

RECOLETOS

The official publication of Recoletos Formation Center

update
Formation Year 2018-2019



AMOR CASTUS.
AMOR ORDINATUS.
AMOR DIFFUSIVUS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Message of the Editor
Message of the Master of the Professed
Message of the Rector

Community

Love of God

Sacred Scriptures

Education

Brotherhood

Contemplation

Holy Eucharist

Vow of Obedience

The Church

Apostolate

Charity

Youth

Service

Chronicle of Events



ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS
Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno
Recoletos Formation Center

With the theme “*Amor Castus, Amor Ordinatus, et Amor Diffusivus,*” this year’s issue of *Recoletos Update* invites us to ponder upon the threefold love anchored on the Augustinian Recollects’ life of community, contemplation and apostolate. Initially, being an Augustinian Recollect entails living a Christian life in consonance with the style of St. Augustine, who developed a deep dedication to prayer, a life of fraternal charity and a strong commitment to service of the Church. As men consecrated to God, the existence of the Augustinian Recollects carries out the response to the call of holiness and the task to diffuse the incarnated love of the Savior.

Recoletos Update 2019 unfolds stories of conversion and spiritual realizations that will lead us to recognize the person of the loving Christ present in human endeavors and experiences. Inherent in these articles is the resplendent reality of God’s love that perpetually moves us to progress and innovation. This year’s issue also features articles from the Non-OAR brothers, who, upon being integrated into the formation program of *Recoletos Formation Center*, impart their personal encounters of God as they commit themselves to religious consecration.

Recoletos Update 2019 seeks not only to enlighten minds but also to touch hearts, revealing the unitive effect of God’s love which stands unimpeded even in the midst of differences and oppositions. May this year’s issue of *Recoletos Update* animate the spirit of love in our actions and task of evangelization. May it become a testimony of the Augustinian Recollects’ enduring effort to arrive at the Kingdom of Love. Happy reading!



Fray Ramon Bitancor III, OAR
Editor-in-Chief

ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS
Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno
Recoletos Formation Center



As Augustinian Recollects the fundamental consideration we need to do is to conform our lives to the spirit of St. Augustine, in particular to the Contemplative (*Amor Castus*), Communitarian (*Amor Ordinatus*) and Apostolic (*Amor Diffusivus*) ideals in-fleshed in his works and life. Our Constitutions reminds us that: *“The Augustinian Charism is summed up in the love of God without condition, which unites hearts and souls in the common life of brotherhood, and is diffused towards all human beings to win them over and unite them in Christ within His Church.”* (Const. 6)

Correct understanding of our identity as Recollects is fundamental, especially during the initial part of formation. For what reason? In order that the lives and practices of each Recollect especially of the present would correspond to the “true” interpretation of the Order’s identity and vocation. Each member should take the initiative to know the “orthodox” Charismatic identity (*Amor Castus, Amor Ordinatus, Amor Diffusivus*) of the Order because that is what we embraced and appropriated in our lives. We have to do this because we want to live out whatever was understood, studied and lived of the Augustinian Recollection from the OAR history and Constitutions.

To be a Recollect implies a more intensified way of fraternal living in common to be essentially contemplative and readiness to serve in the mission of the Church.

REV. FR. KENNETH JOSEPH ONDA, OAR
Master of the Professed



ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS
Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno
Recoletos Formation Center

I wondered why the theme, Amor Castus, Amor Ordinatus, Amor Diffusivus. But I am grateful. This reminds me of how God, who is love, ought to be the center and at the center of the person. He is source of strength and action. You know how, at present, all sorts of attraction entice us to look and move out of ourselves and be more involved in the affairs of the world. To rest from work, to disengage the self from activities that enthuse us the most, is becoming more difficult. It is hard to be quiet and silent, in solitude to return to and enter the heart...to find in the interior, peace and the source of that desire to be eternally blessed.

Is the desire for eternal happiness still alive in today's man and woman? Is God still the final joy and object of search and contemplation? How about self-discipline? What happened to ascetical practices to put order to unruly concupiscence? Is martyrdom gone with the winds? And God's command of love: is this still the starting point of services to the poor and the most disadvantaged?

I thought, perhaps, similar questioning led you to choose amor... that is... castus, ordinatus and diffusivus as theme for the 2019 "Recoletos Update". I thought that this is an attempt to invite readers to reclaim the purpose of life in this world – To know and love God... In his Son and through him...to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life... (CCC I. 1). I do hope it is.

At the service of formation.




REV. FR. LAURO V. LARLAR, OAR
Prior

COMMUNITY



“Among the members of the community there should reign a friendly spirit of life together in Christ: all the brothers should foster mutual trust in open dialogue, bring aid to the sick, console the downhearted, rejoice sincerely in the talents and success of others as if they were their own; they are to unite their energies in the common task, and each one should find his fulfillment in his submission to the others.”

The Communitarian Character of the Order
Constitutions: Additional Code
Article 3, No. 18

The Perfect Love of the Father

Bro. Brien Panagsagan, ESHT

He was lost and is found, for that we have to rejoice and be glad. (Jn 9: 1-41)

This gospel verse reminds me of my brother who had just passed away last March 13, 2019. He was lost and was found “dead” after three days, floating in the sea. The only difference here compared to the parable is that my brother did not go with money but to look for money. And when he was found, far away from my place, my father hurried to see him, not in joy nor in gladness, but in sorrow, for he was dead.

On his third night counting the day when the accident happened, as part of the tradition in the province which we call “patnog,” my father decided to kill one of our pigs for the dinner of the many visitors. When I went home, my parents asked me if we could kill the other two pigs – one for the night before the burial and one for the last day – as many people were coming. Here, I unconsciously commented “*namatayan na nga tayo, tapos papatayin pa tayo sa gastos?*” My father abruptly corrected me, “*nakita na natin ang kuya mo kaya ipaghanda naman natin siya.*” I was left silent for few minutes. I acted like the older brother in the parable who revealed his limited understanding of the depth of his father’s love. I showed my narrow understanding of my father’s love for my brother. It made me realize that no one can explain the feeling of the parents who lost their son. It made me realize that it is also too painful for them to send their own son to the grave when, in fact, it must be the other way around. *Napakasakit sa isang magulang na sila mismo ang maghatid sa kanilang anak sa libingan.* It also made me realize that my father wanted to show the depth of his love for my *kuya* by preparing food for my brother’s visitors. I know that there is no perfect father here on earth but a father would always love

perfectly. The person of my biological father whose love I felt resembles the very love God has for me.

“He was lost and is found, and for that we have to rejoice and be glad.” I asked myself, am I really supposed to rejoice? Well I don’t know. All I know is that I am happy and thankful to God for my brother was found but maybe not to rejoice for he is dead. Lastly, having the figure of the father in the parable, God is telling me that he loves me. God is telling us that he loves us. God is like the father in the parable who loves his children. As in my own experience, God is a loving God for he sent many people to assist us during the time of grief. He is a loving God, for he provides everything that we need through his generous people. He is a loving God for he heard my prayer and allowed me to be with my brother for the last time. God is a great lover!



A Book Beyond Compare: Musing on the Timeless Splendor of the Holy Bible

Fray Ramon Bitancor III, OAR

Are'n't books downright powerful? Cognizant of the top-grossing YA (Young Adult) trilogy novels that shook the era of millennials, like the Hunger Games, Divergent, Mazerunner and many more, it's impossible to discredit the undeniable influence books bequeath to the human race. Books are hypothetically alive. They can be our magical passport to a whole new dimension. They can send us off to uncharted territories. They can launch us to an adventure set to change our lives forever. In just one flip of a page, we can travel back in time or take a peek into the future. In just one flip of a page, we can uncover hidden wonders yet unknown

to mankind. In just one flip of a page, we can turn a darn boring situation into an extraordinary episode of fun. Yet, by the time I thought I already knew what to read, I realized how incredibly ignorant I actually was. It dawned on me that I haven't been really opening my eyes wide enough. Little did I know that I was missing a lot, because I haven't paid attention to the Bible.

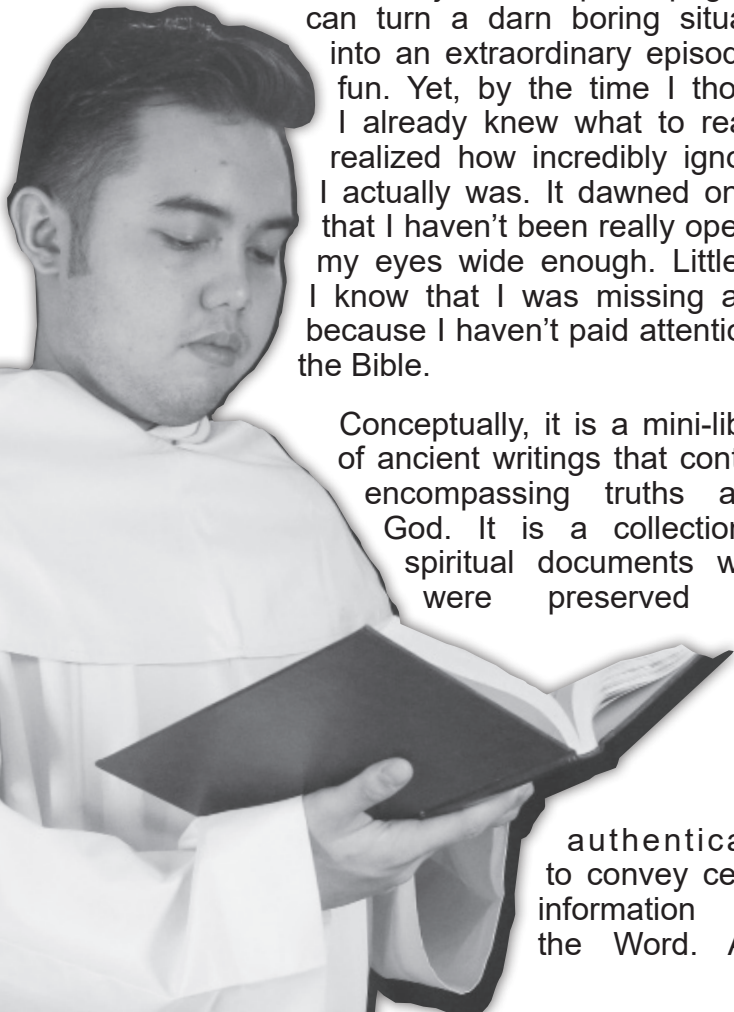
Conceptually, it is a mini-library of ancient writings that contains encompassing truths about God. It is a collection of spiritual documents which were preserved and

authenticated to convey certain information on the Word. Also,

the Bible is jam-packed with meaningful narratives, themes, dialogues, poems, songs, allegories, parables, and mysteries. The Bible is a divine instrument that communicates the Wisdom of God. However, inasmuch as it holds the foundation of the Christian faith and tradition, some detailed portions of it are still left unclarified and ambiguous. In search for answers, there had been those who made a rigorous attempt to gather the missing pieces of the puzzle by venturing into one of the most disturbing accounts the Catholic Church had subtly dealt with throughout centuries- The Apocryphal Books.

Mostly consisting of pious and seemingly harmless legends, still they were declared unfit to be part of the official Canon of the Scriptures due to their heretical tendencies. Since they were very likely to provoke irreverent allusions against the Catholic faith and tradition, the Early Christian community deemed to keep them hidden instead to avoid any chance of passing inaccurate data and stir up confusion among believers. Condemned to be spurious in content, they were strictly banned from the sight of many, especially from the emanating sects that sought the destruction of Catholicism. The unorthodoxy that these Apocryphal Books possess became the potent basis for their rejection.

Musing on this matter, I doubted if these controversies were really meant to malign Catholicism. Needless to say, as a follower of Jesus Christ, I am 100% willing to stand up for the Roman Catholic Church until my last breath. However, I believe there lies a purpose behind the compositions of these "uncanonical texts." Nothing happens by accident. I assume these books did not just come out of thin air, without any purpose. Somehow, I can tell that they were written for a special reason. Thus, if given the opportunity, I would spare a moment or two to read and have an encounter with such incredulous accounts. They might not carry out exact conformity to Catholicism; nevertheless, I still think they deserve recognition. Hence, St. Augustine opines that the search for the



truth means to recognize that even false doctrines and philosophies have a spark of truth in them, some hints of the Truth. Basically, there is no false doctrine that does not have anything which is true. This being said, shouldn't the embedded contradictions contained in the Apocryphal Books spur renewal to our Catholic identity and motivate us to proclaim nothing but the Truth on behalf of the Church?

The Bible is resplendently timeless. It never runs out of style. It is always on a trend. It informs, forms and transforms. To those whose paths are darkened by sin, turn to the Bible and you will discover your Guiding Star. To those who are wearied and weakened by ordeals, count on the Bible and you will discover a wellspring of strength. To those lost at the sea of iniquity, give reliance to the Bible and you'll find your moral compass. I remember an instance at the onslaught of depression and emotional turbulence in my formation journey, I almost wanted to quit. But, right on the verge of giving up, I suddenly came across a miracle I never expected. While my eyes burned in tears as I lay on my bed one bleak evening, I chanced upon my four-year old New American Bible translation. I gingerly plucked it out from my shelf and began to shift from one page to another until my eyes found themselves fixed on 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Landing on that verse, I instantly felt a flash of hope pass through my chest. I knew I had found my comfort. As I speak from experience, I could testify how the Bible can be a tutor and a coach to people who are about to lose hope. From the book of Genesis down to Revelation, nothing comes as trivial. The Bible is where God speaks, admonishes, consoles, and declares His presence.

Despite the successful publicity by best-selling novels that many readers went gaga over in recent years, I believe that not a single one of them could truly divest the Sacred Scriptures of her title as the reigning soul of theology. The Bible is unrivalled and indomitable. It is a book beyond compare. It inscribes the legacy of God's love expressed through His ceaseless intervention in human phenomena. Every chapter offers a supernatural experience of transcendence. Every chapter reflects the varied faces of human reality like tragedy, humor, romance, and drama. But above all, the insurmountable value that the Bible holds rests on the truth that it first and foremost inspired by Someone far greater than Shakespeare, Homer, J.K Rowling, or any of the brilliant authors this world has ever known. The Bible is fashioned by God; it is a masterpiece.

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Hebrews 4: 12

Education for Augustine Beyond Output

Fray Jhoben M. Rodriguez, OAR

Is knowledge a gift to be shared or a property to be protected? What is the purpose of education? An educational system that largely emphasizes on output is highly preposterous because it initiates the decadence of humanity since it sees the study of humanities and theology as a waste. To focus on the outcome according to the “outcome-based curriculum” is basically a pedantic step towards a blunt technologism. Under the veneer of this educational system hides a subtle problem wherein man is considered as a means to the tyranny of progress. To look at man as if he is a raw material, that has to be motivated into a utility, as so much as a ‘means’ or stuff to be manipulated is something that is wrong. Education for Augustine is basically beyond having an output.

Education

Education for Augustine did not come from educare, it is from educere. For him it is to extract and develop the image. Learning is a journey going to the interior by which one continues to unravel things that are not actually alien to him. For Augustine there is something in the being which only needs to be cultivated and nurtured along the process. A person is not a blank slate that requires to be filled, but a being that only needs to be led and developed.

Philosophy of Education

Augustine’s Philosophy of education is following the dynamics of interiority that is anchored to his philosophy of going back to the self. For him, education is a means toward a greater end.

In this quest the community has a great role of being a companion in the same process of search for happiness. Having one mind and heart the community moves to a common goal. His community is not only defined as physical togetherness, for it is the love of God that can be concretely seen in dialogue, sharing and other communal activities. The telos of Augustinian education creates a difference in its execution of activities and its world’s perception.¹

Make use of knowledge like scaffolding that serves as an aid to help construct the building of love; that building will last forever, even when knowledge has been dismantled. Accept your own imperfections. That is the primary step to perfection.

Humanistic Dimension of Education

St. Augustine explained that “The love of knowledge and truth should invite us to continue learning; the love of others should compel us to teach.” Having knowledge and discovering the truth are progressive experiences that man in his very self has an unceasing desire to learn. In Augustinian education the whole person is being educated; it is more dynamic and holistic.

Finality of St. Augustine’s Concept of Education

The Augustinian Education is distinguished and identified by its very purpose. According to St. Augustine: “learning should serve only one ultimate purpose, the seeking of God...” Thus, education is a means to encounter God in a constant search for truth in the community. To encounter truth is no other than to encounter God. To encounter God is to find the ultimate human fulfillment or purpose. To encounter God is to find the perfect Happiness.

Going back to the concept of Augustine’s aim for education, it is undeniably a repercussion of Platonic philosophy. Augustine’s concept of end in education is the attainment of transcendence. Looking for a happy life is considered as both an aim and a process. The latter, process or the vehicle, is intellectual inquiry. The former – aim – therefore, is to know God. Augustine also explains that the process happens in earthly domain, in temporal existence. Its final realm is beyond this changing world. He underscored the search for wisdom through the discipline of education. He even mentioned in his work Christian education: “That in man exist a soul and it has its real and definite place – its purpose i.e. eternity.” Having the Augustinian pedagogy as lens, we infer that we are not just utilities but participants. Education is not merely seeking for an output, but a learning graced by the light of Christ through the community i.e. service to others (amor diffusivus) .



¹ Br. Jhoben M. Rodriguez, *St. Augustine’s Philosophy of Education in the 21st Century Four Pillars of Education*, Ed. Marisol M. Afuang, MA Ed (Baguio City, Philippines, 2016), 30.

Reverse Treasure Hunt

Fray Jose Enrico V. Gallego, OAR

It is normal to say that one loves what he considers as valuable but the problem arises when nothing seems to be of value. It is true that our only real treasure is God alone and everything else falls short of being truly valuable. However, it seems better to set one's heart on passing things than to have nothing to set it on.

There are times when so many things seem to be of no significance when there is nothing to consider as treasure, everything seem pointless, and prayers seem to have fallen on deaf ears. There was a time when I lost all sense of meaning and purpose – to put it simply I was empty. I was simply floating in the community devoid of passion but trying hard to conceal it from everyone's eyes. For me, there was no such thing as where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

I remember reading somewhere that when one encounters dark nights when even God seems nowhere to be found, it is useless to use our energy in going against the odds in finding Him because how can we look for something that isn't even lost to begin with. My mind was telling me that God was simply working in me quietly even though I felt otherwise. So I just continued to do everything as usual, hoping that one day everything would be better. Indeed I was like one of those servants wide awake waiting for his master but what a tired and hopeless servant I was.

Somebody told me that "in order for one to survive, one must get lost." I did not initially understand what it meant because I knew I was lost. It came to a point that I hit rock bottom. I was nothing but a mess but it was the tipping point for me. Little by little everything became better and hope was renewed. I realized that the lost one was not God but me, nor was it I who found Him, but rather, it was God who found me. He simply had his perfect timing for everything. I found my way back after being lost. I now understand what that "in order to survive, one must get lost" meant. In becoming empty and being divested of anything of value, everything is now seen as precious – family, friends, and the only real treasure, God. Like a faithful servant, wait for him in patience. If you realize that you lost your real treasure, do not expect to find it because it is the real treasure who will find you in the proper time.



WARNING:

UPON THE AWARENESS OF STORIES ABOUT TREASURES BEING BURIED, NEVER MAKE THE MISTAKE OF BURVING YOUR BROTHERS IN THE LIGHT OF CONSIDERING THEM AS YOUR TREASURE. YOU CAN ALWAYS TREASURE YOUR BROTHERS, BUT PLEASE NEVER BURY THEM.

Sharing Life in Community

Br. Herbert James A. Hantsch, DS

"Again, the friendship which draws human beings together in a tender bond is sweet to us because out of many minds it forges a unity"

- Conf. II, 5,10

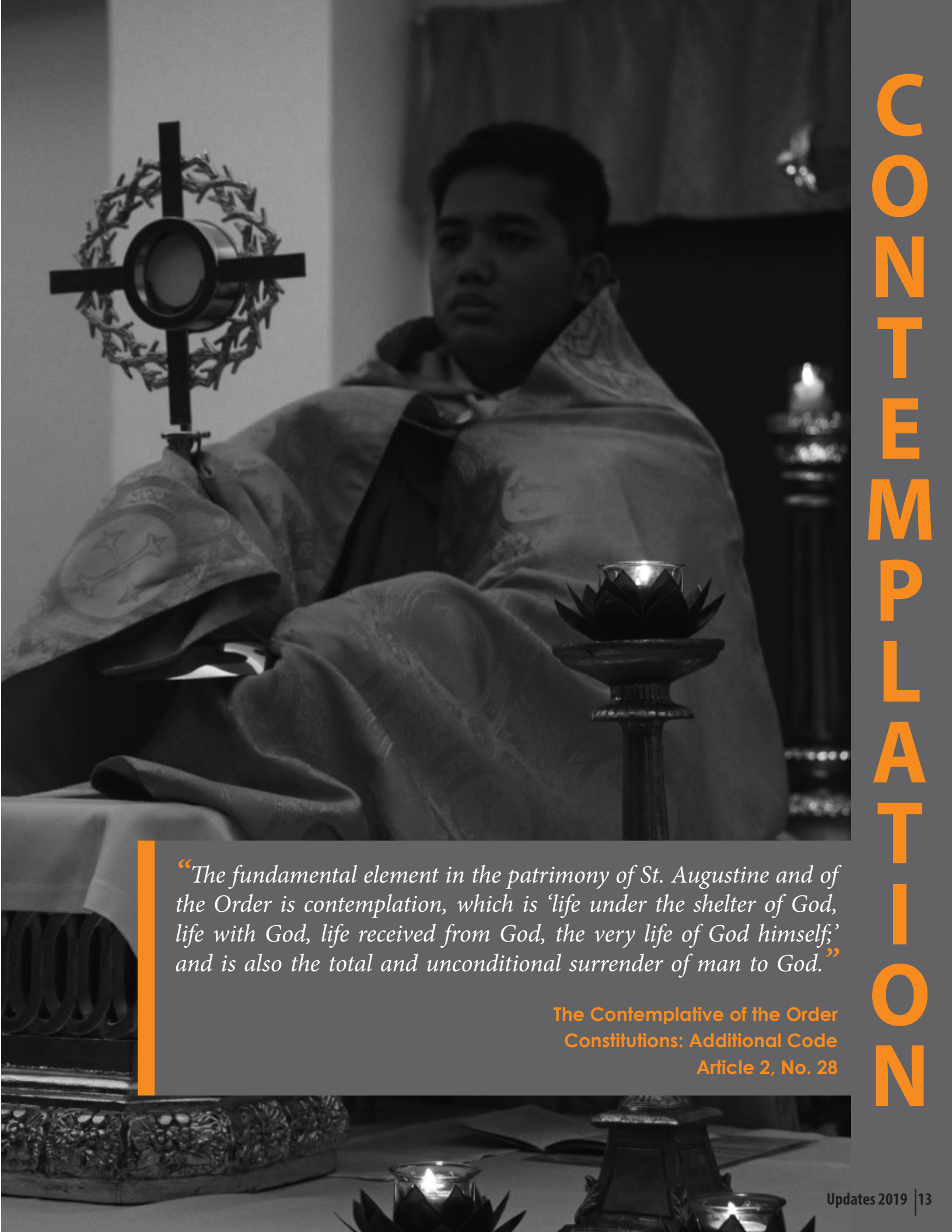
A community is a gathering of individuals, who, despite their difference, still strive to live in common to achieve one goal. It is an experience of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, characteristics, vision or interests. Living in the religious community of the Recoletos gives us a different feel as compared to living in our own community as a pious association. This is because we seek to live out a charism which is not intentionally rooted in Augustinian Recollect traditions. Nevertheless, the Order of Augustinian Recollects welcomed us with open arms. The Recoletos Formation Center received us with great enthusiasm. Today, they are helping us with our own formation development and assisting us to frame our own religious identity.

At first, it was difficult to accept the situation considering that this would be the first time for us to be integrated into a formation program different from ours. We were very much challenged in the beginning as we tried to adapt and adjust to the new community we were in. We feel like we are hamsters being experimented on. Eventually, after a couple of months living in the Recollect community, we learned to adjust ourselves with the schedule and activities of the community. We really felt the strong affection towards the Recollect community for they were able to address particular areas of formation, necessary for our growth and development.

We now live our lives side by side with the Recollects. We make sure that we make ourselves available to them as they are to us. It is truly significant that we share a life in the community. There should always be mutual support and concern for each other. Living a life in common made me realize that our core values should be centered on Jesus and rooted in charity. Jesus invites us to discipleship. He leads us to a life of inclusiveness and equality. Community life is more than living together under the same roof. It is about supporting each other and our chosen charism. We spend quality

time together, share talents and resources, and divide household duties. We also have a great deal of fun together, preparing meals, reading books, playing games and many more. We enjoy a community rhythm that includes regular prayer and faith sharing. In the Liturgy of the Hours, we give time for meditation, reflections and spiritual reading which is done in common. We celebrate the Holy Eucharist as a community.

We are all called by God to grow in our vocation and spiritual life both individually and communally. We are connected to each in one faith. In fact, our life is shared not just with the brothers who live with us, but also with our family, associates, ministry volunteers, young adult chapters, co-workers, neighbors, parish friends and with those we serve. It is important that while we share a life together in the community, we allow each member to express himself in his own way. Community life is possible only if we allow the all-embracing Spirit of God to govern us. With its help, we can have a deepened spirituality and experience life more keenly and intensely. Surrendering to this Spirit is such a powerful experience that we can never feel equal to it. In truth, the Spirit alone is equal to Itself. It quickens our energies by firing the inmost core – the soul of the community – to white heat. When this core burns and blazes to the point of sacrifice, it radiates far and wide. Community life is like martyrdom by fire. It entails the daily sacrifice of all our strength and all our rights, all the claims we commonly make on life are assumed to be justified. In the symbol of fire the individual logs burn away so that, united, its glowing flames send out warmth and light again and again into the land. We must live in community because the Spirit of joy and love gives us such an urge to reach out to others that we wish to be united with them for all time.



“The fundamental element in the patrimony of St. Augustine and of the Order is contemplation, which is ‘life under the shelter of God, life with God, life received from God, the very life of God himself;’ and is also the total and unconditional surrender of man to God.”

**The Contemplative of the Order
Constitutions: Additional Code
Article 2, No. 28**



Mass and Purgatory

Some souls in purgatory who were allowed to come to us to communicate their situation in the afterlife told us that the best remedy to alleviate them from the fire of purgatory is by the mass, station of the cross, the rosary and the liturgy of the hours.

1. St. Bernard saw an unending stairway which led to heaven. By means of it many angels ascended and descended carrying souls from purgatory to paradise - souls freed by the Sacrifice of the Mass –a Sacrifice renewed by priests on the altars throughout the world.
2. Padre Pio after celebrating mass devoutly everyday would receive the visit of ten thousand souls from purgatory who would enter heaven because of his sacrifice of the mass offered for them.
3. CureD’Ars said that put all the good works on earth, they will not equal the infinite value of one mass offered for the souls in purgatory.
4. St. Thomas said that one drop of blood of Jesus Christ is enough to repay all the sins of mankind throughout the world.

“The Eucharist is Jesus.
He is Jesus alive.”

-Pope Francis

The Challenge

If we are Eucharistic centered in our lifestyle what importance do we give to our daily mass? Is it as if it were the first, last and only mass we have in the whole world? Are all our days focused to make our mass the best activity throughout the whole day?

1. Do we go to confession before the mass so that our real encounter with Jesus truly present body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ is nurtured and maintained?
2. During the mass do we participate actively, enthusiastically, creatively, as if it were our last mass before we would be martyred?
3. After the mass how often do we visit the Blessed Sacrament in holy hours? Alone with God in radiant Heart contemplation?
4. Do we weep during the mass knowing that the mass is God, reenacting Calvary for our redemption?
5. Where Jesus is present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, how do we behave before the Blessed Sacrament or inside the Church. Is our behaviour like kneeling, genuflecting, making the sign of the cross, standing, sitting, kneeling, walking all give the proof that we are in contemplative gaze with Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament?
6. When we pass the Church, chapel, oratory or any prayer rooms with the Blessed Sacrament, do we respect and spend a few moments of prayers to greet the Lord?
7. Are the vestment and vessels we use in the mass so beautiful and precious befitting the King of kings? Are our linens clean, as well as the Church? Is everything orderly and spotlessly clean inside the Church, the sanctuary and sacristy? Do we launder the clothes of the Church so well that finished products become the envy of the all?

Prize The Price ^ of Obedience

Fray Julius James T. Tinapao, OAR

"At the age of twelve, our Lord was seated at the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers." (Luke 2:42, NAB). This instance could have been a springboard of our Lord's early fame. Yet, after Mother Mary expressed to him the great anxiety they felt in looking for him, "But, He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them." (Luke 2:51, NAB)

Obedience... It is one of the vows we professed publicly, but often, it is the most challenging one to live up personally. It is even difficult to embrace it when what we think is right or better than what we are asked to do. As a result, it is either we complain but follow for the sake of not getting ourselves into trouble or never do it at all out of preference for what we think is right.

I myself could attest that obedience is not an easy thing most especially if it is contrary to what I think as something that could make me better.

Many years ago, I was assigned to one of the offices of the seminary. Although I felt a little bit hesitant about it at first, I gladly accepted it, since our formators assigned me there and I felt confident that I could do it. However, as time went by I noticed that the atmosphere there was turning unpleasant. I had many academic demands to attend to; I had my seminary formation to undergo; then came the tasks I had to deal with plus the office pressure I had to bear with. I was so stressed. My hyperacidity kept on recurring. I never had an allergy in my whole life but at that time, I became allergic to the wind – red rashes appeared on my skin. I already found it unbearable so I gathered my courage and had a dialogue with our Father Prefect. I requested him to present my case to the Formation Chapter and suggested that they remove me from that office. I also begged God every day that, if it is His will, our formators would grant my request. It was December then and I was looking forward to it as my "Christmas gift". A week after that dialogue our Father Prefect called me to his office. He was smiling at me when I approached him. I took it as a sign that they granted my request. I was so excited and I could not wait to hear him say that big "yes" to my request. But unfortunately, it was the other way around. "Julius," he said to me, "the Fathers want you to stay. You have to face your fears now. In due time, there will be something good that will come out of it." My smile and excitement popped like a bubble in thin air. I felt like arguing with him, but the words of my prayer, "Lord, if it is Your will..." returned to my mind,

preventing me from saying anything. Thus, with a heavy heart, all that I said was, "Yes, Father, I will."

I have expressed my affirmation but I found it hard to accept and mean that yes for days and even for several weeks. I felt so bad at that time because I thought they did not understand my situation. The desire to justify myself kept on hovering in my mind. But, a part of me kept on telling me that I have to embrace it with gratitude because it is part of God's will.

My internal struggle ended when I read Divine Mercy in My Soul, the diary of St. Faustina of Kowalska. In #28, our Lord told St. Faustina, "I was here during your conversation with the Superior and I know everything. I don't demand mortification from you, but obedience. By obedience, you give great glory to Me and gain merit for yourself." And, in #894, "...know that you give Me greater glory by a single act of obedience than by long prayers and mortifications." I felt astounded upon reading these. Thus, from then on, I meant the "yes" I said to our Father Prefect.

Whenever I reminisce that experience, all that I can say is, "Lord, thank you so much for inspiring my formators with that decision. It made a great difference in my life." I could not help but wonder what my life could have been if I did not obey. Perhaps, if I did not submit that time and insisted on what I wanted, the present Fray Julius James might still be that same fearful, stressed, very emotional, overly sensitive, and self-centered Julius James. To my surprise, that single act of obedience years ago continued to pour many beautiful results in my life at present. Similar experiences appear now and then, but the lesson from that single act of obedience made me face them with courage and maturity.

The story of our Lord's boyhood continues to be a source of lesson. He truly knows what is best for Him, but He humbly submitted Himself to the painstaking process of our human growth under the direction of His parents, St. Joseph and Mother Mary. In that process, He embraced His mission, He "advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man." (Luke 2:52) In a similar way, formation to the religious life is very intricate and demanding because it requires one to conform his life to that of Christ. Obedience is never an easy path to tread on, but its reward is beyond measure -- living the very life of Christ.

obedience

THE WOUNDED CHURCH: The Church Through Time

Br. Constantino V. Salas, MMMP

The Church has always been a flawed human institution riddled with the incongruities of darkness and light, sin and virtue, defeat and triumph, secrecy and candour. Ordinary Catholics find it hard to grapple with these paradoxes much more associate with a Church that is now indicted with institutional evil and brazen culture of silence.

With the keys entrusted to Peter, the Church is not manned by angels but by humans – ordinary human beings with all the trappings of weakness, limitation, sinfulness. The Church is supposed to be the mother. It is unthinkable that people should suffer and get hurt within the very confines of the Church wherein solace, wisdom, support, understanding, acceptance and holiness are supposed to be abundant. Written accounts and historical evidence abound that since the earliest times of the Church, personal, relational, communal, and institutional issues are a constant. One has only to read the letters of St. Paul to get a glimpse that the nascent Church also underwent the same problems besetting the Church today. Human nature manifests itself the same way regardless of time and place. The abuse of leadership, the desire to dominate, and the greed for power are as perennial as grass.

In 2000, during the year of the Great Jubilee, St John Paul II made a sweeping apology for the sins allegedly suffered at the hands of the Catholic Church over the centuries. To see the powerful Church on bended knees in the person

of the Pope, himself debilitated by Parkinson's disease, was a historic landmark of greatness and a magnanimous display of humility, unheard of until then in the Church's unbroken line of the papacy. The papal apology encompasses all the past faults in the context of sociology, ecclesiology and theology, ranging from the condemnation of Galileo Galilei (himself a devout Catholic), the Church's involvement with the African slave trade, the horrendous Inquisition of the Middle Ages, the religious wars that followed the Protestant Reformation, and the inactivity and silence of the Church during the Holocaust, among others. That repentance of the great Pope left an indelible mark in the annals of history even as his trembling hands and blurred speech are etched forever in everyone's memory.

The unspeakable horrors of the Inquisition and the equally inconceivable cruelty of the Crusaders are now left to the mercy of believers and to the judgment of history. But human tendencies remain. Human nature does not change save its countenance. Today, the sexual scandals committed by men of the cloth is the new face of the Inquisition and of the Crusades. Priests have been identified as wolves in sheep's clothing and tagged as unscrupulous predators preying on the young and the vulnerable – the very people that have been entrusted to their care and shepherding. The insolent silence and desultory cover-up of the Church has allowed priests to abuse children with impunity, the brazenness of it adulterates the air, smothers and chokes. A breath of fresh air is imperative.

There is an urgent need to acknowledge the ugly truth

that hurts notwithstanding the difficult reality of owning up to it. The guilty always pleads innocent. It requires a herculean courage, let alone a great amount of humility. A rose is not a rose by any other name, just as a spade is called a spade. Throughout the centuries, the Church has failed, at times miserably and pathetically. At no other time in the Church's more than 2,000-year history has it been truer that absolute power corrupts and consummate authority warps. The predominance of tepid, if not, non-existent charity that paints the Church in myriad colours – betrayal



of trust, manipulation, pathologic lies, mediocrity, blatant cover-up, unfaithfulness, lack of integrity, emotional and sexual abuse – add up to the hurt that gnaws at the very heart of every believer.

Amidst all the scandals that rocked, and continues to rock the Church, she goes on undaunted and relentless in her mission to bring the Good News to all men. Badly bruised and fatally wounded, she has become, in the words of Henri Nouwen, the epitome of a wounded healer. In the course of the centuries, men and women from various socio-cultural and political backgrounds, have risen to the challenge of steering the Church that was careening off its rails. Every crisis is an impetus to action.

Trying times bring out the best in men and women. Francis of Assisi was on time to rebuild a Church falling into ruins, Teresa of Avila came in to provide the much-needed reforms, and closer to our times, Maximilian Kolbe proved once and for all that the only creative force is love. They are reminders that Christ never abandons his Church especially in her darkest hours. Following Benedict XVI's abdication, a man from the grassroots, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, was elected to the Chair of Peter. He was the much needed breath of fresh air.

Cognizant of the state of the Church, Pope Francis rolled up his sleeves at once and made strides in bringing wayward souls back into the fold by his humility and all-embracing mercy. The Church is not a perfect institution. Just six months into the papacy, when asked to opine on the current status of the Church, the Pope replied that he sees the Church as a field hospital after battle. His answer finds a parallel in his address to all believers to go to the peripheries, to people in the margins of society, to smell like the sheep. Pope Francis envisions a Church that welcomes everybody, a Church that is rich in love and mercy, a Church that heals wounds, a Church that warms hearts. "It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and what is the level of his blood sugars. You have to heal his wounds!" His words resonate to a world that has become unchurched and hostile to religion.

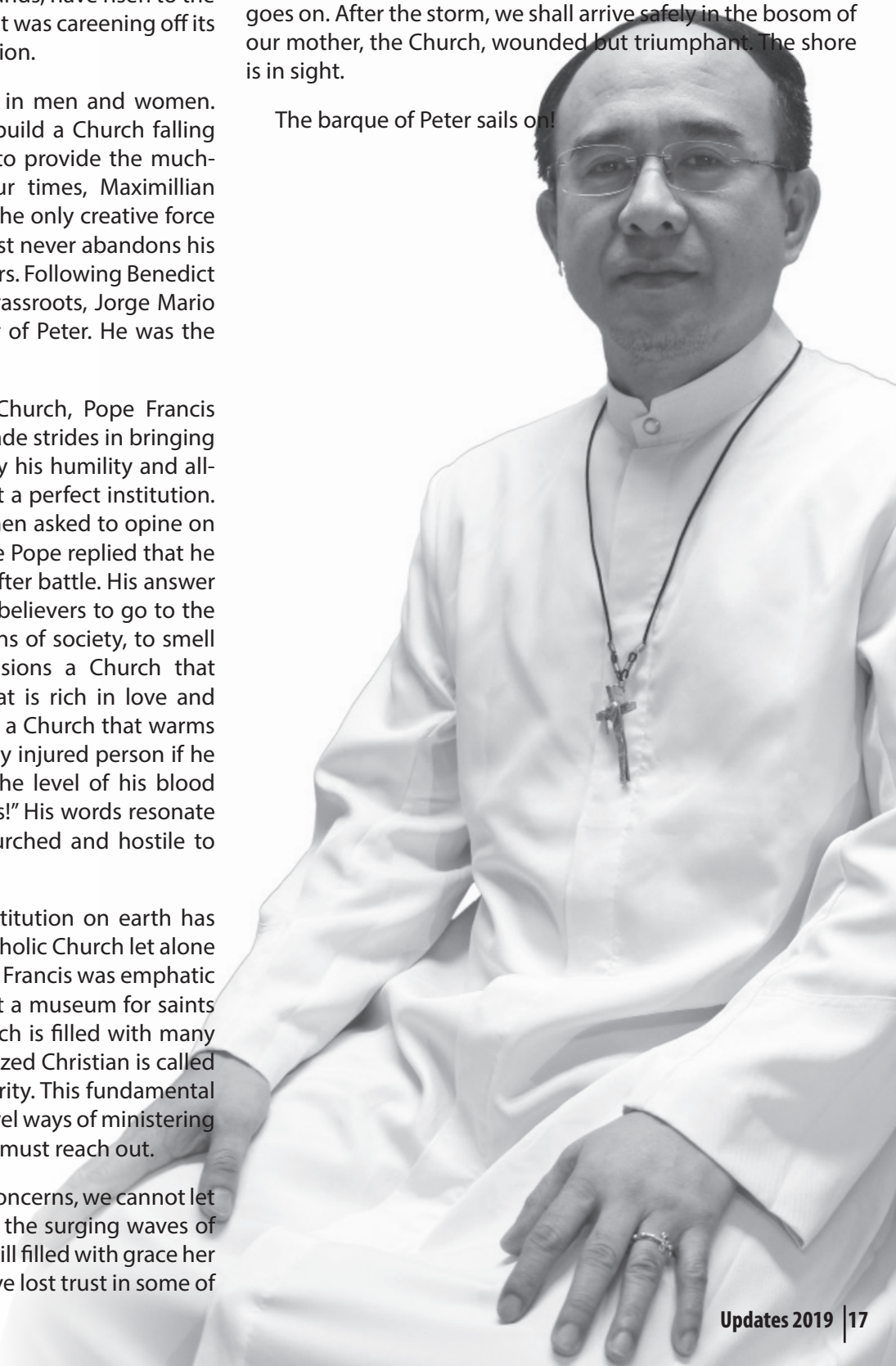
There is no denying that no institution on earth has ever done more charity than the Catholic Church let alone care for the sick and the dying. Pope Francis was emphatic when he said that the Church is not a museum for saints but a hospital for sinners. The Church is filled with many people who are hurting. Every baptized Christian is called upon to live a radical Christ-like charity. This fundamental of our faith must incite us to find novel ways of ministering charity to persons who are hurt. We must reach out.

In the wake of all these ecclesial concerns, we cannot let the Church we love be drowned by the surging waves of scandals one after the other. She is still filled with grace her lapses notwithstanding. We may have lost trust in some of

our leaders in the red cap or to some of their subordinates, but we cannot lose trust in our fellow weary travellers standing next to us. We still believe in the people of God. While some of our captains may have hit a pernicious iceberg and steered the ship off-course, we have kept the ship afloat. We have travelled in the same vessel for the last 2,000 years or so. We have weathered too many a storm and journeyed too long. We refuse to let our beloved Church down. The words of the much loved John Paul II afford us hope: "There will be a springtime in the Church."

With our hands steadily on the steering wheel, the journey goes on. After the storm, we shall arrive safely in the bosom of our mother, the Church, wounded but triumphant. The shore is in sight.

The barque of Peter sails on!



A P O S T O L A T E



“The contemplative and communitarian religious is a generous and effective apostle because he carries that love within himself, the essence of which is to give and to communicate, and the natural impulse of which is to spread itself out among our fellow men in order to claim possession of everyone for God and for Christ. The religious, as consequence of that diffusive love, acts and labours so that everyone may love God with the brethren, and his is always prepared to serve the Kingdom, following the Gospel, and according to the charism of the Order. Communion, therefore, itself becomes the mission.”

**THE APOSTOLIC CHARACTER OF THE ORDER
CONSTITUTIONS: ADDITIONAL CODE
ARTICLE 4, NO. 23**

YES TO CHARITY, NO TO CUPIDITY

Fray Renz Calex C. Soriano, OAR

Amor Diffusibus (Diffusive love) is one of the charisms of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. Love is the product of both community and prayer being expressed in service. Nonetheless, charity is sealed if it is not shared to others, as written in the Constitution of the Order, “*exuding the fragrance of Christ.*”¹ As we all know, love is neither self-centered nor selfish it must be an outward movement from the person towards the recipients, who should feel God’s presence through us. Real love must be perceived in us as Christ’s fragrance spread around the world. To imitate Christ and to bring His presence to our apostolate can be precarious. This is because we might be so spirited that we become unaware that the love in us is embedded in something inordinate which is known as the cupid love that is usually depicted and manifested in our *telenovelas*. It is as if we were being pierced by an arrow, and we immediately succumbed to our feelings. With this, the product of our mission is not really Christ but the things that we can get from the people serving Christ, from what we receive in our apostolate, and from our efforts. We also tend to become choosy in picking the areas and the people whom we want to serve such that we somehow forget the real value of service and the reason we were sent by the order to those communities to serve in the first place. Can we call it real love, or is it merely a love that is superficial?

In the gospel, Jesus said to his disciples “*go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to every nation* (Mk 16:15).” We believe that charity is essential in evangelization, yet to bring the word of God to the people is not an easy task. We are evangelizing to the people because God wants us to deliver his message to humanity with love and compassion. But, what does love really look like? St. Augustine defines love by situating the functions of our sensible senses. He puts it this way: “*love has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes*

to see misery and want and it has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men.”² In other words, love is not the gratitude that we receive from others. It is not the praise that we hear from the mouths of other people. Neither is it the money that we receive from those we have served, nor the comfort that they try to repay us with in return for our service. Thus, love is perceived as “*self-sacrificial*” and “*unconditional.*” It is as if we imitating what our Lord Jesus Christ experienced when he died on the cross because of our sins. Therefore, we can only call it love if we share it for the sake of Christ and only Christ alone.

As a religious, this is indispensable especially for those living in the community. Perhaps, we are already knowledgeable of the Word of God and it would be so easy for us to impart His message. In spite of this, where do we, as evangelizers of the word of God, get our strength from? Consequently, what moves us to eagerly inspire the people around us and what motivates us to serve the Lord and His people is the community. In order to effectively satisfy the hunger and thirst in the faithful’s spiritual lives, we have to start with ourselves and lay the foundation of love in our souls so that it would be easier for us to bring God’s words to the hearts of every person that we are going to encounter along our journey. As what St. Augustine stated, “*Love is the beauty of the soul.*” Hence, it will be hard to inspire people without an essence of love in our ways to evangelize. With the absence of love, we, among ourselves, may even be the first to mislead the people away from the Creator instead of drawing them closer to Him. As what these passages manifest: “*Not cupidity, but Charity*”³; “*restrain cupidity, arouse charity*”⁴; “*Root out cupidity, sow charity*”⁵; and “*vomit cupidity, drink charity.*”⁶

² Constitution

³ (Sermon 169, 15);

⁴ (Expositions on the Psalms 31, 5)

⁵ (Sermon 311, 7)

⁶ Fr. Athanase Sage, AA, *The Religious Life According to Saint Augustine* (United States of America: New City Press, 1990), 12. (Sermon 311, 15)

¹ Constitution

“Hence, it will be hard to inspire people without an essence of love in our ways to evangelize. With the absence of love, we, among ourselves, may even be the first to mislead the people away from the Creator instead of drawing them closer to Him.”

A diffusive kind of love is the best way to express our service to God and to His people. The phrase “*Jesus is sending us like lambs among wolves*”, manifests that there will always be challenges that would pull us down in our way of reaching out to the people. This might take the form of problems with the community, emotional worries from our unpleasant experiences, spiritual dryness or personal concerns and baggage. Thus, Jesus is telling us: “*Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals and greet no one along the way*” (Luke 10:4). As I read this phrase, I initially could not imagine how it is to live without anything that could sustain my living. I could not even see myself walking barefoot in the streets, without a handkerchief to wipe my sweat and without money to buy my favorite food and drink. At the back of my mind, I imagined I would not survive. Yet, the message of the gospel is not really the way I ought to perceive it because God is pointing to us something that even our senses cannot grasp. In other words, God is only challenging us not to worry about our future whether it is good or bad, but instead to focus more on our mission and to live out what is heavenly and inconsumable. That is, to bring God’s love to the needy, to reach out to the margins and to lead them closer to our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Yes to Charity and no to Cupidity.**



In the New Evangelization

Fray Virgilio Calalang, Jr., OAR

The youth is the hope for better a tomorrow. This hope is given emphasis in the celebration of the year of the youth with the various activities dedicated for the youth. It was a timely experience for me to experience a part of this celebration in Cebu City where the Year of the Youth was opened.

A part of this experience was the time I set foot in Talavera Retreat House. The recollection for the youth made me realize how the Church as a mother should care for the youth of today. The youth remains to be the youth although the environment in which they move differs from one another. As everyone is called to holiness, so are the youth. "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it. Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them" (Mark 10:13-16).

The youth experiences various challenges coming from the different aspects of life. Nowadays, young people are facing various preoccupations and are in search of what life is all about. Just like the young Augustine, there is that desire in them for interiority. In fact, the youth are in the process of maturation and discernment over the function that plays a big role in the world. And, along with the awareness of the problems that the youth are encountering today is the need to be educated. The challenges among the young repress and obscure the value of human dignity. Nevertheless, education offers a solution. In fact, Fr. Fausto Gomez Berlana, OP, a Spanish Dominican priest, asserts that education, as one of the fundamental and universal human rights, helps persons to become aware of their own identity as an individual person and a social being. Education is an essential part of human dignity and is important in the integral

development of the human person.

In today's world, the youth are exposed to the use of science and technology. They have to realize that the use of science comes together with the proper use of their conscience. Also, the youth ought to know that the use of technology comes with a responsibility. With all the various forms of abuses that the youth encounter nowadays, there is a need for moral education that focuses on the formation of a true and upright conscience. Education involves the search for truth and the practice of goodness through the family, through the church and through various forms of media. Gomez also added that to be truly educational and formative, the search for truth is accompanied by doing the truth in love. Oftentimes, however, the experiences expressed by the youth are a repudiation of love. So the youth should commit themselves on performing activities that advocate the truth in the service of love.

The youth are also asked to be aware and conscious of their failures or lapses. As they grow older, they are prone to experiencing difficulties and brokenness in life, which may develop bad habits or vices. Since there are those who are afraid to look at the ugly truth of the wounded self, Saint John Paul II reminds the youth not to close their eyes to the moral sickness that stalks their society today, and from which their youth alone will not be able to protect them, since nowadays, many young people have already ignored their conscience and have substituted the true joy of life with drugs, sex, alcohol, vandalism and the empty pursuit of mere material possessions.

Another difficult statement to respond to is when the youth would shy away from proclaiming their Catholicism as they become aware of the various scandals in the Church. Yet the words of Saint John Paul who loves the youth gives inspiration to become an active body through faith. The youth are to spend time searching for a purpose in life of truth and love in the same way that the rich young man had asked Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus looked at the young man with love. Then an invitation came as a response "come follow me" (Matthew 19:16-22). This is the invitation for the youth of today: "Come follow me!" The youth are called to an active participation as members of the body of Christ. With the Holy Spirit who inspires, the youth are given an inspiration to know oneself and to know God and use their acquired education as a tool for the new evangelization.





Diaconate At the Threshold of Heaven

Fray Tomokatsu Yamaguchi, OAR

Becoming a deacon calls me to a deeper perspective through the pure love of serving others and God. When Fr. Kenneth revealed to me that I passed for the ordination for Diaconate, I really felt joy and gratitude to God. I am ready to belong to the hierarchy of the Church, meaning I am a cleric now. Being a person in the clerical state doesn't make me feel pompous, but instead I am humbled.

I have received the gift of consecration as a Deacon not to elevate my status but to serve the people of God and to proclaim the message of Jesus within His Church as my primary commitment. Diaconate is a service. As what Pope Paul VI speaks of, a deacon is an animator and promoter of the Church's service and a sign or sacrament of Jesus Christ himself, who came not to be served but to serve.

A man like me who is pursuing diaconate must have, as a true vocation, the desire to serve. As a deacon to be, I must have an understanding of my calling from God and a desire to pursue holiness. Essential to that calling is the commitment to the person and mission of Jesus Christ, a commitment that includes willingness and the ability to live the Gospel values as expressed in simplicity, compassion, forgiveness, humility and obedience. Inherent in this call to holiness is the mature understanding of one's own identity as a disciple. As a deacon, I am not a "mini-priest." The ministry of deacon is a gift to the Church that has its own

charism and brings its own contribution to the life of the Church.

To be a deacon is to have willingness to be a man of the Church. Deacons have a special relationship to the bishop. Their service to the church is through their relationship to the bishop and their obedience to him.

To become a deacon also requires me to have willingness to be intimately involved with the needs of the sick, the poor and the needy. Given the call to sacramentalize the Church's mission of service, deacons must be in the midst of the community, serving the needs of the poor, the forgotten and neglected. The traditional scriptural foundation for the Church's *diakonia* is found in Chapter 6 of the Acts of the Apostles, in which seven men of good repute are prayed over and have hands laid on them in order to minister to the Greek-speaking widows neglected in the daily distribution of food. Service at the table of the poor precedes, and in a sense is a prerequisite for, service at the altar. Without such service, the diaconate becomes an empty clerical rank within the church hierarchy.

As a deacon I am ready to exercise the ministry with charity and humility, as a collaborator of the bishop and priests, in the service of the Christian people. By my acceptance, being a new deacon manifests my desire to follow the footsteps of Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,

who willed to make himself the servant of all. I continue to pray that I may always fix my gaze upon Him and His son, as the supreme model of availability in my ministry.

I will express my readiness to guard with a pure conscience the mysteries of faith, proclaiming it by word and deed, according to the Gospel, in complete fidelity to the magisterium of the Church. I have prepared myself for a number of years by means of a profound study of Catholic doctrines. Following the example of St. Augustine, I urge myself to dedicate some time each day to reflect more deeply the questions regarding faith and morals. The Catechism of the Catholic Church will be a very useful source for me, as the Holy Father has recommended to the Catholic Christians. It is the source of enrichment for both my homilies and my preaching.

A deacon should also be entrusted with the task of praying the Liturgy of the Hours, giving voice to the prayer the Church raises to heaven in the name of all mankind, and distributing communion to the faithful. This closeness to Jesus, really present in the Most Holy Sacrament, has to truly make me a Eucharistic man, asking our Father to obtain me the grace to always lovingly and reverently deal with holy things such as the chalice, ciborium and the like, because of my connection to the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before our ordination for diaconate we had our retreat in Tagaytay at St John de Baptist. During the five-day retreat our retreat master asked us what it is to be a deacon. The very powerful words that I could remember from the retreat were regarding the deacon at the threshold of heaven and earth.

It means that my vocation or calling to the diaconal ministry is a vocational discernment. First it is a discernment to acquire the heart of God. Vocation is sharing the vision of the Father. The basis of our preaching is not our human capacity but our consecration to God. I am called by God, discernment actually builds the uniqueness of my nature. A deacon must be the face of Christ. Even if I am unworthy due to my own weaknesses and limitations, still God sustains me spiritually. As what I have stated earlier, I am redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Diaconal ordination is a configuration to Christ. As a deacon I am entrusted to Christ. Remembering Christ's whole life is a revelation of the Father. Christ enables me to live in Him all that He Himself lived, and He lives it in me. As a Deacon I am called to be holy. Holiness is nothing other than charity lived to the full. The measure of holiness stems from the stature that Christ achieved in us. Since the Church is in itself a sign and sacrament of communion with God and humanity, it is because of her communion with God that she communes with humanity. Thus, my ordination is not personal; rather it is communitarian in nature.



Recoletos Formation CENTER FORMATORS



**Fray Lauro V. Larlar, OAR
RECTOR**



**Fray Hubert Dunstan Decena, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Leander Barrot, OAR
VICE - RECTOR**



**Fray Hector Gonzalez, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Feliciano Campomanes, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Rey Tripulca, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Emilio Edgardo Quilatan, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR
FORMATOR**



**Fray Gideon Antolin Lagrimas, OAR
FORMATOR**



ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECT FRIARS



FOUR NEW PIOUS ASSOCIATIONS WERE INTEGRATED TO THE FORMATION PROGRAM OF THE RFC COMMUNITY: DISCIPLES OF HOPE (3), OBLATES APOSTLE OF THE TWO HEARTS (1), EMMANUEL SERVANTS OF THE HOLY TRINITY (1), AND MISSIONARIES OF MARY MOTHER OF THE POOR (3).

Chronicle of Events



SARF Mira-nila @ 25 (August 25)

Members of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity-Mira-nila Chapter celebrated their 25th founding anniversary at the Recoletos Formation Center.

Welcome Party (September 1)

The community of Recoletos Formation Center officially welcomed fourteen (14) freshmen in the theologate level - six (6) newly professed Recollect friars and eight (8) from the Pious Union which is composed of the Clerics of the Disciples of Hope, Emmanuel Servants of the Holy Trinity, Oblates of the Alliance of the Two Hearts, and Missionaries of Mary Mother of the Poor.



Solemn Profession of Vows of Seven OAR Friars (September 15)

Despite the super typhoon Ompong devastating the northern part of the Philippines, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno never held back from witnessing the Solemn Profession of Vows of seven friars at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish.





Licensure Examination for Teachers (Septemebr 30)

To acquire the license necessary for teachers and school administrators in the Augustinian Recollect Educational Institutions, thirteen (13) simple professed Augustinian Recollect friars and seven (7) temporarily professed Augustinian Recollect sisters took the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) at the Perpetual Help College of Manila, V. Concepcion Street, Sampaloc, Manila.

Seven OAR Friars Ordained as Deacons (November 17)

Through the imposition of hands by Most Rev. Nolly Buco, JCD, DD, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Antipolo, seven Augustinian Recollect friars of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno were ordained as deacons. This momentous event coincided with the Feast of Nuestra Señora de la Salud at Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Quezon City.



Grand Marian Procession (December 2)

As an expression of their devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the community of Recoletos Formation Center participated in the annual solemn presentation of the original 384 year-old image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud in the streets of Intramuros, where a parade of not less than a hundred images of the Blessed Mother Mary were displayed and prayed over.

OAR receives Five New Priests (December 5)

Along with the 430th birthday celebration of the Augustinian Recollection, also known as the "OAR Day," the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno witnessed the ordination of five new OAR priests at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Quezon City.



AR and OAR Formand's Convention (December 15)

With the theme "AR-OAR Formands in the Millennial Age: Witnesses of Faith and Discernment," the OAR formands in the theologate level reunited with the formands of the congregation of the Augustinian Recollect sisters for a special convention to develop camaraderie and experience accompaniment in their discernment process as religious.

Christmas Party at St. Rita College (December 25)

The Augustinian Recollect family encompassing all religious and priests of the OAR as well as all members of their female counterpart, the Congregation of Augustinian Recollect Sisters, gathered together to share the spirit of Christmas at St. Rita College.





Lolo DD Celebrates 77th Year of Existence (February 19)

To give tribute to the eldest member of the community, the friars prepared an exclusive birthday bash for Rev. Fr. Hubert Dunstan Decena, OAR on his 77th year of existence.

Institution of Lectors and Acolytes (May 4)

The community of Recoletos Formation Center witnessed the institution of 11 friars to the ministry of acolyte and 11 friars to the ministry of lector at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish,



Comprehensive Spiritual Formation and Immersion Program (May 14-24)

Seventeen representatives of different OAR Schools in the Philippines spent a two-week stay in the community of Recoletos Formation Center as they through the Comprehensive Spiritual Formation and Immersion Program (CSFIP) for OAR Schools in the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno





Renewal Visit of the Prior General (May 8-9)

Rev. Fr, Miguel Miro, OAR, the Prior General of the Order, paid a visit of renewal to OAR communities all over the Philippines, most especially the friars of the Recoletos Formation Center.

Pilgrimage on Araw ng Kagitingan (April 9)

In line with the celebration of St. Ezekiel Moreno's 171st Birthday and the commemoration of the Araw ng Kagitingan, the community of Recoletos Formation Center pursued a perambulate pilgrimage from the seminary all the way to the St. Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate-Recoletos (SEMoNoRe), Antipolo City.



Happy Easter Bonding (April 22)

After a hectic and busy celebration of the Holy Week, the community of Recoletos Formation Center, decided to welcome the Easter Season with a fraternal bonding at the Provincial House.



12th OAR Formands' Convention (June 8-12)

The community of Recoletos Formation Center hosted the 12th annual OAR Formands Convention. With the theme: Recollect Accompaniment: Quest for Interiority, Sign of Communion and Bond of Charity, all formands from three major seminaries of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno deepened their Recollect identity and cultivated fraternal charity.



Community Excursion (June 19)

To conclude the academic year 2018-2019, the community of Recoletos Formation Center went on a three-day excursion to RSAM Resort, Nasugbo, Batangas.





**“The God who calls each creature by its name
has a loving and providential plan for every one of those creatures.
That is what is meant by ‘vocation.’”**

*Constitutions, Additional Code
Chapter 6, Article 3, no. 155*

WRITE OR CALL:
THE NATIONAL VOCATION DIRECTOR
CASIMIRO RECOLETOS SEMINARY
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(074) 442-2823



OR VISIT OUR WEBSITES:
WWW.VOCATION.PH
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