



Recoletos School of Theology, Inc.

81 Alondras St., Miranila Homes, Congressional Ave. Ext
Brgy. Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, Philippines

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GIFTED TO GIVE: CHARISMATIC IDENTITY AND 21ST CENTURY CONCERNS

December 7-8, 2021



December 7, 2021 (Tuesday)

Concurrent Activities

9:00

**RECOLETOS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, INC.
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF INCORPORATORS**

9:00

**RST THEOLOGY STUDENTS
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

2:30

CONFERENCE

Fray Jaazeal Estelou Jakosalem, OAR



**GIFTED TO
GIVE**

CHARISMATIC Identity
and the 21ST
CENTURY CONCERNS



December 8, 2021 (Wednesday)

Solemnity: Immaculate Conception

CONFERENCE

RATIONALE

- Post 500th anniversary of Christianity challenges
- Discovering relevance and innovative re-reading of the Augustinian Recollect charismatic identity vis-à-vis the challenges of 21st Century
- Forward to the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno (November 2023)

TOPICS and SPEAKERS

Fratelli Tutti and Human Ecology

Mr. Carmelo P. Marollano, Ph.D.

Recollect Augustinianness against the Rhetoric of Consumerism

Fr. Radni L. Caparas, OAR, SThD

RSVP: Formation Program for OAR Lay Missionaries

Mr. Lorecito M. Sy, Ph.D.

Augustinian Community Identity

Fr. Alexis E. Mansueto, OAR

Kulto

Fr. Hector C. Gonzales, OAR



PROGRAMME

December 8, 2021

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception



**GIFTED TO
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CHARISMATIC Identity
and the 21ST
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9:00 **Opening Prayer**
National Anthem
RST Hymn

Program Rationale

9:30 **Fratelli Tutti and Human Ecology**
Mr. Carmelo P. Marollano, Ph.D.

10:30 **Recollect Augustinianness against the**
Rhetoric of Consumerism
Fr. Radni L. Caparas, OAR, SThD

11:30 **Open Forum**

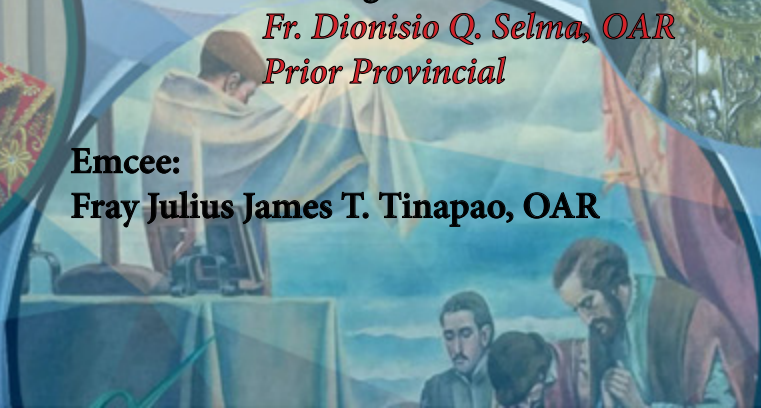
2:00 **RSVP: A Formation Program for OAR**
Lay Missionaries
Mr. Lorecito M. Sy, Ph.D.

3:00 **Augustinian Community Identity**
Fr. Alexis E. Mansueto, OAR

4:00 **Kulto**
Fr. Hector C. Gonzales, OAR

5:00 **Closing Remarks**
Fr. Dionisio Q. Selma, OAR
Prior Provincial

Emcee:
Fray Julius James T. Tinapao, OAR



CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS



FRATELLI TUTTI AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

Carmelo P. Marollano, Ph.D.

Pope Francis issued the encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti* last October 2020. The subtitle of this Church document states that it is about Fraternity and Social Friendship.

The said document talks about matters appertaining to the current realities in our contemporary society and the concomitant problems and malaise that people are facing. The Pope talks about human rights violations, migration, the pandemic, climate change and degradation of the environment, war and terrorism, globalization, the illusion of communication and different forms of subjection which are indicative of a throw-away world with which man lives right now. Thomas Hobbes succinctly captures it when he opines “*homo homini lupus est*”.

During his papacy Pope Benedict XVI espoused the idea of human ecology. Being well aware of the pathetic plight of humanity he thought about symbiotic relationship with the rest of creation. In this regard he declares in his final encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (par 51):

The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its life-style, which, in many parts of the world, is prone to hedonism and consumerism, regardless of their harmful consequences. What is needed is an effective shift in mentality which can lead to the adoption of new life-styles “in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments.” Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment, just as environmental deterioration in turn upsets relations in society.

This paper intends to elucidate one aspect of human ecology which could also be found in *Fratelli Tutti* and what it says about interpersonal relationships with a backdrop of St. Augustine’s distinction of *uti vs. frui*. In his treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana* (1.3.3), Augustine thinks that all human perversion consists in wanting to use things

which are meant to be enjoyed and to enjoy things which are meant to be used. This idea is also echoed in *Fratelli Tutti*.

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Seen within the framework of the existentialist thinkers (Martin Buber, Emmanuel Levinas, Gabriel Marcel and Karol Wojtyla) the author hopes to allow their ideas on interpersonal relationship, *disponibile*, communion and participation which are hallmarks of genuine fraternity and social friendship to surface out.

RECOLLECT AUGUSTINIANNESSE AGAINST THE RHETORIC OF CONSUMERISM

Fr. Radni L. Caparas, OAR, SThD

Consumerism cultivates our desire to acquire more. It knows more of our needs and interests than ourselves by the use of search engines, social media, and cookies. It aggressively seduces people to buy, to acquire things in order to be happy. Billions of money are poured into researching behaviors, tastes, attitudes, and aspirations so as to find the particular weak spot that will unlock the key to people’s desires and fantasies. The powerful seduction of consumerism is the advertisement of a happy life that can be gained through patronizing their products. It targets mainly our emotions, imagination, and desires to pursue an ideal of happiness. The appeal of consumerism is designed to compel us to buy. It invades our hearts and the subconscious level of our minds. We live in the consumer city constantly bombarded with the temptation to purchase.

The rhetoric of consumerism impacted not only an ordinary person but also professed religious and priests. Sometimes religious are more persuasive evangelizers of the consumer city rather than the City of God. They patronize, testify, and preach about the products and brands they used.

St. Augustine and OAR founding fathers didn’t have OLED television, a dishwasher, air conditioning, a cellphone, tablet, laptop, drones, and other high-tech gadgets. They did not have these things

but they are happy. St. Augustine and OAR founding fathers even asserted that it is better to need less than to have more. They search for a true happy life in a monastic life without luxuries.

St. Augustine and OAR founding fathers are against the rhetoric of consumerism on the issue of happiness. The talk will present the Augustinian option of happiness as lived by the OAR founding fathers.

RSVP: A FORMATION PROGRAM FOR OAR LAY MISSIONARIES

Lorecito M. Sy, Ph.D.

RSVP, according to Webster Merriam Dictionary, is an abbreviation of the French phrase “répondez s’il vous plait” which means, “please reply.” In this research presentation RSVP will stand for Recoletos Service Volunteers Program. It is a program of invitation for lay people to respond to the Lord’s call, “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (John 20:21) and “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel...” (Mark 16:15).

RSVP, as a formation program for the laity, desires to train lay persons--from the Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel of different OAR Schools, Parishioners of different Parishes as well as Lay organizations such as SARF, RAY and FORSOAR—desiring to become lay collaborators in the Apostolic Mission of the Recoletos in the Philippines.

RSVP is a response to the challenge of the Church to the Religious Congregations to share the charismatic identity of their founder to the laity especially among those who volunteer to become missionaries. As we celebrate 2021 as the Year of Mission, with the theme “Gifted to Give” and 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines, Bishop Romulo G. Valles, then CBCP President, in his Pastoral Letter for the 2021 Year of *Missio Ad Gentes*, said, that this gift of Christian Faith 500 years

ago which motivated missionaries over the centuries, must also enflame the hearts of all of us today to engage in mission here at home and in other countries (CBCP Pastoral Letter for the 2021 Year of *Missio Ad Gentes*).

Thus, all the baptized, according to Pope Francis are missionaries: “*In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples... whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients*” (EG. 120).

The OAR Constitution provides that, “*According to the directives of the local ordinary, they are to set up the catechumenate and give formation to the Christian Community... They are to promote the training of lay people for catechesis and other ministries, and they are to work dauntlessly to develop an authentic laity* (OAR Constitution Art 2, On Missionary Apostolate). The St. Ezekiel Moreno Province LAMP’s Vision-Mission Statement of states that “*In line with the OAR Life and Mission Project (LAMP) and guided by the vision of the Order, we, as a Province, assume our own Mission to “live and proclaim the Gospel, bearing witness to a contemplative and fraternal life, at the service of the Kingdom and in a shared mission with the Lay people*” (OAR LAMP 2018-2022, p. 15). Consequently, the Province of St. Ezequiel Moreno in the Philippines directs the Religious to: “*Prepare and implement guidelines for the laity in the OAR missions*” (OAR LAMP 2018-2022, p.33).

As we celebrate the 400 years of the Recoletos presence in Cebu, and as we look forward to the 25th anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, let these words of Pope Francis be a challenge to us in the 21st Century, not only to continue, but to share the legacy of our Recollect missionaries to the Laity: “Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigor” (EG 109) and “Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary enthusiasm” (EG 80). Let us share this charismatic identity of being a missionary to the laity.

Augustinian Community Identity

Fray Alexis E. Mansueto, OAR

The crisis of faith today is rooted in the crisis of identity. Christians have lost the identity of being a Church, the Body of Christ, a community of believers bonded together in love by the Spirit. Thus, this research aims at retracing the biblical foundations of the Augustinian Community as described in Rule 1.2 by looking back at the exegetical works of St. Augustine, where he expounded his teachings connected with the said biblical texts.

Many have written already some commentaries on the Rule of St. Augustine and others have written about the spirituality of the Rule. This research focuses on the specific topic on the Rule, namely, Rule 1.2. In this part of the Rule, St. Augustine wrote what living together in the monastery means. It is says, “The main purpose for which you have come together (cf. *Jn.* 11, 52) is to live harmoniously in the house (cf. *Ps.* 67, 7) and to have one soul and one heart (cf. *Acts* 4, 32) intent upon God.” This research will elucidate more the ideals of St. Augustine about the community life and its goal.

This research was guided by the following questions: Why did St. Augustine use two biblical texts in Rule 1.2? What is the meaning of the two biblical texts in the following works of St. Augustine: Selected Sermons, Exposition on the Psalms, and Tractates on the Gospel of John? and, In what ways can St. Augustine’s concept of community enhance the common life of the faithful as community of disciples?

This research affirms that the ultimate point of unity is God Himself. From the Unity of the Godhead of the Three Persons comes the unity of Christians. Christian life is ultimately and fundamentally a communion of life and love. The Rule of St. Augustine points out that it is because of love that a community exists and is nurtured by it. This love is a person, Jesus, the Word-Incarnate.

Furthermore, Augustine calls all towards deeper understanding of unity of mind and heart. This is a unity of the person with himself, with the community and finally a union with God through the action of the Holy Spirit. And this unity of love calls all towards service and towards building a community of authentic disciples of the Lord.

KULTO

Fray Hector C. Gonzales, OAR

“Kulto” in the vernacular is always associated with demonic or unorthodox group and beliefs. But it is a religious movement. A particular devotion accepted by the faithful and became part of their way of life. Marian cult is the most popular among many.

Devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary are visible in the *Forma de vivir* of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. According to Fray Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR, Marian devotion forms an essential part of Christian piety.¹ Though it may start in a personal form of piety, communal devotion will later on be developed in order to have a more structured Marian cult. Fray Cuesta pinned in his article that religious in Spain reserve a prominent place to the Blessed Virgin Mary in their lives. With this kind of affection to the Blessed Virgin Mary, missionaries’ journey to the Philippines 400 years ago is also an indication of the journey of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Philippines’ soil.

Prior to the arrival of the Recollects in the Philippines, images and icons of the Blessed Virgin Mary are already introduced by other religious Orders in the country such as *Nuestra Señora de Buen Suceso* by the Augustinians in 1580,² the painted icon of *Nuestra Señora del Pronto Socorro* by the Dominicans in 1587³ and *Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario de la Naval*, a gift received from Governor General Dasmariñas by the Dominicans in 1593.⁴ A great indication that the Blessed Virgin Mary is strongly associated with religious life. Many events in the Philippines are also attributed to the Blessed Virgin Mary’s powerful intercession such as the attributed role of *La Gran Señora de Filipinas* (the Naval) during the Dutch wars and *Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje*’s comfort to Filipinos in their worries.

¹ Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR, “Mary in the Apostolic Tradition of the Order,” in *Bulletin of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno*, Vol. 3, No. 5, (January-June 2002) 63.

² Msgr. Sabina A. Vengco, Jr, *Shaping the Filipino Marian Piety*, (GPV Printing Ventures Inc., Quezon City, 2017), 79.

³ *Ibid.* 81.

⁴ *Ibid.* 83.

The researcher will deal on the development of Marian devotions in the Philippines both introduced by the Recollects and in history, administered by the Recollects. This development holds an important aspect in the evangelization of the Philippines. Praying of the rosary played an important role in the daily ministerial activities of a religious. The Marian charism of the Order of Augustinian Recollects intensifies the desire of religious missionaries to introduce and evangelize the faithful. An order was implemented on 1672 wherein rosary will be prayed in the ministries on Saturdays and every third Sunday. Several Provincial Chapters confirmed this implementation and even included in *Modo de administrar*, a kind of Provincial Pastoral booklet. In 1729 edition, the chapter ordered all ministers to foster daily recitation of the rosary and establish the respective confraternity.⁵

In the end, devotions must not perceive as a dividing factor whether what cult is superior among the rest but to look at the commonality among them, devotees are asking the Blessed Virgin Mary to intercede in their petitions. As members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel will say during their investiture, to Jesus through Mary.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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⁵ *Ibid*, 32.