

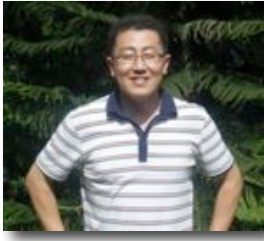


Our Doors are Open to the World

The last three months of our life have been very colorful. Various festivities have characterized these months: from Christmas to New Year and the Asian New Year. It has also been a time of foundations for the Assumption Family: the establishment of the Orantes Sisters and the Oblate Sisters. It has been a time of big and important gatherings: the First Forum of Assumptionists in Asia, the National Lay Congress- Assumption Together and the Taizé Pilgrimage of Trust. We also welcomed two new members to join our growing Assumptionist family.

These events may have caused us to have busy schedules and yet these have also paved the way for us to open our doors to internationality, to collaboration and friendship, a perfect way to start the year.





Two new postulants from abroad

We have welcomed in our midst two new postulants: Christopher Jeong from Korea and Carlos Danilo Ascencio from El Salvador. Both are currently studying English at our Assumption Language Center in preparation of their Novitiate in Antipolo.



Asian Youth Day

At the end of the November, the Diocese of Imus a suffragan of Manila, organized the Asian Youth Day. Brother Ricky Montanez was in charge of welcoming the international delegates. Our parish welcomed the delegation from Laos. On November 20, we welcomed some youth of the parish and the delegates from Laos to an evening dedicated to the mission of the youth to the Church. Postulants, young religious and Martin Yen residents actively participated in these

activities. Peter Xiang was part of the spectacle offered by the Chinese delegation through his breath-taking sword exhibition dance, boosting the adrenaline in the gymnasium.

Christmas Parties Abound

It is true that Christmas starts early in the Philippines. On weeks leading to Christmas Day, various gatherings and celebrations are expected to occur.

Our own Assumption Language Center gathered its partners, teachers and students into a colorful celebration of Christmas. There were parlor games facilitated by the teachers, a simple meal and very rich cultural presentations from the different participating nationalities present in the Language Center: Filipino, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Colombian, Canadian, French and American. Those who were in this event had a taste of how Christmas is observed (or not) in places other than their own.

Each of the three communities of the Delegation also had their respective Christmas parties before some brothers took their family visits. All of these simple gatherings have been marked with a time for sharing on the Incarnation, meals, gift-giving and funny presentations.

In keeping up with tradition and with our heritage, the Assumption Family gathered once again on Christmas Eve. As our founders have professed their fist vows on Christmas Day, the religious have also renewed their commitment during a concelebrated Christmas Mass in Assumption College San Lorenzo. With us was Sister Micaela de Wilde, general councilor of the Little Sisters of the Assumption.

Christmas Day itself was spent together as a Delegation. The three communities of Adveniat, Pavel and Novitiate shared a meal of ham, wine and cheese prepared by Brothers Alex Castro and Ed Molina.

On December 26, the Assumptionist Novitiate Community went to the Little Sisters in Malibay to celebrate the feastday of their founder, Fr. Stephen Pernet.



Top to Bottom:
Christopher (Korea); Carlos (El Salvador); The different Christmas parties in Pavel, Adveniat and Assumption Language Center.

Christmas with the poor: Navotas and Puso sa Puso

Brother Ed has been working for the past few months with the Sisters of the Good News, inserted since seven years in an area of “extreme poverty”. He had discovered this troubling poverty, and has tried to understand it from the inside. Indeed, he had a week of immersion last September among this poor squatters’ area. Ed gave the suggestion to Marie, our French Volunteer, to meet the Sisters and to gather from their experience some learning:

“I was immersed in this place for one week and was able to exchange with the three French Volunteers who came to offer their time and their competences to the Sisters, during few months. So, Ed and I discovered unacceptable realities for human people who seem keep their smile what ever happened: refuge in recycled materials for one complete family, lack of clean water, lack of food, lack of access to school, family problems, diseases, sometimes violence...

Our community went to celebrate Christmas with the inhabitants of this very poor area where the Sisters work. It was an important moment of sharing where the Advent Season made most sense.

The cooperation with the Sisters continues thanks to my regular visits with Ed. We hope to continue on this way with our immersion project in a neighboring squatter area: a project that we plan to carry out soon.

On December 5, many of us participated in an activity for 5,000 poor children in a stadium located in Pasay City. Our friends from the Salvatorian community organized “A Nativity Event” and they needed a lot of volunteers to accompany the children during the whole day. Recognizable with their yellow t-shirts, some 1,000 volunteers enjoyed the whole affair that was not without some improvisation, especially the distribution of food and Christmas presents.”



Marie Rahard, volunteer.

More and more guests

In December, the community welcomed:

- Our Oblate Sisters from South Korea, Sister Joanna Song (Vice-Provincial) and her two councilors, Sisters Lucia Lee and Teresa Hong, who came to prepare for the upcoming foundation in Manila. This community will welcome religious and candidates from China.
- Fr. Bruno Lepeu of the Foreign Missions of Paris (MEP), based in Hong Kong, visits China regularly and accompanies several Chinese seminarians and priests.
- Fr. Bernard’s family from Germany who came to spend vacation with him in the Banaue Rice Terraces, Chocolate Hills of Bohol and White Sand Beaches of Panglao. The day after Christmas, his family was happy to have an outing with the community and Martin Yen Residents. The trekked and explored the slopes of Taal Volcano.



Brother Ed among the poor children in Navotas.

Bro’s Café in Adveniat

The Youth Ministry of our parish along with the Pastoral Team for Vocation has been organizing a series evening gatherings called “Bro’s Café” at our place. The first one was sometime in early December and followed by another last Friday, January 29.

Introduced by a short musical presentation, the evening focused on a talk by a Jesuit on **Life Directions**, based on a book that he himself published a year ago. Coffee and light refreshments were offered and there should be a follow-up to these evenings of discernment for the young people of our parish.

In Philippine pop culture, “Bro” has taken a more significant meaning. A popular soap opera adaptation of the classic Italian film *Marcelino Pan y Vino* has been drawing a lot of viewers for its values integration and popularity among the young. Here, the character of Jesus is often called “Bro” by the child protagonist. We are not surprised why the organizers chose to have this name for the said event.



First Assumptionist Asian Forum

From January 19 onwards, participants to the first forum of Assumptionists in Asia have begun to arrive: André Brombart from Rome; Joseph Baik Ho and Frans Desmet from Gwangju, Korea; Marcel Poirier from Quebec,

Canada; Thang Le Viet, Tran Van Huyen, Nguyen Van Dong, Le Van Khai, Tran Van Khue and Nguyen Tien Dung from Saigon, Vietnam and Benoit Griere from Paris, France.



On the 21st, all came together in San Lorenzo to attend the welcoming festivities organized for the General Council of the Religious of the Assumption: A Eucharist with the Assumption Family and a Filipino dinner.

The forum was held in Antipolo, at the retreat and formation center of the Religious of the Assumption. It was essentially a time of mutual discovery and familiarization: with one another, with varying generations and backgrounds, with three different countries, churches and cultures. It was also a time to share our activities, our joys and preoccupations, our hopes and projects.



Some priorities for the years to come:

- To reinforce the foundations in Asia (with a special priority in Korea) through a viable, fraternal, international if possible communities with clear apostolic and communitarian orientations as well as an inculturated charism.

- To strengthen formation at all levels and also formation of formators, leaders and treasurers. This also includes formation to internationality and mission, taking a particular emphasis on learning new

international languages.

- To maintain and improve the vocation ministry, extending its scope to new Asian countries such as China, India and Indonesia.

- To further engage in social work and solidarity with the poor.

- To strengthen Bayard's insertion to the Asian context.

The participants also talked about the upcoming General Chapter and the preparations being done in the different provinces. They met also Bruno-Francois Leitao from Bayard who presented the reality of Bayard in Asia and its strategies for the future.

The Asian Commission again explored these questions. The suggestions and reflections will be sent to the coming Council of the Congregation.

A cultural night was held, animated by the participants and with the Assumption Family and friends, and allowed us to appreciate in a dynamic way the diversity of our cultures.

According to all the participants, the "first" was a success. We would love to have another forum in three years.

CDs with the presentations of the countries and its corresponding Assumptionist realities with photos from the forum were given to each participating community and for the information of all.

**From top to bottom:
Sharing in groups has
been a common feature
of the forum;
All the participants of
the forum across the
generations;
The Assumption Family
dancing during the
cultural night of the
Forum.**

Foundation in the Philippines: 3 years later

Fr. Pierre Khue from Saigon came to Manila for the first time for the Commission on Asia three years ago. He was back here this January for our First Forum of the Assumptionists in Asia and the 4th meeting of the Commission on Asia. **Fr. Pierre Khue** shares with us the changes he has observed:



**Pierre Khue,
an Assumptionist
from Vietnam.**

“When I first came to the Philippines, it was in 2007, one year after the foundation of the community in Manila: it was a very humble beginning, in a house that had been rented. Today, I see a great future for the mission.

The community has grown significantly over the years: from one single community at the time, there are now three communities of formation; from 7 religious then, they are now 16, besides the candidates, postulants and novices. Moreover, the family of the Assumption has been enriched by the arrival of the Oblates and the Orantes of the Assumption at the beginning of 2010.

From the very start, this foundation was international in its character with members from 4 different countries. Today, they have members coming from 8 countries. This is a rich experience, a parable of what Assumptionist communities look like now in many countries.

The apostolate of the communities in the Philippines is not only made out of the many services offered to their local parishes. It is now designing its own original profile. The community wants to come closer to the poor people: it became obvious when the country was hit by the typhoon “Ondoy” and when other social commitments were launched. It is quite a challenge for the Assumption when you see such a great gap between the rich and the poor in the Philippines.

As for the involvement with Bayard, our international publishing house, the development seems at a slower pace for the moment but there is a will to share with the Catholic community the rich experience of the Assumption with the media. Our brothers there, in their love for the Church, want to be available for edging needs. Thus, they have created a residence for some Asian seminarians and priests (mostly Chinese at the moment) coming to Manila to pursue their formation. It is called the “Martin Yen Residence”.

One other thought struck me: our brothers have lay partners in their ministry. The lay partners are full of enthusiasm to work with the religious for the Kingdom of God, the Assumptionist way.”

Vocation Ministry: Some updates

Fr. Gilles continued his regular visits to the contacts of the islands: in Cebu, (January) and Iloilo-Antique (February). As for those contacts of the Manila area, we continued to invite them for a monthly gathering in Adveniat House on the last Sunday of January and February. Fr. Marcel Poirier, our Provincial Superior, met with the 5 candidates who are applying for Postulancy as well as with the 5 Chinese priests studying in Manila who would like to join us. Next on the agenda is a visit to the South of India in early March to meet with four young men who are in contact with us through the internet. The idea is to constitute a screening team in India with a priest and some Religious of the Assumption to interview those who would write to us in the future.

Assumption Together: National Lay Congress

The Religious of the Assumption have organized a two-day National Lay Congress, which coincided with the visit of their General Council. The event was held last January 30-31, 2010 in Manila.

The first day was held in Assumption San Lorenzo. Sister Diana and her council addressed the participants and an open forum was held to tackle sensitive issues that concern the Assumption in the Philippines such as the development of its education apostolate, the welfare of its employees and teachers, its relations with the current President of the Republic who is an alumna. There were various concurrent sessions held after, mostly dealing on the “Kingdom Letters” by the former superior general, Sister Clare Teresa.

We will recall that most of our Filipino brothers, in one way or another, have been connected with the RAs as former students and teachers. In this special occasion, our Filipino brothers have been tapped to contribute to the congress.

Brother Blair, who recently ended his teaching stint in San Lorenzo, was a facilitator in one of the concurrent sessions in the congress. His topic was centered on Love for the Church.

Brother Alex, a graduate of Assumpta Technical High School and a former teacher in the same institution, shared his experience on the concurrent session on the Special Concern for the Youth. **Brother Alex** shares:



Br. Alex Castro

I was asked to share my Assumption experience as a former student then as a teacher at Assumption San Simon. I shared to a mostly youthful audience how my Assumption education influenced me in my vocation, how it formed me in my values and attitudes, and how it nourished and deepened that desire to follow Jesus Christ and to serve his church. The sharing in a way was a reliving of those beautiful experiences in the Assumption. What made it more concrete was for me to meet my former co-educators from the different Assumption communities not to forget also my bonding with the big delegation from Assumption San Simon.

Indeed, Assumption Together is becoming bigger and bigger, I hope that there would come a time that it will go beyond the scope of the RA sisters but to the whole religious family of the Assumption - sisters, priests and their lay partners. Furthermore, with our desire to form our lay contacts, we have a lot to learn from the RA sisters though collaboration, coordination and constant communication; anyway, our vision and mission is towards the same kingdom that impassioned our founding mothers and fathers – Adveniat regnum tuum!

Brother Joseph, former music teacher of Assumption Iloilo, led the choir in the various liturgical celebrations including the Closing Mass at the Shrine of Jesus Way, Truth and Life – the grand church beside the grand Mall of Asia.

Brother Ricky, a former teacher in Assumption Iloilo, sang the Creed at the Closing Mass. Our Assumptionist novices came also to serve at the Mass and to sing with the choir.

It has been a trend now in the urban setting of Manila to organize marathons for a cause. Assumption Together organized its own after the closing mass. Various sisters, alumnae, faculty and students joined including our own energetic volunteer, Michael for the 5 km run!

An estimate of 600 persons from all over the Philippines attended the congress and around 1000 joined the Assumption Run.

Day of Prayer for the Religious in the parish

Our parish is home to twenty different religious congregations. The religious priests, brothers and sisters help in the liturgical celebrations, youth catechism, calamity assistance, comfort to the sick and dying and for other projects. On February 2, the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus and also a day of prayer for the religious, the parish honored the religious in their midst with a special mass presided by Bishop Honesto Ongtongco, the diocesan bishop. The parish expressed its appreciation and friendship with this testimony: “Thank you Fathers, Brothers and Sisters for being such a blessing to our community.”



Taizé: Pilgrimage of Trust in Manila

The community of Taizé organized an international meeting of the young from different parts of Asia.

Our house became a welcoming center for contacts designated to our area. We have welcomed around two hundred young people from Asia and from the rest of the world. Brother Jean-Jacques of Taizé—who lives in a community of brothers in Bangladesh—stayed with us for three weeks.

On the days preceding the international meeting itself on February 5-7, young people have been coming to our chapel to pray throughout the day (morning, noon and evening) and to our backyard to eat and share. Brother Ricky and Kimiko Akita, a Japanese volunteer, were busy arranging accommodations for each delegate who arrived—in a foster family or in a religious community. They also arranged for visits to places where immersions can be made, places where there are “signs of hope” within the city and where people are given a warm welcome. We were also delighted to receive groups in our table.

Brother Blair helped in the preparations as the official translator of the all the reflection materials, prayers and letters in Filipino. On the days of the meeting itself, Brothers Blair and Joseph were asked to receive and animate Japanese and Chinese volunteers in a house generously offered by the parents of Assumption San Lorenzo students.

The prior of Taizé, Brother Alois, centered his message mostly on his Letter from China. While it mentioned his encounters with the Church in China, the letter talked about universal themes of faith and trust for young people. There were quite a number of Chinese delegates in the meeting. Our own Chinese residents participated in the meeting. Here is what **Joseph Zhang** has to share:



**Clockwise:
The delegates from Assumption with the host families;
The pilgrims in our chapel in Adveniat;
Sharing around the Word is a distinct feature of the Taizé meeting.**

“There were 200 Chinese participants who joined the Taizé prayers, something that they have been curious about, something that they have been longing for. As a result, most of them have a lot of rich experiences and feelings. An 18-year-old girl said that the gathering opened her heart that was for many years kept closed because of a misunderstanding in the Church. A 26-year-old boy said that now that he understood what a Taizé prayer is, he wants to go back to China in order to re-adjust the way they conduct prayers and to welcome the participation of people from all walks of life. A nun said that she saw the future and hope of the Church with young people. She saw how Taizé connected together people of different faiths. A young man who is discerning his vocation said that he experienced Jesus in this prayer and that Jesus is really in his heart. A girl from a broken family said that she found solace here, something that other people cannot easily have. Another priest said he experienced a true sense of the spiritual pilgrimage, something he had never experienced. He felt God, and God gave all his work a positive affirmation. There is a sister who wanted to give up her way of following Jesus. She said she got encouragement and courage in the sharing to renew once more her commitment; she now wants to continue her way of following Jesus.

Taizé is a prayer; it is a gift from God. We should cherish God and we must keep him in our lives, we want to make him known so that more people will be experience God. Taizé is an encouragement; it is a blessing from God. We should enjoy being with him and it is necessary in life to often see him. Thanks be to God! Thank you, Taizé!”

Filipino Postulants on their Immersion to the Poor

As part of their Sojourn Inter-Postulancy Program, our postulants have been dispersed into different areas for their immersion.

Jay Lituanis stayed with an elderly Aeta (an indigenous tribe of pygmies in some mountain regions) for ten days. He saw that they were in such poor living conditions. This is what he says of his experience:



“All these disturbed me to find solutions to their problems in the light of the Gospels. A medical mission can be conducted in the area. A literacy program and even basic catechesis can be had too. Coordinating with the concerned LGU and public offices like the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and PhilHealth must be made. Inviting an NGO to assist them in their trading needs and capacity-building is also an option. A lot of possibilities must be explored. On a very personal note, I am more determined to move on to the next stage of formation—the novitiate—in responding to my vocation to the religious life and specifically, to Fr. D’Alzon’s call for Assumptionists to go where the image of God in men and women is threatened!”



Chris Quinal stayed in Talim Island where there are fisherfolks. He stayed particularly with a foster family. He became aware of the difficulties being faced by poor families in the countryside. He writes:

“I saw in my foster father the determination to rise again and to recover everything that he lost during the recent typhoon. I know he can do it because he is so industrious. The lake also offers a good opportunity to have a good income. What he needs is a capital to have a boat that he can use for fishing and a fish pen for him to earn more. I want to help him. I want to lend him money that he can use as a capital, but I do not also have money... What I can do now is to pray always that God will help him in his endeavor to build again his life.”

**From top to bottom:
Jay with his foster family;
and Chris.**

New developments for the Development Office

Our Development Office is now evolving into something more organized and purposeful: an NGO we would like to call Kaloob Development Foundation. Now with more lay volunteers, religious and an employee working as a team we are now in the process of planning future projects, developing policies and procedures, shaping our identity as well as finding means to sustain our projects. We have recently acquired the necessary permits and government recognition to work as an entity for social development.

Mary Janelyn Hiloma, or Jen, is the newest member of the team. Her training and experience as a development practitioner has exposed her to the many realities faced by the underprivileged in the country, having worked with academic institutions, corporate foundations and other cause-oriented groups. She is a youth educator, a development worker and a “frustrated singer.” She earned her undergraduate degree in Community Development and her masters degree in Urban and Regional Planning both from the University of the Philippines.



Jen Hiloma, our new employee.

Arrival of the Orantes of the Assumption

Our Orantes Sisters arrived on January 7: Sister Yolande Champigny, superior general; Sister Edwige, her councilor and Sisters Marie-Nicole and Florence, who will be founding a community in San Jose, Antique, in the island of Panay—an hour by plane plus two hours by bus south of Manila. Our community helped them to discover the country and to prepare them to be inserted in the local scene. The date of the foundation is January 8, the first day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Father Oswaldo Sanchez Garcia from Mexico arrived on January 14. He brought with him postulant Carlos Danilo Ascencion Lemos from El Salvador. Our two Mexican novices were happy to be with him and to taste his spicy cuisine.

From time to time, the community welcomes different groups in its garden. Our visitors appreciate the beauty and serenity of our place: students of Montessori schools, retreatants, catechists and social workers for their on-going formation, youth discerning their place in the Church and society.



**“Rendons grâce au Seigneur car il est bon.”
The Orantes and the Oblates sing a day before they go to their respective foundations.**

Arrival of the Oblates of the Assumption

On February 6, at the Feast of St. Paul Miki and martyr companions, we welcomed the Oblate Sisters. Sister Joanna Song, Vice-Provincial Superior of Korea was accompanied by two “foundresses” of Manila, Sister Catherine of Korea and Sister Ghislaine of the Democratic Republic of Congo. On February 11, they signed the contract leasing to them their new house, one that was previously used as the formation house of young Jesuit philosophers. It is conveniently located near the Jesuit campus. Therefore, our two communities are now very near each other.

**From L to R:
Sr. Florence, Sr. Catherine,
Sr. Ghislaine and Sr. Marie-Nicole.**

Celebration of the Asian New Year

On Saturday January 13, our community celebrated with Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean men and women the Asian New Year, the most important feast of the year for them.

Our Chinese residents have organized very well the feast. They have invited some sisters to help them prepare 2010 dumplings, a ball of steamed dough stuffed with vegetables and meat and eaten with a very spicy sauce. It is a traditional dish at the start of the New Year.

The celebration of the New Year began with a Mass concelebrated by around fifteen priests. It was an occasion to pray especially for the families who gather together for this feast. After that, we had an entertaining program with some songs and dances. We had dinner after with the famous dumplings. Everybody dispersed after to watch the live TV coverage of the celebration in China.



The next day, the residents came to express their New Year greetings to the superior who gave to each of them the “red envelope” with a modest amount of money. All went to the mass presided by the “Nuncio” of Hongkong at the Chinese Seminary in Manila. More than two hundred Chinese nuns and priests attended this mass. A lunch with dumplings was served, an entertaining program followed after with very nice Mongolian dances. And “red envelopes” were passed around.

With Flying Colors!

On the eve of Ash Wednesday, Ricky and Ed successfully and brilliantly completed their final comprehensive exams in theology. They both received the mark “magna cum laude”! This was our last feast before the season of Lent... They will receive their diplomas in a grand celebration this coming March 10, the feast of Saint Marie-Eugenie de Jesus.

<p>CONTACT US! www.assumptionists.ph aa.manila@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Adveniat House 17 C. Salvador St, Loyola Heights 1108 Quezon City</p>	<p>E. d’Alzon Assumptionist Novitiate c/o Assumption Antipolo Sumulong Highway 1870 Antipolo City</p>	<p>Pavel House 84 East Drive 1810 Marikina Heights Marikina City</p>
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Solidarity with Haitian victims

Because they were strongly devastated by the typhoons last year, the Filipinos expressed a lot of generosity for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. The Catholic Church asked for a second collection during the Sunday Masses on January 24.



The Second National Congress of Priests in Manila

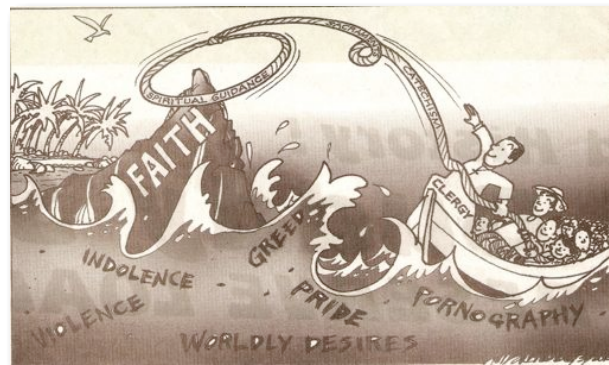
From January 25-29, priests and bishops numbering to 5,542 from 87 dioceses across the Philippines gathered in Manila for the Second National Congress of Priests. “We can only see this in the Philippines!” the Nuncio exclaimed as he was impressed by the huge participation. Of course it was very impressive to see so many priests and bishops from one country gathered to celebrate the Eucharist, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, to pray the Rosary, to go to confession, to venerate the relics of the Curé of Ars, to actively participate in the conference given by Fr. Rainiero Cantalamessa, Preacher of the Papal Household and to express their solidarity with the Haitian victims.

The Official Start of the Electoral Campaign Period

Next Monday May 10, will be a national holiday. More than 50 million Filipino citizens are called to vote for a new president, a vice-president, twelve senators, 287 congressmen, 80 governors and respective vice-governors, 766 provincial board members, 137 city mayors and their respective vice-mayors, 1,524 municipal councilors, 1,524 municipal mayors and vice-mayors and 11,980 municipal councilors.

Eight to ten are vying to become president: Noynoy Aquino, son of Cory Aquino

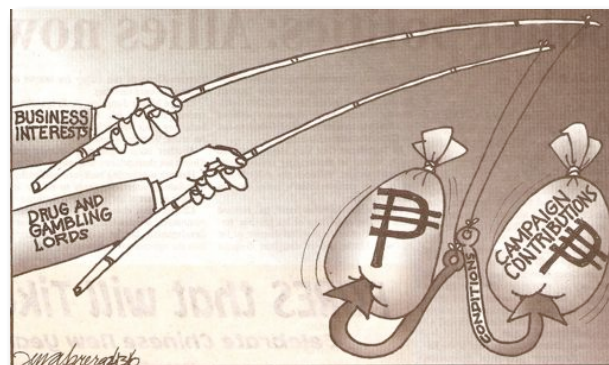
(icon of Philippine Democracy who passed away last year/Liberal Party), JC de los Reyes (Ang Kapatiran Party), Dick Gordon (Bagumbayan), Jamby Madrigal (senator, sole woman candidate/Independent), Nicanor Perlas (Independent), Gibo Teodoro (former Defense Secretary from the current administrator, candidate of the coalition of Lakas-Kampi-CMD), Eddie Villanueva (or Brother Ed, from the strong evangelical movement “Jesus is Lord”), Manny Villar (a rich businessman-turned-senator who strongly emphasized his poor origins in his campaign outfit/Nationalista Party) and Joseph Estrada (deposed president on the grounds of plunder and corruption). Each of these candidates try to win the favor of the Church and other religious groups.



“The Electoral Circus has begun” is a popular headline. In effect, the electoral campaign becomes a simple demagogic spectacle where the people are being won over by food, money, clothing and a lot of flashy billboards. But

we do not talk about governmental programs. The

issue remains uncertain. Some personalities, including bishops, think that the issue regarding the elections is very important for the country. Some even say it is crucial. In mid-February, the survey polls foresee a close fight between Aquino and Villar



taking note that the voice of poor masses will make a difference.

A background of doubt and violence

This will be the first automated election. The public and some candidates fear the occurrence of cheating, as there were widespread instances of cheating when the polls were still in its manual version. During this time, military insurgencies are happening in the South and armed men have abducted 75 persons in Mindanao.

Prayer for the Two Hearts

The Filipino bishops, in observance of the Year of the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary, have contextualized a prayer for the nation:

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, the reality of our deeply wounded and broken country impels us to respond with new urgency to the most pressing problems of our times. We are a broken people. Our hearts are fragmented and we are discouraged. We need your heart, O Lord as we seek to be made whole. Rooted in faith in You and love for our country, we want to participate in Your work of transformation of persons, families, organizations and society. Through the transforming power of Your Heart, we draw a



new dynamism, a strong inspiration, a fire which can change and transfigure our lives as individuals and as a nation. Love of the Heart of Jesus, give us courage and patience. Wisdom of the Heart of Jesus, teach us to pray and to act with hope and charity at all times. Amen! Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us! Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!

Some facts about the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs):

- \$14.3 billion: Total remittances from OFWs from January to October 2009
- 3,000+; Estimated total number of OFWs deployed daily (2008)
- 2 million: Estimated number of OFWs working abroad at anytime between April and September 2008.

20 February 2010

If you wish to help us in our ministry of helping others, you may send your donations to:

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