



In most countries, it is the beginning of the school year. In the

Philippines, this time has long passed. We have resumed our usual **activities**

and the **typhoon** season is already upon the country. A new

school year is often

the time for **changes**, new

beginnings. There are a few of these in

our Assumptionist Delegation as well as on the **political scene**.

Our joys

On August 11, Bros. Ed Molina, Blair Paulus Nuyda and Joseph Macalanggan renewed their vows. On August 15, in Mexico City, Bros. Jose Gonzales and Gilberto Amalor pronounced their first vows as they concluded their novitiate year in the Philippines. On September 2, on the 200th anniversary of the baptism of our founder, Brother Ed Molina will receive the ministry of lectorate, a first step towards priestly ordination. Marie Rahard and Arnaud Lemaître, our two French volunteers, have announced their upcoming wedding.



Brothers Ed, Joseph and Blair during the celebration of the renewal of their vows



Our griefs:

The death of Magno Garcia, Bro. Ellis Luciano’s grandfather, on July 18 2010. Also the death of Msgr. Francisco Claver, S.J., first bishop from the Igorot tribe and fierce defender of Human Rights during the dark Marcos years.

Local chapters and new composition of the communities

At the beginning of June, just before the school year started, the three Assumptionist communities of the Philippines held their local chapter during which they reviewed the past year and made plans for the coming year.

The Adveniat community spent 3 days (June 2-4) in the newly built retreat house of the Sisters of Notre-Dame, *Stella Maris*, in Balanga (Bataan), north of Manila. It is run by some Korean sisters. A Salesian brother was the facilitator. We reviewed the past year, shared our endeavors and expectations and decided on the aspects of our common life.

Daily	On Saturday	On Sunday
Morning prayer 6 am	Morning Prayer and Eucharist 7 am	Morning prayer 8 am
Breakfast 6:30 am	Breakfast 7:45 am	Breakfast After Lauds
House Chores 7 am 7:30 am	Weekend Chores for all 8h30	Eucharist at the Parish 6h30, 9h30, 17h30, 19h
Classes/activities 8 am	Lunch 12 am	Lunch 12 am
Lunch 12:30 am	Common activities Apostolate	Restful and leisurely afternoon
Classes/activities 2:30 pm 4:30 pm	Meditation in common 6 pm	No common prayer and dinner
House Chores 5 pm 5:30 pm	Evening Prayer and Gospel Sharing 6:30 pm	
Evening Prayer and Eucharist 6:30 pm	Dinner 7 pm	
Dinner 7:15 pm	Movie night/other activities 8 pm	
Recreation		
Compline 8:30 pm		

The Adveniat community is essentially a community of formation. It is made up this year of:

- 6 Filipino religious brothers starting their first year of theology at the Jesuit University *Ateneo de Manila*,
- 2 other Filipino brothers newly graduated from their theological studies (see Chronicles no. 15) and ready to take up apostolic ministries and responsibilities,
- 2 senior religious-priests from Québec (Canada) and Alsace (France).



The big challenge for the brothers, after their well ruled life at the novitiate, is to find the right balance between their studies, prayer, leisure, apostolate and community life. And for those who have finished their academic studies, it is to tackle their new responsibilities. The senior religious challenge is to face the many responsibilities they share and hold them together. The Adveniat community chose various means to favor prayer life and community life. As a result, they voted on a schedule that goes like this:

Weekly schedule		
Monday	Adoration	6 pm
	Separate dinner for Volunteers and their formators	7:15 pm
Wednesday	Community meeting	4 pm
Wednesday and Thursday	Community dinner	7:15 pm
Friday	Gospel sharing of one Brother	
	Social	After the Eucharist

Monthly schedule	
2 Tuesday	Incorporated Music Practice/Recreation
Last Friday	House meeting/Socials
First Saturday	Recollection (sessions/seminars may be incorporated)
15 th of the month	Monthly financial report

Yearly schedule	
Two week holiday in Christmas break, depending on the needs and responsibilities of the Brothers.	
An eight days retreat	
One week community holidays	
Mid Year financial revision in July	
end of the year report in February	

Apostolate

The members of the community have taken various apostolates, according to the priorities set by the Delegation:

- In terms of education and formation:
 - by welcoming 6 Chinese priests or seminarians in the Martin Yen residence: they will study English before enrolling in theological studies in Manila;
 - by investing time and energy in running the Assumption Language Center;
 - by implementing *Bayard* publications in the Philippines.
- In terms of Vocation Ministry
- In solidarity with the poor by co-sponsoring with our parish the pastoral responsibility of Marytown, a nearby shanty area and by continuing our involvement with the victims of typhoons
- In fund-raising activities to cover formation and apostolate expenses.



A student of the Language Center, in his room of Martin Yen Residence..

A small team of lay people help the community in these projects: our 2 French volunteers, Marie Rahard and Arnaud Lemaître, Jun Danilo, an employee of Kaloob, our fund-raising office, and the teachers of our Language Center.

The community of the postulants (Pavel House) in Marikina had its own local chapter on June 14-15.

The community of the postulancy is made up of 2 religious: Fr. Jean-Marie Chuvi Adubangho, the Superior, and Bro. Alex Castro, formator and treasurer; there are 3 Filipino postulants: Darwin Anolin, John Ray Nagas and Rex Navarro; finally there are 2 Chinese pre-postulants: Frs. Joseph and Simon.

Pavel House is an Assumptionist community of religious and pre-novices living a fraternal life centered in Jesus Christ according to the spirit of St. Augustine and Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon.

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Our mission first and foremost is to accompany our pre-novices in their formation as they continue to discern their vocation to the Assumptionist way of life as we continuously immerse ourselves in the context and realities of the community, especially the poor, and of the local church where we are situated.

The postulants attend the *Sojourn* inter-congregation program of formation and are trained to the Assumptionist spirituality and lifestyle. They also have French lessons with our French volunteer, Marie Rahard. The Chinese pre-postulants continue their English classes at our Language Center. They promote our *Bayard* publications and are involved, at their level, in parish activities. Bro. Alex is enrolled in a program of formation for formators while Fr. Jean-Marie Chuvi is finishing his survey on the religious quests of the people of Daan Tubo, a shanty town, and his thesis on the catechetical program of this impoverished neighbourhood.



The Postulants and their Formators. From left to right: Rex Navarro, John Ray Nagas, Le Père Chuvi, Darwin Anolin et le frère Alex Castro.



The postulants during the « Sojourn » program.

The novitiate in Antipolo

There were changes in the composition of the community in the last months. In June, there were 9 members: the Master of novices, 2 assistant priests and 6 novices.

Since the beginning of August, with 2 Mexicans returning home after they finished their novitiate year, the community has only 7 members.



At the two extremities are Pépé and Gilberto, now in Mexico.

The life of a novitiate is well regulated and structured and it is mainly an initiation to the Assumptionist religious life. The novices attend the *Exodus* inter-novitiate program of formation with two modules a month. In between the modules, they have a series of classes in the morning and various activities in the afternoon: chores, spiritual exercises, study, gardening, music, sports...

On Saturday afternoons, their apostolate brings them to the orphanage of the Missionaries of Charity of Mother Teresa where they teach catechesis or help in some other ways. On Sunday mornings, Bro. Christopher Jeong teaches catechesis to the children of a Korean parish in Manila. The 3 religious-priests have their own ministry (masses and confessions) at the Retreat House of the Religious of the Assumption. Fr. Leo Brassard presides at the Mass once a week at the Missionaries of Charity while Fr. Roddy Ratsiomalaka ministers regularly at Saint John the Baptist Parish in Taytay.

This Jesus Challenges Me...

*I am FURIOUS and he tells me: FORGIVE!
 I am AFRAID and he tells me: TAKE COURAGE!
 I have DOUBTS and he says to me: HAVE CONFIDENCE!
 I feel RESTLESS and he says to me: BE CALM!*

*I prefer to go MY OWN WAY, and he tells me: COME and FOLLOW ME!
 I make MY OWN PLANS and he says to me: FORGET ABOUT THEM!
 I aim towards MATERIAL GOODS, and he says: LEAVE THEM BEHIND!
 I want SECURITY, and he says: I PROMISE YOU ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!*

*I like to live MY OWN LIFE, and he says: LOSE YOUR LIFE!
 I believe I AM GOOD, and he tells me: GOOD IS NOT SUFFICIENT!
 I like to BE THE BOSS, and he says: OBEY!*

*I like to UNDERSTAND, and he says: BELIEVE!
 I like CLARITY, and he speaks to me in PARABLES
 I like POETRY, and he speaks to me in REALITIES
 I like my TRANQUILITY, and he likes me to be DISTURBED*

*I sometimes go for VIOLENCE, and he tells me: PEACE BE WITH YOU!
 I draw the SWORD and he says: PUT THAT AWAY!
 I think of REVENGE, and he says: OFFER THE OTHER CHEEK!
 I speak of ORDER, and he says: IL HAVE COMME TO BRING DESORDRER
 I choose HATRED, and he says: LOVE YOUR ENEMIES
 I try to sow HARMONY, and he says: I HAVE COME TO CAST FIRE ON EARTH!
 I like to be the GREATEST, and he says: LEARN TO BE SMALL AS A CHILD!
 I like to remain HIDDEN, and he says: LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!
 I search for the BEST PLACE, and he says: SIT ON THE LAST BENCH!
 I like to be NOTICED, and he says: PRAY IN YOUR ROOM BEHIND LOCKLED DOORS!*

No, I don't understand this Jesus. He provokes me and confuses me.
 Like so many of his disciples, I, too, would like to follow another Master.
 Who would be more certain and less demanding.
 But I experienced almost the same as Peter: "I don't know anyone else WHO HAS THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE!"



It is not so easy to describe the experience of a novitiate. But before leaving for Mexico where he was to pronounce his first vows, during the *despedida* Br. José Cervantes, known as 'Pépé' gave this piece of poetry as a summary of his own experience.

Among the activities of the Delegation

Assumption Language Center

At present, our students include those from our Martin Yen Program and those coming from other Congregations. Most of them attend our daily weekday classes. Others attend our enrichment classes once or twice a week.

Our students...

First Cycle (July-September)

- 6 Chinese (Martin Yen Residence)
- 1 Chinese (Canton)
- 3 Passionist postulants from Vietnam
- 2 lay partners of the Salesians from Thailand
- 3 Oblates of the Assumption : from Korea, from RD Congo and from China
- 1 Sister of Notre-Dame from Corée
- 1 Vietnamese postulant from Congregation of the Immaculate Conception Sisters
- 2 Assumptionist pre-postulants from China

Second Cycle (October –December)

New students will join the first group: 2 Indian A.A. Contacts in September, 1 Japanese Lay Associate of the Religious of the Assumption, 2 Postulants of the Religious of the Assumption from Vietnam.

The Third Cycle will start in January



**Sister Ghislaine,
 Oblate of the Assumption,
 from RD Congo**



**Sister Catarina,
 Oblate of the Assumption,
 from South Korea**



**Sister Teaw,
 from Thailand**

French Classes

Marie Rahard, one of our French volunteers, provides a French class to our postulants and weekly classes to our brothers and to the Oblates. She also organizes a French Summer Camp once a year.

The Language Center is under the care of a team of 5 lay people and 3 Assumptionist brothers, all of them English teachers by profession. The director of the Center is Br. Ricky Montanez and the accountant is Bro. Rodel Cervantes.



**Brother Ricky
Montañez**



**Brother Rodel
Cervantes**

Solidarity with the poor

Relocation of 40 families

We are conducting a preventive program in Piat to relocate 40 families living in dangerous areas threatened by typhoons. The water is now provided in the site and some livelihood projects have started, like the communal garden. We are now working to provide the site with electricity

A Scholarship Program: “Emmanuel d’Alzon”

Service Scholarship Program for the Youth of Piat To concretely help some less fortunate young people in the neglected parts of the country.

“In honor of the Bicentennary of their founder’s birth, the Philippine Delegation of the Augustinians of the Assumption (Assumptionists) through its Kaloob Foundation is launching this school year 2010-2011 the Emmanuel d’Alzon Scholarship for Leadership and Service. This scholarship program complements our involvement in Piat. It is for sixteen-year-old students affected by the typhoons or living in areas with risks of natural calamities. This project aims to sponsor each student for a period of four years of his or her education. The project will have the following criteria: To studying a State College or University, (where fees are less expensive); to enrol in service-oriented courses such as social work, education, healthcare, environment or criminology, allowing the student to render service to his other community in the future. Each student will be regularly evaluated. The scholarship will cover the school fee of the university, which is around 10,000 pesos a year, or 170 Euros or 225 US Dollars.”

A presence among the marginalized

Marytown is a marginalized area close to our community. Floods have affected it after Typhoon Ondoy. Many families were deprived, especially the children. Our project: to rent a house that will be a Study Center open seven days a week with social and educational activities for children, teenagers and mothers. Brothers Ed Molina, Joseph Macalangan and our volunteer Marie Rahard are working together to prepare for this initiative, in cooperation with the local parish. They will organize workshops, a livelihood program and will be open to address some problems concerning children, education, healthcare, and environment

Among some rich villages, there are marginalized people, living in poor areas. This is a small entrance of Marytown.



An emergency fund for the victim of typhoons...

In the Philippines, about twenty typhoons hit the country every year. Most of these occurrences do not cause a lot of damage but there are also strong ones that come, affecting thousands of people. Last year, typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng made huge damage calling us to action during the last six months. We need an emergency fund to intervene more quickly in order to help the people in need, especially those who are living in the neighbourhood of our communities.

Our own NGO

In order to sustain its own apostolates, the Delegation has created its own NGO, officially recognized by the government of the Philippines last December. It is called *Kaloob* (meaning, “of one heart”); with its motto: forming leaders, building communities.

KALOOB

Forming leaders. Building communities.

Kaloob is a fund-raising office, here and abroad, in order to support our programs:

- Formation of leaders for Church and society
- Administration of a Language Center
- Providing board and lodging at the *Martin Yen residence*
- In solidarity with the poor: victims of typhoons, scholarship programs, a presence among the marginalized.

A website will soon be designed in order to inform about our various programs

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

For Europe

In Euros:
Procure
Missionnaire de l’
Assomption–
Philippines,
79 Avenue Denfert-
Rochereau 75014
PARIS France

For North America

In Canadian dollars :
Montmartre
Canadien –
Philippines,
1679, Chemin Saint-
Louis
QUEBEC G1S 1G5 -
Canada

In American dollars:
Augustinians of the
Assumption –
Philippines,
330 Market Street -
BRIGHTON, MA
02135 -USA

For the Philippines

In Pesos:
Assumptionist Philippine
Delegation
Account No. 3081-1158-92
Bank of the Philippine Islands
Loyola-Katipunan Branch-
Quezon City
Philippines

Returned home

On July 28, Michael Sheerin went back to his native Kansas after spending a year with us as an AMA volunteer (Associate Missionaries of the Assumption). He was involved in many projects of the Delegation, as a teacher in our Language Center at first, then in helping rebuilding houses after typhoon Ondoy had hit the area where our Little Sisters of the Assumption have their apostolate (see *Chronicles* no. 15) and finally in helping with the street children programs of Virlanie and the L’Arche community.

Before he left, Michael had this testimony of the human and spiritual impact on him of his experience in the Philippines:

“In the past year I have been blessed with a laundry list of gifts, friendships, and challenges. In every way my time in this house has been one of importance and significance in my life as it was my first step out of the world I knew to taste the world I did not know. [...] I am truly blessed to have experienced each and every one of you in my life. No matter the obstacles to our God, we can always persevere. As I was able to overcome many of my own personal obstacles here, so is this my prayer for you.”



Michael attending a weekend of formation with the AMA last July.

Thank you, Michael, for your presence, work, sharing and enthusiasm. We hope you have a happy return to Kansas and we wish you good luck!

Memories from our holidays

Before the start of the school year, we have enjoyed some days of refreshment. Here are some bits of memories.



Survivor: Adveniat

“For a couple of days my family welcomed the community to our house in Albay, where I had fond memories of childhood under the majestic shadow of Mayon Volcano and the cool breeze from the Pacific. It was time to discover the place in the midst of electoral campaigns. It was also an opportunity to build ties with the local church by meeting Bishop Joel Baylon and the emeritus Bishop Jose Sorra. Then, we spent some time also in Caramoan Islands, about an hour of travel by land and another two hours (depending on the weather) by boat. We have heard about its pristine and untouched beauty and dared to embark on a vacation to this still-to-be-developed paradise. These islands were indeed spectacular and the clutches of tourist industry have not yet polluted this area. We will recall that these island have just recently been brought to the attention of the nation and the world because it has been the venue for the Survivor France and Survivor Israel series. After a few days in Bicol, we have not only survived—but have been renewed by the well-deserved respite.”

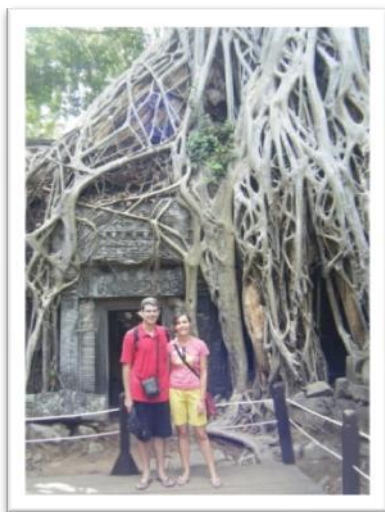
(Blair Paulus)

Holidays in Québec and in Maine

Fr. Gilles Blouin spent two months in Canada: one month of fund-raising for the mission in the Philippines and one month for a rest with his family at the Silver Lake. Fr. Richard Brunelle, master of novices, is spending one month of holidays with his family in Maine (USA). He will use this precious time also for some medical exams. Fr. Bernard Holzer took his place at the novitiate during this time.

Marie and Arnaud, our two French volunteers, on their holidays

You are in the heart of the South-East Asia, it is summer, schools are closed, and the life turns in slow motion... what do you do? Go on a journey! Marie and Arnaud took this resolution last May 2010. They went to discover some cities and places of interest in South-East Asia.



Arnaud et Marie at the temples of Angkor.

“First stage: Bangkok. Welcomed by the Religious of the Assumption, our two travellers received all the necessary advice they needed to visit this magnificent city, which at that time was being disturbed by the rebellion of the "Red Shirts". They were plunged into the Buddhist universe, its monks, its temples full of details and illuminations ... They were touched by these people rich in warmth, in respect for the others, the rules ... The most impressive example seems to be the one of the subway: the passengers enter in a single file and remain aligned inside the carriage. While a person goes out, we move to leave some place behind ... How disciplined!

Second stage: Laos for a rendezvous of nature and tradition. Their bus settled to Paksé, a town in the South of the country. It was a discovery of a poor Laos where people are very welcoming. They live very simply in traditional houses on piles. They cultivate some coffee, some tea and eat a rather disconcerting variety of food especially as regards the meat: from squirrels to snakes, from toads to birds, from cockroaches to dogs... really, they cook everything! Then, they went to the region of 4000 islands. We feel isolated on these small floating islands on the Mekong.

Continuation of the adventures: Cambodia with a first visit of Phnom Penh. The scar of the Pol Pot remains very painful and seems to be also relatively recent. Marie and Arnaud had a disturbing visit of the memorial and museum featuring the torture of the Cambodian people. Then, going back in more ancient times, they admired the Temples of Angkor.

For this fourth and last week of journey, let's go to Ho Chi Minh City. Received by Assumptionist communities, Marie and Arnaud discovered the activities of our Vietnamese brothers. The country seems very different from the three other countries they visited. For example, its noodle soups, its pagodas and its motorcycles swarm in the city at daytime and during the night.

Throughout the stay, our volunteers also visited monuments with a more familiar feeling: colonial buildings. They were also able to eat some French bread of French—a real pleasure found after these 9 months of life in Asia.

Meetings and visits

Fr. Bernard travels to China

In the middle of May, Fr. Bernard went to China in order to visit the families of some students of our Language Center. He was followed by the police quite openly, particularly when visiting with Christians of the underground Church in the north of the country.

First communion celebration at the French speaking parish

On May 30, the French speaking community in Manila convened for the First Communion celebration of 7 children among them. Some of the mothers had given catechism classes to the first communicants. Fr. Gilles had helped with the preparation and celebration of their First Confession. It is up to some fathers to continue the faith initiation of the kids two Sundays a month.

Assembly of the Religious

On June 23, just before leaving for the USA and Québec, Fr. Bernard gathered all the religious of the Delegation. On the agenda of the meeting: a sharing about the recent local chapters and preparation for the Provincial chapter. One of the items on discussion will be the future status of our Delegation, its links with the Assumption in Korea and Vietnam, the openness of the Congregation to a future in China. A power point presentation of the Delegation validated some of our proposals.

Welcoming the CCFD (French Caritas) in Manila

No less than 17 members of the CCFD (Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement), a strong French NGO, came to the Philippines for an immersion program with their local partner organizations (17-28 July 2010). Marie and Arnaud were integrated into the project as translators and facilitators in the daily life of the group since they now have some knowledge of the habits and culture of the Philippines.

It was an opportunity for Marie and Arnaud to know more about the CCFD, a close partner of the DCC (Catholic Delegation for Cooperation), the NGO that sent them to Manila; they could also discover new places, projects and people quite unexpectedly.



Arnaud assumes the responsibility of translation for the CCFD in Maguindanao, located on the island of Mindanao.



Agtas in primary education.

Marie with the Agtas

“I had the chance to spend few days among the indigenous people who live autonomously in the mountains of Infanta, east of Manila. The encounter was strange... for both parties, a grand discovery that limited our communication to mere observation. After some time, we gained confidence to express ourselves and to exchange with each other. We had a celebration together, to prove that despite our differences, we can live fraternally. I was also touched by their profound respect to their ancestors, to their land and harmony with nature. I have a feeling that this was another step to discover the Philippines through these people. They maybe excluded from the life of their fellows, they maybe considered indigenous but they are first of all, also Filipinos.”

Arnaud in Mindanao

“After two days spent in Manila, I went to the southern island of Mindanao. There were nine people in our group. Marie-Line Ramakers, an executive of the CCFD, was leading the group. Bishop Herbeteau of Agen was with us along with six volunteers and myself. We spent eight days in the western part of the island, in the province of Maguindanao. This is the place where a horrible massacre took place last year: 56 people were shot dead and beheaded. We met with a variety of NGOs who deal with the daily reality of that area. One of them focuses on the OFW (Overseas Filipino Workers). Another is committed to a peaceful settlement among the various socio-political components of the area: the Moros, the native tribes and the descendants of those settlers who migrated from other parts of the Philippines during last century. Yet another organization was created by the tribal populations themselves in order to protect their land against deforestation and farmers at the service of multinational companies. One more NGO is at the service of the various populations in organizing themselves in promoting their rights whether Moros, indigenous or migrant settlers from other parts of the Philippines. These visits took place in the areas of Cotabato City, Upi and Kidapawantting. Some indigenous people brought us to their ancestral territory for two days; there were no electricity or running water. This experience had a lot of impact on the group. This was a powerful moment in our experience and it helped me to get more acquainted with some of the problems that the NGOs face in the Philippines. I was also a witness of the great aid that the CCFD is providing by financing over 500 projects throughout the world.



A visit to an Islamic community, the Moros.

Fr. Bernard is a former General Secretary of CCFD; he greeted the visitors in Manila, gave them a general orientation regarding the Philippines and introduced them to a few key speakers. At the end of their stay, he accompanied part of the group to meet with the Nuncio, to visit the campus of the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila University as well as meeting with the President and the Dean of the Faculty of Theology. Bishop Hubert Herbeteau of the diocese of Agen, along with a seminarian and two lay people spent the evening with the community.

Assembly of Major Superiors in the Philippines

July 19-22, Fr. Bernard took part in the annual meeting of Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines in Cagayan de Oro. The theme of the gathering was: “Understanding the Impact of Today’s Global Culture On Consecrated Life”. Fr. Anthony McSweeney, former Superior General of the Sacred Heart Fathers, helped us to understand the evolution of the Catholic Church throughout the world: the transfer from North to South in the number of religious members, the challenge of fast-growing evangelical communities (some really fundamentalist) and the impact of Islam, which bring the Catholic populations to the verge of withdrawal on the past and a refuge in tradition.

The final statement of the assembly reads:

We recognize that the global culture is a dynamic and an ever-changing reality. It will have a continuing impact on our consecrated life. Our response to it will require from us, singly and collectively, a constant conversion to the demands of the word of God. Intensify our commitment to the gospel values, especially of prayer, simplicity, humility, detachment, sobriety and discipline; Promote “mass media education”; Prepare more and assign formators equipped to guide our candidates to address the challenges of today’s culture; Adopt and develop more contextualized and wholistic formation programs, both at the initial and ongoing levels of formation.

Meeting of the RIAD in Rio de Janeiro

Bro. Ed Molina was chosen as a representative of the North American Province to the meeting of RIAD (Rencontre Internationale de l’Assomption pour le Dialogue) which took place in Rio de Janeiro (Brasil), on July 15-25. He reports:

“It was my first time to join an international, inter-Assumption gathering of this kind. RIAD - I still could not write down what the abbreviation meant in French. All I know is that it happens every two years, delegates from the Assumption family gathered to experience a bigger Assumption community, to share ongoing formation, and to talk about relevant inter-religious and ecumenical issues today. The 10-day assembly was well prepared owing to the hard work of both the international and local organizers. It provided a balance of both academic-cognitive contents and practical-experiential exposures.

The theoretical-cognitive elements were provided by very competent and experienced speakers including Michel Malleuvre, a Dominican priest who gave a historical panorama of the Evangelical movement in the world and who guided the delegates throughout the assembly, Oscar Beozzo, a Franciscan theologian who presented the socio-political and cultural reasons for the expansion of the Evangelical churches, and Elias Wolff, a diocesan priest with the Ecumenical commission of the CNBB who spoke of the anthropological and religious reasons for the expansion of the Evangelical churches in the world. They gave important frameworks on how to approach the work of dialogue with Evangelical and Pentecostal churches. These are valuable signposts in order to begin any kind of interaction and collaboration with fellow Christians of different faith traditions. Delegates also attended a big Evangelical gathering in the heart of Rio and participated in regular Sunday services of various Evangelical churches. Afterwards it was enlightening to meet face to face the pastors of these same churches one afternoon and to hear them speak about their communities and the faith convictions they have. They came back the last day of the assembly and sat with small groups for questions and a lively exchange of views and experiences.

It was striking that the pastors came with an attitude of reconciliation even humbly asking forgiveness from the delegates for the divisions that exists between their churches and the Catholic Church. The highlight of the whole experience was the joint ecumenical celebration among the pastors and the delegates in which the pastors blessed the delegates in a simple but meaningful ritual.



The delegates from each continent in turn wrote down their commitment toward ecumenism and sew them together into one banner. This was given to the pastors to bring to their communities as a reminder of the common commitment to be agents of dialogue, reconciliation and unity among Christians.

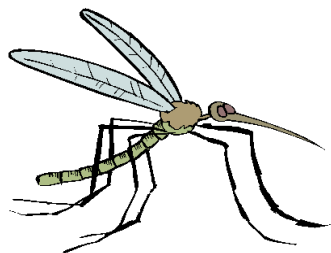
My own experience was of pride and gratitude in knowing that the Assumption family's charism is so relevant and needed among Christians today. At the same time it is a challenge to be agents of dialogue, collaboration and brotherhood between different Christian churches in the countries where we are inserted. It is a mission and a responsibility that is much needed in the Church and among Christians today.

Visit of Fr. Miguel Díaz

August 4-20 marked the visit of Fr. Miguel Díaz, Formator of the North-American Province and Regional Superior for Mexico. He met personally with all the religious, novices, postulants and a few candidates. He went to the three communities and held a meeting of the Assembly of the religious. He received the renewal of the vows of our Bros. Ed, Blair and Joseph and was on hand for the Feast of the Assumption on August 15. He invited us to have a second look at our recent history in the Philippines, to imagine the future of our Delegation and its upcoming challenges, and to prepare for the Provincial Chapter (Worcester, MA, December 28 to January 2) and General Chapter (Rome, May 2011).



Father Miguel receiving the renewal of the vows of Joseph, on August 11, 2010.



Health

Dengue, a virus formerly called “tropical flu”, arises frequently during the rainy season and more particularly this year. Transmitted by mosquito bites, this viral infection develops symptoms close to those of the flu. One of our Martin Yen residents have been brought to the hospital since he has been showing symptoms of Dengue. He is under continuous observation and we are praying for his recovery.

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PRESS REVIEW

The turning over of the Presidency: from Arroyo to Aquino

As the new Aquino administration is sworn into office, great expectations came to the country. The challenge is immense and the new President knows that he cannot deliver it all: *'I am not Superman!'*. In his State of the Nation Address, he stressed the irregularities that his Cabinet had found upon taking office and the little money left in the treasury for the rest of the fiscal year.

For the first time in Philippine history, the Cardinal Archbishop of Manila offered a *Red Mass* to call the light of the Holy Spirit on the newly-appointed government.

Twenty-two bishops concelebrated at the Mass in the cathedral with President Aquino, members of his government and the Supreme Court Chief Justice in attendance.

Bishops present a 13-point agenda...

"On top of the church's list is the implementation of land reform.

The church officials demanded the rejection of the controversial reproductive health bill, same sex union, abortion, divorce, euthanasia and contraceptives.

They urged Aquino not to allow the demolition without relocation of urban poor families and to put a stop to human trafficking of children and women.

The other nine Church advocacies are: protect the environment by stopping large scale mining and illegal logging; stop corruption and prosecute the people involved in graft and corruption; no to Nepotism and political dynasty in Philippine politics; uphold human rights of all the accused; educate the poor by improving educational system and give the poor access to quality education; peace and security: negotiate with the rebels with public consultations to all stakeholders; stop illegal gambling by arresting and prosecuting gambling lords, alleviate poverty by improving the living condition of the marginalized, under-represented people; food security by eliminating structures that hinder the growth and development of those in the agricultural sector."



When an archbishop gives a public reproach to the sister of the President

Kris Aquino, the sister of the President and a local TV star, has announced that she is divorcing the basketball star she had married. At the end of his homily for the first anniversary Mass of the death of former President Cory Aquino, Bishop Socrates Villegas, a close friend of the family, spoke publicly to Kris: *'Your beauty and talents are not yours, they are God's. Remember, all of these things shall pass. You will find your real happiness, as your mother did, not by being in the limelight, but by being the spotlight lighting the face of Jesus.'* A journalist commented: *"this is real friendship!"*

More violence

On June 19, Nestor Bedolido, a journalist from *Kastigator* is shot dead in Digos City (Davao del Sur), the third person from the press killed in five days, after the murder of Desidario Camagyan, a journalist of the radio in Mati City (Mindanao) and that of Joselito Agustin in Laoag City (Ilocos Norte). During the election campaign, he had written columns against a local politician. He is the 103rd journalist to be killed since 2001.

On June 25, Suwaib Upham, a witness in the Maguindanao massacre (56 people killed among whom 32 journalists) was shot dead after asking police protection. A 72-year-old Swiss hostage was freed by the army in Zamboanga after two months in captivity.

On Monday, **July 5**, in Kalibo, leftist leader party Fernando Baldomero of *Bayan Muna* was killed when he brought his son to school. It is the first political killing under the Aquino administration. Two days earlier, Jose Daguio (72), a former radio speaker,

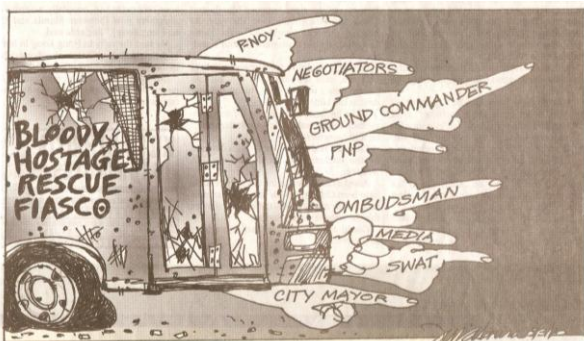
had been killed in Roxas (Isabella). Four days later, Pascal Guevarra (78), an old-timer militant of the agrarian reform is murdered in Nueva Ecija near a military camp. On July 12, young militant teacher Mark Francisco was also killed in Masbate. The newly-appointed Secretary of Justice, Leila de Lima, feared that the military was behind some of these assassinations. The President told the army that no crime will go unpunished.

Everyone hopes that the culture of impunity which ruins this country will soon come to an end.

August 23, a former policeman, dismissed on charges of extortion, held a group of tourists from Hong Kong as hostage in Luneta Park located in central Manila. The hostage drama, covered extensively by the media, lasted for about 12 hours. The police managed to kill the hostage taker but only after the later has killed eight hostages.

Many have condemned the act but also many have highlighted the inefficiency of the government in handling the situation. Protests from Hong Kong swarmed the President’s website and Facebook account. The local broadcast stations have also received some criticisms for not having imposed a “media black-out” during this delicate situation. Because of this, he hostage taker had access to the situation outside the bus and people have speculated that he got more agitated when he heard that his brother (also a policeman) was arrested on suspicion. Filipinos in Hong Kong have expressed their solidarity but they have also expressed fear that the citizens of Hong Kong will vent their anger on them.

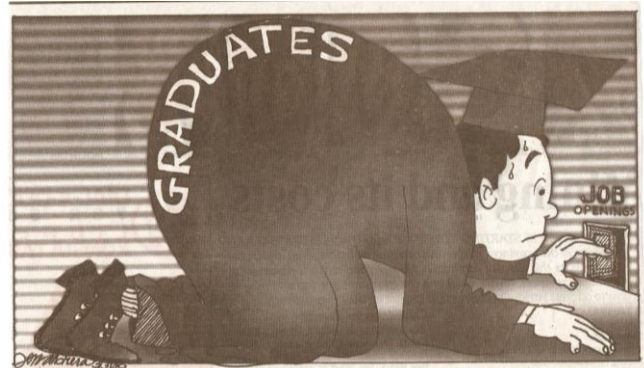
The former policeman Rolando Mendoza had been in the service for a long time and was among the recipients of an outstanding award during his career. Upon his dismissal, he had grievances about how his case was mishandled by the authorities and about how he could no longer enjoy his pension.



It is also in this same situation when we heard of the victory of Maria Venus Raj as 2010 Miss Universe fourth runner-up.

Raise of the minimum wage

In Metro Manila, 2,18 million workers have seen their salary raised by 22 pesos for a total of 404 pesos a day for non-farming workers and 367 pesos for agricultural workers. This last decision of the Arroyo administration was called by the unions as an insult to the workers. The agricultural sector has 32.5 % of the working force, the industrial 15.5% and the services sector 52%.



Fewer jobs, more exports

The jobless have increased from 2.3 million to 3.1 million (January to April 2010) despite a stronger economy in the 1st quarter of 2010 (National Bureau of Statistics). During the five first months of the year, export goods, mainly electronics, have increased by 39%. Ayala, the top investor in the country (supermarkets, real estate), has announced the purchase of a 10-hectare land in Tianjin (China) at the cost of \$200 million for flat high-rise buildings.

Brain drain

A new episode of brain drain came to public attention with the resignation of 25 pilots of the Philippine Airlines. The national air carrier had to cancel many domestic and international flights. The pilots found new jobs in foreign airline companies, mainly in the Gulf, where their salaries have tripled.

More foreign students

A survey of the National Bureau of Statistics shows an increase of 20% of foreign students in the Philippines. By order of importance (or number?), these students come from: Korea, China, Iran, India, Indonesia, USA, Sudan, Taiwan, Myanmar, Vietnam and East Timor. The Koreans primarily enrol in English classes while the Iranians study dental science or engineering. The Philippines hope to become a hub for education among the South Asian countries.

Typhoon season

The first typhoons of the season have touched land in the Philippines. On July 14, typhoon *Basyang*, whose course had not been foreseen accurately, killed 22 people. But 35 others, mainly fishermen, are still missing. In the capital, power went off for many hours, disturbing the subway system.

Dengue on the rise

The rainy season in most tropical countries brings about conditions favorable to diseases such as Dengue.

Statistics have shown that the number of those who got the disease have increased, showing a 75 percent difference from last year.

Health authorities reported that it is still not an epidemic since it is under control and they have already taken initiatives to manage the situation.

