatic Corps, Lima, 19 January 2018.
2. Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’*, 49 (original emphasis).
3. Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si’*, 144 (original emphasis).
4. Pope Francis, Meeting with Authorities, the Civil Society and the Diplomatic Corps, Lima, 19 January 2018.
5. Pope Francis, Meeting with Indigenous People of Amazonia, 19 January 2018.

# The Holy Spirit as the Church's guarantee of continuity of Jesus' cause

6th Sunday of Easter, Year C, John 14:23-29  
May 26, 2019

By Msgr. Lope C. Robredillo, SThD



LIKE the previous Sunday's, today's Gospel forms part of Jesus' farewell discourses placed by John in the context of the last supper. Though, historically, these discourses could be understood in a situation wherein the community of John was expelled from the synagogue, yet they are meant to answer the problems spawned by Jesus' physical departure from the disciples. Once Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven, who will continue his teaching and work? Like any other historical

person, Jesus could not have taught everything to his disciples, nor could he have, considering the circumstances of his death, done it completely. And even without adverting to Mark's portrait of the disciples who frequently misunderstood Jesus, it was simply impossible for them, as historical persons, to understand everything he taught them. And there are other related problems. For instance, who will sustain the disciples in the aftermath of the shattering experience of Jesus'

death? Will his departure spell the end of the community?

It is on account of these problems that in John the supper discourses look beyond Jesus' death to the resurrection. After his physical departure, Jesus will remain with the community of disciples through his spiritual presence: "I will ask the Father to give you another Paraclete—to be with you always" (John 14:16). The Spirit is thus none other than the spiritual presence of Jesus. Jesus

Holy Spirit / B7

# The condition to enjoy a foretaste of heaven

6th Sunday of Easter, Year C, John 14:23-29  
May 26, 2019

By Fr. Sal Putzu, SDB

IT is a matter of consistency—those who claim to believe in Christ and love him have to prove it through their actions. Jesus is not satisfied with verbal protestations of love and faithfulness. He wants action. Already at the beginning of his public life, he had warned his disciples, "Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who DO the will of my Father" (Mt 7:21). Later on, he proclaimed that he considers as his closest relative whoever DOES God's will. (See Mk 3:35.)

In his discourse at the Last Supper, the test of love is even more personal: "Anyone who loves me will be true to my word" (Jn 14:23). Conversely, failure to be true to his word signifies a lack of love for him. (See v. 24.)

To be true to Jesus' word means to accept it in faith and to value it as the most precious treasure; to take it as one's own highest inspiration in life; and to live by it, no matter what the cost. Such a cost may sometimes be very high indeed. But the reward is higher still. God will bless with His continuous presence the believers who have learned how to live by the word of Christ. Then their lives will take on a new dimension – the dimension of communion with the Father, the Son, and the Spirit of

Love. They will enjoy the essence of heaven, already in this life.

This will be just a foretaste, of course, since the fullness of heaven lies beyond the many limitations of our earthly life. But it will be a real foretaste, nonetheless, which fills the soul of the "genuine believer" with divine splendor, insight, and peace. It is the splendor coming from the glory of the Father. (See Rv 21:23.) It is the insight deriving from the presence of the Spirit. (See Jn 14:26.) It is the peace produced in our hearts by the self-gift of the Son. (See Jn 14:27.)

All this spells a unique dignity for every human being. Man is great on account of his intelligence, his moral and artistic achievements, and for the call to be with God forever. But every human being is especially great because he/she can be the temple of the Blessed Trinity already in this life. The condition to actualize this potential is threefold, as it is spelled out by Jesus himself:

- to open one's heart to him in humble faith,
- to love him tenderly, and
- to be true to his word.

Then heaven dawns on earth and the hearts of human beings become the most precious shrines in which Father, Son, and Spirit love to dwell.

# Jesus' Ascension as an assurance of our participation in His heavenly glory

Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, Year C, Luke 24:40-53,  
June 2, 2019

By Msgr. Lope C. Robredillo, SThD

IN OLD TESTAMENT and Intertestamental Literature, voyage from earth to heaven is a widespread motif. The journey of Enoch, Moses, Elijah, Baruch, and Abraham easily comes to mind. The Book of Enoch, for instance, recounts how this son of Jared was taken up into the heavens, and was appointed guardian of heavenly treasures, chief of the archangels, and attendant upon God's celestial throne. Of course, in ancient religions, we even find a detailed account of the voyage through the seven spheres of heaven with their gates, hostile spirits and other obstacles. But the Christian understanding of the ascension of Jesus is quite different. In Luke, for example, it signifies the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and his earthly ministry, a beginning of his exaltation, and a new way of his presence among us.

To stress that the ascension marks the end of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and of his earthly ministry, it may be noted that with his account of Jesus' ascension (Luke 24:50-53), Luke's narrative on the journey to Jerusalem comes to a close. In Luke 9:51, Jesus, whom the Samaritans did not welcome, resolutely determined to journey to the city, where the ultimate rejection awaited him. Here in the farewell scene, that journey is completed, as Jesus blesses his disciples. At the same time, this sets the end of Luke's account of the story of Jesus, for just as it began in Jerusalem, with Zechariah unable to bless the people gathered in the temple (Luke 1:21-22), so it ends in Jerusalem, with the disciples praising God in the temple, after Jesus blessed them (Luke 24:52). The ascension, therefore, marks the end of Jesus' earthly ministry. In ascending, Jesus entered into God's presence. This is the essential meaning of "going up" or "ascending far above all heavens" (Eph 4:10).

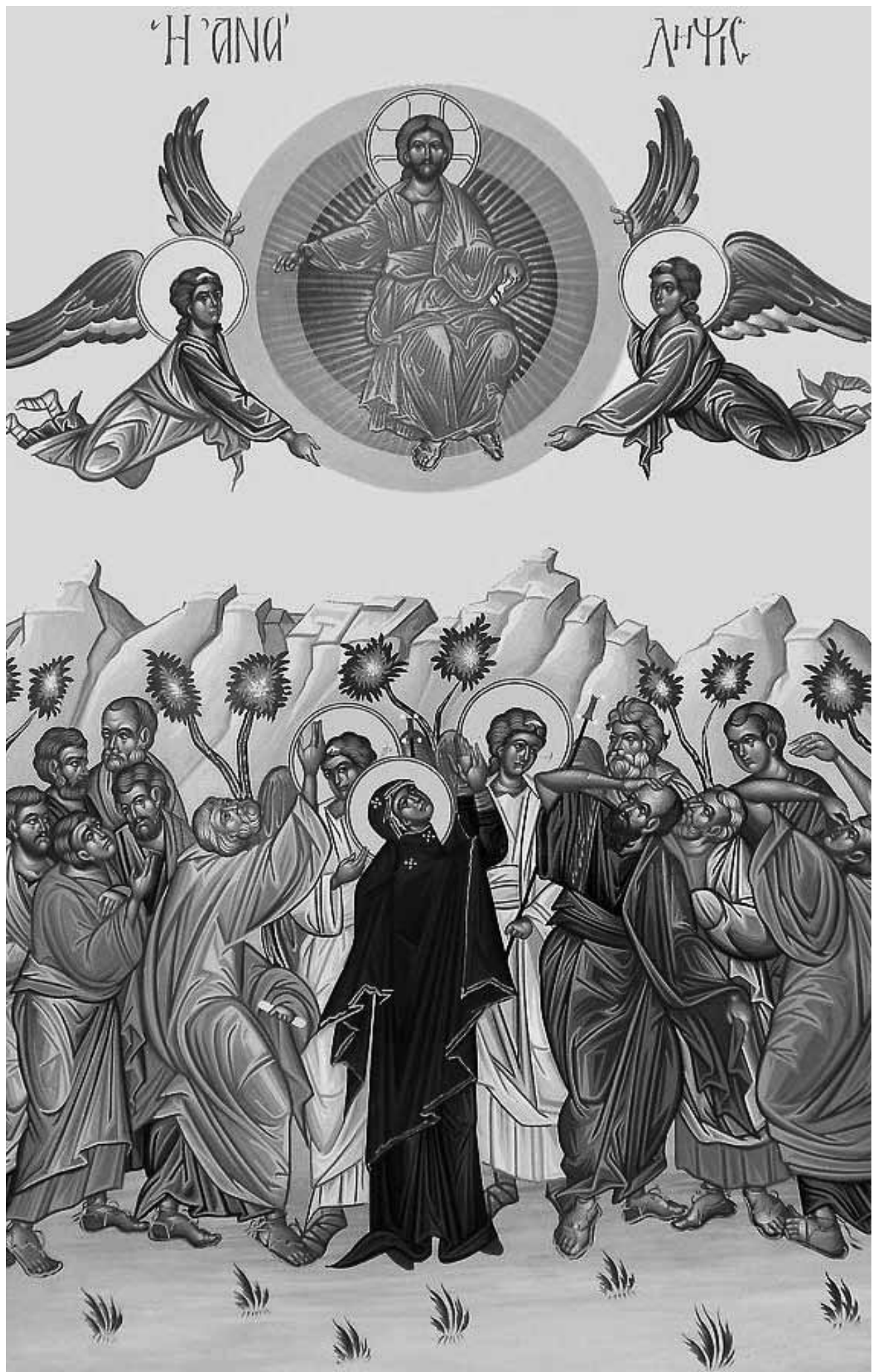
This, of course, is only one side of the coin. The other is that it signifies the beginning of Jesus' exaltation: "God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name

that is above every other name" (Phil 2:9). "God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior" (Acts 5:30a). It also indicates the start of his glorification and his enthronement at God's right hand: "Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26); "Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him" (1 Pet 3:21c-22). As a high priest, he passed through the heavens (Heb 4:14) and entered the heavenly sanctuary (9:24). These images and meanings are, of course, related to Jesus' coming into God's presence.

But what about his relationship to us? Since Jesus is now an exalted and glorified Lord, the mode of his presence changed. Jesus entered into a new form of presence with his disciples, with us, and in the world. He is present to his disciples on earth in a spiritual way. With us, he is especially present in his signs—in his word, in his minister, in the assembly, in the Eucharist and the sacraments, and among others, among the poor. But his presence among us and in the world is the beginning of the parousia. This has been initiated into the world, but in a hidden form. For this reason, ascension serves as a principle of hope, an anticipation of glory for those who proclaim his death and resurrection in their lives. His invisible presence in his signs will be disclosed definitively in his return in glory. The preface proper to the feast puts it this way: "Mediator between God and man, judge of the world and Lord of hosts, he ascended, not to distance himself from our lowly state, but that we, his members, might be confident of following where he, our Head and Founder, has gone before."

What does this mean in simple language? That Jesus must ascend—this brought sorrow to his disciples. But they were assured of his presence of another kind. Of course, life is a series of arrivals

Ascension / B7



# Why the climate is changing

By Fr. Shay Cullen

THE students are on the streets, waving banners, banging drums, singing, chanting, and calling for an end to the causes driving climate change that is wrecking the planet. They see the global warming caused by huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane gases heating up the environment and causing the melting of the ice cap on a gigantic scale never seen before. They want to close coal-fired power plants and governments to install renewable wind and solar power farms and geothermal generators to provide the electricity we need.

They are the voice of the planet; they are its feelings and its cry for help. The planet is, in many ways, dying and the human species, its magnificent creation, is a vengeful child killing its parent by savage greed. The warmer atmosphere is evaporating more water from the oceans, causing more frequent powerful rainstorms as never before. They, the children, the teenagers, the youth, want and demand a clean planet free from poison chemicals and pollution and the burning of fossil fuels.

They say enough, stop it and give us and our

future children a clean planet. They want to stop the acid rain. It is poisoning the fish and the land and the people that eat the fish. They are demanding the skeptical reluctant politicians to take political action to cut CO<sub>2</sub> gases and stop the damage to the planet.

I saw the negative and damaging impact of climate change on the lives of ordinary Filipino people when I went to visit the Aeta indigenous farmers in our Preda fair trade mango project. They live on the mountains of Zambales and they were once forest dwellers, hunters and gatherers. They survived for 30,000 years, anthropologists say.

They are an amazing people with a culture and customs that would put many a Western community to shame. They have more gender equality—women as tribal leaders, men that carry the children on their backs, a plant based medical practice that has kept them alive for thousands of years. They are under threat from climate change. They have lost their rain forests and the climate will never revert again to be a balanced harmonious influence for growth if we do not stop the warming. The greed of the ruling elite families with international corporations devastated



This Oct. 4, 2015 file photo shows religious groups join a "climate walk" in Manila to call on the government to address climate change. CARITAS PHILIPPINES

the rain forests by cutting and exporting logs to rebuild Europe and Japan after the Second World War.

Only 3 percent of forest cover is left in isolated areas around the nation. The bare hills were stripped of their topsoil by the increased rainfall and the brown earth was eroded and washed into the sea. This soil covered the coral and the smaller fish died out and the bigger fish migrated to deeper waters. Coastal fisher families were catching less and in the deeper waters foreign fishing fleets raided the Philippine seas as the Chinese do today.

Only rough grass and bushes grow on the bare mountains. The climate has changed as a result. The rice harvest that should feed millions of people has been lost in recent years. Prices have risen through corruption

and mismanagement.

Rural poverty has increased and the poor have abandoned the land and the shores and migrated, like refugees, to the slums of the big cities. There they live in squalor, a once proud self-sufficient people, reduced to barely surviving. They squat in the shadows of the rich that live in luxurious condominiums. They eat 'pagpag' to survive— that is the boiled left-overs scraped from the food plates of the rich that eat in the posh restaurants and hotels.

But the Aetas have not become refugees in their own country. They have struggled to survive by continuing to adapt to climate change by planting and growing their own root crops, vegetables in a natural and organic way. They produce fair trade organic mangos, the only such

group to do so internationally certified by Naturland. They live in poor villages but eat and produce healthy, nutritious natural grown food.

Susan, an Aeta village chief, a woman, explains how they experience climate change. She tells of the unexpected rainstorms that destroy the mango blossoms. There have been no mango fruits for three years in their mountains. It is the rebuke of a wounded and hurt nature. It feels the pain of neglect and convulses in agony with the death of plants and forests animals driven to extinction. Landslides scar the hills, rivers are polluted, chickens die, children cry and sickness is more frequent.

We are destroying our own habitat and eliminating our role as the planet's self-awareness. When

we are at war with the earth, we are at war with ourselves. When we hurt the planet earth, we hurt ourselves for we are one with it. We humans have evolved from its soil, its chemistry, and its life forms. The earth is our mother that gave us life and we are its consciousnesses. Through us, the planet and the universe reflects and contemplates its own self because we are its brain, the thinking being and the planet is conscious and self-aware through us.

Every one of us has to redeem the failures of the human race that is destroying ourselves and the earth. We must cry out and take to the streets in peaceful non-violent protest and claim our rights as belonging to a clean healthy planet of which we are an intimate part.

Courage / B1

prepared to be committed, someone willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she had, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise. I ask each one of you: Do you see yourselves as bearers of a promise? What promise do I bear within my heart to take forward? Mary's would undoubtedly be a difficult mission, but the challenges that lay ahead were no reason to say 'no'. Things would get complicated, of course, but not in the same way as happens when cowardice paralyzes us because things are not

clear or sure in advance" (*Vigil with Young People*, Panama, 26 January 2019).

On this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, let us join in prayer and ask the Lord to help us discover his plan of love for our lives, and to grant us the courage to walk in the path that, from the beginning, he has chosen for each of us.

From the Vatican, 31 January 2019  
Memorial of Saint John Bosco

FRANCIS

*freed from all its obligations.*

## Curial praxis for Declaration of Nullity of Ordination

The DWDS usually asks the Ordinary to conduct a preliminary extra-judicial investigation in order to determine probable cause (Regular servanda, n.6). If the Congregation accepts the libelous, it determines whether it will decide the matter itself through an administrative process, or whether it will designate an ordinary tribunal to decide the matter through a judicial process. The ordinary praxis of the CDWD is to decide the matter itself in the administrative process, after delegating an Ordinary to form a special tribunal to instruct the case in the diocese. Nevertheless, for particular cases, the CDWD instructs the case itself.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that here we have an option that, on the whole, could prove less notorious (scandalous) and more pastorally fruitful, not only as regards the repair of the injury to the victims and the protection of the common good of the Church, but also as regards the rehabilitation of the abusive cleric.

Holy Spirit / B6

is the first paraclete, and the Holy Spirit is another. Jesus and the Spirit resemble each other: both are sent by the Father (3:17, 4:26) both remain with the disciples (14:20; 14:17), and both guide them (14:16; 16:13). Moreover, even if the world of men and sin hates the community, they are assured of not falling into the lie and the devil, because the Spirit is a Spirit of Truth (14:17), who will guide them into all truth (16:13). Of the functions of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel mentions two of them: to teach all things, and to bring remembrance: "The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will instruct you in everything, and remind you of all that I told you" (14:26).

Since Jesus is the once-and-for-all revelation of God (Heb 1:1), the Holy Spirit will not make any new revelations. That is not his work. Nothing is to be added to what has been revealed by God in the life and person of Jesus. Rather, it belongs to him to help—Paraclete means helper—the community understands the meaning of the words and actions of Jesus that up to the time of his death were obscure to the disciples. Thus, for example, it was only after the resurrection

Ascension / B6

and departures. After graduating from high school, one goes to college. One says good-bye to bachelorhood when he enters into marriage. But the transition from one term to another is never easy. Some individuals get married, but their mentality remains that of a bachelor. Yet, one cannot appreciate the stage of life one enters unless there is a change in mind-set. Some parents find it difficult to realize that their

that they were able to understand the saying, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (1:19). In addition, what Jesus spoke of implicitly, the Spirit will make it explicit. He will enable the community to perceive the deeper meaning of Jesus' teaching. Moreover, he will unfold new interpretations of what the early Jesus revealed to the community.

However, the Spirit uncovers not only new understanding and interpretation, but even application of God's revelation in Jesus. In the community's encounter with new problems that arise when faith is confronted with various situations, the Spirit will make a creative application of the gospel. That way, the community perceives the relevance of Jesus' teaching to contemporary life. When the early Church, as related in the 1st Reading (Acts 7:55-60), faced the problem of circumcision vis-à-vis the admission of the Gentiles to the community, the resolution reached by the disputing parties at the Council of Jerusalem reflects the workings of the Holy Spirit: "It is the decision of the Holy Spirit, and ours, too, not to lay

sons and daughters are no longer children: they simply cannot let go. The same may be said of faith. That Jesus is seated at the right hand and no longer present to us in the way he was physically present to his disciples during the public ministry—this is not necessary a disadvantage for us. On the contrary, we must ever rejoice because of it, even as the disciples were filled with joy as they witnessed the ascension.

on you any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary" (Acts 15:28). As a great Johannine commentator, Hoskyns, puts it, "the Spirit's work is more than a reminiscence of the ipissima verba of the Son of God; it is a living representation of all that he had spoken to his disciples, a creative exploitation of the gospel."

By fulfilling his teaching function, the Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus: "When the Paraclete comes... he will bear witness on my behalf" (John 15:26). He ensures, in other words, that, even if conditions and circumstances change, the identity and continuity of the truth that Jesus revealed to the first community is assured. What Jesus said, the Holy Spirit recreates and perpetuates. Hence, when the Church speaks on such issues as militarization, globalization, migration, etc. from ethical and doctrinal perspectives, one is assured that it is the same truth the disciples had heard that is being preached today. Through the Holy Spirit, the Church is guaranteed with the continuity of Jesus words and works, even without his physical presence.

Today, his presence to us who believe in his power is no less real than his presence to his disciples. And that experience of his presence is the beginning of the parousia. If we have an intimate relationship with him, we are assured of the final revelation of that participation when he returns in glory. The final transition will occur, and what Jesus is, we will experience and share.

Misconduct / B2

*case is to be determined by the Congregation of the Roman Curia, or by a tribunal designated by it. The competent dicastery for the Latin Church is the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments (Pastor Bonus, n.68). The Regulae servandae of 1931 recommend that the petitioner submit his petition through his proper ordinary (for a member of an institute of consecrated life, through his/her Superior).*

--§2 *Once the petition has been sent, the cleric is by the law itself forbidden to exercise orders.*

Can.1710: *If the Congregation remits the case to a tribunal, the canons concerning trials in general and the ordinary contentious trial are to be observed, unless the nature of the matter requires otherwise and without prejudice to the provisions of this title.*

Can.1711. *In these cases, the defender of the bond has the same rights and is bound by the same duties as the defender of the bond of marriage.*

Can.1712. *After a second judgment confirming the nullity of the sacred ordination, the cleric loses all rights proper to the clerical state and is*

**CINEMA**  
Catholic Initiative for Enlightened Movie Appreciation

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT MORAL ASSESSMENT

5: Excellent  
4: Above Average  
3: Average  
2: Below Average  
1: Poor

CINEMA RATING  
VA: For all ages  
V13: Ages 13 below, Parental Guidance  
V14: Ages 14+  
V18: Ages 18+  
NPV: Not for Public Viewing

# Buhay San Miguel

# Brothers Matias



# Avengers: Endgame



It is not the superpowers per se that can defeat the oppressor but teamwork, selflessness, and embracing one's higher purpose, whatever it takes.

Technical assessment: 4  
Moral assessment: 3.5  
MTRCB rating: PG  
CINEMA rating: V13

Three weeks after Thanos (Brolin) snaps his finger and disintegrates half of life, Captain Marvel (Larson) rescues Tony Stark (Downey) and Nebula from outer space and reunites with the remaining Avengers on earth — Romanoff, Captain, Rocket, Patriot, Banner and Thor. Together find Thanos, hoping to retrieve the Infinity Stones and undo the destructions. However, Thanos reveals he has destroyed the stones and gets beheaded by a frustrated Thor. Five years hence, Scott Lang escapes the quantum realm and convinces the Avengers to travel back in time and retrieve the stones. They recruit Banner—who successfully merged his intelligent side with Hulk's body—and Thor—now an overweight alcoholic still reeling from his failure to save humanity. Stark refuses to help as he is now a father of 5-year-old Morgan. But after talking to his wife Pepper (Paltrow), he decides to perfect the time travel technology and joins the team to retrieve the Infinity Stones in various times before Thanos does. This brings certain closures and requires painful sacrifices from our heroes.

Avengers: Endgame completes the narrative arcs of the 22-movie long individual journeys of its characters. While we can take Endgame as a standalone film, understanding it from 2008 Iron Man (and we are almost sure most viewers saw the previous films) allows viewers to appreciate the struggles and triumphs of its characters. And this is the greatest strength of the movie—the slow unfolding of individual stories tightly woven into the main conflict and the antagonist's own arc (even Thanos is given a backstory). The other elements—the imaginative design, the gripping action

scenes, the impressive CGIs, the emotional score and the seamless editing—are subservient to and supportive of the storyline, pushing it forward, bathing it in drama and comedy as needed and underlining its message with powerful punches in the soul. By the time fans watch Endgame, they would have been so emotionally invested that each triumph (like when the disappeared heroes return) is a celebration, each death is a heartbreak and each conclusion is bittersweet.

Taking the film as a whole, we can talk about sacrifice and selflessness. Natasha kept the team together in the beginning and let herself go in the end to save humanity. Stark, the conceited self-serving genius millionaire whom Cap said in the very first Avenger can never sacrifice for others, ultimately did. The battlecry, "Whatever it takes!" resonates real struggles ordinary people fight everyday. Thanos is not the just the intergalactic Titan but a representation of people and situations that oppress. Avengers: Endgame showed that it is not the superpowers per se that can defeat the oppressor but teamwork, selflessness, and embracing one's higher purpose even if you can turn your back on it. Individually, we learn from Captain America's willingness to live an ordinary life instead of remaining the superhero the world worships. We see how Peter Quill will not give up on his one true love even if she does not recognise him. We see how Thor grieved and became depressed—from successive failures to save Asgard from Hela (in Ragnarok) and the world from Thanos (in Infinity Wars)—and relinquished his throne to a person he felt deserved it more.

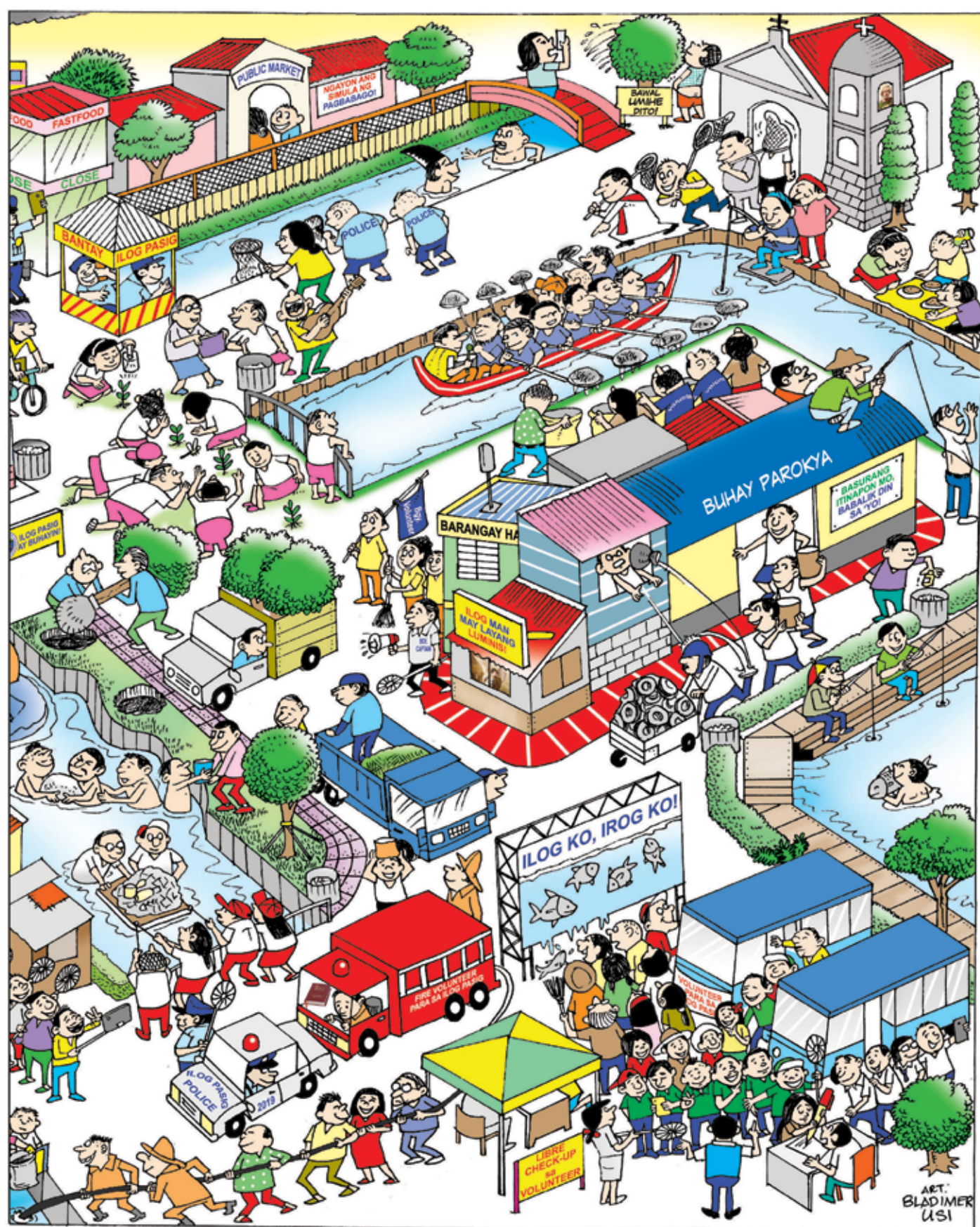
# TERIBOL OG

# Bladimer Usi



# Buhay Parokya

- FIND 3 MISSING THINGS:  
1. ST. JOSEPH  
2. ARCHANGEL GABRIEL  
3. HOLY BIBLE



# The Kid Who Would be King

Director: Joe Cornish  
Lead Cast: Louis Ashborn Serkis, Dean Choumoo, Rebecca Ferguson, Patrick Stewart, Tom Taylor, Rhianna Doris, Angus Imrie  
Screenwriter: Joe Cornish  
Producer: Nira Park, Tim Bevan, Eric Fellner  
Editor: Jonathan Amos, Paul Machliss  
Musical Director: Electric Wave Bureau  
Genre: Fantasy Adventure  
Cinematographer: Bill Pope  
Distributor: 20th Century Fox  
Location: United Kingdom  
Running Time: 120 Minutes

Technical assessment: 3  
Moral assessment: 4  
CINEMA rating: V13

Opening the film is a colorful animation of something that happened "Once upon



a time"—about a king called Arthur, who united his kingdom with his Knights of

the Round Table and whose famous sword, Excalibur, was caught in a vast rock. The sword could be drawn out solely by an authentic descendant of Arthur. Who would have thought that the celebrated sword would wind up in 21st Century US of A? That the underdogs in The Kid Who Would be King would turn out to be the chosen ones in this sword-centered contemporary adventure fantasy clearly says this movie is made for boys their age. And maybe subteen girls who wish to find superhero boyfriends. The appreciation of The Kid Who Would Be King depends on the maturity of one watching it. The

story has more layers than an onion and is heavy with symbolism. To the very young it is obviously a good-vs-evil thing and we know very well which should win. But to the more experienced, the battle is not simply between Team A and Team B. The message is that one triumphs over evil when one succeeds in battling the dark forces within oneself, the demons of fear, self-doubt, insecurity. When one remains in sin—in darkness, not in light—evil inevitably wins. (Morgana waits for darkness to strike). However young people may view it, the film is empowering in that it gives hope—lest we throw in a spoiler, just watch what happens to the bullies.



# THE CROSS



KofC Family ... Our Concern

A Supplement Publication of the Order of the Knights of Columbus and KCFAPI

CBCP Monitor Vol. 23, No. 10

May 13 - 26, 2019

## Charity is at the heart of KC Order – Mindanao Deputy

**THE head of the Knights of Columbus in Mindanao encouraged their members to continue works of charity in favor of the neediest.**

Speaking at the opening of the 19th KC Mindanao State Convention in Davao City on May 3, their State Deputy, Gerry Eutemio Mission, said works must continue for the spiritual and material advancement of people in poor communities.

He said their mandate is to pursue charitable works in everything they do whether it is an organized event, cause or just a simple act.

“The most basic virtue of our faith in line with the faith in action program of our Fraternal Order is charity, the care for the needy and the outcast,” Mission said.

“In this spirit, I urge every Brother Knight to continue the works of charity you have undertaken and remain supportive to our religious endeavors,” he said.

More than 1,000 Knights from across southern Philippines attended the convention that was held at the Grand Regal Hotel from May 3 to 5.

This year’s theme was “Knights of Columbus, Knights of Charity”.

The state convention is an annual gathering of brother Knights across Mindanao to strengthen fraternal ties and to renew commitment to the Christian of Columbianism.



Bro. Gerry Eutemio T. Mission, Mindanao Deputy; Bro. Jose C. Reyes, Jr., Luzon North Deputy and Supreme Director; Most Rev Jose Colin M. Bagaforo, Bishop of Kidapawan & Mindanao State Chaplain and the Officers of the K of C Mindanao Jurisdiction during their 19th Annual State Convention held at Grand Regal Hotel, Davao City last May 3 to 5, 2019.

Programs and activities during the gathering are also aimed to recommit them to the goals of the Order.

In other jurisdictions, State Conventions are scheduled as follows: Luzon North - May 18 at

the Century Park Hotel, Manila; Luzon South - May 25 at the Bellevue Manila, Alabang, Muntinlupa City;

and Visayas - May 17 to 19 at the Resorts Negrense in Bacolod City. **(RLagarde)**

### K OF C PHILIPPINES UPDATE:

**BATANES** - Following the installation of the first council in Batanes and upon the request of Fr. Ronaldo “Zenki” Manabat, Rector and Parish Priest of Basco Cathedral and the Charter Grand Knight, a special 2nd degree exemplification was conducted. A total of 26 candidates including 4 priests were elevated to the formation degree. Another council was established and this was in Ivana, Batanes where 30 new members were exemplified. After the exemplification, election of officers was conducted. The Grand Knight was Rev. Fr. Demetrio Quintos (parish priest) with Bro. Jerry Agana as Deputy Grand Knight. The third council established was at Mahatao, Batanes where 18 members were exemplified and Rev. Fr. Aniceto Abiera (parish priest) was elected Grand Knight and Bro. Jovie Agresor as Deputy Grand Knight.

Not only 3 councils were established in Batanes but also the investiture of the first Columbian Squire Circle



First Fraternal Mass of Basco Council held last May 5, 2019 celebrated by Fr. Zenki Manabat attended by about 30 Council members. (MRLodrigito)

was also held with 22 Charter Members. Majority of the members were Monaguillos (alter servers). The installation of circle officers was also held.

The other activity where Brother Knights were very active was the maritime procession in honor of Our Lady of Porta Vaga. It was participated and witnessed

by over 500 devotees. For the first time, the Ivatans saw the Knights of Columbus in full Honor Guard Regalia. Bishop Ulep personally thanked the team for their support and participation.

The 6-day program of the KC Luzon North activity was truly fruitful with 2 new councils and 1 circle being established. These would not

have been achieved without the persistence of Fr. Zenki and support of the clergy of the Prelature of Batanes and through the leadership of Bro. Jose C. Reyes, Jr., KC Luzon North Deputy and Supreme Director. Special citation should be given to Bro. Mark Anthony Lodrigito, Squire Chairman of KC Luzon North.

### Manila Council 1000 Celebrates its 114th Anniversary



The Knights of Columbus Council 1000 headed by WGG Reynaldo D. Valencia, WDD Noel S. Lacanilao, Past Grand Knights., Officers and members during the 114th Anniversary Celebration held at Max's Restaurant Maria Orosa, Manila. (JKYngco)

LAST April 27, 2019, the Manila Council 1000 celebrated their 114th Anniversary at Max's Restaurant Maria Orosa. The first and premier council in the Philippines was established last April 23, 1905 with thirty-one chartered members and are now composed of 1,128 members. This was preceded by a Holy Mass celebrated on the actual date of the

anniversary last April 23, 2019 held at San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila.

The celebration was attended by Past Grand Knights, past and current Council 1000 Officers led by CY 2018 to 2019 Worthy Grand Knight Reynaldo D. Valencia, Worthy State Program Director Elmer Z.

**Anniversary / C3**

### K OF C FOUNDATIONS UPDATE:

#### KC Philippines Foundation, Inc. receives its PCNC Accreditation

LAST March 2019, the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC) has issued the Certificate of Accreditation for the KC Philippines Foundation, Inc. (KCPFI). The certification was issued upon the approval of the former's Board of Directors during their meeting held last January. Duly recognized by the body, the Foundation is now given the “donee institution” status of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

Granted to act as a “donee

institution” by the BIR, any donation received by the Foundation shall be entitled to the donor/s full or limited deduction and exemption from donor's tax. This is in compliance to the regulatory requirements prescribed by the government. As of today, the KCPFI is now on the 48th year of its corporate life. The foundation acts as the social responsibility arm of the Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines, Inc. **(JSServiento)**



Certificate of Accreditation issued by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC) to the KC Philippines Foundation, Inc. (KCPFI).



The Knights of Columbus Mindanao Jurisdiction together with their ladies and Special Guest, Bro. Jose C. Reyes, Jr. Supreme Director and Luzon North State Deputy during their 19th Annual State Convention held at Grand Regal Hotel, Davao City last May 3 to 5, 2019.

Ramoncito A. Ocampo

## President's Message



### Mothers, our everyday hero

*"Love our Lady. And she will obtain abundant grace to help you conquer in your daily struggle"* - St. Josemaria Escriva SHE is the first woman in our lives, she gives us the wonderful right of existence, and the human experience we had as of today. She is the reincarnation of God in the image of a woman. She is the best definition of superlative, going beyond human limits. She loves us wholeheartedly and molded our pillars of strength for us to become successful in every way. She gives us our footing and sunshine when we feel that our world is breaking apart. Simply, she is a superhero with no power on her hands but carries a great responsibility.

Our mothers, a unique creation of God. Her love that will forever be priceless and will always be unconditional. Her love that cannot be replaced, the love that is selfless, the love with a strong willpower. The love that is so strong and deep that will always caress us over the ignorance we had in this world.

God was easily recognizable in her. The idea of birthing process just as like how He created the universe, our planet and we, His children. Our Father in heaven, guarantees us with his maternal nature just as how our mothers gave us the opportunity to breathe and live a full life in this world. He keeps trail on 7.7 billion people on our planet, like our mothers who will always be there to protect and guide us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Truly, the love he formed for the mothers are exceptional.

In this season, we are reflecting on the essence of a mother and her love. Whether she has children on her own or not, we must still focus on giving her love, kindness, care and understanding—the same righteous attributes she uses to raise us. May God still continue His handiwork in weaving a mother's heart from this day onwards. Let us celebrate with a more Christ-centered day thus more fulfilling Mother's Day.

Vivat Jesus!

Arsenio Isidro G. Yap

## A Brother's Insight



### 2019 Mid-term Election Day

TODAY is May 13 and is a mid-term election day. As a PPCRV volunteer I have observed different situations in different polling places. In my own barangay where I voted, there were only three clustered precincts and voting was very peaceful and casting a ballot was a breeze. It only took us thirty minutes to be in line, had our credentials checked and cast our ballots. The biometrics though not working properly was efficient enough to stave off any unwanted piling up of the lines and no signatures were required.

When I had my fingerprint checked by the machine, almost instantly I was recognized and my picture appeared while others were not as lucky as they need to have several of their fingers checked only to end up encoding their name in the machine. Once their names are encoded, their picture would also appear in a sec, hence a positive identification of a qualified voter.

The poll watchers of political parties or their representatives are not giving out sample ballots, are outside of school premises and in my assessment are just waiting for the tallying of votes and would get their copy of the returns if they belong to a dominant party. Barangay personnel are also nearby and also outside the school premises giving assistance to voters.

It's so peaceful in our barangay that there's no need for the services of the PPCRV although in the past elections, there were some PPCRV volunteers. The BEI and their support group are very well organized and are very courteous especially to senior citizens like me and my wife. Had it not been for our two daughters who were in a regular line, my wife and I would only have taken ten minutes to complete the whole process.

There are twenty two clustered precincts in the parish where I was among the PPCRV volunteers which included two precincts for PWDs. The story here is different. It's very chaotic because there are too many voters and lines were a whole lot longer than where I casted my votes. There are reports of vote buying headed by some barangay officials which could not be validated. Most of the biometric machines were not working and manual encoding is also not possible. The BEIs have to resort to a computerized listing provided by COMELEC to qualify voters to cast their votes. This slows down the process considerably compared with a working biometric machine.

Secondly, the still able bodied seniors, who are still quite agile refuses to go to the second floor where some of their precincts are located. They wanted special treatment and are insistent that they cast their votes on the first floor. This slows down the whole process as the teachers would have to go down and assist them; get their ID; run up and verify their identity; go down again to hand them their ballot; run up again

Brother's Insight / C3

Jose C. Reyes, Jr.

## Chairman's Message

### Praying while Moving Forward

WHILE still in the Easter season and now that the Mid-term Election is finished, we ought to continue praying while moving forward in the direction towards God. First, let us pray for thanksgiving that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, we will also be born again to newness of life. One day, we will die, resurrect and join our God in heaven. So, while here on earth, let us live our life in ways that will lead us to eternity.

Secondly, let us continue praying for peace in our country. God granted our prayers for less violence in the recently concluded election. The people we have voted may have won, but how they will serve their term is

Karlo Serviento

## Pondering the Words

### God be with you

ASCENSION Sunday is really fast approaching. We have walked through the path of the passion to Jesus' death on the cross and His triumphant resurrection. Sooner, we will celebrate His glorious ascension to His and our real home, the Eternal City of Heaven. On the following Sundays, the gospels have one central theme and it is "commendation."

How hard is it to bid farewell to a person who showed care, compassion and mercy on you? How can you bid goodbye to a person who loved you from your strongest points to the weakest you have? How difficult is it to let

the person who served as your inspiration go far from you?

These are the questions that are answerable by the life the apostles had after Jesus' ascension. At the start, they might all be puzzled. They might not know how to start without a master. They might not be able to act as normal human beings. It is too hard to let someone who has influenced your whole being go and make his or her own path. It is very hard to say goodbye.

In a book entitled Praying our Goodbyes by Joyce Rupp, the author emphasized that the word goodbye means God be with you. We bless someone

each time we bid goodbye. On the apostles' case, it is the Lord who promised that He will be with them until the end of times. The promise became their foundation to move ahead and go forward. The God be with you now turned to - God is with you.

How then did Our Lord fulfill His promise? Love is the fulfilment of God's promise. "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another. (Jn. 13:34)" Where there is Love, there is God. And as Pope Francis once told, the name of the Lord is mercy. It is now the

challenge for us to be sharers of God's love. Let anger turn into joy. Let hatred turn into harmony. Let selfishness turn into selflessness. In fact, we are not merely the Easter People, rather, every creation of God from east to west and north to south, nation from every nation, tribe from every tribe and culture from every culture are the Easter People, we are the fruits of the resurrection.

As we move forward, may we be witnesses of this Love to every person we meet and hear them proclaim as they have seen in us, Vidimus enim Dominus! We have seen the Lord!

Erwin John Mallari

## EJ's Corner

### Ilaw ng Tahanan

CLOSE family ties is a big part of Filipino culture. Most of us grew in households wherein we lived within the same compound with our relatives or are in close proximity with their homes. Even after we grow up we still live with our parents and take care of them in their old age as they took care of us during our infancy and childhood. The tender loving care is embedded within our DNA and we get most of that value from the very first person we came into contact with, the person who loved us, before she even met us, our mother.

The month of May gives us a day to honor, cherish, and celebrate our Mothers. Over forty (40) countries around the world celebrate mother's day but not all of them celebrate it on the

same day. The origin of the celebration in the Philippines dates back to 1921 when a group known as the Ilocos Norte Federation of women's club asked for a holiday to celebrate and "honor the fabulous women who brought forth God's children into this world". They were given the 1st Monday of December to celebrate Mother's day. Several years later, President Manuel L. Quezon changed the name of the day to "parents day" to honor both parents since there was still no father's day at the time. In 1988, President Cory Aquino issued presidential decree no. 266 declaring the second Sunday of May as mother's day and the 3rd Sunday of June for father's day.

To this day I still do not know how mothers are able to work at the office,

take care of the children, do household chores, give support to their husband, and much more all in one day, everyday. Being the one who primarily cares for everyone in the family, mothers play different roles at home. They become teachers to their children, helping them study at home and do their assignments. When a family member is sick, mothers become doctors and nurses their patient back to health. Mothers are also the biggest fans and cheerleaders of their family whether it's sports or academics, or arts and music.

They say that "children are God's gift" and they really are lucky to have a mother who will always treasure them. Not only do mothers know best, they are the best. Thank you for everything and Happy Mother's day to all Moms!

Atty. Luis Voltaire D. Formilleza

## Ponderings on Mothers and Motherhood

EVERY year a particular date in the calendar is celebrated as Mother's Day. It is an opportunity for most of us to show our ultimate love to the person who continuously nurture us with love, care and compassion. But through the years, this occasion we specially dedicate to mothers has expanded to not just celebrating the foremost woman of the house. As it stands, Mother's Day is a celebration of the role of motherhood and maternal bonds which goes beyond bloodlines. Hence, even those whom we do not consider as biological mothers are greeted and treated during Mother's Day, as special persons in our lives who stepped in the shoes of our real moms, may it be in our extended families, workplace and communities. This evolution of Mother's Day is manifestation that while societies grow and develop, the constant nurturing of

a mother to a child is a universally important tenet of human life which all of us cannot live without.

For Catholics, this is among the primary impetus for our devotion to our Mary Mother of God whom we honor and praise for continuous nurturing, care and guidance. This reverence to mothers is aptly quoted as: "Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness." – Proverbs 31:25-28

In the light of societal recognition of motherhood and the important role that mothers play, we applaud the passing of Republic Act 11210- Amendments to the Republic 1161 as Amended by Republic Act 8282, otherwise

known as the Maternity Leave Law. Under the new law, any pregnant female worker in shall be granted a maternity leave of one hundred and five (105) days with full pay, regardless of whether she gave birth via caesarian section or natural delivery, while maternity leave of sixty (60) days with full pay be granted for miscarriage or emergency termination of pregnancy. Additional fifteen (15) days of maternity leave shall be granted to those who are qualified as "Solo Parents" under the RA 8972 otherwise known as the Solo Parent Act. Furthermore, the law provides that entitled female worker may allocate maternity leave credits of up to seven (7) days to the child's father, which shall be over and above the leave credits under RA 8187, otherwise known as the Paternity Leave Act of 1997. Indeed, it is a welcomed piece of legislation for mothers

and their families who are the primary stakeholders of a confraternity such ours in the Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines, Inc. (KCFAPI)

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A little over three (3) years ago, the first woman that I ever loved and will continually love, succumbed to the cancer. It is a void that can never be replaced and a fact that I have to contend with until I meet here again in the afterlife. I miss you every single day. And so as the world, celebrates all the Moms out there and the role of motherhood, I give a big shout out to my Mom, Agnes Delas Llagas Formilleza. I will continuously live as you have taught me and will be a continuous blessing to the people around me as you did yourself when you were still with us. I hope your lawyer is doing you proud up there.



A Supplement Publication of the Order of the Knights of Columbus and KCFAPI

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# We will rebuild

*The tragic fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral evokes both our history and our responsibility as Catholics*



by Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson

I AM WRITING this column while a massive fire is still engulfing our beautiful Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. I say “our” because this magnificent structure has been for centuries an artistic patrimony of humanity, a place of prayer for millions of Catholics in France and throughout the world — and, more recently, a special place for the Knights of

Columbus.

In May 2017, I joined a delegation of brother Knights from Paris to attend Mass at Notre-Dame Cathedral and to participate in a special exposition and veneration of the relic of the Crown of Thorns. Later that year, the Knights of Columbus was one of the major sponsors of a light show on the cathedral’s façade. Titled “Dame de Coeur” (Queen of Hearts), the light show depicted the history of the cathedral in commemoration of World War I.

From the two-volume history *The Knights of Columbus in Peace and War* (1920), we read this: “In Paris on Good Friday 1919, the most impressive religious service held in the history of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe took place when the Knights of Columbus ... held a service there for the public adoration of the cross. Ten thousand Americans packed

the great edifice; the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, Mons. Amette, presided.”

Much has been said about the significance of this tragic fire. It is difficult to grasp its significance for the French people and especially French Catholics.

Perhaps “The Virgin at Noon,” a poem by Paul Claudel, can help us understand. It is noteworthy that Claudel’s conversion took place in Notre-Dame Cathedral during the singing of the Magnificat on Christmas Day 1886.

“It is noon. The church is open.

I must go in.

Mother of our Lord, I have not come to pray.

I have nothing to give and nothing to ask.

I am here, my Lady, only to look at you.

To look at you, to cry for joy, to know

That I am your son and you

are there.

Only for one moment when everything stops.

Noon!

To be with you, Mary, in this place where you are.

To say nothing, to look at your face.

To let my heart sing in its own language.

To say nothing, but simply to sing

because my heart is too full... .

Because you saved me, because

you saved France.

Because France too, like myself, was

for you a thing to be considered.

Because at that moment when

everything collapsed, you intervened.

Because you saved France once again.

Because it is noon, because we are

at this moment of today.

Because you are there for always,

simply because you are Mary,

Simply because you exist.

Mother of Our Lord, we give thanks to you.”

When the president of France announced today that Notre-Dame Cathedral will be rebuilt, I thought of how the great Gothic cathedrals were originally constructed. An account from 1144 states that the faithful were freely “harnessed to carts, laden with stones, timbers, corn and whatever might be needed for the work of building the cathedral, the towers of which rose like magic into the heavens... . Everywhere men humbled themselves, did penance, and forgave their enemies. Men and women could be seen dragging heavy loads through mire and marsh, praising in song the miracle which God was performing

before their eyes.”

Mindful of all the controversies consuming the Church in recent years, the image of this burning cathedral seemed in a way to symbolize the devastation so many Catholics have felt as our Church has been rocked by one crisis after another.

Fires have destroyed great cathedrals before, and they have been rebuilt. So let us hope this will be true again.

But not only this church. Let us resolve to patiently “rebuild” the Church, not with granite and mortar, but with living stones in the spirit of those earlier builders — with humility, penance and with gratitude for the miracle that God is still performing before our eyes.

And let us do so with confidence in Mary, who “at that moment when everything collapsed” does not hesitate to intervene for us.

Vivat Jesus!

## The Gentle Warrior

By James B. Reuter, SJ

### CHAPTER FIVE

#### THE WAR YEARS

“Even more. One American prisoner was dragging himself along in obvious distress. Finally, he fell, prostrate, in the road, unable to proceed. In the Bataan Death March, the guards had killed those who collapsed. We held our breath, as a Jap soldier, bayonet on rifle, approached the poor fellow.

“But no. Not brutal in the least, the guard bent down, and half-lifting, half-supporting the American, trudged together with him down the street out of sight.”

George saw good, even in the Japanese, when he was suffering under the Japanese!

It was true that the Japanese were making an effort to convince the Filipinos that they were friends, that this was not a religious war. The religious section of the Japanese Army came in with the second wave — some priests, some Seminarians, and some nuns. The Jesuit Scholastics met with one of these Japanese Seminarians. He came to the Ateneo, to the dormitory, sat on one of the beds, and talked. He did not know English, and the Jesuit Scholastics — Filipino and American — did not know Japanese. But they got along famously in Latin. All seminarians, at that time, used Latin as the means of instruction! It was a bond of

union!

The Japanese Seminarian explained that he had been drafted from the Seminary. He did not volunteer. He did not want to come. But the Japanese government felt that Seminarians were necessary, to convince the Filipino people that Japan was not hostile to the Church. The Seminarian said that he had been out on the water, off the coast of the Philippines, since October of 1941. And Pearl Harbor did not happen until December 8!

Not only the Religious Section of the Japanese Army was making an effort to befriend the Filipinos — the whole military organization wanted to convince the Filipino population that the coming of the Japanese was not a hostile invasion, it was liberation from the tyranny of the Americans!

It manifested itself in ways like this: a young girl, the daughter of a Filipino government official in Manila, was raped by a Japanese Officer. The girl told her father. The father reported it to the Japanese Command. In the office of a Japanese Colonel, the girl identified the Japanese Officer who had raped her. The Colonel spoke to the Officer, and gave him a pistol. The Officer went into the next room, and shot himself through the head.

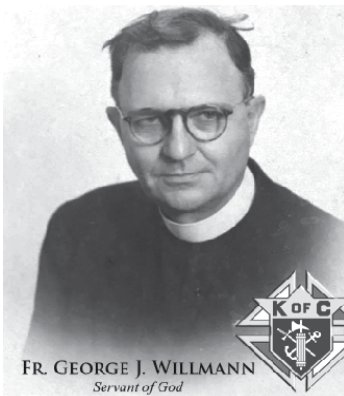
It was a definite,

programmed procedure, to convince the Filipino people that the Japanese were friends.

George went to Saint Scholastica’s, to visit wounded American soldiers. The Japanese chose Saint Scholastica’s for this, because the Benedictine nuns were German, and Germany was the ally of the Japanese. In the hospital wards, George discovered that very many of the American boys were there not because of wounds, but because of battle fatigue! Battle Fatigue was the new word, in World War II, for what was called “Shell Shock” in World War I. The name was changed because it was discovered that a boy could come down with battle fatigue, or with shell shock, without hearing any shell fire. It was insanity, brought about by the pressure of war. The boys suffering from this did not know who they were, or where they came from. George got their names from their dog tags, and — whenever possible — tried to get word to their parents, or to their wives.

It dawned on George that the wreckage of war is not only buildings and bridges — the real wreckage of war is men!

In the early days of the Japanese Occupation the Voice of Freedom was sounding, loud and clear, every night, from the radio transmitter of the United States Armed



Forces on Corregidor. George listened to the radio in his room, at night, with the lights out and the door locked. It was a crime to listen to the Voice of Freedom. George knew that it was the voice of Leon Maria Guerrero, saying: “It would be so sad, so tragic, if we surrendered today and help arrived tomorrow!”

Then, suddenly, it was no longer the voice of Leonnie Guerrero. It was the voice of Norman Reyes. George knew both of these boys.... And then the Voice of Freedom was still.

It was replaced by triumphant cries from the loud speakers which the Japanese had set up in every street: “Corregidor has fallen! The Japanese Imperial Army has conquered Corregidor! Four hundred Japanese paratroopers have taken two thousand Americans prisoner, on Corregidor!”

(to be continued on the next issue)



An INVITATION to become a **FR. GEORGE J. WILLMANN, SJ FELLOW**

THE “Fr. George J. Willmann Fellows” was launched by the Knights of Columbus Father George J. Willmann Charities, Inc. last June 29, 1997 during the Centennial Birth Anniversary celebration of Rev. Fr. George J. Willmann, S.J. This fund-raising campaign finances the theological research expenses necessary to possibly raise Fr. Willmann to the honors of the altar. Last December 7, 2015, Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio G. Cardinal Tagle has officially opened the Archdiocesan Process for the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of Fr. George J. Willmann.

Membership to the Fr. Willmann Fellows is open to all Knights of Columbus councils, members, their families, friends and even to business institutions. As of December 2018, more than 1,100 individuals and 36 institutions all over the country have already joined this fellowship. Father Willmann Fellows serve as co-sponsors in the work of spreading the good news about Fr. Willmann’s life, works and holiness. Their donation is a lifetime subscription to the initiative of the Knights of Columbus of promoting awareness on Father Willmann in order that authentic devotion to him may be encouraged among the faithful, especially those who need his intercession for God’s grace.

We therefore cordially invite you and your loved ones to join the Fr. Willmann Fellows. Aside from being an advocate in spreading the sanctity of Father Willmann and the graces that come with it, each Fellow is entitled to receive the following items as memorabilia: (1) a Certificate of Membership, (2) a lapel pin and (3) a pamphlet entitled “A Quest for a Cause of Fr. George J. Willmann, S.J.”. We further urge you to fervently seek Fr. Willmann’s intercession in all your petitions for God’s graces and to report to the Foundation all blessings you may have received with the intercession of Fr. Willmann.

#### Anniversary / C1

Eroles, Worthy District M-47 Deputy Noel S. Lacanilao, Brother Knights of the Council and their families.

The celebration was opened through the Welcome Address of Sir Knight Rodolfo N. Profeta, Deputy Grand Knight and Program Director followed by an Inspirational Message from WDD Noel S. Lacanilao wherein he awarded the Triple Star Council Award to its CY 2017 to 2018 Officers headed by PGK Orlando H. Gonzaga.

Apart from the various inspirational messages, brother knights were also recognized for their commitment and

#### Brother’s Insight / C2

to cast the ballots on behalf of these seniors; go down to have the receipts validated by the voters and run up again to put these ballots in the ballot box. It takes about 30 minutes for the whole process and unnecessarily depletes the personnel of precincts affected. The delay in the whole process would add up and tempers rise as lines are getting longer and slower to move.

Both of these differing situations are in Quezon City. Hopefully these could

service to the order. They are Bro. Arvin P. Dapula, Faith Director; Bro. Gerry G. Sabanal, Life Director; Bro. Neil M. De Leon, Community Director; Bro. Arcadio C. Prado, Jr., Family Director and Bro. Ronald T. Vargas, Membership Director. The Family Award was given to Bro. Gerry G. Sabanal and his family. The Knight of the Year Award was bestowed upon Sir Knight Rodolfo N. Profeta.

The festivities for the day was followed by a fellowship night at the Council 1000 office.

be the same scenarios in most of the polling places all over the Philippines. If such is the case then we could all say that election is relatively peaceful, fast and efficient with minor glitches and some hindrances caused by some unruly and demanding voters.

Let’s hope and pray that results of the election would be released with dispatch and no cloud of doubt would be cast on it lest the elections would just be a travesty and an exercise in futility.

## The Founder in the Philippines

Father Michael McGivney almost certainly did not expect the fraternal Order he established in Connecticut in 1882 to be planted some two decades later in the faraway Philippines, but the fact that the first council was founded in Manila in 1905 is testament to the worldwide and timeless appeal of the Knights of Columbus.

The first Knights in the Philippines were Catholic U.S. soldiers stationed in Manila in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. Local Filipinos, however, quickly took up the Columbian banner and the story has been one of constant growth for the Order. Father George Willmann, a New York Jesuit priest assigned to the Philippines, said that the principles of the Knights and the spirit of the Filipino man were perfectly matched. Known as “the Father McGivney of the Philippines,” he promoted the Order throughout the mostly Catholic nation until his death in 1977. Today, there are more than 424,000 Knights in the Philippines in four jurisdictions: Luzon North, Luzon South, Visayas and Mindanao. In addition, Justice Jose C. Reyes Jr., who sits on the Philippine Supreme Court, is a member of the Knights of Columbus Board of Directors.

Devotion to Father McGivney is

strong among the Knights and their families, thanks to the efforts of an office in Manila run by Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, director of Communications for the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines. With the help of staffer Ronalyn Ramos and numerous volunteers in locations throughout the archipelago nation, the life, mission and vision of Father McGivney are spread among priests, parishes, schools, youth groups, religious societies and hospitals. Visits to cancer wards have become a focus of the office’s activities. When they are told about the need for a medical miracle attributed to the intercession of Father McGivney, patients are comforted by the fact that they can pray both for their healing and for the beatification of the founder of the Knights of Columbus.

“In a country with much poverty, the example of Father McGivney is very appropriate, since he worked closely with the poor and those on the margins,” Msgr. Quitorio said. “The priests of our country identify with him very easily since much of their work involves social ministry, and working with the poorest of the poor. Personally, I have a great devotion to Father McGivney. I pray for his canonization every day and whenever I have a serious need or intention,

I add to my petition: ‘Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present.’ I find it very assuring.”

Of course, spreading devotion to Father McGivney is far from the only work of the Knights in the Philippines. With severe tropical storms regularly raging across the islands, there is a constant need for relief services in the affected areas, and the Knights are always there to assist with rebuilding homes and lives, even if they themselves have suffered loss. They also partake in food and nutrition programs for children, free medical and dental clinics, tree planting to slow soil erosion, as well as numerous spiritual initiatives designed to build the faith and fraternal cohesion of the Order and the Church.

One of the main engines of charity is the Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines, Inc. (KCFAPI), which offers life insurance and other financial benefits to members. The association funds numerous charitable programs and promotes the sainthood causes of Father Willmann and Father McGivney. The ground floor chapel in the KCFAPI headquarters in Manila is dedicated to Father McGivney, and a statue of the venerable founder is enshrined beneath a cupola on the grounds outside the building.

THE results of operations of the Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines, Inc. (KCFAPI) for the year 2018 generated a P54.2 Million Excess of Revenues Over Expenses, which is 14.33% lower than the previous year's P63.3 Million. This is not to say that the Association's operations has diminished its returns since its gross revenues as shown on the table (figures lifted from the

audited financial statements) increased by almost 5% or P48.9 Million from P1.02 Billion in 2017 to P1.07 Billion in 2018. The decrease in the Association's bottom-line is due to the higher total benefits and claims paid for the year which increased by 7.59% or P53.1 Million from P700 Million in 2017 to P752.8 Million in 2018. This is just as expected as the Association reached its 60th year in 2018, and we

shall continue to provide increasing benefits as the benefit certificates increase its values each year.

As a testament to the Association's commitment to its benefit certificate holders, as of December 31, 2018, the Association has released a total of living and death benefits of P6.2 Billion, more than or 104% of its total resources of almost P6 Billion. Included in this is the P27 Million participation

or dividends to be released this year.

The Association's total resources as of December 31, 2018 as shown on the table (Statement of Financial Position from the audited financial statements) reflected an 8.70% or P477 Million increase from P5.5 Billion in 2017 to almost P6 Billion in 2018. This has grown by more than 186,000 times from a seed capital of P32,000 in 1958. (RMDiapolit)

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES INC. STATEMENT OF INCOME

	Years Ended December 31	
	2018	2017
Underwriting Revenue	752,313,110	715,820,779
*Total Investment Income	314,257,362	301,623,100
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,066,572,490</b>	<b>1,017,445,896</b>
<b>BENEFITS, CLAIMS, AND OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Gross benefits and claims incurred on insurance contracts	457,930,146	470,085,472
Reinsurers' share of gross benefits and claims incurred on insurance contracts	37,663	496,778
Gross change in legal policy reserves	295,764,870	229,722,071
Reinsurers' share of gross change in legal policy reserves	(949,206)	(617,354)
<b>Net insurance benefits and claims</b>	<b>752,783,473</b>	<b>699,686,967</b>
General and administrative expenses	112,725,547	118,077,949
Commissions and other direct expenses	76,218,790	70,438,411
Interest expense	27,742,873	28,560,126
Operating expenses	216,687,210	217,076,486
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>969,470,683</b>	<b>916,763,453</b>
<b>NET INCOME BEFORE FINAL TAX</b>	<b>97,101,807</b>	<b>100,682,443</b>
<b>PROVISION FOR FINAL TAX</b>	<b>42,863,067</b>	<b>37,370,184</b>
<b>NET INCOME BEFORE PARTICIPATION OF BENEFIT CERTIFICATE HOLDERS</b>	<b>54,238,740</b>	<b>63,312,259</b>
<b>PARTICIPATION OF BENEFIT CERTIFICATE HOLDERS</b>	<b>(27,000,000)</b>	<b>(34,000,000)</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>27,236,723</b>	<b>29,310,238</b>

\* Interest Income, Dividend Income, FV Gain/Loss on FA at FVPL, Forex Gain/Loss & Other Income

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES INC. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Years Ended December 31	
	2018	2017
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	400,725,413	251,398,576
Short-term investments	122,307,358	427,109,742
Insurance receivables	17,272,813	18,663,409
Financial assets	4,658,947,028	4,152,852,014
Investments in subsidiaries	458,327,694	458,327,694
Property and equipment		
At cost	10,674,164	9,870,766
At revalued amount	265,612,522	144,166,000
Net pension asset	17,635,423	11,704,779
Other assets	9,590,350	10,046,886
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>5,961,092,765</b>	<b>5,484,139,866</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Insurance contract liabilities		
Claims payable	90,548,457	77,455,443
Legal policy reserves	4,276,697,036	3,968,090,985
Other investment contract liabilities	272,075,519	276,750,349
Other insurance contract liabilities	4,661,946	4,860,739
Members' participation payable	135,112,610	137,722,334
Accounts payable and other liabilities	102,057,191	95,563,226
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>4,881,152,759</b>	<b>4,560,443,077</b>
<b>Net Worth</b>		
Contribution from founding members	32,000	32,000
Other reserves	277,543,778	149,382,317
Unappropriated surplus	802,364,228	774,282,472
<b>Total Net Worth</b>	<b>1,079,940,006</b>	<b>923,696,789</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH</b>	<b>5,961,092,765</b>	<b>5,484,139,866</b>

## KCFAPI on-boards new Legal Services Manager

THE Association welcomes on deck its new Legal Services Manager as it traverses its corporate journey beginning 2019. Atty. Luis Delas Llagas Formilleza, fondly called as "Atty. Bok" is a Knights of Columbus member who earned his Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Science in Legal Management degrees from San Beda University. Prior to his assumption as head of the KCFAPI Legal Services Department, he worked

as an Associate Lawyer for Ponce Enrile Manalastas and Reyes Law Offices (PECABAR) and Nograles Law Offices (NLO), specializing in criminal and civil litigation, labor relations and alternative dispute resolution. He also served as a Legal and Technical Assistant for the Office of the Undersecretary for Legal and Procurement of the Department of Transportation. He used to be a varsity debater and coach for the San Beda

Debate Society, Law Debate Circle and the International Law Society and is an alumnus of the prestigious Ayala Young Leaders Congress and Ten Outstanding of the Philippines (TOSP)- National Capital Region. He is no stranger to underwriting and insurance for he had been exposed to the industry at a young age, as both his parents and extended families are insurance practitioners for more than three (3) decades.

## KCFAPI: Training and Development Programs

KCFAPI has been very active in various organizations that would help the Association and their employees in its mission to provide optimum mutual benefits to its members and their immediate families. For the month of May, the Association participated in events of 2 different groups with the objective of honing the skills and competencies of their employees and provide exemplary service to their BC Holders.



### Customer version 2.0 Training

As an active member of the Association of Service Professional in Life Insurance (ASPLI), an organization is composed of about 200 members from the Life Insurance industry, KCFAPI is committed in supporting the participation of its employees to various activities of the said group. Last April 24, 2019, Mr. Arvin P. Dapula and Mr. Glenn D. Salado of the BC Holder Relations Office (BRO) attended the Customer version 2.0 training conducted by ASPLI at the Green Sun Hotel, Makati. The training provided attendees additional knowledge on Customer Service which will enhance their skills in handling the needs of their clients.



Ms. Mary Magdalene G. Flores, KCFAPI VP for Treasury, BRO and HRCC; Mr. Jhon Lyndon Palafox, KCFAPI Manager for HR and Corporate Communications together with the participants of the Job Evaluation and Salary Structuring Training conducted by PMAP last May 7 to 8, 2019 at the PMAP Center, Mandaluyong City. (JDPalafox)

## Job Evaluation and Salary Structuring Training

The People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) organized a training last May 7 to 8, 2019 entitled "Job Evaluation and Salary Structures" it was attended by Ms. Mary Magdalene G. Flores, Vice President for Treasury, BRO and HRCC and Mr. Jhon Lyndon Palafox, Manager for HR and Corporate Communications. The 2-day training covered topics such as job analysis, job evaluation, job classification, compensation management process salary surveys and salary structures. It was a well-intended session to equip HR professionals on the standard process of ensuring competitiveness of employee compensation and benefits.

These trainings are part of the program lined-up for all employees of KCFAPI and their subsidiaries for 2019. As part of its commitment to uplift the services provided to BC-Holders, numerous training programs, like the Advanced Customer Service training in June, will be provided by the Association to further equip its workforce for their individual growth and fulfil the objectives of the company.

## KCFAPI Underwriting Manager takes her Oath as HOLUAP President



Ms. Lorraine A. Teodoro-Mendoza, KCFAPI Manager for Underwriting Services and incoming HOLUAP President together with Commissioner Dennis B. Funa of the Insurance Commission during their Oath Taking Ceremony at the Insurance Commission office, Manila City. (LTMendoza)

ON May 7, 2019, Ms. Lorraine A. Teodoro-Mendoza, KCFAPI Underwriting Manager took her oath as President of the Home Office Life Underwriters Association of the Philippines (HOLUAP). This organization was incorporated in March 28, 1990 and is composed of Underwriting Professionals across the country. The organization is committed in the development and promotion of life, accident, and health risks thereby professionalizing and promulgating the advancement of the home office life underwriting profession.

Her term will commence in June 2019 until June 2020. As president, she will ensure that the members of the organization is updated to current trends within the Underwriting industry through various activities of the organization ranging from trainings, seminars, workshops, lectures and conferences.



KCFAPI Officers and employees led by Ms. Ma. Theresa G. Curia, Executive Vice President and Mr. Arsenio Isidro G. Yap, President of Keys Realty and Development Corporation during their Themed Fridays "Today is Tropical Day!" last April 24, 2019. (KJYngco)