



Filipino Cursillo Community Diocese of Oakland



Issue 6 Volume IV Year 2023

EDITORIAL by Sis Celsa Taraya

The First Christmas – Fr. Theo Villariza, our Advent Retreat Master pointed out to me its Simplicity. No frills, no fireworks, no hoopla and yet look what it had done to humanity.

1.3 billion Catholics alone, a part of the 2.38 billion Christians in the world adoring Him, paying homage, evangelizing, and spreading the Good News.

God gave us a gift. A gift of LOVE in Jesus being born in a manger. No music played, no marching band welcoming Him to the world, no royal robe but swaddling clothes to wear, lowly shepherds and their flocks gathered around Him, no great armies of kings and queens heralding Him.

How great God is. Jesus is the reason for the season. He is the greatest Gift of all.

But what have we done to the Gift? We scourged Him, we spat on His face, we crowned Him with thorns, we made Him carry our cross, and we nailed Him to die. And we celebrate Santa Claus more than Him.

Dying. He looked up to the Father to forgive us for we know not what we do.

Forgiving. An act of Love for us gasping His last breath. Giving us HOPE to salvation.

Go forth, atone, do penance and sin no more.

Merry Christmas to one and all.

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A little kindness goes a long way

By Sis Celsa Taraya

Sometime ago, my husband Ramon and I stayed a bit longer after a successful Medical Mission done by the Maharlika Lions Club in Davao City, Philippines instead of coming back home to California.

The Philippine President then was Rodrigo Duterte. He had a selfless and noble project of feeding the children with porridge every weekend through the Barangay Chairman in Daliao, Toril, Davao City. The Barangay is the lowest form of governance in the Philippines. It has sitios (sites) under the Barangay Captain or Chairman. Duterte started a Keep-Davao-Clean campaign across the City at that time as well.

The Daliao beach is a public beach that anyone can come and enjoy what it offers for free. One fine day, our family had a picnic swimming day.

We noticed that the high tide brought to the shore all the garbage and filth thrown into the water like candy wrappers, cigarette butts, plastic bags and even diapers. It was not fit or healthy for swimming. Requested my family to be careful wading the water and pick up garbage we could find. We gathered ten (10) sacks of garbage from that small area alone.

That's how the Beach Clean-Up started. We made a commitment to clean-up the beaches with the help of the community and volunteers, fully sanctioned by the Barangay.

Each year since then, we asked support from family and friends who responded generously, and some of them even volunteered to serve the project physically; the likes of St Patrick Reunion team members of the Filipino Cursillo Community, friends from Europe, Australia, the US, and local medical professionals who donated their time and effort to serve.

It was a two-day weekend event. Saturday was for beach clean-up of 21 sites in the Barangay. At first people were leery about our intent on why we're cleaning up their beach and backyard, curiously watching, and confused. They felt slighted and a bit insulted because other people were cleaning instead of them. Later on that morning, they took our tools and bags from us, and did the work themselves.

We fed 200 children, gave tokens and gifts when they sang. Played games with them while the parents were busy cleaning the beaches.

Sunday was the Medical outreach day. We had dentists, nurses and local doctors who showed up and volunteered. The Barangay Captain provided the basketball court, the clinic to set up,

security and order of the event. Surprisingly, the people were not pushing and shoving to be served. They waited their turn. All in all it was a very fine day of kindness.

We do this event each year around March or July.

Last year, I was informed that the Daliao Beach won the contest in the cleanest beach in the City of Davao. The community actually continued the project we started on their own. I am so proud that we are part of it.

The most recent Medical outreach we did last Aug 12, 2023 in Barangay Baliok, Bago, Davao City served close to 5000 adults and children. Fed 500 children, distributed 250 food bags to the poorest of the poor families, 200 backpacks with school supplies, 8 dentists doing 100 extractions, 2500 pairs of eyeglasses from the Folsom Project of the District 4C-5 Lions Clubs with the all-time support of PDG Don Ring and PDG Carol Ring, 4 barbers doing haircuts to 50 school children, relief dry goods like used clothes and shoes. We had volunteers from Vienna and California.

Thanks to the Barangay Captain and his council members for providing local ground support and order.

The day ended with dinner at a local restaurant for 60 volunteers.

All we can do is all we can do. There were so many people still lining up for services but we have to close shop sooner because our supplies were exhausted. Local anesthesia ran out, antibiotics and pain relievers were done.

I wish each time it happens that we could stay longer, and not run out of supplies at all to serve more.

But we can do better next time with your help.

Thank you.



Poets in Our Midst

Seeking my Lord

By: Brother Deacon Noe

In mountain's gaze, where sky and earth
converse, I sought the divine, an emptiness
immersed. Amongst the trees, their tales
untold, God's absence echoed, a story unfold.

Rivers and streams, in their fluid grace,
His face remained veiled, an elusive trace.
In every corner, every cosmic seam,
His silent absence, a recurring dream.

Yet, in the vast expanse of seeking,
A revelation stirred, quietly speaking.
Not on distant peaks or winding streams,
But within my heart, where the divine gleams.

A journey embarked through realms untold,
God's whisper found in the heart's silent fold.
No need for distance or cosmic charade,
In the depths within, His presence displayed.

Remembering those who passed away

By: Sis Daisy Lopez

JUST PASSING?

Really? In our lives, people just passed by?
People come and go, leaving only a shadow?
Is that all there is? Here's a voice from a widow.
For years, this started some twenty years ago.

2023 passed by leaving us grieving for friends
Whom we knew just passed by or passed through
Our lives or our company; leaving vivid memory.
Of the cherished past and of unforgettable company.

Family, friends, our reunions with one another
Brought an unprecedented relationship that made us
one
We grieved and we mourned and together we prayed
For those who left us to the grave; for their eternal
rest.

Let's join our grieving friends, for death is just a
passing
Take it from me, twenty years did not erase the
memory
So, let's pray, whisper and sigh: He/She passed away?
We remember them; their company, memory, and
legacy.

Condolence to all who lost a loved one in 2023.
May they rest in peace with the LORD.



SPIRITUAL ADVISOR CORNER

Cursillo Encounter with Jesus: Lessons of Renewal and Faith By Deacon Noe Tuason

In the diverse moments of our lives, we experience encounters with Jesus – whether at Mass, in prayer, or through acts of kindness. These encounters are far from casual; they carry messages to ponder, lessons to learn, and actions to take. Consider the unconventional meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, a frowned-upon encounter in Jewish society. Despite societal norms, Jesus offered the woman the life-giving water of eternal life, proclaiming, “Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst.”

Jesus continually extends to us, as He did to the Samaritan woman, the Father’s divine life and grace, providing salvation and eternal happiness. Our encounters with Him happen at pivotal moments – baptism, confirmation, confession, and Holy Communion. Moreover, these encounters extend beyond the individual; they shape our interactions with others during Cursillo weekends, Group Reunions, Ultreyas, and the School of Leaders.

In our encounters with Jesus within the Filipino Cursillo Movement, Pope Benedict’s 2008 address to religious communities emphasized the importance of returning to the origins for renewal. Crisis, he noted,

becomes an opportunity for positive change when communities rediscover their original charism and live in a manner aligned with the spirit of their founders.

This call to return to roots echoes a 1998 invitation by Saint John Paul II for movements and ecclesial communities to discern their founders’ mentality. In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI reinforced this message at the Second World Congress of Lay Movement, urging a rediscovery of their foundational principles.

As a religious community, we evolve with time, yet we must never lose sight of our original charism. Failing to understand or forgetting our roots diminishes our identity as Cursillistas and weakens our mission to bring others to Christ. Any evolution in the movement that strays from this central mission becomes irrelevant.

In essence, encountering Jesus is not just a personal experience but a journey of continuous renewal and fidelity to our foundational principles. Our encounters with Him provide us with messages, lessons, and actions that shape both our individual faith journeys and the collective mission of our community.

ADVENT MANTRA

**“God of Eternal Advent we open our hearts to you
Fill us with Faith, Hope and Love in all we do
Give us each day in your light so true
Until our lives are a reflection of you.”**

Fr. Theo “Bong” Villariza



QUOTES TO LIVE BY

**Advent is about Faith, Love and Hope.
Here are some words to live by.**

“Let all that you do be done in LOVE” – 1Corinthians 16:14

“For we walk by FAITH not by sight” – 2Corinthians 6:7

“In HIS name the nations will HOPE” – Matthew 12:21

“HOPE is the feeling we have that feeling we have is not permanent” – Mignon McLaughlin

On being human.

**“Man is indestructible because of his will to freedom”
– William Faulkner**

**“The difference between misery and happiness
depends on what we do with our attention” – Sharon Salzberg**

On forgiveness.

**“For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember
their sin no more” – Jeremiah 31:34**

FUNNIER SIDE OF THINGS

During their anniversary, the wife reminded her husband, “Do you remember the time you proposed to me, I was so overwhelmed, that I didn’t talk for an hour?” The husband replied “Yes, honey. That was the happiest hour of my life’. The next day the husband was seen to work with a black eye – quickline comedy.

“How many times can you subtract 10 from 100? Once. The next time you would be subtracting 10 from 90” – www.readersdigest.ca

“What is the longest word in English? Smiles. There’s a mile between each “s”- www.slideshare.net

“Why can’t your nose be 12 inches long? Because then it would be a foot” – www.readersdigest.ca

“Do you believe in life after death? The boss asked one of his employees. “Yes, Sir”, the new recruit replied. “All is fine then. After you left early yesterday to go to your grandmother’s funeral, she stopped in to see you” – FindEmployment

“I’m going to stand outside so if anyone asks I am outstanding” – www.lovethepic.com



Ultreya Report...

October Ultreya - was hosted by the Divine Mercy Team. The witness speaker was Bro Alex Caragay



Witness Speaker



Divine Mercy Team

Spiritual Summation
Dcn Alex Dizon



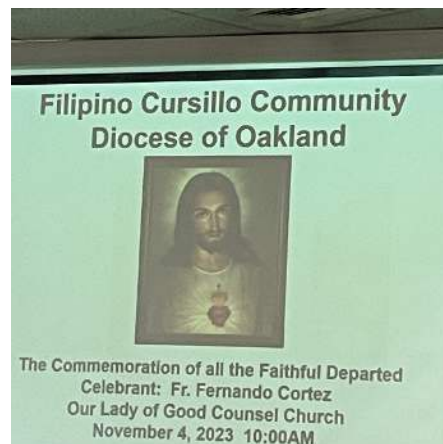
Men's Cursillo #104 Graduates



October Birthday Celebrants

November 2023 Ultreya & Memorial was hosted by Antioch Team and Mother Theresa of Calcutta Team. (Pictures shared by Sis. Marly Dy-Liacco)





ADVENT RETREAT



This year's Advent Retreat was held at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in San Leandro. The Retreat Master was Fr. Bong Villariza. The theme was "Season of Hope and Expectation"



Christmas Party 2023

The FCC Christmas Party was held at the Transfiguration Church Hall – the host team is **The Chosen Flock**



THE SCHOOL OF LEADERS

SOL PRESENTATIONS for October & November 2023

By Sis Gid Eugenio

As we celebrate this joyous season and on behalf of the School of Leaders Committee, we extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. May your Christmas be filled with the serenity of peace and the boundless joy from shared moments of wisdom, love and togetherness.

In **October**, SOL was able to present the **CURSILLO 101 – A Basic Overview of the Cursillo Movement** to our new sisters of WC#103 and brothers of MC#104. It was also a needed refresher for most of us seasoned Cursillistas. Deacon Noe Tuason also gave us a moving and challenging spiritual reflection on the “Woman at the Well” as an introduction to the CURSILLO 101 presentation.

In **November**, we ended our year of studies on the treasured book of discernment for Cursillo Leaders by Fr. Frank Salmani – “*Whom Shall I Send?*” The topic presented by sis. Edith Guevarra of St. Mary’s Group Team was on “**THE MAKE-UP OF A LEADER**”. Sister Edith discussed in depth the essential qualities needed to be a good Cursillo Leader and also gave us the beautiful meaning of the Leaders’ Prayer found in this chapter topic. Deacon Rey Encarnacion gave us an inspiring spiritual reflection regarding Christian Leadership to introduce this talk.

Thank you once again for being a cherished part of the SOL and book club gatherings. We look forward to continued blessings and shared moments of pondering, learning and reflecting the “WHYS” of the Cursillo Movement in the coming year, through the guidance of our SOL book club patron and our mother **Mary – Seat of Wisdom**. In the words of **St. Thomas Aquinas**, “*The pursuit of wisdom especially joins man to God in friendship.*”

(Please note that the SOL Technical presentations are captured in video and are available at the FCC website – www.fccoakland.com)

PRE CURSILLO

By Sis. Corrie Budnik

Our Pre-Cursillo committee is excited to announce our 2024 Pre-Cursillo Plan. The focus of this plan is to assist our community in living Pre-Cursillo. Pre-Cursillo is intended to be an ongoing process of living the Cursillo method of evangelization through friendship by individual Cursillistas in their environments.

The Post-Cursillo Committee supports Cursillistas in persevering in their 4th day primarily through Group Reunion Ultreya and other community activities.

The Pre-Cursillo Committee is intended to support Cursillistas in their 4th Day evangelistic efforts and to prepare prospective candidates for the Cursillo Weekend.

Ideally the Pre-Cursillo is lived by individual Cursillistas engaged in an ongoing process of evangelization through friendship. Living Pre-Cursillo should be a natural part of our 4th day supported by our Cursillo Community. However, the tendency has been to focus our Pre-Cursillo efforts only on getting candidates for the next women's and men's Cursillo Weekends and often at the "last minute".

Our Pre-Cursillo Committee is working hard on ideas to help us as individual Cursillistas and as community to evolve our Pre-Cursillo effort into an ongoing process. Some of those ideas are:

Parish Outreach – This is a continuation of a project started by Bro. Lino Centeno, Rector of Cursillo #104, designed to get inactive Cursillistas involved in our community and attract candidates for Cursillo Weekends. The central focus of this project is to make our Cursillo Community better known at parishes through bulletins, pulpit announcements and hospitality tables after masses.

Distribution of Pamphlets and other materials to assist our community in evangelizing using the Cursillo Method is intended to keep the need for evangelization in the minds of our community members. We plan to have Cursillo Pamphlets and other handouts available during Ultreyas.

Offering witnesses of personal experience – We plan to encourage members of our community to share their witness of evangelizing and sponsoring candidates to Cursillo Weekends through mini witness talks at Ultreyas and perhaps written witnesses in the Mariposa.

We look forward to an exciting 2024 for our community as we live Pre-Cursillo bringing lots of friends to Christ and some of them to our 2024 Cursillo Weekends.

THREE DAY CURSILLO

The discernment for the 2025 Rectors was held at Santa Maria Parish on Nov ... the participants who attended were: Sis. Marie Centeno, Sis. Lynne Evans, Sis Celsa Taraya, Sis. Gigi Enriquez, Sis. Rose Encarnacion and Bro Bong Solis. The discernment process was headed and guided by our Spiritual Advisor, Deacon Rey Encarnacion with the support of the 3Day Committee and the Secretariat.



The Chronicles of Joy

The Mediterranean Report Part II



Sis Joy Inocencio
Our Lady of Holy
Rosary

Sorrento is specially a beautiful coastal town in southwestern Italy, facing the Bay of Naples on the Sorrentine Peninsula. Perched atop cliffs that separate the town from its busy marinas, it's known for sweeping water views and Piazza Tasso, a cafe-lined square. Piazza Tasso is a central place and square in Sorrento in the south of Italy. The area is famous for its lush lemons and all the wonderful products they make from them.

On our way back to the ship, we had a little tour of the famous cathedral, San Gennaro, where Pope Francis holds his Mass when in Naples. San Gennaro in Italian, is the patron Saint of Naples. He was bishop of Benevento in the third century, and his bones and blood are preserved in the Naples cathedral as relics. He is believed to have been martyred during the Christian persecution of Emperor Diocletian.

Januarius, also known as Januarius I of Benevento, was Bishop of Benevento and is a martyr and saint of the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Born: April 21, 272 AD, Benevento, Italy
Died: September 19, 305 AD, Pozzuoli, Italy
Place of burial: Naples Cathedral

Pope Francis kisses a reliquary containing what is believed to be the blood of St. Januarius during a meeting with religious at the cathedral in Naples, Italy, in 2015. The dried blood of the saint is said to liquefy several times a year. After the pope handled the relic, the blood apparently liquefied. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

The liquefaction of the blood of the early Church martyr St. Januarius occurred Saturday amid the coronavirus lockdown, leading the Archbishop of Naples to bless the city with the miraculous relic. "Dear friends, I have a big announcement to make: even in this time of coronavirus, the Lord through the intercession of St. Januarius has liquefied the blood!" Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe said May 2.

Cardinal Sepe, the Archbishop of Naples, offered a Mass via video live stream from the Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary to celebrate the recurring miracle, and then used the relic of the liquefied blood to bless the city. How many times our Saint has intervened to save us from the plague, from cholera. St. Januarius is the true soul of Naples," he said in his homily.

The reputed miracle is locally known and accepted, though has not been the subject of official Church recognition. The liquefaction reportedly happens at least three times a year: Sept. 19, the saint's feast day, the Saturday before the first Sunday of May, and Dec. 16, the anniversary of the 1631 eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

During the miracle, the dried, red-colored mass confined to one side of the reliquary becomes blood that covers the entire glass. In local lore, the failure of the blood to liquefy signals war, famine, disease or other disaster.

"Naples has never given up in the face of the misfortunes that have affected it," Sepe said.

The Cardinal praised the health care workers who are serving those infected by the coronavirus in the city. Naples is the capital of the region of Campania, where 4,459 people have been documented with COVID-19 by the Italian Ministry of Health.

“But there is another possible epidemic that worries me in the most dangerous neighborhoods in the city” Sepe said, referring to the Camorra, the Neapolitan mafia.

“There are those who are good at making a fortune in times of epidemic. Let’s move, intervene immediately, because the underworld is faster than our bureaucracy. The Camorra does not wait. It is up to us to get rid of all [criminal] organizations. We must overcome and affirm the right to hope,” the Cardinal said.

Amid Italy’s lockdown, anti-mafia experts have warned that Italy’s criminal organizations could take advantage of the redirection of police resources, and profit from the government stimulus that could inadvertently fund mafia- controlled industries.

The coronavirus lockdown also prevented the traditional procession for the miracle of St. Januarius from taking place.

This procession had even continued in Naples during World War II, according to ACI Stampa.

Masses have not been allowed in Italy for the past eight weeks under the country’s coronavirus restrictions.

The president of the Italian Bishops’ conference, Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti said May 2 that the Bishops had reached an agreement with the government, and that he expects public Masses to resume “in the coming weeks” if the infection curve flattens.

“As a Church, we have certainly shared in suffering the limitations imposed to protect the health of all,” he said.

Hoping Italy will have normalcy soon.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Jan 13, 2024 – Ultreya @ Santa Maria Parish Hall
- Jan 27, 2024 – SOL (In Person) @ OLGCC Parish Hall
- Apr 6, 2024 – 3Day Workshop (Rector’s Guide) Venue/Time TBD

Please visit our website for more details on upcoming events – www.fccoakland.com

REMINDER:

- Secretariat Meeting – every 1st Tuesday of the month
7 pm via ZOOM Meeting ID: 846 5195 3571 Passcode: SECRETARIAT
- SOL Book Club – every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month
7 pm via ZOOM Meeting ID: 836 7743 6577 Passcode: BOOKCLUB
- SOL / Team Rep Meeting – In Person Quarterly (Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct) – Zoom (Feb (Mar, May, Jun, Aug, Sept, Nov)
7 pm via ZOOM Meeting ID: 882 9453 2558 Passcode: SOL

*** For more information, check the FCC Website –www.fccoakland.com ***

Mariposa

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