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Amor **D**ifussivus IV: **Historical Studies, Sources and Biographies**



EMMANUEL LUIS A. ROMANILLOS

Vol. 19 Nos. 1 & 2 December 2024 - May 2025

Quærens

Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life

**AMOR
DIFFUSIVUS IV:**

Historical Studies, Sources and Biographies

**In Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary
of the Foundation of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno
of the Order of Augustinian Recollects (1998-2023)**

EMMANUEL LUIS A. ROMANILLOS

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Cover:

[*top: left to right*] Logo of the 25th Founding Anniversary of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno (1998-2023); Coat-of-arms of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Order of the Augustinian Recollects; Coat-of-arms of the Recoletos School of Theology, Quezon City.

Priors Provincial of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province: [*center: left to right*] Victor Jose L. Lluch; Emeterio D. Buñao; Lauro V. Larlar. [*bottom: left to right*] Regino Z. Bangcaya; Dionisio Q. Selma; Bernard C. Amparado.

Quaerens is published twice a year, per school semester, by Recoletos School of Theology, Inc. of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Order of the Augustinian Recollects (OAR). Its name draws its inspiration from the celebrated Anselmian formula for theology: *fides quaerens intellectum*. The title is also very Augustinian. It calls to mind the constancy of spirit required of every restless heart: “Sic ergo quaesumus tanquam inventuri; et sic inveniamus, tanquam quaesituri” (*De Trin.* IX, 1, i).

As a journal of theology and pastoral life, *Quaerens* is committed to the noble mission of deepening the modern-day Christian’s understanding and praxis of the faith, of fostering an atmosphere of dialogue with cultures and religions throughout the world in general and throughout Asia in particular, and of promoting a scholarly theological discourse that addresses the specific pastoral needs and questions of our time.

The Editors welcome contributions pertinent to theology and pastoral life. The Editorial Board is not responsible for published opinions. It is further to be understood that approval of an article for publication does not necessarily imply endorsement of the views of the author.

Administration

Research, Planning and Development Office
 Recoletos School of Theology, Inc.
 81 Alondras St. Miranila Homes, Congressional Avenue Ext.
 1101 Quezon City, Philippines
 (email: quaerens@sscrmn.edu.ph)

All business and editorial correspondence (e.g. matters concerning manuscripts, books for reviews, advertising and subscriptions) should be addressed to:

Quaerens

Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life
 Recoletos School of Theology, Inc.
 81 Alondras St. Miranila Homes, Congressional Ave. Ext.
 U.P. P.O. Box 206, U.P. Diliman
 1101 Quezon City, Philippines

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PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO

ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

Message

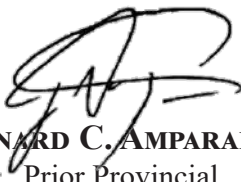
With gladness the Augustinian Recollect Family commemorates the important milestone of the 25th Founding Anniversary of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno (1998-2023), even as we are grateful to Our Lord for the copious graces and immense love we received and with hope continue to receive from Him in our mission.



As Dr. John Stahl-Wert affirms: “Acknowledging milestones gives us the opportunity to reflect on where we have been, where we are now and what we can learn from this part of the journey. Our growth and achievement are for the greater purpose of our service to the world.” My confreres and my five predecessors as priors provincial have made great strides in the growth and progress of our Province for the service to the People of God and to the Order. Indeed, the present generation of Augustinian Recollects owes much to the struggles, pains and triumphs of our first missionaries who arrived in May 1606 and of those of our cherished mother-province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in 1621-1998. We disseminate pertinent historical narratives in four special issues of history in *Quaerens* of our school of theology I had served for six years as RFC local prior.

We call to mind what Pope Francis said to the General Chapter fathers in 2016: “The grateful memory of his love in the past impels us to live in the present with passion and greater courage. Thus we can ask him to *command whatever he wishes*, for to ask this implies freedom

of spirit and availability. Allowing ourselves to be commanded by God means that God is the master of our life and there are no others... When the Lord is at the center of our lives everything is possible. Neither failures nor other evils matter, because it is he who stands at the center, it is he who guides us.” We go on giving testimony to our charismatic identity and spiritual values worth emulating, even as we live in a community of brothers with “one soul and one heart” and with renewed commitment to God’s glory and everyone’s edification.



FR. BERNARD C. AMPARADO OAR
Prior Provincial



Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Inc.

ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS • PROVINCE OF ST. EZEKIEL MORENO

Sed Luz y Amor para el Mundo! • Be Light and Love for the World!



Message


The present issue of *Quærens: Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life. Amor Diffusivus IV* commemorates the 25th founding anniversary of our Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno. When asked to write a message in this special issue, I reviewed some of the past published research works pertinent to the beginnings and the development of the same Province. I also reflected on the articles published in *Quærens, Amor Diffusivus IV* issue.



I am grateful, Lord! The first thing that sprung to mind was gratitude. The glorious history and evangelization efforts of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines and around the world have been extensively documented and offered to researchers and readers—especially our teachers, parish workers, students in our universities and colleges and our own seminarians—to study, learn and apply in their work and life. I extend my gratitude to the coauthors and the Recoletos School of Theology for publishing this timely issue. I am especially appreciative of Professor Emmanuel Luis Romanillos for requesting me to share this message which I use as a chance to convey how much I cherish the Province and the Order.

I wish that the countless historical studies and biographies published by *Quærens* may also serve as a wellspring to which we can return in order to revitalize our spirituality and charism that, as challenged by the Holy Father, we are to “place in the hands of the laity.” This is called for in order for us to “walk together,” responding to the needs of the Church and society.

It is my ardent prayer that the exemplary lives and works of our predecessors and the fidelity of our contemporaries to the Augustinian Recollect charismatic identity will help us grow closer to the whole Christ and bring Him closer to the people in search of God. With hope and joy, we celebrate this milestone, even as we continually ask the Almighty God for more graces for our apostolates and religious communities.


FR. LAURO V. LARLAR OAR
Rector





Recoletos School of Theology

81 Alondras St. Miranilla Homes Subdivision, Congressional Avenue Extension,

1107 Quezon City Philippines

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Message

It is truly a great privilege for our theology school to commemorate the 25th Founding Anniversary of our Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno. Since its foundation in 1985, our institution is honored to have mentored over one hundred forty graduates who imbibed the Augustinian brand of education as well as to have in our ranks faculty who nurtured our research culture under the guidance of the Almighty and His Church.



In this *Quaerens* special issue, we take pride in the contributions of four seasoned writers—Paglinawan, Panedas, Quilatan, Romanillos—who either as professors of Theology or Church History or as thesis advisers or panelists took our students under their wings. Their research output focuses chiefly on our Augustinian Recollect history, spirituality, biography and heritage. This issue has also articles culled from accomplished authors—Angel Martínez Cuesta, Enrique Eguiarte, Rafael García, Gregorio Ochoa—and major superiors—Fidel de Blas, José Aranguren, Emeterio Buñao—who penned historical accounts, manuals and biographies. This issue is extraordinarily valuable for courses on Recollect heritage, culture, charism and spirituality in our formation centers, universities, Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity assemblies and for parish workers, faculty and Church History researchers. We further add the previous *Quaerens* vols. 15, 16 and 17 to

avail ourselves of a rich depository of sources for Recollect heritage and spirituality. Hence, we are grateful to God for our historians who made us look back to our glorious past in order to understand our present and to craft the brilliant future of our beloved Order.

Soli Deo gloria! Glory to God alone!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Renacia', written over the printed name.

FR. MARK ROCHELLE F. RENACIA OAR

President



Recoletos School of Theology

81 Alondras St. Miranilla Homes Subdivision, Congressional Avenue Extension,

1107 Quezon City Philippines

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Preface

This special issue of our scholarly journal—*Quærens, Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life*, volume 19, year 2024—is an opportune tribute of Recoletos Formation Center [RFC]-Recoletos School of Theology [RST] to the 25th Foundation Anniversary of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno of the Order of Augustinian Recollects.



The Recollects traced their roots to the provincial chapter of the Augustinian Province of Castile on 5 December 1588 in Toledo, Spain. In June 1621, Pope Gregory XV raised the Recollection to the rank of congregation whose first general chapter in November created four provinces, including the missionary Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in the Philippines, whose pioneering missionaries had reached the Islands in May 1606. More provinces of the Order were erected through the centuries. At one point in its history, the convents in Spain were suppressed and confiscated by the despoliation decrees of Minister Juan Álvarez Mendizábal in 1835-1836 and sold to interested parties. Monks and friars were ejected from their own convents. Every Recollect convent—over thirty—was lost, except that of Monteagudo in Navarra that trained missionaries for Philippine missions. Hence, the Recollects were providentially saved from extinction by the Philippines.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896-1902 wrought havoc on the Congregation and caused the carnage of Recollects. Under persecution stemming from anti-friar sentiments, they were forced to abandon curacies and sought refuge in Manila. It further constrained them to

acquire more convents in Spain or to journey to Latin America and establish new fields of apostolate. In 1912, the Congregation was elevated to the rank of Religious Order by Saint Pius X in his *Religiosas familias*. Across the centuries, zealous and exemplary religious contributed a great deal to the spread of God's Word, uplift of their lives, teaching of the youth and even livelihood projects, preservation of languages through their novenas, dictionaries, hymnals, devotionals they authored in Visayan Cebuano, Tagalog, Cuyunin, etc.

Their tangible cultural legacies have fortunately endured till now, such as their cathedrals, churches, *kumbentos*, cemeteries, stone bridges, bell towers, forts, bulwarks, dams, installation of pipe organs, Black Nazarene, Marian devotion, Las Piñas Bamboo Organ, the all-steel San Sebastian Basilica and the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters. The educational institutions of the Augustinian Recollect Family in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have withstood the test of time. Numerous Recollects lost their lives in Mindanao, Palawan, Mindoro, Romblon, Negros, victims of Moro piratical fury. Exemplary curates touched the lives of our ancestors: Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Blessed Vicente de San Antonio and confreres martyred in Japan in the 17th century, Blessed Vicente Soler and four confreres slain in Motril during the Spanish Civil War in 1936. They contributed to the Recollect spiritual legacy of Christian Faith to the Filipino nation.

The creation of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno was unanimously approved at the general chapter on 28 November 1998 in Monachil, Granada, Spain. Six religious have been elected as priors provincial since then: [*See the cover: clockwise*] Victor Jose L. Lluch, Emeterio D. Buñao, Lauro V. Larlar, Bernard C. Amparado, Dionisio Q. Selma, Regino Z. Bangcaya. Five of them—Buñao, Bangcaya, Larlar, Selma, Amparado—were RFC priors. Hence, this *Quaerens* special issue is likewise a timely tribute to these superiors in the formation apostolate. In 1985, RFC was founded when German F. Chicote was vicar provincial and Lluch as vicarial councilor. Since 1995, RST—affiliated with the University of Santo Tomas—continues with its mostly Recollects teaching theology to their own *formandi* and even to those from other orders and institutes. It is both a comprehensive ecclesiastical and CHED-recognized civil institute of higher learning,

offering Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology and Master of Arts in Theology with seven majors to choose from. Over one hundred forty graduates have passed through its hallowed cloisters and academic halls and have gone on to their evangelization task mostly as ordained ministers of God's Word.

The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno today meets new challenges. It now sends missionaries to such foreign lands as Sierra Leone, Saipan, Indonesia and Vietnam. Some worked in Brazil, Panamá, Colombia and Cuba. Others are assigned in Recollect communities in Europe and America. Young religious have taken up post-graduate studies in Rome, Madrid, Manila, Cebu City and Baguio City. Filipinos have occupied positions in the general council in Rome. Their candidates to the religious life and priesthood are trained in seminaries in Quezon City, Antipolo City and Baguio City. They own and administer two universities, five colleges and four high schools. They exercise their ministry in parishes and quasi-parishes of various archdioceses, dioceses and apostolic vicariates: Manila, Cebu, Cubao, Novaliches, Dumaguete, Bacolod, San Carlos, Tandag, Lingayen-Dagupan, Butuan. Puerto Princesa and Taytay.

The religious of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno never cease to spread the Gospel wherever the Church needs their services and to touch the lives of innumerable believers in their pastoral ministry and educational apostolate. Such Christian Faith is the indelible intangible legacy and spiritual heritage of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines and in other parts of the world.

History has a primordial role in the life of the Augustinian Recollection. As Pope Francis told the OAR general chapter delegates at the Vatican City in October 2016: "Let us look at the past and give thanks for the many gifts received. We must adopt this historical perspective by entrusting ourselves to the Lord because it is He who gives us the key to interpreting the past; it is not simply a matter of making history, but of discovering the presence of the Lord in every event, in every phase of life. The past helps us to return to our original charism and to taste it in all its freshness and integrity. It also gives us the chance to see the difficulties that have arisen and how they have been overcome in order to face today's challenges with a view to the

future. This journey with Jesus becomes a prayer of action, grace, and interior purification.” It is fitting and proper to give thanks to Almighty God for these twenty-five fruitful years and look to the future with hope to meet the challenges that come our way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ian Espartero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

FR. IAN ANTHONY R. ESPARTERO OAR
RFC Prior and RST Dean of Studies

Author's Introduction: Legacies of the Augustinian Recollects in Philippine History¹

I was interviewed by Fr. Pablo Panedas of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, who was local prior of the general curia in Rome, Italy, for a two-part article during the 4th Centennial of the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino (1621-2021) published in their website in June 2021 [*OAR PSNT* - "*Los Recoletos se han ganado la fama de 'trabajadores silenciosos de la viña del Señor', pero conviene dar a conocer sus huellas en la historia filipina*"(*agustinosrecoletos.org*)]² for online readers in Spain, Italy, Great Britain, Latin America and USA. The opening query thrown at me hit the target. My reply was what motivated my love for and interest in languages, historical research and cultural heritage many decades ago:

Question: What made you decide to research on and write about the Augustinian Recollect Family?

Answer: In 1963-1972 during my formation years in the seminaries of San Carlos City in Negros and Baguio City, I found out that the sources and bibliography in English on the history and heritage of the Augustinian Recollects were practically nil.

¹ This short talk was delivered at the book launch held at the Domingo Carceller OAR Little Theater during the occasion of the institutional book fair at the College Library of San Sebastian College Recoletos Manila on 3 October 2023.

² The headline of the two-part interview was: *The Recollects have earned the fame as "silent workers in the vineyard of the Lord," but it is convenient to make their footprints in Philippine history known..*

Background

Those available sources were in Spanish, 99% of them, and my twelve college units did not make me proficient. There was a dire need to consult primary sources and bibliography. In subsequent stages of formation, more Spanish books and sources posed more challenges along the path of studies and research for writing books and delivering lectures. Years of further studies in Spain and Italy equipped me with necessary language tools together with research instruments as paleography, historiography and later with translation techniques, research methods at the University of the Philippines Diliman where I was a graduate thesis panelist and undergraduate thesis adviser of Italian/Spanish majors, and as masteral thesis adviser or panel member at San Sebastian College Manila Graduate School in 2005-2014 and at Recoletos School of Theology in 2014 up to now. My Church history licentiate, philosophy degree and language proficiency found me teaching in four universities, two colleges, a school of diplomacy and a maritime school for seafarers. A great number of research works, lectures and publications came my way through the decades. Lectures were delivered at international, national and local conferences and workshops. The Covid-19 pandemic was a great opportunity to deliver online lectures and do further research, write and publish historical articles and books on Recollect history and heritage.

Rationale

I did my research works because I wanted to address the need of historiographers, students and teachers for reliable bibliography and history books based on primary sources which are accessible only in archives. These people, bereft of research tools like Spanish and paleography, found it extremely difficult to do archival investigation. Without trustworthy sources, factual errors eventually found their way in historical markers or in social media platforms— at times sadly— plagiarized or in blatant violation of intellectual property rights.

I did much research on our heritage churches and other structures in order to perpetuate the feats of unheralded church builders and to banish from textbooks black legends like that of forced labor from social media brimming with so much misinformation and disinformation. That is why I find immense pleasure to make the books and research

journals published by Recoletos Communications Inc, National Historical Commission of the Philippines, UP Diliman, Recoletos School of Theology, University of San Jose-Recoletos and University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos accessible in archives, libraries and documentation centers in the Philippines, America and Europe and or in book fairs like the Manila International Book Fair at SMX and in the Saint Thomas of Villanova Library or in book exhibits in UP Diliman and San Carlos City [Negros Occidental] Public Library.

Furthermore, this book launch and book fair at San Sebastian College Manila show how much Recollect authors are doing research thus announcing to the academic world their unheralded Recoletos research culture. And the legacies of the Augustinian Recollects are found in the myriad books, markers and articles in English.

Research outputs through the decades.

The licentiate thesis on Bohol defended in 1978 in Rome is now part of the 802-page *History of Bohol 1521-1937: Essays, Notes and Sources*, published in September 2022 and launched at the National Museum Bohol in Tagbilaran City generously sponsored by the provincial government, dioceses and National Historical Commission of the Philippines. My book contains my research works and lectures delivered at local and national conferences about and in Bohol since 1998 until 2018.

Now published in three voluminous issues: vol. 15 (2020), vol. 16 (2021) & vol. 17 (2022) of *Quærens. Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life*, published by the Recoletos School of Theology are the local histories of Mindanao, Palawan, Negros Island, Siquijor, Cavite, Cebu, Palawan, Caraga, *Contracosta de Luzón*, twelve cathedrals and hundreds of churches and chapels, belfries, schools and universities, colonial books, grammar and devotional books. Therein too are the biographies of iconic religious like Diego Cera, Mauricio Ferrero, Fernando Cuenca, of historians like Juan de la Concepción and Angel Martínez Cuesta, of musicians like Domingo Carceller, of Servants of God and Blessed like the Spanish Civil War Martyrs of Motril and Martyrs of Japan, and of Augustinian Saints like Ezekiel Moreno and Magdalena of Nagasaki and historic structures like Bamboo Organ, Punta Santa Cruz, bridges and belfries in Bohol.

The History of the Augustinian Recollects in Cebu since 1621 was commissioned and launched at the University of San Jose-Recoletos, Cebu City in February 2022. You can find historical narratives of Recollect colonial curacies, present-day parish churches and chapels, USJ-R and its campuses.

My trailblazing research on the Virgen del Carmen icon and devotion and San Sebastian Basilica was *The Spires of San Sebastian. The Story behind the Virgen del Carmen Image and the only prefabricated all-steel church in Asia* in 1991.

The Recoletos Communications Inc. [RCI] published most of my early books: *Bishop Ezekiel Moreno: An Augustinian Recollect Saint Among Filipinos*; *The Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines. History and Hagiography*; *Life and Spirituality of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Parish Priest of Las Piñas (1876-1879)*; *Saint Ezekiel Moreno: Studies on his Missionary Activity in the Philippines* and others. The RCI also published my research articles in *The Recoletos Observer*.

My research works on Recollect heritage and culture can be found in my historical articles in such journals as *Philippines Social Science Journal*; *Handurawan: Visita Iglesia Negros y Recoletos* (Bacolod City); *Recollectio* (Rome); *Recollections* (Baguio City); *Al habla* (Madrid); *Tolle Lege* (Bacolod City), *The Recoletos Update* (Quezon City), and *Bulletin of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno* (Quezon City), seminary annuals and fiesta souvenir programs.

The Augustinian Recollect legacies are perpetuated in historical landmarks installed by the NHCP like that of Bagumbayan Church in Maria Orosa Street and Recoletos Church in Intramuros, Manila in 2006, that of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Puerto Princesa City in 2014 and that at USJ-R Main Campus on 29 April 2023, in colonial parish churches in Loay, Loon, Jagna, Bohol, in Bacolod City, forts in Palawan, Romblon, Panglao, Maribojoc, and national cultural treasure plaques by National Museum of the Philippines in San Sebastian Basilica, Dauis, Loon, and Balilihan parish churches, belfries, etc.

I translated the many research works done by Fr. Angel Martínez and published them in *Holiness and Heroic Witness: Augustinian Recollect Saints and Blessed*, *The Augustinian Recollects in Mindanao*

(1622-1919), *Quærens* vols. 15, 16 and 17, and hopefully next year *The Augustinian Recollects in Palawan (1623-1987)* will come out.

These cultural studies were largely based upon old Spanish manuscripts found in the archives and libraries of Manila, Rome, Vatican City, Sevilla, Marcilla (Navarra), Madrid in Spain and of course at the two Recollect archives of Quezon City. Naturally, my knowledge of Spanish and Latin paved the way for over twenty books, lectures, journal articles, seminar-workshops and a book *Chabacano Studies* as well articles on our Hispanic language heritage in research journals like *UP Linguae et Litteræ*, *Journal of History* and *NHCP Journal of Philippine Local History and Heritage*.

It has been a great privilege to be the thesis adviser of about twenty young professed friars and Augustinian Recollect theology students for their Master of Arts in Theology, Major in Church History, that have focused on legacies in Batangas, Romblon, Bohol, Negros, Antipolo, Palawan, defense of Recollect missions against Moro piratical raids and three prelates, namely, Vigan Bishop Juan Ruiz de San Agustín, Palawan Apostolic Vicar Bishop Gregorio Espiga and Apostolic Prefect Msgr. Leandro Nieto.

The aforementioned topics and publications constitute some of the best ways to promote and perpetuate Augustinian Recollect legacies in Philippine history

Thank you so much.

Acronyms/Abbreviations

ADHIKA NG PILIPINAS – *Asosyasyon ng mga Dalubhasa, Historian at mga Interesado sa Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas*

AGI – *Archivo General de Indias*, Sevilla, Spain

AHNM – *Archivo Histórico Nacional*, Madrid, Spain

AHPM – *Archivo Histórico Provincial de Marcilla*, Navarra, Spain

ARSI – *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*, Roman Archive of the Society of Jesus, Rome, Italy

BR – *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*, BLAIR & ROBERTSON, 55 vols., Cleveland 1903-1909

BPSN – *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino*, Marcilla, Navarra, Spain

Crónicas – *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*, 13 vols.

DSPH – *Documentary Sources of Philippine History*, Gregorio F. ZAIDE, Sonia A. ZAIDE, eds., Manila 1990

ed. – *editor, edited*

et al. – *et alii* [and others]

f. – *folio* [manuscript page]

NHCP – *National Historical Commission of the Philippines*. Manila

NHI – *National Historical Institute* [now NHCP]

núm. – *número* [number]

OAR – *Order of Augustinian Recollects, Recollects*

OP – *Order of Preachers, Dominicans*

OSA – *Order of Saint Augustine, Augustinians*

PUG – *Pontifical Gregorian University*, Rome, Italy

r – *rursus* [front page of manuscript folio]

RFC – *Recoletos Formation Center*, Mira-Nila, Quezon City

RST – *Recoletos School of Theology*, Mira-Nila, Quezon City

Sinopsis – *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino*, by L. RUIZ, 2 vols., Manila 1925

SJ – *Society of Jesus, Jesuits*

UP – *University of the Philippines, Diliman Quezon City*

UST – *University of Santo Tomas, Manila*

v – *versus* [back page of manuscript folio]

vol. – *volume*

I. Historical Studies on the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno

Deconstructing the OAR Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno: Looking Back with Gratitude, 1606-2018

Emilio Edgardo A. Quilatan, OAR

Status Provinciae November 2017

As we celebrate the Twentieth Foundation Anniversary of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno (1998-2018) let us see the latest overview status of the province.¹

Total number of friars	179 friars	177 - Filipinos 2 - Nigerians
Total number of clerical friars	142 friars in permanent formation	134 - "clerical religious" 8 - "non-clerical religious"
Total number of non-clerical friars	37 non-clerical friars	24 - simple professed friars 13 - solemn professed/deacons
Total number of communities	24 Communities	1.21 - Philippines 1 - Taiwan 1 - Sierra Leone 2 - Saipan

With God's blessings and providence, the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno is increasing in the number of vocations and expanding its apostolates. Recently, the province sent two friars to Indonesia to study the language as initial preparation for the future engagement to the Archdiocese of Pontianak. As we count our blessings, let us not forget who we are and what we are aiming at, *i.e.*, to be holy Augustinian Recollects. "To be holy as the Lord our God is holy" (Leviticus 19, 2) through the Augustinian Recollect way has been our "Tatak Recoleta." In the way we live and the way we share our life with others let the "Tatak Recoleta" shine. It is difficult to enumerate in detail what is this "Tatak Recoleta." The OAR Constitutions delineates and defines the Recoleta trademark. The letters of the Constitutions were given life by the friars who were desirous of a more austere and perfect way of life. Let us examine who we are. Let us review the lives of our Augustinian Recollect predecessors by looking back at our Recollect history.

The Spirit of 1606

The Augustinian Recollection was born on 5 December 1588 as a result of the decisions of the provincial capitulars of the provincial chapter held in Toledo, Spain, in the Augustinian Province of Castile. The cradle of the Augustinian Recollection was the monastery of Talavera de la Reina. Soon other Recollect monasteries were established. To guarantee the autonomy of the Recollects in the way they live their charism, all Recollect communities were organized into one religious province with its own Augustinian Recollect prior provincial. This was granted by Pope Clement VIII on 11 February 1602 with the papal bull *Apostolici Muneris*. This province was called *Provincia de San Agustín*. However, partial autonomy was given since the Augustinian Recollects were under obedience to the Augustinian Prior General in Rome.² The *modus vivendi* of the Augustinian Recollect friars in Spain was communitarian and contemplative. The apostolate was limited to assisting the local parish priests in administering the sacrament of reconciliation, anointing of the sick, teaching catechism, and retreat giving. Local chapels of the Recollect houses in Spain were open to the public for the celebration of the Holy Mass.

² Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos I: Desde los orígenes hasta el siglo XIX* (Madrid 1995) 205-208.

One important highlight of the *Provincia de San Agustín* was the decision of the Augustinian Recollects to open their doors to the missions in the Philippines. On 23 December 1604, the long-awaited Royal License from King Philip III was given to the Recollects. King Philip III permitted the Augustinian Recollects to go to the Philippines but with conditions: that the missionaries that would be sent by the superior should be men of “letters and age” [learned and mature].³ Finally, in April 1605, the second provincial chapter approved the missionary enterprise to the Philippines “with unanimous consent” among the chapter participants who considered such apostolate “of great service to God” (*Crónicas* I, 397-399).⁴ The chapter fathers recommended Fray Juan de San Jerónimo to implement the ordinance of the provincial chapter. Later, on 12 July 1605, the fourteen-member missionary expedition (10 priests and 4 lay brothers)⁵ headed by Fray Juan de San Jerónimo boarded the galleon *Santa María del Juncal* and left Sanlúcar de Barrameda in Cádiz, Spain and sailed to Mexico. They arrived in Veracruz on 17 September. From Veracruz they travelled by land to Mexico City to get the necessary licenses for Manila from the royal viceroy and therefrom to the port of Acapulco where a galleon would bring them to the Philippines. They reached Cebu on 12 May 1606. In late May 1606, thirteen Recollects arrived in Manila.⁶ The Recollect priest Fray Andrés de San Nicolás died at sea.⁷

Upon arrival in Manila, the thirteen Augustinian Recollect pioneers were accommodated temporarily at the Dominican community in Santo Domingo in Intramuros. Three days later they lodged at the Augustinian monastery of San Agustín. The Recollects raised funds

³ MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 359.

⁴ MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 360.

⁵ The ten Augustinian Recollect priests in the first expedition were the ff: Fray Juan de San Jerónimo, Fray Andrés de San Nicolás; Fray Miguel de Sta. María; Fray Jerónimo de Cristo; Fray Pedro de San Fulgencio; Fray Diego de la Anunciación; Fray Rodrigo de San Miguel; Fray Francisco Bautista; Fray Francisco de la Madre de Dios; and Fray Andrés del Espíritu Santo. The four Augustinian Recollect brothers were as follows: Fray Simón de San José; Fray Juan de San Jerónimo; Fray Jerónimo de la Madre de Dios; and Fray Juan de San Guillermo. See Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas* I (Manila: 1925) 9.

⁶ MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 360.

⁷ *Ibid.*

in order to buy a house and lot outside of Intramuros – Bagumbayan. The house was formerly owned by the late Governor-general Pedro Bravo de Acuña. The house was dedicated to San Nicolás de Tolentino.⁸ This was the first canonical house of the Recollects in the Philippines. And also within the year of arrival the Recollects proceeded to Zambales for their first mission.

The first batch of Recollect missionaries who arrived in the Philippines in 1606 laid the initial groundwork of the Recollect presence in the archipelago. Moreover, the Recollect missions were baptized in the blood of its martyrs. One of the trailblazers, Fray Miguel de la Madre de Dios was gravely wounded when the natives of Mariveles stoned the missionary alive. Fray Miguel did not survive his wounds. He is deemed as the “protomartyr” of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines.⁹ Other Recollect missionaries will follow the path of martyrdom in the mission fields of Bataan, Mindanao, Palawan, Mindoro, Romblon and Japan.

From 1606 to 1620 there was a total of thirty-three Augustinian Recollects who arrived in the Philippines. They were either assigned in the missions of Zambales or assigned in the different houses in Bagumbayan, Intramuros and Cavite Puerto (now Cavite City).¹⁰

The Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, 1622

On 5 June 1621, Pope Gregory XV issued a papal brief, *Militantis Ecclesiae*, elevating the Augustinian Recollect Province of Saint Augustine to the status of congregation under the vicar general. However, the Recollect Congregation was still subject to the Augustinian Prior General in Rome. Nevertheless, the Augustinian Recollects were given rights to elect their vicar general and the vicar general was given

⁸ When the second Recollect community was opened in Intramuros in 1608 and was dedicated to Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, the Recollect house of Bagumbayan had the patron of their community dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. See Licinio Ruiz, *Sinopsis histórica* I, 11.

⁹ Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas, 1606-1906* (Madrid, 1906) 36-37.

¹⁰ See SÁDABA, 331-156. Cited by MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 372.

faculty to subdivide the Congregation into religious provinces, and the communities of the provinces were distributed geographically.¹¹

For the Recollects in the Philippines, Pope Gregory XV canonically established the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino on August 31, 1622.¹² Thus, all Augustinian Recollects assigned in the different houses and missions in the archipelago belonged canonically to this province and the prior provincial had his provincial curia in Intramuros, Manila.

From 1621 until 1896 on the eve of the Philippine Revolution, 1,623 Augustinian Recollect friars served as missionaries, pastors, military chaplains and in other capacities.¹³ They converted to the Catholic faith and formed the Filipinos in the Catholic communities and later contributed greatly to the formation of the Philippines as the only dominant Catholic nation in Southeast Asia. In 1896, the Augustinian Recollects took care of 1,249,399 souls in different 203 towns in twenty provinces.¹⁴ By 1898 there were 233 Augustinian Recollects serving either as missionaries or parish priests distributed in the Archdiocese of Manila, Diocese of Cebu and the Diocese of Jaro.¹⁵

Selected notable tangible Recollect contributions in the Philippines:

Vigan Cathedral and Episcopal Palace

These ecclesiastical buildings were constructed during the episcopacy of Fray Juan García Ruiz de San Agustín, Augustinian Recollect bishop from 1780 to 1796 (SÁDABA, 268-269).

Forts and churches in Cuyo and Agutaya, Palawan

They were built during the time of Fray Juan de San Severo who died in 1697. (SÁDABA, 109-110).

¹¹ MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 249.

¹² *Status Generalis OAR*, Vol. 27 (1992), No. 86, 78.

¹³ Valentín MARÍN Y MORALES, *Ensayo de una Síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las Corporaciones Religiosas Españolas de Filipinas* (Manila 1901), 256.

¹⁴ Pablo FERNÁNDEZ, *History of the Church in the Philippines, 1521-1898* (Manila 1979) 26.

¹⁵ Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos II: El Siglo XIX* (Madrid 2015) 941-942.

Forts and churches in Romblon

They were built during the time of Fray Agustín de San Pedro, more popularly known in Philippine history as *El Padre Capitán*. He defended his parishioners in Mindanao and later in Romblon from the piratical invasions of the Moros. He died in Romblon in 1653 (SÁDABA, 81-83).

The church and the Bamboo Organ of Las Piñas

Saint Joseph Parish Church and the world-famous Bamboo Organ were built by Fray Diego Cera when he was the parish priest of the town from 1797 to 1831 (SÁDABA, 363-363).

The city of Bacolod, Negros Occidental

Fray Mauricio Ferrero was assigned three times as parish priest of Bacolod: 1871-1894, 1897-1898 and 1902-1909. He was the town planner of Bacolod and responsible for the construction of the church which was inaugurated in 1882 (present-day San Sebastian Cathedral), rectory (where in 1919 the Augustinian Sisters set up the La Consolacion College, the first school of higher education in Negros) and Puerto San Juan, which was the military headquarters and the provincial jail (now demolished).¹⁶ (SÁDABA, 532-533)

The building and improvement of the sugar industry of Negros

Fray Fernando Cuenca, was parish priest of Talisay, Negros Occidental from 1850 until his death in 1902. He was the builder of the town of Talisay, he was responsible for the improvement of the sugar industry of Negros. Reportedly, he built the first hydraulic press for crushing of sugar (SÁDABA 447-448).

The town of San Juan de Bolbok, Batangas

Fray Celestino Yoldi, parish priest from 1892 to 1898. He was responsible for the town planning of San Juan and built the still existing parish church (SÁDABA, 659-661).

¹⁶ Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Events in Bacolod, Negros Occidental, in the Parish Chronicle (1871-1909) of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero, OAR, and Other Essays*. Quezon City 2016.

San Sebastian Basilica

The Augustinian Recollects contributed to the building of the first pre-fabricated all-steel church in Asia. It was designed by the Spanish engineer Genaro Palacios. It was inaugurated on 15 August 1891. The church was also the first basilica in the Philippines which houses the first image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel brought by the third mission of Augustinian Recollects from Mexico in 1618 (Cf. ROMANILLOS, *The Spires of San Sebastian*).

Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters of the Philippines

The Augustinian Recollects supported the religious aspirations of two biological sisters from Calumpit, Bulacan — Dionisia and Cecilia Rosa Talangpaz. The Beaterio de San Sebastian was established in 1725. In 1970, AR Sisters became a congregation of pontifical right.

The Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines 1835-1998

The Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino survived the crisis that the Recollect Congregation faced in the Spanish Peninsula, i.e., the secularization of monasteries and convents in 1835. During this period, the Spanish Liberal government confiscated the properties all monastic communities in Spain, except for those who had missions in the Philippines, and expelled the conventuals into the streets. And because of their mission in the Philippines, the Recollect novitiate in Monteagudo belonging to Saint Nicholas of Tolentino Province was spared from government confiscation. Moreover, during the Philippine Revolution of 1896-1898 and the Filipino-American War, 1899-1903 all Spanish friars suffered the anti-friar persecution from the Filipino revolutionaries. Finally, the *Patronato Real* ceased in the Philippines when Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States of America on 10 December 1898. The new political situation gave new opportunities to the Recollects. Under the leadership of Fray Patricio Adell, Recollect missions were opened in Latin America.

Under the American Regime, the Augustinian Recollects regained their spiritual and pastoral élan and continued their apostolic works in the Philippines. With the application of Pope Leo XIII's apostolic constitution *Quae mari sinico* (1903) the Spanish friars continued their

presence in the archipelago. For the Augustinian Recollects, missions in Palawan were constituted as an apostolic prefecture in 1910.¹⁷

The Order of the Recollects of Saint Augustine, 1912

On 16 September 1912, by virtue of the papal brief *Religiosas Familias*, Pope Saint Pius X elevated the Augustinian Recollect Congregation to a fully autonomous Religious Order.¹⁸ The Order of the Recollects of Saint Augustine at this time with its own prior general based in Rome had three provinces, namely: the Province Saint Nicholas of Tolentino (1622), the Province of Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (1660), and the restored Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova (1909). The newly established Religious Order had 439 friars assigned to 92 houses in 9 countries. However, majority of the friars were from the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino.¹⁹

The Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, 1912-1946

The Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines were responding to the urgent call of missions in China. They canonically opened a house of procuration in Shanghai on 1 July 1911. In November 1923 the Sacred Congregation Propaganda Fidei granted authorization to the Augustinian Recollects to enter China. The Recollects accepted from the Holy See the mission territory of Kweiteh-Fu [now Shangqiu] in the Province of Hunan. The first batch of Recollect missionaries arrived in 1924.²⁰

The provincial chapter of 19 April 1940 enacted an ordinance that the province would open its doors to formal and higher education as one of its apostolates. Two formal schools were opened in 1941: Santo Tomás de Villanova Institute, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, and Colegio Fray Luis de León in Caracas, Venezuela. Selected Augustinian

¹⁷ Rene F. PAGLINAWAN, "Creation of the Apostolic Prefecture of Palawan" in *Recollectio*, 8 (1985) 109-112.

¹⁸ Jesús SOBEJANO, *Los Agustinos Recoletos 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas* (1606-1981) viii.

¹⁹ José Javier LIZARRAGA, *Conference delivered on 28 November 2008 in Berceo, La Rioja: Primer Centenario del Capítulo General de San Millán de la Cogolla: 1908-2008*, in *Boletín de la Provincia de San José*, 62-63, Madrid 2010, 177-207. Partial English translation by Rene F. Paglinawan.

²⁰ SOBEJANO, *Los Agustinos Recoletos 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas*, 90.

Recollects were sent to study Education at the University of Santo Tomás. Another school was opened in 1941, San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Manila. However, with the outbreak of the Second World War in the Pacific, all Recollect schools suspended the 1941-1942 school year and temporarily closed the schools.²¹

The province reactivated the novitiate in the Recollect church in Intramuros. On 21 May 1941, three Filipino candidates entered the novitiate — Salvador Calsado, Arturo Calsado and Honorato Francisco Laxamana.²² They received the initial formation in Manila since the Spanish Civil War (1933-1936) and the Second World War in 1939 prevented them from leaving the Philippines to undergo formation in Spain.

The Vicariate of the Philippines and China, 1946-1998

The provincial council met in Marcilla on 13 May 1946, and decided to transfer the seat of the provincial curia to Spain. Furthermore, the full council officially voted to create the Provincial Vicariate of the Philippines and China (Guam would be later included).²³ On 25 May 1946, the general council in Rome appointed Fray Leoncio Sierra as Vicar Provincial.²⁴

Selected significant moments of the Recollect Philippine Vicariate:

The increase of Filipino Recollect Vocations

Fr. Salvador Calsado was the first Filipino Augustinian Recollect ordained to the priesthood in the 20th century. He was ordained in 1945. Other Filipino candidates aspiring to the Recollect habit and the priesthood would soon follow him. The Colegio Apostolico de Santo

²¹ Martín LEGARRA, “Inauguración de Santo Tomás de Villanueva Institute, San Carlos, Negros Occidental, Islas Filipinas,” in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas*, 32 (1942) 14-15.

²² TELLECHEA, “Tres Novicios Filipinos,” en *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas*, 31 (1941) 185-187.

²³ After the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish domains in 1768, the colonial government entrusted Mariana Islands (which included Guam) to the Recollects. See Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica I*, 744-757. The Recollects returned to Guam on August 28, 1974. See SOBEJANO, *Los Agustinos* 103.

²⁴ Rene F. Paglinawan, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century” in *Recollectio* 21-20 (1998-1999) 118.

Tomás de Villanueva (Minor Seminary) in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental was canonically established on 10 May 1948.²⁵ This was followed by the opening of the novitiate in San Sebastian Convent on 5 July 1949.²⁶ Recollect postulants studied their philosophy at the Jesuit-owned Seminario de San José (located along the former Highway 54, now EDSA). On 5 June 1965, the Augustinian Recollect retreat house, Casiciaco, in Baguio City, was converted into a college philosophate called Seminario Mayor-Recoletos (now called Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary). The novitiate was transferred to this seminary on 6 October 1970. Then, on 25 May 1985, the OAR General Council in Rome, headed by the prior general Fr. Javier Ruiz Pascual, approved the canonical establishment of the theologate and novitiate at Mira-Nila Homes Subdivision in Quezon City.²⁷ Finally, the OAR novitiate in the Philippines has its own home at Antipolo City in Rizal province. It was canonically established on 6 November 1991 under the patronage of Saint Ezekiel Moreno.²⁸

In 1997, the so-called “pre-novitiate” program was inaugurated as the fifth year of the postulancy prior to the novitiate. At first, the candidates shared board and lodging with the novices; then, on 19 June 2007, the Bahay Lingkod-Recoletos was inaugurated for the pre-novices.²⁹

Filipinization Attempts

Early Filipinization attempts of the religious congregations were made by Filipino priests as early as in 1957. On 14 September 1957 six Filipino priests — Fr. Hilario Lim SJ; Fr. Benito Vargas OP; Fr. Salvador Calsado OAR; Fr. Antonio Garin OSA; Fr. Julio Obvial OFM; and Fr. Ambrocio Manaligod SVD — wrote a Memorial addressed to Pope Pius XII. The Memorial was a petition to the highest authority of the Church urging for greater recognition of Filipino leadership in the Philippine Church. Moreover, the Memorial expressed lament on the general shortage of Filipino religious found among the religious orders

²⁵ BPSN, Año XXXvIII, Junio (1948), Número 428, 132-133

²⁶ BPSN, Año XXXIV, Julio (1949), Número 441, 145-146

²⁷ *Acta Ordinis OAR*, Vol. XX, Iun.-Dic., Núm. 78 1985, 163.

²⁸ *Acta Ordinis OAR*, Vol. XXVI, Ian.-Dic. 1991, Núm. 85, 69.

²⁹ Document not available.

and congregations in the Philippines. This was the first voice of Filipinization of the religious orders and congregations in the Philippines. However, their voices were hushed and the movement that they initiated passed into obscurity.³⁰

In 1975, eleven Filipino Augustinian Recollects attempted to resuscitate the Filipinization issue within the vicariate.³¹ A ponencia was prepared and this was to be read before the capitulars of the 1976 Provincial Chapter of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino held in the Recollect Theologate in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain. The Filipino Recollect delegates to this chapter were three: Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, Fr. Federico de la Rosa and Fr. Cirilo Durana. Fr. Federico de la Rosa read the ponencia before the capitulars.³² The provincial bulletin of the Province of St. Nicholas published diplomatically the effects of the paper on the Filipinization in the Recollect Vicariate. In Ordinance VI, seven sub-sections were delineated by the capitulars with regard to the Filipinization in the Philippine Vicariate.³³ At this point the Filipinization was still premature in a predominantly Spanish Recollect province. Patience and humility were virtues needed for the right time to form the Philippine Recollect province.

The OAR 51st General Chapter of 1992 in Bogotá, Colombia

The possibility of the Augustinian Recollect Vicariate in the Philippines of becoming an autonomous province in the Order was slowly becoming a reality. Far from being a dream one of the section states in Enactment, no. 24:

The General Chapter views with gratitude the evolution of the Vicariate of the Philippines and China toward becoming a future province of the Order. The Chapter asks the General Council...to undertake the studies and organize the meetings necessary to make it

³⁰ Rolando V. DE LA ROSA, *The Beginnings of the Filipino Dominicans* (Manila 1996) 206-212.

³¹ These eleven Augustinian Recollects were as follows: Fray Victor L. Lluch, Fray Federico de la Rosa, Fray Emeterio Buñao, Fray Casiano Cosmilla, Fray Pedro Escanillas, Fray Delfin Castillo, Fray Walthrode Conde, Fray Cirilo Durana, Fray Regino Bangcaya, Fray Mauro Ambubuyog, Fray Rolando Pineda. Based on the 2007 Interview with Fray Delfin Castillo.

³² BPSN, 61 (1976) 114-122.

³³ BPSN, 61 (1976) 128.

possible for the General Chapter of 1998 to establish a new province, if it judges that it is opportune to do so.³⁴

The Status of the Philippine Vicariate on the Eve of Provincehood:

According to the 1 March 1998 data there were 140 Augustinian Recollect religious, of whom were 122 Filipinos (82 religious clerics; 4 non-clerical brothers; 5 deacons and 31 simple professed religious). The vicariate had a complete cycle of seminary formation. Moreover, the Recoletos Formation Center was affiliated to the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomás since 1995. There were fifteen Filipino Augustinian Recollects with licentiate degrees obtained from pontifical universities in Rome.³⁵

The vicariate had two universities: University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos (1962) and University of San José – Recoletos (founded in 1947 and elevated to university status in 1984). It had two colleges: San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Manila (1941), and San Sebastian College – Recoletos, Cavite City (1966). It had four high schools: Colegio de Santo Tomás de Villanueva, San Carlos City, Negros Occidental; UNO-R High School in Talisay, Negros Occidental; San Pedro Academy in Valencia, Negros Oriental; and San Pedro High School in Caidiocan, Valencia, Negros Oriental.³⁶

Moreover, the vicariate in the Philippines had nine parishes in 1998: five owned by the vicariate (San Sebastian Basilica in Manila; San Nicolas de Tolentino, Quezon City; Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Quezon City; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Cebu City; and Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Laray, Talisay, Cebu); three are administered “ad perpetuum” status (Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, Del Pan, Tondo; Our Lady of the Abandoned Parish, Valencia, Negros Oriental; and San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, Talisay City, Negros Occidental); and one in Baguio City, St. Vincent Parish, which was temporarily given to the administration of the vicariate in 1997 and it was turned over the Diocese of Montañosa in 2000. In the Diocese of Kaoshiung, Taiwan, the Recollect vicariate had seven parishes.³⁷

³⁴ *Acta Ordinis OAR*, Vol.27 (1992), Núm. 87, 366-367.

³⁵ PAGLINAWAN, “The Recollects in the Philippines in the 20th Century,” 125.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

The presence of the Augustinian Recollect Family was completed with the arrival of the Augustinian Recollect contemplative nuns from Spain in 1992 and the establishment of the Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternities in almost all Augustinian Recollect communities in the vicariate.³⁸ Finally, in preparation for the provincehood of the vicariate, two Vicariate Congresses were convened at Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, Baguio City. The first Vicariate Congress was on 11-15 April 1994, and the second on 7-13 April 1997.³⁹

The OAR 52nd General Chapter of 1998 in Monachil, Granada, Spain

Finally, after six years of preparation and waiting since the 1992 OAR General Chapter, the Recollect friars of the Philippine Vicariate reaped the fruit of their patience: the 52nd General Chapter elevated the Philippine Vicariate as the eighth province of the Order on 28th November 1998, Sunday, according to Acts of the Chapter, nos. 19 and 20. The new province is named after Saint Ezekiel Moreno with Fr. Victor L. Lluch appointed as its first prior provincial. The other members of the provincial council were: Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao, first councilor and vicar of the province; Fr. Joseph Philip I. Trayvilla, second councilor; Fr. Samson S. Silloriquez, third councilor; and Fr. Dionisio Q. Selma, fourth councilor. The territories belonging to the province are the ff.: the Philippines, Taiwan and Sierra Leone in West Africa.⁴⁰

Conclusion

As the French proverb says, “Gratitude is the memory of the heart.” We the Augustinian Recollect friars benefited the contributions of our forefathers and predecessors in forming the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. It is fitting to look back and give thanks to the pioneers of different periods of the history of the Order and of the province. Moreover, as we thank them let us also learn from our Recollect forebears! From their persons let us learn from their fidelity to the Augustinian Recollect charism as they translated the charism into their lives. In their dedication to the

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

³⁹ Documents of the First and Second Vicariate Congresses in *Archivo Recoleta*, Bulwagang Recoletos, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City.

⁴⁰ *Acta Ordinis OAR*, 33 (1998) 302-305.

common life, the missions and the apostolates let us learn from them on how they served faithfully the church in spite of their human limitations. Finally, let us learn from their heroic lives in correcting their mistakes and how they look for solutions to their problems in the community.

It is by remembering that we learn to give thanks. It is by remembering of our Recollect forebears and predecessors that we maintain our connection with the past and be able to understand our present situation. And with the lesson from the past we hope that we would be able to accomplish the present task that we have at hand and pass it on to those who would succeed us. Let us take the words of Pope Francis in one of his homilies:

Today we ask the Lord to give us the grace to never lose our memory, never to hide our memory – memory of a person, family memory, memory of the people; and that He gives us the grace of hope, because hope is a gift of his: to know how to hope, to look at the horizon, not to remain closed in front of a wall. Always look at the horizon and hope. And give us the grace to understand what are the lights that will accompany us on the road so as not to make mistakes, and so get to where they are waiting for us with so much love.

Today is a day of memory of the past, a day to remember those who walked before us, who also accompanied us, gave us life. Remember, remember. Memory is what makes a people strong because it feels rooted in a journey, rooted in a history, rooted in a people. Memory makes us understand that we are not alone, we are a people: a people that have history, that have passed, that have life. Memory of many who have shared a journey with us, and I am here... It is not easy to remember. We, many times, we struggle to go back with the thought of what happened in my life, in my family, in my people ... But today is a day of memory, the memory that takes us to the roots: to my roots, to roots of my people.⁴¹

The Augustinian Recollection is not a relic of the past. It is a dynamic charism coming from the Holy Spirit. This charism, tested by time, is clearly identified in our Constitutions. And Holy Mother, the Church, authenticated and approved our Constitutions, thus, we have

⁴¹ Pope Francis, “All Souls Day Homily” in Zenit (English), November 2, 2018.

prophetic contribution to give to the world that is suffering from the contagion of pride, power and possessiveness.

Moreover, as we celebrate the Twentieth Anniversary Foundation of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, let us remember that our Augustinian Recollect forebears are still accompanying us through history. Through them we are reminded of our roots. Because of them, in spite of their human limitations, we are here today reaping the fruits of their labors. Pope Francis said in his homily:

Remember, remember... It is through remembering that we are truly grateful for the things we benefit today. Finally, by remembering let us also be aware of the spiritual side of our anniversary celebration, that is, the “spirit of the dead will survive in the memory of the living” (quoted from the 1986 movie *The Mission*).



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The Underside of the History of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province During its Filipinization Phase

The gift of provincehood—that we who are gathered here today all cherish and commemorate—was not handed to the Filipino Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines and in other countries on a silver platter. The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno was the joyous end-product of various factors, a happy confluence of many events—some enlightened, well-crafted, planned, and providential, others clandestine, internecine and James-Bond-like.

The process was protracted but steady, characterized by decades-long growth, gradual development, concerted efforts, unified goals and progress that finally attained its goal—autonomy, independence and provincehood. Along the way, it was a process wracked at times with delays or retrogressions, human conflicts and clashes of nationalities. The road to the path of success was carefully paved and at last victory, i.e., provincehood, was attained. Yes, provincehood had many mothers indeed.

Like all human enterprises, the path to provincehood was an endeavor that was understandably fraught with human frailties and fraternal misunderstandings. Some called them uncharitable “backstabblings,” “betrayals” or “ungrateful” acts. But the love and affection for God and for the total welfare of His Church prevailed over human frailties in the end. The underlying affection for the Augustinian Recollect Order prevailed over all human imperfections.

The oral history and chronicles as well as the accounts of eyewitnesses and protagonists themselves constitute, undoubtedly,

a wellspring of firsthand sources for a later documented and written history. Personal interviews were conducted with protagonists and witnesses living at that time. Otherwise their unwritten, albeit rich and authentic accounts of experiences and witnessing, could have been swept off under the rug, lost to posterity forever and handed over to oblivion.

The rich but unwritten sources may either corroborate or contradict official written records, especially “sanitized” history. And since it is official, it is found in public records and documentation. That official history may unfortunately last forever, unless another “official history” by an official historian is redacted to modify it.

Preparations for formation houses

To promote local vocations, the Provincial Chapter of 1934 of Saint Nicholas Province recommended the establishment of formation houses in the Philippines, Venezuela and England. Three Filipinos [Salvador Calsado, Arturo Calsado, Honorato Laxamana] started as postulants in Intramuros in 1940 and studied philosophy in San Nicolas Convent. They started their novitiate in 1941 under Fr. Felix Martínez as novice master. Only Fr. Salvador Calsado of San Fernando, Romblon, went on to profess the vows, finish theology in UST in 1945 and, on 29 June of that year, he received his presbyteral ordination.

The formal preparations started with a plan to put up a colegio apostólico (minor seminary) to train young Filipinos for the future management of the “new” apostolate, i.e., formal schools. Vicar Provincial Fr. Leoncio Sierra in a letter dated 22 July 1947 to the Santo Tomas de Villanueva Institute Rector Fr. Gregorio Espiga. The canonical establishment of the minor seminary at San Carlos, Negros Occidental, became a reality on 8 May 1948.

The seminarians finished high school at Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos. They were then sent to San Jose Seminary in Quezon City for their philosophy. High school graduates even spent a year at CST-R before going to San Jose Seminary. Vocations to the religious brotherhood were accepted at Santo Tomas before proceeding directly to Monteagudo in Navarra, Spain for their novitiate. Such was the case of Br. Joaquin Jamelo and Br. Rolando Pineda.

In 1963, two newly ordained Filipinos were sent to Rome obtain their philosophy licentiates from the Pontifical Gregorian University in preparation for the Baguio seminary. Fr. Felipe Maraya and Fr. Benedicto Jayoma were to join the first formation team of Seminario Mayor-Recoletos, now Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary. The seminary was canonically erected on 4 June 1965. Seminarians from the Diaspora—Santo Tomas in San Carlos City, San Jose in Quezon City and even San Carlos Seminary in Cebu City—had arrived at this new “house of philosophical studies” which was built in 1953 as a vacation and retreat house.

Since time immemorial, the novitiate had always been in Manila: since the 17th century San Nicolas Convent in Intramuros, then San Sebastian Convent in Quiapo. The Marian convent of Monteagudo, Navarra, was the novitiate for Filipinos in 1956. In 1970, Baguio was the novitiate with Fr. Crisostomo Garnica as novice master and Cornelio Moral, Regino Bangcaya, Euben Clemente Capacillo, Hector Songcayauon, Doroteo Ocheda and Rene Villarosa were his first novices.

San Nicolas Convent in the Walled City had always been the theology house since the 17th century. Augustinian friars, Spanish peninsulares, insulares and creole Filipinos who joined the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines studied in the now-defunct San Nicolas Convent. Young missionaries from Spain customarily finished their last year of theological formation in Intramuros. These professed friars were later ordained in Manila, Iloilo City or Cebu City.

During the catastrophic Liberation of Manila in 1945, San Nicolas Convent was destroyed and thereafter demolished. Unheralded preparations for a theology seminary commenced in the 1960s. In 1966, a newly ordained Filipino Fr. Casiano Cosmilla was sent to the University of Santo Tomas to study Canon Law. He finished only a semester and then traveled to Palawan to work in the next 19 years as a missionary in Puerto Princesa. In the following year Fr. Emeterio Buñao likewise took up Canon Law in UST.

In 1969, Fr. Pastor Paloma took up Sacred Scriptures at the Pontificio Istituto Biblico in Rome where he obtained his licentiate. Fr. Cornelio Moral studied Moral Theology at the Alphonsianum, Lateran University, in 1975. A year after this writer took up Church History at

the Gregorian University and finished it in 1978. Fr. Rene Paglinawan finished his Church History licentiate in 1984. On 5 December 1985, Recoletos Formation Center in Mira-Nila Homes was blest by Bishop Espiga.

The Filipinization Phase (1957)

On 3 December 1957, five religious priests (Lim, Vargas, Obvial, Garin, Manaligod), and the lone Filipino Recollect Fr. Salvador Calsado, a conventual in San Sebastian Convent, wrote a memorial to Pope Pius XII on the Filipino priests' right to self-government and self-determination in the Philippine Church. Thereafter Fr. Calsado was ostracized strongly and condemned by Spanish Recollect confreres. Fr. Calsado eventually stopped meeting with the five priests. He was assigned to UNO-R in 1963 and sent back to San Sebastian College later. In the mid 1960s, he moved to the USA. He left the Order and was laicized eventually by the Holy See.

The Recollect Filipinization phase in 1975-1979

The interesting Manila events of 1975 and those of the Provincial Chapter of 1976 in Marcilla are published for posterity in the Master of Arts in Theology thesis of Fray Hector Gonzalez titled *The Filipinization of the Order of Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines*. It was presented to the Faculty of the Recoletos School of Theology in 2014. The *Quaerens. Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life* printed substantial excerpts of his masteral thesis on pages 1-76 of its April 2015 issue, volume 9, number 2.

Father Hector's thesis was based mostly upon personal interviews of living leading protagonists of those years such as Fr. Emeterio Buñao, Fr. Walthrode Conde, Fr. Regino Bangcaya who chronicled those historic years. Fr. Lauro Larlar, Fr. Pedro Escanillas, Fr. Huberto Dustan Decena and a few more pitched in more information. Official records published in the *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* and several internet sources of presidential decrees and naturalization of foreigners were thoroughly consulted and cited.

Months before the 1979 Provincial Chapter, Fr. José Antonio Calvo, then provincial councilor in Madrid, arrived in Manila to monitor Filipino activities prior to the forthcoming triennial event in Marcilla.

A rare copy of Reunión especial allegedly held at the Office of the President conference hall, San Sebastian College, which was redacted and signed by Fr. Calvo, stemmed from his pre-capitular visit.

The *Reunión especial* was deemed fabricated and spurious because friars mentioned in the minutes among those present at the special meeting, like Fr. Buñao, Fr. Huberto Dunstan Decena, Fr. Lauro Larlar and Fr. Germán Chicote, categorically denied their presence, *i.e.*, that the meeting never took place at all. Yet its contents were relevant and informative and they were put to good use in the thesis. The sentiments of both Filipino and Spanish friars at that time were faithfully reflected in that document.

Fr. Hector Gonzales' excerpted article ended with *The Road to the Establishment of the New Recollect Province (1992-1998)*, which is very relevant to our 20th anniversary celebration.

Why Saint Ezekiel Moreno as name of the new Province?

The concerted plans were undertaken by the Vicariate of the Philippines and China headed by Fr. Victor Lluch. They were aimed to intensely promote knowledge of the pastoral ministry and to disseminate devotion to the future Saint Ezekiel Moreno in the Philippines. They started long before his canonization at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in October 1992. The initial publication of the popular comics was undertaken by Fr. Lauro Larlar, chair of the Committee of Print Media and Publication.

Fr. Larlar, then President of San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Manila, urged this writer to pen the biography of Saint Ezekiel. A 24-page booklet on the Saint's biography and his triennium in Las Piñas parish was initially published and launched at Saint Rita College, Manila in October 1992. On 11 October, highly informative full-page ads came out in the major broadsheets in Metro Manila.

Vicar Provincial Fr. Lluch personally exhorted me to continue my research on Saint Ezekiel who spent his pastoral ministry in 1870-1885. Furthermore, Fr. Lluch told me of his plan to make him the patron saint of the future Philippines province. Fr. German Chicote, secretariat of pastoral ministry president and procurator provincial, funded my

research. Three thousand copies of Bishop Ezekiel Moreno, Augustinian Recollect Saint Among Filipinos were printed and the biography was launched in February 1993 at Bulwagang Recoletos in Quezon City.

Conclusion

To wind up: The prophetic words of Prior General Javier Pipaón in the First Vicarial Congress convened at Casiciaco Recoletos in April 1994, which I had the good fortune of attending, presently come to my mind.

Fr. Pipaón, who was prior provincial in 1973-1976 triennium, disclosed to all the delegates his keen observation expressed in the following manner: “I am indeed happy to observe that you Filipinos are now capable of conducting these proceedings like in a provincial chapter.”

A Brief Narrative on the Birth of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno

Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao OAR

Introduction

As introduction to this brief narrative, I opt to use the text of a homily I delivered to the chapter delegates towards the end of the 5th Provincial Chapter of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno which was held at the Talavera House of Prayer on 13-27 February 2012. This homily inspired me to elaborate a narrative that led to the birth of the Province, as described in the *Postscript* section.

Chapter homily on February 24, 2012

Brothers:

- If I were to stick to the spirit of the liturgy of the day, first Friday of Lent, I should be talking to you about fasting and mortification as a topic.
- But with your indulgence and permission, allow me to share with you some ideas, very personal on my part, but thoughts still relevant to our Provincial Chapter that is about to be concluded. I have the privilege to be a delegate of this particular Chapter.
- So to begin with, I remind myself that I have been in the Order of Augustinian Recollects for 49 years. One year more and I will be a golden boy. Out of these 49 years, I spent 35 years as a member of the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentino, and only 14 years under

the Province of St. Ezekiel. From that vantage point I had the opportunity to watch from the sideline the journey of the Vicariate of the Philippines on its way towards full maturity as the 8th Province of the Order.

- I estimated that the desire of becoming a Province started to burn in the hearts of some Recollects in early 1970s.
- As an eyewitness and protagonist of the whole saga, I remember very well that the first formal articulation of that desire to be autonomous province happened in 1976. During the 1976 Provincial Chapter held in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain a fourteen-point position paper of varied demands prepared by Filipino Recollects, were presented to the Chapter for deliberation. To mention a few: a petition to open a theology house here in Manila; That Filipinos should be prepared professionally and they be given bigger role in the governance of the Vicariate. That there should be a respect for the Filipinization laws of the Philippine educational institutions, etc. I had the “*mala suerte*” [bad luck] to be one of the three Filipino delegates to the Provincial Chapter. We were assigned to explain, to justify and to defend the different demands of our paper. It was embarrassing to say that not one of the 14-point manifesto ever reached the first base. The chapter rejected the articulation *punto por punto* [point by point] branding them as preposterous, ambitious and even bordering on the point of being *ingratos* [ingrates]. A joke [*bugal-bugal ba*]¹ had been circulated in Marcilla which said: “¡Ojo!, *que vienen los filipinos con bombas*” [Be careful! The Filipinos are coming with bombs]. Because of that embarrassing experience, I promised to myself that it would be the first and the last provincial chapter I would ever attend.
- After that event, we in the Vicariate accepted our defeat and we settled calmly and yielded to the authority to buy peace and not division.

¹ The word *bugal-bugal* means *to ridicule, to revile, to talk without respect to elders, persons or anybody*. Cf. Jes B. TIROL, *Kapulongnan binisaya-ininglis* (Tagbilaran City 2010) 84.

- Some fifteen years later, it must be in 1990 or 1991 Fr. Javier Pipaón, the same religious I met in Marcilla in 1976 at that time he was the outgoing Prior Provincial, came to Manila. As Prior General (1986-1992), he came to Manila as part of his duty to prepare for the 1992 General Chapter to be held on Colombia.
- I had the chance to talk to him and I reminded him that the aspiration to be an autonomous Province, although not articulated strongly, yet it was still burning in the hearts of some of our religious. That personal encounter with him happened in USJ-R Cebu City. It was a long discussion, so long that we forgot to take our *siesta*. I asked him that the 1992 General Chapter was the opportune time for us to be a Province.
- His answer was a disappointment yet enlightening when he told me: “*Buñao, you have to wait. It is not the time yet. You are too young to have it.*” I disagreed and I could not understand his refusal to give in. I argued telling him that houses and communities, we have them; number of religious, there were more than enough; formation houses we have them, and money? Yes, we have plenty of money to spend, to avail ourselves of. What more is needed?
- To paraphrase his explanation, he told me: “*The Vicariate in the Philippines is a treasure of the Order. Yes, you have stable communities, thriving parishes and missions, well-established educational institutions. All of these were the fruits of the hundred years of missionary efforts by thousands of Recollect missionaries many whom were Spaniards. Prudence dictates that when the time comes for a turnover, this treasure must go to capable and responsible hands to prevent the dissipation of this treasure.*”
- With emphasis, Fr. Pipaón added: “*Llevar y gobernar un Provincia no es fácil. Para eso hay que tener religiosos bien asentados.*”² [To carry and govern a Province is not easy. It is necessary to have religious well established for that.]

² The English-Spanish, Spanish-English dictionaries consulted (Cassell's, Collins, Larousse, Oxford) have such varied meanings as *stable, steady, settled down, well-balanced, deeply rooted, firmly held, established*.

- He then went on: *“Look at the profile of the Vicariate: the average age is only 38 years old, many are still in formation houses; majority of the religious have only 3 to 4 years in the ministry. You are still too young.”*
- I saw the logic of his explanation and still I pushed harder and I asked him to create the province during the 1992 Chapter and the implementation may be delayed even to 3 or 4 years later. Our discussion ended there and I got no answer in the affirmative.
- Later I learned that during the 1992 General Chapter an ordinance was passed ordering the Prior General and his Council to study the possibility of creating a new Province.
- We, who are members of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, will always remember that on 28 November 1998 during the 52nd General Chapter the Province of St. Ezekiel was born with an overwhelming support and approval from the Capitular fathers through the initiative of Fr. Pipaón and his General Council. He was then the out-going Prior General. I asked myself: *“Was it a mere coincidence or Divine Providence that I met Fr. Pipaón in the 1976 Provincial Chapter and at that time he was strongly opposed to the idea of the Philippine Province. He was the outgoing provincial. Then in the 1998 General Chapter, again I met Fr. Pipaón and he was the outgoing Fr. General and we were together in proposing the birth of the Philippine Province: Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province.”*
- This treasure of the Order is now in our hands. The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno is ours to cherish, to own and to manage in accordance with our charismatic identity. For many of us, it was a dream come true.
- Our Province has traveled long enough and it is now celebrating its 5th Provincial Chapter.
- All of us have heard at the Capitular Sala that there were certain disturbing concerns, like dark clouds hovering over us. Concerns of our being geographically isolated; communication break-down due to cultural and language barriers. Equally gloomy is a parochial mentality of some religious who could not see that the Order is

bigger than the Province. If we allow these dark clouds to fall on our Province like a storm, then we will be soaked, cold, trembling and will become ineffective. Ordinances—even if they are beautifully crafted—will not be enough to dissipate these dark clouds. In the language of Fr. General, we need to have religious *bien asentados* who would carry our Province to greater heights.

- We must understand that no amount of ordinances and regulations can make a difference unless we have mature and truly committed religious around.
- But definitely we can assure our Fr. Prior General and his Secretary, who are here present, that the way we are, and the way we will be, this Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno will grow strong and healthy because it is now peopled with *religiosos bien asentados* who are ready to embrace the difficult and painful process of restructuring leading us towards revitalized communities and ministries.
- In conclusion and above all, let us anchor our hope of success through the intercession of St. Ezekiel our Patron. Amen.

The Postscript

In November 2013, I met Fr. Javier Pipaón in Madrid, at that time he was a regular member of the community of Santa Rita Parish at Calle Gaztambide near Avenida Cea Bermúdez. With him as an ex-general and a friend, I shared pleasant moments and some observations about the progress of the Province of St. Ezekiel that was created during his term as prior general. In passing I told him about a homily that I delivered on the occasion of the 5th Provincial Chapter. I told Fr. Pipaón that in my homily I shared with the Capitular Fathers about his interest and best efforts to prepare properly the Vicariate to be a Province. He thanked me for giving him due recognition and crediting him for his role in preparing the Vicariate to become a Province.

During that short visit in Madrid and our casual conversation, I came to realize that the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno was truly close to the heart of Fr. Pipaón. He considered the Philippine mission as the treasure of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. And for that reason he used his authority as the major superior of the Province of St. Nicholas

and later as Prior General of the Order to make sure that the missionary treasure of the Augustinian Recollects stored in the country may not be dissipated.

A Short Review of History

In May 1970 Fr. Pipaón was elected Prior Provincial of St. Nicholas of Tolentino and he held that office for six consecutive years (1970 – 1976). At that time the Vicariate of the Philippines was under the jurisdiction of the Province of St. Nicholas. By virtue of our Constitutions, the communities in the Philippines were subject to the supervision of the Prior Provincial of San Nicholas. In that score Fr. Pipaón was well-acquainted with what was the value of the Vicariate, and with what was going on in the communities in the Philippines.

I remember that during the 1976 Provincial Chapter held in Marcilla, Navarra Spain some Filipino Recollects articulated before the Chapter their desire and wishes to enjoy some form of autonomy in the Vicariate in the Philippines. In that occasion Fr. Pipaón, who was the Prior Provincial, used his constitutional power to block the movement on the grounds that it was not timely and the issue of creating a new province could not be done hurriedly. Rather it must be subjected to careful and profound study. Only the General Chapter was endowed with the power to create a new Province. To some of us his firm opposition was difficult to understand and even hard to accept.

But all the same we in the Philippines settled down calmly before the authority to buy peace rather than division. However, to my mind, the position paper that was presented before the Provincial Chapter awakened the authorities of Madrid that there was an issue that needed attention. I can recall that that after Filipino position paper was discussed and settled by the Chapter, Fr. Pipaon concluded by saying: *“Nunca olvidaré estas cosas.”* [Never shall I forget these things.]

Ten years after his term as Prior Provincial of Saint Nicholas de Tolentino, Fr. Pipaón was elected Prior General at the General Chapter held in Monteagudo, Navarra in 1986. He held on to that office as Prior General for twelve consecutive years from 1986 to 1998. If I am not mistaken, he also had been a General Councilor in Rome, prior to his

election as Prior General. From that long experience of being in the position of governance of the Order, first as prior Provincial, later as Prior General, he had accumulated a deeper appreciation of the value and the role of the Philippine mission in shaping the history of the Order, which he considered as a treasure of the Order.

During the 51st General Chapter held in Colombia in 1992, an ordinance was passed ordering the Prior General and his Council to conduct a study on the possibility of creating a new province. The task of carrying out that ordinance fell on the hands of Fr. Pipaón, who was re-elected as Prior General for another six years. So Fr. Pipaón, with the support of his Council, acted on that ordinance. I calculated that between 1994 to 1997, the General Council conducted the study. Among other things, the General Council ordered the Vicar Provincial in Manila to organize the so-called Vicarial Congress. Two congresses were organized. The first one was held in Baguio City in 1994. The participants of that Congress were all Filipino Recollects except Fr. General, a Spaniard, who was personally present during the whole period of the historic Congress. For some of us, the motive for convening the Congress was not thoroughly ventilated but it appeared to me that it was a dry run of a provincial chapter. The Prior General was there to observe the capability and the maturity of Filipino Recollects on how to handle issues that a province may have to face in the future. I could not remember the date, the venue and the issues discussed during the Second Congress.

Later I was also informed that a survey conducted by the general curia showed that some 80% of the Filipino constituents favored to have a mission territory. In effect, Fr. General prepared an English-speaking mission for a Filipino Province. Sierra Leone in West Africa was identified as one of the possible missions. As part of the preparation of creating a province, the general curia advised the Provincial Council in Madrid and the Vicar Council in Manila to form a study group to discuss a fair and equitable distribution of the patrimony of the Province found within the Philippine jurisdiction. The Prior Provincial and another representative came to Manila and with the Vicar Provincial and his representative. they met with the *Procurador general* to discuss and to come up with an acceptable formula on how to handle the delicate issue of distribution of the patrimony of the Province.

In summary it can be said that Fr. Pipaón and his Council had done their homework of conducting a feasibility study leading towards the creation of a new Province of the Order as mandated in the 51st General Chapter.

History would tell us, that in 1998 during the 52nd General Chapter held on Monachil, Granada, Spain the proposal to elevate the Vicariate of the Philippines to the 8th Province of the Order was presented, accepted and unanimously approved by the members of the 52nd General Chapter. The long-awaited birth of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno became a reality on November 28, 1998. Thanks be to God.

The memorable event of the creation of the new Province would put to rest the resentments and the complaints of some constituents in the Philippine against the authorities in Madrid and Rome for their delays in addressing the lingering aspiration of the Vicariate to be an independent Province.

To My Reader

You may wonder why this testimonial was ever written. For sometime I have wanted to express my personal recognition and appreciation to Fr. Javier Pipaón's role and efforts in building up the Vicariate to a status of a Province. The opportunity came when I was locked down in the novitiate in Antipolo City during the Covid-19 pandemic. I had some extra time to take advantage of so I went over my old notes filed in my computer. Accidentally, I stumbled upon a homily I delivered to the participants of the 5th Provincial Chapter. That homily inspired me to elaborate and write down in the *Postscript* additional details about the role of Fr. Pipaón and his Council in preparing the Philippine mission to a Province.

I believe that we, the members of the Province, have a duty to be grateful to those authorities and other religious who took part in building up of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. Actually Fr. Victor Lluch, our First Prior Provincial, immediately after the official promulgation of the birth of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno, stood up and asked to be recognized. With joy and highly emotional speech he thanked the Capitular fathers for their generosity, and in particular he thanked

Fr. Pipaón and his General Council for sponsoring the creation of the Province. I love to think that he spoke with gratitude for and in behalf of all the constituents of the new Province.

But I wonder if we have kept a copy of his heartfelt thanksgiving address at the close of the General Chapter of 1998. Now if this piece of paper I have written would echo the sentiments of Fr. Victor Lluch, our First Prior Provincial, then I am glad to have done it.

The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno: A Thumbnail History

Ángel Martínez Cuesta

Translated from the Spanish and Edited by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Origin of the Province

The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno has a very long pre-history. In a certain sense it could be affirmed that it began to be formed in the 17th century with the arrival of the Augustinian Recollects in Manila in May 1606. The Philippines since then has always occupied a privileged place in the life of the Order. However, during more than three centuries its religious were all Spanish. It was only towards 1930 when the interest for native vocations surged forth. And still at that time it was but simple desire that vanished quickly when it found no favorable ground. The secularism of the Spanish Republic (1930-1936), the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and finally the Second World War (1939-1945) banished it into oblivion.

The sole tangible fruit of this first attempt was the profession of Salvador Calsado in 1943. After World War II the minor seminary of San Carlos in Negros Occidental was founded in 1948. And the following year the novitiate was reopened in Manila. Three years afterward, two young Filipinos made their profession of the vows which continued almost uninterrupted up to the present. They would constitute the sturdiest foundation of the future province. The second would be the opening of formation houses. Until 1965 when the province was provided with

a house of philosophical studies—Seminario Mayor Recoletos, now Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary—in Baguio City, the candidates used to finish their studies in the humanities and philosophy at the Jesuit-run San Jose Seminary in Quezon City where other congregations and dioceses sent their seminarians. The novices went on travelling to Spain until 1970 when a wing of the Baguio formation house was converted into the novitiate.

Houses of formation established

In 1985, the Vicariate of the Philippines completed the formation cycle with the opening of the house of theological formation at Mira-Nila in Quezon City. In 1991 it was improved with construction of a new novitiate at Antipolo City. In the previous year 1991, the Baguio seminary was made bigger and in 1996 that of San Carlos City as well. It is highly worth noting the inauguration in May 1998 of the Talavera House of Prayer which regularly served as residence and venue for provincial chapters, educational conventions, spiritual retreats for Recollect religious, diocesan priests, and university students, a pet project of USJ-R President Emeterio D. Buñao.



The Coat-of-arms of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno; the Provincial Curia edifice that houses the offices of the prior provincial, councilors, parish priests and parochial vicar of San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, at Neptune Street, Brgy. Bahay Toro, Quezon City.

At the outset of the 1990s the creation of a province in the Philippines was deemed imminent. Accordingly, the increasing number of native religious, favorable vocation prospects, abundance of ministries and even the financial resources seemed to recommend it. However, the superiors preferred not to precipitate the events and opted to go on preparing appropriately its groundwork.

Birth of the New Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno

In October 1998, the general council believed that the time for a new province had already come and it petitioned from the Vatican Congregation of Religious the faculty to proceed to its creation. On 28 November 1998, the general chapter accepted the general council's efforts and approved the Province dedicated to Saint Ezekiel Moreno which consisted of all the houses that Saint Nicholas Province had in the Philippines, on top of the Sierra Leone mission in West Africa and the ministries of Linyuan and Santimen in Taiwan. The first prior provincial was Fr. Victor Lluch, at that time vicar provincial, and four religious were assigned to his council. The general chapter further recommended the celebration of the provincial chapter "within twelve months following the creation of the Province." The new Province was established in a solemn rite that was celebrated at Mira-Nila in Quezon City on 10 February 1999. Its first provincial chapter took place in November 1999. The seat of the new Province was Neptune Street, Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City.

The Province possessed a significant numbers of members since its birth. Not in vain was the fruit of centuries of work and of preparation that was left nothing to chance. On the eve of its establishment, in March 1998 the Philippine Vicariate had 140 religious, of whom 122 were Filipinos, ten Chinese and eight Spanish. Of this number only three—two Spanish and one Chinese—opted to remain in the new Province. This piece of information explains the diminution that was noted in the first statistical date of the province compiled in May of 1999.

Personnel of the New Province

At that time of its creation in 1998, the Province had 120 religious, 118 of whom were Filipinos: eighty-five priests, four brothers and twenty-nine young professed. Thirty-nine religious administered five colleges and two universities with a total student population of about forty thousand. Eighteen managed parishes; twenty-four were assigned to the formation apostolate in four seminaries, seven worked in the missions and three in the administration of the Province. The remaining twenty-nine were young professed religious in the formation stage.

A certain boon in vocations has permitted the young Province to attend to the major burdens of the received ministries, to continue preparing personnel for teaching in civil centers of learning as well as in ecclesiastical faculties and even to extend a helping hand to other provinces of the Order, especially in Brazil and the United States of America. The student population in Recollect schools and universities in school year 1998-1999 numbered 39,393.

Towards the end of 2002, six religious were loaned to other provinces of the Order. In mid-2004, seventy-four religious finished masteral degrees, nineteen had licentiates and five doctorates. The theology house of Mira-Nila affiliated to the University of Santo Tomas of Manila in February 1995 was attended and continues to be attended by students of other religious orders and institutes of consecrated life. The professors of Recoletos Formation Center conducted classes in other theology schools.

Improvement of School Facilities and Return to Past Missions

The Province has expanded and remarkably upgraded the facilities of its universities in Bacolod City and Cebu City and those of its colleges in Cavite City and San Sebastian College Manila. On 8 June 2006, San Sebastian College inaugurated its new campus at Canlubang, Laguna, located south of Manila. In 2000-2004, the Province administered a parish in Iligan in Mindanao. There existed somewhat a hope to revive the Order's glorious tradition of evangelization in that island. However, bureaucratic difficulties interrupted that experiment.

The Order returned to Palawan, another island evangelized by the Recollects of yore. In July 2007, the Recollects took charge of the new parish in Inagawan, Puerto Princesa City. From there the religious zealously promote the devotion to Saint Ezekiel Moreno who has been very popular in that island. The Province further lent a couple of religious to manage the diocesan seminary of Kabankalan in Negros Occidental.

Augustinian Recollect Sisters and Secular Augustinian Recollects

The Province has continued its traditional collaboration with the Augustinian Recollect Sisters in the Philippines. It has reorganized and given new stimulus to the Augustinian Recollect Fraternity. In mid-2004 there were thirteen fraternity chapters with a total of 532 members

in the country. The most numerous was the Cebu City chapter with ninety-seven members. In September 2004, five novices professed in Palawan and ten candidates began their novitiate stage of formation in Brooke's Point.

Milestones Commemorated in 2004-2006

Among the events we should highlight the celebration of the Fourth Centenary of the Arrival of the Order in the Philippines. Between 2004 and 2006, the Province through the Executive Committee headed by Vicar Provincial Regino Z. Bangcaya organized a series of activities to commemorate the mega-event. The main ones were the National Conference on the Order's History and Heritage in the country in 2004, the Festival of Recollect Arts and Culture in 2005, and the Third OAR World Mission Congress on its missionary tradition in 2006. The three conferences took place at San Sebastian College in Manila. They were celebrated in the first week of December of the three consecutive years. The various lectures and chronicles of the conferences of 2004 and 2006 were published in two books. While the 2005 conference lectures saw print in some issues of the news magazine *The Recoletos Observer* during the year and thereafter. Two historical landmarks in Intramuros and Luneta were turned over on 7 December 2006 by the National Historical Institute to the Order of Augustinian Recollects, represented by Prior General Javier Guerra Ayala and Prior Provincial Lauro V. Larlar.

During its first decade, hardships were not wanting. A few weeks following the establishment of the new Province, the religious missionaries were constrained to abandon Sierra Leone on 25 December 1998 on account of the outbreak of the civil war. They did not retrace their steps until April 2004. The sustenance of *Handumanan*, an ambitious social project promoted in previous years in Bacolod City, likewise underwent some hardships.

The colleges and universities that constitute the main field of its educational apostolate experienced difficult periods. The population of 39,393 students in the 1997-1998 school year declined to 26,330 in 2002. Afterward, there was some recovery. In 2004, the student population climbed to 32,223. More conspicuous was the departure of a big number of religious. In the 2000-2004 period, seven priests, one who professed

the solemn vows and eighteen religious who professed the simple vows abandoned the Province.

The Members of the Province in 2004

The Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno had 138 religious: thirty-two dedicated in the educational apostolate in seven colleges and universities; twenty-four in the ministerial apostolate in eight parishes; twenty-three in the formation apostolate in four seminaries; seven in the missionary apostolate and five in administrative offices.

Another five confreres were on loan to other provinces of the Order. Two were administrators in the diocesan seminary of Kabankalan. Two priests took up higher ecclesiastical degrees in Rome and three religious were in the process of exclaustation. The rest of the thirty-five are in various formation stages.

II. Historical Studies, Sources and Translation

Augustinian Recollect Spirituality¹

Serafin Prado OAR

A spirituality is nothing other than a form and a style of conceiving and living the Christian mystery. Strictly speaking, this means that there is but one spirituality and to pretend to discover substantial differences among the so-called Catholic spiritualities would be to misconstrue the problem. The structures are common, the ends are the same: the glorification of God by means of the sanctification of the soul; the dogmatic presuppositions are the same: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Church; the same model of imitation: Christ, splendor and figure of the Father of His essence and His holiness; the same dynamic principles: grace, virtues, and gifts of the Holy Spirit; the same laws governing the vital rhythm conditioned by the concrete state of fallen and exalted man with the concomitant tension between sin and grace; the same three essential steps of spirit ascent, purification, illumination and union; the same means of sanctification *ex opere operato*: sacraments and sacrifice, and *ex opere operantis*: mortification, prayer, exercise of the virtues and merit.

¹ The article *Espiritualidad agustino recoleta* was written by Serafin Prado OAR, professor of Spirituality and Sacred Oratory for a long time at the theology house of Saint Nicholas Province in Marcilla, Navarre, Spain. It was published in the *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* 52 (1962) 245-272. The English translation, whose author is anonymous, saw print in two issues of the *Bulletin of the Province of Saint Augustine* in vol. 8, no. 1, January-March 1969, 21-28 and vol. 8, no. 2, April-May 1969, 50-68.

The differences, thus, cannot be sought in the constituent and functional structures of the diverse spiritualities. We could say, in scholastic terminology, that there are no specific but merely accidental differences among them. These accidental differences are due, in the first place, to the diverse nuances of the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and secondly, to the diverse characteristics of the individuals or collectivities in which these inspirations are received.

Catholic spirituality is realized and incarnated in concrete persons who are quite distinct one from the other: temperament, character, education, personal history with a present upon which a past weighs down both naturally and supernaturally; past and present which, in some way, condition the future. Grace becomes incarnate in the soul and body in order to transfigure the whole man to mold him in the image and likeness of the Creator; it can also be affirmed, however, that man molds grace to his own image and likeness since the mystery of sanctification does not consist in the elimination of human elements but in the sublimation or even divinization of these very elements.

There is no substitution of one life—the human—for another the divine—but rather a joining of the two, an inexpressible symbiosis of the natural grafted unto the supernatural. We are concerned with a natural psychology which vibrates as a harp to the delicate stroking of the Holy Trinity. In this sense, every man is a spirituality; every man is a distinct history in whom, on a reduced scale, the same divine-human tensions enter into conflict as those which propel universal history.

Nevertheless, just as in a study of differential asceticism it is possible to group individuals under the common denominators of types and saintly types, it is also possible to classify in superior unities of genus and species individuals which, in spite of their personal psychologies and non-transferable biographies, coincide in the same style of conceiving and of living the Christian life. These genera and species are called the schools of spirituality or, simply, spiritualities. Thus, each religious Order is a spirituality influenced by those peculiarities of legislation, of the intellectual, ascetic, moral, and mystical formation of its members, in such a fashion as to become a distinct style with a particular physiognomic characteristic which, within the common mark of Christian and religious life, give them a certain similarity, or, even a certain air of family.

The Historical Circumstances

The Augustinian Recollection appears as an expression of a state of collective conscience, more or less diffuse, within the Order of St. Augustine. The foundational act of the Chapter of Toledo of 1588 points to this state of conscience as the fundamental motivation of the accord through which the reformed monasteries were established:

Since there are among us, or certainly, there might be among us in the future those who by reason of a greater desire for monastic perfection desire to follow a more austere form of life...

By this was realized in fact in a situation already anticipated in the General Chapter of 1575 and recognized in the Constitutions of 1625. What was intended in Toledo was to verify this state of conscience and to open a juridical channel in which to identify and to direct it.

Such an inspiration or aspiration towards a greater perfection of monastic life reveals the mysterious and hidden action of the Holy Spirit who impels individuals and collectivities towards goals of constant improvement. The capitulars at Toledo were very aware that to resist this collective desire would be to resist the Spirit. “Ne Spiritui Santo obsistere videamur...” and the *Forma de vivir de los Frailes Agustinos Descalzos* recognizes in this mysterious and divine impulsion the generative force of the Recollect movement. “This reformation which divine piety awakens in some sending his spirit...” It was thus, a gust of the wind of Pentecost which agitated the waters.

Nonetheless, the essential primacy of the divine factor does not mean in any way that the origins and development of the newborn Order were not conditioned by the historical circumstances in which they were to be found. The Augustinian Recollection is a movement within the spiritual context of 16th century Spain and, logically, it would have had to suffer the influences of the spiritual currents prevalent in that moment in history. The desires for reform, never totally extinguished in religious orders and ever symptoms of the thrust of life and of holy disquiet, were favored, advanced and endorsed by the reforming milieu of the Spain of Isabella, Cisneros, Philip II and the Council of Trent. Powerful currents of a revitalizing spirituality flowed horizontally across the traditional spiritualities impressing upon them a more or less pronounced direction and releasing new currents in old channels. The sustaining sources of

these currents, at times subterranean, are also those living waters which nourish the deep roots of the gestating Recollection.

In the actual state of historical investigation it is not possible to enumerate all of these sources and, certainly, new ones will appear on the surface before we shall be able to take into account all of the streams which contributed to form the bulk of that impressive and copious river which constitutes the Spanish élan of the 16th century. Nevertheless, we shall attempt to list the principal sources: renovation and importance of biblical and patristic studies as well as the restoration of medieval theology; contact with the Rhineland mystics by means of Latin and Spanish translations of these writings, particularly, those of Tauler and Ruysbroeck; the mutual influence and interdependence between Christian mystical and ascetical thought and Islam arising from eight centuries of strife and coexistence; the Erasmian current of incisive criticism directed against an exteriorized, unsubstantial and unauthentic Christianity and the parallel call for an authentic and interior Christian and religious life; the Italian influence which reached the Peninsula through the works of Juan Bautista de Crema and Serafin de Fermo; the reevaluation of the Socratic Stoicism and the ethics of Seneca as a sort of propaedeutic to a Catholic asceticism; the rebirth of Christianized Platonism through the influence of the Pseudo-Dionysius and St. Augustine, a rebirth which will call the attention of spiritual writers to such lively themes as the Divine Beauty, the psychology and dimension of the soul, and particularly, to the theme of love. The above-listed was nothing more than partial and approximate explanations of a complex historical phenomenon which became that opulent and torrential Spanish spirituality bursting upon the history of the Church as a miracle of God.

And if we transfer our attention from the doctrinal currents which join to feed the stream to the personal experiences of such elevated degrees as those of Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross—experiences turned into human language in the *Exercises*, the *Spiritual Canticle* and the *Interior Castle*—we are forced to look for the final explanation of this prodigious phenomenon in some sort of renewed Pentecost.

The historical precedent with which the spirituality of the Golden Century has, perhaps, the most evident affinities and relations

and the most common roots and characteristics is the movement called *Devotio Moderna*. Some of the most fundamental characteristics of this movement can be seen as we begin to outline those of the Augustinian Recollect spirituality: Vocation to interiority; prolonged and methodical mental prayer; affective and personal devotion; sobriety and seriousness in a liturgical oration pruned of the overgrowth and additions which were overwhelming it; spiritualization and revitalization of the pious practices with the renovation of interior life and recollection; return to the most pure sources of Catholic spirituality the Gospel, the life and person of Christ. That which we rejected of the heritage of the *Devotio Moderna* was the mistrust of illuminism and mysticism; a mistrust at times justified but, when exaggerated such an attitude runs the risk of limiting the spirituality itself to one of “low flying” by cutting the best flying wings of the soul. Neither the boldest flights, nor the most elevated contemplations nor the most exquisite mystical experiences disturbed the Spanish spiritualities.

Thus, to enumerate, even if in a summary fashion, these sources of Spanish spirituality, of which the Augustinian Recollect spirituality is a tributary, is to point out the sources of this particular spirituality as well and, equally, those of the other reforms which appeared more or less contemporaneously. All of these factors and influences determine that state of collective conscience which the foundational Fifth Ordinance of the Chapter of Toledo seized upon and embodied.

Augustinianism

The Augustinian Recollection is not a new Order without either a tradition or a past nor is it a rupture with this tradition and with this past. It is a movement within the Order of St. Augustine. If, within a few years of its foundation, diverse circumstances brought about its autonomy of fact and of right and if, later, the papal brief *Religiosas Familias* recognized and sanctioned it with absolute juridical independence, this does not mean that the Recollection is a deviation from Augustinianism or a branch torn out from the nourishing trunk; it is a new shoot sprouting from the old stem, from its sap and substance, it continues in life. The Recollection did not even pretend to be a reform of the Order in the rigorous sense of this term. The founders sought to live more intensely the traditional spirit, to be more authentically Augustinian, to

journey down the historical current and to return to the purest and least contaminated sources, to realize more fully and integrally that which they believed to be the monastic ideal of the holy Founder, to be the heirs of the most crystalline tradition, the very transmitter of the spirit which had been the hard substance of the Order in past centuries.

In the prologue to our first Constitutions of 1637, this affirmation is made: “When, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Recollection of the religious family was instituted in Spain, bringing it back to the first rigor with which Our Holy Father St. Augustine founded it...”

If, thus, the Augustinian Order is a special style of living the life of perfection within the mark of the religious institutions, the Recollection is a special style of living Augustinian monasticism. On this account, its generic spirituality is fundamentally the spirituality of the mother Order. Augustinianism and Recollection, speaking in scholastic terms, will be the proximate genus and the specific difference, respectively.

Fidelity to the spiritual magisterium of St. Augustine is our sacred, intangible inheritance. One can object and, with reason, that there is no Catholic spirituality which is not Augustinian. The affirmation of Saint-Beuve is also valid at this point:

St. Augustine is an empire so vast that it could not have been transmitted in its totality to any heir. It was necessary to dismember it and divide it just as the vast empire of Alexander was divided among his generals; because the brow capable of bearing the weight of the crown which was borne by the bishop of Hippo is yet to appear.

And the assertion of Pryzwara is not an exaggeration: “Augustine is the patriarch of all the schools of spirituality of the great religious families of the West.” Nonetheless, the commentary of Father Victorino Capánaga on this statement is quite correct:

Although, St. Augustine has influenced all religious families, his magisterium has been quite naturally greater among those who wear the Augustinian habit and who call him ‘Father’ he has been the preferred master of the Augustinian ascetics.

This faithfulness has been extended in the Recollection not only to the Augustinian doctrine accepted by all but also to the interpretations of the traditionally disputed thesis of the Order. Our legislators placed in our classrooms the teaching of the representative theologians of the school. The doctrine which ought to be given to our students

we wish to be the sound and Catholic doctrine of (*Fundatissimi Doctoris*) Blessed Aegidius Romanus (Giles of Rome), at one time prior general of our Order; where, however, his writings are not found, the doctrine will be taken from Thomas Aquinas; and also from other doctors of the Order: namely, Thomas of Argentus, Gregory of Rimini, James of Viterbo, Gerard of Siena, Alphonse Vargas of Toledo, Michael of Massa, Augustine Favaroni of Rome, Augustine Triunfo of Ancona, Michael Salon, Aegidius of Portugal, and many others whose names would make a very long list. (*Const.* part IV, chap. III, no. 17)

The thesis in dogma which is characteristic of the theologians of our school and which was considered by them as the expression of the authentic thought of the father and master, had, quite naturally, a logical echo in the manner in which Catholic spirituality was conceived by giving it a particular color and character. The thesis of Aegidius Romanus that “*Quanto plus possumus tanto plus debemus dare gratiae, et quanto minum naturae, dum tamen servetur libertas arbitrii*”, already determines an initial attitude of the soul before God: an attitude of humility, radically anti-Pelagian. “*In operibus gratiae...magis agimus quam agamus.*” “*Hoc solum remedium superest, ut, Dei habentes gratiam, permittamus ut Ipse nos moveat, agat, et ducat, qui non potest male agere nec male nos ducere,*” these are formulas which accent the passivity of the soul which reduces the collaboration of the soul to a sort of mere non-resistance to divine inspirations. More than our own activity with God, we are concerned with allowing God to act on us. The interpretation of the theological axiom concerning the consequences of original sin to human nature, which “*expoliatur gratuitis et vulneratur in naturalibus et redditur inhabilis ad ipsa bona naturae*”; the radical necessity of medicinal grace for any good work whatsoever, the doctrine concerning concupiscence and, distinguishing the two levels of human nature, the metaphysical and historical, that concerning the impossibility of a state of pure nature; the concrete situation of mankind as *massa damnata*, are all theses tainted by a certain anti-humanistic pessimism over-compensated, however, by the optimism of the Redemption and the grace of Christ. This is a dogmatic Christo-centrism which determines as a logical consequence a spirituality centered on the Person of the Redeemer.

All of this traditional flow was caught up in the Augustinian Recollection and incorporated in its spirituality.

Fifty years after the Chapter of Toledo which gave birth to the reform, Father Agustín de San Ildefonso wrote his *Teología Mística* which is indisputable evidence of the Augustinian directions followed by the early Recollects in ascetical and mystical practices. The work of Father San Ildefonso, systematic, scientific and complete, is sustained by an internal framework of Augustinian ideas and these are the raw materials with which he weaves his developments and experiences. His point of departure is an essentially Augustinian anthropology: man as the “*imago Dei*” but a soiled image, botched by sin, which must be cleaned and polished in order to return it to its original brilliance. That the Trinitarian image regain its splendor, a violent and agonizing asceticism of death and resurrection is necessary. The tragedy of the fallen man is his radical impotency to break the chains of his captivity; he is crying for the intervention of healing and elevating grace. This grace must be conceived as the infusion of liberating and soul-ordering love, a love of charity which will fire him of the allure of vain loves, of the fascination *negacitatis* as a *delectatio victrix* that, respecting his freedom, would fasten him to the repose of love thus healing his radical inquietude and dispersion. The spiritual life is understood as a return to the interior, toward the center of the soul, in search of God who dwells in it and the soul is the center of God, and God the center of the soul. Christ is the sole way to turn to God, and his sacred humanity would never be an obstacle to reaching the divinity, as many writers from the Franciscan school strove to attain (or assumed). Essentially, method for prayer is colloquial and effective; meditation is not a speculative, but a loving exercise, “*cogitatio amantis*”, the lover’s love and remembrance. Loving contemplation is the end of every spiritual ascension made by means of a scale of cognitive and effective purifications arriving at attainment of sacred silence in which only the divine voice resounds. The voluntary character of asceticism and mysticism is acknowledged without disdaining the importance of knowledge conceived as divine illumination. And of these theses explicitly or implicitly furnish the scientifically systematized conception of the spiritual life of the great Recollect mystic.

And the great Augustinian affirmation could not be absent; the primacy of charity in theory and in the practice of the life of perfection.

The primacy of charity is a dogmatic thesis of evangelical, Pauline, and Johannine roots; consequently, it must be the backbone of every Catholic asceticism and mysticism. The specification, however, of any spirituality by that primacy is impossible since it is the generic element of every spirituality. Augustinian spirituality, nonetheless, claims for itself, before others, charity as a differentiating principle. We will find the solution to this apparent antinomy this simple distinction: if every spirituality is aspiration and tendency to a plenitude, of love, and in it lies its fundamental coincidence. The differences begin upon the selection of the means to achieve that plenitude. While other Orders stress the sanctifying efficacy of this or that moral virtue, of this or that exercise of the Christian life, the Augustinian (Order) gives the primacy of charity, not only on the level of the ends, but also on the level of means. Its exact formula would be: *Going to love through love*. If the Franciscans seek the plenitude by the rigorous observance of poverty, and the Dominicans by apostolate, and the Carmelites by contemplation, and the Benedictines by liturgical piety, we, the Augustinians believe that there is no better quickener of life than the exercise of the very same love and that everything else would be added to it. *Ama et fac quod vis* (Love and do what you want).

The ideal of the Augustinian community is *anima una et cor unum in Deo*; it is a gathering in Christ of brothers who precisely intend to live that brotherhood, not seeking *quae sua sunt*, but holding what is communal in preference to what is proper, and realizing in its rigorous etymological meaning, that unanimity of the early Christian communities as described in the *Acts of the Apostles*. This ideal is the core substance of the whole Rule as well as of the *Forma de vivir de los Frailes Agustinos Descalzos*, the Charter which Fray Luis de León gave us and from which the early Recollects, according to Fray Andrés de San Nicolás, learned to read. The same primacy of charity is the first affirmation of Fray Luis: “Because the end of the Christian is charity...” and “Our goal is the life of God.” And from this central principle he logically deduces the whole juridical organization of the nascent Reform.

“Charity with the neighbor is born of the love of God, and thus, peace among the religious is a true sign that the Holy Spirit dwells in

them; hence we must attend with utmost care to everything concerned with this purpose.” (Chapter II). In other words, the love of God is manifested, tested, and realized in the love of neighbor, especially that neighbor who is a brother in the same community; both loves—the divine and the fraternal—are intertwined as twin flames which influence, nourish and animate each other reciprocally.

Thus, the Augustinian is a man of community, a community which is fraternal. The Recollect intended to accentuate this character by reinforcing the communitarian and fraternal bonds. This is his fundamental care. The statement, “we order that in these monasteries the number of religious never be more than fourteen,” could be, as it has been said many times, of Teresian inspiration, but it is before and beyond anything else the expression of a wish in conformity with the whole tradition of the Order and with the spirit of the Holy Founder. The basic idea is confirmed and justified by the preceding reasoning: “Since love is better preserved and grows more equally among few, because those of similar interests naturally love each other, we order...” (chapter II).

Recollection

Within this essential fidelity to the spiritual and monastic Augustinian ideal, however, the Recollection must have brought some novelty; it must have been a style within the common style, a specific difference which determined the generic. Investigating the immediate historical sources of the Recollection, some of the characteristics are found which are common to all the contemporary reforms. Reformed or Discalced Franciscans, Carmelites, Trinitarians and Mercedarians are different expressions of the same spirit, the same historical scope, identical preoccupations, and similar aspirations brought into being by the same historical situation. Hence, the many similarities and points of congruity.

The influence of the Carmelite reform upon our reform is a fact which has been stressed and which we need neither deny nor underestimate. This influence could have been easily transmitted through Fray Luis who was so enthusiastic about the Teresian Reform. Perhaps, the affirmation made by the Venerable Ana de Jesús—according to what Father Doria tells us—“That Ana de Jesús boasts that she has taken

advantage of one Fray Luis de León, and that from his communications with her has resulted the reformation of the Augustinians,” is not bragging but historical truth. But let us not forget that the spiritual tension of the Catholic soul in that hour is a satisfactory explanation of the fact that diverse reforms were born then due to the influence of many identical impulses.

By the same token, these tensions were particularly alive in the Order of Saint Augustine in which collective discontent had already had diverse manifestations through the different attempts of reform such as the various Congregations of the Observance, notably the well-known and quite successful Congregation founded by Father Alarcón and the reform inspired in Portugal by Venerable Thomas of Jesus. Three well-marked tendencies appear in the Province of Castile during the years immediately preceding the Chapter of Toledo, 1588. (a) The view of the Conformists or mitigated Observants, who were well pleased with the rather uncertain situation of the Province; (b) The position of the reformists who were reacting against that situation, but were content with the simple restitution of the observance of the Constitutions, the pacification of spirits, and the extirpation of abuses and corruptions which had been introduced and tolerated; (c) There were those who were not satisfied with a simple renewal of the broken regular discipline, but aspired to go beyond the demands of the Constitution. These were the “*Profectionis monasticae amantiores, qui severius vitae institutum sequi cupiunt*” of which the Fifth Ordinance of the Chapter of Toledo will speak. There were those who had felt the Spirit calling them to *ultiora et perfectiora*. It was, perhaps, an attempt to emulate re-kindling spiritual life which they had noticed in other religious orders and which they wished for their own, the Order of Saint Augustine and its Province of Castile.

For this reason, to talk of *reform* is insufficient. It was not only this, and, perhaps, in no way was it intended. With the Canonical visit that the Most Reverend Father General had made to the houses of the Province, the appointments of new superiors, the elimination of abuses and the capitulary agreements, the Reform was a fact... the Fifth Ordinance is more than that, much more than that. The thesis that Father Jenaro Fernández holds in his *De Figura juridica* and in the *Bullarium* of the Order seems historical and juridically viable. The precise sense

of the capitulary ordinance that gave birth to the Recollection is a desire for greater perfection and the foundation of houses in which this desire could be cultivated.

Recollection

That word says everything. To be more withdrawn and alone in order to find God; more mental prayer to talk and listen to Him; more austerity of collective and individual life. And to obtain, with all that, a rekindling of the flame of the love of God and of neighbor. In short, a more authentic Augustinianism. Everything else barefootedness, the more or less meager habit, the more or less wide tonsure, is thoroughly accidental. These externals can be sacrificed to the essential or be accommodated to the circumstances as long as our differential characteristics remain and we continue realizing our definition: “*Perfectionis monasticae amantiores, qui severius vitae institutum sequi cupiunt.*” In other words, Augustinian Recollects or Recollects of Saint Augustine.

Eremitism

A regrettable historical error nourished and stirred polemics that seem childish today. Our Chroniclers believed that Saint Augustine’s first monastic institution was *eremitis*, i.e., they speak of hermitages of Tuscany the Saint founded before his return to Africa, and contended that the same way of life had been preserved in the first African foundations. Thus, we hear them speak of “the most ancient institute of the most religious African deserts” directly linking Augustine with the Anthonine eremitism; we hear them lyrically describing the earliest Augustinians as inhabiting “straw huts that only protected them, though very little, from the furious inclement weather,” and resolutely affirming that “our holy Religion, in its beginnings, was a eremitic way of life in which the religious lived in cells scattered in the wild.” Perhaps, they thus pretended to save the juridical and historical continuity of the Order making a connection with the supposed Augustinian hermitages of Tuscany through the Congregation of Hermits that joined the Great Union.

The logical consequence would have been to organize the Recollection eremitically. But the chronicler Father Andrés de San Nicolás is quite wary to note that the Recollection is “the union of two

lives, the coenobitic and the eremitic, from which our illustrious Religion arose in its beginnings.” And the Constitutions get rid of the problem with this historical note: “*Siquidem: occulta quondam sacra Religio nostra, in speluncis et cavernis terrae, in eremis abstrusit splendorem humilis, ut soli Deo vivere, qui post multa saecula manifestare decrevit, ut animarum saluti quoque insisteret.*” (Constitutions of 1664, page 205). The eremitism stayed then as a mere archeological remembrance, since the Constitutions, legislating for the house—designated as those of *stricter observance*—advise us that this is done as a remembrance and veneration of such a noble principle: “*Propter hoc, ergo, altissimum principium et dignissimam memoriam, opere protium judicamus et mandamus ad perpetuam recordationem et reverentiam, necnon imitationem priscorum partum...*” (Ibid.)

In fact, no matter what becomes of the chroniclers’ opinion, the Recollection was not organized, was not planned to be organized, and could not have been organized as an eremitic institution. This would have been indeed a deviation from the authentic monastic ideal of Saint Augustine, for whom the hermitic life was something prodigious, another of the many manifestations of the Church’s vitality, but, at the same time, something that was beyond his strength and even his character. “*Sed si hoc excedit nostram tolerantiam, quis non illos miretur et praedicet?*” And a true eremitism can hardly reconcile itself with a Rule so communitarian and coenobitic as the Augustinian.

Our first convents were convents not hermitages; our life and our legislation were coenobitic in spite of the Order’s seal which appears on the cover of the Constitutions with the figure of a Recollect friar kneeling before a crucifix, and in the background, against a rock, a lonely hermitage. However, there is some trace of eremitism in the *Forma de vivir* of Fray Luis de León in that: “these gardens could be extended and might have in them some huts for recollection and solitude”. There is something also in the Constitutions where it is recommended that there be in the convents a solitary place (such as hermitages) where the religious may recollect (Part III, No. 19); but all this is secondary and accidental. And the very *Desierto de la Viciosa*, so wonderfully contemplative and penitent, was not a strict hermitage since in it, the two traditional ways of living an ascetical life were combined. Besides, there were no perpetual inhabitants. It was, rather, a sort of retreat or

exercise house to which the religious who wished to renew their spirit could repair.

If something of the supposed eremitism of the Order passed to the Recollection, it was its essential characteristics, such as austerity, deep spirituality, contemplative spirit, and withdrawal from the world. The formula with which Father David Gutiérrez summarizes the historical phenomena of the Recollection seems exaggerated: “It was the manifestation of the never extinguished tendency of the Order to eremitism.” (In the article *Eremites de Saint-Augustin*, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, column 938.)

Contemplation and Apostolate

Charity has its natural expansion in deeds, especially, deeds of zeal and the apostolate. Thus, the Augustinian communities could not be closed and exclusivist. They are, on the contrary, family hearths, which serve to warm the soul and broaden sentiments, of a universal fraternity which opens its arms to all Christians and to all men. Its motto is that of Saint Augustine: “*Extende caritatem tuam per totum orbem terrarum, si vis Christum amare; quia membra Christi per orbem jacent.*” The members of Christ, or, those who may become members of Christ, are all men, everywhere. Hence, our apostolic character.

And if we wished to determine the special characteristic of the Augustinian apostolic spirit, paradoxically, we would have to answer that its characteristic is the lack of any specific character whatsoever. If the rest of the apostolic Orders prefer this or that form of apostolate the Augustinian is opened to all of them, without other criteria of preference than those of charity, efficacy, the glory of God, and the service of the Church. Missions, teaching, preaching, confessions, spiritual direction, care of souls, apostolate of pen, prayer and action; all fit him who boasts of being son of the religious of Tagaste and Bishop of Hippo. The attitude of the Augustinian is one of a permanent availability to the Church’s needs; he is the soldier ever prompt to all missions, even the more hazardous. Thus, his spirit must be wide as his heart full of broad vision without narrowness of criteria and without any excessive attachment to obsolete formulae or risky methods. He is flexible, with love’s flexibility, *omnia omnibus*.

A century after the Great Union, Blessed Jordan of Saxony described the chores of the Augustinian thus: “*Officia divina decantare, altari deservire, orare, psallere, lectioni seu studio Sacrae Scripturae insistere, docere et verbum Dei predicare, fidelium confessiones audire, animarum salutem verbo et exemplo promovere.*” This is pure Augustinianism. Hence, we do not think that the uneasiness of some Recollects is justified when they remark that our present Constitutions point to the whole immense range of the forms of apostolic action as the proper goal of the Recollection.

If we see the things superficially, it might seem that the Augustinian Reform was a reaction of the contemplative spirit against the apostolic, that is, of contemplation against action. This is, indeed, the impression that the legislation and the life of the Recollect communities during the first fifteen years of our historical existence produce in us. The Recollects appear as mere contemplatives, eager for solitude, silence and recollection in the intimate presence of God. And there is that command of Fray Luis de León: “We do not want the friars of these monasteries to go out for burials nor even to hear confessions unless to attend the sick,” would seem to affirm the position of those who think in this way. While preaching is expressly exempted from these limitations on apostolic activities, we must acknowledge that the tendency of Fray Luis’ norms is to lean towards the spiritual and contemplative life mostly, it would seem, out of fear that the apostolate might become a danger which would distort and even destroy the authentic Recollect spirit. If the Recollection had been limited to the three monasteries of greater austerity that the Chapter of Toledo had provided for in setting them to us as retreat houses within the Province of Castile, Fray Luis’ precautions would have been wholly justified. But things did not happen in that way. The initial impulse went beyond human expectations and the germinal nucleus developed such a lively activity that the Recollect houses became an autonomous Province, a Congregation, and, finally, an Order. The historical circumstances planted a problem to which the first legislators had not given a solution since they had not foreseen it, at least, with absolute clarity. These very historical circumstances brought the solution; a solution that was already traditional in the mother Order.

Our Order appears within that diffuse movement known as the Counter-Reformation, or better yet, within the movement of the only

and authentic reform, the Catholic Reform or Renewal. The desire for Christian authenticity bifurcated in two seemingly divergent directions which, well analyzed, coincide in an absolute and total convergence. One direction was eagerness for interiority, for a life within, for contact with the divine in the deepest center of the soul; this was illuminist and mystic. The other was a conquering tendency, of clash, of assault, of displayed flags and naked swords. “My will is to conquer the whole world and all the enemies.” The first is the mystic of the Interior Castle with its seven mansions; the second is the mystic of knight-errantry in the divine style: Saint Teresa and Saint Ignatius, the Discalced Carmelite Order and the Society of Jesus.

Besides, as Aranguren affirms, those two attitudes were the only possible vocations at that historical moment. And we could add: the two really possible vocations in any season for the Catholic soul, always subjected to two fundamental tensions, action and contemplation. One and the other understood in an exclusivist sense would be partial and inexact, and in the last instance, would not be Catholic. Every authentic spirituality must try to join them, conjugate them, harmonize them in the exact binomial of the integrating formula: *In contemplatione activus, in actione contemplativus*. The difference between two spiritualities could not consist in one that neglects action, and the other that neglects contemplation, relegating one or the other to a secondary level, but in the pondered fusion of the two ingredients, both essential and primary.

This problem of balance gave birth to more or less tense situations within the two institutions representative of the two tendencies, the Discalced Carmelites and the Jesuits. “The Society of Jesus,” Father Hernández says, “had to fight against the current that dragged some to the contemplative life, to the detriment of the active life, the principal end of the Institute.” The episodes of Father Cordeses and Father Baltasar Álvarez with the interventions of the father visitor and of the father generals Mercuriano and Acquaviva are well-known. The lively and passionate polemics between those who thought the missions were in radical opposition to the contemplative spirit of the Order and those who thought they were a demand from the missionary spirit of Saint Teresa that created even more tense situations in the bosom of the Discalced Carmel. Great theologians, like Robert Bellarmine, held that missions could not be reconciled with the Discalced Carmelite spirit,

resolutely inclined their authority in favor of the contemplatives; and only repeated interventions of the Holy See in favor of the contrary tendency succeeded in calming the troubled waters.

The matter was not even raised in our Order. The Constitutions explicitly stated that one of the ends of the Recollection was “*ut animarum saluti quoque insisteret*,” and the Chapter of Valladolid in its Fourteenth Ordinance had proclaimed that the care for the souls of the faithful was essential to the Reform: “Charity towards the faithful is necessary for the preservation of the Reform.” The apostolic and missionary vocation of our Institute was accepted by all as something evident and without possible discussion. When, in the Chapter of 1605, the chapter fathers were notified that the monarch had given permission to Father Juan de San Jerónimo to take twelve religious to the Philippine Islands to preach the Holy Gospel and found monasteries of our Congregation, “it seemed to us that the journey would be of great service to God, and everyone in the provincial council determined to act accordingly,” The general historian refers to the transcendental accord with these laconic, but well-expressed words: “The mission to the Philippines was first proposed and then was accepted with the universal applause of the Province,” that is, of the entire Recollection, which, then, only had the juridical category of a Province. So, then, if we accept as reasonable the classification of the religious orders as either lyrical and epic, as was proposed by Américo Castro, our Order cannot be classified in either member of the division, since from its beginnings it intended and achieved—and in what degree!—to be lyrical and epic at the same time.

Our spirituality is, then contemplative and apostolic. This we know from our legislation, and thus this proclaims our history.

Liturgical Piety

The life of piety was wholly centered in the liturgy: “Even as our goal is to love God, so our care must be special in everything that encourages us to do and accomplish this end, such as His cult and praises and the use of the Sacraments and the exercise of meditation and prayer; consequently we order and command this, in these monasteries of the Reformation, the whole Divine Office, daytime and nocturnal as well, be said in choir; everybody must attend it, continually, even if they are officials of the monastery, save when necessity excuses. And

we want that part of the Office which is sung, to be sung without point in a low pitch with moderate pauses. In days of obligation, all must be sung, as well as on feasts of the 2nd class, on other days, Matins, the conventual Mass and Vespers will be sung.” (*Forma de Vivir*, chapter I) The *Constitutions* and the *Ceremonial* of the Order have repeated in equivalent terms this primacy of liturgy in the Recollect life of piety. “*Cum divinus cultus et ea quae ad Dei venerationem spectant, in primis et ante omnia, prae oculis nobis perpetuo habenda sint, quoniam hinc actiones omnes et reliquae vitae nostra rationes sunt dirigendae...*” (Const. 1664, Pars I, Cap. I). “Our principal institution is to dwell in the divine praises. . .” (*Ceremonial*, intro. to chap. I)

The celebration of the Holy Mass and the collective attendance at the conventual Mass always were legal prescriptions which centered the whole life of the Recollect monasteries on the Holy Sacrifice: “The priests will ordinarily say Mass” said *Forma de vivir* (Chap. I). And the reason for the imposition of the rigorous silence, was “because the whole morning ought to be employed as a preparation to celebrate and as recollection after having celebrated it” (*Ibid.*) “*Sacerdos quotidie Missam celebrare debent,*” added the *Constitutions* (Pars I, Capt. IX, Num. 5), in explanation of the “ordinary” of the *Forma de vivir*.

The twenty-one days, determined in the *Constitutions* of the Order of Saint Augustine of 1625, (Pars I, Capt. IV, p. 16) as days of obligatory communion, were extended in Fray Luis de León’s *Forma de vivir* which stipulated that “those who are not priests would communicate every Sunday, besides the other days ordered by the *Constitutions*.” (*ibid.*) Our *Constitutions* added obligatory communion every Thursday of the year and completed the former list with the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception, Circumcision of Our Lord, Saint William, Saint Monica, Saint John of Sahagún, Blessed James of Viterbo, Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, Saint Thomas of Villanova and the four anniversaries for the departed. There were some hundred and forty days a year. In so doing, the Order resolutely stood beside the earliest defenders of frequent Communion, among whom is our Father Agustín de San Ildefonso.

If, to this, we add the obligatory practice of weekly confession, twice a week for the sick, we can see something of the intense sacramental and liturgical piety that imbued the life of the first Recollects, a way of

life that was preserved and even strengthened in the centuries which followed.

Mental Prayer

“An hour before prime, let the signal for prayer be rung; once the signal is heard, everyone must rise and concentrate in prayer until the bell for prime; prayer may be done in each one’s cell or where there is greater devotion... Likewise, from five to six in the afternoon there should be mental prayer; for this purpose a bell must be rung; prayer may be held, as in the morning, either in one’s cell or where it more pleases.” (*Forma de vivir*, chap. I) The Chapter of Valladolid (1602) of the Recollect Province, already established that “such prayer be held in common, not letting the place to be arbitrary, as was the established law before.” This was an important advance in relation to the old Constitutions of the Order, whose demands in this matter, very limited and imprecise, were expressed in these colorless words: “*Decernimus quoque ut quotidie Fratres, antequam ad quiescendum post coenam vel collationem vadant . . . in Choro, seu Capitulo cum silentio convenient, ibique genuflexi devote in spiritu aliquandiu orent*” (Pars VII, Chapt. 1).

The overseas provinces, in emulation of the Spanish province, rigorously urged this obligation of daily mental prayer of two hours. The *Normas de Vivir de la Recolectión del Nuevo Reino de Granada*, under no. 3, ordained:

Likewise, we order that besides the ordinary contemplation ordered by our Constitutions, there should be two extra hours of mental prayer in our convents: one early in the evening and another in the morning. The evening hour must be held after saying the Antiphon. The morning prayer must be from five to six, before beginning the hours.

Besides, “on Communion days, after Mass, bell will be immediately rung for contemplation, and everyone should have an hour of mental prayer.” It is gratifying to study the efforts of the Philippine Province to reconcile the overwhelming apostolic activity which characterized the Province with the life of recollection and prayer required by the character of the Recollection:

Firstly, it was ordered that every law and statute of our Congregation be kept, not missing a jot of the Rules and Constitutions

practiced in Spain, particularly the two hours of mental prayer and midnight matins, even if there is but one religious alone; he could say this with the Indians who always live or dwell within the fence or wall of the Convent.

Neither our Laws nor our Ceremonial determine anything on the method of praying of our religious. The themes for meditation or contemplation, in the morning prayer would be “about the life, Passion and Death of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and in the evening about the miseries and end of man” (*Ceremonial*, II part, chapter XXV), and as for the reading of the points the books of Fray Luis de Granada, Molina, and Father Agustín de San Ildefonso (*ibid.*) were recommended. Father San Ildefonso’s *Teología Mística* was the theoretical and practical manual of the spirituality of our religious, therefore we can deduce what the methods of discursive prayer and Recollect contemplation were. It was meditation of loving colloquy after the model of the Augustinian meditations and the *Solilloquy* and a preponderance of the affective over the intellectual, since speculation is neither prayer nor meditation, but a simple preamble to them. A meditation that, more than reasoning and analysis, is a return in depth consideration and assimilation of the meditated theme, followed by admiration, joy, sorrow and love. Such a meditation naturally tends to contemplation which is the end of all good actions and the normal completion of the discursive prayer. Natural contemplation is within the reach of all souls with life of prayer and it is the best disposition for the ascent to mystical prayers and infused contemplation. These central ideas of the author of *Teología Mística* undoubtedly were the ones that imparted a definite coloration to the mental prayer of our ancestors. It was the *cogitatio amantis* of Saint Augustine, which Father San Ildefonso prefers to any other definition of meditation.

Taking into consideration such prolonged exercises of prayer and meditation which leave the soul radically open to the most extreme demands of grace, the appearance of spiritual and contemplative men, which is manifest in our early history, is not a matter of astonishment. Nor were our religious in danger of becoming exaggerated *Illuminati*, as were so many of that epoch. They stood on firm ground protected by moderate realism and a prudent diffidence against possible pseudo-mystic deviations. Let us read the discreet advice of our *Ceremonial* concerning spiritual conferences (part VI, chapter III):

The so-called passive states resulting from prayer should not be discussed since these things God will teach the soul as well as the soul should react to them. He is the author of them and gives them whenever, however and to whomever He wishes. Therefore, points about ecstasy, raptures and spiritual weddings will not be treated, nor passive contemplation, but rather points about meditation and its phases, active contemplation and ejaculatory prayer; these are things that though impossible to perform without the special grace of God, do not surpass the forces of nature in performing of them and the soul could pray whenever it wants, with the grace of God — and this never fails.

Examination of Conscience

The examination of conscience, not as a more or less essential part of meditation, but as a distinct and peculiar exercise of piety, already appears in *Forma de vivir de los Frailes Agustinos Descalzos* (Chapter I): “Compline will be said as soon as it rings for silence, ordinarily at seven thirty or eight in the evening: it will always be recited; the community will stay in choir for the time the superior deems necessary in order to make an examination of conscience.” The Chapter of Valladolid (1602) in the Third Ordinance completed the practice of this exercise and added the examination of conscience before dinner: “That there be continuous prayer the whole day in the house of novitiate and that, in it and in other houses, once the Conventual Mass is finished, all religious should stay in choir making an examination of conscience for the time that the Superior would deem sufficient.” It was another legacy inherited from the *Devotio Moderna* which was entering Spanish Spirituality and which was accepted by the religious institutions born or reformed during the 16th century. It would not be excessive to suppose that the method of such examination of conscience in the Recollect convents would be that which had become popular and which the *Rosetum* of Mombaer summarized in these non-technical verses:

*Glorificans, placat, purgans, humilis, sciens, ardens,
conservans, pungit, renovans, ditat, beat, aufer.*

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual directors of the Recollect communities were the local superiors, whose obligations, among others, included that “once a month they speak to and visit each one of their subjects, separately, thus obtaining information of their spirit and progress, of their afflictions and interior fights and the other necessities, in order to console, heal and

encourage them as a father.” (Chapter of 1602, Ordinance 13). The Fifth Ordinance of the Chapter of 1605 reminds them of that obligation with these words:

That every fifteen days the superiors have a chat with the religious, and that each month they speak to each one in particular, thus obtaining information about their spiritual and physical necessities, since they do not have another father to whom to go in their afflictions or consolations; and the superior who does not do this, incurs automatically a month of suspension.

Although the necessary evolution of things and the convenient distinction between matters of statues and of conscience naturally brought about greater precisions and distinctions between jurisdictional power and spiritual direction, the figure of the local superior, as it is delineated in the capitular acts and in the early Constitutions, is undoubtedly revealed as being that of a true director of consciences.

Spiritual Exercises

The practice of making Spiritual Exercises was widely extended at the birth of our Recollection, not only in the sense of a program or ordered and constant spiritual practices — the *Devotio Moderna* understood it and as it was interpreted by García Jiménez de Cisneros, a monk of Montserrat—but in the strict sense and according to the definite system of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The latter is as a retreat for a determined period of time during which the soul, within a plan of specific practices, remains alone with God in order to reform its life and to elect or to correct a state of life. The *Spiritual Exercises* thus understood soon enter into our legislation and life. In the words of Chapter IV of *Forma de vivir*, we can already trace its existence, without forcing the meaning and without violating the text. “And these gardens can be extended and have in them hermitages for their recollection and solitude”; undoubtedly, this salutary practice is prescribed in the Second Ordinance of the already quoted Chapter of Valladolid of 1602: “Let a cell be provided with an oratory in each house. Yearly, each one of the religious, without exception, must retreat for eight days; he should then care only for the good of his soul, preparing himself to care more devoutly for the things of the service of God.” This chapter determination passed into the *Constitutions* of 1664 (part III, chapter XI, no. 19):

Ut autem ardor spiritus et fervor devotionis in dies apud nos, ut oportet, augeantur, hortamur fratres omnes aliorum. Conventuum habitatores, tam Praelatos quam subditos, ut singulis annis intensius spiritualibus exercitiis per haebdomadam unam vacanti et qui hujus modi occupati fuerint, ab omni cura et officio liberos esse volumus, ut die nocteque in cella, sive solitario loco (qui vulgo dicitur Ermita) orationi mentali prolixius insistant. Hae autem solitariae Habitationes in quolibet monasterio ubi commode fieri possit extruantur, et nulli particulari usui applicentur . . . Frater . . . toto illo tempore quo in tali solitudine permanserit, alteri non alloquatur neque illine aliqua causa aggrediatur.

There is a detailed description of a plan of spiritual exercises for our religious in the old *Ceremonial*, regrettably, we will quote it in order not to excessively lengthen this article. It has, however, been almost integrally transcribed in the famous *Enchiridion Exercitiorum* (page 648).

The fitting occasions to have these Exercises are before a novice's profession, before a newly ordained priest's first mass, before beginning preaching; especially those who preach continually during Lent, and the Superior beginning his term of office in order to ask guidance from God. Generally, every religious must recollect himself once a year in order to renew his vows, to prepare for death, to confess for that year, to follow his brethren in everything if he is busy in other affairs and cannot do it, to seek God, and to train himself in meditation on the last days of man and the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Marian Devotion

No religious family does not somehow strive hard that it is the Virgin Mary's own elected congregation. Because the maternal love of Our Lady is so fine and generous towards everyone, everyone feels he has the right to believe her love for him as one of preference. The Augustinian Recollection has always conceived this love as preferential love. It is not necessarily because the particular religious has felt such filial piety in an intense manner although it would be easy to furnish a list of Recollects deeply enamored of the Mother of Gracious Love, thus extending indefinitely the list gathered by Father Corm, but rather, it would be because the Order, collectively, has felt this love in such a way that — as one of ours says — the Recollection has acknowledged

that its virtue, its honor and its glory come from Mary: *Quin omnis virtus et decor et gloria ex te esplendet, oh Maria*. It is explicit in our legislation. The Constitutions say that the Virgin is *cujus protectione nostra Congregatio nititur* (Const. part I, chap. III): She is the foundress of the Convent of El Desierto in Colombia, vital cell of the Province of Candelaria. The Little Office daily and the first nocturne of the Virgin (*Benedicta*) on Friday were recited in the choir in her honor; the *Ave Regina Coelorum*, *Mater Regis Angelorum* were intoned after the conventual Mass; every day, the evening prayer (*Serotina*) started with the singing of the Antiphon *Nativitas tua* in commemoration of the Birth of our Lady. After discipline the community, saying the *Litany of Loretto*, greeted the Virgin, and although their attendance to the act was not obligatory, “very little must be the devotion of the religious which would excuse himself from imploring the aid of our Queen Lady and the Mother of Him who will judge us; so much is the protection and favor we need from her” (*Ceremonial*, part II, chap. XXIV). The resolutions and purposes of the oration were placed under that protection and that favor, adding at the end of that Antiphon *Sub tuum praesidium* with the corresponding oration. The non-clerical religious received communion on all her feast days; the *Salve Regina* was solemnly sung in community on those days as well as on every Saturday of the year. On those Saturdays, the votive Mass of the Virgin had to be sung; in order to add more honor, it has to be officiated by Father Prior, *vel ab alio religioso ex gravioribus*. (Constitutions. part I, chap. III).

We must count our Order among those which energetically defended and celebrated the mystery of the Immaculate Conception. The feast was celebrated “*Con solennità, sermone e musica per la loro gran devozione e affetto particolare della detta Congregazione ha intorno alla Vergine Santissima, e massime, a questa festa,*” as our general procurator says in the *preces* with which in 1663 he asked that the Recollects might celebrate the feast with an octave, as the Franciscans and other orders in Spain were already doing. The privilege was granted on March 17 of the above-mentioned year.

The same *Constitutions* and *Ceremonial* recommend or prescribe other devotions such as the *Hail Mary* or *Angelus*, the so-called *Sentence* with the “Blessed be Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, Our Lady, conceived without sin. ..”

and the Antiphon *Sancta Maria*: as though the dead would imagine that all day and night hours would become perfumed by the *cinnamomum et balsamum aromatizans* of this fragrant remembrance of the Lady.

The recitation of the Rosary in community is prescribed nowhere until the Constitutions after the Code of Canon Law. The old Ceremonial simply said: "If some religious, moved by the devotion of the Holy Rosary of the Most Blessed Virgin which is exemplarily sung in the streets even by princes of higher rank, wish, on some of the Virgin's feast days or any to say the Rosary in choir, in the church, cloister or atrium in order to raise the fervor of the people, the Superiors, after mature reflection, may give them leave to do so. It will indeed be pleasing to Our Lord Jesus Christ and to His Blessed Mother, and a cause of great joy to the courtiers of heaven, who will see how the praises they continually give God for having granted so many favors and gifts to His Holy Mother are repeated on earth." (part II, chap. XXI). Number 10 of Chapter VII of the First Part explains how to recite it "If, due to particular devotion or some necessity, they wish to gather to recite the Rosary or Crown of the Virgin in community." Likewise, it recommends (part V, chap. XIII) that religious participate in processions "with great silence and mortification, secretly saying either the Rosary of the Virgin or other vocal or mental prayers." At any rate, the practice of reciting the Rosary privately among our religious must have been common, as the recommendation of the *Ceremonial* indicates (part VI, chap. XXVII), when, after forbidding to carry the keys hanging from the cincture, it continues with these words: "Only a Rosary will be carried, because in doing so indulgences are obtained; not carrying it is sign of too much a lack of devotion."

In the Philippines, as everywhere, devotion to Mary was one of the first means of pastoral and apostolic action since the Rosary is one of the pious practices that more easily fit into the psychology of the masses. From the beginning, our missionaries had a sort of *Pastoral Manual* called *Modo de Administrar*, which was approved in several Chapters of the Province. The confidence our religious had in the apostolic efficacy of the devotion to the Queen of the Apostles, particularly for the propagation of the Rosary, is evidence in the manual. It orders the establishment of confraternities of the Rosary together with the confraternities of the Consolation in all our ministries, encouragement

of the family recitation of the Rosary, and requests that the faithful to be counseled to wear it around their necks. The Manual ends with these magnificent words: “This is not difficult if the minister is devoted to the Virgin; the zeal of the minister is known in his care for this devotion.”

Such is our Marian piety which “*utinam et nunc et semper et augeat et floreat.*”

Other Devotions

There is no need to enumerate the many pious practices which have appeared in the history of the Order; various practices have had a more or less lasting or ephemeral existence. It is sufficient to mention those of Our Queen and Lady, the Virgin of Consolation, of Our Father and Founder, and those of the Saints of the Order. But failing to dedicate some words to the devotion of the Recollects toward the Husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus would indeed be unforgivable. Let us recall the words of the chronicler Father Pedro de San Francisco de Asís when he refers to the official proclamation of St. Joseph as special Protector of the Order on 8 June 1669.

In this Chapter, they elected and proclaimed the most glorious Patriarch, Saint Joseph, as protector of our Recollect Congregation. From the very beginning, our Reform was under the shelter of his powerful patronage. Through him, the Recollection achieved much, expanded itself to Asia and America where it proclaimed and extended the Catholic Religion at the price of martyrdom. Likewise in Europe, where, through its rigid observance, good example and edification, the Recollection overcame very strong oppositions and established itself in several countries. It may be proved that our family owed all this to the foster father of Christ because it placed itself in several ways under his care. Father Gregorio de Alarcón de Santa Catalina who secretly was completely in favor of the Discalced community. Father Juan de San Jerónimo, founder of the Province of the Philippines from whence all the spiritual advances in Asia proceeds, and Father Francisco de la Resurrección to whom we owe our expansion in America, have all testified that they overcame many difficulties and surmounted the most formidable contradictions through the patronage of St. Joseph.

In order to honor such a magnificent benefactor and in order that our Reform might show due gratitude, several General Chapters

ordered that every Saturday, in the votive Masses of our Lady, the Commemoration of this Most Blessed Patriarch be added: that his antiphon and prayer be sung together with the Solemn Salve; that his feast be celebrated in all provinces and convents with the due solemnity, and that care be taken to instill in the novices a filial, devotion to this benevolent Saint to whom our Recollect institute was indebted. But it was left to the Chapter we are speaking of (8 June 1669) to acclaim him as protector with all the solemnities which the honor supposes. To conclude, the trend expressed above was officially sealed in our Convent in Madrid when a request was submitted to His Holiness asking that the Apostolic See confirm this designation of St. Joseph as protector. We wished the joy of having the same certainty in the militant Church that the Blessed Patriarch had accepted in heaven the task of caring for us as he had always indebted in his deeds. While Father Simón de San Agustín was vicar general, and Father Diego of San Buenaventura, the general procurator before the Roman Curia, an application was made to the Congregation of Rites. On 23 January 1700, it granted our privilege of celebrating the Office of Patronage of Saint Joseph with second class solemnity on the third Sunday after Easter. This gave the greatest joy to the Augustinian Reform which has always sought to attain the summit of happiness for all its members, under his powerful protection.

On 11 July 1722, while Father Bartolomé de San José was vicar general and Father Blas de la Inmaculada Concepción, procurator in Rome, we obtained a new decree declaring that since St. Joseph was the principal protector of the Discalced Reform, we ought to honor the saint on his proper day with the first-class rite. Finally, on 6 February 1726, at the request of the procurator general Father Tomás of San Agustín while Father Juan de Santa Teresa was vicar general, for the same reason, a privilege granted to make commemoration in lauds and vespers on those days on which there were common suffrages and commemorations. “May our Congregation grow to the greatest fulfillment under so excellent a patronage! That this may be attained, let us not underestimate it, but strive to be perfect religious, at least to honor Christ’s foster father.”

Recollect Augustinian Spirituality

The preceding work, necessarily limited and superficial, raised the definite question: Can we speak about a Recollect Augustinian spirituality?

The question is ambiguous: it is necessary to divide it to achieve greater precision, (a) Has the Augustinian Recollection been a special style of Christian life? Is it now? (a) Has the Order had, and does the Order have a peculiar way of conceiving the spiritual life, a theoretico-practical system to direct souls to perfection?

The first question: already, a priori demands a peremptorily affirmative answer. It could not be otherwise. A religious order which is not a special style of living the Christian life of perfection would not have sufficient reason for existence. It would be an entity without any specific weight in the Church. The juridical personality that diverse papal interventions attributed to us, crowned with *Religiosas Familias* and the approval of our Constitutions, already presupposes the spiritual personality which the positive law has acknowledged and ratified.

It is clear that special style of life does not comprise essential differences from other styles of life; the diversity consists, rather, in graduations, in stress, and in the particular mixture of common basis elements. These graduations of stress and combination are accurately determined by the organization, the legislation, the life transmitted by tradition and the influences received at the hour of its birth and throughout its historical development. The result of all those factors is—as it is already stated above—, a well-delineated physiognomy, a certain collective likeness, a certain family atmosphere, not noticed, perhaps, by those who live it, but which does not go unnoticed to strangers. The Recollection was born within the Augustinian Order with well-differentiated characteristics. Four centuries of autonomous historical existence proclaim that the original impulse was well justified.

The fundamental coincidences with other styles—the same final or immediate ends, the same common means of sanctification—do not suffice to obscure, much less erase, the distinctive physiognomic features: as the radical anatomic and physiologic identity of the living beings is not an obstacle to the specific or individual differentiation. Each religious order is a spiritual organism, a living entity, whose vital

processes are presided and regulated by the two biological principles of assimilation and elimination. The nutritious elements will be taken from the common environment, but before being definitely incorporated, they will suffer a previous selective elaboration under the influence of the individual a priori. If the Recollection incorporates within its vital activity all the traditions of the Mother Order, if it takes from the spiritual atmosphere in which the personalities of late 16th century Spain moved, if it accepts some new practices of piety from older orders or from contemporary reformations, if the necessary adaptation to the times and circumstances obliges it to unforeseen concessions or modifications, it cannot be said that its history is a series of processes of disassociation from or discomposure of its authentic personality. If, for example, it admitted since its beginnings in its legislation and in its life the practice of the Spiritual Exercises, the Recollection would not perform them by simply taking the Ignatian method of retreats, but by creating a special style which, while accepting what is universally valid, would reject the schematic and methodic rigidity of the model, adapting it to the concrete way of life of the Recollect communities. We could be convinced of this if we read without prejudices the legislation of the old *Constitutions* and *Ceremonial* of the Order. Recently, the magazine *Revista de Espiritualidad* (year XV, page 424) printed an article entitled *Retiro espiritual para las almas religiosas que aspiran a la perfección* by Father Víctor Ruiz de San José who states:

This method takes much from the Ignatian plan and method and is frequently inspired in Saint Augustine. A meditation, not on the Two Flags, but on the Flag of Christ appears on the agenda; there is no meditation proper for the second or fourth week. It contains deep thoughts and is written with fervor; the examens, with profitable thoroughness.

If our Order took its appreciation for mental prayer from the historical environment, thus coinciding with other contemporary reforms, especially with the Carmelite, it was not such a thorough coincidence that we would not have a peculiar method of systematic prayer, with a more intuitive and affective meditation, rather than discursive, with the loving contemplation as an end.

And, as we have done in the cited examples, we could trace differentiating hues in all our forms of living the spiritual life. It is, precisely, that capacity of reaction and assimilation which belies

the existence of a totally different vitality, of a wholly differentiated organism, or of an acquired personality. To withstand the influences of the collective currents without radical deformations of the authentic vital nucleus, without deviations and breaks in existential continuity is a positive sign of the characteristic spontaneity and immanence of the living beings.

The Augustinian Recollection has been this: a well-characterized, partial manifestation of the unique yet multiform life of the Church.

But, if the Augustinian Recollection is a practical spirituality without sharp contrast, would it also have the right to be considered as a school of spirituality, in the strict sense of the word? Would it have a proper theory and technique for the soul's journey toward God? If we were to say that every practice presupposes a theory and every life, a system, a group of principles and conclusions, an affirmative answer to the question would be obvious, and it would even be a necessary consequence from the preceding considerations. But, as we speak of spirituality in its rigorous sense, we cannot confine ourselves to merely pointing to the existence of a vital spontaneity; it is necessary to discover a reflected theological elaboration, a system of principles and conclusions that would, perhaps, be implicit in actual life, but explicit and organized in a coherent and harmonious theory. Saints and mystics live a practical spirituality; theologians and historians discover and systematize the theory.

Does the Augustinian Recollection have a scientifically elaborated spirituality? If, with this question, we are asked to present a complete and original system of spiritual life, even with the relative originality of all the other systems, we will forcibly confess that we do not have it and have never pretended to have it. There is more, such precision would have been the denial of our very essence. It has already been said that the Recollection was not break a with the past, it intended to be a revitalization of that past. And that past already included a theoretical-practical system of spiritual life, a heritage and a doctrinal patrimony which we did not want to toss aside. We already had a teacher, he was our greatest glory, faithfulness to his teaching is a sacred, almost categorical imperative for us.

Hence, the Recollection did not raise a *cathedra* among doctors: it sat down, and it humbly remains sitting at the foot of the chair of the

teacher—and what a teacher—it lived and it wants to continue living with all ears to his words.

School of Spirituality-The Augustinian Doctrinal System-That of St. Augustine.

This doctrinal filiation suffices to establish the specific difference between the Recollection and the other non-Augustinian religious institutes; but it is not sufficient to bring out the specific differences within the group of Augustinian spiritualities. It is the same problem in the differentiation of the Catholic spiritualities. No one spirituality stands ahead of the others by the appropriation of new elements or by the omission of some of the essentials, since all of them must be in every one of them as is demanded for their radical identity. But each one of them bears a difference which consists in giving stress to some one or more of the common elements to which it confers a major role which this element does not have in the other spiritualities. To define the Augustinian Recollection would simply be to point out the Augustinian element or elements it has stressed. The very name—Recollection—gives us a key to the correct solution. Augustinianism would ever be a movement toward interiority; a Recollect Augustinian would be the stress of this tendency. To achieve this he becomes recollect that is, as sort of “turning inward”, a constant turning toward the center of the soul in whose transparency, the light of God which illuminates it, reverberates.

Augustinianism is a catharsis, a purification, demanded by the prior necessity of cleaning the mirror in order that the uncreated brightness of the face of the triune God may shine on it. The Recollect Augustinianism would stress austerity of life, external and internal mortification in order to make out of the soul an immaculate linen similar to that of Veronica in which all the features of the Holy Face would remain impressed. Augustinianism is prayer, passionate colloquy of son and of the beloved, an urgent entreaty of a beggar conscious of his radical wretchedness. Recollect Augustinianism stresses the spirit of prayer orientated from the beginning towards the loving intuition of contemplation. Augustinianism demands a restless and insatiable apostolate, urged on by love for the souls and for the Church of Christ. Recollect Augustinianism has known the heroic and generous

apostolate of hazardous missions and of difficult beginnings such as our history proclaims. Interiority, austerity, prayer and heroic apostolate are our ultimate differentiating characteristics. They were present in our convents in Spain, the Philippines and America; they were in our most isolated missions.

If the historical circumstances and the necessities of the Holy Church have determined that the restored Provinces—offspring of Saint Nicholas Province which has had predominantly apostolic character—were born under the sign of active and militant apostolate, and that the other essential character of the Order—the contemplative—would have passed, somehow, to a second stage, the tendency nowadays stressed, of restoring the conventual life of retirement and prayer, would be within the most pure traditions of the spirit of the Order. Forgive my audacity of affirming that, while that restoration is not a fact, the rebirth of our spirituality and its historical continuity would not be altogether achieved without it. It is not that the arch is in ruins, but it would perhaps be convenient to reinforce some of its pillars.

It is not a matter of renouncing the apostolate, which is also within the traditional Recollect spirit, but to revive the houses of retreat, of silence, of austerity and of prayer in both a traditional and modern sense. The apostolic activity would lose nothing; moreover, it would be reinforced and activated, since *the soul of all apostolate would always be the interior life*.

Summarizing: the exact definition of the Recollection as distinct from other Augustinian spiritualities, is that which was given in the foundational act of our birth in the Chapter of Toledo. Those are Recollects who *perfectionis monasticae amantiores, severius vitae institutum sequi cupiunt*.



Talavera de la Reina Convent: Cradle of the Augustinian Recollection

Angel Martínez Cuesta OAR

Translated from the Spanish and Edited by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Introduction¹

The first convent—albeit very short-lived—of the nascent Augustinian Recollection was, strictly speaking, at Pastrana in Guadalajara, Spain. It was founded in April 1589 but without the permit required by local and provincial authorities. The admission of the *donado*² Francisco de Jesús on 22 April 1589 made him the first professed of the Recollection. In the wake of intrigues posed by some clerics of Pastrana, the convent was ordered closed exactly a year later by the cardinal-archbishop of Toledo. The dispersed conventuals moved out to other Augustinian convents. The first Recollects at Talavera de la Reina For the Augustinian Recollects, the Convent of San Agustín el Viejo in Spanish city of Talavera de la Reina of the province of Toledo is part of the being and of the bosom of its history. It was the cradle that

¹ This article is based upon Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta's three books *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos I* (1995), *The Augustinian Recollect Charism* (1994), *The Order of Augustinian Recollects. Its Charismatic Evolution* (1994), as well as other relevant books and internet sources.

² A conventual with no professed vows. He cultivates the orchard, the poultry or livestock of the community.

forged the spiritual image of the Recollection, configured its profile and gave concrete form to its religious anxieties and projects. The name “Talavera” signifies for generations of Augustinian Recollects a symbol of spiritual vigor, of evangelical radicalism and, at the same time, of family tenderness and nostalgia of a definitely bygone world. “Talavera” shall resound and shall never cease resounding wherever an Augustinian Recollect heart beats.



The Convent of Talavera de la Reina: Iconic Cradle of the Recollection in Toledo, Spain



Forma de vivir, the first Constitutions of the Recollects written by Fray Luis de León

The primitive convent was poor and bereft of comfort. It was founded by the Augustinian Saint Alonso de Orozco in 1566. Since 1569 it was an Augustinian novitiate. In 1576 there were twenty religious, known for their poverty and observance. On account of the failed experience at their convent in Pastrana, many friars desirous of embracing the new way of life repaired to Talavera.

On 19 October 1589 the Recollects were able to make their dream come true. Fr. Cristóbal de Orellana, a native of Talavera and nephew of Saint

Alonso de Orozco, was commissioned by the prior provincial Fr. Pedro de Rojas, who in turn was pressured by the Spanish monarch Philip II and his almoner García de Loáisa, to dissolve the old community and to establish the first Augustinian Recollect group. This first convent was handed over by the Calced Augustinians to those who wished to live

“the yearnings for greater austerity by a group of friars.” The convent was the realization of the foundational act of the Toledo Chapter of the Augustinian Province of Castile on 5 December 1588:

Since there are or can be among us some brothers so desirous of monastic perfection that they would want to follow a more austere plan of life, and whose legitimate desire is to be furthered so that no obstacles be placed in the part of the work of the Holy Spirit, after duly consulting our most reverend father general and having implored his leave, we determine that, in our Province, three or more monasteries for men be set aside or newly founded and the same number for women, in which a stricter form of life may be practiced, which the Fr. provincial with his council shall prescribe after a mature reflection.



Interior of the Conventual Church of San Agustín el Viejo now

Eight Augustinian religious who originated from various houses in Castile composed the pioneering community that was headed by Prior Francisco Briones and Vice-Prior José de Parada. Fr. Briones was at the helm of the community for two years. He then became novice master. Lastly he lived in Nava del Rey where he returned to the Father in 1600 with the fame of sanctity. Information has been gathered with a view for the eventual canonization of Fr. Briones.

Fr. José de Parada excelled in his love for the sick. In order to serve them more, he learned the profession of surgeon. He had to return to the original province for health reasons. He passed away in Salamanca in 1619. He was seen him “crippled, unable to move or turn.” Among the other members of the community were Baltasar Martel, prior of Pastrana Convent; Andrés Díaz, a professed from Madrid, to whom primitive history would attribute the transfer of the Discalced movement to Italy; Gabriel Hurtado; Juan de Pamplona; Francisco de Tapia, first prior of the convent of Portillo in Valladolid, and García de Prado.

Not one of the first conventuals was renowned for scientific training, scholarship, eloquence or communitarian prestige. They were very ordinary friars, without remarkable traits, other than their love for God and the will to live their vocation with utmost seriousness. Such love and spiritual tension constituted their wealth which enabled them to realize the ideals and goals conceived of in the Chapter of Toledo. Every Recollect religious would look back with tenderness the first conventuals of Talavera.³

Austerity and asceticism at Talavera de la Reina

The life of the Recollect pioneers at Talavera was poor, austere but totally focused on God in whose praises a great part of the day was spent. Very few friars were contented with the six hours of daily prayer imposed by the provisions of the *Forma de vivir* [Way of Life], written by Fray Luis de León for the first Augustinian Recollects in 1589. Many of them spent hours and hours, day and night, prostrate or kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, bowed before the Crucifix and absorbed “in the contemplation of heavenly matters.”⁴

³ The first Augustinian Recollect convent is known as *Convento de San Agustín el Viejo*, known later in our history as *Convento del Ave María* or *Convento cuna de la Recolectión*. The present church—Baroque in style—was restored in 2002-2004. It was converted in the past into a theater and warehouse but was completely restored as an auditorium with funds from the *Comunidad Caja de Madrid*. Inaugurated on 15 June 2004, it is now a private property which in 2006 was the site of the exhibit dubbed as *Spanish Ceramics and Don Quijote* commemorating the fourth centennial of the publication of the world classic of Cervantes. The other rooms of the old convent are used as Ruiz de Luna Ceramics Museum.

⁴ *Crónicas* OAR 1, 156a-157a; Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, “*La Forma de vivir en las constituciones y en la vida diaria del siglo XVI*,” in INSTITUTO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD AGUSTINOS RECOLETOS, *Forma de vivir de los frailes agustinos descalzos de Fray Luis de León* (Madrid 1989) 365-371.

A strong ascetical spirit completed their spiritual physiognomy. Silence, seclusion and engrossment in devout prayer, fasts, disciplines and other penitential acts accompanied the Recollect conventuals all throughout the day.

Pros and cons

The asceticism practised by the Recollects had earned for them the admiration of the Talavera laypeople who for some time provided for their sustenance without the need of soliciting house-to-house collection. A *donado* collected alms in the town which had some eight thousand inhabitants at that time. When he fell ill, people without waiting for a substitute voluntarily proceeded to the convent to give help.



**Church of San Agustín el Viejo.
17th century. Baroque style. Work of
Fr. Lorenzo de San Nicolás**

Such show of affection by the townspeople for the Recollects was repeatedly exhibited in subsequent years. In 1590 or 1591 a crew of farm workers and mechanics, who were joined by some haughty noblemen, pulled down the wall that diametrically crossed the orchard of the convent and thus obstructed ventilation.

In 1608, the municipal authorities of Talavera defended the Recollects against the Calced Augustinian prior provincial who had ordered them to wear shoes. They generously donated 300 reals to defray the expenses of the second general chapter of the Recollect Congregation.

However, there were attempts by some Augustinian friars who originated from Talavera. Intent of getting back the convent from the Recollect religious who were living a “different way of life,” they sought the assistance of two town councilors but all their efforts proved fruitless.

Subsequent conventuals

Since its inception, the convent had always been a novitiate. And the first fruits were copious. Francisco de Santa Cruz professed in April 1590. Renowned Recollect friars lived in this convent of Talavera. First and foremost was Fr. Lorenzo de San Nicolás who was the architect and builder of the Talavera convent itself, the church of the Monastery of the Incarnation of the Bernardine nuns just across the street, and the dome of the Basilica of *Nuestra Señora del Prado* with Renaissance and Baroque features.

Other renowned conventuals of Talavera de la Reina included Fr. Jerónimo de la Resurrección, the first general of the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollects, and Fr. Juan de San Jerónimo (†1610),⁵ first Recollect provincial (1602-1605). Fr. Juan was likewise the superior of the first expedition of Augustinian Recollect missionaries to the Philippines in 1605-1606 and two-time vicar provincial of the Philippine missions. The Scottish Fr. Thomas Bort de Santa María (†1599) spent the last eight years of his life in the evangelization of his fellow Scots.

A Talavera native, Fr. Bernardino de San Ildefonso (†1642) was provincial of Castile and Andalusia and in 1640 third vicar general of the Congregation. Fr. Gabriel Palomeque became a professor of philosophy and theology in various seminaries of the Congregation. Fr. Agustín de San Ildefonso (1585-1662) wrote one of the best pioneering works of spiritual theology entitled *Teología mística* [Mystical Theology] in 1644. A great number of Talavera friars linked hands with their confreres in the far-off Philippine mission territories, never to return to the land of their birth.

The convent through the years

In January 1603, the town council of Talavera authorized the Recollects to set up a college of ecclesiastical studies in La Estrella, although shortly afterward it had to withdraw the permit in the face of the stiff opposition posed by Trinitarians, Franciscans and Dominicans.

⁵ Fr. Juan de San Jerónimo of Malagón, Toledo, was a priest of the Congregation of Saint Jerome when he joined the first community of Talavera where he professed in 1594. Cf. Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde 1606, en que llegó la primera misión, hasta nuestros días* (Madrid 1906) 35.

In 1608, the council defended them against the arbitrary actions of the Augustinian provincial who ordered them to wear shoes.

The province closely followed their lifestyle and very soon came other religious who were anxious to share it. Among them was Juan de Castro (1547-1611), a man of great holiness and distinguished oratorical talent being appointed later as royal preacher and archbishop of Bogotá, Colombia, and Juan de Vera, the great defender of the Recollects in their initial confrontations with the Calced Augustinians. Their lives showed that those friars did not disassociate themselves from the people. They preached the Word of God, took care of the sacramental needs of the people and cultivated the devotion to the Crucified One and the Blessed Virgin under the special invocation of Our Lady of Peace.

The devotion to the title of *Ave María* which in time would give the name to the convent of Talavera de la Reina dated back to 1629 with the patronage of Marquis of Montesclaros, former viceroy of Mexico and Peru. In his last will and testament, he ordered his executors to comply with a provision in his old last will—done in Lima in September 1614—in which he and his first wife Ana Mejía provided for the foundation of a Recollect convent with such title.

The Convents of Portillo and Nava del Rey

After Talavera, the foundation of other Recollect convents ensued. The Convent of Portillo in Valladolid was juridically established on 29 June 1590 by Fray Luis de León. Fr. Francisco de Tapia, a Talavera pioneer, was appointed prior of the new community. There used to be an ancient hermitage dedicated to the Mother of God under the invocation of *Virgen de la Fuensanta*. In due time about twelve friars resided in it. In some occasions, such as Lent, the friars went out to assist adjoining churches in confession and preaching. The town council agreed to their complete sustenance in exchange for some conditions, like no property ownership, and it would perpetually remain Recollect.

The third Recollect convent was founded in Nava del Rey, also in Valladolid, in June 1591. Its site was beside a hermitage dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. The friars were obliged to attend to the people's spiritual care in exchange for such condition as sustenance of eight friars in the community, "two of whom should be preachers and another two confessors, and a *donado* tasked to ask for alms."

Talavera until 1835

A new convent was constructed on the same spot in 1625 with Fr. Luis de San Lorenzo as architect and constructor. Well-to-do people and the nobility defrayed the costs of the construction and embellishment of the new *Convento de San Agustín el Viejo*. The façade of the church was totally made of bricks. An extensive orchard which was necessary for the subsistence of the religious community was petitioned by the friars from the Council of Castile. It was later learned that the Archbishop of Toledo owned the land and when he visited the convent in 1669 he generously donated it to the Recollects.⁶



Coat-of-arms of the Augustinian Recollects in Talavera de la Reina Convent

Oftentimes, the convent served as the venue of the provincial chapters of Castile. The population of the community ranged from 20 to fifty. In 1834, on the eve of the *desamortización* [despoliation] of Church properties by the Liberal Finance Minister Juan Álvarez Mendizábal, there were only five friars. The religious for centuries continued to be poor but they still observed the primitive practices of yore. However, the passage of time witnessed the erosion of the religious fervor, generosity and joy of its first dwellers.

Apostolate was somewhat intense inside and outside the house. The faithful who came to the conventual church were always attended to. The friars assisted adjoining parishes in the pulpit and in the confessional during feast days. They also supervised the sacramental needs of chaplaincies in the vicinity and the Augustinian Recollect nuns at Calzada de la Oropesa in Toledo. Some friars served as curates of adjoining curacies. A religious served as a grade-school teacher in one town.

⁶ Angel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Talavera de la Reina y los agustinos recoletos*, 22-

Upon the expulsion of the Jesuits from Talavera, the Recollects took over their house in June 1789, in compliance with the royal order of 29 September 1788. Renamed *Convento de San Agustín el Nuevo*, the dilapidated house had to be reconstructed at a great expense. However, during the War of Independence, the French invasion troops turned the remodeled spacious church into a stable for horses of their generals and field-m Marshals. The friars were outright expelled from their own convent by the French.

Epilogue

What the invaders left behind after the war was a completely useless convent with its equally inutile church. Despite the donation of 4,000 reals by the confreres of Saint Nicholas Province in the Philippines for its reconstruction, the Convent of San Agustín el Nuevo could not be finished for the 1818 provincial chapter. The community of twenty-five friars was dispersed by the constitutional government of 1821. The 1835 decree of *desamortización* [despoliation] by Minister Juan Alvarez Mendizábal put a closure to the annals of the cradle of the Augustinian Recollection.

Meanwhile, the Convent of San Agustín el Viejo suffered so much damage done by the French troops. By 1815, it was totally useless. For some years, thereafter, it was converted into a school. After 1835, the temple of God became a storehouse for fodder and animal food. From 1886 until early the 20th century, the church was a theater. Later it turned into a warehouse for agricultural machinery.

What reminds us today of the Convent of San Agustín el Viejo, cradle of the Augustinian Recollection in the late 16th century, is the historical marker that reveals its architect and builder as well as its Baroque style. At the apse of the cherished church is the Augustinian coat-of-arms consisting of a heart aflame pierced by two arrows and with the hovering dove symbolizing the Holy Spirit, against whose divine work no one should place any obstacle.

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Manner of Administration (1844)¹ *(Modo de Administrar)*

Translated from the Spanish, edited and annotated
by Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Instructions and Manner of Administration that must be observed by the Father Ministers in all the Ministries of the Province of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines. (Approved by Prior Provincial Fray José Aranguren and the 1844 Intermediate Provincial Council. 1860 revised edition)

CHAPTER 1

The Duties of Ministers with Regard to the Institution and Profession

The obligations of the religious are strict. They are bound by the vows, the Rule and Constitutions, which they have professed, at all times and places, even during those times outside of their functions as curates of souls. For this reason, the father minister should dedicate himself to prayer according to the conditions prescribed by the statutes. He will do things ordered by the Constitutions. He will do those things

¹ «**Instrucciones y modo de administrar que han de observar los padres ministros en todos los ministerios de la Provincia de Agustinos Recoletos de Filipinas**» (Aprobadas por el prior provincial fray José Aranguren y el Capítulo Provincial Intermedio de 1844. Re-edición del 1860.)

not only in the morning or afternoon but during the time mandated by the Constitutions, in other opportune times that do not hinder his functions. He should obey the fasts of the Church without using too much excuse which they may have with just reason that the prelates can give their subjects. He will use this with the fear of not being deceived by pride and passions. He is further mandated to pray, aside from the divine obligations. When the father minister has the opportunity to pray in the choir or in the rostrum with devotion and pauses at prescribed times according to the Rubrics. This would be in the morning, four hours in the afternoon: the complete Vespers, *Benedicta* and the Matins and Lauds when the sunset is at hand that from the zeal of the rest of these obligations, they should comply with the devotions and sacrifices that are mandated in the statutes.

The father minister has to fulfill the Divine Justice for our sins, the taming of the flesh and the subjugation of passions. He should not neglect the prescribed days. The danger of the works of the flesh in the ministry is great, therefore he should pray the act of contrition more frequently. The ministers are obliged to comply with the *Culpas* and appease the divine wrath provoked by the sins of the souls entrusted to them. With regard to the celebration of the Mass, it should be held within our ministries as mandated by our statutes and provincial ordinances. It would be better to know those concerning the anniversaries of the Order and of the Province on the dates designated in the directory: all Mondays or on another available day of the week for the souls in the purgatory, mass and vigil by any religious who died or any parishioner and all the religious or priors like the vicars by each religious priest of the province, twelve masses and nine by the religious who is not a priest each month, as assigned by our father provincial, and one each week for the intention of the prior provincial of our Convent of Manila.

The three vows of obedience, poverty and chastity are the essential components of the religious. When he commits faults against any of them, the religious minister is bound for eternal condemnation. He is obliged to fulfill all what is mandated by our holy statutes and all of those imposed by superiors, those ordered in the general acts, and provincials and in the decisions of the chapters.

The vow of poverty obliges him not to possess anything for his own. He has to supervise all the properties of the church with all

faithfulness. He should abstain from excessive and illegal expenditures. He should behave well in the house furnishings of the convent and in the food. He should practice with frugality; neither he will decline (for being stingy) especially when he has guests (religious or vicars) and if he is invited at table (or to dine) with distinguished lay people or with whom we are indebted, He shall not prepare extravagant meals which exhibit vanity (that might cause a scandal).

Every year in January as prescribed by decisions of this Province, a minister should divest himself. He will clearly indicate and differentiate the amount of money for his use. All that follows belongs to the church according to the list of church fees including jewelry, books and clothes. He will state if the inventory of the church is complete or not. He will also indicate to whom he is indebted *cerrado y lacrado* [closed and with seal].

He will submit it to the vicar provincial; he will put it in the case/chest of our Province for the year ____ and we order the vicar provincial to keep the aforesaid divestment without opening it or returning the old divestment.

The vow of chastity is the strictest obligation of the religious, next to the care of souls. Aside from sacrileges, immorality is almost unfailing particularly among the natives if he scandalizes the flock and harms the holy habit worn by the religious. They affect the sermons or preaching. The minister's words will be of no use if their habits are tainted. Therefore, they have to avoid as much as possible all instances when dealing with women. They should not be allowed to go up to the convent. If it is unavoidable, they should be received in the stairway or in a conspicuous portion of the convent. They should not be received in the rooms of the religious.

For the same reason and in order to avoid other inconveniences which come along throughout the years, the minister should never enter the house of a native or *mestizo* except when administering the sacraments and visiting the sick. All ministers should be reminded that if they want to preserve the laws that our Father Saint Augustine has said: the ministers should behave themselves in all appropriate times. They must never scandalize themselves and the religious state.

Therefore, they must never go out wearing the white habit which is in fact worn underneath the black cassock. There must be a decent garment to cover the body in front of any woman. Any similar offense will be dealt with accordingly by our Holy Father.

CHAPTER 2

Regarding the Minister's way of dealing with his household

He is a minister of the convent and the superior of the religious order, who lives in it. If he has a companion, he will treat him as a regular of the convent. He will help him in all his needs. He will give him (as practiced) a young assistant and he will treat him in the same way with regard to the laws on food, salary and clothing.

He will receive all his guests with all respect even if they are from different religious congregations or orders. He will do his best to please them and he will see to it that the crockery, food and drinks conform to the level of his guest. All ministers are considered as fathers of the poor. Whenever Spanish officials pay a visit, they should be treated with appropriate manners. They should stay in municipal house. If they need anything, the convent shall send to them what is necessary. They should not be easy to be approached by the people so as to be invited to sleep or to dine in the convent. They can only sleep in the guest house of distinguished people to whom we are indebted or who are close to us.

Whenever there are no guests, especially non-Christians, the minister during mealtime will see to it that a servant reads (according to the rule of our Father Saint Augustine), the *Novorum vobis fauce*. They should read any book of vows in Spanish. The minister should bear with their servants' mistakes in reading.

The servants will wear clothes in a way they are recognizable as servants of the poor religious. Likewise, their attire should be clean, decent and should distinguish them as natives. They will be paid monthly, according to the practice in the province. If the

servant is married his salary will be placed in a small bag with a paper stating the date he started to serve, his monthly earnings and the deductions so that he will be prevented from unreasonable expenses. The minister shall not have more helpers than necessary. Experience teaches that the best servant is he who has less and for this reason he will not extend his household. The minister should have a butler, a cook and at most two stay-in servants.

The minister should be the best example to his servants when it comes to conduct. He should teach them the Christian Doctrine, reading and writing. He should make them confess and give them communion at the right age. He should teach them the important feasts especially those of the life of Christ and of Holy Mary, making them aware of the devotion and imitation of this Sovereign Queen who scorned earthly things and endured all for the heavenly ones. He sets himself to them as a good example in deed and in words, making them worthy members of the minister's household.

Bear in mind what the Apostle taught: "So that a minister's work is fruitful in teaching his servants, they should be useful members of the ministry. They should have fear of the Lord and be of good conduct. They should be able to impart the Christian doctrine to their own families and town residents."

CHAPTER 3

Regarding the Minister's manner in dealing with the people and strangers

When dealing with parishioners, the father minister should only use the method that our Father St. Augustine had taught. He will set as the best example of good deeds to everyone. He will reprimand those who commit mistakes; console those pusillanimous and weak in spirit; he will receive lovingly the sick and treat them with charity. He should be tolerant and patient to all. He has to bear in mind the holy teachings. He will perform prudently as a religious curate of souls. He should be a model of

virtues and stays away from indecent words and acts. He should be gentle and refrain from passion of anger. He reprimands with words in order not to drive off his flock and in his works, bearing in mind that they have not elected him as an implementor. As a spiritual father, the worst punishment he can give is public reprimand. If the offense is public he paints his words with colors whenever its enormity or ugliness calls for. When the sin is hidden, he reprehends it with love secretly. His lack of interest in mundane things is the best proof of the minister's kindness. He must strive to keep away from his heart all forms of greed by forgoing the payment of the poor who cannot pay well according to the subject's penury or what is asked of him. He will never send anyone to work with unjust compensation. If in the town under our administration, the prevailing practice is for young ladies to chaff the convent's rice, he will order the guards of the week to do it instead. The royal ordinances grant the list of church fees to the father ministers or their servants to buy what they need. The list of church fees shall be upheld and if, for being old, the price becomes unfair as time passes by, the ministers will have to buy according to the custom.

With regard to agreements and commerce in buying merchandise and selling it afterwards at an exorbitant price, all ministers and other religious are ordered to abstain from such harmful practices. They should bear in mind the censures and excommunication imposed by Clement IX and Urban VIII. The ministers can only sell by reason of need from compensation or what they bought through legal ways and at moderate prices. They should sell merchandise at prices without interest and attachment.

The father ministers should not intervene with the secular justice system of the government. If they are asked to give counsel in behalf of the third party, they may do so. However, they may cause damage to the person and they put their functions at risk. They also cause discord between themselves and town magistrates. The ministers should refrain from giving their opinions if there are scandals in town. Whenever the local justices, governors and mayors cannot properly handle prevalent cohabitations, the case will be elevated to the governor general as prescribed by his Majesty. It will be prevented this way. We also order

strongly the ministers to write directly to the prior provincial who shall determine the necessary action.

The father minister must keep the harmony between him and the town mayor. Untainted certifications should be given to them which should not be damaging to any third party. Based on experience, personal damage causes resentment against the mayor and the minister. Whenever ministers have to respond to the mayor or town magistrate (not including those letters by complying with them through the heading of the response; the letter of the mayor or justice and the following answer will be kept).

CHAPTER 4

Regarding the Minister's Residence and to whom he is accountable

The parish is the personal residence of the minister of the Divine Law and for no reason at all can he abandon it unless for reasons stated in the Holy Council of Trent. These are the *Christiana charitas, urgens necessitas* [the urgency of Christian charity and need] which needs to be observed *ac evidens Ecclesiae et Reipublicae utilitas* [and for the evident usefulness of the Church and the Republic], and still these reasons coincide with the authorization from the bishop and the regular prelate. The religious therefore is an administrator according to the *solorsano intra claustra*. If he absents himself for a few days, for example, a week, he should leave an appropriate substitute and he must have a just cause for his absence, as prescribed by the Council of Trent. The vicar provincial and the vicar forane can give the permission. But in the absence of a substitute the father minister can't leave the town for a day or even for a night. For a just reason, he will go to confession to any other father minister. If he gets terribly sick for which he will be absent for more or less two months, he will get the permission from the diocesan bishop and from the religious prelate. And according to the Laws of the Indies of the Vice Royal Patron, whenever in the Visayas a priest comes to Cebu with the authorization from the vicar provincial, he will present himself to

the bishop or to the vicar provincial. He will explain the reasons for his departure.

The residence should not be idle; it should be useful and fruitful and even so the father minister should give nourishment to the flock by preaching to them every Sunday and during the town fiestas. He or any vicar should see to it that the mass is held on these days. The vicar can substitute him if for a legitimate cause he cannot preach. The father minister will preach during Fridays of Lent, before and after the Stations. If he is very busy, attending to confessions or other church duties, he can read from any book [of sermons], especially if he has a short memory. He shall visit any sick person, console and help people in their needs. He will assist them in times of danger. He will always make sure that the parishioners would want to confess before their last breath and he will give them communion. If he finds it convenient, he will help the impoverished people. In this matter much prudence is necessary for native parishioners because there are people who are not used to ask for help so that they die of hunger before they can even inform the father minister about their needs. It is important that father ministers investigate charitably those in need. In other towns, people usually ask too much which they use for their vices. Therefore, it is necessary that the father minister should investigate who really are in need. For poor people who can work, the best recourse is to provide them with tools especially in times of pestilence or famine. In these occasions the minister should be generous. He will never give alms taken from the properties of the church even if their needs are great unless there is an authorization from the bishops who decide on the matter.

With regard to stipends or maintenance, the ministers should bear in mind their obligation to contribute for the collections assigned by the provincial council to the provincial. These are the ministers' specific obligations for the *conducis* of the new workers for their assistance, development and education at the Convent of Manila. They are used as well for the sustenance of the sick or elderly religious; for the old priests suffering from all sorts of ailments who retired in the ministry. They are also used for the upkeep of secular clergy through the

rent of the curate; for the maintenance of the interim or permanent vicar; for the ransom of those who get captured on duty. Finally, they are for the expenses of the Province and the lawyers who sometimes defend it from trouble and injustice. It is the King, His Royal Majesty, who gives the stipend. The excess of what is given to the Province is allotted whenever a minister passes away. The Province will be given a legitimate separate payment from what was earned from stipends and cedula as mandated by secularization. Each province can choose two from the richest ministries in order to defray the expenses. It should be noted that this cedula was first given to America which does not have stipend but only remuneration. Through this a growing community can be maintained. The regular prelate takes all the compensation that maintains the parish as prescribed in the state of religions, all of which are authorized by the king and his councils, by church prelates and religious superiors. No minister should ever think of being against the divine or church decree. The ministers should realize that they should comply with giving alms to the needy companions and contribute to the maintenance of the religious. With a clear conscience they should comply with the collections and the contribution that the ministry assigns which does not pertain to the church.

CHAPTER 5

Regarding the Father Minister's duty in teaching Christian doctrine to parishioners and to students

One of the most essential duties of the father minister is to make sure in every way possible that the parishioners know and understand the Christian doctrine. This includes the sacred mysteries of our faith which they should accept, the Commandments that they must obey and the way that they should pray to God, to Holy Mary and to all the saints. All of these are explained in the catechism. Every Sunday and during the holidays, everyone should be present in the church. As practiced, before or after the mass, two sextons or two schoolboys, who

have clear voices and know well the prayer, come out. They should wear cassocks and surplices. They will lead the prayer slowly and clearly, and everyone should reply from the beginning to the end. It will be very proper if the interim father minister stays in this function. After the prayer, he asks someone some questions in order to find out if he knows the doctrine. Diligently, he will teach him the responses. Every day, with the exception of Sunday and Thursday, the prayer will be recited after the mass until it comes to the part of asking the questions until it ends. The prayer will be recited after the vespers on Fridays and Saturdays when all boys and girls [non-tribute-paying children] will be gathered and will recite all the prayers in the morning and in the afternoon. They will be sent to the choir to pray, separating the boys from the girls. They will kneel until the *Salve* is finished and, afterward they will be seated, taking turns to go to confession and to [visit] our Lord Jesus Christ. After the prayers and *Salve* are sung, the boys will go to school, if there is no teacher, they will spend Friday and Saturday in the house of the fiscal where they will practice in the doctrine. If there are community services they have to do, like cleaning the streets and the patio of the church or they will carry lime, sands or pebble for a job that is a duty of the people. The schoolboys will have spent two or three times the prayer in the morning and in the afternoon. The father minister will see to it that the teachers accomplish their duty. They must use the pattern for reading and punish those who absent themselves. They should not receive bribes. After they fall short of their duties they should be reprimanded. If they do not make amends, they can be replaced. They will not be given the certificate so they will not receive their pay. The father minister should always see to it that the prayer is explained in school. He will ask them in order to find out if they have learned or not.

He will do the same in the evenings in the convent wherein the young men sleep. He should make them pray before the rosary in the church or in other decent place and sprinkling them with holy water afterwards. The boys of the *principales* can go to school every day. The father minister has to make sure that they learn how to read and write, giving them *cartillas* to what they

need, fountain pens and inks and paper to those who first practiced on banana leaves. This is what they need in order to loosen them up in the writing in the Island of Bohol. With regard to the servants, schools, sextons and *dalagas* and to what they should obey, it should be according to what the father ministers and the mayors of Cebu have prescribed. It should be as prescribed by the decree issued by the governor general on July 3, 1791.

CHAPTER 6

Pertaining to the Church and Divine Worship

It is the strictest duty of the parish priest to take care of the decorum and adornment of the house of God. For this reason, the father minister should maintain the orderliness and the cleanliness of the church. And although the town is humble and small, the adornments should be decent, tidy and well-taken care of. He should strive to have silk ornaments, as much as possible with few creases. They must not have wrinkles due to occasional wind blows. The natives should never touch the sacred glasses, corporals, purifiers especially throughout the mass. The father minister or the other priests have to wash them. They should be very careful with the holy Bread. The natives should not mix them up with rice. As much as possible the tending of the altars should be done every Saturday, so that on Sundays everything is prepared. There should be decent images, not deformed ones which may produce ridicule. If there aren't any decent images, it will be better to do away with it. On the altar where the mass is celebrated, there should be an *ara*, three tables covered with tablecloths. In the middle of the candleholders, a cross with the crucifix of regular size is placed between the candleholders and it can be seen by the celebrant and by the people, if not the altar of Crucified Christ that in such case will suffice. All these are mandated by Pope Benedict XIV. The minister will bless the ornaments (with the exception of the chalices, paten and *sacras* consecrated only by bishops). Unless in the provincial chapters the local priors are

deputized but they should be careful in delegating to others since Benedict XIV doubts that the bishops who have more power than the regulars, can delegate other priests without special concession for they can bless ornaments for clerics. This privilege can only be enjoyed by the regulars for the churches and this includes crosses, images and pictures of saints. In all my ministries, aside from the canonical books of baptism, marriage and funerals and of census, there should be an inventory wherein it clearly and distinctly contains the record of sacred glasses, jewelry of the church and adornments. It should take note of those that has been newly acquired in corresponding entries; the colors of the ornaments. He should leave two or three blank pages for updating purpose. There should also be a book of assets of the church wherein each father minister will add what was done on time. There must also be books of expenses and receivables of the church. In the receivables book, the three halves collected from the feasts will be indicated, the eighth part of the remuneration (not of the mass), from the burials if they have been paid and the offerings of candles, according to what the church fee list the bishops had ordered. The expenses will include the following: for the candles, adornments, images, incenses, in washing and repairing the vestments of the church. It must also include the expenses of the father minister which will be taken from the three feasts. The payment for the choir members and sextons will be according to what the church fee list assigns. The repair of the church, the wheat for the Holy Bread and wines for the masses will be taken from the five percent of what was collected from the three feasts. There should be boxes wherein the ornaments will be placed. Cupboards or cases with good keys in order to protect the sacred vessels and an archive well-taken care of and a safe for the books of canons and other important papers. The minister shall never celebrate a mass outside the church in a portable altar nor in a small room made for this purpose when they sail or travel. All the privileges regarding this matter were revoked by the Council of Trent. If the church has fallen down or destroyed or for other reasons, the mass can't be celebrated. The people can hear the mass on festive day which must be celebrated in a decent place.

CHAPTER 7

Regarding the choir members and their allowance

In all the *cabeceras*, there should be a head singer endowed with good manners, with the best voice possible and expertise in music. If the population reaches 500 tributes there will be seven additional singers. There, the minister will provide good sopranos who will be paid from the community treasury. With regard to the giving of certificate, it should be done in the same manner as that of the teacher of the school. The head singer should attend to the singers of the week and the sopranos should go to school every day. The head singer should teach the choir members of the week in order to rehearse them. He should teach the sopranos to read and to write well. These choir members of the week will sing every day the *Te Deum laudamus*² before the mass. Afterwards they will sing the short verses *Benedicamus Patrem* [...] *dignare Domine Divina*, *La Oración de la Santísima Trinidad* and from the prime of the Divine Office then they will sing the prime of the Office of the Child of the Virgin. If in the altar there is a purple or black ornament, instead of *Te Deum*, the *Benedictus* will be sung. In the afternoon the vespers of the office of the Child at two o'clock will be sung except during the feasts of the church.

While the vespers are sung, the minister puts on the vestments. All the choir members will attend every Saturday and Sunday including the days of the feasts in the morning. After the classes, the hymns *Nativitas* and *Crucem Sanctam* will be sung in the afternoon. The minister will say the prayers and the devotions, for not having a very necessary function, he will not ask them to attend during Thursday and festive days in the afternoon.

² Literally "Thee, O God, we praise," *Te Deum laudamus* is a 4th-century hymn of unknown authorship. In the Liturgy of the Hours, this hymn of praise is chanted or sung at the end of the *Office of Readings* on all Sundays (except those of Lent), all solemnities, octaves of Easter and Christmas, and all feasts. There was a prevailing practice in the past wherein upon the arrival of the visiting president of the Republic in a city or town, the presidential entourage went directly to the parish church for the simple welcome rite and the singing of the *Te Deum laudamus*.

The choir members need not attend nor will there be classes but on Sundays they will attend the sung rosary.

Choir members will attend burials and the minister should see to it that they are paid. They should be assigned equally during the anniversaries of the Order and the Church, All Souls Day procession and the rest of the sacrifices of what the ministers will assign in accordance with the Acts and Ordinances. They will attend this extraordinary work. They will assist in free burials of women and children who are under the care of the State.

CHAPTER 8

Regarding the sextons and the bell-ringers

In each church of the *cabeceras* there should be a head bell-ringer who comes from the *principales* in the community and should be fit. He will be in charge of taking care of ornaments and sacred glasses as well as of the cleanliness of the church, altars and wooden images. He will adorn the altars during feasts and fix the monuments and adorn the *carrozas* and images for the procession. The ministers should not allow the women from the *principales* to do it. He should also attend baptisms, weddings and burials and take care of whatever necessary. And the sacristan mayor takes care of the sextons.

With regard to the care of the sextons, they are bound to him and there will be eight in each cabecera and the father ministers will see to it that they have good manners, that they know how to read and write and that they are fifteen years old and above, but no one should be at the age [where they are required to pay the tribute/close to the tribute-paying age].

Their duty is to help both in the sung or recited masses, in all the church services, to serve the head sexton in all corresponding church matters and sacristy, the tolling and ringing of bells. Every Sunday, feasts, Holy Week and every last Saturday, they will all attend to that and all in the remaining days of the week. There will be four of them who will be left: one will serve as porter in the convent, the other will help the bell-ringers and the two

will take care of the church. They should be prompt in assisting in the administration of the sacraments. If the town is small, one of the two will serve as guard. The porter should provide them with food and the same thing for those who serve or assist the minister. With regard to what the sextons should persevere both in the house of the community and in the feast and perquisites, they should bear in mind that it is everyone's duty. And with regard to their allowances, half of it will be given to the head sexton or to the one who is next to him or to one who substitutes him in case of a growing parish. The salary will be given to the head sexton and he shall be exempt from paying the tribute. With regard to the tolling and ringing of the bells, it will be done uniformly. On the first light of day the bells should be tolled before the celebration of the mass. It will be tolled before and after the mass. At twelve it will be rung for the *Ave Marias* and at two, for the vespers, and at three in the afternoon. On Fridays, the *Agonías* which is a precept of Pope Benedict XIV will have its turn and their indulgences in the town where the rosary is recited. The bells are rung at four-thirty and ends at five in the afternoon with five rings. And the tolling will always be done for whatever function. It will signal the end of classes and at ten in the morning it will be done for the same purpose with eight or ten rings in the evening for the prayers and at eight for the *Animas*. The ringing of the bell will start at twelve if it is a big feast or of the Three Crosses and then the vespers will follow at two, for the prayers at dawn. And for the masses of the remaining feasts, it will be started on vespers and it will follow the prayers and Mass. Then the prayers and mass will follow, also the bells will be rung for the Mass on Saturdays and for the Vespers and prayers on a Sunday. On Holy Wednesday, it will be rung at 4:30 in the afternoon for the office of the *Tinieblas* when there are major litanies. The bells will be rung for the Entrance or Exit of the procession in the church. The same thing will be done in all the processions except on Fridays of Lent, Holy Thursday and Good Friday. In the Procession during All Soul's Day, it will be doubled and whenever there are anniversaries it will be doubled at about half an hour after the prayers of the Vespers, another half an hour before the Mass and in all respective times until the end of the functions. On the eve of All Soul's Day, the double Vespers

will be started and they will follow from morning until night until the function ends. Also, the bell will be rung in the interment of adults and children.

CHAPTER 9

Regarding the Mass and Divine Duties

On all Saturdays that are not the first-class and second-class or on the eighth of all *Cerrada*, the mass of the Virgin Mary will be sung. During the abovementioned days, the mass of her major feast will be sung. After the Salve of this mass, it is customary to gather all lads and lasses who have not been entered yet in the census of tribute-payers. The father minister will do this in an orderly manner in order to maintain the devotion to Holy Mother Mary. The Votive Mass will be done according to the terms prescribed. Laws with the prayers that in them are expressed and in the prayers of the Salve the ritual that I have brought will be added.

The prayer *Deus qui transtulisti pro navigantibus* and the prayers of *Nativitas*³ will be recited. Once the Salve is played the attendees will be sprinkled with the holy water. The Salve will be sung as well on the nine feasts of the Virgin Mary and on the day that the Patronage is recited. If any feast falls on Sunday the Salve will not be blest with holy water for having been blest earlier before the Mass.

Every Sunday and Feast of the Three Crosses, the ringing of the bells will start at 7:30 and it will be stopped a little before eight o'clock when all are gathered. At eight o'clock the sprinkling of the Holy Water begins as well as after the Mass, which doesn't fall in the main feast, the father minister will recite it in the altar while the choir sings the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus* in the festivities as compliance with what the pontifical decrees ordered. Every day, before the Mass or after the sermon

³ The Marian hymn *Nativitas* has the initial lines *Nativitas tua, Dei Genetrix Virgo, gaudium annuntiavit universo mundo*, meaning *Thy Birth, O Virgin Mother of God, announced joy to the whole world*.

the father minister will recite the Acts of Faith and Hope in a kneeling position and in a loud voice. The attendees will repeat the Acts of Faith and Hope, Charity and Contrition: that is at the last part of rites of administration, it will be expressed in the natives' language which the father minister will read from a board. It is found in the catechism, at the end of the letter of the Bishop of Pamplona, Father Lorenzo de Yrigoyen. After the Gospel or at the end of the Mass, the father minister himself will preach [to be done by the vicar is legally prohibited]. The sermon will be appropriate to the audience in simple terms well-coordinated. He will instruct the parishioners in the principal mysteries of our faith so that they may depart from vices and love virtues. He will convince them to have the devotion to Blessed Mary and to the saints so that they can emulate their virtues. After the mass and the sermon, the doctrine follows as what was prescribed in Chapter 5. Everyone sings the *Salve* after the prayer. After the function, before everyone goes home, the father minister will read the census of residents, but not its entirety, in order to determine those who failed to attend the mass without justified cause. They will be summoned in the church on the following day. If they are found guilty, they will be reprimanded so as to embarrass them and make amends. If in each house someone missed the mass, the father minister a bit sure will dissimulate from the houses and it is necessary to watch over the possession of those who are inclined to commit robbery.

Every Sunday afternoon the rosary should be sung in the streets if it is possible and the father minister or his vicar will attend in the principal feasts of the Holy Virgin Mary, if there was a devoted image, it will be taken from the *Andas* for the rosary with the candles for the rest of the days. A bearer of the Blessed Virgin Mary will be taken, and six or eight lanterns, on all the four Sundays of the month. There will be a procession where the *Cofradía de la Correa* [Confraternity of the Cincture] has been established. They will bring out our Father Saint Augustine and the Lady of Consolation. They will sing hymns and the rest of what is prescribed in our ritual, the day of the Corpus and of the patron saint of the town. There will be a solemn procession where the *palapala* is done carefully. The altar-servers should sing the Christmas carols as decently as possible. They should be rehearsed earlier. Due

to their ignorance of the language, they are accustomed to write and sing with errors. In the procession of the feast of Candlemas, Palm Sunday and feast of our Lady of Consolation, if there is a space, the arches are placed below the canes and coconut palms. But on Fridays of the Lent, there should only be six or seven altars, and in them (if there is any) the Passages that are expressed in the Via Crucis, having been the half of the stations, a Friday and the other half and if there is such a practice on Holy Thursday or Holy Friday, there will be fourteen small altars. It should pass in front of the parish's Cross, if it is decent enough it goes without sleeve, the non-wearing of which signals its jurisdiction. And after the *ciriales*, the school children will follow together with their teacher.

He makes sure that they perform the devotion with devoutness and orderliness. Next will be the rest of the men led by the *fiscal celador*, then the image. If there are many images, like in the Holy Week, they will go at an orderly interval among the men and then according to the most important images. And when there is only one, it will pass under the canopy. In front of it, the incense burner burns the incense and after it follow the women in proper order. [...] The practices should be observed.

Every Monday, the less solemn rite or *semidoble* and the simple rite are recited. If there is a day of less solemn rite in the week, the procession of the All Soul's Day will be sung. The father minister or his colleague will wear a black cape. If there is a space it will be done inside the church or else outside. It should be done as it is in the Holy Week and on the weeks that fall on *Octavas cerradas*. There won't be a procession of the All Souls Day. In the anniversary of the church and of the Order, it will be sung before the mass and after the procession. In the province where there are vespers, the vigil will be sung before the mass. In all the coffin-like frame or *Tumba* is placed and with regard to the candles that are offered on All Souls' Day, they will be distributed according to what is prescribed in the list of church fees and the rest of the things that are offered will be done according to what is being practiced.

On the day of Saint Mark, the three days before the Ascension and when the bishops order the procession for public emergency, they will be done with brown cape and the father minister

carries it [the Blessed Sacrament] with a veil. If there is any decent locket with religious certificate, all of the Vespers of the feast of The Three Crosses, first-class days of the Universal Church and of the Order, solemn Vespers will be sung and the father minister or his companion will wear vestments to officiate them. The Vespers will be sung and after the Vespers the vestments are taken off. From the rite of the Santo Niño and in the morning, the *Te Deum* and the prime de la Virgen shall be sung as stated in Chapter 7 that deals with choirs. On Holy Thursday the Vespers will be sung without wearing the vestments and without solfeggio as it is done in the convents. Furthermore, the *Tinieblas* hymn will be sung on Holy Wednesday and all the processions of the mass of major feasts will be done as mandated in the Rubrics.

CHAPTER 10

Regarding the *fiscal celador* and the methods of preparing censuses

In every *cabecera*, there should be a *fiscal celador* chosen by the father minister. He should be the most reputable man in the town. He will be exempt from tributes. He will be the guardian whose duty is to guard if there are concubinages or public offences or divorces in the town. He will inform the father minister so that he can resolve them. He will also take care of the municipal guards and other servants. He will inform the father minister of whatever is necessary and their salary. He will neither be involved in punishing anyone nor will have any jurisdiction on it as it is prohibited by the royal decrees. He will handle the *polos*.

The father minister will grant him the proclamation of marriage with the decrees. He should always be in good terms with the chief of the *reservados* or exempted citizens. He should see to it that they attend the masses on Mondays and work a little after the mass. This practice should be done especially if on Sundays these people do not hear mass because they have to watch over houses, cemeteries, and animals. With regard to works, they

should not be obliged to work too much or work on something that does not benefit the community. The father will not allow them to be punished if they fall short. If the *fiscal celador* has the necessary pledges, he will make the census lists, coordinate and collect the three halves of the three feasts, giving to the father minister the 5% of what was collected by the work. If the minister thinks it is convenient to let another do the collection, he may do so. If the town is not that big, he himself will do the collection. The census lists should have much vigilance with the minister if he does not want to have equal responsibility giving certificates of uncollected tributes and which were hidden, causing damage to the Royal Treasury. Every year the general census-taking will take place in each barangay and to these by cases starting in alphabetical order. After putting the head of the barangay and their families in the first place among the cases, he will leave a blank page, so if within the year, when a new-born child is added he can write it, letter by letter and he will leave spaces so that if someone reaches the age to be included in the census list or by marriage, the married ones will be taken from their parents' entries. Therefore each marriage should be put in a different entry, and the widows and widowers with their respective families. In the margin, the year when each person was born will be indicated. In this manner they will bear in mind when they should pay the tribute, when they will be exempted, when they will start to fulfill their duty to the church putting in entry or abbreviation those who are tribute-payers or those who are exempted due to old age or due to their position or to sickness or if someone is an absentee. It should be indicated in the margin and the same thing will be done if a captive or prisoner dies. He should be erased, then recorded in the list of deceased. And the same way after the *cédula*, if a person was counted in the census of another town, in the margin the place, month and year shall be indicated in order to determine where he should pay the tribute. After having satisfied the requisites he should be erased from the census list. Those erased should no longer be included. From the general census list of tribute-payers, the heads of barangays, teachers, head sexton, and *fiscal celador* can get a list of their respective subordinates.

Barangay or village chief: subordinates

teacher: schoolboys

chief sexton: sextons

fiscal celador: *reservados*

female teacher or female fiscal: schoolgirls

Those who confess, those who receive communion and those who failed to attend the mass will be indicated in the general census list. The census will be written in a book for the purpose of official visits. This census of souls and tribute-payers will be done annually. It will be submitted to the prior provincial. Placing in a box the married tribute-payers and in another the single or unmarried, both male and female; those who are exempted; the young communicants, both male and female; those who make confessions; in another the children. And the same divisions will be made for Spanish and Chinese mestizos and mestizas. The minister should separate the Muslims who are Christian converts and indicate the number of dead and captive Muslims. This should be done so that our Province can provide a total account to his Majesty, the King of Spain, as mandated in the royal order.

CHAPTER 11

Regarding the Administration of the Holy Sacraments

The administration of the Holy Sacraments is the most important duty of the father minister. It should be carried out with utmost care and in the prescribed manner. The parishioners should benefit from them. He will read it to them so that they do not miss out on matters of utmost importance. They should lend a hand to those slackened in Christian morality. On the contrary, they should expose those who commit absurd sacrileges and iniquities. All my ministers should abide by the *Méntrida Ritual* that I brought. They should read and reflect on the notes in order to fulfill them. But in the matter of privileges, it is only governed by those that are put in respective places that are the only that are at present are without doubt and by force and vigor not governed by the *Méntrida Ritual* nor by other old Rituals where they had written

before, having revoked many privileges and having ceased, and others for having been modified from the old discipline in these Islands.

With the same care and efficiency that the minister should be perfect with matters regarding morality. He should practice teaching these matters in the native language. On the contrary he cannot instruct them correctly or make necessary judgment if he falls short on these matters. He should see to it that no parishioner dies without receiving the holy Sacrament especially the baptized and the penitents.

CHAPTER 12

Regarding the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation

In all the ministries, it is necessary that there should be a big porcelain vase for storage of water and as much as possible it must have a lock. The water for baptism will be blest during Holy Saturday and the Pentecost. And if there isn't any, a decent large earthenware will suffice, unless the baptistery can store many types of water to be blest. Some of this water will be used for Baptism. When there is an instance that a person had died without being baptized, whatever natural water, from rivers, springs, stored rain water or from the sea, will do. If the blessed water becomes scarce, leaked empty, or runs out, other water will be blest as the Rite prescribes. Every Saturday or where it is practiced on Sundays on a designated time, the head sexton will have to prepare the baptistery, the minister descends to baptize and puts on the rochet. According to what the Rite has prescribed, he will say in words the questions that are commonly asked so that the respective respondents will know how and what to answer if the man to be baptized does not agree that a woman becomes his godmother or vice versa. This is done among the natives so that they do not get confused with the bond of their spiritual relationship. After baptism he will remind them clearly about the relationship they contracted with the child and his parents and the obligation in teaching the Christian doctrine. The name that the parents or godparents want to give the child will not be allowed if they are not names of saints. The minister should see to it that the child takes the surnames of the father in order to avoid the confusion in the towns of the natives without being able to check clearly the progeny leaving the church or convent. He will

write in the book of baptism entry by entry and will sign it in the end if he does not know parents of the child. He will record it as a “child of anonymous parents.” If the parents are known, he will record it but will remind them they are not married and if they have impediment in getting married. With the rest, the *Ritual de Méntrida* will be applied. He will not make any expressed clarification to the parents of the child who was brought by parents not legally married nor will he reproach nor chasten them. It is better that they brought the child to be baptized than to abort him for fear of chastisement. After the baptism he will record it at once. He will indicate in the margin the year of birth. If the child is from unknown parents, he will indicate the family of the godparents.

If during the weeks he needs to baptize anyone who is on the danger of death, he will baptize him with solemnity. If the baby dies, he will sprinkle him with holy water. And at once, he will replace the rest of the ceremonies. He will have someone who knows well the manner of baptism. He will inform the people about those who act on his behalf whom to whome they can resort to if there are dangers while the minister is away. It will be better if they know the language. But instead of *buñag* (baptism) which is almost common in all the island, *naka-bautismo* is done in the Visayan language and respectively in other languages. With regard to the baptism of the adults, it will be discussed in the *Missions*.

If the bishops make a visit to the ministry in order to conduct Confirmations, they minister should see to it that he has prepared the parishioners. The parishioners should receive the Sacrament of Confession. He should see to it that all those to be confirmed carry with them *cédulas* with the name of their parents or godparents and the head of the barangay, so that he can check them clearly in the Book of Baptisms wherein the entries of Confirmations are written.

CHAPTER 13

Regarding the Sacrament of Penance and others

Administering the sacrament of the Penitence is the most demanding work of the parish priest because in order to accomplish

it, he needs to know many moral issues and he should know to resolve them. He should be prudent and patient in listening to the confessions of the natives. He should help them by using brief words; encourage them with sweet and gentle words. He should deal with them with pusillanimity. He should not burden them with so much penance they might be unable to fulfill. He should not have many questions in the examinations (that others make). More or less, he will ask questions according to the context of the answer they show because of little knowledge of Christian doctrine. With regard to big Christian communities, to avoid embarrassment in the examination of prayer, it should start in the beginning of December. If the town exceeds 500 tribute-payers, after All Souls' Day in the churches there should be enclosed confessionals with door and screens that even fingers won't fit as ordered by the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition.

No women should make their confession elsewhere except in the aforesaid confessional unless they are sick. In big towns where people usually confess the day after the feast of the Three Kings, the minister should follow this practice. However, he should see to it that it starts with confessions and they will not receive communion so that the communicants can obey as closely as possible our order and that of the Church. And that in this land, evil develops more than in Spain maybe for lack of suggestion and by bad example. The minister should be on guard in crowded confessions from the start to the end. The bell will be rung in the morning and in the afternoon to summon the people to the mass. Once the minister descends then it will be stopped. Then five or six consecutive tolls will follow. Once the minister is inside the church, a sexton will come out with cassock and rochet. Everyone will kneel down and the minister will say clearly and will devote the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*. Before the confession starts, it will be better that the escorts confess their sins and the damage they inflict on their souls so that they can be forgiven. Confessions at night must be avoided; confessions of many male penitents can be done; never those of women except during illness or in emergency cases but always in lighted places and in full view of other people.

On the Eucharist

More or less known warnings have been done on the sacrament. Furthermore, the convenience of receiving communions on the same day of confessions or on the next day is indicated in order not to expose to receiving communion in the state of mortal sin. It is the obligation of the parish priest to strive that pregnant women go to confession and receive communion at the opportune time, getting ready in a Christian way for the perilous hour of giving birth. When taking the Viaticum between the lights that accompany the Most Blessed Sacrament there shall be one lantern just in case the wind blows of the others, and the sexton who bears said lantern as well as the one who acts as acolyte are to don the soutane and rochet. In towns where the Most Blessed Sacrament. In towns where the tabernacle of the Most Blessed Sacrament is non-existent, the Viaticum shall be give with a host consecrated in the mass that the father minister must strive to celebrate early, more or less, according to the need of the sick, because in order that the ill person may not die without the Eucharist, the mass may be celebrated at any time after midnight.

Extreme Unction

Nothing worthy of special mention is prescribed.

Matrimony

This is the sacrament that customarily causes major difficulties to the parish priests. It frequently exposes him to discomforts and offensive language if they have not been thoroughly informed about the statutes anent matrimony. The instruction ordinarily imparted to us by authors of moral theology are not enough for the father minister. Moreover, it is essential to bear always in mind the directives of high officials who administer these Islands, and even the customs of the natives in order to avoid in countless cases mistakes and disagreeable commitments. Fortunately the Ritual of Fr. Méntrida on the treatise on matrimony has resolved majority of the controversies that our father ministers can encounter and we earnestly recommend its reading and observance. These directives shall be limited later to make up for some points omitted by Fr. Méntrida and we likewise overlook here by noting down solely the last point where the ministers are exhorted to endeavor

to have widowers get married in the church before the mass and they hear mass with lighted candles in the hands during the celebration of the mass of the day.

CHAPTER 14

On Missions

The missions must be the apple of the eye of the Province, and he who might be designated missionary can take for himself what Saint Paul advised his disciple Titus. As he observes the advice of the Apostle, he will be able to take upon himself everything that leads to the conquest of the souls in the darkness of paganism for heaven, for they have the right to our toils and indefatigable zeal for having been redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

The missionary must always bear all this in mind in order not to be scared in perils however arduous they may be, without falling into decay in difficulties that come their way nor passing out upon viewing the fickleness of unbelievers in these Islands. Patience, charity and prayer to God for enlightenment are the strongest weapons to overcome idolatry. The concern for their salvation and the complete detachment from what is worldly is an incentive that attracts the unbelievers to love the missionaries and hold them in great respect. Prudence is a virtue that is less essential because if they view him as mean or hypocrite they will withdraw from the missionary, and if he gives them gifts, they usually pretend to be Christians. Let him help them in their needs, but not in the way that they may think that they are given gifts in order to be converted. Let him not easily believe their words with respect to baptism; let him pay attention to the words for these are confirmed by long experience. Let no one be baptized without first being settled in a community and abandoning completely life in the mountain and without being well instructed in the most important mysteries of our faith. The grown-up converts may not be obliged to learn all the prayers which is almost impossible. Let the administration of baptism be delayed for children unless in danger of death until they possess an average knowledge of the Christian doctrine. Do not charge the neo-converts with fees nor compensation. Explain to them with clarity the obligation that they have to contribute to the fees to

the minister and to the church. And as they receive good instruction and deepen their roots, the father minister may gradually introduce the fees with gentleness. If it is possible, the missionary may allow old Christians in the towns of new converts, unless they are of good conduct and may edify the new Christians with their example. He shall neither permit the neo-converts to live in separated farms and very isolated from the site where the new mission has been established. If this happens, instead of profiting from favorable settlements, they who have the duty to be Christians are obliged to live as such and they do not become worse by living as unbelievers.

When the mission station starts to take form as a town, let the decent residence of the minister and church, school be set up and the divine functions be celebrated with the possible solemnity in the manner practiced in older ministries. He shall strive with diligence that the houses be situated with order so that straight streets may be developed. There must be a small space between houses in order to prevent the spread of fire and let each house cultivate a small garden. Furthermore, the missionary shall see to it that no two families live in the same house and that division be set up so that men lived separately from the women who are not their legitimate spouses in order not to fall into many sins. Let not the missionary baptize the children of nonbelievers unless they are in danger of death or the parents may give consent that their children live with Christians without withdrawing to the mountains again. What is mandated for the missionaries must be observed as teaching to ministers who may be in the vicinity of unbelievers.

CHAPTER 15

Regarding Visitations Conducted by the Bishop and by the Prior Provincial

When the diocesan bishop wishes to conduct a visitation to our ministries, he can do so by himself or may appoint a religious of our Order and no other person in accordance to the Royal Decree of 1776. According to the decree, the religious minister must not defray the expenses of the diocesan visitation. If the bishop or his visitor, supported by tradition or by any other basis, might demand certain amount for

reasons of the fees of the secretary, etc., our religious parish priest shall charge to the funds of the church and in no way to his personal funds. Then the reception, visitation, etc. is explained in details.

Our prior provincial or his delegated visitor shall conduct his visitation in the manner provided for by our statutes and according to the custom in these Islands. The father ministers shall defray the visitation costs as it is just. The natives shall offer their services in the manner they may wish, but they shall not be obliged to do it, leaving them this way to do their will. It is supposed that they are not mandated to do so by the provincial visitation. But they should not fail to do what is appropriate to their father minister. Our prior provincial may admonish them, and if such admonition does not reach them, he shall give inform the person who is qualified to impose the remedy. This chapter then provides some instructions on the conduct of provincial visitations.

Having imposed on themselves what has been mandated in this chapter, the father ministers shall avoid speculations and they shall keep the due respect and submission to their superiors whether ecclesiastical or regular and shall live with care and vigilance in the compliance of the obligations as parish priest and religious with the increase of guidelines that may correct and chastise them. But at the time, it shall be very pleasant and satisfying for the religious parish priests upon considering that these same superiors in the same character as judges and fathers who may console them in their afflictions, as guides who illumine them in their doubts and supervise them in their uncertainties and deviations, and finally, their sincerest protectors against wrongs and injustices.

CONCLUSION

This Manner of Administration is what we have mandated to be obeyed and observed hereafter in our curacies and missions, respectively, without introducing innovations and contravening in no section of what is written here. Only if the diocesan bishops might order our religious parish priests something that might be contrary to whatever pertains to the office of parish priests. They shall be in accordance with what is mandated by our diocesan bishops, since it not our wish to order anything against his authority.

On the contrary, we are to assist them in anything that allows our faculties in the perfect compliance of duties in our religious ministries.

In order that all ministers may have these Instructions in mind, we order that they read them not just once but many times until they acquire a good knowledge of them and that they may not cast them into oblivion.

Furthermore, by strict order of obedience we command all our subjects, the father ministers and missionaries, to inscribe them word for word in the *Book of Decisions and Mandates*. When such book is already full, another book shall be provided and they shall continue it in the same manner. We order that in the new book these *Instructions and Manner of Administration* shall be on the first pages.

Done at the Convent of San Nicolás in Manila in the Hall of Chapters, on the 11th day of December of 1844.

Signed by:

- Provincial Fr. José Aranguren de S. Agustín.
- Fr. Francisco Vidal de S. José, ex-Provincial.
- Fr. Miguel de S. José, Substitute.
- Fr. Manuel Zubire de la Ascensión, Councilor.
- Fr. José Aznar de los Dolores, Councilor.
- Fr. Guillermo Royo de S. Juan Bautista, Councilor.
- Fr. Luis de San Joaquín, President of the preceding Provincial Chapter

Augustinian Recollect Missions in Mindanao in the 17th Century¹

Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR

Translated from the Spanish by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

In 1622 the Augustinian Recollects considerably widened their missionary horizon. The personnel reinforcements that arrived from Spain in 1618 and the vocations in the novitiate in Manila made the opening of new fields of work already possible. Towards the end of 1620 their superiors approached the Augustinian bishop of Cebu requesting new *doctrinas*. Bishop Pedro de Arce very gladly acceded to their petition. On 1 March 1621 he entrusted to the Recollects the whole northeastern portion of Mindanao, from Butuan to Cateel and Caraga as well as the islands of Dinagat and Siargao. On 27 August of the following year he further handed over to them the district of Calamianes and Cuyo which was vacated by the priest Juan de Santa Cruz. In succeeding years the colonial government continued entrusting to the Recollects other regions in Mindanao until finally when the whole island was adjudicated to them on 3 March 1625. Two years later the colonial government in Manila confirmed the donation.²

¹ *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*, vol. I: *Desde los orígenes hasta el siglo XIX* (Madrid 1995) 378-388.

² Pedro de Santiago, *Relación del tránsito que hicieron a las Indias los primeros padres agustinos recoletos descalzos de España el año de 1605 y progresos que han hecho hasta el año de 1630* (Madrid 1630) 16r-17r.

Some missionaries had visited Mindanao and the Calamianes archipelago in the past. Secular priests and Augustinians had spread the Gospel in Mindanao. Between 1596 and 1612, several Jesuits from Bohol and Cebu likewise worked there. The bishops' decrees revealed the names of some priests who did mission work in both Mindanao and Cuyo. In a letter dated 6 August 1628, the procurator general of the Recollects, Father Alonso de San Bernardo, recalled and acknowledged all these efforts of past evangelizers. But as in Zambales, the attempts made in Mindanao were so isolated, discontinuous and too sporadic to be effective. Lacking were the steadfastness as well as a clear and concrete program of action. The same Father Alonso spoke of the Jesuits' unproductive efforts during the year when they stayed at the fort of Tampacan (1597). Not for that, however, one can disregard those initial evangelization endeavors. Without the predecessors' hardships, the Augustinian Recollects' activity could hardly turn out so fruitful. The southernmost region of Mindanao, however, had not been visited by any missionary at all.

On 6 February 1624, Governor General Alonso Fajardo divided the island of Mindanao into two sections. The areas located northeast of the imaginary line which ran from Cape Sulawan down to Cape San Agustín were adjudicated to the Recollects, while the Jesuits were put in charge of the territory southwest of the same line. On 12 July 1628, his successor Juan Niño de Tabora confirmed the partition. The misunderstandings between both orders lasted several more years, partly fueled by a certain volubility of the bishop of Cebu. In 1637, he accepted Tabora's decision and declared his very own 3 March 1625 decree which had earlier favored the Recollects null and void. Two years later, in May 1639, in a partial change of opinion, he again assigned the ministry of Bayug to the Recollects.³

Eight were the missionaries dispatched to Mindanao between 1622 and 1623. They would be joined in succeeding years by more Recollects almost uninterruptedly until 1898.

³ Felipe REDONDO Y SENDINO, *Breve reseña de lo que fue y de lo que es la Diócesis de Cebú en las Islas Filipinas* (Manila 1886) 66-70; Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas I* (Manila 1925) 175-178; Peter SCHREURS, *Caraga Antigua. The Hispanization and Christianization of Agusan, Surigao and East Davao* (Cebu 1989) 99-121.

The first missionaries applied in Mindanao a method similar to what was experimented in Zambales. At the outset, their activity—supported by the fort of Tandag—was according to a roving plan, traversing shores, rivers and swampy areas in search of natives who were dispersed in the fields and farms. Afterwards they founded some communities and put up in every one of them a simple church made of cogon, wood and nipa, the parochial house or *kumbento* and began to settle in them the few natives who had agreed to abandon their farms. Customarily, it was only after that time when they administered the sacraments.

Only two of the eight missionaries stayed in Tandag. The rest spread out to the north. A small group probably composed of three religious headed for Butuan and from that place the missionaries proceeded to Cagayan and Linao situated upstream in the Agusan River. Another small group traversed the coasts north of Surigao, which gave life to the *doctrinas* of Gigaquit and Bacuag, and to those of the adjacent island of Siargao.

The work of the missionary was not easy. The region was not yet pacified, and their inhabitants viewed all the Spaniards with suspicion. With the exception of the Butuan natives, we can say that they knew no other Spaniards but the soldiers, who in 1609 had set up a menacing fort at Tandag, as well as the *encomenderos* and tribute-collectors. It was not at all too easy for the natives yet to differentiate the Church and missionaries from the conquest and *encomenderos*. The missionaries had to cope with the obstacles of a psychological and religious sphere, such as the polygamy of the caciques, the possession of slaves and the inordinate attachment to their rites and religious traditions. The violent death of the two pioneering missionaries tragically gives us an idea of the gravity of these obstacles.

In 1623, Father Juan de la Madre de Dios ended his life at Datu Suba's hands. The datu was irked by the insistence of the missionary who sought the liberation of a slave girl. The Moro leader pierced his body with a lance. The following year Brother Juan de San Nicolás was killed in a sinking incident provoked by the natives. In 1628, some natives in the vicinity penetrated Cagayan, "killing a lot of people there" and "taking with them more than sixty young boys and girls as captives. "Raving mad, they arrived at the convent and robbed everything they

found of value in the church and sacristy, murdered eight Christian natives found there. They entered the room of a priest to slay him, but the latter, aware of his fury and of what a terrible weapon the *kampilan* was and how it could tear everything to pieces, came out of it miraculously without any of them seeing him.”⁴

In spite of everything, their fatiguing efforts did not end up fruitless. They fell on fertile land and bore fruit in abundant harvest which nevertheless is impossible to quantify yet. The statistical figures compiled by Father Toribio Minguella in the 19th century—repeated so many times by subsequent historians—posited a more in-depth analysis.⁵ As of today, we can only affirm that they baptized some thousand natives who had given new encouragement to some already existent towns and founded some: Tandag, Butuan, Cagayan, Gigaquit, Bacuag, Jabonga, Tago, Bislig, Linao, Siargao and others.

It is not easy to enumerate the causes of this success. The religious conversion was developed in the sanctuary of the human conscience and, without denying the strong influence of environmental factors, it depended in the final analysis upon the very free will of God and upon human collaboration. We cannot doubt the influence of the conversion of the old cacique who was vehemently opposed to anything Spanish, Datu Inuc of Marihatag, who surrendered to the apostolic intrepidity of Father Juan de la Madre de Dios. We can as well single them out in the gradual cracking of the psychological, social and religious security of the natives before the pressure by the new rulers, by the undeniable religious zeal of the missionaries and perhaps even by the existent rivalry between the natives and the Islamic believers of Cotabato, which constrained them to seek the Spaniards’ protection.

This first phase of the evangelization we may deem relatively tranquil remained brusquely interrupted by the revolt of the natives in July 1631. Within a span of a few days they sacked the towns, razed the convents to the ground, desecrated the sacred vessels and slew four missionaries—Jacinto de Jesús María, Juan de Santo Tomás, Alonso de San José and Pedro de San Antonio—and captured two:

⁴ Pedro de Santiago, *Relación*, 12r.

⁵ Toribio Minguella, *Conquista Espiritual de Mindanao por los agustinos recoletos. Cuadros estadísticos*, in *La Ciudad de Dios* 9 (1885) 24-32, cited 21,300 baptisms administered by the Recollects in 1622 and part of 1623.

Lorenzo de San Facundo and Francisco de San Fulgencio. These two saved their lives, thanks to the unexpected protection of Mangabo, one of the leaders of the revolt. Traditional historiography considers these religious as martyrs. But perhaps the motives that aroused their wrath and that raised the arms of rebellion were not entirely religious in nature. Along the corpses of the religious, there were scores of slain soldiers and encomenderos, and during the exaction of the tribute there were small boats owned by Recollects which were loaded with rice.

With a small fleet organized in Cebu, Captain Juan de Chaves restored order but not the tranquility in the area. The natives continued to be restive for several years. In 1635, they put to death the commander of the Tandag fort and laid ambush to his successor. Referring to this same year, the Recollect chronicler writes that “tranquility was nothing” (*Crónicas* 3, 364). Not long afterward, the Dutch threat forced the government to intensify the fiscal pressure, with the ensuing discontentment of the natives. In Linao they assassinated Father Agustín de Santa María (1651) and in Camiguin they repeatedly affronted their parish priest. In 1659, the priestess Salud attracted a good number of Cagayan natives whom she urged to rise up in arms against Spain and the missionaries. Another priestess appeared shortly afterward in Bislig. And towards 1679 Montano and his followers reduced the *kumbento* of Cagayan to ashes.

RELIGIOUS KILLED IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Name	Year	Place	Manner of death
Miguel de la Madre de Dios	1607	Zambales	Stoned to death
Alonso de San Agustín	1612	Zambales	Lanced
Juan de la Madre de Dios	1623	Mindanao	Lanced
Juan de San Nicolás	1624	Mindanao	Cast to the sea
Jacinto de Jesús María	1631	Mindanao	Stabbed to death
Juan de Santo Tomás	1631	Mindanao	Lanced
Alonso de San José	1631	Mindanao	Beheaded
Pedro de San Antonio	1631	Mindanao	Lanced

Francisco de Jesus María	1636	Palawan	In a battle
Juan de San Nicolás	1637	Palawan*	Hanged
Alonso de San Agustín	1637	Palawan*	Knifed to death
Francisco de Santa Mónica	1638	Palawan	Lanced
Francisco de la Madre de Dios	1638	Palawan	Struck in the head
Juan de San Antonio	1640	Jolo	In prison
Martin de la Ascensión	1645	Jolo	In prison
Agustín de Santa María	1651	Mindanao	Lanced
Alonso de la Madre de Dios	1650		Lanced
Diego de Santa Ana	1652	Palawan	Died of hunger
Antonio de San Agustín	1658	At sea**	Lanced
Francisco de San José	1668	Romblon	In a battle

* A Palawan missionary, he died in prison in Mindanao.

** On his return from a visit to Palawan.

Sources: *Estado general de la Orden 1936*, Madrid 1936, *Introducción*; SÁDABA, *Catálogo*, Madrid 1906.

Furthermore, the minister’s relationship with the Spanish authorities was somewhat tense on account of the different ways of dealing with the Indios. Pedro Rojas de San José (†1651) defended them against the abuses of the *alcalde* of Tandag. In 1651, the “Padre Capitán” sped up the liberation of a good number of Caragas and Manobos who had been reduced to slavery on account of the past revolt. In 1657 and 1658, the provincial authorities negotiated similar decrees against the monetary penalties imposed upon the Indios and against the encomenderos’ excesses. The cacique Montano likewise owed his freedom to the missionaries’ mediation and his journey back to Cagayan (1713). Such humanitarian interventions by the missionaries were not to the liking of the encomenderos who contrived some kind of revenge. In 1647, they obtained through misleading information the demolition of the church and kumbento of Tandag, and immediately afterwards (1651) came the solemn rebuke by the king, which accused the religious

of having vehemently opposed such demolition and of having favored the flight of the Indios to the mountains (*Crónicas* 3, 135-137).

These revolts and confrontations made the missionaries' effort fraught with hardships. They did not, however, paralyze it. It is rather surprising to know the speed with which they restored the *doctrinas* ruined during the revolt and reconstructed the churches and convents that had been earlier razed to the ground. More laborious was the recomposition of the social and religious fabric.

The children and the *principales* took a privileged position in the ministers' daily activities. The missionaries in the Philippines immediately took cognizance of the importance of attracting principales. Juan de Medina, a missionary for twenty years (1610-1630) in the neighboring island of Panay, took note of it with total clarity: "Our religious saw how great it was that the principales were baptized because since all the Indians hearken to them, it was for them [missionaries] a matter of great edification to view them embrace the law that we were teaching them." They had already felt it in Caraga at the outset. The conversion of Inuc (1622) had paved the way for the baptism of hundreds of non-believers. Towards 1670, the conversion of another principal, Puig Matanda, would facilitate that of the Manobos of the mountains of Agusan (*Crónicas* 3, 345-346). The children had always been the fast route to reach the hearts of parents. Furthermore, they offered the unique virgin field where the seed could sprout without the risk of being suffocated by malice. In order to win over their will, they made a very especial use of catechesis, school and songs.

Catechesis did not bother completely with theoretical basis of religion and it almost exclusively rested upon the repetitious recitation of some prayers and the fundamental truths of Christianity. The magnificence of worship—especially during Holy Week, Feast of Corpus Christi and the fiestas honoring the patron saints of every town, the chanting of the Passion and the Rosary, the groups of flagellants, the activities of some *cofradías* and eventually the mock demonstration of the helplessness of their old gods—brought about its efficacy. Somewhat frequently the religious further resorted to more violent means, such as the strict vigilance by the *fiscales*, the reading of the register during Sunday Masses and even public bodily chastisement. Tomás de San Jerónimo (1682) had words of praise for Father Juan de San Felipe

(†1690) who in Calamianes had recourse more than once to floggings in order to promote attendance at Sunday Masses. Eugenio de los Santos (†1681), the first Recollect minister of Naujan (Mindoro), was attacked by a principal whose conduct he had rebuked in public (*Crónicas* 4, 389).

Sacramental life was somewhat feeble. On principle, all the natives were excluded from the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The uniqueness of the minister of Confirmation and the immensity of the dioceses in the Philippines made its reception practically impossible. In 1668, the Jesuit Ignacio Alcina disclosed that during his thirty years of sojourn in Samar he had not seen any bishop at all. During the first half of the 17th century, Negros Island had experienced one sole episcopal visit. It is not improbable that Palawan or Mindanao had suffered the same plight. The administration of the Viaticum gave rise to a very protracted controversy among missionaries and civil as well as religious authorities. The former, out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, demanded the transfer of the sick to the church and the latter censured such practice which they branded as inhuman. It is necessary to say that the missionaries' attitude prevailed, which after all what the only way possible. Some provincial chapters at the end of the 17th century as well as the very *Modo de administrar* (1709 edition, 20-21) gave the impression that they bowed to the will of the government, but in reality the missionaries persisted in their convictions. In 1665 and 1668, the missionaries of Butuan and Cagayan, respectively, erected the hospitals in two towns to attend to the sick and thus to facilitate the reception of the Viaticum. None of the two, however, had any major success. Father Cristóbal de Santa Mónica (1647-1650) earlier constructed another hospital in Masinloc. Rather more frequent was the Unction of the Sick, to which the missionaries exerted special attention.

Annual confession and communion were conscientiously implemented, and the missionaries took pains to prepare the faithful with utmost care. Those confessions and communions out of devotion were a privilege for some chosen souls who ordinarily belonged to the Confraternity of the Cincture or to the Augustinian Recollect Third Order [*orden tercera*]. The chroniclers recount the lives of some *mantelatas* or *beatas*: Clara Caliman (†1639) and Isabel (†1646) in Butuan and Rosa de la Cruz (†1647) in Surigao. These beatas attended the Divine Office,

devoted time for mental prayer, read pious books, some of which were written or translated by the religious themselves, received communion thrice a week and served the poor and the church as teachers, nurses or extraordinary catechists (2 *Crónicas* 2, 296-297, 371-372). In most of the doctrinas the Blessed Sacrament was not kept. In 1582 Father Tomás de San Jerónimo wrote that only in six doctrinas of the Order there was “a continuous repository of the sovereign Sacrament of the Eucharist.” In Mindanao they had one in Tandag, and probably another in Butuan.

During this period the number of outstanding missionaries in Mindanao rarely surpassed ten. There were ten in 1655 who were distributed in five residences, from which they administered some 10,000 Christians, scattered in 30 towns and in several thousands of square kilometers. The two religious of Tandag also administered the *presidio* of the place and population centers of Cantilan, Tago, Marihatag and Lianga; those of Butuan served Jabonga, Arwayan, Linao, Hibong, Odyongang and the reduced Manobos; those of Cagayan reached Iponan, Tagoloan, Compot and Camiguin; those of Siargao were responsible to Sapao, Cabuntog, Bacuag, Gigaquit, Bolor and Surigao; and those of Bislig attended to Hinatuan, Cateel and Baganga. All of them had under their jurisdiction groups, more or less numerous, of non-believers and undocumented natives.

In 1671, the provincial Juan de San Felipe assigned a missionary to Cateel for the sole purpose of promoting, in collaboration with the *doctrineros* of Bislig, the evangelization of the neighboring non-believers. In a few years they succeeded in reducing more than a thousand of them (*Crónicas* 4, 288-289). These non-believers shared with the Christians the same hatred for the Moro, who had begun to seriously vex their daily lives. Nevertheless, the systematic raids by the Moros against Caraga would only start several lustrums later.



Augustinian Recollect Missions in Mindanao in the 18th Century¹

Ángel Martínez Cuesta, OAR

Translated from the Spanish by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Moros piratical raids against Recollect missions

Shipwrecks and endless raids by the Moros were the two causes of deaths and illnesses of Augustinian Recollect missionaries. Between 1720 and 1750 thirteen perished at the hands of the Moros: “One died by spears in Linapacan; another was poisoned and died in Taytay; another by a gunshot wound at the fort of Taytay [Palawan]; another captured in Mindoro and brutally killed in Tirong; still another mercilessly treated and was ransomed for eight-hundred pesos; and eight perished due to hostile conditions in their escape to the mountains” (*Crónicas*, 7, 552). The subsequent decades were no less catastrophic. Between 1752 and 1754, the Moros captured sixteen religious,

“six of whom were ruthlessly killed, three died a natural death in Moro captivity and others were rescued after huge sums of money was paid. The last one they seized and taken captive, in 1784 [...] was able to flee from them, but so injured and weakened for the pains he suffered that upon regaining his freedom he had the consolation of dying among Christians and receiving the holy

¹ *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*, vol. I: *Desde los orígenes hasta el siglo XIX* (Madrid 1995) 536-547, 599-601, 610-615.

sacraments of our holy Mother the Church, for having died in a town of religious folks of Leyte Island where he luckily escaped [...] Many other ministers who had been freed from captivity suffered a great deal in other circumstances, constrained several times to take refuge in the bowels of the mountains, laden with needs, miseries and nakedness, totally losing their health and becoming a mere relic of their usual ailment [...] Others drowned in the trip from one ministry to another” (*Crónicas* 8, 411-412).

Table 1. Religious killed by the Moros in the 18th century

Year	Name	Place
1723	Benito de San José	Cateel
1753	José de la Virgen del Niño Perdido	Siargao
1754	Antonio del Santo Cristo de Burgos	Bislig
1755	Antonio del Sto. Cristo del Desamparo*	Tandag
1764	Esteban de San José	Bislig
1770	José de Santa Teresa (Caspé)	Surigao
1808	Alonso de San José	At sea

* Died in captivity

Sources: *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás* 9 (1918) 440, 10 (1919) 618-620; *Crónicas* 3, 355-356b; 7, 314-323, 378, 428-431, 525, 683, 689; 8, 24-25, 157-159, 252-253, 344; 9, 125-126; *SÁDABA*, 216-218, 281, 283, 326; *Cartas* 1, 137r.

Some religious were subjected to untold tortures. The Moros dragged Fr. León de San José, missionary of Ililim (Mindoro) along the coast, they then tied him to a post and afterward mutilated him in a most horrendous manner. Slowly they chopped off his legs, arms, nose, ears, etc., and later hurled his lifeless torso to the sea. In 1736, the Moros disinterred the cadaver of Fr. Diego de la Virgen del Camino, *doctrinero* of Mangarin (Mindoro) and cast it to the sea. Years after, Fr. José de la Virgen del Niño Perdido was ripped to pieces.

Table 2. Religious held Captive: 1700-1800		
Year	Name	Place
1753	José A. de la Santísima Trinidad	Gigaquit
1755	Rodrigo de los Dolores	Surigao
1769	José de San Joaquín	Butuan

Sources: SÁDABA, *Catálogo*, 211-212, 246-248, 291, 295, 307, 321, 329; *Crónicas* 8, 24-25.

In the last fifteen years of the century not a single religious perished at the hands of the Moros, and the number of captives dropped dramatically. In 1785 one friar was taken captive. He was quickly rescued but he could not overcome the privations he suffered; he died as soon as he was set free. Fr. Joaquín de San José, seized at Inabangan, Bohol, in 1790, was more fortunate. After he regained his freedom, he was assigned to Tagbilaran as curate.

The devastation of their towns, nonetheless, went on unabated year after year. The letters from provincials seemed like war chronicles. At one time or another they spoke of deaths and captivities, of the need to exempt the natives from tribute, of the damage on their dwellings and farms, of the construction of bulwarks and forts, of the distribution of arms, clothing and food supplies, etc. A letter dated 12 June 1796 attests to the death of 150 parishioners and the capture of four hundred during “these two years [...] in the towns under our administration.” In succeeding years the brutality of the attacks somewhat diminished, but from July 1797 to the same month of 1797, the death of eighty people and the captivity of two hundred others had to be mourned.

The war commenced in 1719, after the restoration of the fortress at Zamboanga, thereby bringing to a close an interval of peace that started in 1680. It set off a new era of terror, desolation and death. The Moros who were irked by the reopening of the stronghold, renewed their raids against the Christian communities in the Visayas. Year after year, Joloans, Maguindanaos, Maranaos and Tirones embarked on their fast sea craft and raided the defenseless Christian towns, spreading devastation and death.

The worst misfortune befell on the Recollect *doctrinas* small, helpless and so very near the Moros’ natural bases of operations. Palawan, Mindanao, Mindoro and Romblon were endless targets of their forays.

In some areas of Romblon, Palawan and Mindoro the Moros even set up permanent bases.

In 1720, as soon as the fort of Labo (Palawan) was dismantled, the Moros commenced their gruesome raids. They burned the Linapacan church down, razed the town to the ground, seized a huge number of natives “and inflicted a cruel death to Fr. Manuel de Jesús María.” In 1722, they pillaged Agutaya (Palawan) and Manaol (Mindoro) and laid siege on the fort in Cateel (Mindanao). In 1730, they landed at Taytay, *cabecera* of Calamianes, defying the fort there which did not in any way prevent them from taking over the town. After twenty-one days of siege and setting fire to the church, the *kumbento* and all the houses, “they withdrew contented and loaded with captives and spoils.”

In 1731 and 1732, it was the turn of Culion, Dumaran and Calatan, wherefrom the Moros headed to the shores of Mindoro. In 1734, they again went to attack the fort of Taytay and, when they saw “they could take over said royal fort, they set the town hall and its adjacent buildings afire, razed the plants and farms and captured over six hundred Christians.” In the skirmish a bullet hit the heart of Fr. Antonio de Santa Ana and the three other religious perished “as a result of the incalculable deprivations they suffered [...] when they trekked and fled to the mountains, naked, barefoot and burdened with chalices and sacred vessels, after feeding on wild herbs for some days” (*Crónicas*, 3, 371).

In the ensuing years Palawan was at the mercy of the Moros, “who go in and out as if they were in their own house, without experiencing the least resistance. [...] All the natives had ensconced themselves in the mountains and so dispersed were they that not even the ministers know where their sheep had gone, nor do the parents know the whereabouts of their children, nor do the women have knowledge of their husbands’ whereabouts.”² In August 1734, the missionary of Taytay confided to the father provincial in a letter: “May your reverence, as father of the province, gaze at us with eyes of mercy, for it has been two years that I have not gone out to administer the sacraments on account of the Moros, and I do not know the whereabouts now of many adults who have been taught catechism in Paragua (Palawan)” (*Crónicas*, 7, 304).

² JOSÉ DE LA CONCEPCIÓN, *Memorial de 1738*, ARCHIVO GENERAL DE LAS ORDEN DE AGUSTINOS RECOLETOS, Rome, carpeta 77, legajo 3, no. 29.

In 1738, only 1,800 settled families have been left in the entire Palawan. The number of Palaweños who fell into the hands of the Moros between 1720 and 1737 went up to 2,000 (*Crónicas* 7, 375).

In the years that followed Mindoro was the most chastised. In October 1739, a squadron of sixteen to eighteen caracoas invaded the island and devastated the towns of Bulalacao, Ililim and Mangarin. This last town was reduced into miserable hole of twenty survivors. In April of the next year, the Moros stationed at the most strategic points in the island and choked the trade of the Visayan islands with Manila. In 1746, they went on “laying waste on the towns and provinces and capturing all kinds of people.” In provinces administered by Recollects the dead and captives already rose to more than 10,000 souls (*Crónicas*, 7, 443).

In 1749 they reached up to Zambales where “they could not play havoc because all the towns were armed with great caution,” and Caraga, “which we considered to be much secured. [...] In that region, they torched seven towns: Gompot, Guinsiliban and Balingoan, *visitas* or annex villages of the district of Cagayan; Gingoog and Tubay, *visitas* of Butuan; Sapao and Cabuntog, *visitas* of Siargao. All the *kumbentos*, churches and houses of said towns were reduced to ashes, and they seized more than three hundred people in the whole province of Caraga” (*Cartas*, 1, 27r).

The decade of the 1750s was still most tragic, especially from 1752 to 1755. With the incarceration of their kind in the early part of 1751, and perhaps because of it, the Joloans abandoned their long period of neutrality and joined their fellow believers. The old raids, always headed by the Tirones and other marginal groups, became a sort of holy war that ruined a great part of the Recollect ministries. In that same year the first alarm sounded. In November 1751, they attacked Mindoro and stayed in the island for several months. “For the fourth time they burned down the *kumbento*, church and town of Calavite, robbed all what was there, even the sacred ornaments; they had left the island so devastated that only two towns of the island were left: Naujan and Calapan” (*Crónicas*, 7, 612).

For three subsequent years the Moro attack acquired alarming proportions. At one time or another they scoured Palawan, Romblon, Maestre Island, Masbate and Mindoro and the powerful blows fell on Mindoro and Caraga.

Mindoro, already brutally chastised, was razed. In 1753, the Moros reached even Calapan, whose parish priest was taken prisoner and led to Mindanao and Jolo where he died. A good part of its inhabitants fled to the islands of Luzon, Marinduque and Panay. The rest took off to the mountains, where for some months Fr. Tomás de Santiago gave them company. In July 1755, not a single church was left standing.

The Moros burned Caraga in Mindanao where they desecrated the Blessed Sacrament and devastated the districts of Siargao and Butuan together with its ten visitas. In Siargao they made forts to explore the mines with the captives' labor and took advantage of the strategic situation of Surigao that gave them control over the maritime movement of the area. The doctrinas of Tandag and Bislig were incommunicado. These raids proved fatal for some religious who lost either their lives or their freedom.

The behavior of some religious was heroic. Dozens of religious stayed alongside their faithful, day by day sharing their perils and anxieties, living in bamboo and nipa dwellings, nourishing themselves with root crops and taking charge of their defense. They were aware that they were the only ones capable of gathering forces, joining together their resources and organizing defenses: "When there are no religious in the town, there is no more control nor advice for the defense against the Moros." When defense was next to impossible, the ministers escaped with their flock to the mountains which were at all times the safest refuge. The valor and the military expertise of some religious guaranteed the survival of not a few towns as well as the perseverance of the people in the Faith. In the period of greatest abandonment, the prior provincial was able to assure the vicar general of the fidelity of his religious to the mission committed to them:

Despite the fact that we have no more houses nor churches nor towns in Mindoro Island and in other districts [Caraga and Masbate], every religious minister acts like a soldier of Christ Jesus, standing guard in his assignment for the spiritual consolation and solace of the few Christians left [...] *Heb* 11:34-35. This doctrine now serves the only palliative to our pain for having made us in a way similar to the primitive teachers and preachers of the Faith (*Cartas* 2, 117v-118r).

Pastoral work

In Mindanao, the pastoral activity of the Recollect missionaries continued around the five ministries handed down from the 17th century: Cagayan, Butuan, Siargao, Tandag and Bislig. But the geographical area was not always the same and in periods—more or less lengthy—they also counted on other centers of evangelization. In 1746, Camiguin Island finally was separated from Cagayan and it became the sixth Recollect ministry in the region. Years earlier, in 1723, at the request of Fr. Juan de la Concepción, the province opened another *misión viva* among the mountain dwellers of Pinagavían and Tagoloan, in the northeastern portion of Cagayan. In 1753, the minister of Siargao transferred his residence to Surigao, which after years of hesitation and doubts, was promoted to be the fixed *cabecera* of the *doctrina* and administrative capital of the province. The 1755 chapter separated Tubay, Jabonga and Mainit from the doctrina of Butuan and out of them a new doctrina was created which survived only until 1767 or 1768. More ephemeral still were the vicariates of Calagdan and Gigaquit, erected in 1746 and suppressed three years after, in the same way with Siargao which was reestablished in 1758 and closed again in 1761. The missions of Fr. Hipólito de San Agustín (†1746) among the mountain dwellers of Batinay or Mobo lasted only from 1737 to 1742. The same priest had previously worked with the Muslim inhabitants in Lake Lanao (1734-1736). The province made some negotiations to establish a mission there, but the government did not allow it since it fell under the territorial jurisdiction assigned to the Jesuits.

The missions of Pinagavian had more hopeful beginnings. In 1725, there were already three hundred non-believers baptized. But again more obstacles that impeded their development surged forth soon. The proximity of the Muslims did not favor the work of the missionaries, and the principales of Cagayan did not look at it with favor either since the progress of upland residents would go against their business interests (*Crónicas* 7, 191-192). In 1729 they went to the extent of incarcerating and flogging the chiefs who wanted to go to Manila to give a report of the state of the mission. In 1740, the mission was already in crisis, and the province decided to pull out one of the two religious who were ministering to it. In 1750, the provincial publicly confessed that the mission had “not been able to attain [...] the growth that it had offered

in the beginning [...] because of the endless tattle and suspicions of those of the district of Cagayan and mountains of its district among Christians, non-believers and Muslims of the adjoining areas.” But this did not mean that all was fruitless. From that mission, the town of Tagulanao was created. This was located three leagues upstream from Cagayan which in 1750 was home to about 400 Christians. On that date the mission had seventy Christian families, 150 neophytes “who did not pay tribute yet” and hundreds of catechumens.

Until 1731 each doctrina was administered by a prior and one or two companions who ordinarily lived together at the cabecera. One of them used to stay always behind at the cabecera while the others dispersed themselves in the visitas or annex villages. The 1731 chapter had an ordinance that ignored the communitarian character of the congregation and the apostolic fruitfulness of a secular formula, dismembered the nuclear communities to put fixed ministers in populated settlements. There is no exact news about the application of that ordinance. Probably, it was not decisively and consistently implemented because in 1738 complaints against the concentration of ministers at the cabecera abounded.

Nonetheless, it had broken a tradition that was over a hundred years old and prepared the way for ordinances of the chapters of 1738, 1740 and 1746 that imposed the doctrinas of one sole personnel. In these years and during these more or less protracted periods there was a resident minister in Camiguin, Gingoog, Surigao, Calagdan [now Cortes], Bayuyo [today San Agustín] and Cateel.

Changes in the pastoral map, 1768-1800

On 5 October 1768, Don Felipe Ilagorri, *corregidor* of Iligan, gave notice of the expulsion order to the six Jesuits of the province. Three months later, on 15 January 1769, the royal decree reached the two Jesuits of Zamboanga. Between the eight of the Jesuits, they ministered to 10,000 souls, distributed among the four military garrisons (Zamboanga, Dapitan, Iligan and Misamis) and two mission stations (Bayuc and Lubungan). Their posts were occupied by eight Augustinian Recollects who fixed their residence in the same places.

There are no news about the state of mind with which the Recollects took charge of the southeastern region of Mindanao. Apparently, they were carried away by euphoria and nostalgia, happy to assist in the realization of a long-cherished dream. Suddenly and with no pressure exerted on their part, the spiritual care of the whole island was entrusted to them again, since the whole northeastern part was never abandoned by them for a moment. In 1768, the Recollects maintained in them eight religious who ministered to 14,000 inhabitants distributed among six parishes, namely, Camiguin, Cagayan, Butuan, Surigao, Tandag and Bislig, with their visitas or annex villages, and the mission of Pinagavian. Unfortunately, the path to reunification was sown with anti-Jesuit intolerance and violence. On the other hand, the province worked with a certain rash haste, without taking into consideration the heaviness of the burden it had assumed.

The island of Mindanao was at the threshold of collapse. The Moros traversed its coasts with impunity and sacked its towns, very small and defenseless in posing an effective resistance. Their fast sea craft made fun of the sentinels and surprised the inhabitants again and again, wreaking havoc on their harvests, destroying their houses and causing scores of victims. These victims felt abandoned, without any refuge but the thickness of the mountains. The missionaries did not approve of their flight on account of the politico-religious consequences it entailed. Many missionaries set up fortifications, organized corps of volunteer soldiers and used up a good part of their stipends in the acquisition of the most indispensable weapons. In 1790, the provincial Joaquín Encabo de la Virgen de Sopetrán distributed among the towns of Caraga a supply of equipment: “To the pueblo of Cantilan a cannon of four, three of two and one of one; to the pueblos in the island of Siargao, two falconets of two, and one of one; to the district of Bislig, two falconets of two and one of a half; to the new town of Gingoog, a falconet of one, with sufficient number of bullets and cartridge bags for the abovementioned cannons.”

Nevertheless, their opposition could not be total and, of course, it turned out very ineffectual. Several pueblos south of Caraga district—like Caraga and Baganga—disappeared. Others became miserable villages of thirty, forty or fifty families, without amenities of any kind.

The missionaries' fate was the same one suffered by their faithful. Majority remained exposed to the elements, without house, without church, with the parishioners scattered in the mountains and farms. "The old houses of our doctrinas in the provinces of Calamianes, Iligan and Caraga," the provincial bewailed in a letter to the vicar general on 7 July 1793, "all, except one, have been reduced to rubble by the Moros, and we necessarily lived in a greatest need of shelter and clothing" (*Cartas* 2, 137r). The scattering of the population multiplied the ministerial tasks and diminished their fruits. On the one hand, they were forced to go in continuous movement; and, on the other hand, it was the best fertilizer for the growth of weeds and syncretism.

Far from the priest, the sacraments and the rigid socio-religious regulations of the settlement, in continuous contact with non-believers and, sometimes with the Muslims, the religious life of the *remontados* was exposed to grave snares. Not a few times it was reduced to a vague pietism, mixed with a thousand superstitions and compromises with his Malay ancestral world. They formed hybrid mixture of Christian ideas and pagan practices. A number of *remontados* were born, lived and died without the aid of religion.

The missionaries tried to put a stop to these hazards. Once in a while they climbed mountains and penetrated their fields. But their visits were too sporadic and did not reach all the fugitives. The missionaries baptized them, legitimized their unions and encouraged them to go back to the practice of Christian life. For a more protracted and systematic teaching, rarely did they have time. In reality, the education and Christian life of the group were at the mercy of the zeal and training of some pious person who fortunately was not lacking in any town. The person presided over the recitation of the rosary every Sunday, taught the young children the basic prayers and even administered "baptism of water" to new-born babies.

In June 1779, in Mansalay (Mindoro) Fr. Francisco del Portillo found a community of Mangyans who gathered together inside the church every holy day for the communal prayer of the rosary and the chanting of the *Salve*. There was even someone in charge of baptizing the new-born children. Desirous of assuring the validity of those sacraments, the missionary asked them about the formula and the intention, and "a servant of Fr. [José de] Santa Orosia replied that what they recited was

the formula of baptism, and he recited it in Castilian Spanish; that upon pronouncing it and not before or after they poured water; that they did it with the intention of doing what was instituted by Christ, by the Church, and what was taught by the priests. I asked them if in Bulalacao and Dongon there was someone who knew how to do the same thing, and they answered me that there were several of them.”³

The first practice was prevalent in the archipelago. At the close of the century we have a testimony of their ritual in effect in Mindanao. The neophytes gathered by Fr. Juan de los Dolores in the barrio of Quiliog (Cagayan) met regularly every Sunday in a small warehouse-chapel to pray the rosary and study the doctrine. The second practice should not be exceptional at all, since it was insistently recommended in all the editions of the *Modo de administrar*. I now transcribe the provision from the 1729 edition of the *Modo de administrar* in effect until 1792:

In every pueblo of their ministry the minister must give the head fiscal and those who worked as midwives the formula of administering this holy sacrament in writing, advising them that they must have the intention and that when they pour water on the child the formula must be simultaneously said. In this very important matter, the zealous minister shall put those who might be necessary so that in emergency cases there would somebody who might administer it for the well-being of souls.⁴

The *Modo de administrar* of 1729 advised the use of the formula in the mother tongue: “It shall be good that the formula shall be learned in their mother tongue.”

To these difficulties could be added the dearth of ministers. In reality, the lack of personnel was an endemic ailment of the province, if not congenital. However, at the close of the 18th century, with the widening of the apostolic field and the simultaneous deterioration of the plight of vocations and missions in Spain, this dearth of missionaries acquired alarming proportions. The most critical phase extended from 1780 to 1786 and it constrained the province to part with the ministries of Mindoro and Zambales.

³ Letter of Fr. Francisco del Portillo to the provincial, Cápiz, 17 July 1779, ARCHIVO GENERAL DE INDIAS, *Filipinas* 1054A, 51r.

⁴ *Modo de administrar* 1729, f. 20r, ARCHIVO HISTÓRICO PROVINCIAL DE LA PROVINCIA DE SAN NICOLÁS, MARCILLA, NAVARRA, legajo 61, no. 2.

Such circumstances could not but be reflected in Mindanao as well. By mid-1784 solely two religious weighed down by maladies were working in the whole province of Caraga. “Valero de San Agustín, 56 years of age and 26 in parochial administration, who was attacked with some sudden illness and had received the extreme unction, according to the latest news I had of him,” was in charge of Tandag and its four visitas, “Calagdan, Bayuyo, Cantulinan and Lianga, with a distance of about twenty leagues away from the cabecera.” José de Santa Teresa, “46 years of age and thirteen in parish administration, always attacked by sudden ailment, and continuously vomiting blood,” administered Cateel with its adjoining visitas of Hinatuan and Baganga which were twenty leagues away from the cabecera. Surigao and Butuan, with three and six visitas respectively, had no priests. In Iligan and Zamboanga, the plight was not very hopeful either.

In 1784 there were six priests whose residences were at Mambajao (Camiguin), Cagayan, Misamis, Dapitan, Lubungan and Zamboanga. In the following year the number had already been reduced to four. The succeeding years witnessed a significant improvement with the arrival of eighty new Recollects in the Philippines in 1786-1797. With these priests, it was then possible to administer Iligan, Butuan and Surigao once again. In 1798, sixteen Recollects were working in Mindanao: two in Zamboanga, eight in the five ministries of Iligan, Camiguin, Cagayan, Misamis, Dapitan and Lubungan; and six in the four ministries of Caraga: Butuan, Surigao, Cantilan and Bislig. In 1776, there were fifteen.

Table 3. Doctrinas with Tributes and Population in Mindanao

	1770		1776		1785		1799	
	<i>Tributes</i>	<i>Souls</i>	<i>Tributes</i>	<i>Souls</i>	<i>Tributes</i>	<i>Souls</i>	<i>Tributes</i>	<i>Souls</i>
Bislig	420	1,700	470	2,100	346*		694	3,529
Tandag	500	2,050	500	2,500	706*		712	3,521
Surigao	669	2,864	669	3,345	710*		1,146	5,714
Butuan	657	2,868	657	3,285	469*		844	4,198
Camiguin	480	1,915	480	2,400	638*		675	3,058
Cagayan	560	2,280	560	2,800	570*		833	4,010

Pinagavian							140	825
Misamis	321	1,600		1,600		864	366	1,305
Iligan	300	1,200	95	75	90	2,309	246	1,118
Dapitan	603	2,810	400	2,000	381	864	740	4,957
Lubungan	300	1,700	300	1,500	200	1,138	559	2,096
Bayuc			300	1,650	128	629		
Zamboanga	328	2,010		2,010		704		3,557
Total	5,136	22,997	4,531	25,265	4,238		6,955	37,888

* The figures belong to the year 1784.

SOURCES: FIDEL DE BLAS, *Los agustinos recoletos en las islas Filipinas, Zaragoza 1910, 18-21; Recollectio 6 (1983) 331-345; ARCHIVO GENERAL DE INDIAS, Ultramar 668.*

With them, it was possible to even consider the heathens and *remontados*. In 1792, the parish priests of Butuan and Cagayan put themselves in contact with thousands of heathens who lived in the mountains of their respective districts. The provincial supported their activities and even proposed to the government the foundation of similar missions in them. Apparently, what became a reality was only that of Cagayan. The mission was established in the barrio of Quiliog in April 1793, thanks to the efforts of Fr. Juan de los Dolores who always worked in perfect harmony with the datus of the Christian region. This mission did not live up to its desired development, perhaps because it did not receive the needed attention. The ailments and parish activities did not allow the ailing Fr. Juan to visit it with appropriate regularity. In 1799 there were only eighty inhabitants who assembled every Sunday in a lowly, small chapel to pray the rosary and study catechism (*Crónicas* 9, 44). There was no news anymore about the thousands of heathens in the surroundings of Linao, who had promised the parish priest of Butuan to settle themselves in a town.

The efforts of the ministers of Dapitan and Lubungan were more successful. In 1798 they formed from the upland dwellers two towns with 600 and 300 souls. Fr. José de Santa Orosia had also successfully founded a mission dedicated to Saint John in Cape Bakulin with the Mandayas in adjoining areas. However, the planned repopulation of the old doctrinas of Caraga and Baganga with almost 2,000 Mandayas of

the vicinity failed partly because of the intransigence, greed and lack of tact of the *alcalde mayor* of Surigao and the other *doctrineros* de Bislig and Cantilan. But the main cause was doubtless the incapability of the government to guarantee their security against repeated raids by the Moros.⁵ The Pinagavian mission was attended to by the parish priest of Cagayan or his companion. In 1799, it had one hundred and forty families and 285 inhabitants lived in it. The mission of Bayuc was attached to that of Lubungan-Dipolog.



⁵ Peter SCHREURS, *Caraga Antigua. The Hispanization and Christianization of Agusan, Surigao and East Davao* (Cebu 1989) 250-267.

A Contemporary Account of the Dagohoy Rebellion in Bohol¹

Juan de la Concepción OAR (1724-1786)²

Translated from the Spanish and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Furthermore, the [provincial governor] José Romo consulted an order of this administration [office of the governor general] found in the archive on the destruction by sword and fire of the mountains, places or towns³ where a rebel native⁴ named Dagohoy of Bohol Island, the main cause of the sacrilegious and violent deaths of two Jesuit priests, its ministers, might be found and on the followers of that rebel, about whom no news had been received by this administration whether they had been vanquished or not.

¹ JUAN DE LA CONCEPCIÓN OAR, *Historia general de Philipinas* (Sampaloc Manila 1788-1792). This account is found in volume 14, chapter 3, pages 79-107. The complete title of this 14-volume masterpiece is *Conquistas espirituales y temporales de los españoles dominios, establecimientos, progresos, y decadencias. Comprende los imperios, reynos, y provincias, de Islas y continentes con quienes ha habido comunicación, y comercio por inmediatas coincidencias. Con noticias universales geográficas, hidrográficas, de historia natural, de política, de costumbres y religiones lo que deba interesarse tan universal título..*

² Fray Juan de la Concepción's biography is found at the end of this article.

³ This obviously refers to the military strategy whose objective is to destroy anything useful to the enemy.

⁴ Indio is rendered as *native* here in this translation, not *Indian*.

The order from the Office of the Superior Government had been disseminated in those areas referring to their indult or amnesty on which it was based at that time it was complied with. Its implementation was not done for dearth of soldiers endowed with valor and loyalty. And even if there might be those soldiers, it was excessively inconvenient to leave them exposed to the enemies in view of the fact that their mountain fortress was so sophisticated. If it pleased his Excellency to send to them reinforcement of twenty-five men from this office equipped with arms whose expenses he would defray from his own pocket and together with them he would seek the rebel. It was decreed as regards the preceding orders that had been circulated and they had deemed to agree in but no account of its end-result they had been informed about. There was neither information on what had been prohibited, discontinued or suspended temporarily nor of the rescheduling of the consultation made by the provincial governor.

The Jesuit Gaspar Benito Morales and the Rebel Francisco Dagohoy⁵

This rebellion about which a narrative has been already recorded but its particular origin had not been discussed for not having discovered the agencies which might explain its beginnings and causes, and not wishing to leave the history on this topic incomplete, the Recollect priests have thoroughly informed me about what happened to the Jesuit fathers in the ministry of Bohol, what its narrative and information were, and it was convenient to have other extrajudicial reports already available.



Dagohoy as depicted by
Rosalio Ortiz of Jagna, Bohol

⁵ For a detailed discussion, see *The Dagohoy Rebellion (1744-1829)*, in Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos, *History of Bohol (1521-19377. Essays, Notes and Sources* (Manila 2022) 276-289.

The district of Inabangan was spiritually administered by the Jesuit Fr. Morales⁶ who was endowed with a strong personality and harsh temperament, exacting in his resolve much more than what was endured by the natives who were more bellicose than all the others in the Island. His provincial might have assigned this priest there in order to subjugate and bring them under control. His harshness went on and the natives showed up before the rector of the residence so that as vicar provincial he might restrain (Fr. Morales') violent outbursts or might transfer him to another town. This the superior could not do this because Fr. Morales was exempted in the general licenses, so the qualms continued. Nevertheless, the natives did not dare break openly because the priest was extremely fearless and did not live unprepared for their depraved intentions that threatened nothing less than his own life.

Constable Sagarino Seeks the Fugitive and He Is Slain in Combat

The town of Talibon was an annex to Inabangan and in this town there was a *remontado* and apostate, who did not confess nor receive communion. Neither did he attend Mass nor perform any act that a Christian was known for. Furthermore, the scandal was public and the damage he was inflicting on those adjoining towns already was so compulsory that his capture was inferred. Nobody had dared execute it on account of his reputation as dauntless. Nobody was bold enough to get in front of him. The priest—an intrepid one at that—strictly ordered the chief constable⁷ of that town to capture him. The orders of the priest were executory. And which of them was a less risky dilemma: incarceration or the infringement of such order?

[The constable] resolved to accomplish the former and set out to look for the fugitive from justice and when he found him he wanted to carry out the arrest order. In his bold resolve, he met his ill-fated end.

⁶ Gaspar Benito Morales of the Society of Jesus was parish priest of Talibon for four terms: 7 June 1741-2 April 1742; 10 April 1742-29 November 1743; 8 June 1744-8 October 1744 and 23 January 1745-25 April 1746. See Romanillos, *History of Bohol (1521-1937)*, 763.

⁷ The town constable was Sagarino, brother of Francisco Dagohoy according to Sotero Misa's masteral thesis *The Life and Struggle of Francisco Dagohoy: a Historical and Cultural Heritage to the Filipino People*, University of Bohol. Tagbilaran City 1970.

The rebel apostate was first to strike the blow which was so ferocious that he did not give the constable the strength to defend himself. The rebel was able to repeat more blows that put an end to his life. And the assailant withdrew to the mountain hideaway. The deceased has powerful relatives, and it was but natural for them to avenge such a nefarious death. And this fear forced him to continue his condition as fugitive. The indiscretion of Fr. Morales freed him from such a very serious hazard.

Dagohoy Asks Padre Morales to Bury His Brother's Body, but the Jesuit Wants *Arancel* Payment for it First

After receiving the news of the tragedy, his brother by the name of Dagohoy rushed to the place where it happened, retrieved the body and brought it down to the Población. He gave notice to the father minister and informed him that there was no other remedy but to bury him in the church. It was said that the priest asked the brother to pay the usual church fee.⁸ He excused himself from such church fee, saying that his death was not for that cause. There was sufficient reason to exonerate him from all the fees. The minister resisted in burying the cadaver on holy ground, declaring that he had died as an excommunicated one, in public challenge, hence he has incurred the penalties imposed on those involved in duels. Dagohoy replied that his brother did not have any plan to slay the fugitive. He only wanted to arrest him as he was mandated by the priest to do so. But because the constable obeyed his orders, he had lost his life; and it was bad payback to deny him church burial.

Amid these controversies the cadaver lay unburied for three days and the priest became all the more obstinate in not giving burial to the corpse. Hence what was expected happened: the cadaver became putrefied and was festering with worms and the stink became so unbearable already.

Dagohoy Cries For Justice

Dagohoy was very intensely hurt by the priest's irresponsible obstinacy; the love for his brother spurred him and that tragedy would not rouse any compassion for one who was the reckless cause.

⁸ *Limosna* in the original text is also called *arancel* which refers to the church fee paid for such services as baptism, wedding and burial.

He was an outstanding native, chief of a group of natives; he was very respected by them. He assembled them together and with a coarse but heart-rending eloquence he put his brother's misfortune into their consideration, that it was the most uncharitable act committed. And worse, if that Padre Morales himself was cause of the killing, yet he objected to burying him on sacred ground. Such inhuman and cruel act, such a wretched grievance should not remain without any redress. They might view and contemplate what might be most fitted for such a nefarious outrage. They replied that whatever he would propose that they would follow him with greatest eagerness.

Dagohoy Takes Up Arms

Dagohoy swore that he would only stop and desist from his vengeance until he saw Padre Morales' corpse putrefied in the same way he had consented to the contagious putrefaction of his own brother's. All his constituents swore then and there in their conspiracy and they presented themselves to him for its very speedy implementation. He inspired so much respect among the elders of these natives. They abandoned the town, adapted themselves to a rustic and maroon life in the mountains, fortifying their accesses and making them inaccessible. Furthermore, they declared themselves in rebellion against God, against the King and against the Fatherland. And they began annoying their neighbors: some three thousand souls of both sexes followed the perverse example of their leader Dagohoy, and submissively they rendered obedience to him. They recognized him as the absolute leader who ruled autocratically.

Jesuit Hacienda San Xavier is Raided by Rebels

The Jesuits owned in the vicinity an estate and hacienda named San Xavier, vast and well-stocked with cows, carabaos, horses and other domestic animals. They employed plenty of natives who worked there. The hacienda facilitated their subsistence in their escape. They further took advantage of everything of use to them and destroyed what was of no use. The common anxieties were the implementation of the oath that he was urging: there were numerous intense efforts to take the priest's life. In vain they were so extremely querulous about the priest because

he always lived exceptionally prepared and his valor and watchfulness did not give any chance to surreptitious daring acts.

The Jesuit Lamberti is Slain in Jagna

There was much thought about it. And it was rare that this vindictive spirit was no different in every nation whether it was against the offender or against another member of his group. Since they were unable to succeed in carrying out such vengeance against those who wronged them, they attempted to exact their vindictive wrath against the father minister of Jagna, Padre [Giuseppe] Lamberti, an adjusted and peace-loving religious who did not have anything to fear nor did he have suspicions and mistrust.

Padre Lamberti lived completely devoid of any caution. Dagohoy offered a carabao to a native of that town in order that with it [carabao] or at any other price he could contract marriage with someone he had promised to do. But he could not perform it for lack of resources. Then came along this condition if he would kill that good priest. The native did not renege on his agreement. And he confirmed the contract by giving Dagohoy his word to execute the death sentence. At such a loathsome price the life a religious minister was cut short just to satisfy his greed and Dagohoy's revenge.

Nonetheless, putting to death an innocent person caused him horror. He wavered in his various feelings: some emotions made him realize how awful was his action. Others made him see his non-compliance of his word of honor as this indeed would be so effective that its non-completion would have been unforgivable. Struggling with such thoughts, he consulted his [future] father-in-law on the matter: if the word he had given to comply such a horrifying execution might oblige him from the dispensation to accomplish it? Without wavering in his reply, the old man said to him yes, he was obligated to comply with what he had sworn to Dagohoy because it was improper for men not to fulfill what was once agreed upon.

With such an evil advice as this, the native remained very serene, and as if the resolution was what was already determined, he went to the house of the father minister with a dagger in his hand. It was the hour of Prime in the evening and at that time the priest was praying his devotions in his room. And standing by the door was a servant, a young

man. The native asked him: “Where is the father?” And he replied that the father was praying in his room. The native then entered the room and made the gesture of wishing to kiss his hand. When the priest gave him his hand, he stabbed his chest with the dagger. It was so violent and so accurate that the minister fell dead after breathing his last.

Padre Lamberti’s Murderer is Arrested

The murderer immediately fled the scene. And even the young doorkeeper who was horrified did not have the courage to remain in that place, not even to see for himself the fatal aggression. The majordomo or head servant then arrived at the customary time to prepare the dinner of the father minister. He found the deceased swimming in his own blood. He gave the report of the bizarre news to the mayor and justice of the town. And everything at once started to set in motion in order to make inquiries and find out the assailant. However, there were the least indications, and everything was in utter disarray. The murderer hiked the whole night in search of a place of refuge in the mountain. But, filled with dread, he got astray along the wrong paths, and since he was running away from himself he instead found himself in the same town in the morning.

The mayor was still deliberating with the town leaders on that they would agree to do in such a grave occasion, when the assailant presented himself in their midst. He was carrying a charcoal in his hand and in the presence of the Justice he declared very distraught and without being asked that it was not him who killed the priest. And to prove that it was that way, he carried that charcoal in order to draw on the palm of his hand the sign of the Cross, on which he would swear that it was not him who had inflicted the violent death on the priest. His discomfiture and other manifestations showed it, saying it was another person who was the perpetrator of that sacrilegious murder. They gripped his hand and tortured it by putting it in the flintlock of a shotgun and he confessed at once to the deed and his insult in all its circumstances.

Three Natives Are Sentenced and Hanged in Cebu

With these proceedings they gave a brief report to the provincial governor of Cebu, the judge of this jurisdiction. He went to Bohol to initiate the proceedings. The verdict resulted in declaring guilty the

main defendants—the killer and the future father-in-law—who were assured of unconditional incarceration. They had made the young doorkeeper an accomplice whose only evidence of guilt was his flight. Nonetheless, the statements of the killer did not exonerate him, instead he was incriminated for having given entry and for not giving advance notice to the priest.

The three culprits were conducted to Cebu and were sentenced to death and they suffered the capital punishment, death by hanging. That the two were sentenced to the gallows was justified and was fairly accepted by the natives. Moreover, they felt strongly about the execution of the young doorkeeper; such execution had been done despite his known innocence. That perverse justice augmented more people to the cause of Dagohoy and he became more formidable.

Padre Morales is Slain; Dagohoy is Avenged

The rebel chief was not satisfied yet with the sacrilegious death of the minister of Jagna. And since Padre Morales was much in control of the situation and had a group in town in his favor, it was not easy for Dagohoy to carry out his objective but there were various proposals from the people of Talibon and Inabangan. He succeeded in getting what he schemed: very tailor-fit to his wicked desire. One day the priest went out to compel the natives in dragging a log with which he wanted to build a boat for his service. With their wicked intention they set afire the dried grass of the field. The priest wanted to flee from the fire and he was pierced with a lance hurled directly at him and his life was instantly snuffed out. Everyone withdrew from the site and there the corpse was exposed to the elements.

Such was the case that it could not be retrieved until the third or fourth day when the priests of the same island who went there with competent bodyguards found it decomposed and foul-smelling. They reported it to the provincial governor of Cebu who went with some troops to Bohol. They conducted the usual investigations on the person who had slain Padre Morales. And it was not difficult to find out who did it. However, this person escaped to Dagohoy and reached safety.

The governor vehemently threatened the ruling class of the town and he would chop off the heads of everyone if they did not surrender the guilty perpetrator of the sacrilegious murder. The directive was

effective because the town leaders wrote Dagohoy explaining to him the peril where they were found if he did not surrender to them the fugitive criminal in his hideout.

Dagohoy Surrenders Morales' Killer to the Governor

And in case he refused to do so, it would be necessary to take him out by force with the governor's support. Dagohoy was very afraid—not assured at that time of this superior authority—that his compatriots might declare themselves against him. He sacrificed that doomed man by surrendering him to the local leaders so that they might receive satisfaction by handing him over to the governor. And they put him in the hands of the governor who carried out thorough justice by displaying the culprit's body parts in public places.

Dagohoy entrenched himself in his hideaway and incited his compatriots to a general rebellion of the whole Island. Some natives got close to him and joined him for their own personal reasons and the rebellious group swelled significantly. Some inroads were conducted against Dagohoy. They relied on their success with the remaining natives who were much greater in number and they could easily annihilate Dagohoy's group without exerting much effort. However, they did not push through with his destruction and defeat because they found some conveniences in this uprising. All the attacks against him were done to put our armed troops to shame. They only served to confirm the intransigence of the rebels.

Rebellion Boosted by Boholano Troops who Returned from Mindanao

This rebellious group grew much more when the armed expeditions returned from Iligan, Misamis and Caraga. They discovered their families in a very wretched state on account of the levy of royal tax. The [officials] had executed confiscations and incarcerations with no exception for women. [The returning troops] were greatly exasperated by the ill-treatment. Their benefits would have accrued in hopes with which they would have been gratified despite other inconveniences occasioned by their absence from their home and concerns. Many decided for their own satisfaction to withdraw to the mountain to be with Dagohoy. They enjoyed their freedom and there they lacked nothing for

they had what was the best and the most fertile in the Island. And what they could not acquire in their own place, they took what was stored up in towns under government control and maintained a very lucrative business with them. And the rebellion turned all the more unyielding every day, and more grueling became their subjugation that only well-prepared troops and arms would be able to achieve.

Acting Governor General Bishop Espeleta Offers Pardon in Vain

Attempts were made to subdue them through offers of pardon. When most illustrious Bishop Espeleta⁹ went to his Diocese of Cebu. he carried instructions from the superior government for the purpose [of quelling rebellion]. As a consequence, he travelled to the Island in the company of the provincial governor and soldiers. He stationed himself at Inabangan. At his request and in the company of some of his men, Dagohoy descended from their mountain lair with a safe-conduct pass issued by the most illustrious bishop in the name of the monarch. The prelate earnestly encouraged them to accept resettlement by offering them beneficial lands and properties to their liking.

[The rebels] explained their difficulty in accommodating themselves in districts still under the control of the Jesuits, whom it was believed that everyone feared and they would resist it with those ministers around. [The bishop] proposed that he would assign [secular] clergy to them. Since he had opened all the doors for them, they expressed some good prospects. However, they deemed these proposals as entreaties which made them more brazen and defiant.

The Augustinian Recollects Arrive in Bohol

The general expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish dominions which included these Islands took place. The Augustinian Recollect fathers entered the Island of Bohol with orders from the superior government. Padre Pedro de Santa Bárbara, actual provincial councilor of his Province, was vicar provincial and immediate superior of all those priests assigned in those [vacant] ministries arising from the

⁹ Bishop Miguel Lino de Ezpeleta (also *de Espeleta* [1701–1771]) was a *criollo* clergyman born of Spanish parents in Manila. He was Bishop of Cebu from 1757 until his death in 1771. He was acting governor-general of the Philippines from 1759 to 1761.

aforementioned expulsion. He took charge of the administration of Baclayon and its district. This religious with his well-known dynamism, endowed with a tried-and-tested zeal and uncharacteristic intrepidity which were made known to his dependents now in peaceful possession of the spiritual administration of all the subdued towns. He had seriously conducted an in-depth study on the beginnings and growth of the rebellion, its present condition and the character of those rebellious minds. He successfully carried out the effective implementation of his plans. Through benevolent letters accompanied by little gifts and his connection with members of the leaders of his town, he was able to establish contact with the supreme leader Francisco Dagohoy so much so that a place was fixed for their personal meeting. The father minister proceeded to the vicinity of his entrenchments and he was welcomed by Dagohoy himself with manifestations of deep trust.

Dagohoy Meets with Padre Pedro de Santa Bárbara in the mountain

The priest intimated to him the state of his deplorable life having taken up arms and the government would make every effort to wipe them out. This was very easy to do because they could not withstand the superiority of government arms that with their artilleries they could set afire even the most elevated camps. There they would not be safe even if they would hide themselves in the clouds. Even though these would not inflict on them maximum harm because it was more worth taking into consideration the wicked state of their consciences, the eternal damnation of their souls. But then again, living as they were not unlike fierce animals, they would die like beasts. Far away from the Kingdom of God, their eternal damnation was evident and indisputable. It would be necessary for them to reflect on these matters, if they still preserved some principles of Christianity in them. Everything had a remedy, yes, if having thoroughly acknowledged their fault, they would seek pardon.

Dagohoy and his companions showed they were convinced and they explained their feelings. He did it with other chiefs in their own writings which in essence said: Dagohoy was going back to God and to the King. Since there were also supporters and Padre Pedro de Santa Bárbara could enter [their camp] with him. Furthermore, [Dagohoy] allowed his followers to receive baptism, their marriages to be

solemnized and to make their confession. That is why having returned to God and to the King he and his followers were seeking pardon from the governor. It was only just that he would pardon him for his wrongdoings and he wanted two towns would be created on the sites of Canapog and Datuanan. Dagohoy wanted Padre Santa Bárbara to help them because those of the Society [of Jesus] did not agree with them. Another chief Ignacio Aráñez proposed that he and the datus at the bend of Calitong would return to God and to the King, if the governor would have mercy on them and pardon their old crimes. Once this was achieved they would ask him to grant them permission to establish a town by requesting Padre Pedro de Santa Bárbara to initiate the procedures in the government to obtain it.

Negotiations between Padre Pedro and Dagohoy

Pedro Baguio explained himself saying that, as a humble son with all justification, who having returned to God and to the king had not kept the deal after doing the same procedures of admission with his allies, of whom twenty-five married men had come to a decision with him. There were many people but he did not trust in the mob with whom they had been friends as he was still suspicious of them. Bernardo Sanote said he and other datus in the mountain of Tambúngan where they lived on account of the great fear they had for the former priests [Jesuits], and since that inconvenience no longer existed they wanted to go back to the service of God and his Majesty. It would please the governor to pardon them, have mercy on them and grant them the foundation of a town in the bend of Guindulman Bay in order to comply with their obligations as Christians and vassals of the King. For that reason, they requested their spiritual father Fray Pedro de Santa Bárbara that he might have mercy on them and might deign initiate the bureaucracies so that their souls would not be lost. Moreover, they trusted him alone to assist them in their difficulties. Very contented with these dispositions, Padre Pedro deemed them too much for their representations. They provided the minister with a decent church and there he baptized about one hundred twenty-four children of both sexes, five years old and below. He solemnized some marriages and administered the sacrament of penance to about two hundred souls and this number was very large as regards those who were disposed to cleanse their consciences through this sacrament. And no less was the number of those adults who underwent catechism lessons

as prerequisite to receive the holy baptism in a worthy manner. With so many good dispositions, Padre Pedro thinking that everything would turn out easy presented himself in Cebu before the provincial governor Don Pedro de Vargas and made representation in behalf of the rebels and those who took up arms against our monarch. And not having put aside their revolt, they were unqualified to [receive] the holy sacraments. [Padre Pedro] had proceeded with caution and persuasiveness right and proper for men who had been gone astray for so many years and he had endeavored at the cost of his fatigues and hard work so that they might return to God and to the service of his Majesty bringing no other motive but the glory of God, the benefit of their souls and the increase of the vassals who would be faithful and loyal to the king.

[Padre Pedro] had succeeded by means of special procedures that even the rebel chief Dagohoy himself and two of his leaders had acknowledged their unfaithfulness and had asked for pardon from the two Majesties [God and the Spanish king] and that they might settle down to an organized life, corroborated by attached petitions. These petitions which constituted him as mediator were intended to achieve such an advantageous goal, including the fear and misgiving for their wicked crimes. In view of their repentance he had used the permission and authorization by the rebel chiefs to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and administer the sacraments to those he had considered to be most prepared and agreed upon by the commanders and a great number of rebels with an appropriate devotion to such sacred mysteries. For this reason, [Padre Santa Bárbara] requested that necessary procedures be carried out so that the documents at hand through his representation be forwarded to the governor general's office in order that his most illustrious governor himself might deem what was most convenient for the service of God and the king.

The provincial governor accepted the presentation and forwarded a report to the most illustrious Bishop of Cebu Miguel Lino de Espeleta so that he might give his judgment on these requests. The most illustrious prelate informed him that he did not doubt that the subjugation of the rebels was sincere, such as the fact that they might obtain the exoneration of the crimes from the governor of these Islands, that the countless lost souls might be retrieved because there had been several negotiations which Padre Pedro had communicated to him that he had engaged with Dagohoy. There had been cases he had seen in them by means of the

priest's apostolic endeavors that gave him every reason to grant his consent, and the acknowledgement [of their flaws] by the rebels was authentic. Although his most illustrious prelate had personally sought the same in the year 1772, he had not been able to obtain more from Dagohoy than the construction of a church in order to comply with their obligations as Christians. However, such dissolute life practiced for so many years attracted him and the pleasure of being obeyed, and this was necessary for dragging the situation until the present time. Solely the wooden posts intended as pillars for the church were put up and with their lack of enthusiasm the easiness was mocked.

The provincial governor further asked information from Don Joseph Velarde, his predecessor in the government position, and in the whole duration of his term as governor when the Bohol Island was administered by the Jesuits. Far from giving signs of reconciliation himself, the chief Dagohoy together with his allies continued their obstinate insurrection making their subjugation hopeless. And it was very necessary to keep their arrogance in check by stationing several troop detachments in the Island to prevent the rebels from committing atrocities through robberies and killings in those towns that remained quiet and peaceful. Nevertheless, since the Recollect fathers had taken possession of those towns, a transformation could be noticed among Dagohoy and his allies. A transformation that had not been experienced during the twenty-years of their revolt [1744-1789]. This was made evident in the both verbal and written determination of all rebel leaders to reconcile with God and the monarch, as they had pledged, having been convinced by the motivations and procedures of Padre Santa Bárbara. As required by Dagohoy those leaders of the rebellion [depended] on Padre Santa Bárbara's power to deal with that subjugation for its validity. In response, they had no power but that of the minister of the Most High, to whom the Catholic monarch had entrusted the spiritual administration and care of their souls. He took into account the extreme necessity and went deeper into the mountains at his own expense in order to proclaim the Kingdom of God to them and to motivate them to obey the king, their *señor natural*.¹⁰

¹⁰ *Señor natural* is a medieval Castilian political concept, not a title, referring to a lord by inherent nature or "by birth of superior station attains power legitimately and exercises dominion over all within his lands justly..." in Robert S. Chamberlain *The Concept of Señor Natural*, in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, [n.d.] 130-137..

Governor General Raón must issue the full pardon of rebels before the promised treaty

After Dagohoy heard this, he reminded the priest about the resolution that he and his allies were about to finalize a treaty that might ensure the tranquility among them. Nevertheless, it was very necessary that the governor general would decree a full pardon and general amnesty of their past flaws, or else their freedom and even their lives would be at risk. There was no doubt that the office of the captain general would grant it in view of the representations and documents through which the dossier had been done with the administrative system having been modified and the office of the governor general would deign to consent to the sought-after amnesty. Through that soft means, the conquest of the rebels would be confidently achieved without augmented expenses by the Royal Ministry of Finance and without bloodshed. And when this would not be so realized, there would always be the option to go all-out against them with needed force and they should deal with their pacification in a dreadful manner.

Padre Pedro de Santa Bárbara Continues with the Negotiations

Then the procedures were formalized in that way, and the provincial governor sent to the superior government for the decision that might serve to free himself in this matter during its deliberation. Padre Santa Bárbara visited once more the provincial governor himself and declared that, having taken possession of the parishes in Bohol, he was surprised that in almost all the towns troop detachments were still stationed. He verified the reason: the protection of the former ministers. Besides being exceptionally hated by the rebels, in truth they were not safe without any guards. Furthermore, troops were posted in order to avoid the rebels from committing abuses, murders and robberies in the towns. However, it had been observed that since the taking possession by the Recollect fathers the primary motive¹¹ had ceased to exist, yet the second motive¹² still continued to stay alive with vigor and force.

¹¹ The presence of the Jesuit ministers in Bohol.

¹² The rebel raids of towns and villages.

Lawlessness situation persists

The settled people have been engaged in killings with those mountain dwellers at the entrances of the town. After withdrawal of the troops, the mountain rebels would descend in order to satisfy their grievances and avenge the wrongs. However, he had decided with his predecessor to withdraw all the detachments from less exposed places but it had not been implemented yet having taken into account those precautions against inconveniences. However, at present the negotiations with Dagohoy had been accomplished as well as with almost all the chiefs and their followers not without measures taken nor efforts exerted, the rebels had agreed on that ceasefire and further requested that troops be removed from the Island, so that they could descend to the towns without apprehension. This procedure would assure more negotiations with the rebels with sincerity. Likewise, they had experienced the harmony of minds between the rebels and the peace-loving people, all set to reciprocally forgive each other's grievances.

Troop withdrawal from five towns recommended

For that purpose there was a compelling reason to make this representation favorable to the royal interests, by asking that the provincial governor might consider withdrawing all the troops stationed in the towns of Jagna, Loay, Malabohoc [present-day Maribojoc], Malibago [actual Cortes] and Loon. Even though it was indispensable in the past, at present it was deemed unnecessary unless there were no changes in the towns of Inabangan [now Inabanga] and Talibon, since there was a rebel chief by the name of Ligaon in the adjoining mountains.

According to reports received, this leader had more than one thousand tributes under his command that resisted reduction for considering it deceitful. And although there was a report that the same rebel had already mended his ways and wanted to return to God and to the king like the others. Nonetheless, the troops were considered convenient and indispensable in those towns in the meantime that the leaders had not yet accepted the subjugation. And even if the troops were not considered necessary in Tagbilaran neither for the purpose of holding back the rebels nor for the protection of its natives. It was nonetheless believed that a detachment of twelve soldiers with their sergeants should remain in this town in order to facilitate the collection

of the royal tribute. They would assist the tax collectors when necessary. This would seem the most convenient according to the present system in Bohol. For that reason that would redound to the service of God and the king [and] the provincial governor attentive to a very grievous matter should request it at all cost and would initiate the procedures deemed most useful.

Troop detachments stay in Inabangan, Jagna, Talibon and Tagbilaran

In view of what was presented, the provincial governor decreed that an order be dispatched to the commanding officer of the Bohol Island detachments to withdraw to Cebu City those detachments stationed in Loay, Malabohoc and Loon, but those in Inabangan should stay put with seven men, one of whom to be designated as sergeant. Similarly, seven soldiers were to remain in Jagna, ten in Talibon and thirteen in Tagbilaran. And so it was done. The dossier that endorsed the resettlement of the rebels was dispatched to the governor general's office. Marshal and Governor José Raón accepted the recommendations. He concurred on them and in the name of the Majesty he granted a general amnesty for those who sought it and whose requests were sincere. The amnesty proclamation was made public in Bohol with the greatest solemnity and the results were those that Padre Santa Bárbara had sent in a signed letter to the prior provincial, together with those seven ministers of the same island that expressed these terms in a very heartfelt way.

Some rebel groups returned to the fold of the law

With respect to the actual status of the rebellion, it persists and remains the same as always, that of unfaithfulness to God and to the king, and with greater base because from that group maintained for two years in this area, which was set up in the interior of the mountains in eighteen towns (according to what they said), only a small part had seceded: about forty [tributes] had been recorded in the census of Dimiao, eleven in Baclayon, and eighteen in Inabangan. A rebel leader named Aráñez withdrew with a hundred forty-three tributes to the coastal area and to the place of Tumbangan in the vicinity of Guindulman and requested for the creation of a town in that area. A report had been dispatched to the

provincial governor of Cebu who was suspicious about it upon being informed that he had made an agreement through blood compact—according to the custom—with the rebel leader Dagohoy and another chief Don Pedro Baguio who had expected to create a town in Canapog and being unable to joined Dagohoy withdrew to the town of Maasin in the Island of Leyte. Their small number joined the numerous groups of rebels. There were many more who joined them from the same island or others especially from Leyte.

Having persisted in their unfaithfulness, they declared that God was also there in the mountains, that they could be saved there without the need of sacraments and ministers. A greater number of them did not believe in the existence of Hell because they affirmed that none of them had seen Hell. They further said that the priest and the Spaniards believed in Hell which was intended for them. They kept themselves occupied with superstition and idolatry. They used oils and roots and entered into a pact with the devil. And from what had been experienced from those in their district, it had been observed among those people listed in those town censuses who were pallid, easily scared, with eyes dazed and stunned and almost useless. After being notified about the amnesty published in the name of his Majesty they abandoned the rebels who were deemed outlaws under pain of death.

Cattle rustling, skirmishes and armed robberies persisted despite the amnesty

Likewise, this dread restrained the rebels from being conquered and they continued their habit of cattle rustling and armed robbery but no longer with impunity like before. Furthermore, there were not so many deaths anymore. As far as it could encompass, it was not much due to publicized amnesty as to the fear that they would be deprived of their dealings and trade with the natives and upstarts, that it was a foundation on which rested the rebellion. This was the information given with religious sincerity, and it was the serious judgment that it could be formed from the actual status of those rebels in accordance with minimal dealings and communication brought about with them.

Even if it was true that after the promulgation of the general amnesty Dagohoy informed him to go and see him, he did not dare do it in view of the edict ordered published by him which was so opposed to

the one proclaimed by order of the governor general. He was so wary of his unfaithfulness and his word did not generate any assurance. And the priest's word brought out equivalent and advantageous hostages.

Juan de la Concepción ends his narrative in 1779

It was certain that the trust put on the perfidious subject is exactly comparable to a rotten tooth and to a disjointed foot and one or the other damaged the man in essential matters and in moments of greatest anxiety. Facility in false expectations was reprehensible, and the subjects placed in such situations were more worthy of scorn because they debased what was most honorable in human dealings as in our case what might have taken place. I believe it even more disdainful that it was abandoned that way for so many years. It had been thirty-five years since 1744.

Bohol rebels remain unrestrained

Bereft of subjugation, this perverted scandal affected the natives of the same Island that in everything they went about with immunity on such a foul asylum and it emulated by everyone who committed countless abuses after observing such a slipshod inaction. Future modification should be carried out at the beginnings of uprisings to find that their pacification by arms would not be a major endeavor nor would not incur greater expenses.

The Evangelization of Cuyo, Calamianes Islands and Paragua¹

Fidel de Blas OAR

Translated from the Spanish, edited and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

At the same time as the spiritual progress of our missionaries in Mindanao grew every day, those who had stayed in Manila and had wished for an occasion became more and more enthusiastic to go out and work in the conquest of other islands and provinces for God and for Spain. Soonest it was offered to them; since in the same year 1622² five³ religious chosen from that group of new arrivals from the Peninsula, who were at the orders and under the direction of Venerable Father Juan de Santo Tomás embarked to the Calamianes Islands and

¹ This chapter is culled from *Labor evangélica de los padres agustinos en las Islas Filipinas* (Zaragoza 1910) 22-24 and 59.

² On 27 August 1622, Bishop Pedro de Arce OSA (†1645) of the Diocese of the Most Holy Name of Jesus of Cebu granted the spiritual administration of Cuyo and the Calamianes, which belonged to his vast jurisdiction, to Vicar Provincial Andrés del Espíritu Santo.

³ Juan de Santo Tomás (†1631), their first superior, Francisco de San Nicolás, Diego de Santa Ana (†1652) and unmentioned confrere. Martínez Cuesta affirms he was Brother Francisco de la Madre de Dios slain by *sangleyes* in Cuyo in 1638 whom he rebuked for their errors and vices.

Paragua⁴ where the trumpet of the Gospel had never resonated.⁵ They dropped anchor at the island of Cuyo and afterwards they knew that their inhabitants, although they were ferocious and undomesticated, they were intrinsically well-disposed to the Spaniards and even desired to see them on account of the good news they had acquired from them. Hence our missionaries did not take long in becoming leaders of all the people and catechized and baptized majority of them, constructing churches and convents [...]. However, if on the part of the natives of the Calamianes our confreres did not suffer nothing but the hardships concomitant to their apostolic works among unbelievers and unfamiliar land and even bereft of the necessities of life, let us show hereafter the number of Recollects who have shed their blood in defense of the Catholic Faith or have suffered dreadful captivity in the hands of Moros who infected that land by plundering and slaying or subjecting to slavery all who fell into their hands.

Recollect martyrs of Cuyo and Calamianes

The blessed plight of our Recollect confreres in these Islands:

1. Br. Francisco de la Madre de Dios, slain by a *Sangley* in Cuyo
2. Fr. Juan de San Nicolás, hanged by the Moro Kudarat
3. Fr. Alonso de San Agustín, flogged and wounded by Moros
4. Fr. Francisco de Santa Mónica, speared and burned by Moros
5. Fr. Antonio de San Agustín, slain by spears by Moros
6. Fr. Manuel de Jesús y María, slain and later cut into pieces
7. Fr. Antonio de Santa Ana, murdered by gunshot in Taytay
8. Fr. Francisco de Jesús y María, persecuted by Moros and suffered thirst, hunger and every kind of illnesses

⁴ Paragua was known later as Palawan.

⁵ Definitely, the Recollects were not the first to evangelize Cuyo and adjoining islands. The mission had been earlier vacated by the diocesan priest Juan de Santa Cruz. Bishop Pedro de Arce named him missionary of Cuyo and Calamianes on 19 October 1619 vacant for many years. The appointment issued by Gov. Gen. Fajardo noted that there was no person who wanted to go there or opposed it. On 16 March 1621, the bishop named him Vicar Judge of Cuyo and the Calamianes. We do not know Fr. Juan de Santa Cruz's length of stay. Felipe REDONDO Y SENDINO, *Breve reseña de la Diócesis de Cebú*, 117.

9. Fr. Martín de Santa Mónica, perished in harsh captivity
10. Ex-Provincial Fr. Onofre de la Madre de Dios, persecuted by Moros, gained freedom in the jungle and spent three weeks on the verge of death
11. Fr. Juan de San José, captive of the Moros and shackled for two years, underwent horrifying tribulations
12. Fr. Francisco de San Juan Bautista, hounded by Moros, wandered aimlessly in the mountains of Taytay until he fell very serious ill

How much blood had the evangelization cost our Recollect forefathers in many islands in the Philippines which we their descendants have administered afterwards with hard work, yes, but in utmost peace and tranquility!

Evangelization work in Calamianes Islands and Paragua.

In 1622⁶ when our religious took charge of Caraga Province in Mindanao, and its number grew bigger, necessary to attend to the towns under our administration, the office of the governor general in Manila as indicated by the most illustrious bishop of Cebu put us in charge of the administration of Calamianes Islands (*Calamidades*, calamities as called by some) which were approximately one hundred leagues from the capital of the archipelago. Five were the Recollects mandated by obedience [superiors] for the holy undertaking at the helm of Fr. Juan de Santo Tomás, vicar provincial, who was the first to resonate in the island of Cuyo the vibrant voice of the Gospel.⁷ In a very short time, they were successful in the conversion of two thousand family they had found to Catholicism.

From that small island where our missionaries established themselves in the beginning and let the Christian religion triumph and moved to Alutaya or Agutaya. This island is similar to the first in extension, terrain, dwellers and other circumstances. In both islands,

⁶ By virtue of the Royal Patronage, Governor General Alonso Fajardo approved on 23 January 1623 the bishop's decree that handed Cuyo and the Calamianes over to the Recollects who arrived at Cuyo at the end of January.

⁷ The footnote 5 declares that the diocesan priest Fr. Juan de Santa Cruz preached the Gospel in Cuyo and the Calamianes in 1619, long before the first Recollects arrived in 1623.

they constructed churches and strong forts at the expense of our Congregation, providing the parishioners with firearms and bladed weapons in order to defend themselves from the enemies coming from the outside and simultaneously they worked and exerted effort in strengthening the spirit of the Christians with the islands.

Much later Fr. Francisco de San Nicolás and Fr. Diego de Santa Ana with a religious brother transferred to the island of Palawan, larger than all other islands. And, even though with greater difficulties and efforts, they successfully founded in a Christian community somewhat numerous and the town of Taytay was formed with it. From here our religious dispatched to Manila a report about the absolute need of constructing another fort where they could defend themselves from the Moros who with their raids and plunder devastated that territory and threatened to complete destroy the three towns which they had successfully established in that third island.

This report was read and favorably acted upon immediately. The construction of the fort in Taytay was decreed. At the expense of the office of the governor general, the fort was put up shortly afterward in the town of Taytay, capital of the province of Calamianes. In 1719, the government ordered the constructing of another fort in the southern area of Palawan and small island of Balabac for the purpose of checking the Moros and repulse their invasions because the fortress constructed in Taytay was no longer enough to check them. Fr. Manuel de San José was sent there as chaplain of the new colony of Balabac. However, despite the good results that it gave and against the detailed report sent by Fr. Juan de la Encarnación who staunch defended the need to preserve the fort, the same government in Manila ordered the withdrawal of the detachment and demolish the fort. Time gave this priest the reason why the higher authorities had rejected him. That is why very shortly afterward the disastrous results were lamented as foreseen by Fr. Juan de la Encarnación. The Moros entrenched themselves in that area of Balabac which the Spaniards had abandoned. There the raiders sowed desolation, fire and terror in Calamianes, Romblon, Mindoro and even up to... up to Manila Bay. What an embarrassment and ignominy! With their small vessels and very bad weapons, the Moros from Jolo dared measure their audacity in Manila against the indomitable valor of nation like Spain! The government by then had already thought of repressing so

many excesses and foolhardiness. Furthermore, among other vigorous measures it adopted was to establish once more that the former colony in Balabac by giving it the name of Principe Alfonso. This was already in 1858 and with this the Moros desisted from their daring raids.

In March 1872, another military and penal colony was founded along the eastern coast of Paragua with the name of Puerto Princesa where our saintly Fr. Ezekiel Moreno was assigned. Besides that mission and colony of Puerto Princesa, he further laid the foundations of two more in the south: Inagauan [now Inagawan] and Aborlan. He later died in the odor of sanctity in Spain.

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The Augustinian Recollects in Negros Island After the Philippine Revolution (1898-1914)¹

Ángel Martínez Cuesta OAR

Translated from the Spanish by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Negros Island had for the Augustinian Recollects of those years a special charm. The Order of Augustinian Recollects looked at it as the apple of its eyes and kept in the Island Father Fernando Cuenca, one of its most meritorious sons, already of age and in need of company. Moreover, the American presence in the Island was a guarantee of security. And in April 1899, scarcely three months after they had been expelled, they dared dispatch Fr. Tiburcio Fernández to Talisay. They were hoping the Cantonal Government of Negros would allow him to give company to Cuenca, with whom many of its leaders had been friends. But he encountered a hostile ambience and Fernández hastily returned to Manila.

On 5 July 1901, Fr. Marcelino Simonena arrived in Talisay. He likewise hoped to exercise his ministry in the shadow of Fr. Cuenca and some of his old friends. In October of that same year, Eusebio Valderrama and Ángel Quintana established themselves in San Carlos where the presence of the prominent Spanish colony would not cease to give them protection. Between February and May of 1902, more religious arrived in Bacolod, Sum-ag, Murcia, La Castellana and Isabela.

¹ Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los agustinos recoletos*, vol. III: el siglo XX, tomo 1: 1898-1948 (Madrid 2021) 459-472, 486-496.

The ministers found Negros Island in complete religious emergency. The antagonism posed by provincial and local leaders had wrought havoc on the Island. In a greater or lesser degree, almost all of them turned prey to the hatred against the friars, and they took possession of the *kumbentos* and cemeteries while many churches lay in great abandonment and others reduced to piles of ruins. The native clergy, in very small numbers, was either unprepared to confront such complicated circumstances nor could they move around with the needed freedom nor did they display indications of zeal demanded by the situation.

In the wake of the expulsion of the Recollect ministers, in the west coast of the Island there remained seven or eight diocesan priests and three Recollect ministers, namely, Fernando Cuenca, Pedro Chivite and Miguel Álvarez. Cuenca was an old man who could hardly attend to his parishioners. Chivite spent long periods of time in Iloilo and was constrained to abandon San Carlos in the early days of August 1899. And Álvarez likewise had to go out of Murcia in early 1900. Elías Goñi and Juan de Dios Martínez had been taken out in obeisance to their bishop. The diocesan priests were formerly parochial vicars who were authorized in November 1898 to administer their parishes with full faculties as well as the adjoining curacies bereft of ministers. We can recall Cosme Segovia in Bacolod, Nicolas Alva in Silay, Juan Hofileña in Saravia [now E.B. Magalona], who was vicar forane of the Island since November 1899, Marcelino Guanco in Binalbagan, Lorenzo Paloma in Valladolid, Santiago Descalzo in Ilog, Cornelio Salas in Bago and Eusebio Delariarse [?] in Cadiz. Delariarse who in 1902 “died of cholera” was succeeded by Feliciano Gomez, who was freshly ordained as priest by Bishop Ferrero and later expressed solidarity with him in August 1903.

Lorenzo Paloma and Santiago Descalzo joined the Aglipayan schism. Towards the end of 1902, they were already Aglipayan bishops of Negros and Panay, respectively. In July 1903, Cornelio Salas took a prominent part in the preparation of the *Manifesto of the Jaro Clergy* which formally repudiated the authority of the bishop and even the disciplinary authority of the Pope himself. Hofileña, Alva and Segovia affixed their signatures on that same manifesto and incurred *ipso facto* excommunication upon themselves. These three priests later took

advantage of the pardon offered by the American Bishop Frederick Rooker shortly after his entry to Jaro (2 November 1903), by signing a document wherein they officially acknowledged their error and submitted themselves to the authority of the bishop.²

In the whole of Negros Oriental, solely two priests remained. One was the Recollect minister Pedro Bengoa who could exercise his ministry for some months thanks to the help extended by General Diego de la Viña. Fr. Baldomero Villarreal, parochial vicar of Tanjay, from where he visited already as parish priest the southern towns going farther down to Siaton. In September 1899, accused of conspiring against the Americans, Villarreal was arrested and taken to Bacolod where he remained in military custody until April 1900. As a consequence, the province was totally bereft of clergy until the end of 1899.

Fr. Gervasio Gallofin (†10 September 1908), a “native priest of Dumaguete,” arrived at the capital of Negros Oriental. In March 1901, Marcelino Espinosa (†26 October 1905) followed suit in March 1901 and took his post as parish priest of Siaton. Francisco Locsin came with him as parochial vicar. In November 1901, Locsin fixed his residence at Dauin where he died in 1910. Negros Oriental was “thereafter partitioned into four parishes or districts: Dumaguete with Sibulan and Nueva Valencia; Tanjay with Amblan [now Amlan], Bais, Manjuyod and Tayasan up to Guihulngan; Dauin with Bacong and Zamboanguita; and Siaton with Tolong, Bayawan and other missions in the south.”

The priests in these four districts should minister to a population that went up to 460,676 inhabitants, and in the last years of the Spanish colonial regime could the parishes were ministered to by more than seventy religious. The last priests arrived from Panay and, like those of Negros Occidental, harbored nationalist feelings. In February 1900, the clergy of Jaro petitioned the Apostolic Delegate to reserve the parish administration to the native clergy and in no way to permit the return of the friars.

² The letter of protest against the bishop is in ACHÚTEGUI-BERNAD *Religious Revolution in the Philippines* (Manila 1968) IV, 246-48. Bishop Ferrero's circular, 13 July 1903, informing the excommunication of the three priests of Negros is in *Libro de órdenes de la parroquia de Talisay*, f. 87r, 87v; ACHÚTEGUI-BERNAD I on page 230 mentioned 73 priests, but in reality there not more than fifty. A copy of the formula used by the repentant clergy is in APM, leg. 57, n. 4.

When Fr. Melchor Ardanaz arrived in Isabela in May 1902, “the people were dying without the sacraments” and many got married in civil rites, “since the only parish priest assigned in the south was Fr. Marcelino [Guanco], a clergyman who had to minister to twelve towns.” The civil authorities had seized the church and the cemetery, and continuously interfered in “matters of the Church.” The municipal president of Pontevedra, Tito Silverio, was an extreme sectarian. In Sum-ag, hardly was there a remnant of “sentimentalism or longing for something that happened in the past.” In 1902, only an old man complied with Easter precept. The following year sixty-five of the 5,239 inhabitants did so. In 1912, the number rose to 956. The church edifice had no doors nor windows, and at night it was transformed into “a lair of animals.” The chalice was in the possession of the local teacher who was a Protestant. The kumbento which was grandiose but it served as municipal school, teacher’s residence, police headquarters and town hall. Meanwhile, the parish priest was confined to a shanty bereft of any comfort.

Similarly, in La Castellana the missionary had to be lodged in a private residence and to convert the ground floor of another house into a chapel, since both the church and the convent were ruined. The Americans had burned down the old church of La Castellana like what they did to that of Magallon, shortly after they arrived in the island. After the departure of Fr. Miguel, Murcia received two or three visits from Fr. Cosme Segovia who was in charge of the parish in Bacolod. The church and kumbento suffered huge damages during the time when the church edifices were occupied by the American troops. The cemetery was administered by the municipal government that exacted the burial fees. The new parish priest had to be accommodated in a borrowed house. In 1915, he was still residing in that house.³

The town of Escalante received as well some visits by Cosme Segovia and more visits by the parish priest of Cadiz. For three years, the convent was in the hands of the Americans and was later taken over by municipal government that took possession of its furniture. Some furniture was used to furnish the town hall and the school.

³ APM, leg. 58, n. 1.

The building materials which were gathered by the last parish priest intended for the new construction of the new church ended up in the municipal hall and school.

In Bacolod and San Carlos the Recollects found an encouraging ambience. They arrived at both towns at the request of a large majority of their inhabitants. There had always been a resident priest in Bacolod, and San Carlos counted on the support of the Spanish community. However, in spite of that the municipal governments were hostile to the missionaries. In Bacolod, the civil authorities gathered signatures to seek from the Jaro bishop the expulsion of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero. They even hindered his ministry through the sectarian enforcement of the current legislation. In 1902, the municipal council banned the processions during the Holy Week and entry of corpses inside the church. It further demanded the implementation of extraordinary measures on hygiene inside the church apparently in order to sabotage his pastoral work.⁴ The people countered by gathering ten times more signatures than those presented by town council. In Sum-ag which once again depended on Bacolod, the opposition to the missionaries was more severe. Their maneuvers did not have much significance because majority of the population were on the side of the friars. In San Carlos, the municipal council convoked an extraordinary session on the same day of the parish priest Fr. Eusebio Valderrama's arrival and the following day posters were nailed by a dagger on the doors of the church with the proclamation written in huge letters: "The public demand that in whatever part of the Filipino churches no friar shall be admitted, since reminiscing the times of the past, the friars are a poison to the Filipinos... Friars out!" Fr. Valderrama gave no importance to it since he considered it a work of a Tagalog parvenu. Three days after his arrival he celebrated the Sunday liturgy at church with normalcy. He met more opposition in Escalante, Calatrava and Guihulngan. In Vallehermoso, stronghold of General Diego de la Viña, everything was easy.⁵

⁴ This incident gave rise to a series of communications between the local, provincial and national authorities, wherein the mayor of Bacolod defended the actions of the local council: *Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1903*. 5: *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 308-14.

⁵ Eusebio VALDERRAMA, *Carta a padre provincial*, San Carlos 25 Oct. 1901: APM, leg. 58, n. 4.

In 1904, the Recollects returned to the east coast of the island and increased their presence in the west coast. The faithful of Dumaguete, Bacong and Sibulan had already reclaimed their presence in October 1899. In June 1901, it was General James Smith (1859-1928), the military governor of the Island in July 1899-October 1900, who, surprisingly, advocated for their return in a letter to Negros Oriental governor Demetrio Larena:

[given] the extreme dearth of church personnel existent in this province [...] since, as I understood it, not more than four Catholic priests are in the island, I believe that if it would be necessarily go very well for the religion and for all the inhabitants of those towns, if the Recollect fathers [...] exercise again the sacred ministry, because even though they lacked the influence and official representation that they enjoyed under the Spanish rule, I am certain that [...] they would work with greatest sincerity —by all — for the moral and material prosperity and progress of those inhabitants, by providing you with their precious help and support to the authority so worthily represented by you.

These requests ran into the open hostility of the authorities. Larena, the strongman of the province, first directly (1899-1906) and later through his relatives, ignored these suggestions. In February 1902, he ordered the expulsion of the Recollect who was on a pastoral visit in Guihulngan and the following year his brother Meliton Larena, municipal *presidente* of Dumaguete, likewise did the same thing to Fr. Claudio Argote, who was put in charge by the bishop of Jaro to distribute the holy oils to the parishes of the province. In Bais he had already been gravely injured. This incident tended with the facilitating of the return of the Recollects. The American government reacted immediately and sacked the guilty official and prohibited him from holding public offices for life,⁶ encouraged the Catholics who were gradually casting their

⁶ Juan LORENZO, *Parroquia de Bácong*: APM, leg. 56; *Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1903*. 5: *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 228, 314-34; Roman C. SAGUN, *Friar's Expulsion Condemned, The Argote Case and Taft's Instructions for the Governor*, in *The Negros Chronicle*, Dumaguete 8 Sept., 9 Oct. and 25 Nov. 2006. *The Prautch Letter: the Religious Situation in Negros Oriental 1904-1905*, in *Kinaadman* 18 (1996) 163-77. In 2003- 2006, Sagun published about 200 articles in a Dumaguete paper where he disclosed anecdotes, events and personalities that shed light on the religious situation in Negros Oriental between 1898 and 1910.

fear away. That same year they petitioned the American bishop of Jaro in a letter asking for the return of the Recollects. In December, it was the new bishop Frederick Rooker himself who sought the urgent assignment to the island of twenty-two religious for as many number of towns. Seven municipalities belonged to the province of Negros Oriental. The Recollect superior replied that the dearth of personnel and resources in several of those towns allowed him only to send two religious ministers to the southern part of Negros Occidental, who could fix their residence in Kabankalan or Ilog. The ministers of San Carlos would extend their religious ministry to the northern towns of Negros Oriental. However, “they were blocked by the opposition posed as always by the primary authority of that province.”⁷

Between May and June 1904, Bishop Rooker made his first pastoral visit to Negros Oriental, where he saw for himself the alarming situation of the Church.⁸ The increase of priests was non-extendible since the existent four ministers, obviously, were completely inadequate. This time the Recollects could give him a more positive reply. On the first of September 1904, Fr. Paulino Jiménez arrived in Valencia, and in October his steps were followed by Fr. Nemesio Llorente and Fr. Pablo Vicente, who established themselves in Sibulan and Amlan, respectively. In 1905, Fr. Eusebio Valderrama took charge of the seven parishes existent between San Carlos and Tanjay. Fr. Francisco Solchaga fixed his residence in Bais and Fr. Tiburcio Fernández in Siaton from where he was mandated to attend to the old missions of Tolong, Bayawan and Basay. Within a year the Recollects had again covered almost all the parishes of the province. Only Dumaguete, Tanjay and Dauin-Bacong remained in the hands of the diocesan clergy. Bacong was put under the Recollect administration in 1907 and in Dumaguete in 1908. Likewise this year same year Fr. Inocencio Sola was put in charge of Zamboanguita. Between 1910 and 1911 three Recollects established themselves in Dauin, Vallehermoso and Bayawan. This last town would be attended to from the mission of Tolong which like its matrix town had remained vacant since 1898. The diocesan priest Fr. Baldomero

⁷ Frederick Z. ROOKER, *Carta al vicario provincial*, Jaro 2 Dec.1903, and his reply to it, Manila 10 Dec. 1903: *Circulares Ayarra*, 260r-62v: APM, libro 20.

⁸ Roman C. SAGUN, *The First Pastoral Visit of Bishop Rooker in Oriental Negros*, in *Kinaadman* 20 (1998) 221-31.

Villarreal continued his pastoral ministry in Tanjay until his death which occurred in 1929.

Other Recollects took possession of several parishes in Negros Occidental. In 1905, they fixed their residences in Kabankalan, Ilog and Sagay (formerly Argüelles); in 1907 in La Carlota and in 1909 in Lemery. When the parish priest of Sagay was rejected in the town proper, he sought refuge in Vito where the popular image of San Vicente Ferrer was venerated. As a response to the implicit accusation by the Jaro clergy in July 1903, the Recollect writings affirmed that in their return



Parishes in Negros Island under the Augustinian Recollects in 1899-1948

to the parishes in Negros, not a single native priest was removed: “Such an idea never entered the plans of the bishop while the [diocesan clergy] voluntarily gave them up due to illness or death which obliged them to it, but yes there was a determined objective to cover the vacancies with our personnel, as he did it with the first vacancy in Siaton.” The bishop was not pleased with the behavior of the parish priests of Dumaguete and Bacong yet he did not remove them in order not to provide fodder the the attacks by the adversaries of the friars. The Recollects entered Siaton and Dumaguete after the demise of Marcelino Espinosa and Gervasio Gallofin. Nevertheless, the parishes of Bacolod (1902), La Carlota (1907) and Bacong (1907) were taken over during the lifetime of their parish priests. In all three parishes it was the bishop himself who took the initiative. The remaining parishes were vacant.

The arrival of the Recollects caused “immense joy among the peaceful and simple people and stroked the ill will and hatred of the fanatics.”⁹ The previous sentence was felt by the Church in Negros for five decades and the hitherto unpublished history of the parish of Bacong faithfully mirrored the ambience that encompassed the Recollects. We have the first example of it in Valencia. While the people were overjoyed in welcoming the friar and the parish priest of Dumaguete accommodated him in his kumbento, the diocesan clergy and civil authorities of the region assembled in Bacong in order to petition the municipal president of Valencia and the bishop of the diocese for his expulsion.¹⁰ In July 1905, Negros Oriental Governor Demetrio Larena (1857-1916) accused the friars of Nueva Valencia, Amlan and Sibulan of disturbing the peace previously enjoyed by the people and of fighting against the teaching given in public schools. He was particularly annoyed by the parish priest of Valencia who decreased by 90% the student population of the public

⁹ Juan LORENZO, *Historia de la parroquia de Bácong*: APM, leg. 56, n. 4. Aldecoa, *History of Negros oriental. From American Rule to the Present: a History II*, Dumaguete 1989, devotes a few lines on the religious question in Negros Oriental, overflowing with blunders and biases. She depends almost exclusively on tainted official sources. Demetrio Larena was one of the liberators of the country, but he was also an extremely zealous Aglipayan, whose reports must be read with extreme care.

¹⁰ Paulino JIMÉNEZ, *Historia contemporánea. Negros Oriental*: Nueva Valencia 18 dic. 1906, *Apuntes* 1, 87-101.

schools: from 500 in 1904 to 50 in 1905.¹¹ In Bais, the Villanuevas, related by blood to Larena and close, just like him, to Aglipayanism, were imposing the law.

In Kabankalan, Fr. Tiburcio Fernández found himself without a church where to celebrate the Mass nor a kumbento where to live. He had to find accommodations in Hacienda San Juan, located four kilometers away from the town, to the great detriment of his priestly ministry. The plight did not improve until the end of 1907 when the municipal president who was close to the religious was elected. In 1909, Fr. Tiburcio's second successor recovered the church but not all its properties and constructed a small kumbento with building materials salvaged from the chapel erected earlier by Fr. Tiburcio. In 1912, he replaced it with a bigger kumbento. In November 1914, when the political horizon seemed clear, a typhoon struck Kabankalan and left the church unusable and plunged the parish once more in poverty. In Calatrava, everything was in ruins or at the hands of the municipal government whose officials were Aglipayan and constrained the missionary to fix his residence in the barrio of Lemery.

In the southern region of Negros Oriental the environment was somewhat more favorable to the Recollects. Neither in Bacong nor in Zamboanguita did they meet any major difficulties. The people continued to be supportive of the priest. In Siaton, Fr. Tiburcio was given a cold reception. But after three days Felipe Tayco, a former revolutionary, who held absolute power over the populace, changed his attitude, and dragged all the people with him. His administration, though, was annoying and least desirable. The town of Siaton covered a huge territory but it lacked roads. Its bordering towns were many kilometers away and its villages suffered the consequences of the Revolution, neglect and the ravages of time. "Of the town halls or *casas tribunales*, of schoolhouses and, as a whole, of all the public edifices during the Spanish rule. not one remained standing not even one just as an example. Of the churches and kumbentos of the five mission stations that with this town comprised this district, only the lowly bamboo church of Bombonon, the church of Bayawan and the kumbento of Siaton survived but they were in such a

¹¹ *Report of the Governor. Province of Oriental Negros*, Dumaguete July 19, 1905, in *Sixth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, part I, Washington 1906, 368-77. In August of this year the school had to close its doors.

state of abandonment that the church of Bayawan was destroyed shortly afterward. It was only through expenses, hard work and sacrifices that the church and kumbento of Siaton could be preserved. The worst part of it all was that every day there were more hardships and less resources and less hope of reconstructing those edifices that for so many years, so much hard work and sweat had cost the missionaries of yore.” Tolong needed a kumbento and the church was still under construction. The people gladly welcomed the visit of the first missionary. Within ten days he baptized twenty-five people, solemnized seven marriages and two burials on top of hearing seventy-one confessions. In Basay, the church had been burned to the ground in the wake of the departure of the missionaries in November 1898. The first parish priest of Siaton stayed in Basay for six days. During his three-month sojourn in Bayawan, the Recollect minister celebrated 156 baptisms, seventeen marriages, nineteen burials and heard the confession of 305 parishioners.

None of these hardships disheartened the missionaries. Some of them were men of solid mettle, others enjoyed some prestige in the town and still others were religious overflowing with zeal. Ángel Fabo, Mauricio Ferrero and Melchor Ardanaz represented each of these three types of ministers. Paying heed to the obstacles, they at once carried on with their tasks by attempting to reconstitute the socio-religious fiber of their respective towns. They tried their best to recover the church edifices, and when they failed in their attempts they substituted them with humble structures and resumed their worship activities and administration of the sacraments, especially confession, matrimony and anointing of the sick. They further updated the canonical books. “There were days when I was at the confessional for fifteen hours,” wrote Fr. Fabo in 1915. “It has been five years that I have designated a day of the month for confession and communion for a group or more and from Monday prior to First Friday of the month. The confessions by groups began and continued until the general confession on First Friday. In one year, I have distributed in this parish up to 9,898 communions.” People from neighboring towns went to Valencia for confession. In 1915 in Dumaguete, 5,740 of its 14,894 inhabitants fulfilled the Paschal obligations. Furthermore, they set up some confraternities and admonished the absolute necessity of establishing Catholic schools.

Since almost all the parishes were extensive, their administration was extremely onerous, especially if the parish priests limited their obligations to the population center. Valderrama traversed the northeastern region of the Island from Cervantes, Vito and Sagay down to Vallehermoso. He would have wanted to go further down to Guihulngan but he stumbled upon the opposition of its municipal *presidente*, “blind puppet of Demetrio Larena,” and “hell-bent on preventing a single friar from stepping inside the territory under his control.” Not long afterward, Valderrama’s coadjutor fixed his residence in Escalante. In August 1905, the bishop of Jaro gave the San Carlos parish priest the faculties to administer the parishes of Bais, Calag-Calag, Jimalalud, Manjuyod, Tayasan and Guihulngan. The jurisdiction of the parish priest of Siaton for many years reached the mission station of Basay which was located some eighty kilometers from the capital. In 1906, the parish priests of La Carlota and Kabankalan ministered to Valladolid, Ma-ao, Magallon (present-day Moisés Padilla), San Enrique, Pontevedra, Pulupandan, Himamaylan and Ilog. In this last jurisdiction the situation improved markedly in 1909 with the arrival of the Mill Hill missionaries in Bago, Valladolid, Pontevedra and Ilog. Fr. Fabo travelled to the remotest villages of Sum-ag in 1908, 1909, 1910 and 1913.

The endless source of conflicts was Aglipayanism which started spreading in the Island in early 1902. Its focal point had always been the town of Valladolid, whose parish priest was Lorenzo Paloma, future Aglipayan bishop. In that town, he could always count on the enthusiasm and expertise of the *hacendero* Francisco Infante.¹² From March to May 1903, Aglipay visited several towns along the west coast. It was evident in the letters of the parish priests of Talisay and Isabela¹³ that Aglipay was not welcomed in all the parishes with enthusiasm as claimed by Aglipayan sources and reiterated by María Fe Romero,¹⁴ but there was no doubt that he successfully gained the support of many local leaders

¹² Ma. Fe ROMERO, *Negros Occidental Between Two Foreign Powers (1888-1909)*, Bacolod 1974, 222.

¹³ Marcelino SIMONENA, *Carta al vicario provincial*, Talisay 16 March, y Melchor ARDANAZ, *Carta al Mons. Ferrero*, Isabela 8 May 1903, in *Recollectio* 21-22 (1998-99) 62-66.

¹⁴ Ma. Fe ROMERO, *Negros Occidental Between Two Foreign Powers*, 219-235. Her reconstruction ignores the Church sources and gives excessive credit to oral reports of old people of Aglipayan ancestry.

and his visits paved the way for future adherents and defenders of the schism. In November, through the sugar hacendero Infante, Aglipay relayed to Aglipayan committees the directives anent the ownership of church edifices. They did not belong to the Roman Church but to the townspeople who handed them over to the National Church. Therefore, the people should reject any claim by the Roman Church and should be responsible for them solely before the civil authorities. It was convenient upon their registration for the residents of the town to declare that the edifices had been constructed through the work and with the funds of the people.

The first three priests of the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* showed up in Bago, Pontevedra and Himamaylan and in the next two years their “bishop” Bernardo Hijalda, former coadjutor in Isabela, traversed a great part of the island in the company of a good number of his priests. Their action was detrimental particularly in the southern towns of Negros Occidental as well as in the central regions of Negros Oriental. Both areas were ministered to by a single priest. The first group of Aglipayan ministers fixed their residence at Binalbagan. The second group resided at Tanjay and later at San Carlos. In 1918, when the Aglipayan phenomenon had already entered into its downward parabola, still almost 34% of the inhabitants of Negros Occidental declared themselves as Aglipayan adherents while 28% of those in Negros Oriental did so. In one town or another, the percentage went over 80% and in several towns it exceeded or approached 50% of their population.

In towns administered by the Recollect priests the Aglipayan impact was very irregular. In La Carlota, Isabela, Kabankalan and even in San Carlos, Aglipayanism affected a big number of their population. In San Carlos, the number of proselytes was numerous especially in the barrios. On the other hand, in Zamboanguita and Siaton, Aglipayan impact was practically nil. In Murcia, Talisay, Dauin and Dumaguete, it was hardly perceivable. In Bacolod, the impact did not reach 2% of its population. In La Castellana, the massive adherence to the schism took place in 1914-1920, when the parish was bereft of a Catholic priest.

Table 1. POPULATION OF AGLIPAYANS IN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL 1918¹⁵

Towns	Population	Aglipayans	Percentage
Bacolod	19,360	359	1.9%
Bago	25,606	12,598	48.7%
Binalbagan	8,966	639	7.1%
Cádiz	21,260	3,205	15.0 %
Cauayan	13,584	8,066	59.3%
Escalante	28,934	1,225	4.3%
Himamaylan	15,559	5,809	37.2%
Hinigarán	16,097	7,165	44.5%
Ílog	13,182	11,042	83.7%
Isabela	19,653	3,526	39.1%
Kabankalan	16,804	6,675	39.6%
La Carlota	20,410	15,882	78.1%
La Castellana	8,087	6,112	76.1/%
Manapla	10,033	5,891	58.7%
Murcia	9,183	18	0.19%
Pontevedra	10,817	9,103	89.00%
Pulupandan	5,268	4,443	84.3%
San Carlos	42,453	8,923	21.0%
Saravia	14,021	22	0.31%
Silay	23,328	624	3.1%
Talisay	14,165	15	0.1%
Valladolid	10,213	9,429	92.2%
Victorias	7,557	3,061	40.5%
Total	390,958	132,740	34%

¹⁵ The statistical figures are not completely exact, because the census does not always provide the identical numbers.

TABLE 2. POPULATION OF AGLIPAYANS IN NEGROS ORIENTAL. 1918

Towns	Population	Aglipayans	Percentage
Ayuquitan	12,525	1,679	13.4%
Bacong	4,686	248	5.3%
Bais	13,952	7,274	52%
Dauin	10,356	44	0.42%
Dumaguete	16,336	138	0.84%
Guihulngan	31,069	16,720	53.7%
Jimalalud	17,828	5,594	36.9%
Luzuriaga (Valencia)	8,825	165	1.86%
Manjuyod	14,728	13,078	88.6%
Siaton	13,183	—	—
Sibulan	9,807	18	0.18%
Tanjay	15,089	64	0.41%
Tayasan	13,847	12,462	82.5
Tolong	10,283	1,781	17.3
Vallehermoso	9,726	1,448	14.9%
Zamboanguita	8,076	—	—
Total	214,241	60,313	28.1%

SOURCE: *Census of the Philippines. Year 1918*, vol. 2, 422

Pastoral ministry in Negros and other Recollect parishes in the Philippines

It was the lot of the Recollect missionaries to move around in a hostile ambience, particularly during the initial five or six years. The field of apostolate was immense and they were very few. That constrained them to be in constant movement, especially after having overcome that surprise and doubts during the initial period and the faithful dared manifest their true feelings. The parish priest of San Carlos had under his charge half of the east coast of Negros Island, from Escalante down to Tayasan. In 1906, the bishop of Jaro still extended it farther down to Bais.

From June 1902 until September 1904, wrote Fr. Fernando Hernández about the Recollects in old Zambales, “I can be sure that not only was I well received in the towns, yes, the townspeople had debated my presence among themselves. It is with difficulty that I could minister to the pastoral needs of the following towns: Agno (formerly Zambales, present-day Pangasinan) where I set up my center of operations, Bani, San Isidro, Dasol, Balincaguin and sometimes Zaragoza. I was, therefore, constrained to work as a travelling missionary, carrying in a small cart everything necessary for worship.” In 1903, he celebrated Palm Sunday in Bani, the Holy Week in Agno and Easter in San Isidro. This situation was similar to that in Mindoro, Romblon and Palawan. In this last province, the trips encountered greater risks and weakened inexorably the health of the religious.

Another hardship originated from the dearth of resources. The new government did not shoulder anymore the parish expenses unlike during the Spanish regime of Royal Patronage, and the parishioners—besides being impoverished—were not wont to defray the expenses for the sustenance of their parish priests.

Outbreaks of cholera, measles, epizooty, storms, droughts, locust plagues and other natural calamities devastated the islands during these years, cutting down lives, demolishing edifices and increasing the prices of agricultural products.

In April 1902, there was hardly a day when the smallpox epidemic did not cut down the lives of four or five children in Agno. Some days the number of young fatalities reached ten. Between 21 June to 23 July 1902, the cholera plague caused the death of almost five hundred people in Pinamalayan (Mindoro). There were days when the casualties climbed up to more than twenty.¹⁶ The following year locusts ruined their rice harvests and the plague reduced the people to famine and misery. In Calapan, from the fifth of June when the epidemic broke, 173 people perished. In the early days of October of that same year, the parish priest of Araceli (Palawan) buried about seventy corpses and hardly was there a day thereafter when no death occurred. At that moment, he wrote on the 8th day of October, “they called me to hear the

¹⁶ Jacinto MARTICORENA, *Cartas al p. Víctor Oscoz y al vicario provincial*, Nauján 30 June and 22 July 1902: AM, leg. 53, leg. 1.

confession of the people. [...] In the farms 25 to 30 were interred because there was nobody to take them to the cemetery.”¹⁷ The cholera epidemic arrived somewhat late in Misamis, but with identical intensity nonetheless. In Loculan and Tudela alone, it caused the death of five hundred people. In Loculan, a town with scarcely five thousand inhabitants, there were days when sixteen to twenty perished. Two years before some malignant fevers struck the region and 962 lives succumbed to them.¹⁸

In Negros Oriental, the number of deaths almost reached two thousand (1,895). The epidemic of 1909-1910 was more benign, still over 495 lives were lost in the same province. In 1895, the smallpox outbreak caused hundreds of deaths, especially in Bacong and Nueva Valencia. The most lethal malady throughout these years was malaria. In 1910, 1,250 perished from malarial fevers in Negros Oriental.¹⁹

Between October and November of the year 1912, three typhoons battered Negros Island and devastated the crops which were about to be harvested. Thereafter followed one of the most devastating famines the Island had ever known.²⁰ On the night of 15-16 September 1912, a typhoon sank the steamer *Tayabas* at the mouth of the river of Escalante, “drowning about thirty passengers and crew members with only nineteen survivors. The high waters that had pulled the *Tayabas* down entered the town proper and erased it: wiping out the church, town hall, schoolhouses and more than two hundred houses. Only the kumbento was left standing and it served as refuge for everyone. In Vito (Sagay) the new convent submerged in floodwaters, with Fr. Antonio Hernández miraculously saved. Here in Bacolod, it was not a major event, but a good number of nipa houses and boats at the shore were destroyed. The palay plantation which was about to be harvested was lost.” Two years earlier, on 10 November 1910, another typhoon wrought havoc and death in the archipelago. In Cuyo, it demolished five hundred houses and seriously damaged three hundred more.

¹⁷ Victoriano ROMÁN, *Carta al padre Vicente Soler*, Araceli 7 Oct. 1902: *Recollectio* 1 (1978) 217.

¹⁸ C. CHOCARRO, *Vuelta de los Recoletos al distrito de Misamis (Mindanao) después de la Revolución*, 3r, s. l y s. d.: AGOAR, caja A80, leg. 7.

¹⁹ RODRIGUEZ II, 104-11, M^a Fe ROMERO, 239-42.

²⁰ RODRIGUEZ II, 63-69.

During those years drought, locusts and rinderpest or cattle plague decimated the draught animals and ruined the agriculture in Negros. Between 1901 and 1903, 90% of the carabaos in Negros Oriental perished. In 1902, fifty percent of the sugar cane harvest was lost and the following year abaca, tobacco and copra suffered the same fate. In 1905, a protracted drought destroyed a great part of the corn harvest, corn being the staple food of the people. In 1905, Kabankalan was attacked by the followers of Papa Isio, and in 1907 a huge conflagration hit the town.

These calamities likewise aggravated the economic instability of the religious ministers and constrained them to administer the sacraments without church fees. Áriz, Abaurrea and Román narrated about their travels throughout Palawan Archipelago and declared that very often they were compelled to waive the church fees—their sole source of earning. Other sources had always been Mass intentions but even these became very scarce. Only Cuyo and Zambales had more than enough. Town authorities like those of Oroquieta, Ozamiz, Puerto Princesa, Culion, Escalante and those less rabidly sectarian ones, particularly Murcia, were in control of the local government and they took part in the collection of the *arancel*, specifically the burial fees. Since almost all the cemeteries were under their control, they themselves could fix the rates and collect the burial fees. Some officials, like that hotheaded one in Jimenez in Misamis, even went to the extreme of prohibiting the residents from assisting Masses or taking part in the sacraments.²¹ In Candijay (Bohol), the town officials prohibited the Recollect minister from celebrating the Mass at the parish church.

In Palawan the missionaries survived due to the assistance extended by the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino and some generous parishioners. The parish priests of Sum-ag and Murcia received help from the same sources. In San Carlos, La Castellana and Kabankalan the Recollects found the support of some Spanish sugar hacenderos. And when local justice officials demanded their appearance for some activities, they were freed from incarceration thanks to the generosity of big-hearted individuals who posted bail for them. Vicente Vázquez, Pedro Pérez and Ángel Fabo, parish priests of Escalante, La Castellana and Sum-ag, respectively, benefited from such generosity.

²¹ SÁENZ, 275, 277.

In 1910, the procurator general of the Province of Saint Nicholas de Tolentino reiterated this penury or lack of resources in a letter to the prior provincial.

Our missionaries feel very bad, Father, majority of them devoid of the celebration and, of course, they would prefer to celebrate the masses to pay for their stipend. One of them with leftover is Fr. Hipólito and we are already aware of the deprivations, penury and misery in which Fr. Navascués is living. Poor missionaries of ours! One has just written me: ‘Do not remind me, not even as a joke, that I owe the procurator’s office because you have to be informed that still I need to maintain the Catholic schools of the town and its villages, and I have firmed up my decision to die of hunger first than to close them’ [...] I send them some intentions when I can get from some friends in the clergy. This is very bad, very bad, and everybody is of one voice in foretelling worse days for religion and its ministers.”²²

Many Recollects had to fight for the church property and the use of church edifices. Upon their arrival at former Recollect curacies, many churches were in a ruinous state, and the parish rectories had fallen into the hands of the municipal governments and were utilized as schoolhouses, town halls, police stations and other official government agencies. The situation got worse towards the end of 1902 and the beginning of 1903 when they lost even the use of the many churches since during those dates and thereafter the churches started to fall into the hands of the Aglipayans. Sometimes in the wake of the defection of the parish priest to the schismatic group, like those in southern Zambales, and others with the assistance extended to them by the local authorities, such as those in the southern part of Negros Occidental, Misamis, Banton in Romblon, Bani, and other towns. Some religious ministers had to find accommodations in private houses and celebrated the services of worship in lowly shanties. The missionary of La Castellana found refuge in the sugar hacienda of a German national named Hermann Gruppe, while that of Kabankalan in the sugar estate of the Lizarraga brothers. In Dumaguete, Cuyo, Puerto Princesa, Masinloc, Calapan, Sum-ag, Escalante, La Carlota, Murcia, San Carlos and other municipalities, the missionaries were lodged in rented houses. In Masinloc, Puerto [Galera],

²² Juan LABARGA, *Carta a Fernando Mayandía*, 5 Sept. 1910: APM, leg. 29, n. 3, 2r-7r.

Calapan, Naujan and other towns, the edifices were soon returned to the Catholic Church, their legitimate owners, but the majority were recovered only after the verdict was handed down by Supreme Court on 24 November 1906. In Negros Island, the Supreme Court verdict was not published until 1909. In Sum-ag, and perhaps in some other parishes, church properties were not even re-claimed.

The spread of the Aglipayan Church greatly troubled the Recollects, although initially some religious did give it any importance. Fr. Fernando Hernández believed that it would not take long for the faithful to notice the moral and doctrinal discrepancies of the promoters, and once they got fed up with the fad they would end up abandoning the sect. The Recollects did not know how to appropriately appreciate the weight of the nationalistic factor.

Their first contact with them took place in the northern region of old Zambales province. Its promoters who originated from Lingayen showed up in Anda. The diocesan parish priests of Bolinao and Alaminos who were in charge of that Anda parish did not feel the need to resist them. With the support of the town authorities it did not take long for them to settle there. Then they proceeded to Bani, where in spite of the strong resistance posed by Fr. Fernando Hernández they took possession of the church and converted many proselytes with the assistance extended by town officials. In Anda, the Aglipayans comprised 82.3% of the population, and 58,5% in Bani. The adherents in Agno reached 23.7%. In four other parishes administered by the Recollect missionaries, Aglipayanism did not become an enduring phenomenon. In Infanta, Dasol and Masinloc they reached 0.50% of their population. In Candelaria they hardly exceeded 1%; there were 48 Aglipayans out of the population of 4.252 souls.

In subsequent years Recollects and Aglipayans coexisted in all the provinces, even in Bohol and Palawan which were two of the provinces least affected by the schism. In 1903 and 1907, the Recollects met with Aglipay himself during his visit to Negros and Zambales. In his visit to those two provinces, Aglipay attempted to get in contact with them. He was successful, by making use of some of his schemes, in Isabel, Negros Occidental, where he attempted to attract Fr. Melchor Ardanaz to his sect. His relationship was more lasting with the “bishops” Narciso Hijalda and Lorenzo Paloma in Negros, Gregorio Dizon in southern

Zambales Zambales and José Evangelista in Misamis. Hijalda and Paloma won over to the schism majority of the towns in southern part of Negros Occidental before the arrival of the Recollects in Kabankalan. According to the recommendations of the bishop of Jaro, the Recollects of Kabankalan should “recover, even if little by little, what had been lost in all these places since the departure of the Recollect fathers.”²³ Fr. Gregorio Dizon did exactly the same among the Ilocanos in southern Zambales, and the installation of Fr. Fernando Hernández there had failed to bring them back to the fold of the Catholic Church. The second visit conducted by Jose Evangelista to Misamis District in September 1905 ended with the leaning to Aglipayanism of a province where it had already made major breakthroughs.

The coexistence between the Romanists and the Aglipayans was tense and often violent. Aglipayan as well as Catholic chronicles spoke of clashes, malicious acts, dispossession, and even personal attacks, which they did not doubt in attributing to their adversaries. However, it seemed that it was the Aglipayans who frequently made use of those means. In Kabankalan, they threw Fr. Inocente Lamata out of the window. In Sum-ag they tried to block religious processions, threatened Fr. Angel Fabo with death and several times filed legal cases against him, putting his ministry in embarrassment in a thousand ways. On the night of 5 March 1905 they torched the hut where he lived, and on Holy Saturday of 1909 they threatened his life and attempted to set his new residence afire. Fortunately, in this occasion “it did not catch fire.” In Escalante, Ozamiz and Sibulan they hurled stones at the kumbento. In one town, they incarcerated the parish priest. In Valencia (17 March 1906), Amlan (April 1906) and Bais (December 1907), they set the parish churches ablaze. In Escalante, an Aglipayan adherent murdered Fr. Víctor Baltanás (1909) inside his convent. After a legal proceeding in Bacolod, on 17 August 1909 the court sentenced the murderer to life imprisonment. In Bayawan, the church was forcibly taken after breaking down the doors and windows. The court found the criminal guilty and condemned him to six years in jail.

²³ *Apuntes* 2, 40r.

There were instances when the Aglipayan adherents resorted to threats in order to block the attendance of Catholics at church. They tried to dissuade them from collaborating in the reconstruction of churches (Infanta and San Isidro in the actual province of Pangasinan) and to keep them away from contact with the missionaries. This scheme had already been resorted to before by the local chieftains. When the malignant fevers ravaged the district of Misamis towards the end of 1901, the parishioners left their loved ones to die without receiving the last sacraments out of fear of the authorities. "The fevers continued to decimate the people and hardly did they summon us. Such was the terror of those people who permitted their sick ones without confession in order not to approach the priest."²⁴ In Escalante in 1902-1905, Fr. Juan Lorenzo found himself without sextons, musicians and servants. In May 1904, the municipal president of Ozamis padlocked the church and banned Fr. José Abad from entry.

The Aglipayans felt they were the masters of the situation and, supported by civil authorities, they seized a good number of properties from the Catholic Church. Their feelings, oftentimes more proper to the politics of religion, incited them along that path, and the American authorities did not deem it their obligation to impede them. Bishop Rooker of Jaro, Bishop Thomas Hendrick of Cebu, numerous missionaries and even some American civil officials believed that it was a mere disguise and the authentic objective was political in nature. Starting 1907, as the verdict of the Supreme Court on the return of church edifices released in 1906 was being enforced, the situation commenced to improve. In 1908, the governor of Negros Oriental declared that in the province "differences which were religious in nature" no longer existed.²⁵ The burning of the church of Bais in 1907, murder of Fr. Baltanás in May 1909 and other minor incidents clearly showed that such assessment and judgment like others mentioned in his reports to the American government were self-serving judgments and they did not reflect the reality.

These circumstances affected their work of the Recollects and made the drawing-up of adequate evangelization programs almost impossible. During some years they had to limit themselves to the

²⁴ CHOCARRO, 3c.

²⁵ *Report of the Governor of Oriental Negros*, Dumaguete, 11 July 1908: *Ninth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, part I, Washington 1909, 393.

normalization of the worship services, the administration of the sacraments, the retrieval of the parochial archives and sacramental books and the rehabilitation or construction of new church edifices. After three, four or five years of abandonment, those were the most urgent tasks to be accomplished. Their efforts to recover their old edifices and construct new ones did not experience the greatest success. Sometimes they were lost during the hostile conflicts of local politics and at other times due to the hardships stemming from their own penury. This plight only allowed them to erect lowly structures made of wood but most often made of bamboo and nipa, helpless in resisting the violence of typhoons or the forces of tropical nature. In very rare occasions—such as those in Cuyo, Nueva Valencia, San Carlos—were they able to provide their churches with galvanized iron roofing.

Neither in the spiritual side of their ministry were they especially fortunate. Unmarried couples and unbaptized children who were three, four or even ten years old abounded everywhere. In some towns in Zambales, Mindoro and southern area of Negros Oriental the Recollect ministers had to solemnize hundreds of marriages and administer thousands of baptisms. Fr. Fernando solemnize fifteen marriages in just one day in Eguia, a small village in Zambales. In less than five months, Fr. Tiburcio Fernández administered four hundred baptisms and joined sixty-three couples in holy matrimony. In other towns the need for baptisms as well as for marriages was below what was necessary for such reasons as religious indifference or pressures from Aglipayans or scattering of the population. In Oroquieta with around 12,000 inhabitants, between 1903 and 1907, only 153 baptisms were administered. This figure included those coming from Marella (López Jaena) and Langaran (Plaridel). Only eighteen marriages were canonically solemnized. During his ministry of two years and a half when the same Fr. Fernández administered the towns of Kabankalan, Himamaylan, Ilog, Cauayan, Bayawan and Siaton (these last two towns for five months) with a total population of 80,000 souls, he celebrated only six hundred baptisms, eighty marriages, forty-nine burials and 929 confessions. The figures of Siaton were included in those statistics: four hundred baptisms, sixty-three marriages and 813 confessions.²⁶

²⁶ T. FERNÁNDEZ, *Carta al vicario provincial*, Kabankalan Dec. 1907: *Apuntes* 2, 39v-51; la cita en APM, leg. f. 51r. Original, en ff. 55r-76v.

The following two tables reflect the situation of an average parish, free from special conditionings. The first table was compiled by Fr. Melchor Ardanaz, a religious endowed with great apostolic zeal, who administered Isabela for twelve years. The second was the work of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero, who summed up the situation in Bacolod when the nationalistic fervor was already on the wane. The estimated population of both parishes was 13,000.

TABLE 3. SACRAMENTS ADMINISTERED IN ISABELA, 1903-1907

Year	Extreme Unctions	Confessions	Baptisms	Marriages
1903	84	1,376	704	100
1904	100	912	696	76
1905	71	1,417	523	93
1906	82	1,063	508	105
1907(till 19 June)	45	1,054	—	94
1914			12,000	

SOURCE: Melchor ARDANAZ, *Carta al vicario provincial*, Isabela 16 October 1906: *Apuntes* 1, 79-87.

TABLE 4. SACRAMENTS ADMINISTERED IN BACOLOD. JAN-JUNE 1907

Baptisms	241
Extreme Unctions	24
Marriages	63
Deceased without sacraments	20
Confessions	1,093

SOURCE: Mauricio FERRERO, *Carta al vicario provincial*, Bacolod July 1907: *Apuntes* 1, 139-40.

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The Creation of the Diocese of Bacolod and Negros Recollects Welcomed the First Bishop in 1933¹

Miguel Avellaneda OAR

Translated from the Spanish and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Creation of the new diocese

Through the apostolic constitution *Ad Christi regnum* of 15 July 1932,² Pope Pius XI created the Diocese of Bacolod, capital of Negros Occidental, with the episcopal see at Bacolod, with territories taken from the Jaro Diocese in Iloilo and the Diocese of the Most Holy Name of Jesus in Cebu. The new ecclesiastical jurisdiction included the whole island of Negros, Siquijor and the small islands in the eastern coast. Thus the Latin papal decree declares the four salient provisions:

¹ The article *De Filipinas. Bacolod, sede episcopal* is in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* 25 (1934) 14-25. This has been annotated and edited.

² The CBCP website for Bacolod Diocese declares that it was created on 16 May 1933. Cf. <http://www.cbcponline.net/jurisdictions/bacolod.html>. Then its CBCP news dated 28 January 2008, it gives another date: 4 March 1933. This last date confuses the creation with the birthday—4 March—of Bishop Lladoc. Cf. <http://www.cbcpnews.com/?q=node/622>. The websites of the Diocese of Bacolod and “The Student Catholic Action of the Philippines” agree with the *Augustinian Recollect chronicles*: 15 July 1932. Cf. <http://www.dioceseofbacolod.org.ph/pages/historicalhi.html> and <http://www.scaphilippines.com/bacolod.html>.

1. *A dioecesi Jarensi integram insulam vulgo Negros nuncupatam destrahimus una cum parculis insulis ad orientem adiacentibus. Item a Nominis Jesu seu Caebuana dioecesi, in praesens vacante, insulam Siquijor nuncupatam avellimus ac distrahimus.* From the Diocese of Jaro we take away the whole island commonly known as Negros together with the adjoining small islands in the east. We remove and separate as well from the Diocese of the Holy Name of Jesus or Cebu, *sede vacante* at present, together with the indicated island of Siquijor.
2. *Eregimus dioecesim de Bacolod.* [...] We erect the Diocese of Bacolod.³
3. [...] *Sedes in urbe Bacolod.* The see is in Bacolod City.
4. [...] *Cathedra in ecclesia Sancti Sebastiani, in eadem urbe, cum grado et dignitate Ecclesiae Catholicae ...* The seat is at San Sebastian Church in the same city with rank and dignity of Catholic Church.

Bishop Casimiro named First Bishop of Bacolod

Through his apostolic delegate in the Philippines, the Roman Pontiff appointed the then vicar general of the Diocese of Naga, Msgr. Casimiro Lladoc as bishop to govern the new ecclesiastical territory on 23 June 1933.⁴ Msgr. Lladoc had a Licentiate in Canon Law and was a professor in the University of Santo Tomas. He was born in Pilar, Sorsogon, on 4 March 1893, and received the holy presbyterate on 25 March 1918.

³ The word “bacolod” means “hill” or “bank of stone” probably from the town called “Daanbanua” located three or four kilometers towards the barrio of Granada. Bacolod was founded in or about 1770. It was then transferred to its present site. Marcellán, however, stated in 1879 that Bacolod was founded in 1756. The natives of the place and families from Iloilo and Antique settled in the old site of Bacolod. Avellaneda avers that 1788 was the foundation year of Bacolod as town. He confessed he could find no record of the date of its creation as a parish. In a parochial book of Binalbagan, however, Avellaneda saw that there was an entry of 11 January 1802 where Father Eusebio Lauren signed as curate of Bacolod.

⁴ For more on Bishop Lladoc, visit <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/blladoc.html>.



**Bishop Casimiro Lladoc, DD
(1893-1951)**

Together Bishop James Paul McCloskey (1870-1945) of Jaro, Iloilo, and Bishop Francisco Javier Reyes (1876-1937) of Nueva Caceres, the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Guglielmo Piani (1875-1956), consecrated Lladoc as bishop on 16 September 1933 in Manila. After eighteen years as bishop of Bacolod, the prelate passed away on 24 October 1951 at the age of 58.⁵

Together with other Negros Recollect curates, Fr Luis Alvarez (1898-1960), Talisay parish priest, welcomed the new bishop

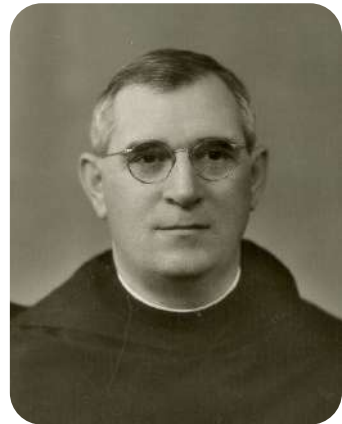


⁵ The CBCP website erroneously states that Bishop Llador [sic] took possession of Bacolod Diocese on 24 October 1951. This was the day the bishop died. He took possession on 24 October 1933, eighteen years earlier. Cf. <http://www.cbcponline.net/jurisdictions/bacolod.htm>

Recollects cede Negros parishes to the secular clergy

Soon after Bishop Lladoc's episcopal consecration which was celebrated with much pomp, the Recollect superiors in Manila paid him their respects and asked him what he wanted. The bishop believed it was opportune to replace our priests in Bacolod with native clergy. And this was no sooner said than done. When the people in Negros saw that the Recollects broke camp by withdrawing themselves in a simple manner, some town leaders filed petitions and even registered their protests with the highest authorities. Bacolod⁶ and several neighboring towns were under Recollect administration. They owed almost everything to the Recollect Order. However, how erroneous were a great number of Christians! The Catholic missionary and his cause were more sublime: that the ideal of religious orders was not circumscribed to a single territory!

The horizons of the Augustinian Recollect Order were not fundamentally linked to Bacolod, nor to five, nor to ten towns, although these towns—such as those of Negros—might be of great significance and of so much glorious history for us. Without any trace of a doubt, to have prepared in a convenient manner the apostolic vicariates—so lowly and so impoverished— and dioceses that were relatively opulent and of high morale like that of Negros, was an honor and splendor for the apostolic province of Saint Nicholas.



Vicar Provincial Leoncio Reta (1893- 1966), a long-time curate of San Carlos, Lemery and Escalante accompanied Bishop Lladoc to the Recollect parishes in northern Negros.

⁶ The word “bacolod” means “hill” or “bank of stone” probably from the town called “Daanbanua” located three or four kilometers towards the barrio of Granada. Bacolod was founded in or about 1770. It was then transferred to its present site. Marcellán, however, stated in 1879 that Bacolod was founded in 1756. The natives of the place and families from Iloilo and Antique settled in the old site of Bacolod. Avellaneda avers that 1788 was the foundation year of Bacolod as town. He confessed he could find no record of the date of its creation as a parish. In a parochial book of Binalbagan, however, Avellaneda saw that there was an entry of 11 January 1802 where Father Eusebio Lauren signed as curate of Bacolod.

Hence, since 1932 when the diocese was created, our confreres in Negros with all smiles advised and instructed the people in obedience, this axis of Catholicism especially in the Philippines. The fears vanished and the Recollects campaigned ceaselessly so that the new bishop would be welcomed in his diocese, and it happened appropriately: with the pomp and majesty fit for a prince, with affection and enthusiastic applause.

Church entourage from Manila sails to Negros in October 1933

The prelates of the Church in the Philippines were then in Manila and when their conferences were over they expressed their desire to honor Bishop Casimiro Lladoc by accompanying him to Negros. Among those appointed for the entourage was Vicar Provincial Leoncio Reta who kindly invited Father Miguel Avellaneda to join the trip and accompany him to Negros. This was a fine occasion for the historian to visit the two provinces and almost all the Recollect curacies.

The church entourage left Manila on 23 October on board the steamer *Bohol*. It was the following day 24 October when the waiting welcome party caught sight of the ship from the Silay wharf. Another steamer *Princesa de Negros* where the welcome committee was on board met the prelates from Manila. They then transferred to the *Princesa de Negros* which docked at the Silay wharf and from there the waiting convoy of cars led the entourage to the new church of Silay. They made a brief stop and visited the Blessed Sacrament and went on their way to Talisay.

The convoy of vehicles was already a kilometer long. Long before



San Sebastian Cathedral of Bacolod built by the Recollect parish priest Mauricio Ferrero in 1862

the arrival in Talisay, the Recollect priests had prepared the crowds in an orderly manner. From time to time, hurrahs and congratulations reverberated along the way. The crowds grew bigger and bigger until there was hardly any space to walk anymore. The entourage members got down from their cars. The papal delegate, the archbishop and other prelates under the pallium proceeded to the church of Talisay amidst hymns and loud shouts of “Long live!”

At the Talisay church portal was the parish priest of Father Luis Alvarez OAR with the fluvial cape, together with almost all the Augustinian Recollect parish priests of Negros Island, who came to pay their respects to the new bishop. The rite was so lavish that the Holy Father’s apostolic delegate, emotionally touched, addressed the Catholic congregation of Talisay.

Bishop Lladoc takes possession of Bacolod

The entourage continued the trip to Bacolod. But the downpour which commenced to fall scattered the crowds, so much so that when the entourage reached Bacolod the dignitaries could not get out of the cars without getting drenched. The ceremonies which should have been celebrated at the town square had to be cancelled. At once we headed for the church—now the cathedral—, there the papal bulls were read before the people who filled the naves to the rafters and the *Te Deum* hymn was sung. Shortly afterward, Bishop McCloskey of Jaro, Bishop Lladoc and Abp. Guglielmo Piani took turns in reading their messages before the congregation. That night a popular banquet was held.

The following day, the new prelate celebrated the pontifical mass, and afterwards we had another sumptuous meal which was hosted this time by the diocesan and regular clergy of the diocese for their local ordinary at the activity hall of La Consolacion College. During the two meals, speeches—in bombastic manner—were delivered. Nonetheless, endless silly orations, though done in good faith, were not wanting either. But it was a memorable event for Bacolod as the Christian community welcomed its first bishop.

Land area of the new diocese

According to the 1905 data from the Census Office of the United States of America, Negros Occidental had a land area of 3,130 square

miles.⁷ Its total population was 308,272.⁸ Very sparsely populated, the western province had 98 inhabitants per square mile. Negros Oriental had a land area of 1,864 square miles. Its population was 201,494. In 1903, the Christian population of the two Negros provinces was 201,047.⁹ The whole Negros was 208 kms. long and 80 kms. wide. The total land area was 12,642 sq. kms. The population (1903) of eastern Negros was approximately 488,000 [In 2007, it had 1,231,904.].¹⁰

Siquijor, the sub-province of Negros Oriental which likewise belonged to the new diocese, was 27 kms. long from west-northwest to east-southeast and twenty kms. long from north to south. The population of Siquijor was approximately 12,500. [Siquijor in 2007 had 87,695 inhabitants.]¹¹



⁷ Bacolod has 2,019 sq. miles only, following the creation of the Dioceses of San Carlos and Kabankalan in 1988.

⁸ The total population of the Philippines was 7,635,000, according to the *Summary of Principal Vital Statistics of the Philippines, 1903-1997*.

⁹ The *2007-2008 Catholic Directory of the Philippines* listed the Catholic population of Bacolod Diocese as 1,081,444 from a total population of 1,2837,433.

¹⁰ *2007 Census of Population. Total Population by Province, City, Municipality and Barangay: as of August 1, 2007*, 74.

¹¹ *2007 Census of Population*. 91.

Our Casiciaco in the Philippines¹

Fray Agustín R. de Santa Teresa de Jesús
[Rafael García OAR]

Translated from the Spanish and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Dreams bloomed at last among the marvelous roses of realities. The yearnings to have a rest house in the summer mountain city of Baguio have been achieved. The house is already there, not unlike a nest of nightingales hanging in the grove of pines. Like a haven of peace for the hectic life of the missionary and educational ministries. Like a Bethany for the solace of the spirit. And like a new Casiciaco where certainly no immortal dialogues shall be written much like in the Cassiciacum of Italy. On the other hand, yes, there will be intimate spiritual dialogues between Jesus and our religious when they go up for their holy retreat, their spiritual exercises.

Of the country villa of Cassiciacum in Italy owned by Verecundus, Fr. Félix García in his quadricentenary essay titled *El retorno a San Agustín* [The Return to Saint Augustine], crafted the following depiction:

It was like a welcoming refuge in upper Lombardy, sheltered by the solid strongholds of the Alps. Fields of a sweet soothing green landscape, lying gardens of the mountainside, surrounded by trees offering its fruits of the season; meadows of bountiful pasture for herds that are reminisced by Sicilian flutes, and tinkling and jumping water from the mountain like a vivid symbol for those who suffer from the endearing thirst for the truth.

¹ Rafael GARCÍA, *Nuestro Casiciaco filipino*, in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de la Islas Filipinas* 44 (1954) 256-259.



Casiciaco Recoletos, now a formation house for students of philosophy and the humanities, located at Pres. E. Quirino in Baguio City, was inaugurated in 1954 as a vacation and retreat house of the religious of the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

This is a picture that with some modifications of geographical names and with something of lesser thickness in the copious grasslands for grazing could serve as well to depict the picturesque panorama of Baguio City whose villas and chalets painted with vivid hues and scattered through the small valleys and knolls speckle its green landscape and appear to be the beautiful Bethlehem scenery.

Yes. It has been a long time that our missionaries yearned for a vacation house in the Philippines. In 1930, setting up a vacation house in either Tagaytay or Baguio was contemplated. A vacation house would definitely serve as alleviation from the scorching heat for all Filipinos. The superiors appointed Brother Ángel Morrás de la Purísima Concepción to conduct a visit to Tagaytay, to observe its climatic characteristics as well as to study the conveniences of a house it could offer. Despite the burden and ailments of old age Brother Ángel visited many sites in Tagaytay and submitted a report published in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás*.² For whatever reason, the idea of establishing a house in Tagaytay did not become a reality. The plan was revived in the wake of the Filipino-Japanese war.

² Ángel MORRÁS, *Una excursión a Tagaytay, in Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas*, 21 (1930) 408-411.

And when concrete steps were taken for the acquisition of a necessary land parcel, it was not in Tagaytay but in Baguio and during the canonical visit of Prior Provincial Fr. Santos Bermejo in the Philippines in the spring of 1951. In consequence thereof, the vicar provincial and the procurator general of Manila tried their best to be informed of land parcels on sale. As soon as its projects were publicly announced, several lots were offered to them. On 31 August of that year [1951], the two superiors went up to Baguio in the company of Architect Mañalac and our counsel Attorney Ayala. They looked personally into all the land parcels being offered to them. After considering and carefully studying carefully the terms and the advantages of each land parcel, they opted for that of the American Jesuit fathers which besides its suitable location and exceptionally unsurpassed communications accessible to the market and center of the city. Furthermore, the location would solve for us some embarrassing problems not worth mentioning here.

The land area having been chosen and before proceeding with subsequent legalities, they had a meeting with the Apostolic Vicar of the Montañesa Bishop William Basseur of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They manifested to him their plan to establish a house within his ecclesiastical jurisdiction and sought his authorization for it. The zealous Belgian missionary garbed in civilian clothes, covered with raincoat and wearing rubber boots welcomed them. The Manila visitors surprised him doing manual work and repairing the damages occasioned in his property by the torrential rains that for many days caused floods in the city. The prelate did not pose any impediments to the project and granted the petitioned authorization. All that was communicated to the provincial curia and having acquired that permit, we proceeded with the preparation of the contract with the Jesuit fathers. We were ready to construct it anytime we deemed most opportune and convenient.

Since that triennium³ was already nearing its end and it was not appropriate to commence the works that could not be finished before the friars who were appointed in the 1949 Provincial Chapter would end their term, the construction of the house was entrusted to succeeding religious superiors.

³ The religious elected for the 1949-1952 triennium would end their terms of office in 1952 when the new superiors would be elected during the provincial chapter convoked for that year.

In the meantime, the services of Engineer Espiritu, a Baguio resident, were hired for the building of the fence around the property with pine stakes and wire fence and simultaneously in order to prevent from erecting their shanties within the property the squatters, *i.e.*, intruding settlers who in the wake of the Filipino-Japanese war built their shacks with brass and old boards anywhere they wanted without even asking permission from the landowners. All this could mean a derisory interference but this fact had become an immensely widespread reality even in Manila itself that later on occasioned many displeasures and financial expenditures on the part of the owners who were obliged to expel them from their properties.

And the time to build it came when the new prior provincial Fr. Manuel Carceller de la Sagrada Familia made his canonical visit to the Philippines. During his sojourn in the Philippines he travelled to Baguio together with the procurator general Fr. Simeón Asensio. When he checked the advantages of the planned foundation stemming from the climate of the place, so beneficial to those who performed their activities in a torrid and tropical zone, he immediately provided the necessary measures for the drafting of the architectural blueprints of a sufficiently large edifice. Meanwhile, Villa Santa Rosa, a property of the school with the same name in Manila,⁴ whose board of directors presided by the vicar provincial was to be rented by religious who would monitor the construction.

The blueprints prepared by Architect Manalac were approved by provincial council on 21 May 1953. And they were adjudicated to Engr. Espiritu who at once commenced the building project. In March 1954, as published in a number of this *Bulletin* corresponding to the month of June, the construction of one wing and the chapel was finished. Prior General Fr. Eugenio Ayape blest them on the feast of Saint Joseph. Now we can inform our readers that the whole building has been already finished and we shall now give a cursory description of the house even as we take advantage of the data provided for by Fr. Simeón in a letter.

⁴ Villa Santa Rosa belonged to the foundation whose board had the Augustinian Recollect major superior in the Philippines, *i.e.*, vicar provincial at that time, as president and which owned the schools bearing the name of Colegio de Santa Rosa located in Intramuros, Manila and in Makati City.

The shape of the edifice is a long line but angulated with a chapel in the middle. The main door is in the center of the edifice, which leads to a spacious lobby with a receiving room on each side. The wall and doors that partition the lobby and the chapel can be drawn to both sides in such a way that the lobby can be united with the chapel to form one big hall in case there is a huge number of people in attendance. The exterior walls are made of cement while the interior walls of the lobby and the chapel are plywood made of *dau*, one of the finest woods known in this country. Right above the lobby is the very spacious recreation hall. Separated by the wall in between is the *tribuna* or gallery where one could view the chapel below and which is sometimes used as choir loft.

The right wing of the building has a staircase for the exclusive use of the priests. It has rooms or cells made of pinewood, each furnished with a sink. The dimensions of each room on each side of the hallway are five meters by four meters. The common restroom/bathroom is located at the extreme left and is covered with white tiles. It is furnished with five showers, five urinals, six toilets and a washtub. At the extreme of the right wing is a staircase that leads to the lower floor beside the kitchen. The walls of the kitchen are made of white tiles and in the lower portions there are chests of drawers. On the left side is the pantry or stockroom and on the farther right is the refectory whose tables and chairs are made of *narra*, just like the tables and closets in the individual rooms. Going out of the refectory is a hall where four classrooms can be accommodated since there are four doors and four equally spacious windows. A hallway or corridor exists along these four doors and at the extreme part is a restroom.

At the left wing there has a staircase that leads to the floor with rooms of the students: thirty rooms and the room of the prefect or master of the professed. These rooms have half the space of the rooms of the priests. Each of the thirty rooms has a sink with running water. The partitions of hallways and the rooms are made of *tangili* wood. At the extreme right there is the restroom/washroom with the same amenities of that in the fathers' wing. At the extreme part of the left wing is a common dormitory with a staircase that leads to the second floor where the individual rooms are found. The walls are made of tangili wood of the dormitory as well as the room of the "inspector" or supervisor.

Likewise there is spacious hall that can serve as refectory of students who occupy the common dormitory. The second part of the left wing has one more floor below for the hall and rooms of the helper. The extreme part of its wall serves as the main wall of the concrete fronton or pediment, whose dimensions are eleven meters high and twenty-three meters long.



The Chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar at Casiciaco Recoletos in Baguio City was blest on 19 March 1953 by Prior General Eugenio Ayape OAR.

Along the edifice is a pathway with a sidewalk and a beautiful garden with a fish pond. All of them turn out beautiful and coquettish, in harmony with the surrounding scenery. Furthermore, beautiful is the chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Pillar whose image as well as the tabernacle, candelabras and chandeliers were crafted and shipped from Spain.

At the altar frontispiece are the bas-reliefs of the images of Saint Clare of Montefalco, Saint Rita, Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, Saint Thomas of Villanova, and Our Lady of Consolation at the center. The lateral altars shall be adorned with the images of Our Father Saint Augustine, Saint Monica, and those of our Blessed Martyrs of Japan.

Such is the cursory description of our house of Casiciaco in Baguio. For its construction the climatological conditions of the place were taken into account. Taken into consideration as well was that one day it could be a house of formation for Filipino candidates to the priesthood and even for other non-Filipino candidates who might come to the Philippines to finish the priestly studies. The place and the clime are suitable for meditation and study as well as for the recreation and reinvigoration of the religious. *Laus Deo!* Praise be to God.

The Recollects of San Sebastian: Zealous Promoters of Carmel Devotion in the Philippines¹

Ángel Martínez Cuesta OAR

Translated from the Spanish and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

For over three centuries (1621-1960), the Augustinian Recollects have been the foremost promoters of the devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Philippines. In 1621, they constructed a lowly church in the outskirts of the Walled City of Manila and dedicated it to the Roman martyr Saint Sebastian. There they placed a small image of the Virgen del Carmen, which they recently brought from Mexico. The Marian icon very soon after attracted the devotion of the faithful who began to gather at her feet.

In 1650, there already was an active confraternity with numerous members. The confraternity, however, had not acquired all the legal sanctions until 1691. In August of that year, the confraternity was approved by the general of the Carmelites, who authorized the prior of San Sebastian “to establish and erect the confraternity in other cities and places in the Philippines.”² Pope Innocent XII (1691) and

¹ This brief historical account is culled from Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta’s article *María en la espiritualidad y apostolado de los Agustinos Recoletos*, in *Agustinos Recoletos. Historia y espiritualidad* (Madrid 2007) 479-509.

² Aurelio DE LA CRUZ, *La Virgen del Carmen y los agustinos recoletos*, in *El Monte Carmelo* 25 (1921).

Pope Clement XI (1715, 1716) granted new graces to San Sebastian Church and to the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.³ The Augustinian Recollect community took extra care of the devotion to the Virgin, and in whose honor a magnificent Gothic temple was constructed in 1891. The entire structure was made of steel and prefabricated in Binche, Belgium.⁴

The Augustinian Recollects spread the Marian devotion by means of scapularies, medals, novenas and pamphlets which reached the whole archipelago. In 1725, beside the centuries-old Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel commenced the existence of a *beaterio* entirely dedicated to her service which in the course of time gave rise to the present-day Congregation of Augustinian Recollect Sisters,

The novena during the month of January was an event of socio-religious significance in Manila society. In the middle of the eighteenth century, about six thousand people received the Holy Communion, and this situation constrained the Augustinian Recollect community to request for confessors from other parishes or congregations. “The number of devotees during the novena,” writes the Recollect chronicler Fr. José de la Concepción in 1750, “was too numerous and the nine days of plenary indulgence were not enough because many devotees, having exerted their best on their part, could not go to confession and receive Communion during those nine days. Hence, the confessions would last up to twelve or fourteen days.” Furthermore, the attendance of Marian devotees was not limited only to the novena days. “Even during the day there is always a multitude of devotees of the Virgin inside the church,” continues Fr. José de la Concepción, “and if the Marian temple were to remain open at night, it is my personal view that there would be *laus perennis* [perennial praise] in the church.”⁵

³ Jenaro FERNÁNDEZ, *Bullarium* OAR III, 67-68, 375, 377-380.

⁴ By concession of our most Holy Father Leo XIII, done on 24 June 1890, this church of San Sebastian was attached to that of the prince of the Apostles, that is, the Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican City, Rome, making it share the indulgences granted to Saint Peter's. On 14 July of the same year 1890, another similar grace was granted to San Sebastian Basilica by attaching it to the Basilica of Saint John Lateran. The first privilege [Saint Peter's Basilica] was perpetual and the second [Saint John Lateran Basilica] should be renewed every 15 years. Cf. Licinio RUIZ *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* I, 127.

⁵ José DE LA CONCEPCIÓN, *Origen, progreso y estado de la provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino en las Islas Filipinas*, Manila 1751, in BPSN 14 (1923) 134-135, 195.

From the whole stretch of the nineteenth century up to the first half of the twentieth, the Augustinian Recollect Basilica of San Sebastian continued to be the center of devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Philippines. After the arrival of the brothers and priests of the Order of Discalced Carmelites [*Ordo Carmelitarum Discalceatorum*] in 1947⁶ and the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel [*Ordo Carmelitarum*] in 1957,⁷ its importance began to diminish but San Sebastian Basilica has never ceased to be an active center of Marian devotion. Nor have the Augustinian Recollects ceased to be zealous promoters of the special devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Philippines.

In southern Philippines, the devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel has been promoted ceaselessly by the Augustinian Recollect convent of Cebu City. “What the Carmel devotion of San Sebastian was for the Tagalogs, the Carmel devotion of Cebu was for the Visayas, and it reached its highest point in the last years of the Spanish rule. [...] The devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel or the scapulary was its greatest height that it was hard to find a person who did not wear it, especially those belonging to pious ones, as eloquently proven by the members of the Confraternity.”

⁶ The year of establishment of the Order of Discalced Carmelites [O.C.D.] in the Philippines is 1947, according to the *1996 Catholic Directory*, page 398, as well as in the *2004-2005 Catholic Directory*, 323. However, the year no longer appears in the *2008-2009 Catholic Directory* on page 410, nor in the *2010-2011 Catholic Directory*, 388, and in the *2012-2013 Catholic Directory*, 395. In the book *Institutes of Consecrated Life of the Philippines* (Pasay City 2015), page 97, the date of establishment of the Discalced Carmelites is indicated: March 1947.

⁷ The Order of Carmelites [O. Carm.] points to 1957 as the year of its establishment in the Philippines, according to the *1996 Catholic Directory*, 397, to the *2004-2005 Catholic Directory*, 322 and to the *2008-2009 Catholic Directory*, 409. Strangely, the year of establishment is changed to 1958 in the *2010-2011 Catholic Directory*, 386, and then again in the *2012-2013 Catholic Directory*, 394. *Institutes of Consecrated Life of the Philippines*, page 84, gives us the exact date of the establishment of the Carmelite Order: 16 March 1958.



The all-steel Basilica of San Sebastian (1891) in Quiapo, Manila and Our Lady of Mount Carmel icon brought by the Recollects from Mexico to the Philippines 1618.



A Monument to Father Fernando Cuenca OAR in Talisay, Negros Occidental¹

Jesús Gabriel Pérez Recio, OAR

Translated from the Spanish by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

A date, a month, a year may not have the greatest importance for a town, for some individuals. Dates of little value abound in the calendar. But if such dates of minor significance abound, there are also those which have become famous in history and live on in the grateful memory of the people because of something that exalts and immortalizes them.

One of those dates that the people of Talisay hold dear is the 30th of May. It was on the 30th of May 1824 when Father Fernando Cuenca de San José,



Fr. Fernando Cuenca: His statue at the public plaza Talisay City (Negros) erected in 1974.

¹ The Spanish article is *Agradecimiento de un pueblo. En Talisay se erige un monumento al P. Fernando Cuenca*, in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* 65 (1975) 32-35.

the town founder, was born in Aragón [Spain]. And the 30th May 1974, the 150th anniversary of his birth, Talisay marked a page in its history in order to show its gratitude with the dedication of a commemorative plaque that was attached to the pedestal constructed at the public plaza. On it the statue of Father Fernando was built on the feast of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, patron of the parish and town. Through this gesture, the 30th of May shall be indelibly embedded in the annals of Talisay.



The construction of the new Church of San Nicolás de Tolentino of Talisay City, Negros Occidental, was started by Fr. Fernando Cuenca de San José.

These ceremonies paid homage to the honored person as well as to those who rendered honor. The honored personality was Father Fernando Cuenca who, as anyone aware of the mission history of the Philippines knew, was one of the chief architects of Negros Island. A newly ordained priest, he was one of the first Recollects who arrived in Negros in 1848. And he was one of those who worked most for the spiritual and material aggrandizement and progress with his renowned [evangelization] journeys to the interior of the island in 1856, with the motivation he gave to the sugar cane cultivation and production, with the construction of hydraulic [water-powered] mills, with the medical ministry at the parochial convent that was converted into an infirmary and hospital, with his apostolate and the foundation of Talisay which metamorphosed from a vast cogon wasteland during his arrival into a town that became the pride of Negros for its planning, for its elegant buildings, for its large-scale sugar plantations, wellspring of prosperity

and wealth. They heaped accolade on our Recollect habit because they showed gratitude from their hearts to one of their distinguished benefactors.

Today the name of Father Cuenca may not mean a great deal to the inhabitants of Negros. If he was not completely unknown, yes, so his story and the achievements he had were unbeknownst as well. But now he has become known through the efforts of Negros Occidental Historical Commission, one of whose members is Father Pedro Lerga, a professor of our university [University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, UNO-R] in Bacolod. The idea of rendering tribute of public acknowledgement of his beneficial deeds in this island stemmed from that commission. For this purpose, the biography [of Father Fernando Cuenca] written by Father Marcelino Simonena² was translated into English by the wife of Aurelio Locsin, president of the Historical Commission.³ The translation and printing followed the decision to build a monument for him at the public plaza of Talisay. Thus if Talisay was its implementing agency, the motivation was provided for by the Historical Commission.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the erection of the monument underwent two phases. The first phase was the location and construction of the pedestal with the commemorative plaque. The second phase was the putting of the statue and its blessing.

The first phase took place on the 30th of May. There was a concelebrated Mass presided by the bishop of the diocese, Msgr. Antonio Y. Fortich, who highlighted in his homily the great personality of Father Cuenca in his religious, human, social and educational aspects. The concelebrants were Father Víctor Hermosilla, the visitor general from Rome, the three priests of the parish and the religious of the university in Bacolod. Representatives of provincial authorities, members of the Negros Occidental Historical Commission, all the municipal authorities led by the town mayor Jose Carlos Lacson, relatives of Father Cuenca, religious associations and the parishioners filled the church to the rafters.

² Marcelino SIMONENA, *Breve biografía del padre Fernando Cuenca*, in BPSN 33 (1943) 209-212; 231-234; 252-254. 34 (1944) 40-43; 63-64; 82-86; 105-109; 134-136.

³ Mrs. Ma. Soledad Lacson Locsin was acting chair of the Negros Occidental Historical Commission when the booklet *Father Fernando Cuenca of St. Joseph, Augustinian Recollect* she had translated was launched in 1974 in Bacolod City. This biography was annotated by Negros historian Modesto P. Sa-onoy.

On his tomb inside the church beautiful wreaths were laid, and prayers were recited so that from heaven he would continue to shower his beneficial action on the inhabitants of Talisay and the whole Negros Island.

Immediately afterwards, they proceeded to the solemn inauguration of the pedestal where the monument of Father Fernando Cuenca de San José was going to be erected and the unveiling of the plaque dedicated to his memory that says:

Father Fernando Cuenca de San José
 Agustino Recoleta
 May 30, 1824-March 28, 1902
 Organizer of the Barrios and Town
 of Talisay and other Towns of Negros
 Occidental. Inventor of the Hydraulic
 Sugar Mill, Famed as Hydrotherapist,
 Moving Spirit of the Socio-Economic
 Progress of Negros Occidental
 May 30, 1974
 Municipality of Parish of Talisay
 Talisay, Negros Occidental
 Historical Commission

At the ceremony Talisay Mayor Jose Carlos Lacson delivered a speech. So did the secretary of the Historical Commission and a Cuenca family member in the name of the descendants of Don Domingo Cuenca, brother of Father Fernando. On behalf of the Order, Father Víctor Hermosilla gave thanks for the homage rendered to one of its members. The present parish priest Father Florentino Echávarri then encouraged everyone to continue cooperating for a better Talisay and for a Negros great in the spiritual, social and human spheres.

The affair was followed by a fraternal lunch. During this meal the conversations focused on the personality of Father Fernando.

In the afternoon, there was an academic activity at the social hall of our university in Bacolod, a few kilometers away from Talisay. Various lectures were delivered, and they all highlighted the varied facets of the multifaceted character of Father Cuenca. Father Víctor Hermosilla then spoke on behalf of the Order. The final number of the program was the launching of the newly published biography of Father Cuenca.

The second phase of the celebration took place on the 10th of September, feast of San Nicolás de Tolentino and town fiesta of Talisay. It has been 124 years that Talisay had trodden the path of life illumined by the light of the Star of Tolentino. It was Father Cuenca who had showed it to them. And it has been under its brilliant glitter even now when Father Fernando Cuenca is honored with the inauguration of this monument which shall perpetuate his memory among Talisaynons and Negrenses alike and shall remind them—from up high in the pedestal—of his virtues and endless efforts for the wellbeing of their ancestors. Because, if Talisay is today one of the great towns of the province of Negros Occidental for its population—57,284 inhabitants—, for the wealth of its great sugar industry and for the Catholic faith of its inhabitants, it is the glory of Father Cuenca who founded it, who administered it for fifty-two years and who established it in such a way that on the basis on the Faith even in these times of so revolutionary winds it is still professed by 57,245 of the total population of 57,284. Therefore, the day of the feast of the patron was appropriately set aside for the inauguration of the monument dedicated to him as a tribute of public recognition.

Since it was the town fiesta, the number of the faithful who arrived at Talisay to attend the religious celebrations was extraordinary. The Mass was presided by the bishop of the diocese and concelebrated by our religious and some secular priests. The municipal council came in full force together with the members of the historical commission and a great number of the faithful from other towns, barrios and farms joined the townspeople of Talisay.

It was after the Mass when the inauguration of the monument and the unveiling of the statue took place. During the ceremony, the following prayer composed by a Talisaynon was recited:

O Lord, our God, deign to hearken to the prayer of the faithful of Talisay, who ask you to bless this statue of Your servant Father Fernando Cuenca of the Order of the Recollects so that the memory of his missionary zeal in Christianizing and educating our ancestors be a seed that shall sprout with everlasting life and shall bear fruits of holiness and prosperity for our benefit and for that of our children and descendants. This we ask you through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

This monument built as a tribute to Father Fernando Cuenca was put up at the public plaza of the town, fronting the main portal of the parish church. It was donated by the town council with contributions from individuals who wanted to honor him and to put it on the same level as the other Filipino heroes' statues erected at the same plaza.

This is an additional page in the annals of our mission history in Negros Occidental.

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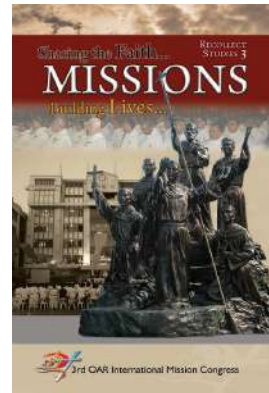
The Third OAR Mission Congress in Manila in 2006¹

Pablo Panedas OAR

Translated from the Spanish and edited by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

The young Recollect Province of the Philippines hosted the three-day Third Mission Congress of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, which highlighted the culmination of the three-year celebration of the quadricentennial of the OAR presence in the Philippines since the arrival of the first missionaries in May 1606. And everything paid off with a resounding success.

The Mission Congress lectures combined the aspects of theology, history, anthropology, praxis of the mission as part of the charism of the Order. The 2004 General Chapter in Rome mandated in its Ordinance no. 12, section 1, that the year 2006 be declared



**The book contains the
papers read at the 3rd
Mission Congress (2006),
and photos.**

¹ The Spanish article was penned by Pablo Panedas of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino Province. See http://www.agustinosrecoletos.org/noticias_detail.php?pkeyNoticia=9462. The translator/editor added more information on the Mission Congress. This article is reprinted with corrections from *The Recoletos Observer* vol. 7, no. 4 (Oct. –Dec. 2006) 4-11.

as Mission Year of the Order and that a mission congress be held in the Philippines “for the purpose of studying the missionary vocation as an integral part of the Augustinian Recollect identity.”

The International Mission Congress was the third organized by the Order and it was the first time to be held outside Spain. The First Congress took place in Madrid, Spain, at the crypt of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in Saint Rita parish in 1990. The Second Congress was held in Alcobendas near Madrid in 1995.



The third-day speakers of the Third OAR Mission Congress [left to right], Sister Marina García, Bishop Mario Alberto Molina, Fr. Don Besana, Bishop Héctor Javier Pizarro, Mother Maxima Pelaez posed for posterity after receiving their plaques of appreciation. [leftmost] General Councilor Facundo Suárez Cubides and [rightmost] Prior General Javier Guerra Ayala.

The appropriate venue chosen for the 3rd Mission Congress was San Sebastian Convent, a strategic centerpoint and for such historical reasons as being one of the Order’s oldest houses in the Philippines. The Convent is flanked by the Basilica of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and San Sebastian College, one of the learning institutions of the Order in the country.

The momentous event witnessed by about 700 delegates and guests took place within the campus of San Sebastian College. The

delegates had arrived from different provinces in the Philippines and from various countries many days before.

Start of the 3rd OAR Mission Congress (4 December 2006)

The opening ceremonies that began with a Holy Sacrifice of the Mass were held at San Sebastian Basilica and attended by over 700 delegates representing twenty countries. The papal nuncio Archbishop Fernando Filoni was the main celebrant. Among the concelebrants were five Recollect bishops, namely, Olavio López Duque (Bogotá, Colombia), José Luis Azcona (Marajó, Brazil), Emiliano Antonio Cisneros, (Chachapoyas, Perú), Héctor Javier Pizarro (Trinidad, Colombia) and Mario Alberto Molina (Quiché, Guatemala).

Over 80 Recollect priests, half of whom were Filipinos belonging to the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno and the other half from outside the country who significantly represented the other nationalities and provinces of the Order, joined the Mass that lasted ninety minutes. The holy Mass was celebrated in English with many Tagalog songs. The communion hymn was the all-too familiar Spanish classic *Venid, venid, Jesús a consolarme*, composed seventy years ago by the Augustinian Recollect missionary-musician Fr. Domingo Carceller who served the parish of San Juan de Bolbok in Batangas for a long time. The liturgical texts for the Eucharistic celebration were culled from the votive mass in honor of Our Lady of Consolation, patroness of the Augustinian Recollect Order, popularly known as *Virgen de la Correa*. Fr. Jose Fortunato Garces headed the liturgical committee of the mission congress and prepared the Liturgy Guide.

Archbishop Filoni combined the message of the three readings that defined what a missionary is: fidelity to Christ, communion with the Church and deepening of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the invocation of Mother of Consolation. In behalf of the Holy See, the papal nuncio congratulated the Order's 400 years of presence and generous service to the Church.

Registration and opening of the 3rd Mission Congress

After the Mass, the delegates and speakers proceeded to the ground floor of the high school building of San Sebastian College for the registration and distribution of the conference kit and identification

cards. They then proceeded to the third floor of the same building, using the recently-installed elevator, where the newly renovated and huge school auditorium was located.

Among the participants were the Recollect bishops, religious priests, deacons, brothers, a good number of Augustinian Recollect Sisters, Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity members, formands of the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno: novices and pre-novices of Antipolo, Baguio college seminarians and theology students of Mira-Nila.

At the pit fronting the stage of the cavernous auditorium were the personnel of the Recoletos Communications, Inc., headed by Fr. Leander Barrot and Fr. Boyax Jaranilla, who directed, controlled the lights and sounds as well as recorded the entire proceedings of the three-day mission congress. Assisting them were Bro. Rey Tripulca, Rev. Ian Anthony Espartero, Rev. Roderick Deguit, Fray Bob Cabanag, Squeegee Jakosalem and the tireless members of ARMaCom, *i.e.*, Association of Recollect Mass Communications students.

The program of the inaugural day was emceed by Fr. Anthony Irineo and Sister Rhiza Eltanal. First to go onstage was Fr. Regino Bangcaya, chairman of the Recoletos 400 Executive Committee and member of the Provincial Council of Saint Ezekiel Province. He welcomed the guests and introduced all the five bishops, one bishop-elect Fr. Alejandro Castaño [auxiliary bishop-elect of Cali, Colombia], the prior general and six priors provincial at the auditorium. And without much ado, Fr. Bangcaya formally declared the opening of the Mission Congress.

The Recollect Missions: history and present situation

The emcees then introduced the first speaker, Fr. Javier Desiderio Guerra Ayala, OAR prior general, who spoke on the “Global Presentation of the Missions of the Order.” His one-hour lecture was delivered in Spanish and its English subtitles were simultaneously shown on the big screen at the stage. He lengthily outlined the present status of the OAR missions in four continents.

Following a brief interlude, Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta, well-known author and historian of the Order, read his first lecture in English.

His topic “The ‘Iter’ of Our Missions in the Past.” The Spanish-speaking delegates received a copy of his paper in Spanish so they could follow the conference simultaneously.

The morning session ended with the recitation of the Marian salutation *Angelus* and *Grace before Meals* before proceeding to the college library in the SSC-R administration building for lunch.

A glimpse of Filipino culture and history

After lunch time, at a quarter past one in the afternoon, a cultural show of folk dances and songs was performed by the college seminarians of Casiciaco Recoletos of Baguio City.

Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta returned to the podium for his second talk, “The Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines.” He traced the history of the travails and successes of Recollect priests and brothers since their arrival in 1606 up to the establishment of the new Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno.

As interlude, a six-minute video documentary of the 40-day Recoletos 400 Caravan/St. Ezekiel Moreno Pilgrimage throughout the Philippine archipelago (1 May-9 June 2006) was shown to the Congress delegates which was produced by the Recoletos Communications, Inc., and St. Ezekiel Moreno Healing Ministry headed by Fr. Ferdinand Hernando.

Prof. Emmanuel Luis Romanillos, noted for his research on Recollect history and legacy, talked on “Saint Ezekiel Moreno as Augustinian Recollect missionary in the Philippines.” He highlighted the missionary and pastoral works of the Saint in colonial Philippines.

The lectures drew to a close. An open forum followed and questions pertinent to the topics of the first day were asked of the three speakers by the delegates, among whom were the prior provincial of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province, Fr. Lauro Larlar, and Fr. Raul Buhay of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos in Bacolod.

Former general councilor Fr. René Paglinawan of San Sebastian College Manila assisted in the open forum by translating queries for the prior general into Spanish. He also rendered Fr. Guerra Ayala’s responses into English for the delegates. He belonged to the pool of translators who had translated the lectures into English or Spanish

months before: to wit, Fr. Emilio Larlar, Fr. Hubert Dunstan Decena and Fr. Joseph Philip Trayvilla. A plaque of appreciation was given to each speaker by the Congress organizers led by Fr. Lauro Larlar and Fr. Regino Bangcaya.

The 418th OAR Foundation Anniversary (5 December 2006)

The second day of the Congress fell on same day as the OAR Foundation Day (5 December 1588). Once again, the opening Eucharistic celebration was held at San Sebastian Basilica with Ricardo Cardinal Vidal of Cebu Archdiocese as main celebrant. The cardinal was fully aware of the significance and solemnity of the day, and consequently, he presided over a vibrant celebration reinforced by the grand choir composed of students from the theology house of Mira-Nila and Augustinian Recollect Sisters.

The homily of Cardinal Vidal was worth highlighting: he hurled the challenge to the Augustinian Recollects to be missionaries in the community and as a community, finding their original charism once more and under the protective mantle of Mary. There were extraordinarily moving moments in the holy Mass which consisted of the renewal of religious vows by all the men and women religious of the Augustinian Recollect Family present.

At the end of the liturgy was the solemn occasion of granting honorary titles of Sisters General of the Order of two lay collaborators: Brenda V. Saliendra, a most reliable secretary of the President's Office of the University of San Jose-Recoletos, Cebu City, and Nestoria "Inday" Bad-an of Valencia, Negros Oriental. Brenda's citation reads thus: "In recognition of your sincere friendship, generous assistance and many years of service to our religious in the community of San Jose Recoletos, Cebu City, by virtue of the authority of our office, we hereby declare that you share in all the spiritual benefits of our entire Order, and we joyfully welcome you as member of our religious family."

Nestoria Bad-an was chosen as Sister General for her "untiring support to the community as a confidante, adviser and defender of our religious, particularly the Recollect Fathers in Valencia, Negros Oriental..." In life and death, they were granted "participation in all the Masses, prayers and good works performed, with God's help, by the brothers and sisters of our Order."

Vatican II Meaning of Missions, Identity and Missions in Brazil and Asia

A scholarly recap of the first day of sessions was prepared and read by Dr. Julieta Savellano, president of SARF Mira-Nila Chapter. The emcees of the day were Nancy Herrin, a Mira-Nila Parish Pastoral Council member, and René Salvania of the University of the East, who was proficient in Spanish and English. The first talk was theological in character and focused on “Mission Theology in the Vatican II Era.” It was delivered by Fr. James H. Kroeger, a Maryknoll missionary. With this talk—so pedagogical as well as profound—the morning session came to an end.



The Augustinian Recollect Sisters attended the historic Mission Congress since Day 1

After lunch was served and without much ado, the afternoon session started at one o'clock. The first speaker was Most Rev. José Luis Azcona, Augustinian Recollect bishop of Marajó (Pará, Brasil), a mission territory located at the mouth of the Amazon River. The title of Bishop Azcona's talk, delivered in Spanish, was clear enough from its content: “The Missions of the Order Today. Challenge, practices and methodology, with special attention on the missionary activities in Brazil.” Indeed, he highlighted the missions on Lábrea (Amazons) and Marajó (Pará), both in the Amazons of Brazil, on which he focused his attention.

A brief musical interlude by the Baguio seminarians followed. Fr. José Javier Pipaón, Recollect prior general (1986-1992, 1992-1998) talked in fluent English on the “Recollect Missionary Works in China and Taiwan.” His lecture brought about markedly emotional moments that elicited thunderous applause from the delegates.

Bishop Emiliano Cisneros, Augustinian Recollect bishop of Chachapoyas (Perú), gave a reflection in Spanish on the “The Identity of the Augustinian Recollect missionaries: Being and Doing.”

Gratitude to former Philippine missionaries

The delegates took part in the ensuing open forum. Among those who posed questions were Fr. Huberto Dunstan Decena, Fr. Marlon Beof and Fr. Euben Clemente Capacillo. Thereafter, a plaque of gratitude was handed to each speaker.

A message to the OAR Mission Congress from His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI through his Secretary of State Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone was read in English by Fr. Jose Fortunato Garces, provincial secretary of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province. Fr. Bangcaya then translated the same papal message into Spanish. The papal message, relayed through the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila, said in part: “His Holiness prays that your gathering will inspire renewed fervor for spreading God’s Kingdom among the people of the Philippines and of every country in which your Institute is present. He encourages you to be very mindful of the fact that only those who are themselves on fire with the love of Christ and burning with zeal to make him known more widely, loved more deeply and followed more closely” (*Ecclesia in Asia*, 23) will be able to proclaim the Gospel effectively.

To everyone’s pleasant surprise, the prior provincial, Fr. Lauro Larlar, went up the stage and read the complete list of living Recollects who had zealously worked in the Philippines and who now belong to other provinces of the Order. He then called on all those who had come all the way from Spain, Italy, USA and Latin America: Fr. Blas Montenegro, Fr. Germán Chicote, Bro. Patrick Diviny, Fr. José Antonio Rodríguez, Fr. Miguel Ángel Echeverría, Fr. Honorio Calvo, Fr. Ángel Martínez Cuesta and Fr. Pablo Panedas. The eight Recollects were acknowledged with a thunderous ovation.

The second day did not commence with the holy Mass, but with the common prayer of Lauds at the auditorium. Two video documentaries highlighted the present situation and history of the Order in the Philippines.

Anthropology and Inculturation of the mission

The emcees for the last Congress session were Sonia Roco, widow of the late Senator Raul Roco and benefactress of the 40-day Recoletos 400 Caravan/Saint Ezekiel Moreno Pilgrimage in 2006, and Richard Burgos of IBM-Philippines. The recap of the previous day's conferences was handled by the provincial chronicler of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province, Fr. José Ernil Almayo, now assigned as formator of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary. Thereafter, Most Rev. Mario Alberto Molina, Augustinian Recollect bishop of Quiché (Guatemala), read his paper "The Missionary before the Present Realities of Society." The Panama-born prelate delivered a profound anthropological reflection and a courageous analysis of the challenges of the moment.

Another musical interlude preceded the conference of another Augustinian Recollect bishop, Most Rev. Hector Javier Pizarro, whose turn was to lecture on "Inculturation and Inter-religious Dialogue." The Colombian bishop of Trinidad read his piece in Spanish on a theme that is very relevant to the times and highly practical.

Personal Missionary Experiences

In the afternoon, the delegates were treated to another artistic-musical show by the professed students of theology. Soon afterward, the superior general of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters, Mother Máxima Peláez, recounted the beginnings and present status of the Congregation and their response to the call of mission.

Fr. Don Besana, a Filipino Augustinian Recollect priest, enlightened the delegates with his topic so full of commitment, "The Future of the Recollect Missions in Africa." Fr. Besana did it with a very moving declaration of love for Africa, as he depicted the present mission and hopes of Sierra Leone. Sister Marina García, a missionary in Kaohsiung (Taiwan), was the last speaker, representing the *Misioneras Agustinas Recoletas* (Augustinian Recollect Missionaries), of whom she was the former superior general. Her talk was well-illustrated with a Power Point presentation that described in detail the various missions attended to by the congregation whose charism was expressly missionary.

The afternoon session drew to a close with the reading of a congratulatory letter sent to the Congress by the Augustinian Recollect contemplative nuns of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Monastery in Bacolod City. Shortly afterward, the plaques of appreciation were distributed to the day's speakers by Fr. Larlar and Fr. Guerra Ayala who were assisted by the General Councilor Fr. Facundo Suárez Cubides, Rome-based over-all Congress coordinator.

Closing rites of the Third OAR Mission Congress

The formal closing ceremonies of the Congress were celebrated with the holy Mass. It was held in the central quadrangle of San Sebastian College. Thirteen bishops and ninety-five priests took part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Hundreds of religious sisters, formands,



***Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno*, popularly revered as the Black Nazarene by millions of Filipinos, was brought to Manila from Mexico by the Augustinian Recollect friars in the seventeenth century**

Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity members, students and lay people joined the joyous and history-making event. A typical religious procession of Recollect holy icons during colorful Filipino fiestas, ably organized by the committee of Fr. Rommel Rubia, preceded the holy Mass and it was a joy to behold. Among the icons was the centuries-old deeply-revered Black Nazarene in Quiapo, brought to the Philippines by the Augustinian Recollects in the 17th century.

Among the Filipino prelates who graced the occasion were Archbp. Antonio Ledesma of Cagayan de Oro, Archbp. Jesus Dosado of Ozamiz, Bp. Soc Villegas of Balanga, Bp. Jose Advincula of San

Carlos, Bp. Patricio Buzon of Kabankalan, Bp. Florentino Cinense of Tarlac and Bp. Antonietto Cabahug of Surigao City. Their ecclesiastical jurisdictions were historically linked with the Recollect pastoral efforts.



Augustinian Recollect Bishop Mario Alberto Molina of Quiché, Guatemala, was main celebrant of the Mass at the close of the Mission Congress on 6 December 2006 at San Sebastian College, Manila

The main celebrant was Bishop Mario Alberto Molina, although he delegated the homily to Fr. Lauro Larlar. The prior provincial of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province continuously quoted Saint Augustine and made his personal conclusions after the celebration of this historic Congress. Thus he said: “Every missionary, every Christian must feel like a waiter in a banquet, who serves the dishes from the kitchen of God: in the first place, the dish of renewal in communion with the Church and complete adherence to Christ; and, in the second place, the dish of gratitude, which is the matter of the mission.”

Towards the end of the holy Mass, the prior general Fr. Javier Guerra Ayala approached the podium and declared the Third Mission Congress formally closed, even as he gave thanks to the organizers and to all present for the resounding success of the memorable occasion—so significant in OAR history.

III. Biographical Studies

Saint Monica, Mother of Saint Augustine

Angel Martínez Cuesta OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos



Saint Augustine and Saint Monica

Saint Monica deserves a place of honor in the book of Christian saints on account of her personal life, her influence on the life of Saint Augustine, and for the myriad possibilities of symbolism. Her determination, firmness of mind, intelligence, maternal love and loyalty to the Church turned out to be decisive in the religious conversion of her son—one the greatest Fathers of the Western Church and paramount figure of Western culture. And that attitude changed her into a perennial model of

Christian wives and mothers. In honoring her memory, the Church pays in a certain way the immeasurable debt she owes to so many anonymous women who not only preserve the faith of their children, but lead them as well to the service of the Church and society.

At the service of her husband and children

Everything we know about Monica we owe to Augustine. In his *Confessions*, he gave her an enduring homage, brimming with tenderness, admiration and gratitude. And with that same veneration he remembered

her in his *Soliloquies*, in some letters and even in works written in his old age. In one of these last works, he attributed his salvation to the prayers of his mother: “the ardent petitions and daily prayers of my good mother... prevented my ruin” (*The gift of perseverance*, 20,53).

Monica was born in 331 at Tagaste, the present-day Souk-Ahrás of Algeria, into a well-to-do family, of Christian roots and loyal to the Church during the Donatist schism. Thus said Augustine that she grew up “in a Christian house, a good member of Your Church” (Conf. 9, 8, 17). One of the servants, who had taken care of her father as a child, left a strong mark in her education, accustomed her to discipline her desires. Outside mealtime she did not allow them to drink water. “You drink water now, because you have not wine in your power; but when you come to be married, and be made mistresses of cellars and cupboards, you will scorn water, but the habit of drinking will abide.” (*Ibid*).



Baptism of Saint Augustine in Milan in 387

Reality came very soon to confirm the fears of the maidservant. When Monica was put in charge of preparing the wine for the meal, she had the opportunity to descend daily to the cellar of the house. Eventually came the temptation and she fell into temptation. Initially, she contented herself with wetting her lips with wine, because she did not like the taste but in due time the taste increased and with it the quantity, to the point of drinking almost a full glass of wine every day.

The rebuke by another maidservant who had been a silent witness to the young lady's mischief for some time pulled her out of

danger. In the midst of heated discussion, the maidservant threw this fault at her with most bitter insult, calling her “little winebibber.” The insult struck deep in Monica’s heart. As a reaction very peculiar to her character, she acknowledged her fault and completely broke away from it: “Wounded through and through by this taunt she beheld her own foul state, and immediately condemned it and cast it off” (*Conf.* 9,8,18). It was the first sign of a determined character, incapable of seeking refuge in false alibis and ready to confront whatever difficulty. And maybe it was likewise the first show of self-esteem and of an innate sense of one’s dignity.

At age twenty, she married Patricius, a municipal official. Her role in the marriage preparations was minimal because in her time the choice of spouse, the processing of papers and wedding preparations belonged to the *paterfamilias*, head of the family. She would enjoy later greater freedom in her own home. Roman society had made some progress in the recognition of the dignity of women and it left in Monica’s hands the household management. She was busy with the purchases, the servants, the education of the children, etc. Running the family depended largely upon her.

The task was not going to be easy for her. He would have to live together with a fickle and pagan husband, so quick to expressions of most tender love as to outbursts of anger and to marital infidelities. He was, in the words used by his own son, “just as he was remarkable for kindness, so also was he given to violent anger.” Moreover, he had never laid a hand on her, “something that never ceased to surprise those aware of his sharp temper.”

Aware of her situation, Monica was ready to get the best benefit out of it. She never engaged in dispute with her husband, and only when she saw that he had curbed his anger, had become calm and that the time was opportune, she explained what she had done “if he happened to have been inadvertently disturbed.” She did not even believe it to be opportune to rebuke him for her infidelities. He tolerated them with patience and went on showing him her love with the hope of winning him someday to herself and to the Lord: “Speaking to him about you through her conduct, by which you made her beautiful, the object of reverent love”. On the one hand, she was aware that the custom and environment would render her protests useless, and on other hand, “she

looked forward to seeing the mercy of Christ upon him, so that he would believe in you and be made chaste (*Conf.* 9,9,19). Example and prayer were her only weapons, and she employed them day after day.

Many a woman today may brand her demeanour as pusillanimous and contrary to her dignity. Her sacrifice would only serve to perpetuate an insupportable abuse. But these observations forget that a conduct—like that of Monica—demands self-control and strength of character and that oftentimes it bears fruits. She succeeded in the conversion of her husband: “After he became one of the faithful, she did not have to complain of what she had endured from him when he was not yet a believer.” (*Conf.* 9,9,22). Patricius was baptized a couple of years before his death that took place in 371.

The new home was neither pleasant to her. Above all, it was a pagan house with customs very different from hers. Very soon she came up against a suspicious mother-in-law and gossip-mongering servants. These servants were ready to feed the mother-in-law’s mistrust with their stories. “At first,” writes Augustine, “her mother-in-law was stirred up against her by whispered stories. Her mother-in-law thought it over and after a just chastisement of the guilty, “the two lived together with extraordinary harmony and good will.” Monica displayed the same greatness of heart in her relationship with friends and acquaintances, of whom she had become a handkerchief for tears. The domestic success provided her an influence that facilitated her apostolate outside the confines of the family. She never allowed any commentary that might discredit a neighbor, much less her husband, and she inculcated this same demeanor into her friends.

She exhorted them to be tolerant with their husbands and never to divulge the faults of those absent. She abhorred tittle-tattle and when her friends fell into those traps, she would stay away from them, without taking part in gossips or peddling the defects of others. Far from joining in the stories of a friend, she exerted great effort in ironing out misunderstandings and reconciling persons in conflict: “Wherever she could, she showed herself to be a great peacemaker between persons who were at odds and in disagreement with each other. [...] She never betrayed a thing to either of them about the other except what would help towards their reconciliation.” (*Conf.* 9,9,21).

The family at Thagaste

Monica had three children: Augustine, who was perhaps the first-born, Navigius and a sister whose name is not known. The last two children did not give her serious problems. Navigius, a young man with delicate health, introvert who loved to investigate the whys and the wherefores of things, must have married, just like his sister. She soon became a widow and later was the abbess of the monastery at Hippo. Some of Augustine's nieces likewise entered the monastery. It could not be ascertained whether they were daughters of Navigius or their sister's. This was the same case of Patricius, a cleric in the church of Hippo, and his brother a subdeacon of Milevi.

It was Augustine who absorbed Monica's attention. His disposition required special attention and she spared no effort in this. She suffered with him, accompanied him in his doubts, warned him with solicitude about the dangers of lust – “very worried, she private reminded me, that I should keep from fornication, and most of all from adultery” (*Conf.* 2,3,7)– and she rebuked him for his doctrinal errors and his moral excesses, even to point of throwing him out of the house. At other times, she adopted gentler methods, making use of the wealth of a mother's heart.

She sought the advice of learned people who she believed were capable of putting an end to the doubts of her son and leading him along the righteous path, and most of all, she remembered him day and night before the Lord's altar. The struggle dragged on for three lustrums and Monica displayed unsurpassable signs of maternal love, steadfastness, astuteness and a spirit of faith. The outcome of her effort was a masterpiece.

Augustine was a newborn baby when Monica carried him to church and inscribed him in the registry book of catechumens and inculcated in him the love of Jesus Christ. One day Augustine would confess that no other book, “no matter how learned and polished it was,” had wholly captured him if the name of Jesus Christ whose sweetness he



Vision at Ostia

had sucked “with my mother’s milk” was not found in it (*Conf.* 3,4,8). Nevertheless, in accordance with the custom of her time, Monica did not feel the need to baptize her son right away.

In complete accord with her husband, Monica went out of her way in order to give him a fine education and she did not stop even after her husband’s death which lessened the family budget nor when the awakening of passions subordinated the son’s spiritual welfare with his professional career. She was scared that marriage would ruin his studies and would, consequently, compromise likewise his future as a professional.

Some biographers viewed in the conduct of the saintly woman a proof of her insight. Augustine did not share this observation. Despite the affection for his mother, in the *Confessions*, he disapproved of it and attributed it to the weakness of her faith: “The mother of my flesh, who had fled from the center of Babylon, but lingered in other parts of the city, strove [...] to restrain within the bounds of married love that which she had heard from her husband about me [...] because of fear that my prospects would be hindered by the impediment of a wife. These were not those hopes of the life to come which my mother herself had, but those hopes for learning, which, as I knew, both parents desired too much.” She believed that the studies, far from being an obstacle to him, “would be of no small help to me in attaining you.” (*Conf.* 2,3,8).

Her faith needed to be enriched by tribulation. And this would not be wanting. From 371 to 386 Monica underwent an authentic Calvary. At one time Augustine went to live with a woman. At another time, he abandoned the Church and joined the Manicheans, a sect that attacked the Church. Still at another time, he fell into the traps of skepticism. She suffered and wept but she did not get dismayed.

She had a dream where she saw her son in the same rule and this cheered her up and assured her of victory. One day her son would share her faith.

In Carthage and Rome

In 374, Monica caught up with her son in Carthage and for nine years she lived with him until 383 when she suffered one of the great disappointments in her life. Augustine was disillusioned with his

students in Carthage and he wanted to try his luck in Rome. To do it with more freedom, he left his mother at the shore and embarked secretly for Rome. Monica realized the blow. And she even reached the extent the point of calling him a liar and a bad son. But she continued to pray for him and on the first opportunity she crossed the sea and caught up with him in Milan.

Augustine was still enmeshed in the doubts, bereft of any certainty and desperately searching for something to believe in: “I went down into the depth of the sea, and I lost confidence, and I despaired of finding the truth” (*Conf.* 6,1,1). Disillusioned with the Manicheans, he had cast himself into the hands of the skeptics, from whom it did not take long for him to move over to the Neoplatonists and to end up as a listener of Saint Ambrose and a reader of Saint Paul.

Monica celebrated the transformation but without enthusiasm. Her joy would not be complete until her son’s total conversion. She then thought that marriage could perhaps calm him and she sought a bride of the social class. Augustine surrendered to social conventions, to his mother’s pressures and perhaps to the designs of Divine Providence and with profound sorrow in his soul—“my heart still clung to her: it was pierced and wounded within me, and the wound drew blood from it.” She dismissed the woman with whom he had lived together for fifteen years. But before the betrothed had reached the age of consent, grace came and after it followed baptism and renunciation of marriage, honors, riches and all hope of his world. Monica could then exult in victory. Her son had gone up to that rule in her dream.

The last year of her life was spent beside her son as she enjoyed the taste of triumph. In Cassiciacum, she took care of Augustine and his friends “as though she had been mother to us all.” She took part in the philosophical dialogues, eliciting their admiration. In March 387, she was again in Milan, where Augustine had registered himself in the list of catechumens. That was when the confrontation of Ambrose with Empress Justina who demanded the surrender of a church in the city to the Arians. Monica placed herself on the side of the bishop and she locked herself in the church to prevent it from being delivered to them.

Finally, on Easter vigil, overflowing with jubilation, she witnessed the baptism of her son, her grandson Adeodatus, and Alypius, Augustine’s bosom friend.

The vision at Ostia

In a few weeks;’ time, they were all at Ostia, waiting for a ship that would take them back to Africa. In their native land, it would be easy to find a place appropriate for serving God. One day, while resting from their journey, mother and son experienced the so-called ecstasy at Ostia. They stood leaning out from a window, conversing together “about what the eternal life of the saints would be like [...], we transcended them, so that we attained to the region of abundance that never fails, in which you feed Israel forever upon the food of truth.”

Monica had a premonition of the nearness of her death. “My son, I now find no delight in anything in this life. [...] One thing there was, for which I desired to linger a little, that I might see you a Catholic Christian before I die. God has granted this time in more than abundance, for I see you his servant, with even earthly happiness held in contempt. What am I doing here?” (*Conf.* 9,10,26). Five days later, she fell sick in bed and after a brief illness she passed away: “On the ninth day of her illness, in the fifty-sixth year of her life and in the thirty-third year of mind, this devout and holy soul was set loose from the body” (*Conf.* 9,11,28).



Saint Monica dies at Ostia in 387

Augustine buried Monica at Ostia, acceding to her last wishes: “Put this body anywhere. Don’t let care about it disturb you. I ask only this of you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord [...] Nothing is far from God. I need not fear that he will not know where to raise me up at the end of the world” (*Conf.* 9,11,27-28).

Along the path of sanctity.

Divine Providence endowed Monica with a healthy nature and placed her in a family of believers that straightened her towards good since her most tender infancy. She was intelligence, sensitive, decisive and sure of herself. But as Adam’s daughter, she had her shortcomings. She was possessive, of solemn demeanor, and with clear awareness of

her dignity. Other weaknesses of her youth and her excessive interest for the professional triumph of her son have already been told. Perhaps her sorrow was neither totally deep in the face of her son's departure.

God was not yet the sole objective of her life at the age of forty. Trials, continuous prayer, the daily Eucharist, fasting, almsgiving, filial obedience to the Church and respect and love to priests and monks would be drawing her away from egoism and assimilating her more to the Divine Teacher.

Monica was not worried about her remains. But the Christians did not forget them. Anicio Auquenio Basso ordered in 408 a metrical inscription carved on her sarcophagus. On 9 April 1430, Pope Martín V moved her body to the Roman Church of Saint Augustine and deposited them in a beautiful chapel where they still awaits the Resurrection of the body.

The Association of Christian Mothers

The *Confessions* of Saint Augustine preserved her memory in the Church, but homage to her began only after the transfer of her body to Rome. Pope Eugenius IV (1431-1447) instituted in her honor a confraternity of Christian mothers and since that time her name has always been linked to them. In the 16th century, Baronius included her name in the Roman *Martirologium*. Shortly afterward, Saint Francis de Sales exalted her virtues in his *Introduction to the Devout Life*. In 1551, the Augustinians were already celebrating the deposition of her body (4 May) and the transfer (9 April). The latest liturgical reform has underscored her link to her son when her memory was moved to 27 August, eve of Saint Augustine's feast.



Santa Mónica. La Madre by Antonio Sánchez Carazo.

In the 20th century, her veneration was widespread. In 1850, the *Association of Christian Mothers* was established in the Basilica of Our

Lady of Sion in Paris. When Pope Pius IX approved the association in 1856, it spread throughout the whole world. In 1858, there were 317 associations in France and nineteen outside it. In the association in the Roman church where Monica shared the religious patronage with Our Lady of Birth, 694 associations based in Italy joined it between 1884 and 1930. Six hundred ninety-six more joined in 1913-1930. In 1865, Louis-Victor-Emile Bougaud published the saint's biography *Histoire de Sainte Monique* which was translated into several languages.

In 1982, the Augustinian Recollect Father Lorenzo Infante (1905-1997) founded in Madrid the *Comunidad Madres Cristianas Santa Mónica* ["Saint Monica" Association of Christian Mothers] for the purpose of training mothers "who, convinced that faith is the greatest treasure and legacy they can ever bequeath to their children, staunchly defend the faith of the same." There are presently thousands of association members in several countries in Europe, America and Asia.

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Saint Clare of Montefalco: The Cross of Christ in Her Heart

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Saint Clare went into an ecstasy at one time while she was praying. In that ecstatic state she contemplated Christ garbed as a pilgrim and carrying His cross on his shoulder.

Kneeling in front of Jesus, Saint Clare queried him: “Lord, where did you come from? What are you looking for?”

Jesus then replied to her. “Clare, my daughter, I just came from the world. I have returned and I am exhausted from carrying the cross. I looked for a place in the world where to plant my cross, and I realized that people still live but they have forgotten me, they are so preoccupied with their pleasures and businesses.”

To those words, Saint Clare responded: “Lord, you can lay your cross here in my heart so you can rest.”



And Christ right away laid his cross in the heart of Saint Clare, and it remained there until her death. The pains Saint Clare experienced at that very moment were extremely excruciating and the terrible ailment would accompany her till the day she died. It was her way of sharing and carrying the cross with Christ.

And it was because she was very young—at age six—when she entered the monastery, and the favorite theme of her prayer was the contemplation of the Passion of Christ. Clare was indeed very young when her sister Giovanna who lived at a hermitage had asked permission from the bishop of Spoleto in 1274 to admit more women hermits in her group. Hence, Giovanna was able to admit her own sister in the monastery. Furthermore, Clare had despite her young age possessed a maturity uncommon among girls of her age. Saint Clare had been in the monastery since she was a young girl and she received ineffable graces from God and lived with simplicity together with her sisters in the community.

In 1290, the monastery where she lived was juridically constituted as such and it followed the Rule of Saint Augustine. Since that time, both Saint Clare and her sisters in the community would be Augustinian nuns. A year after, in the wake of the death of her sister Giovanna who was prioress of the monastery, the nuns elected Saint Clare as the new prioress. Initially, she refused to accept the position. In the end, she had to accept it at the request of the bishop of Spoleto himself.

In 1294, after the feast of the Epiphany, she made a general confession in front of the nuns and forthwith she fell into ecstasy. She remained in that state for many months. In view of the fact that she could not eat, her sisters had to feed her with sugared water during that period. And even though Saint Clare had almost no formal education or theological formation, the gifts God imparted to her in prayer and in contemplation qualified her to be adviser of monks and priests. She put herself in contact with cardinals and bishops and concerned herself with the progress of the Church.

Likewise, she fought against the so-called “Brothers of the Free Spirit” who had rapidly grown in numbers during that time in Italy. They repudiated the hierarchical Church and advocated that the Spirit

of God was everywhere. They denied the validity and importance of the sacraments and even tolerated all kinds of immorality. Saint Clare exposed their errors and in the name of God she asked them to be converted, to cease sowing further their heresy and error, and to love the Church and her efficacious means of salvation.

Furthermore, one must not forget that that life of Saint Clare was characterized by austerity, prayer and penance. Like many other saints, her life had to undergo moments of crisis and emptiness, and that was when she tightly held on to the cross of Jesus Christ, to which she was always very devoted. And much more, she used to repeat with certain frequency that she bore the cross of Christ engraved in her own heart.

On the feast of the Assumption in 1308, Saint Clare asked for the anointing of the sick and, at age 40, she finally died in the odor of sanctity on 17 August 1308. After the death of Saint Clare, her sisters in the community out of curiosity extracted her heart in order to confirm the truth she had repeated so many times that she had the cross of Christ engraved in it. To their great amazement they found inside the heart of Saint Clare not only the cross of Christ but also some of the characteristic symbols of the Passion—the three nails, the crown of thorns and a whip, mysteriously twined with the very muscles of the heart.

When the vicar of the bishop, Berengario di Donadio, came to know about it, he thought the nuns had manipulated the heart of Saint Clare and in anger he headed for the Augustinian monastery to rebuke the religious. He arrived there and very soon he saw no signs of manipulation and the impossibility of seeking a natural explanation of the reality. At once the vicar became a fervid admirer of Saint Clare. Berengario even wrote the first surviving biography of the saint.

Saint Clare of Montefalco was born in Umbria, Italy circa 1268. Her sister Giovanna lived as a hermit and towards 1274 she was permitted to admit more companions. For this reason, although she was only six years old, Saint Clare accompanied her sister inside the cloister. In 1290, the monastery was constituted as such under the Rule of Saint Augustine. In 1291, after the death of her sister Giovanna who was the prioress of the convent, Saint Clare was named the new prioress. She underwent several spiritual and mystical experiences. She stood out for

her great love for the Passion of Christ and she kept repeating that she had the cross of Christ engraved in her heart. She died on 17 August 1308. She was beatified by Pope Clement XII in 1737 and canonized by Pope Leo XIII in 1881. The Augustinian Family celebrates her feast on 17 August.

Saint Rita of Cascia: Thorns and Roses

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos



In 1450, Pope Nicholas V declared a jubilee in Rome. Soon the news reached the monastery at Cascia where many nuns expressed their eager wish to go the jubilee. Saint Rita, who was exactly not young anymore for she was almost sixty years old at that time, felt a strong desire to gain the jubilee in Rome. That is why she told the prioress about her wish. Probably, the prioress, out of envy for the fame of sanctity Saint Rita had, told her briefly:

But, Sister Rita, how did it occur to you that you can make the pilgrimage to Rome? Don't you realize that with that open wound in your forehead you would attract the attention of all the pilgrims? And besides, who of those in Rome can bear the stench coming out of that wound? That is why, Sister Rita, you cannot go to Rome with those signs.

Saint Rita was very saddened by that reply, but without thinking ill of the prioress, she told herself that what she told to her was true. That wound on her forehead would somehow be attention-grabber and many people could think that she had gone on a pilgrimage solely to attract attention. And besides, the prioress was right because that stench

constrained Saint Rita to be almost always alone and the sisters could hardly bear the bad odor. In fact, she lived in a cell withdrawn from the rest of the community for this reason.

Nevertheless, Saint Rita never lost hope, as she had never done in her life. In those times she recalled that dramatic day when she was peacefully taking care of her two sons and doing the various household chores when relatives rushed inside her house bringing the blood-drenched body of her husband who was just slain. She could still recall how her heart was broken when she took in her arms the lifeless body of her husband and pressed it close to her chest, her own clothes stained by the dead body of her husband. She remembered that the tears were not enough, and that the only balm that could soothed her pain had been prayer.

That is why she did not listen to the talk of her neighbors and her relatives who urged her to plan vengeance, to contract *condottieri* or hired assassins to avenge her husband's death. She put her trust in the just judgment of God, and let the grace of God be the ointment that would heal the wounds. However, his sons who were still adolescents allowed themselves be carried away by the chatter of those who surrounded them and the plotted deep inside a cruel plan against all those who murdered their father. This had worried Saint Rita a great deal, and she once more had recourse to God in prayer. She prayed to Him to prevent them from taking into their hands the desired vengeance, and that his sons' hands might not be stained with blood because judgment belonged solely to God. In this manner Saint Rita remembered how her two sons had fallen ill and had died shortly after. Her sons' death deeply wounded her heart as mother, but she understood that it was the way to be able to avoid her sons from consummating the vengeance which would commence the spiral of bloody violence devouring them inevitably as well.

Prayer further helped her to be able to enter the convent because the nuns of Cascia had refused to admit her not only for her being a widow but also on account of the fear that her husband's killers might want to continue the violence and might take her in their convent.

Nonetheless, Saint Rita raised her petition to God and the nuns of the Monastery of Saint Mary Magdalene ended up accepting her. Now, forty years after all those events, Saint Rita had to face another hardship. For that reason, as she had done always, she had recourse to

prayer. She poured her heart in the presence of God, to ask that if it was his will, he would provide the means for her wound to close and thus she could go to the jubilee in Rome. Saint Rita was asking with all her force for several days. A day before the group left for Rome, Saint Rita woke up and forthwith realized that the wound on her forehead had vanished and had miraculously closed. The wound was there no more and the bad stench was gone as well and consequently she could go to Rome. She lost no time and went to the room of the prioress and presented herself to her. All the sisters who saw her did not talk about anything else but about another miracle performed by Sister Rita. The prioress who never ceased to believe what happened closely examined the forehead and passed her hand many times to check if there was ruse. Saint Rita's forehead was completely smooth and white, like all the foreheads of the smiling novices in the convent. In the face of such wonder, the prioress who had not stopped from being amazed, could not do anything to grant permission to Rita to make pilgrimage to Rome.

What Saint Rita was not cognizant of was that 450 years later, she would go back to Rome for another jubilee. This was convoked by a pope who had come from very far—Saint John Paul II. Thus on 22 May 2000, the body of Saint Rita was venerated in Rome during the celebration of the jubilee year.

And Saint Rita returned to her convent after her sojourn in Rome. On the day after her return, the wound appeared once more on her forehead and so was the characteristic stench. Saint Rita would live seven more years dedicated to prayer, to life and mortification.

Shortly before her death, Saint Rita fell ill. When her relatives learned that her death was approaching, they set out to visit her since Cascia was very near Roccaporena, her birthplace. When one of her relatives arrived, Saint Rita requested her to go to the garden which previously belonged to the house where she had lived together with her husband and her sons and to bring her some roses. The relative made Saint Rita realize that the cold of winter was in their midst and a few days before a big snowfall had taken place. On account of all that, it would be impossible to find roses in the orchard. Nevertheless, Rita begged her to go to her old garden and see.

Due to Saint Rita's insistence, the relative went to the garden, and to her amazement she found amid the snow the rose bushes in full

bloom, and they were the most beautiful roses in the world. She picked some of these roses and took them to Saint Rita. The holy nun took them in her hands and thanked her relative and she was absorbed in prayer. A few days later, on 22 May 1457, Saint Rita passed away.

Immediately after her death, Saint Rita began to be venerated as a saint. Saint Rita is the patron saint of the impossible; all throughout her life her prayer made what was impossible possible, for she knew there was nothing impossible to God.

Saint Rita was born in Roccaporena, Italy in 1380. At age sixteen, the parents gave her in marriage to Fernando Manzini and soon they were proud parents of two sons. Saint Rita contributed to the conversion of her husband who was later slain in the midst of the political feuds of the time. In view of the fact that her sons were plotting vengeance for their father's death, Saint Rita asked God to prevent them from accomplishing their scheme. Both sons fell ill and died. Saint Rita soon asked to be admitted to the Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene of the Augustinian nuns at Cascia. After initially overwhelming hardships and obstacles, she was finally admitted to the convent. She lived for forty years at the convent, serving God faithfully and the community with generosity and dedication. In 1450, she went to Rome for the jubilee convoked by Pope Nicholas V. She died on 22 May 1457. She was beatified by Pope Urban VIII in 1628. Pope Leo XIII canonized her on 24 May 1900. The Augustinian family remembers her on 22 May.

Saint Alonso de Orozco, the Saint of San Felipe Convent

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Shortly before his death, two young religious were cleaning the room of Fr. Alonso de Orozco at the Augustinian Convent of San Felipe in Madrid, Spain. These young men realized that mice had entered his room and began to gnaw away some pages of his Bible. When Fr. Alonso returned to his room, he found one of them placing a trap to catch the small and rapacious unwanted guests. Then Fr. Alonso spoke to the young man:



“What are you doing, brother?”

The young religious replied to him: “I placed a trap to catch the mouse eating the pages of your Reverence’s Bible.”

Saint Alonso responded:

“Do not place a trap for that small creature of God. Let’s hope all Christians were like that mouse so they would feel a great hunger for the Word of God up to the point making it their daily nourishment.”

And it was true: the Word of God was Fr. Alonso's daily nourishment and he strove in his countless writings and in his preaching to exhort everyone to meditate on the Word of God and take his listeners to the central message of the Sacred Scriptures which is nothing else but love, as Saint Augustine had indicated. As a preacher, he expounded with clarity and depth the Word of God. For that reason, the Spanish monarch Charles V would appoint him in 1554 as the royal preacher when he was prior of the convent in Valladolid. Later King Philip II would confirm him in that post, and it was then that Fr Alonso transferred from Valladolid to Madrid and resided at the Augustinian convent until the end of his days. The Convent of San Felipe el Real was located at the beginning of Calle Mayor in Madrid, beside Puerta del Sol. The steps of the Convent of San Felipe became the most famous gossip shop of the Spanish capital.

As the royal preacher, he maintained a very close relationship with the great personalities of the period as well as the affluent and powerful of the time. Nevertheless, Fr. Alonso did not let the glories of the world inflate his spirit and fill it with swelling dosages of vanity and pride. He never availed himself of the privileges to which he was entitled as the royal preacher because he continued to be a simple and humble friar at the Convent of San Felipe el Real. And most of all, his contact with the rich and powerful did not make him look down disdainfully at the impoverished and the needy and forget their plight. On the way to the royal palace he always spent moments speaking with the poor and taking interest in their needs. And even more, he saw to it that the rich and powerful help the marginalized and the destitute and with their wealth provide them with the bare essentials in life.

For all that reason, in Madrid where he resided in the last thirty years of long life, he was a renowned personality and the impoverished people were well aware of the fact that they could always find in him assistance and protection.

This life so simple and so committed to God was what called the attention in Fr. Alonso when he was young. Furthermore, it was what had impressed during his youthful age upon his confreres at the Convent of Saint Augustine in Salamanca. He was then a young and restless student. His parents in Toledo had sent him to Salamanca so he could have a brilliant career and open horizons in his life. However, the future

of Fr. Alonso was to be different. Thus, as a university student, despite his young age, his attention was greatly attracted by the mode and style of life of the religious who lived at the Convent of Saint Augustine where the prior was the saintly and learned Thomas of Villanova.

In fact, at the Convent of Saint Augustine in Salamanca of that time holiness was in full bloom because the prior himself was saintly, the novices, like Saint Alonso de Orozco, were holy; the master of novices Fr. Luis de Montoya was likewise a saint. Hence, Fr. Tomás de Herrera wrote:

Happy was the time when the prior, the master of novices and so many novices were holy. And what seems very rare, even the procurator of the convent, enmeshed in the coffers of the estate and in litigations, was likewise holy.

Living with full enthusiasm in the Augustinian Order, Fr. Alonso witnessed the send-off of the first evangelizers to Mexico in 1533. He himself volunteered to go to Mexico; his offer would at last be accepted in 1547. However, when the expedition to Mexico made its first stop-over in the Canary Islands, Fr. Alonso was forced to return to Spain because he suffered a terrible attack of arthritis and the physicians counseled him to return.

Nonetheless, his presence in Spain turned out to be providential, not only he would be put in charge of preaching to the Spanish monarch but also his very own life and fame of sanctity would necessarily be the best preaching and mission for Saint Alonso was the living invitation to accept God in one's life.

Fr. Alonso wrote several works in Latin as well as in Spanish on spiritual themes, on the Order and on the Virgin Mary, to whom he was most devoted, and as he said he had received from her the mandate to write. The following titles stood out among his works: *The Orchard of Prayer and the Mountain of Contemplation* (1544); *Spiritual Nuptials* (1551); *Good Race* (1562); *The Art of Loving God and Neighbor* (1568); *The Crown of Our Lady* (1588); *Instruction of Religious*; *The Chronicle of Our Glorious Father and Doctor of the Church Saint Augustine*, etc. The mission to evangelize in Mexico he could not accomplish was done in Madrid, not only in his writings, his preaching and his life, but also in his being a great reformer of religious life, as he set up monasteries where the perfect life of following Christ was lived to the fullest.

He died on 19 September 1591 at age 91 at the College of the Incarnation in Madrid, also known as the College of Doña María de Aragón, now the Palace of the Spanish Senate. He was beatified by Pope Leo XIII on 15 January 1882. Saint John Paul II canonized him on 19 May 2002. His mortal remains are preserved at the Convent of the Augustinian Contemplative Nuns in La Granja, Madrid, which bears his name.

Saint Alonso de Orozco was born in Oropesa in the Spanish province of Toledo on 17 October 1500. He professed as an Augustinian at the convent of Salamanca in 1523. In 1547 he undertook the journey to Mexico but he had to return to Spain from the Canary Islands on account of a serious illness. In 1554, he was named royal preacher of Charles V. In 1560, he transferred to the Convent of San Felipe el Real in Madrid. He passed away on 19 September 1591 in Madrid. He was beatified by Pope Leo XIII on 15 January 1882. Saint John Paul II canonized him on 19 May 2002. His mortal remains are preserved at the convent of the Augustinian contemplative nuns, which bears his name and is located at La Granja Street in Madrid.

Miguel de la Madre de Dios, Protomartyr of the Augustinian Recollection

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Although in the secular world he was surnamed Bombau, and he belonged to one of the families of noblest ancestry in the Spanish city of Zaragoza, he had listened to God's call, and leaving behind all the glories of the world he entered the convent of the Augustinian friars in the city of Zaragoza. Later on, moved by a desire for greater perfection, he affiliated himself with the Augustinian Recollects in 1602. However, Fr. Miguel did not imagine how far would his new Augustinian Recollect family would take him. Such was how he recalled four years later when he was in mission territory of Mariveles in the Island of Luzon. There he had been sent to evangelize the native tribes commonly known as Aetas or Negritos who despite their short stature were known for their ferocity and warlike traits. But Fr. Miguel did not imagine all this when he joined the first expedition of Augustinian Recollect missionaries who left for the Philippine Islands. Hence, with great joy he travelled to Madrid to be united with the thirteen members of this first Augustinian Recollect expedition for the Philippines.

After taking part in the solemn Mass and bidding farewell to the famous Christ of the Abandonment venerated at the Augustinian Recollect convent in Madrid, all of them left together for Sevilla on 16 May 1605. Then they transferred to Cádiz where they boarded the ship on 12 July of the same year. The maritime journey across the Atlantic

took two months and the missionaries arrived at the port of Veracruz in México on 17 September of that year 1605. From Veracruz they travelled to México City and were lodged at the convent of the Augustinians in the city.

They journeyed towards the Pacific coast of Mexico and reached the city of Acapulco where they finally embarked on 22 February 1606 on the galleon across the Pacific Ocean on the last leg of their journey to the Philippines. Along the way, as it would happen to countless missionaries through the years, one of the missionaries of the expedition, Fr. Andrés de San Nicolás, passed away just as the galleon was nearing the Marianas Islands. He gave an admirable example of patience and fortitude in the face of death.

Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios and the twelve confreres finally reached the port of Cebu on 12 May 1606. There they were welcomed with great joy by the Augustinians and by Bishop Pedro de Agurto of Cebu, also an Augustinian. He invited them to set up their first house in Cebu. But Fr. Miguel and his confreres had their orders and permission to establish their first convent in Manila. Hence when the first opportunity came around, they took to the sea once more and headed northward to the capital of the archipelago. They arrived in Manila towards the end of the month.

Once their community life was installed, the Recollects received the invitation to evangelize the provinces of Bataan and Zambales northeast of Manila. These two mission territories were difficult to evangelize not only because of the hardships posed by geographic barriers but most especially due to the ferocity and violence of their inhabitants and their inordinate attachment to pagan customs. The missionaries chosen to carry out that mission were the only ones who at that moment were able to speak the language of the natives. Hence, two Augustinians who joined the Recollects in Manila, Fr. Pedro de San José, Fr. Francisco de Santa Mónica and our own Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios, were selected for the first mission.

In spite of the harsh conditions of the mission, the pioneering group of avant-garde missionaries did not forget the importance of prayer and the meaning of community life. Hence, without disregarding their missionary obligations and evangelization efforts, they still followed the two hours of daily mental prayer and the prayers of the matins at

midnight, as it was the practice in all the convents of the Recollection. Their quality of austere life strengthened them inside and outside in order to face various hardships. It was common knowledge that they were lodged in poor shanties they themselves built, that their food was limited to scanty amount of cooked rice and vegetables.

But such austerity did not convert them into unsociable and daunted persons because they challenged the geography, fording rivers and climbing mountains in order to preach the Word of God and resettle the natives in settlements, in order to facilitate the teaching of catechism to them, undaunted by the proverbial ferocity and bellicosity of the natives. In this manner, Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios attained glory, for in one occasion while he was preaching to the Negritos, the natives of Mariveles in what is now the province of Bataan, he was stoned by them like a new Saint Stephen.

Fr. Miguel did not die on the spot, but he was very badly wounded. Shortly afterward, he passed away in Manila on account of the wounds that stemmed from the stoning. The ancient chronicles of the Order referred to as the last words of Father Miguel de la Madre de Dios the prayer recited in all the convents of the Augustinian Recollection every night:

Let us remember, fathers and brothers, that we must all die and we are to give very close accounting to God our Lord for the good or bad we might have done in this life, and it could be this night. Let us also remember the terrible anguish and torments of hell.

For that reason, Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios is deemed as the Protomartyr of the Augustinian Recollection since it was the love of Christ Jesus that made him renounce his glories in this world, and this same love that made him proclaim the message of Christ the Savior to the Negritos of Mariveles, and as he was preaching to them this message of salvation he was stoned.

Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios bore the surname of Bombau in the world and he was a native of Zaragoza, Spain. He entered the convent of the Augustinians in that city and in 1602 he transferred to the Augustinian Recollect convent of that same city of Zaragoza. He was part of the first mission of fourteen Augustinian Recollects to the Philippines. They embarked on 12 July 1605 from the Bay of Cádiz in

southern Spain for the Philippines. The first Recollects arrived in Cebu on 12 May 1606. In 1607, he was sent to Mariveles in the present-day province of Bataan with two confreres in order to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the Negritos. Despite the great missionary efforts he had exerted and having given an admirable example of his apostolic zeal and austerity, he was stoned by the Negritos while he was preaching the salvific message of the Gospel to them. He died few days after in Manila on account of the serious wounds inflicted by the stones. Fr. Miguel de la Madre de Dios is rightly considered as the Protomartyr of the Augustinian Recollection.

Isabel of Butuan (†1646): Pioneering Augustinian Recollect Beata in the Philippines¹

Luis de Jesús OAR

Blair & Robertson translation,
edited and annotated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

One of our beatas² named Isabel passed to the better life this year 1646 in the village of Butuan of the Philippines. We know nothing else about her except that she was converted to the faith by the preaching of Fathers when they entered that province.³ The Lord illumined her so that she should leave the darkness of their idolatries, and she was baptized and given the name of Isabel.

¹ This is chapter 6 of the second volume of the *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos descalzos*, to which confreres refer as *Crónicas*. This is the second of the thirteen volumes of the general history published in Madrid in 1681. This was authored by Luis de Jesús. The English translation is titled as *Recollect Missions, 1646-1648*, in BLAIR & ROBERTSON, vol. 36, 109-188.

² *Beata* or *mantelata* is a member of the Third Order of Augustinian Recollects. Juridically sanctioned by the superior general or prior provincial, the Third Order was composed of lay men and women who wished to attain Christian perfection according to the spirit of the founder. Today the tertiaries compose the Augustinian Recollect Fraternity, “the members of which, remaining in the world, pursue evangelical perfection, according to the charism of the Order, while maintaining their secular identity,” cf. *Constitutions* no. 114 in the *Augustinian Recollects. Rule, Constitutions, Additional Code* (Rome 2012) page 136. The members of the tertiary orders of colonial Philippines donned the habit daily.

³ This refers to present-day Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur in northeastern Mindanao.

She produced great fruit in a short time, for the hand of God is not restricted to time limit. Seeing her so useful in the mysteries of the Catholic religion, our religious sent her to become a co-worker and the spiritual mother of many souls, whom she converted to the faith and catechized thus gaining them for the Church. She was sent to the villages where the devil was waging his fiercest war and deceiving by his tricks, so that she might oppose herself to him by her exemplary life and the gentleness of her instruction.

Isabel established her school in a house in the village to which the young girls resorted. With wonderful eloquence she made them understand that the path of their vain superstitions would lead them astray, and explained the rudiments and principles of the Christian doctrine. At her set hours she went to the church daily, gathered the people and instructed the unlearned, confirmed the converted, and enlightened the ignorant and that with so much grace and gentleness of words that she seized the hearts of her hearers. To this she joined her modesty and bearing sweetly grave, by which she made great gain among those natives.

Since so copious results were experienced through Isabel's work, both in the reform of morals and in the many who were converted from their blind paganism, the priests sent her to preach in the streets and open places where the people gathered to hear her—some through curiosity and others carried away by her wonderful grace in speaking. By that means many souls were captured and they begged for baptism, for she was a zealous worker and an apostolic collaborator in that flock of the Lord. She even entered the houses of the obstinate ones who did not go to hear her in the streets. There, with mild discourses and brimming with charity, she softened their hearts and persuaded them to receive the faith.

After some years of employment in that kind of apostolic life her husband died. Upon being freed from the conjugal commitment, she yearned to subject herself to the yoke of religion.

Father Jacinto de San Fulgencio,⁴ at that time vicar provincial of that province, gave her our habit of *mantelata* or *beata*. She recognized, as she was very intelligent and experienced in the road to perfection, that her obligations to make herself useful were stricter, that she must live a better life and employ the talent which she had received from God for the benefit of her neighbor, and she did so.

One cannot easily imagine the diligence with which she sought souls and the means that she contrived to draw them out of the darkness of heathendom. What paths did she not take! What hardships did she not suffer! She went from one place to another discussing with the spirit and strength, not of a weak woman, but of a strong man. The Lord whose cause she was advancing aided her; for the solicitation of souls for God is a service much to His satisfaction.

She finally saw all that province of Butuan converted to the faith of Jesus Christ, for which she very joyfully gave thanks. She then retired to give herself to divine contemplation, for she thought that she ought to get ready to leave the world as she had devoted so much time to the welfare of her neighbor.

⁴ Fr. Jacinto Claramonte de San Fulgencio was born in Cocentaina in the Spanish province of Valencia to Vicente Francisco Claramonte and Isabel Juana Tamarit. He professed in the Augustinian Recollect convent of Valencia in 1614. With eleven confreres he left Cádiz in March 1619 for Mexico. From Acapulco he headed for the Philippines on 4 March 1620 and arrived in Manila five months later on 16 August. When the spiritual administration of Caraga and Butuan in Mindanao was handed over to the Augustinian Recollects in 1622, the first eight missionaries, including Fr. Jacinto, were sent there. He spent ten years in Bacoag, Gigaquit, and Butuan (1629) until he was dispatched to the new mission in Binalbagan in Negros Island in 1632. In 1635, Fr Jacinto was assigned to Tandag in Surigao and in 1638, he was elected provincial councilor in Saint Nicholas Convent in Intramuros, Manila, and concurrently its prior until 1641 when he was chosen as prior of the Immaculate Conception Convent in Cebu City. During his ten-year mission work in Mindanao, he established six convents, three of which were along the banks of the Agusan River, and baptized more than 20,000 natives. During the Caraga Revolt in 1631 he served as military chaplain of the military expedition from Cebu and helped negotiate the pacification of the rebels of Tandag in 1635. Fr Jacinto risked his life in several instances so much that the commander of the military expedition Captain Juan de Chaves lauded him no end for his services. His life was exemplary and so was his death which happened towards 1656 at Saint Nicholas Convent. Cf. Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde el año 1606, en que llegó la primera misión a Manila, hasta nuestros días* (Madrid 1906) 48-49.

Isabel of Butuan sought instruction from Sister Clara Calimán⁵ (whose life we have written above) and imitated her in her penitences, her fastings and her way of life, so that she became an example of virtues. For long hours did Isabel pray devoutly; she visited the sick; she served them; she exhorted them to repentance for their sins and to bear their sorrows with patience.

She devoted herself so entirely to those works of charity that it seemed best to our Fathers (who administered that district of Agusan) not to allow her respite from them, and that she could [not] live wholly for herself.

The Recollect priests built a hospital for the poor and sent her to care for them. She sought those in need, whom she often carried on her shoulders. So great was her charity. She cared for their souls, causing the sacraments to be administered to them as well as for their bodies, applying to them the needed medicines.

She solicited donations and alms, and she had scheduled the hours for going out to beg for the ailing poor. She did all that with a cheerful and calm countenance, which indicated the love of God burning in her breast. Her hour came during those occupations and she fell grievously ill. She knew that God was summoning her and she begged for the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. She received the Sacraments with joy.

At last, Isabel of Butuan surrendered her soul to her Lord, leaving, with sorrow for her loss, sure pledges that she has eternal rest.

⁵ The life of Clara Calimán is treated in a previous chapter of this *Crónicas*.

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Servant of God Isabel de la Madre de Dios (1614-1687): From White Veil to Black and a Colored Life

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

In 1660, Isabel García y Ximénez, now Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios, with other nuns left the Convent of Saint John the Evangelist at Arenas de San Pedro in the province of Avila on the way to Serradilla in Cáceres in order to establish a new convent of the Augustinian Recollect nuns. When she went out of the cloister, a gentle fresh morning air greeted her and soon they saw a cart—not very comfortable but clean and spacious—waiting for them. They carried in the cart everything needed for the new foundation. A splendid day gave them company, not unlike a painting of Diego Velázquez who had died in that same year. And after spending some moments of prayer and putting themselves as always in the hands of God, they asked the angels—to whom they were most devoted—to accompany them. The cart-driver wore his hat again



after taking it off for the moment of prayer, and with a shout and a quick pulling of the reins, he put the cart on its way.

The view of the Convent of Saint John the Evangelist in Arenas, better known today as Arenas de San Pedro, faded in the horizon as they travelled farther from the town. Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios remembered that twenty-eight years before she had entered this convent. She was very young then since she was only eighteen years old. Her childhood and adolescence were spent with her family where she had an excellent school of piety and devotion, where in its warmth her vocation to the contemplative life was born. She recalled the doubts she initially had when the moment came for her to leave her parents and embrace religious life. She likewise remembered that in every moment the grace and hand of God had levelled the path for her and had converted the bitter moments into sweet ones.

Furthermore, she recalled that in the Convent of Saint John the Evangelist, God had shown His great mercy. He further gifted her and revealed to her great mysteries through extraordinary spiritual experiences. Hence she never ceased to give infinite thanks to God for she knew that everything was a gift, an endowment, not of her own merit. And although she then wore the black veil—until very few months before she was a religious nun of white veil, meaning she was a religious put in charge of various tasks, lowly and menial chores inside the convent. Nevertheless, this did not hurt or affect her in her life, for she knew how important was to cast her gaze and heart in Jesus always, in His love, for without Him, all the rest was vanity not worth a single cent.

And speaking of money, she believed that they had just begun this new foundation full of complete trust in God's Providence and in the generosity of the benefactors. However, this thought did not scare her because she possessed an infinite confidence in the paternal providence of God, and she was certain that they would not lack anything in the new foundation. So it was: from nothing rose a solid and beautiful monastery, truly a work of Divine Providence.

While she was gazing at the extensive fields of Avila, she viewed that the cart passed near her native town of Navalcán and her heart beat faster as she recalled her parents and her family. As she looked at the extensive fields, she remembered that as a young girl she had taken care

of the herds of her family, as she saw how some young children who greeted them from a distance were similarly doing it. She was thinking that she never went to school nor she underwent any formal education.

But the book where she had acquired all her knowledge was the Crucifix since through from hands of the suffering and Crucified Christ she had lived profound mystical experiences that had filled her heart with wisdom. She did not possess the knowledge that swelled, but the tranquil, edifying and creative wisdom of God. The bishop of Avila had become aware of it, and when he saw that she knew much more theology without attending university classes than a serious and influential doctor of theology, he had granted her the use of the black veil, that is, she could pray in the choir with the sisters for she had much more than wisdom for that.

The thought that ceaselessly kept her mind busy was on the Passion of Jesus Christ. She found great consolation and encouragement in the meditation of the various episodes in the Lord's Passion. From this contemplation arose a burning love for God and she vividly experienced in her heart the fire of divine love and a series of special experiences which she dictated to another sister in the convent Sister Inés del Sacramento. As her secretary, she gathered all those experiences and put them into writing for posterity to know about them. All were collected in one work called *The Manifestations*.

And while some sisters had been lulled to sleep by the monotonous rolling of the cart, she recalled how much she had been aided in the progress of her spiritual life by the young Augustinian chaplain Fr. Francisco Ignacio del Castillo who was assigned to them in 1640, twenty years before. It was he who first helped her to grow in her spiritual life and leave to grace to carry her along the ways of God and lead her through the most hidden and intimate paths of encounter with Christ.

After these memories and thoughts, while they went on the way, Mother Isabel left her memories behind and underwent an ecstasy in God, as it was wont to her.

What Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios did not know at that very moment was that she would be elected as prioress of the convent on the way to the monastery they were about to establish—the Convent of

the Most Holy Christ of Victories. Great was her surprise and devotion when she came to know that in the new convent the Most Holy Christ of Victories, a work of Domingo de Rioja carved in 1635, was going to be venerated. The beauty, realism and piety aroused by that image made King Philip IV retained this Christ in the royal chapel, although it was later moved to the Church of Saint Martin in Plasencia, and from there due to the express desire of the one who ordered it made—Blessed Francisca de Oviedo—it was transferred to Serradilla.

During the term of Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios as prioress, the convent lived a period of remarkable progress, material as well as human and spiritual, because at that time twenty-three religious made their profession and the convent was built from nothing. This convent can still be appreciated in Serradilla. In all that, the nuns y always had confidence in the power of the Providence of God as well as through their steadfast faith in the face of hardships.

Once the community of Serradilla was firmly established, Mother Isabel made plans in 1676 for a new foundation. This time the new monastery was to be constructed in the city of La Calzada de Oropesa in the province of Toledo, which was very near the town of Navalcán where she saw the light of day in 1614.

Although she met a few difficulties for this new convent, she was not daunted by them, and she went on with the establishment of the new community of La Calzada de Oropesa, which was constituted on 17 May 1676. This time, the convent would be under the protection of the Most Holy Christ of Mercies because the Jesus she had yearned for was not only the Christ of Victories but also the Christ of Mercies, the one who showed with his human face the compassion of the Father for all people.

Mother Isabel began the construction of the convent with great hope but she could not live long to see it finished because she passed away on 19 January 1687 at age 72. His human body remained incorrupt despite the passage of time.

During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the communist troops entered the convent. Her body was not set on fire but a soldier struck Mother Isabel's face with his rifle butt. Her body was recognized

on 5 March 2008 and its incorrupt state was verified except for the damaged face.

On 18 January 2008, Msgr. Carmelo Borobia, auxiliary bishop of Toledo, had opened the diocesan process of the cause of canonization. On 28 November 2009, the Archbishop of Toledo Braulio Rodríguez closed the process. On 5 March 2008, her body was recognized and found incorrupt, although her face is damaged. On this same date it was placed in a glass urn and placed in the conventual church for the veneration of the faithful.



The incorrupt body of the Servant of God Isabel de la Madre de Dios is laid to rest at the conventual church of La Calzada de Oropesa in the province of Toledo, Spain.

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints in its ordinary meeting on 4 March 2011 has recognized the validity of the process of Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios. This means that the whole process of gathering every information, both personal documentation and testimonies on her life, virtues and fame of sanctity has been declared valid. Then the same Dicastery has issued the corresponding decrees.

Thus ends the first phase of the canonization cause which was carried out by the office of the Augustinian Recollect postulator general. The next step is to study in depth all these materials and to show that the Servant of God has practiced in an exemplary manner and with heroism the Christian and religious virtues all throughout her life.

Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios was born in 1614 at Navalcán in the Spanish province of Toledo. Her parents were Francisco García de la Cepeda and Catalina Ximénez. In 1632, she entered the Convent of Saint John the Evangelist of the Augustinian Recollect nuns of Arenas in Ávila. He professed on 4 September 1633. In 1640, her confessor Father Francisco Ignacio del Castillo guided her along the path of perfection and holiness. Mother Isabel dictated her spiritual experiences for five years to Sister Inés del Sacramento.

In May 1660, she left the Convent of Saint John the Evangelist in order to establish the Convent of the Most Holy Christ of Victories in Serradilla. She was elected prioress of the new convent. On 17 May 1676, she founded the Convent of the Most Holy Christ of Mercies in La Calzada de Oropesa in Toledo province. She passed away on 9 January 1687 at the Convent of La Calzada de Oropesa.

Fr. Enrique Pérez, Fr. Francisco Sádaba. Cardinal Vives y Tutó, Saint Pius X and their Role in *Religiosas Familias*¹

The papal brief *Religiosas Familias*, issued by Saint Pius X on 16 September 1912, has a somewhat protracted, colorful, breath-taking, suspenseful and exciting history behind it. It has a long journey from its initial conceptualization at the cloisters of the Augustinian Recollect mother-house in Madrid and of Via Sistina 11 in Rome up to its final publication and promulgation in the Vatican City. The *Religiosas Familias* was wrought with great diplomacy, through clandestine negotiation and with a lot of good will and affection on the part of the Roman Curia cardinals and the Holy Father towards the Augustinian Recollection.

The *Religiosas Familias* brought to the fore four major protagonists: Pope Pius X, Cardinal José Calasanz Vives y Tutó of the Roman Congregation for Religious, Recollect Superior General Fr. Enrique Pérez de la Sagrada Familia and Procurator General Francisco Sádaba de la Virgen del Carmen. Fr. Joaquín María de Llevaneras, the cardinal's Capuchin blood brother also played an important role in the final approval of the apostolic letter that raised the Augustinian Recollection to the juridical status of religious order with privileges and benefices, proper to it.

¹ A paper delivered before Augustinian Recollect priests, sisters, brothers, professed, novices, seminarians, university/college officials, faculty members, students, staff members, at the Symposium on the Centenary of the *Religiosas Familias*, held at the Diego Cera OAR Auditorium [San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Manila Auditorium] in Manila on 19 October 2012. A decade afterward, the editor Fr. Francisco Antonio published this paper in *The Recoletos Observer*, 16 (2022) 125-129.

Enrique Pérez de la Sagrada Familia

The future prior general of the Order of Augustinian Recollects was born on 14 April 1854 in Oña in the Spanish province of Burgos. His father Lesmes Pérez de Mena served the Crown from 1827 to 1843 and retired as captain with several military decorations. His pious mother Josefa Esplúguez Pellicer came from San Felipe de Játiva in the province of Valencia; she taught Enrique in his tender age how to pray and to love Jesus and Mary. The new-born Enrique was baptized at the Church of San Salvador four days after his birth and was confirmed four years after his baptism. The Pérez family moved to the capital city of Burgos to provide the children with better educational opportunities and there the young Enrique began his ecclesiastical studies and Latin at the Colegio de San Carlos of the Jesuits. In 1871, Enrique was with his family that transferred the residence to Madrid.

His intellectual brilliance shone in his studies at the *Colegio de la Asociación de Católicos*. Furthermore, in Madrid he got to know Fr. Marcial Bellido, procurator general and vicar provincial of Saint Nicholas Province in Spain, who assigned him to calligraphic work in the curia, and the uncle of his professor Fr. Félix Sánchez Casado,



Fr. Gabino Sánchez, commissary general of the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollects. His biographer José Javier Lizarraga, quoting the diary of the future prior general, writes that precisely “through those contacts with the Recollects, Enrique entered a new chapter in his life that he took advantage of in order to develop his vocation, definitely opting for the religious life.”

A Recollect religious

At age 18, Enrique officially began his novitiate in Monteagudo, Navarra, on 17 September 1872, donned the Recollect habit and commenced his philosophical studies. The tumultuous period of Spanish history delayed the religious profession until 15 January 1874. He finished his philosophy and went on with his theological formation

in Monteagudo till 1876 when he moved to Marcilla where he finished his theology. He was ordained to the holy priesthood on 22 September 1877 in Pamplona. He returned to Marcilla for his *cantamisa* and for a year of the course of *Oratoria sagrada*.

In September 1878, the newly-ordained priest joined the first Recollect community of the convent of San Millán de la Cogolla in La Rioja. This age-old monastery formerly owned by the Benedictine monks who were victims of the *desamortización* [confiscation of properties of the Church and religious orders] decrees of the Liberal Minister Juan Alvarez Mendizábal (1790-1853) in 1835 and thereafter. His decrees drove away the Recollect conventuals from their convents in the regions of Castile, Aragon and Andalusia, and completely abolished the Congregation in Spain, except for Saint Nicholas Province and its convents in Monteagudo, Marianas Islands and the Philippines. San Millán de la Cogolla was acquired by the Recollect Congregation in March 1878. The young friar was part of the San Millán community by 17 September 1878 with the new community of ix priests, for brothers and eight students of theology and philosophy. When the first parish priest Fr. Iñigo Narro gave up his position, Fr. Enrique took over in May 1879. He organized various parochial organizations like the Daughters of Mary and the Congregation of Saint Luis Gonzaga. He further revived the teaching of catechism of both children and adults. He repaired the church roof, painted the interior, built wooden platforms on the altars, and put four new bells. His pastoral tasks in the confessional, pulpit and other accomplishments as well as his character and personal traits earned him the affection and admiration of everyone in the valley of San Millán. He never had an idle moment: he complied with his obligations as a religious even a he even composed poems.

In August 1884, Fr. Gabino Sánchez designated him as commissary and visitor general to the Candelaria Province, tasked to visit the Colombian communities. The dictator Tomás Mosquera issued decrees in 1861 and 1863 that abolished the religious orders in Colombia and divested them of their properties. The 19th-century revolutions had decimated their numbers. From one hundred religious in 1795, to ninety-seven in 1816, and in 1885 there were but ten priests who did not live a community life. In the South American country, he gathered the remaining religious, talked to them, pouring into them the

great value and love for the Order, primed them about the old ideals of the forefathers and imposed wise precepts for the regular observance. Towards the end of 1885, he returned to Madrid and redacted a report of the status of Candelaria Province to the commissary general who was very pleased with the accomplishment. Fr. Enrique retraced his steps to the parish of San Millán de la Cogolla.

Three years later, in 1888, Fr. Ezekiel Moreno of San Nicholas Province led the pioneering missionary expedition of six priests and two brothers to Bogotá in order to restore the Augustinian Recollection in Colombia.

After the untimely death of Fr. Manuel Martínez in Rome in 1887, he took over the position vacated by the Procurator General. He rendered significant services in his responsibilities before the Holy See and the Recollection, showing proofs of his indefatigable zeal, activity and profound intelligence.² Through his hands passed petitions for spiritual favors, privileges, rescripts, recommendations, appointments, ecclesiastical benefices, etc. He rubbed elbows with cardinals, prelates, Roman Curia officials and other dignitaries. He heard the confessions of the clergy and young students in a Spanish college. Fray Ezekiel Moreno was recommended by Fray Enrique to the future Apostolic Vicariate of Casanare in Colombia. The third Recollect province was established in 1907 to include houses in Spain, Brazil, Venezuela and Panama; originally named Province of Our Lady of the Pillar, it became the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova. For twenty-one years, as Procurator General, Fray Enrique performed his duties to the admiration of his confreres.

His great contribution to the Augustinian Recollect history as procurator general is the celebration of a historic general chapter, after an anomalous hiatus of seventy-nine tumultuous years. In this project, Fr. Enrique closely collaborated with the superior general Mariano Bernad. Presided by Archbishop Antonio Vico, the general chapter met at the Monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla from the 16th of July 1908, feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, to the 27th. After eleven days, the twenty-one chapter fathers firmed up a series of twenty-eight ordinances. And Fr. Enrique Pérez was elected vicar general by a

² Miguel AVELLANEDA, *Nuestro primer prior general*, in BPSN 52 (1962) 318.

unanimous vote. Thereafter, first on his mind and the *definitorium's* [present-day general council] was the compliance of the general chapter's acts and determinations prioritizing special questions. He sought the renewal of benefices and privileges from the Congregation of Religious (1909), declared Saint Joseph as protector of the congregation and Saint Nicholas of Tolentino as special protector, granted administrative autonomy to each Province, ordered the setting up of Augustinian Section in all Recollect libraries, decreed the canonical foundation of houses in Shanghai, Madrid, etc., ordered the reprinting of the revised Ritual and Ceremonial.

In a conference to the young professed at Monteagudo, which moved Miguel Avellaneda who could never forget for the rest of his religious life, the prior general said:

Learn, dear young ones, the laws and precepts of our Order. Interior life, through the daily hour of prayer, through Divine Office well-chanted, through sacred rites... Mass, Communion, Rosary, examination [of conscience], time to speak and time to be quiet, well-kept cell and serious studies in your priestly career. Let us love what is our own. Let us never seek outside what we can find inside. Good sons love the heritage [...] from their forefathers. Seriousness in our relationship with God, with ourselves and with our neighbors.³

Then came the Rescript of 18 July 1911 and the *Religiosas familias* on 16 September 19012, wrought by Fray Enrique and his three or four co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord.

Francisco Sádaba de la Virgen del Carmen

A son of Agustín Sádaba and Josefa Oteiza, Francisco was born on 21 August 1867 in Andosilla, Navarra, Spain.⁴ He followed the Recollect lifestyle in November 1883 when he professed the three monastic vows at Monteagudo. He studied his theology



³ Miguel AVELLANEDA, *Nuestro primer prior general*, in BPSN 52 (1962) 324.

⁴ Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde 1606, el año en que llegó hasta nuestros días* (Madrid 1906) 687-688.

in San Millán and Marcilla. His brilliance and expertise in Latin during his formation years shone when he was awarded a prize for his theological dissertation on Saint Joseph in San Millán. He received the order of priesthood in Tarazona, La Rioja, on 29 December 1889. Thereafter he taught philosophy in Monteagudo until 1890 when he was sent to San Millán to teach Dogmatic Theology.

With sixteen other Recollects, he boarded the steamer *Isla de Panay* at Barcelona in September 1891 for the Philippines. The Diocesan Seminary of Vigan was his first assignment where he taught Dogma, Latin, Philosophy and Sacred History.⁵ He was named synodal examiner of the Diocese of Nueva Segovia, despite his young age. After the province moved out of the seminary of Vigan, in June 1895 he was assigned as assistant parish priest of Rosario, Batangas.

Upon the resignation of Fr. Tomás Roldán as provincial secretary, the prior provincial designated him to the post. In 1902, he was appointed provincial counsellor. It was Sádaba who deftly and promptly worked for the negotiation for the sale of Haciendas in Imus and Bacoar, which ran the risk of complete loss to Saint Nicholas province. He was the provincial chronicler in 1902, simultaneously as provincial counsellor, and archdiocesan synodal examiner of Manila (1900-1906). His most important work and magnum opus as chronicler was definitely *Catálogo de los Religiosos Agustinos Recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde 1606, el año en que llegó hasta nuestros días*.

On 19 October 1906 he was named Secretary General of the Congregation by the General Counsel. With Mariano Bernad and Enrique Pérez, he collaborated in the two major accomplishments: the creation of the Hispano-American Province of Our Lady of the Pillar, later Saint Thomas of Villanova Province, and the General Chapter of 1908.

During his term as procurator general elected in 1908-1914, it is important to mention his close collaboration with Cardinal Vives y Tutó in various Recollect matters. He would consult first Cardinal Vives y Tutó before going to Cardinal Mariano Rampolla, cardinal protector of

⁵ Rafael GARCÍA, *El P. Francisco Sádaba del Carmen. Apuntes para su biografía*, in BPSN 52 (1962) 392-393.

both Augustinians and Augustinian Recollects. Among his innumerable significant contributions to the growth and strong foundation of the Augustinian Recollection was the establishment of Palawan as apostolic prefecture on April 1910, later elevated to Apostolic Vicariate with Fray Gregorio Espiga as its last apostolic prefect in 1953-1955 and apostolic vicar in 1955-1987.

Furthermore, Sádaba very closely worked together with Cardinal Vives y Tutó in the tenacious and constant negotiations for the missions in Shanghai which he petitioned from the Holy See for the Congregation in 1908-1910. In the 1922-1925 triennium, as provincial councilor he travelled to China with the Recollect confreres for the establishment of the first missions. He fell very ill after arrival from the China missions and he returned to his Maker on 5 August 1925 at San Nicolás Convent in Intramuros, Manila.



Pope Saint Pius X

In the town of Riese in the Italian province of Treviso, Venice, Giuseppe Sarto was born on 2 June 1835. Both parents were of lowly condition in life: the father Giovanni Battista Sarto, town postman, died early in 1852. The mother Margherita Sanson, an exemplary woman, prudent wife and mother without compare,” aided the family income by needlework and lived to see her son raised to the office of cardinal. She gave their nine children a fine education. She died at age eighty-one.⁶ Giuseppe studied at his hometown. At age eleven, he walked to a school in Castelfranco, seven kilometres away, daily for four years. At age 19, he entered the seminary in Padova and eight years later he was ordained as priest. He was assigned as assistant priest of a small town called Tombolo but he did all the parochial tasks on account of the old age and illness of the parish priest. Still he had time to study intensely theology and canon law. When the war broke out between the French

⁶ *Encyclopedia Espasa*, vol. 43, 1226.

and Italians against the Austrians, Fr. Sarto was chaplain, infirmarian to every wounded soldier in Tombolo. After nine years, he was moved to Salzano and there he constructed a hospital where in 1872-1873 his spirit of sacrifice and self-denial shone brilliantly among the victims of the cholera epidemic. "He arrived poor and departed poorer," says the Venetian proverb.

The bishop of Treviso named him a canon of the cathedral church. Soon he became the bishop's secretary who exerted effort the religious education be taught in public schools. In 1870, Sarto was appointed by the cathedral chapter as vicar general and ecclesiastical administrator upon the bishop's demise. In 1885, he was consecrated as bishop of Mantua. He assembled a diocesan synod in Mantua after 209 years. He taught moral theology to his seminarians, encouraged reforms in the liturgy and promoted the Gregorian chant and sacred music.

Pope Leo XIII gave him the cardinal's red hat in June 1893 and he was soon after designated Patriarch of Venice. Archbishop Sarto took possession of the patriarchate only in January 1895 on account of some complicated political problems with the Italian government. His priority was focused on the intellectual formation of his clergy. He fostered sacred music, convoked the Eucharistic congress and the archdiocesan synod. He promoted social work and rural banks, established numerous religious houses and took great care of the poor.

In the conclave following the death of Pope Leo XIII, the patriarch of Venice voted by fifty-five of the sixty cardinals on 4 August 1903, taking the name Pius to honor the great Pius IX. In January 1904, he urged the Congregation of Rites to make his *motu proprio* of 22 November 1903 in Venice a universal law, highlighting and officially recognizing the great help of sacred music for the piety of the faithful and the majesty of worship. He convoked a Marian congress in Rome in 1904 and celebrated the 50th anniversary of the apparitions in Lourdes with pomp and solemnity in 1908. With his papal program of restoring all things in Christ, he ardently promoted piety among the faithful and clergy. He heaped encomium on the Franciscan family on the occasion of the 7th centenary of their foundation in 1909. He founded the Pontifical Biblical Institute and entrusted it to the Jesuits. He further mandated the codification of the Canon Law, reformed the Roman Curia and enthusiastically promoted the study of Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa*

Theologica. In 1907, he published his famous encyclicals *Lamentabili* on certain teachings of the Church and *Pascendi* censuring the dangers and errors of modernism.

During his papacy, he continuously supervised and fomented the Catholic social action by means of pontifical documents filled with wisdom especially in Germany, France, Spain and Italy. We can say then that he was on equal footing with his predecessor Pope Leon XIII and his great encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Pius X clashed with the leaders in the governments of France and Portugal with blatant opposition against Catholic teachings and Church institutions, but maintained corial relations with all Latin American countries. He spent huge sums of money for the poor of Rome and aided flooded cities in Italy, but most especially hapless victims in the Philippines devastated by a super-typhoon in 1912. Towards the end of July in 1914, the unfortunate events leading to World War I took place and the Pope's delicate health turned worse and on the 20th of August the holy Vicar of Christ on earth and 259th Successor of Saint Peter passed away in the odor of sanctity.



His pastoral solicitude for the clergy's training, for the Franciscan Orders and especially for the Augustinian Recollects came with the Rescript of 18 July 1911 and the *Religiosas familias* on 16 September 19012.

José de Calasanz Cardinal Vives y Tutó⁷

In the town of San Andrés de Llevaneras on 15 February 1854, José was born to a very humble family. Still an infant, he was consecrated by his mother to the Blessed Mother in a church dedicated to Our Lady of Mercy. His humility, love for the Eucharist and devotion to Mary

⁷ José Javier LIZARRAGA. LXXV del breve "*Religiosas Familias*" (16 September 1912). *Personajes que intervienen en la constitución de nuestra Order* in BPSN 77 (1987) 199-219.

shone later in his religious life. The young boy's father was a carpenter who earned his living by the sweat of his brow. Catalina Tutó y Garriga was a figure of a caring, sweet mother with a firmness of spirit. Catalina simply told his sons Joaquín and José who were set to cross the Atlantic Ocean and join the Franciscan Capuchin Order in Guatemala where the friars had taken refuge in the wake of the *exclaustración* of 1835 in Spain: "You are God's [children] before you are mine." Two other siblings likewise became religious sisters. After his years in the missions, his elder brother Joaquín, age 29, was elevated to the post apostolic commissary of the Capuchins in Spain who in 1885 were suppressed to form the new Spanish province.

The young Capuhin friar journeyed from Antigua in Guatemala, from there to San Francisco in California, then to Tolouse in France, to Ecuador in Latin America and to Perpignan in France. His errant life ended in the convent of Igualada (Barcelona). He was dispatched to the Eternal City to work for the union of the Spanish Capuchins with Rome which took place in 1885. There endowed with wisdom, prudence and counsel, he became a consultor of various dicasteries of the Roman Curia and later member of several special commissions and in June 1899 he was given the cardinal's red hat by Pope Leo XIII.

Cardina Vives y Tutó possessed a profound knowledge and expertise in Sacred Scriptures, Dogmatic Theology, Canon Law, Patrology and Moral Theology. In 1908, he was named Prefect of the new Congregation of Religious. For the cardinal prefect, his very lofty concept of religious life: "the religious must set an example, must not be an occasion for scandals, must live a life of sanctification, must be a mirror of virtues... hence, he shall seek the purity and authenticity of religious life."⁸ He then set his mind and soul for the general reform of religious life in the Church. In a decree in 1909, the Congregation of Religious declares: "Christ's Church seeks quality in religious, rather than quantity... It is better so much to close the door of entry than to have to open the exit..." He forbade the admission of fickle or unpredictable candidates to religious life and those expelled from other seminaries for whatever grounds. The same statutes should be applied to women

⁸ José Javier LIZARRAGA. *LXXV aniversario de la creación de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*, in BPSN 77 (1987) 214.

religious. He contributed much to the codification of Canon Law promulgated in 1917. In 1913, a diabetic for years, he manifested symptoms of intestinal infection and later operated on for appendicitis. After an apparent recovery, passed away on 7 September 1913 in the Alban Hills, twenty kilometres southeast of Rome, where he had been undergoing intensive care and medication since April.

To him is due the juridical independence of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. Other beneficiaries were the Mercedarians, Discalced Carmelites, etc. He was the cardinal protector of 68 religious institutes in 1913 and assisted them in the redaction of their constitutions.

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Venerable Mariano Gazpio (1899-1989): Biography and Canonization Cause¹

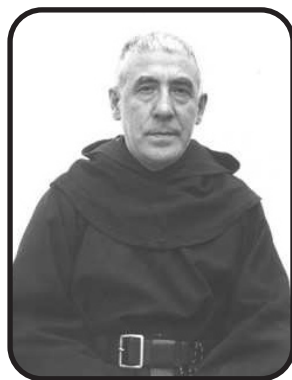
José Javier Lizarraga OAR

Translated from the Spanish by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

The third of four siblings, Mariano Gazpio y Ezcurra was born at Puente la Reina, Navarra, Spain, on 18 December 1899. That same day, his parents Dionisio and Severina hastened to the parish church to have him baptized. He was a little over two years of age when, on 6 January 1902, Archbishop José López de Mendoza of Pamplona administered to him the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Early education

Most probably, he began his elementary studies at a grade school in Puente la Reina managed by the Augustinian Recollects who established their community there on 17 December 1899 and began preaching God's Word and ministering to the sacramental needs of the Chapel of *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad*. He studied the humanities and Latin at the minor



Two phases of his life:
active parish curate,
missionary (1922-1952)
and contemplative friar in
a community of brothers
(1952-1989)

¹ This article in the website of the Order was downloaded from www.agustinos-recoletos.com/estaticos/view/132-causes-of-saints in October 2008.

seminary of San Millán de la Cogolla in La Rioja and met there his future fellow missionaries in China.

After a full year of novitiate at the Augustinian Recollect convent in Monteagudo, Navarra, he professed the monastic vows on 23 December 1915 at the conventual church of Our Lady of the Way. A Marian devotee, he took the religious appellation of *Fray Mariano Gazpio de la Purísima Concepción*. At Monteagudo, he continued his philosophy and later at San Millán de la Cogolla. Later he underwent his theological formation of three years at the theology school and convent of Marcilla, Navarra, and left for Manila in September 1921 for his final year of theological formation. At age 23, he was ordained as priest by the American Archbishop Michael J. O'Doherty (1874-1949) of Manila on 23 December 1922.

Pastoral ministry

The young Fray Mariano arrived in the Philippines in 1921 and lived at their now-defunct Convent of San Nicolás in Intramuros, Manila, to finish his last year of theology. After ordination, he celebrated his *cantamisa* on 25 December 1922 at the parish church of San Pedro Apóstol in Cavite Puerto which was thereafter his first field of ministerial apostolate.² In the Parish of Cavite Puerto-San Roque, he spent his first pastoral ministry of a year and three months. Here he must have relived his own mother's devotion to *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad* revered as patroness of Cavite and recalled how he diligently served the Marian chapel at Puente la Reina as a young altar boy before he entered the high school seminary of San Millán de la Cogolla.

On 11 March 1924, Father Gazpio left Manila for China together with the pioneer group of Recollect missionary confreres from Navarra and reached Shanghai three days later. On 4 April, the missionary expedition arrived at Chutzi.

² According to Avellaneda, Father Gazpio was in the Parish of Cavite Puerto-San Roque, Cavite City, in 1923-1924. Lizarraga, however, in his 29 March 2014 talk in Marcilla said the Servant of God celebrated his *cantamisa* in Cavite Puerto on 25 December 1922, two days after his ordination to the holy priesthood in Manila. Cf. AVELLANEDA, 174. Cavite Puerto parish was handed over to the Recollects on 13 January 1871 with Father Casto Nájera (1846-1876) as parish priest, cf. Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas II* (Manila 1925) 251; SÁDABA, 534.

The superiors sent Father Gazpio to evangelization tasks in various mission posts, including Cheng Li Ku, Yucheng, Chutzi and the capital city of Kweiteh [now known as Shangqiu]. During his twenty-eight years of missionary work in China, he exercised the following posts with responsibility: superior of the missions, religious superior, vicar delegate and vicar general of the Diocese of Shangqiu.



The seat of the apostolic prefecture, later apostolic vicariate, then diocese, city of Shangqiu, as seen from the south gate of the city walls. Photo from Bulletin of Saint Nicholas Province 1925.

His apostolic zeal, deep piety and love for the poor shone brilliantly in the Augustinian Recollect missions of China. Some Chinese Catholics still remember Father Gazpio today with veneration; they are proud of having been baptized by him. From his various assignments, he regularly wrote chronicles of his missionary sallies in epistolary form as requested by his religious superiors in Manila and Shangqiu. These brief historical chronicles were published in the *Bulletin of the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino* and *Todos Misioneros* Magazine. Despite the civil wars and religious persecution that wrought havoc on the Diocese of Shangqiu in the early 1950s, the Servant of God remained in his mission post even amid the grave risks of his life. However, like all the other foreign missionaries of China, Father Gazpio was expelled by the Communist regime in early 1952.

In the wake of the foreign missionaries' expulsion from China by Communist rule in 1952, Father Gazpio returned to Spain and in the provincial chapter of Saint Nicholas Province held at Monteagudo,

Navarra in 1952, he was elected master of novices and vice prior of the novitiate of Monteagudo. The 1955-1958 triennium saw him as prior of the same convent. In subsequent years (1958-1964), Father Gazpio was again appointed master of novices.

In 1964, he was elected vice prior of the Recollect community of Marcilla by the provincial chapter. He held this position until 1970 and thereafter performed tasks his superiors entrusted to him. He cultivated the orchard and vegetable farm of the convent from spring to winter amid the cold climate of Navarra.

He stood out for his charity, spirit of service, poverty and humility. He never talked about his accomplishments or anything that would end up praising him. He was observant and faithful in the performance of his duties, exceedingly gentle and charitable in dealing with others.

Spirituality

Father Gazpio was widely known for his profound piety and contemplation. He was a great devotee of the Holy Eucharist, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Mother of God. In addition to the time set aside for community prayer, he spent more hours in the chapel or in the choir loft in intense personal prayer. His dealing with God was ceaseless. He frequently read the Bible, so that one could surprise him at any moment with the opened book on the table. In his spiritual direction, he frequently had recourse to scriptural expressions.

His exemplary and austere life was always in the heart and mind of the confreres who lived in community with him in Monteagudo and Marcilla. He was a living example of humility, piety and spirit of service. He was always punctual in the daily community acts of meditation, Rosary, midday visit to the Blessed Sacrament and chanting of the Liturgy of the Hours. Everyone today remembers him as a holy religious, and not a few of them put themselves in his intercession.

On 22 September 1989, Father Mariano Gazpio y Ezcurra de la Purísima Concepción died of cardiac arrest at the Hospital of Navarra in Pamplona. He was laid to rest at the mausoleum of the Augustinian Recollect friars in the municipal cemetery of Marcilla.



General visit to the Augustinian Recollects of Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos and San Carlos Borromeo Parish, San Carlos, Negros Occidental in February 1952.

[Seated, left to right] Pío Santillana, Visitation Secretary Mariano Gazpio, Visitor General Victorino Capánaga, Pedro Peña, Inocencio Peña.

[Standing, left to right] Francisco Monasterio, Antonio Ausejo, Cipriano Zubiri, Bernardino Fabregat.³

Beatification and Canonization Cause

On account of Father Gazpio's fame of sanctity, the opening of the canonization process was requested by the archbishop of Pamplona, for which the *nihil obstat* had already been obtained from the Holy See. On 17 January 2000, at the Augustinian Recollect convent in Marcilla the opening of the diocesan process of documentation on his life, virtues and fame of holiness of the Servant of God Father Mariano Gazpio y Ezcurra took place in the presence of Archbishop [now Cardinal] Fernando Sebastián of Pamplona-Tudela, Father Julio Gorricho Moreno,

³ In a personal interview with the editor in 2008 at San Sebastian Convent, Manila, Father Blas Montenegro the 82-year-old Recollect easily recognized Father Gazpio calling him *El Santo* [the Saint] and further indicated the occasion of canonical general visitation. General Councilor Capánaga was appointed by the Prior General Eugenio Ayape (1907-2000) as visitor general of the houses and religious of the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in the Far East. To fulfil his mission, he left Rome by plane on 15 January 1952. Father Blas was in Colegio de San Jose in Cebu during the general visit in February-March 1952. Cf. *Noticiario. De rebus fratrum, in Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas* [BPSN] 42 (1952) 16-22.

judge delegate, Father Miguel Elizalde Astiz, promoter of justice, legally convoked for the occasion, Father Alejandro Lizarraga Artola, actuarial notary, and the Recollect postulator general Father Romualdo Rodrigo who was replaced by Father Samson Silloriquéz.

During the next four years (2000-2004) Father Gazpio's writings were gathered, and more than fifty witnesses made declarations before the diocesan tribunal. Majority of these witnesses were religious who lived with him and bore witness to his holiness. People from Puente la Reina, Marcilla, Milagro and Pamplona of the province of Navarra made their declarations. Among them we underscore Daniela Armendáriz and Luis Senosiáin who contributed significant information about the youth and family of the Servant of God. Furthermore, written declarations from seven Chinese witnesses—majority of whom were Augustinian Recollects who had known the Servant of God during his missionary years in China (1924-1952)—were handed over to the tribunal.

The process of documentation had gathered 950 pages: 404 belong to previous procedures and to the 58 witnesses' depositions; the other 546 consist of personal documents and writings of Father Gazpio. Although he did not write any book, his letters from the missions, talks and homilies have been preserved. During all this time, Father Julio Gorricho headed the diocesan tribunal. Father José Javier Lizarraga was the vice postulator of the cause representing the Order. At six in the evening of 20 March 2004, Archbishop Fernando Sebastián closed the diocesan phase of the canonization process of Father Mariano Gazpio. The rite took place at the conventual church of Marcilla. All the documents were later presented to the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 24 March 2004.

On 27 January 2006, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints granted the Decree of Validity through Protocol No. 2266-3/04, which approved the process carried out by the Archdiocese of Pamplona-Tudela. The Congregation document stated: "All the witnesses have been correctly examined and the documentation has been compiled and compared according to what has been established."

The next phase is the redaction of the *Positio super Virtutibus* which basically is an in-depth study of the holiness of the Servant of God based on the collected testimonies on the fame of sanctity and writings. The person in charge of redacting it was the *relator general*.

For this task, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints appointed Msgr. José Luis Gutiérrez and Father Romualdo Rodrigo as assistant.

[On 22 May 2021, the Holy See promulgated the decree the recognition of the heroic virtues of the Servant of God Mariano Gazpio by the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints and he was declared Venerable.]

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Servant of God Jenaro Fernández (1909-1972): To Be Holy in Order to Exhort Others to be Holy

Enrique B. Eguiarte OAR

Translated by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos



After devoting three years to his doctoral dissertation and having been saved from the explosion of a bomb that fell near the spot where he was during the Spanish Civil War, Fr. Jenaro Fernández finished his doctorate in Canon Law in Rome in 1938, for which he obtained the highest grade. For the excellent quality of his dissertation, he was awarded

the gold medal by the Faculty of Canon Law of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. In fact, on 7 November 1938, the gold medal was personally awarded to him in Rome by the Secretary of State of Pope Pius XI, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli who would become Pope Pius XII four months later.

All this for Father Jenaro was nothing but anecdotes. He knew too well that everything was a gift of God, and that above all he must be

always be simple and humble, as in fact he remained simple and humble throughout his lifetime.

Shortly after he finished his doctoral dissertation, he received the difficult undertaking of compiling the *Bullarium* of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. The new Canon Law doctor was tasked to delve into various archives, especially the Vatican Archives, to discover existent documents and records of every kind and nature on the Order of Augustinian Recollects. It was indeed an enormous task which in other religious orders and families had required several decades of work, even involving many religious. But Fr. Jenaro was alone. Nevertheless, with his gaze fixed upon God, he undertook the task, looking into the maelstrom of the Vatican Archives, which at that time were bereft of systematization and automation that researchers presently enjoy. There he counted on the invaluable assistance of someone he called the “angel of researchers,” Cardinal Giovanni Mercati. Such was Fr. Jenaro’s wish to research and accomplish the monumental task entrusted to him so that even during the Second World War he continued his job with enthusiasm in spite of the restrictions, risks and on some occasions while walking towards the Vatican, he could view above him the American planes loaded with bombs and ready to drop them over the city of Rome.

It is true that Father Jenaro was able to finish the first draft of the first volume of the *Bullarium* so that the prior general could present it in the general chapter of 1944. After the general chapter and with more tranquility, he revised such volume and once again he was enmeshed in the research of documents and he was following a series of interesting leads when an order of the prior general reached him. After almost eighteen years in Rome, he was asked to return to Spain. This order took place on 23 December 1948. Despite the fact that it caused so much pain for Fr. Jenaro to leave Rome, he had no qualms but to obey, as he had done and would do throughout his life. In fact, he wrote in his diary: “obedience until death.” Hence, on 16 January 1949 he left Rome and headed for Spain.

His departure was much felt in Rome since Fr. Jenaro was not only a researcher and a writer; he was, most of all, a father and a pastor for many souls. In Saint Ildefonso International College at Via Sistina 11 of the Augustinian Recollects in Rome, Fr. Jenaro was doing a fruitful and broad apostolate because he was not only in charge of confession

and spiritual direction of many people but he also visited the ill and aged persons, bringing them comfort and peace at all times.

During the global war, countless families suffered great privation and want. Fr. Jenaro helped everyone under his care in every way possible, with generosity, with a broad smile on his face, and with an enormous human quality in such a way that anyone who received something from him remained consoled not only in body but also in the deepest recesses of his spirit. And it was because Father Jenaro carried deep inside him the very living presence of God. Thus he wrote in a letter addressed to someone under his spiritual guidance, reflecting without any trace of doubt his own personal experience in life: *"My daughter, be filled with God in order to share Him with others. Be an ardent soul in order to spread the fire of God in whatever place you may be."*

In his own diary, he clearly expressed his desire that the action of the grace triumphed in his life in order that he might be capable of carrying others towards the encounter with God, so that they too could attain holiness: "Jesus, make me holy so I can make others holy." And so he tried to achieve it with the Augustinian Recollect Secular Fraternity he himself had founded in the Augustinian Recollect church of Via Sistina and later also in the house of the general curia in the Roman district of EUR. His apostolic activity would make him establish a group of the Legion of Mary, with whose help in several occasions he had preached to the refugees in Trastevere in Rome because to Fr. Jenaro the social class nor the cultural level were should not matter at all in choosing whom to help. He wanted to win all for Christ, and for that reason he gave himself up immeasurably to pastoral work in spite of his very limited time which he had also to devote to his research tasks.

That is why when he left Rome in 1948, he had to leave behind, as he himself said, "his multitude of penitents and ill people." Nonetheless, the Providence of God would take him back to Rome, after this trial of purification and obedience which lasted a little over a year when he accomplished with great zeal his duties as director of the Recollect minor seminary of Martutene in San Sebastián in northern Spain.

In the general chapter of the Augustinian Recollects in 1950 he was appointed procurator general of the Order with residence in Rome. Hence, he had to return to the Eternal City on 15 July 1950. In this manner, free from other positions, the monumental volumes of *Bullarium*

of the Order, a gigantic task, began to appear on a regular basis. The *Bullarium* is his definitive contribution to the history, spirituality and identity of the Order. The first volume came out in 1955; the second in 1961; the third in 1967, and the fourth posthumously in 1973, a year after his death.

During these years his work was plentiful and remarkably valuable since, among other undertakings he was tasked, the Federation of Monasteries of Augustinian Recollect Nuns was established with Father Jenaro providing them with some statutes. He further concerned himself with the reform of their Constitutions. He would do the same thing with the Discalced Augustinian nuns. Furthermore, he was the first director of Augustinian Recollect Historical Institute founded in December 1957, procurator general of the missions, vicar general and councilor and postulator general for the causes of saints.

But Father Jenaro was, above all, a religious who felt as a son of the Church. For that reason he lived with great enthusiasm and joy the historic period of the Second Ecumenical Council. And Fr. Jenaro did not live far from this historic ecclesiastical event. On account of his human, spiritual and intellectual qualities, Pope John XXIII appointed him peritus or expert of the Preconciliar Commission and in the duration of the Council he was one of the 201 consultants who assisted it.

Within the Council he was named secretary of the subcommission *De episcopis auxiliaribus et coadiutoribus*, which was under the Commission on Bishops. Despite having worked a lot within the Council, Vatican II was for him “wonderful.” He disclosed in a letter to cloistered Augustinian Recollect nuns: “*Don’t you know that every morning I am very emotionally moved as soon as I enter the Conciliar Hall? To view those bishops and cardinals on their knees on the hard floor before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament praying devoutly (...)*”.

After the Council, Father Jenaro’s task was multiplied because he had to adapt the Constitutions of the Order of Augustinian Recollects to the new directives of Vatican II, besides attending to a big group of faithful and devotees who sought his advice and spiritual guidance. But God was already waiting for him in His Kingdom. And so, on 26 June 1972, Fr. Jenaro had to go to the Vatican as he was wont to do. A young religious in his community offered to take him in his motorcycle. However, a little after leaving the convent, the two suffered an accident.

The young religious was unscathed despite the terrible mishap. Fr. Jenaro was in a state of coma and was rushed to the hospital where he passed away on 3 July 1972. His mortal remains were exhumed from the Verano Cemetery in Rome and are now preserved in the chapel of the general curia of the Augustinian Recollects.

In his youth, he had been saved from the bombs of the Spanish Civil War and from the bombs of American planes hovering over Rome. As he himself said it: “Still the time was not all set yet.” However, that morning of 1972 God knew that the time to enter the Kingdom of Heaven was more than all set and that was why the Lord called him to his bosom

On 13 June 2008, the diocesan canonization process was opened at the Lateran Palace in Rome in a rite presided by Camilio Cardinal Ruini. The diocesan canonization process was closed on 28 June 2010 once again at the Lateran Palace with the rite presided by Cardinal Agostino Vallini.

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints in its ordinary meeting on 4 March 2011 has recognized the validity of the process of Fr. Jenaro Fernández, together with recognition of the validity of the process of Mother Isabel de la Madre de Dios. This means that the whole process of gathering every information, both personal documentation and testimonies on his life, virtues and fame of sanctity has been declared valid. The Dicastery has then issued the corresponding decrees.

Thus ends the first phase of the canonization cause which was carried out by the office of the Augustinian Recollect postulator general. The next step is to study in depth all these materials and to show that the Servant of God has practiced in an exemplary manner and with heroism the Christian and religious virtues all throughout her life.

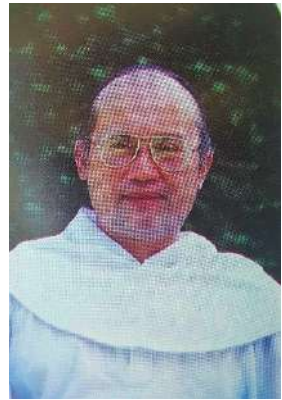
Fr. Jenaro Fernández y Echeverría was born 19 January 1909 in Dicastillo, Navarra, Spain. He professed the monastic vows as Augustinian Recollect at the Convent of Villaviciosa de Odón on 15 October 1935. He was ordained as priest in Rome on 24 January 1932 at the Basilica of Saint John Lateran by Cardinal Marchetti Selvaggiani. On 21 January 1938 he finished his doctorate in Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1949, he was appointed director of the minor seminary in Martutene, San Sebastián, Spain. In 1950, he

was elected procurator general of the Order. In 1955, the first volume of the Bullarium was published. In 1958, he was appointed director of the Agency of the Augustinian Recollect Missions. On 21 February 1959, he was named director of the Historical Institute of the Order of Augustinian Recollects. On 26 July 1960, Pope John XXIII appointed him consultor of the Commission on Bishops for the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council.

In 1961 the second volume of the Bullarium was published. In 1962, he was elected vicar general and first councilor. In 1962, John XXIII appointed him peritus or expert of Vatican Council II. In 1967, the third part of the Bullarium saw print. In 1968, the general chapter elected him procurator general. In 1970, he was appointed postulator general of the Causes of Saints. He died in Rome on 3 July 1972. In 1973, the fourth and last volume of his Bullarium was published. On 2 June 38 2008, his mortal remains were transferred from the Verano cemetery to the general curia of the Augustinian Recollects to facilitate his veneration by the faithful.

Fray Victor Jose L. Lluch OAR (1935-2004): A Filipino Friar with a Fantastic Foresight

Víctor Lluch and Teodora Leonar of Iligan City were the parents of Victor Jose who was born on 1 May 1935. The young Victor Jose finished his elementary studies in his hometown and proceeded to San Carlos in Negros for his secondary education. He finished philosophy at the Jesuit-run San Jose Seminary in Quezon City. After his novitiate at Monteagudo, Navarra, Spain, he professed the vows on 5 July 1961. He went on finish his theological studies at Marcilla, Navarra, where he received his sacerdotal ordination on 18 July 1965.



Fr. Lluch's first assignment was Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos [CSJ-R] in Cebu City, first as property custodian, Dean of Student Affairs, then as vice prior of the religious community and vice rector in 1967-1969. In June 1970, at 35, he became the first Filipino and youngest rector of the future University of San Jose-Recoletos when the Spanish rector Fr. Miguel Navarro resigned his post in the wake of violent student protests of the First Quarter Storm that rattled the nation since January 1970 and following the demise in March of a Josenian student who was going out of the school and was fatally hit by a Molotov cocktail.

It was in 1973-1974 in Baguio City that fully brought out Fr. Lluch's penchant for dramatics. After some months, he shared his dramatic skills and talent with the seminarians of Seminario Mayor-

Recoletos [renamed Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary] with some help from four imported members of CSJ-R Dramatics Guild which he had set up in Cebu City. He thus started the cherished tradition of *Himig Recoleta* [Recollect Music], a variety show which adapted Broadway musicals, which directly involved even such formators as Fr. Emeterio Buñao, Fr. Huberto Decena and Fr. Dionisio Cachero in their productions and made the formation house known locally and in adjoining towns that could hardly believe the formands' amazing talents for music and drama.

New York City was his next assignment where he studied at Fordham University and simultaneously exercised his pastoral work at Saint Roch Parish in the Bronx. In 1979, he was appointed prior of Cavite and president of San Sebastian College. Cavite would be his favorite assignment much more than his other ministries. He would be elected local prior and college president of Cavite once more in 1994 and local prior in 1999-2003. He was president of San Sebastian College Manila for two triennia (1982-1988). He was elected vicar provincial of the Vicariate of the Philippines and China in 1988, the first Filipino to hold the position in the Augustinian Recollect history in the Philippines that started in 1606.

Fr. Lluch was elected vicar provincial for a second triennium in 1991-1994 and in 1997 for a third triennium but he was appointed prior provincial by the General Chapter whose 36 delegates voted unanimously on 28 November 1998 to create the new Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno. The inauguration of the new Province took place on 10 February 1999 at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church in Mira-Nila, Quezon City. He was not able to attend the first provincial chapter as prior provincial when he had to undergo a heart surgery.

Thereafter, he occupied his post as local prior of Cavite City. But his health gradually deteriorated but he stayed in Cavite, free from any responsibility. He would regularly travel to the hospital in Manila for dialysis. While he was confined for some time at Saint Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, he followed the events and projects in Cavite until he rejoined his Maker on 18 June 2004.

His 2004 obituary depicted him as a great fighter, one of the most picturesque friars to be remembered by those close to him. He displayed his love for the company of his Filipino confreres by organizing out-of-

town excursions and bonding moments like those memorable fun-filled days in June 1981 at Kaliraya Lakeside, location of the classic movie *Apocalypse Now*, at Cavinti, Laguna.

He regularly organized weekend basketball games with Filipino confreres from Cavite, Manila and Tondo, almost always followed by a hearty dinner of *tahong* [shellfish] and other seafoods for which Cavite is much-known, and by bonding moments. As the Province grew in number of confreres, the fraternal bonding and camaraderie were done by batches or clusters at beach resorts and heritage sites but the main aim remains the same.

Fr. Lluch was providentially endowed with a fantastic foresight. With the total assistance of his superiors, of his vicarial council or fellow vicarial councilors, he earnestly prepared for the eventual creation of the new Augustinian Recollect province. A video presentation showed the future province's capability to stand firmly on her own, in terms of finances, vocations, sacerdotal ordinations, religious houses, promotion of the Order's heritage, structures and sustainable growth of communities. The construction of school edifices, seminaries, a retreat house [Talavera House of Prayer in Cebu City], and an oratory [Bacolod City] preceded the 1998 creation of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province.

The construction of the new buildings of Santo Tomas de Villanueva Formation House in San Carlos City (1996), then Blessed Ezekiel Moreno Novitiate in Antipolo City (1991), Recoletos Formation Center in Mira-Nila, Quezon City (1985) complemented the Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in Baguio and thus completed the four stages of Recollect formation. The first batch of formands under the Pre-novitiate Program commenced in 1997 at Antipolo.

The author of *Bishop Ezekiel Moreno, an Augustinian Recollect Saint among Filipinos* was tasked by Fr. Lluch, then vicar provincial, and by Pastoral Ministry Secretariat President Fr. German Chicote in 1992 to write about the fifteen-year pastoral ministry of the newly-canonized Recollect Saint in the Philippines. The Vicar Provincial told him that we should disseminate the life and ministry of this exemplary missionary who loved our ancestors so much because he would be the patron saint of our Philippine Province in the future. The book launch was on 6 February 1994 and it coincided with the visit of Prior Provincial Carlos Imas who blest and inaugurated the Bulwagang Recoletos Complex at

Alondras Street, Mira-Nila Homes, Congressional Avenue Extension, Quezon City.

The huge edifice now houses the ff.: Saint Ezekiel Moreno Museum, Saint Augustine Library, Fray Juan de la Concepción Archivo Recoleta, Fray Francisco Sádaba Conservation and Restoration Laboratory and Fray Germán Chicote Atrium for seminars, conferences, recollections, birthday, wedding, anniversary celebrations and for celebratory meals after professions, diaconal or priestly ordinations.

The “picturesque” priest from Iligan City shall always be remembered for his great influence in almost everything. The Filipino Augustinian Recollects are grateful today to that confrere named Fray Victor Jose Lluch, a friar with a fantastic foresight.

IV. Literary Collection

La Virgen del Carmen de Filipinas

por Gregorio Ochoa de la Virgen del Carmen oar

Madre mía del Carmelo, que en las Islas Filipinas
Te dignaste, hace tres siglos, tu morada establecer,
Y hoy presides sus hogares y en sus ámbitos dominas
Con el cetro de las gracias que refluyen de tu ser;

Yo abandono hoy el retiro de mi celda solitaria,
Separada de tu trono por el vasto fiero mar,
Y me postro ante tus plantas, y te elevo la plegaria
Que me oíste tantas veces de rodillas en tu altar.

Que yo soy uno de aquellos de esa humilde muchedumbre,
Que hoy te aclama Reina y Madre, delirante de emoción;
Y como ellos me he gustado de tu amor la ducedumbre,
Y he sentido que latía de placer mi corazón.

¡Eres Madre y eres Reina! A esas playas ignoradas
Arribaste cuando nunca se dejó tu nombre oír,
Cuando todos ofrecían holocaustos a las hadas,
Cuando aún no endulzabas la amargura del vivir.

Pero apenas ocupaste tu sitio en el santuario,
Y empezaste, como Madre, tus oficios a ejercer,
Y flotó triunfante al viento tu glorioso escapulario,
Con tu nombre tus bondades se extendieron por doquier.

Al besar tu rostro puro con pudor la suave brisa,
Los encantos de tu nombre de tus labios recogió;
Y ese nombre y los hechizos de tu mágica sonrisa
Por las Islas y los mares con orgullo publicó.

Y los bosques y en las playas se sintieron tus bondades,
Atrayendo corazones con la fuerza de tu imán;
Y, envidiosas de la brisa las rugientes tempestades,
Las cantaron con el ritmo del indómito huracán.

Desde entonces ese nombre comenzó a tejer la historia
De prodigios inefables de ternura y de poder,
Que del pecho iba a los labios como un grito de victoria
Que las almas rescataba del tirano lucifer.

Desde entonces ese nombre, que anunciaron mis hermanos
Y esculpieron con el fuego de su amor junto a la cruz,
Fue el ariete formidable de los ídolos paganos,
Fue a las almas seducidas como un lábaro de luz.

Y trocó los corazones, y brilló radiante y bello
En la frente antes pagana y en las puertas del hogar;
Y el cristiano en vez de perlas, lo ostentó colgado al cuello;
Y encontró en todos los pechos amoroso y rico altar.

“¡Dulce Madre del Carmelo!” resonaba en los hogares,
Cual dejando entre los labios las dulzuras de la miel;
Y corría entre las brisas por los bosques y los mares,
Inundando de esperanzas al más mísero bajel.

“¡Dulce Madre del Carmelo!” repitieron las montañas,
Y en sus cumbres asentaron tu magnífico sitio.
Y de allí pasó a esculpirse en altivas espadañas
Que hoy adornan tus santuarios que creó el amor filial,

Eres madre cual ninguna, que a este pueblo filipino
Has nutrido cariñosa con el néctar de tu amor;
Y has trazado nueva senda, y has marcado su destino,
Disipando con tus luces las tinieblas de su error.

¡Y eres Reina, Madre mía! Si a tu voz no hay quien resista
Cuando llamas como madre, porque oírte es ya un placer,
Eres Reina soberana por derecho de conquista:
Tus favores son las armas que han rendido nuestro ser.

¿Quién ha habido que, envidioso de tu nombre y de tu gloria,
Contra ti, Madre adorada, haya alzado su pendón,
Que haya visto su osadía coronarse de victoria,
Que haya visto no rendirse su menguado corazón?

Al conjuro de tu nombre, nunca oído del salvaje,
Que sus ídolos guardaba con valor fiero y tenaz,
Se rindieron sus saetas y su indómito coraje,
Transformando su alma agreste en santuario de la paz.

Si el ateo presentuoso, de sonrisa envenenada,
Intentó con lengua impía tus grandezas destruir,
Al retar sus necios ojos el poder de tu mirada,
A tus pies se vió obligado sus alardes a rendir.

¡Eres Reina, Madre mía! Tu invencible poderío
Va arrasando en las conciencias el pecado y la iniquidad,
Y al cristiano negligente y al rebelde audaz e impío,
Al vencerlos, los coronas con diademas de virtud.

¡Eres Madre y eres Reina! Es tu trono ese santuario
Que te alzaron mis hermanos con filial veneración;
Es tu lábaro invencible tu glorio Escapulario;
Es tu gloria y tu trofeo conquistar el corazón.

A tus piés, tienes ya el mío, Madre mía del Carmelo;
Y hoy, unido a tantos otros que has logrado conquistar,
Nos postramos a tus plantas con el más ferviente anhelo
Tus amores, tus bondades y tus glorias a ensalzar.

Madre mía del Carmelo, que en el pueblo filipino
Te has dignado en tres Centurias derramar tu inmenso bien,
Sigue siendo nuestra Estrella que ilumines el camino
Que conduce a los que te aman a la gloria del Edén.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel of the Philippines

English version
by Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Mother of Carmel, Mother of mine, your dwelling did you deign
to set up three centuries ago in the Philippines.
Today their homes are your realm, in their land you reign
with sceptre of graces from your being overbrim.

This day I leave the solace of my solitary cell,
set apart from your Throne by seas, vast and cruel;
myself I cast at your feet, I lift to you my pleas
you answered sundry times, at your altar on my knees.

I do belong to that throng, poor and lowly,
now acclaiming you Queen and Mother in ecstasy;
I have tasted—as they have—your love so sweet.
Indeed I have felt my heart furiously beat!

You are Mother! Queen you are! On those lands unknown
you set foot where your Name had ne'er been intoned,
when all else offered holocausts to the fairies,
when you'd not sweetened yet life's acrid tastes.

But as soon as you took your pedestal in the shrine,
you commenced your maternal affection to shine.
With the wind floated your glorious scapular,
with your name, your goodness strewn everywhere.

When gentle Breeze shyly kissed your face so pristine,
did it gather from your lips your charming name;
that name and the charm of your smile enchanting
through the isles and seas did it proudly proclaim.

And your goodness was felt over shores and forests;
Attracting hearts with your magnetic force.
And, invidious of the breeze, roaring tempests
intoned it in unison with the indomitable storm.

Thenceforth that name commence to indite a story
of empyrean prodigies of tenderness, of power,
sprouting from bosom to lips as a victory cheer,
redeeming countless souls from tyrant Lucifer.

Thenceforth that name—announced by my brethren,
hewn with the fire of their love beside the Cross—
was a mighty battering ram against icons pagan
and to souls seduced a banner of Light;

A metanoia of hearts, radiantly, beautifully it glowed
on heads, pagan of yore, and on doors of every abode;
hung on Christian's neck in lieu of pearls to behold,
in all bosoms it found altars rich and brimming with love

“Sweet Mother of Carmel!” echoed in many a home,
leaving on lips traces of sweetness of a honeycomb,
piercing through the breeze, through woods and seas,
flooding with hope vessels burdened with miseries.

“Sweet Mother of Carmel!” reechoed the mountains;
on their peaks was fixed your grandiose throne.
And from there it moved on to hew lordly belfries
now adorning your lovecreated sanctuaries.

You are Mother, like no other; the Filipino nation
you nourish with the ambrosia of your affection;
You set a new path for them, you marked their fate,
with your light, the darkness of their error you did dissipate!

You are Queen, Mother of mine! If none resists your voice,
maternal call—a pleasure assured, to you my hearkening—
due to rights of conquest, you’re Queen sovereign!
Your blessings are the weapons that overwhelmed our being.

Who felt envious of your name and glory,
with banner unfurled rebelled against you, Mother Holy,
witnessed his insolence crowned with victory,
saw he could not but yield his heart foolhardy?

At your name’s spell, unheard of by the savage,
who clung on fiercely, tenaciously to his idol,
he yielded his arrows, his untamed mettle;
into a peace shrine metamorphosed his uncouth soul.

When a conceited godless man with a poisoned smile,
a profane tongue, tried your grandeur to raze,
his obstinate eyes challenged your powerful gaze,
he was crushed, coerced to quit his haughty displays.

You are Queen, Mother of mine! Your invincible strength
Purifies sins and wickedness from the conscience;
and brazen, impious rebels, remiss Christians,
when subdued, you crown with diadems of virtue.

You are Mother! Queen you are! Your throne's that shrine,
built for you in filial devotion by brethren of mine.
Your banner insuperable is your scapular effulgent,
It is your glory, your trophy is to win hearts of men;

My feet you have at your feet, O my Mother of Carmel,
and in union with many others you vanquish,
prostrate at your feet with our most fervent wish,
we extol your love, goodness and apotheosis.

Mother of Carmel, Mother of mine, on Filipinos you deign
pour for three centuries your boundless bounty;
remain our brilliant guiding Star to illumine
the way that leads all those who love you to Eden's glory.

Fr. Gregorio Ochoa OAR wrote this poem in Zaragoza, Spain, for the tricentennial (1621-1921) of the Marian icon's enthronement at San Sebastian Basilica. It was published in *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* 12 (1921) 1416.

Filipinas y la Virgen del Carmen

por C. L. DE LA VIRGEN DEL CARMEN OAR

Tres siglos ha la Estrella de los mares
Sobre tu cielo su fulgor derrama,
Y el sacro fuego de su dulce llama
Reverbera en las ondas de tus mares.

Islas hermosas de la zona ardiente,
De vuestra madre España el embeleso,
Que os ungió María con un beso
Y ciñó de arreboles vuestra frente

O Filipinas juvenil y airosa
Coronada de flores te levantas,
Te sonríe María cariñosa
Y el paganismo expira ante tus plantas

Eres orgullo de la ardiente zona,
Radiante y bella aparición del día,
Tu hermoso Corazón das a María,
Y a España tu laurel y tu Corona.

Y ellas en cambio de tu fe sincera
Besan tu frente de adorada hija,
María en su regazo te cobija,
Y España entre su manto y su bandera.

Abrumada de sombras y pesares,
Hecho tu mismo corazón pedazos,
Tendías sin vigor tus yertos brazos,
Llorabas en tus lúgubres cantares.

Torpe y vil superstición pagana,
No apagaba tu sed de lo infinito;
Hienden los aires tu doliente grito,
Para perderse en la región lejana,

Tiendes en vano tus llorosos ojos
Por la desierta inmensidad tranquila;
Y solo abarca tu infeliz pupila
Luto en el alma y en tu senda abrojos.

¡Pálida luz sobre la ardiente duna
Ves nada más! tan muda y tan umbría
Te miras ¡ay! como la tumba fría
Envuelta en el fulgor de triste luna.

Errante cruzas la región desierta
De esta vida, sin luz en la pupilas,
Y como el astro de la noche oscilas
Sobre la tumba del olvido abierta.

¡Obcecada esa mente soberana
Que el torpe error supersticioso abruma!
¡Tú que hoy surges espléndida y ufana
Sobre conchas de nácares y espuma!

¡Anubladas de llanto tus pupilas!
Abiertas, sí, para mirar al cielo
¡Astro de Oriente en el abismo oscilas
No sabiendo siquiera que hay un cielo!

¡Inmolando en los más torpes altares
Tu Corazón rasgado por la duda!
¡Enlodada, sin brillo, yerta y muda
La encantadora perla de los mares!

Vienes de Dios y para Dios nacida
Con aliento de estirpe soberana
Y la más torpe esclavitud pagana
tu frente humilla a su coyunda uncida

Tú aherrojada en el oscuro abismo
Tú de hermosura y de virtud desnuda
Lloras tu postración trémula y muda
Mendigando la luz del paganismo

Tú en hondos ayes de amargura inmensa
Como la imagen del dolor errante
Comprimes en tu pecho palpitante
El duelo amargo que tu ser condensa

Y un día fue tu alma en tus cantares
Se desbordó de gozo estremecida
Y al tender tus pupilas por tus mares
Vibró tu ser y resurgió la vida.

Un reguero de sangre por el suelo
Dejó tu corazón hecho pedazos
Mas la augusta Princesa de Carmelo
Le da un beso y lo estrecha entre sus brazos.

Ya despiertan tus dulces ilusiones
Ya no cruzas errante los desiertos
Ni tienes sin vigor tus brazos yertos,
Ni perdidas expiran tus canciones

El eco de esos lúgubres cantares
Con que el alma del cuerpo se desprende
Hay una Madre sí que lo comprende
Y siente como suyos tus pesares

Espléndida gentil con valentía
Surges del cieno varonil gallarda
Que el vicio un corazón nunca aletarga
Destinando a ser hijo de María

Un día fue! sobre tu azul ribera
Tendías melancólica mirada,
Y en ansias de tu amor arrebatada
Te abrazaste a sus pies por vez primera.

Tu la viste radiante encantadora
Paloma inmaculada de los Cielos
Cruza ese mar de inmensos desconsuelos
Te abre sus brazos y contigo llora.

Islas hermosas de la zona ardiente
Escabel de la Reina del Carmelo
Tendedle por alfombra vuestro suelo
Y de azares coronad su frente

Suene con ritmo eterno esas canciones
No cesen de vibrar vuestras gargantas
Y rendid de María ante las plantas
Inflamados de amor los corazones.

THE PHILIPPINES AND OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

English version by
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

For three centuries the Star of the seas
has showered her splendor on your skies;
And the sacred heat of her flame so sweet
on the waves of your waters shimmer.

Isles of beauty in the torrid zone,
enchantment of your Mother Spain,
That Mary annointed you with a kiss,
and your forehead set aglow.

O Philippines, full of youth and delight
you stand with a crown of flowers.
Mary lovingly smiles at you
and paganism collapses at your heels.

You are pride of the burning zone,
Glowing, lovely vision of the day,
You proffer you beautiful heart to Mary
and to Spain, your crown and your glory.

In exchange for your faith sincere
they both kiss your brow, their beloved daughter,
Mary nuzzles you on her lap
And Spain between her mantle and banner.

Overwhelmed with gloom and pains
and your very heart in smithereens,
You stretched stiff, vigorless arms.
You wept in your lugubrious hymns.

Inane and vile pagan superstition
could not quench your thirst for the infinite;
Winds muffled your anguished scream
to lose itself in the farflung region.

You focus your teary eyes in vain
over calm, desert expanse;
And your weeping eyes only encompass
in your soul grief, on your path thistles.

The pale light over the scorching dune
is what you see! So mute and so shady
you gaze—alas!—like the cold tomb
Wrapped in the splendor of the forlorn moon.

You aimlessly cross the desert region
of this life, no brilliance in your eyes,
and like the star of the night you sway
over the gaping tomb of oblivion.

That sovereign mind obfuscated
Overcome by the inane flaw of superstition!
You now surge up proud and splendid
over shells of nacres and foam!

Your eyes hazy with anguish!
Wide open, yes, to gaze at heaven
Eastern star, you sway in the abyss
Not even cognizant that a heaven exists!

Immolated at most inane altars
your Heart torn by doubts!
Muddled, frozen stiff and mute, lustreless,
lies the bewitching pearl of the seas!

From God you come, for God you're born
with breath of a royal lineage.
And the most foolish pagan bondage
brings low your brow with a yoke.

Shackled in the abyss dark,
you with beauty and virtue stark
grieve for your bondage, trembling, mute,
begging for paganism's light.

In deep woes of immense bitterness
like an image of error and pain
you stifle in your breast palpitating
the bitter angst of your being.

And one day your soul in your hymns
leapt with joy tremendous
And when you viewed the seas
Your being vibrated, life reappeared.

A trickle of blood on the ground
left your heart shattered to pieces.
But the august Princess of Carmel
coddles it in her arms, giving it a kiss.

Now your sweet illusions awake
You no longer cross deserts aimless
Nor are you arms stiff, vigorless
Nor your songs are lost, fading away.

The echo of those lugubrious songs
where the soul is snatched from the body
There is indeed a Mother who understands
and shares with your pains.

A splendid gentile bravely
from the mud you rise with vigor, valiant
that vice never makes a heart drowsy
destining him to be a child of Mary.

A day is gone! Over the azure shore
you focused your melancholic gaze
And with yearning for your love snatched away
For the first time at her feet prostrate you lay.

You saw her enchanting, radiant,
immaculate dove from Heaven
she crosses that sea of immense griefs
outstretches her arms to you, weeps with you.

Beautiful isles of the torrid zone
Footstool of the Queen of Carmel
As carpet for her, spread your ground
Crown her head with fragrant flowers

Play those songs with eternal rhythm
May your throats not cease to quaver
And at Mary's heels surrender
your hearts with love aflame.

The poem was published in the *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* 12 (1921) 37-41 only with the initials of the poet

who composed it to commemorate the tricentennial (1621-1921) of the enthronement of the icon of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at San Sebastian Basilica.



La Virgen del Carmen, Our Lady of Mount Carmel [the first Carmel icon in the Philippines] was brought from Mexico City to Manila in 1618 by Fray Rodrigo Aganduru de San Miguel OAR and was enthroned at San Sebastian Church on 5 May 1621.

Monteagudo Recoletos: Spiritual and Natural Haven in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental

The Convent of Monteagudo [Spanish for *sharp mountain*], Navarra, Spain, saved the Order of Augustinian Recollects from total extinction in 1835-1836. The anti-clerical decrees of *desamortización* [confiscation, expoliation] issued by Finance Minister Juan Álvarez Mendizábal (1790-1853) violently drove monks and friars from their monasteries in Spain out to the streets.¹ The properties of the Catholic Church were confiscated by the Liberal government and then put on sale in order to raise money for the deplorable financial situation of Spain stemming from, among other reasons, a civil war. Dispossessed as well were thousands of impoverished folks who used to knock at the doors of the religious houses begging for food and shelter.



Convent of Monteagudo in Navarra, Spain: Augustinian Recollect novitiate and theologate founded in 1828

The hard-hearted government move was deemed *exclaustration* [from the Latin *ex clauistro*, out of the cloister] alluding to the royal decrees expelling religious out of the cloisters. All the religious houses

¹ For more details on the confiscation of monasteries and other Church properties and the exemption of Monteagudo in Navarra, please read my article *How the Philippines Saved the Augustinian Recollects from Extinction*, in *Quaerens*, vol 17 (2022), especially pages 378-379.

in Spain were closed down, except the Dominican friary in Pastrana, the Augustinian monastery in Valladolid and the Augustinian Recollect convent in Monteagudo. These three remaining convents were formation houses of missionaries who helped sustain the Spanish colonial regime in the Philippines where the royal patronage and the policy of non-separation of Church and State were in full effect.



Resting place of St. Ezekiel Moreno

The Convent of Monteagudo was canonically established towards the end of 1828 for the purpose of training Augustinian Recollect missionaries for the Philippine parishes and missions. From its convent walls one can view the snow-capped mountain of the majestic Moncayo. The team of conventual formators consisted of qualified professors and seasoned missionaries who were to instruct the young aspirants to the religious life in the love of God and their neighbor, besides philosophy, natural sciences and theology, prior to the missionary expedition to Manila. The Augustinian Recollects since time immemorial have revered the patroness of their age-old conventual church—Virgen del Camino, our Lady of the Way—as the miraculous protectress of both convent and town of Monteagudo.

In Monteagudo, the Spanish aspirant was initiated to the religious life whose essential aim, as mandated by the Canon Law of the Church, is nothing but the personal sanctity of every member of the Augustinian Recollect Order. From the 1950s till the late 1970s, Filipino major seminarians joined their Spanish, Mexican, Irish, British, Australian and North American counterparts. They were sent to the Convent of Monteagudo to comply with the required year of novitiate. After novitiate, they professed the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, thereby becoming full-pledged Augustinian Recollect religious. Thereafter, they proceeded to their convent at Marcilla also in Navarra for their rigorous four-year theological formation capped by their ordination to the holy order of presbyterate.

Monteagudo remains to this day a house of intense prayer and recollection where South American and Spanish to the Augustinian Recollect lifestyle learn the rudiments of religious life. In the past, it was

the formation house of holy Recollects like five of the eight 1936 Martyrs of Motril and erstwhile Philippine missionaries—Bld. Vicente Soler, Bld. José Rada, Bld. León Inchausti, Bld. Vicente Pinilla, Bld. Julián Benigno Moreno. It is the final resting place of St. Ezekiel Moreno who joined the Father in Heaven in the odor of sanctity in 1906.



Conventual Church of Our Lady of the Way, Monteagudo, Navarra: central nave

Named after the revered convent in Navarra, the Monteagudo of San Carlos is a sprawling and luxuriant hilly span of 4.8 hectares at Sitio Medina, Barangay Rizal in San Carlos City in the central eastern coast of Negros Island. The name was given by Fr. Lauro V. Larlar, prior provincial of St. Ezekiel Moreno Province at present, in a conversation in 2009 with Fr. Vicente Ramon, local prior of the Recollect community of San Carlos City and school director of its educational institution—Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos. A couple of historically significant names were suggested during the conversation. One was Casiciaco in



[left] Well-ventilated multi-purpose hall; [foreground] two of five kiosks for group discussions; a view of the city from a lush area.

northern Italy. It was the holy Founder St. Augustine’s and his friends’ place of reflection, study and common life after his conversion and before his baptism at Milan in April 387. The college seminary in Baguio City, the former summer vacation house and venue for spiritual retreat since

its foundation in 1953, has reverted to the original name Casiciaco Recoletos.

Then there was Talavera de la Reina in Toledo, Spain where the conventual community of pioneering Augustinian Recollects was established in October 1589. It could have been a perfect name for such a spiritual sanctuary. Life at Talavera de la Reina was poor, austere but totally focused on God in whose praises a great part of the day was spent. The exemplary life and asceticism of the first Recollect friars earned for them the admiration of the townspeople. Talavera is presently the house for retreat and renewal courses and is located in Barangay Quiot, Basak, Cebu City.

Finally, Monteagudo was for relevant historical reasons to that spiritual and natural haven in San Carlos for the Augustinian Recollect priests, brothers, formands, teachers and students. It could also be so for Recollect communities, parishioners, faculty members, school and parish employees, students, Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity members in the provinces of Negros Occidental and Oriental.

As early as 2009, the Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos community of Fr. Vicente Ramon, Fr. Rafael Cabarles, Fr. Rouel Sia, Fr. Cirilo Andan, and Fr. Ferdinand Fornilos, had been looking for an appropriate venue for annual spiritual retreat or periodic recollection of their high school faculty and students. The Recollect high school's yearly population has averaged six hundred in the 2000s. A popular beach resort located about ten kilometers north of San Carlos City was in the

past a habitual venue for such spiritual exercises but it had eventually earned a bad reputation. Unfortunately, at twilight pimps shamelessly approached male school officials to peddle services of women of ill repute. Consequently, the beach resort had to be discarded as venue for spiritual exercises.



Breathtaking view of the Recoletos Cross, San Carlos City proper and Sipaway Island

The Recollect community soon heard about the big land parcel of 4.8 hectares, owned by Mr. Roberto Shieh, fondly called Api by everyone. Api Shieh was a close friend of Fr. Ramon's father. The Recollect Fathers acquired it for the sum of 450,000.00 Philippine pesos [US \$10,700.00]. The down payment of 200,000 pesos was paid, paving the way for the building of roads and pathways. On 9 February 2011, Ash Wednesday, the cornerstone was laid and witnessed by a motley group. The cornerstone and *Via Crucis* Stations were blest by San Carlos Bishop Jose Advincula on that same day.

Monteagudo is strategically located along the slopes of the luxuriant hills near the concrete highway leading to the western side of Negros Island. It is roughly three kilometers from the city from which it is very accessible due to cemented road. Under the supervision of Fr. Cabarles, ten workers were employed to open the winding roads on the way to the multi-purpose hall which was finished in time for the episcopal blessing. The equally winding paths leading to the various Stations of the Cross were likewise made. The Fourteen Stations of the Cross have been set up for devout Catholics who practise on Good Friday and Black Saturday the traditional *Via Crucis* even as they do penitential acts, recite prayers, chant Lenten hymns and meditate on the Passion, Death and Resurrection. The Fourteenth Station, one of the highest portions of Monteagudo, provides a breathtaking view of the city proper and yonder still the Refugio Island, locally termed Sipaway. At some point in the vast horizon the blue sky and white clouds kiss the green sea. One can't help but endlessly gaze in awe at God's marvellous creation.



Fourteenth Station of the Way of the Cross, a Holy Week devotion

Monteagudo boasts of a concrete water-tank whose volume is 72.491 cubic meters. The wide cemented catchment area a little over the water-tank was built for the endless downpour, which even overflows during the rainy season. Its water is not potable for humans, but good enough to quench the thirst of plants and trees browbeaten by the scorching sun of summer. Thus the water supply kept at the tank in abundance is most utile during the driest season and for the maintenance of two comfort rooms for guests beneath the multi-purpose hall.

There is a multi-purpose hall made of bamboo and nipa but its roof is galvanized iron and it has a concrete foundation. It is fit for celebrating holy Masses, recollections, lectures, seminar-workshops and other liturgical acts. It was named after Fr. Vicente Ramon to perpetuate the collective effort of the Santo Tomas community he headed in the 2009-2012 triennium. It can accommodate fifty persons comfortably seated on stacking chairs facing the altar for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The fresh air current makes the hall rather cool.

One thousand young Philippine mahogany trees were planted along the fence enclosure. The countless verdant trees, including the molave or *tugas* trees that envelop the area, even fruit-bearing trees and colorful plants of wide varieties, contribute immensely to the ventilation of the hall. Hundreds of *madre de cacao* [*Gliricidia sepium*] were planted alongside the roads to prevent erosion or landslides in the slopes of Monteagudo. At times wild ducks stray into the enclosure. At night one is lulled to sleep by the rhythm of chirping birds and insects.

Monteagudo is one place, very far from the madding crowd, where—in the apt words of Fr. Larlar and Fr. Cabarles, the Augustinian Recollect confreres can “rest, reflect, repent and be renewed in the Recollect way.” Ever true to their charismatic identity, they can fulfil the opportune call and persistent desire of the 2010 general chapter and the prior general Father Miguel Miro for revitalization-restructuring of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, and that means “more prayer, more and better communitarian life, more work.”

The Augustinian Recollects then properly address “the need to revitalize religious life, by opening the hearts to the action of the Holy Spirit, who moves hearts, fills them with fire, illumines them, lifts them up and directs them towards love” in an environment-friendly haven

where their souls are able to commune with the Creator and appreciate His beautiful creation in the vicinity and yonder on the blue horizon.

The restless soul can find revitalization and reinvigoration in such a soothing atmosphere complemented by the melodic chirping of birds night and day amid the astonishing sight of lush hills, sprawling vegetation and white clouds in the azure horizon, indeed the very noticeable manifestation of the ever-ancient, ever-new Beauty.

Truly, what a fitting spiritual and natural haven is this Monteagudo Recoletos in San Carlos City!

A Few Words about Padre Mauricio Ferrero (1844-1915): Father and Builder of Bacolod¹

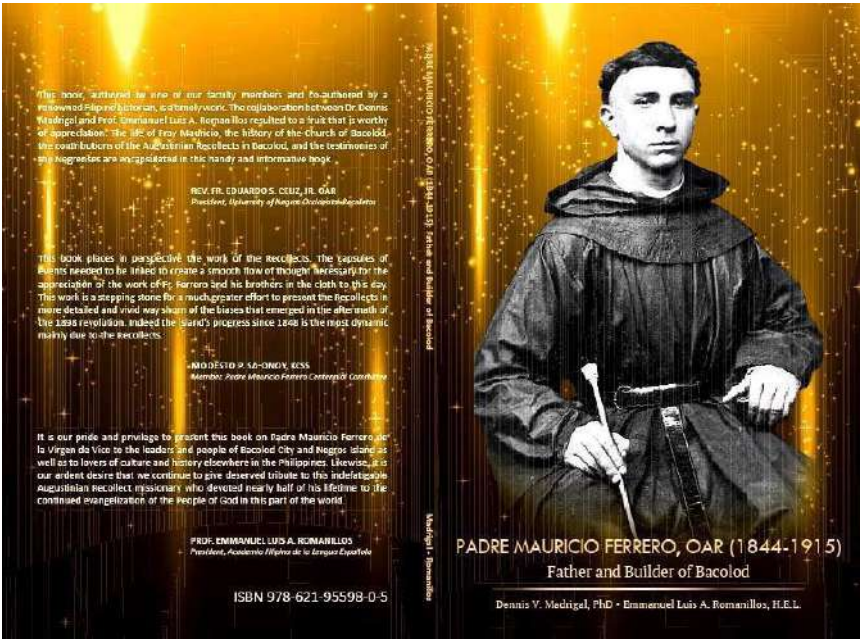
Father Dionisio Q. Selma, Augustinian Recollect Prior Provincial (2015-2022), wrote in his message for an earlier book on Padre Mauricio: “Anniversaries are an important part of life. They remind us of important events, both personal and cultural. [...] Whatever the anniversary, it gives us a chance to look back over the years since the event we’re marking, and reflect on how it has shaped us. Remembering the past can be an important part of understanding who we are.”

Fr. Selma further informs us: “In Bacolod City, there are four anniversaries marked in 2015-2017: the Centennial (1915-2015) of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero, OAR; the 145th Anniversary of the Arrival of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero in Bacolod (1871-2016); the 135th Anniversary (1882-2017) of San Sebastian Cathedral; and the 85th Foundation Anniversary (1932-2017) of the Diocese of Bacolod. These are glorious pages in the annals of history of the Diocese and the City of Bacolod as well as of the Augustinian Recollects. [...] we must look back on those early Augustinian Recollects who touched the lives of thousands of ancestors, nurturing their Christians beliefs, bringing material progress to the vast Island of Negros as well and bequeathing to us indelible legacies of faith and culture.”

The Padre Mauricio Ferrero Centennial was planned in January 2015. During a celebration at the Provincial Curia, I informed Fr. Selma that I was preparing books on Padre Mauricio Ferrero. The provincial

¹ A short talk delivered at the book launch that was held at the lobby of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Lizares Avenue, Bacolod City on 5 December 2016, Foundation Anniversary of the Augustinian Recollection.

was pleasantly surprised. You see, I was the thesis adviser of a student of M.A. in Theology Major in Church History, at the Recoletos School of Theology, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City, and I customarily assisted my advisees in translating Spanish manuscripts into English. I had the good fortune of discovering Padre Francisco Vega’s *Cosas notables de Bacolod* manuscript which mentions his predecessor’s death. The soft copy of the manuscript was sent to me by the renowned Negros historian Fr. Angel Martínez Cuesta in Rome. He wrote that Padre Mauricio passed away peacefully in Intramuros on 8 December 1915. The official catalogue had indicated 29 January 1916. But this date was the day the Padre Mauricio’s obituary reached the general curia. Fr. Provincial then approved the publication of my book and recommended the Padre Mauricio Ferrero Centennial to the Prior Fr. William Villaflores. Fr. Abe Latoza heads the Centennial Committee. And, as it is often said, the rest is history.



Dennis V. MADRIGAL, Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS.
Padre Mauricio Ferrero, OAR (1844-1915): Father and Builder of Bacolod.
Bacolod City 2016.

This highly informative book we are presenting today was conceived at Yellow Cab Restaurant in SM Bacolod after the long interview by my co-author Dr. Dennis Madrigal's *Calle Ferrero* radio program over DYAF Radyo Veritas. Many future book collaboration projects were planned.

Now, what does the new book has to offer? Well, for one, there are the enriched, updated chronicles of the Augustinian Recollects in Negros used by Doc Dennis as background of the life, works and ministry of Padre Mauricio Ferrero. Then there is the transcript of the juicy interview and broadcast over on two Saturdays. Added to that is the lecture on Padre Mauricio I delivered at the President's Hall on 27 August 2016.

I availed myself of the *Cosas notables de Bacolod* scanned manuscripts from the Archivo Recoleta at Bulwagang Recoletos in Mira-Nila. The renowned Recollect historian of Negros Father Angel Martínez Cuesta emailed to me over thirty Spanish manuscripts he himself had encoded and in mid-June even sent through Fr. René Paglinawan more manuscripts from Rome, included letters written to and by Padre Mauricio.

A section of eight pages called *Recoletos Trivia* has been included for students of Religious Education, History and Tourism and enthusiasts to test their knowledge of Recollect and Negros cultural heritage and history.

The book is replete with over 100 illustrations, photographs and maps. All are meticulously chosen, unpublished and in amazingly viewable quality and definition, thanks to Dr. Madrigal.

Furthermore, I included the chronicles of the Padre Mauricio Ferrero Centennial with the interviews of UNO-R President Eduardo Celiz, Jr. and words of Bacolod Bishop Emeritus Vicente Navarra.

It is then our pride and privilege to present this book on this iconic Augustinian Recollect friar Padre Mauricio Ferrero de la Virgen de Vico to government leaders, culture enthusiasts, tourism stakeholders and people of Bacolod City and Negros Island as well as to lovers of culture and history in our country. It is our ardent wish that we continue to give deserved tribute to this indefatigable Augustinian Recollect missionary

who devoted nearly half of his lifetime to the continued evangelization of the People of God in this part of the world.

Above all, as again may I quote Prior Provincial Diony Selma, “we acknowledge Father Mauricio Ferrero OAR, builder of that sturdy citadel of Faith so it may endure for years to come, a veritable symbol of the steadfast faith of the People of God. May the Almighty God the Lord of history illumine our path at all times!”

Thank you and good day!

V. Historical Studies

The Augustinian Recollects in Negros Oriental

I. The Recollects' Second Coming to Negros

The return of the Recollects in Negros in 1848 is a major event in the history of the island, having been to Binalbagan from 1622 to 1638, when they transferred to Romblon. According to Negros historian Father Ángel Martínez Cuesta, “their [second] arrival would soon come to bear on all the aspects of her life. The enthusiasm of the Recollects would contribute decisively toward the creation of a climate of optimism and progress that would soon place Negros in the forefront of the Philippine provinces.”

Martínez Cuesta goes on:

One fact suffices to show how quickly the island developed. Whereas in 1848, it was a semi-abandoned island with no bearing on the country's economic context, in 1892, hardly 44 years later, it came to hold the first place in the country's exports. The exports of Negros sugar amounted in that year to 20% of the total value of the Philippine exports. Simultaneously and strongly intertwined with this fact, other factors came up, such as the multiplication of the population by four times, the massive foundation of new towns and parishes, the immigration of Spanish and Ilongo farmers and Chinese traders, and the improvement of the primary schools, health and communications. In 1896, the Recollects even were able to open in Bacolod a high school for the children of the emerging middle class of the island.

These changes were the happy result of a combination of circumstances, each of them contributing in its own way: The fertility of the soil and the mildness of the climate laid the foundation. Then came high prices for sugar in the world market, the liberalization of

trade, the opening of the port of Iloilo to foreign shipping, technical progress, peace and order, the insight and tenacity of a handful of men, such as Fr. Fernando Cuenca, the English merchant Nicholas Loney, and the *hacenderos* Eusebio Ruiz de Luzuriaga, Agustín Montilla, Leopoldo Gastón, Miguel Pérez and Diego de la Viña; the abundance and cheapness of land and labor, the incentives given by some provincial governors and the enthusiasm and experience of a number of parish priests.

On 15 April 1848, Bishop Romualdo Jimeno of Cebu wrote to Governor General Narcisco Clavería about the dearth of native clergy for the curacies of Negros. On 27 May 1848 the General Clavería passed to the Provincials of the four religious orders, then in the archipelago, the bishop's request that asked for the spiritual administration of the island by any of them. Two days later the Recollect provincial replied accepting the island and promising to send there six priests within six months. On June 20 1848, Clavería accepted the offering and entrusted "the spiritual administration of Negros to the Recollects that they may occupy those parishes and missions that may be vacant and those that as time goes on would become vacant."

Amlan and Siaton in the eastern coast and Kabankalan and Himamaylan in the western were the first four parishes turned over to the Recollects between 28 August and 28 October 1848. The first three were at that time newly created parishes, separated from Tanjay, Dauin and Himamaylan, respectively. Himamaylan had a parish priest since 1842, the well-known peninsular priest Jose María Pavón who was transferred to the nearby parish of Hinigaran, founded as a parish in the previous month of February.

In the following decades, the Recollects brought about an ambitious plan that changed the religious map of the island with the creation of a great number of new parishes and missions. From 1848 to 1861, no less than seventeen new parishes were created. After five years dedicated to their consolidation, in 1866 began what we may call the second chapter in the parochial organization of Negros, which could be extended until 1890. In these twenty-five years, eleven parishes came into being. The Recollects took over the five parishes that remained in the hands of the secular clergy. These were Tanjay (1866), Bacolod (1871), Silay (1881), Bago (1882) and Ilog (1889). All of them were ceded to the Recollects only when the diocesan parish priests passed

away. In this way, the spiritual administration of the island became homogenous.

The third chapter of the pastoral organization of Negros goes back to 1889, when the Recollects submitted to the national government a missionary plan that foresaw the simultaneous opening of ten new missions. Actually, it did not begin until 1894-1895, when, in the wake of much debate and major changes, the colonial government approved the foundation of no less than twenty-nine missions, and the Recollect superiors began to appoint their respective pastors. This project was the most ambitious pastoral plan ever cast by the Recollects in the Philippines. In it, we can see summarized all their deep concern for the poor and abandoned people. The Recollects were aware of the difficulties the plan entailed. Most of the proposed missions would rise in regions still unexplored with hundreds of deserters, robbers, murderers and every kind of undocumented people. The missionaries were also conscious that among them were also thousands of simple people deprived of any civil and church services. Some of them were still pagan, and they wanted to come to their help. In five decades the Recollect established in Negros no less than 56 parishes and missionary stations: 16 between 1848 and 1861; 11, from 1866 to 1889; and 29 in the last seven years. We must bear in mind that parishes held by diocesan priests were ceded to the Recollects on account of the resignation or transfer to another parish, like those of Dumaguete (1855) and Dauin (1857). The six ministries were given to the Recollect Order upon the death of the parish priests: Sibulan (1856), Bacolod (1871), Tanjay (1866), Silay (1881), Bago (1882) and Ilog (1889).¹

II. Parishes and Towns in Negros Oriental

1. Bacong²

A town since 1837, Bacong was separated from Dumaguete. It became a parish in 1849. The church dedicated to Saint Augustine is attributed wholly to its hardworking parish priest Father Leandro Arrué. He laid its cornerstone in 1866. During his second term that started

¹ Angel MARTINEZ CUESTA, *History of Negros* (Manila 1980) see footnote 7, 212.

² *Ibid.*, 33.

in 1882, he finished the exterior of the temple. He was busy with the embellishment of the church interior when he was elevated to the see of Jaro in Iloilo in 1885. Father Laureano Navarro started the belfry. Father Jorge Carcavilla had the pipe organ he had bought from the Roqués Brothers of Zaragoza, Spain, installed in his church in 1894. The Recollects left Bacong during the Revolution and returned in 1907. They ceded it to the diocesan clergy in 1965.

Bacong became a parish in 1849 when it was separated from its matrix Dumaguete with Fr. Joaquín Soriano as its first curate. He first constructed provisional quarters and chapel. He then built the convent made of strong materials in 1856. The church was begun in 1854 by Fr. Leandro Arrué who was finishing its interior when he was appointed bishop of Jaro in 1885. Fr. Lorenzo Cordón continued the construction of the church which was brought to a close by Fr. Jorge Carcavilla. This Recollect installed the pipe organ in 1894 which was donated by the people. The road that led to Valencia was opened by Father Arrué and Fr. Eladio Logroño who further built the bridge that connected the two towns.³

2. Sibulan⁴

The Recollects accepted the parochial administration of Sibulan in 1856. A fire gutted the church and convent and reduced them to ashes. Fr. Tomás Mezquita finished the convent in 1859. Fr. José María Cabañas started the beautiful church of three naves, finished by Fr. Pedro Echevarría. The Recollects constructed the schools and casa tribunal as well the bridges linking the town with Ayuquitán and with Dumaguete. The successors—Fr. Eugenio Sola, Manuel Clemente, Francisco Gómez and Nemesio Llorente—likewise worked hard for the material and spiritual welfare of the Christian community. The end of World War II found the church in ruins, as the Japanese Imperial Army soldiers made it their garrison and was bombarded by the Liberation forces. The convent was likewise ruined. Father José Lizarraga rebuilt the church—63 meters by 14 meters—in 1949. Father Fermín Samanes finished the construction in the 1950s. Sibulan was ceded to the diocese of Dumaguete in 1984.

³ Ricardo JARAUTA, *Album de la Orden de los Agustinos Recoletos*, 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 34

3. Dauin

In 1857, Dauin was ceded to the Recollect province of Saint Nicholas whose superiors assigned Fr. Manuel Navarro as parish priest. He laid the foundations of the solid church, but it was Fr. Manuel Cabriada who finished it. Fr. Tomás González endowed the parish with its convent.

4. Valencia

Luzuriaga or Nueva Valencia had Fr. Tomás Mezquita as its pioneering parish priest. It was his good fortune to erect provisional church, convent and school buildings. Fr. Eladio Logroño erected the solid convent between 1869 and 1875. He then went on to build the strong church in 1886. He brought potable water source to the town. The Recollects left the parish during the Revolution only to return to it in 1904 in the wake of repeated requests. In their effort to scare and drive away the parish priest, some malcontents burned the convent and church of Valencia. But the undaunted Fr. Paulino Jiménez built another very strong church and convent with the willing cooperation of the whole population of the parish.⁵ Luzuriaga or Nueva Valencia was created into a parish in 1854. The church collapsed during the year.⁶ Father Eladio Logroño built another edifice. The revolutionaries razed it to the ground. They did the same to the churches in Amlan and Bais. Fr. Paulino Jiménez reconstructed the church in record time. It is made of mampostería and a façade that provided a well-ventilated church and a wooden floor.

5. Zamboanguita⁷

Zamboanguita was separated from Dauin in 1866. Fr. Faustino Sánchez was assigned as its first parish priest. The church construction began in the following year. The temple took so long until it was finished in 1890. Father Alejandro Osés covered the roof with galvanized iron in 1923. World War II demolished the church. Father Leandro Palacios celebrated masses and other administered the sacraments in a chapel made of bamboo and nipa. A new church rose in 1948 under the able

⁵ *Ibid.* 46.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

aegis of Father Fermín Samanes who finished it in 1950. Fr. Gregorio Samanes built the convent.⁸ The church was begun and continued by the following Recollects: Fr. Tomás González, Laureano Navarro, Matías Villamayor, Lorenzón Cordón, Manuel Gamboa and Alejandro Osés.

6. Manjuyod

Once a part of Tanjay, Manjuyod was handed over to the Recollect administration as early 1849 and under the spiritual patronage of Saint Francis of Assisi. When it became a parish in 1854 a Recollect priest was assigned to it.⁹ It was the hardworking Father Antonio Moreno who planned the streets, tribunal buildings and bridges, enough to make it a decent town. The tribute population increased. The people who once inhabited the uplands decided to construct their houses in the town and settle in it. Father Moreno further built the church that he blest in 1850. Manjuyod had four barangays, namely, Ayungon, Panabon, Malaga and San Antonio where new Christian and upland families resided. In a span of four years (1850-1854) Father Moreno could baptize four hundred adults of both sexes. This admirable achievement was not left unnoticed by Governor General Marqués de Novaliches who added additional financial support from government coffers.

7. Tayasan

In 1849 the superior government separated the Tanjay barrios of Manjuyod, Ayungon, Tayasan and Jimalalud. All these four villages became the sole parish of Tayasan under the patronage of Saint Anthony of Padua. Father José María Ruiz came to Tayasan only in 1854.

As soon as the parish priest took possession of the new parish, he transferred it to a better and healthful location where he erected his convento. Little by little, the people followed suit and built their houses along the streets of the present site of the town of Tayasan, according to the plan prepared by Father Ruiz and approved by the governor. Father Bernardino Ramirez constructed the church of Tayasan with half of its structure of stone materials. In 1894 the church buildings were all finished.

⁸ *Ibid.* 46.

⁹ Patricio MARCELLÁN, *La Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino* (Manila 1879) 146-147.

8. Jimalalud

In February 1886, the new curate Father Cándido Díez saw the extremely dilapidated condition of the church and convent of Tayasan and decided to move the town to a barrio called Jimalalud. He constructed a sturdy temple of God in Jimalalud whose residents willingly offered their cooperation to him. The bishop approved the plan but put the sole condition of preserving the buildings of Tayasan.¹⁰ Father Bernardino Ramírez spent his energy in the erecting the two school edifices. Another floor was added to the convent of Jimalalud.

9. Guihulngan

Founded at the outset of the 19th century, the parish of Guihulngan invoked *Nuestra Señora del Buen Suceso* as patroness.¹¹ Non-believers and Negritos occupied the upland territories of Guihulngan. They were uncivilized and resented baptism. Father Miguel Alvarez was parish priest when the town already enjoyed good well-planned roads and a cluster of resettled inhabitants. In June 1860, Moro pirates sacked the town, razed the convent, church and houses to the ground. They carted off everything of value including the four bells of the belfry. The mission had to be rebuilt. In 1874, a big fire gutted the new convent and parochial church. Five years later, a very strong typhoon pulled the new church edifices down. Father Angel Martinez started to erect a bigger, stronger and more spacious temple of God, but the Philippine Revolution interrupted his task.

10. Vallehermoso

The area between San Carlos and Guihulngan was a village named Vallehermoso was inhabited by upland non-believers. It was a haven for malcontents, outlaws and fugitives.¹² The Christians who lived in that village had completely forgotten about God, immersed in all kinds of vices and totally ignorant of the teachings and precepts of the Catholic faith. Civil order was non-existent as well.

¹⁰ L. RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica* II, 164.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 165-166.

¹² L. RUIZ, *Sinopsis* II, 166-167.

The first missionary in 1895 was Fr. Pedro Bengoa Cárcamo from La Rioja, Spain. He had to teach the people again about the Christian doctrine and prepare them for the reception of the sacraments. When he left the place, Vallehermoso was a town and parish in every sense of the word. It is worthy of note that Father Pedro Bengoa joined the national upheaval in eastern Negros. The well-to-do *hacendero* and general of the Revolution of Negros Don Diego de la Viña asked his Recollect friend to be the chaplain of the revolutionary forces. Thus in the history of our Philippine Revolution (1896-1901) there was the much-hated Spanish friar—vilified by the Propaganda Movement of Rizal and Marcelo H. del Pilar, the hapless victim of carnage by Bonifacio's Katipunan revolutionists, easy target of hatred and violence by schismatic Aglipayans—who served as military chaplain of Filipino revolutionaries! Indeed, Father Bengoa's feat could indeed be an episode for the TV program *Believe It or Not!*

11. Dumaguete City

An age-old parish, Dumaguete was founded in 1620. A Spanish diocesan priest Father Jose Fernández de Septién built a solid church. The first Recollect Fr. Antonio Úbeda took charge of the parish in 1855. Fr. Antonio Moreno endowed the church with precious ornaments, silver altar and processional candlesticks and large finely crafted candlesticks for the main altar. It was during his term when the two *mampostería* school buildings were erected. He passed away in Dumaguete during the construction of the cemetery. Fr. Juan Félix de la Encarnación placed durable wood for the church floor. He subsidized the Manila artists to craft the magnificent *retablo*. He provided for all the needs of the church. Fr. Mariano Bernad finished the construction of the cemetery and important improvements on the church and convent. He also supervised the construction of roads, bridges and drainages.¹³

12. Siaton

The Recollect historians Jarauta and Licinio Ruiz both declare that Siaton was handed over to the Recollects in 1848. Fr. Agustin Olmedillas took possession of the parish. Fr. Tomás Mezquita succeeded him after a few months. He scoured mountains to convince the inhabitants

¹³ R. JARAUTA, 40.

to resettle in the lowlands. The missionary succeeded in baptizing a great number of non-believers. Fr. Mezquita started the construction of both convent and church which were finished by Fr. Manuel Cabriada and Fr. Julián Adán. In 1925 an earthquake partially ruined the church.

APPENDICES

A. Churches (of Strong Materials) in Negros Oriental and Parish Priests/Curates who either built them or finished the construction.

Siaton	-	Tomás Mezquita, Manuel Cabriada, Julián Adán
Dauin	-	Manuel Cabriada, Tomás González
Bacong	-	Leandro Arrué, Laureano Navarro, Lorenzo Córdón
Sibulan	-	Pedro Echeverría
Tanjay	-	Julián Adán
Valencia	-	Paulino Jiménez
Zamboanguita	-	Tomás González, Laureano Navarro, Matías Villamayor, Lorenzó Córdón, Manuel Gamboa, Alejandro Osés.

B. Creation of Towns and Parishes or Cession to Augustinian Recollects in Negros Oriental¹⁴

Amlan	-	1848
Sibulan	-	1848
Dumaguete	-	1852
Manjuyod	-	1854
Tolong	-	1855
Ayuquitan	-	1856
Guihulngan	-	1856
Nueva Valencia	-	1856
Dauin	-	1857
Zamboanguita	-	1866
Bayawan	-	1872
Bais	-	1873
Hibaiyo	-	1895
Basay	-	1895
Tayasan	-	1895

¹⁴ A. MARTINEZ CUESTA, *History of Negros; This Table Shows the Year and Inhabitants when the following towns were founded*, in Rafael GARCÍA, *The Thomasian Memoir* (San Carlos 1949) 62.

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The Augustinian Recollects and Palawan¹

René F. Paglinawan OAR

Annotated by
René F. Paglinawan OAR &
Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos

Beginnings

1. The Augustinian Recollects arrived in the Philippines in 1606, the fifth missionary order to work in evangelizing the islands. Because no two missionary orders were to evangelize the same region, it fell on the newcomers to work in far-flung, still unpacified places.
2. New missionaries having arrived in 1620, the Recollects asked for more missions to administer. Bishop Pedro de Arce of Cebu gave them the region of Calamianes and Cuyo in 1622, left vacant by the priest Juan de Santa Cruz.

¹ The paper was read before OAR priests, AR sisters, SARF members, Saint Ezekiel devotees from Cebu City, students of AR schools, at the conference of the *Biyaheng Rekoletos 400: Palawan Trail* at Saint Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center, Brgy. San Jose, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, on 13 October 2006 . It was published as *The Recollects and Palawan*, in *The Recoletos Observer*, vol. 7, no. 3 (July-Sept. 2006) 15-18, 31.

3. Four religious, three priests and one brother,² arrived in Cuyo that same year of 1622.³ The chronicles report the prompt conversion of a thousand natives in Cuyo and the construction of the Catholic church in the region. Agutaya was also converted, and the missionaries also reached the islands of Culion and Linapacan. In the following year, the mission of Taytay was opened.
4. Applying the evangelization method used earlier in the Zambales missions, the missionaries would search for the scattered natives and persuade them to settle down in new towns, where the church, mission school and priest's residence would then be built. This was needed for the systematic indoctrination of the people in the faith. Only then would the missionaries administer the sacraments. Except for the Moro settlers of southern Paragua, no great opposition to the the evangelization effort seemed to have been made.
5. Moro raids were a constant threat to the work and life of the missionaries and natives. This went on until mid-19th century. The Muslim, on his part, saw the Spaniard as a colonizer to be resisted. Moro raids would destroy towns and settlements, painstaking work of many years. In 1636, for example, the forces of Tagal, brother of the famous Sultan Kudarat, fell on Cuyo, razed the church, killed the inhabitants or took away survivors as slaves, including the priest Fr. Francisco de Jesus María, Fr. Alonso de San Agustín of Agutaya was captured as he was about to say mass; another priest was also held captive. When Spanish troops from Zamboanga tried to intercept Tagal's return

² The pioneers were namely: Frs. Juan de Santo Tomás, Francisco de San Nicolás, Diego de Santa Ana, and Brother Francisco de la Madre de Dios.

³ Angel Martínez Cuesta indicates 1623 as the year of arrival. Cf. *Historia de la Orden de Agustinos Recolects* I (Madrid 1995) 388. In his doctoral dissertation, José María Echeverría (1952) affirmed 1623 when the first missionaries arrived in Cuyo, cf. 118. Marcellán and Licinio Ruiz, however, aver it was 1622. So do Francisco Sádaba and Fidel de Blas who simply declare that the Recolects were put in charge of Cuyo and the Calamianes in 1622. Bishop of Cebu Pedro de Arce handed over the vacant mission to the Augustinian Recolects 27 August 1622. Under the Royal Patronage rule, Don Alonso Fajardo, the royal viceroy and governor general, approved the episcopal decree on 23 January 1623.

to Mindanao, the raiders tied him to a parapet, which resulted in his being killed by Spanish bullets. The two priests were ordered killed by Kudarat the following year.

6. Three more missionaries died from Moro hands in the next twenty-five years. Vain were the repeated petitions to the Manila government for defense. As a result, Recollect superiors ordered the abandonment of Palawan in 1659. But the three diocesan priests who took over the following year did not stay long. In 1680, the governor general of the Philippines ordered giving the Calamianes missions back to the Recollects.
7. With the Moro raids continuing unabated, the superiors decided to send masons and stonecutters to build forts at Recollect expense. This was the origin of the forts of Cuyo, Agutaya, Culion, Taytay, Linapacan, Dumaran and Cagayancillo. The first three were built by Fr. Juan de San Severo. When the enemy is sighted, a cannon is fired to signal for everyone to rush to the fort. The missionary organizes the resistance, assigning each barangay an area to defend. If the enemy is out of cannon range, a well-armed sortie engages them to prevent them burning the town and the fields.
8. But this did not stop the Moro raids. In 1730, for instance, a formidable army of 3,000 Moros laid a 21-day siege on the fort of Taytay. The fort resisted but the town was devastated.
9. While the first years of the Palawan missions wrote glowing reports about numerous conversions and reduction of the natives, this second period of terror dragged on for two centuries until the middle of the 19th century. The Recollect missionary was forced to wield the cross on one hand the sword on the other, to build the place of worship as well as surround it with a stone fort to protect the worshippers.

Second Spring of Palawan Missions

10. Finally, in 1871, the politico-military government of Puerto Princesa was founded. This indicated that Spanish hegemony was finally obtained. Come-ons were offered to

would-be-settlers, like facilities in acquisitions of work tools, ten-year exemption from tribute and reduction of taxes.

11. In February of 1872, the Governor General wrote to the Recollect provincial asking for a priest to minister spiritually to the settlers. The Provincial chose Fr. Ezekiel Moreno and Fr. Antonio Muro.⁴
12. The settlements of the main island increased in number and importance. New missions had to be opened. In 1886, a royal order, hailed as the Magna Charta of the Palawan missions, approved the opening of four new missions, with the towns of Tinitian, Dumarán, Bacuit (now El Nido) and Taytay as cabeceras. The Recollect provincial created a new vicariate, that of Paragua, to which would belong Puerto Princesa, Inagawan, Taytay and Dumarán and subsequent missions in the main island. The old vicariate of Calamianes would consist of Cuyo, Culion and Agutaya and those to be formed in the future in the Calamian region.
13. Throughout the last decade of the Spanish rule in the Philippines, a dozen or more Recollect missionaries were continuously administering the Palawan missions, in 1897, the following places had Recollect missionaries: Cuyo, Culion, Agutaya, Lucbuan, Coron, Tinitian, Bacuit, Taytay, Dumarán, Puerto Princesa, Inagawan and Balabac.
14. In November 1898, fearing a repetition of the killing of fourteen Recollects in Cavite and after a foiled mutiny and Palawan itself, the Recollect provincial ordered the abandonment of the Palawan missions. A steamer was rented from Iloilo to pick up the missionaries at various points. For his part, Fr. Domingo de Pablo missed the steamer; in 1899 he left Bacuit for Cuyo and administered the town until 1901 when he received the order to leave for Iloilo and Manila.

⁴ Chapter 1 of this book deals with the missionary activities of Saint Ezekiel Moreno in Palawan. For more details, cf. Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Bishop Ezekiel Moreno, An Augustinian Recollect Saint among Filipinos* (Quezon City 1993).

15. The 1898 Philippine Revolution seemed to end abruptly the second spring of Palawan missions. In the whole country, the ecclesiastical situation was bleak; dioceses were without bishops, many friars were held prisoners by the *Katipuneros*, or were ill, or had left the country, and those who remained were engaged in education in Manila, Cebu and Vigan. As to the Filipino clergy, there only some 600 priests by 1900, not counting the further decrease due to the Aglipayan schism starting in 1902.
16. Towns of recent foundation, like those in Palawan, suffered most from this situation. In the absence of priests, the temptation to slip back to the pagan ways or to develop religious syncretism was strong for the Filipinos.
17. The papal document of 1902 (*Quae Mari Sinico*) on the reorganization of the Philippine Church gave the bishops the faculty to determine which parishes were to be entrusted to the friars, after consultation with the religious superiors.
18. As early as July of the preceding year, the principalía of Cuyo and Lucbuan had requested for missionaries; in answer, the Recollect provincial assigned two missionaries in Cuyo and another two in Puerto Princesa. In December 1901, Fr. Tiburcio Fernández arrived as the superior of the Palawan missions. Two more missionaries were sent the following year, one of whom, Fr. Victoriano Román, would become the First Apostolic Prefect of Palawan.⁵
19. Among the problems encountered by the returning missionaries were the scattering of the population; the damage to churches, chapels and parishes and to parochial books; the contention by town principalía or American authority of the ownership of church property and the lack of personnel.
20. In 1906, Jaro Bishop Frederick Rooker, under whose jurisdiction Palawan was, made his first pastoral visit in the region. “Just like in the Spanish times, observed Fr. Ariz,

⁵ Recollect Biographer Fr. Miguel Avellaneda writes: “He was named Second Apostolic Prefect of Palawan on 21 April 1911.” Cf. *Continuación del Padre Sádaba, o segunda parte del ‘Catálogo de los religiosos de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos’ (1906-1936)* (Rome 1938) 163.

the townspeople received the prelate in the quay, from where they proceeded solemnly to the church.” Two thousand six hundred received confirmation. The prelate revealed to the missionaries the plan to create an apostolic vicariate composed of Romblon, Mindoro and Marinduque and an apostolic prefecture consisting of Paragua, Calamianes and Cuyo islands and said that, if he had his way, he would entrust both vicariate and prefecture to the Recollects.

21. Bishop Rooker died before the plan could be realized but the Recollect superiors worked for its realization.

Apostolic Prefecture

22. Finally, on 10 April 1910, the pope created the Apostolic Prefecture of Palawan with the bull *Novas erigere dioceses* which also created the dioceses of Lipa, Tuguegarao, Zamboanga and Calbayog. And on 13 May, a decree of the Propaganda Fide entrusted the prefecture to the Recollect fathers and asked for possible candidates to the post of prefect.
23. The nomination fell on Fr. Fernando Hernández,⁶ the first of the threesome proposed, but he promptly resigned, alleging his age (60 years), a chronic heart ailment and his ignorance of the region. Fr. Victoriano Román, 35 years old, was named to the post on 20 April 1911.
24. Fr. Román’s first reaction was to resign too; he wrote: “I could be suited for baptizing, hearing confessions, officiating marriages... I could maintain that light and superficial rapport with the Americans... but neither my experience and much less my talents... will enable me to do anything but serve as a subject.” But obviously he could not resign, and later he wrote

⁶ Biographer Francisco Sádaba informs us a lot about this assiduous missionary of Zambales and Pangasinan for nearly four decades. Fr. Hernández suffered so much for a year and a half as a captive of the revolutionaries. Cf. *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde el año 1606, en que llegó la primera misión a Manila, hasta nuestros días* (Madrid 1906) 572. Avellaneda adds: “The Holy See named him First Apostolic Prefect of Palawan; but he resigned. He passed away at the Convent of San Nicolás on 30 March 1930.” Cf. 450.

that he placed his full confidence on his two confreres Aríz⁷ and Abaurrea.⁸

25. After conferring with the Apostolic Nuncio concerning the prefecture's dependence on the Propaganda Fide and with the Bishop of Jaro regarding the separation of the Palawan missions from the Jaro diocese, Fr. Román took possession of the prefecture on 28 August 1911, feast of the patron saint of Cuyo, which was to be the prefect's residence. .
26. Fr. Victoriano Román was born in Puebla de Arganzon, in the Spanish province of Burgos, on 23 March 1875. A Recollect since 18, he arrived in the Philippines in 1897 with 20 other confreres in what was the last Recollect mission [to] the country during the Spanish regime. Ordained in Manila two months after his arrival, he was sent to Lubang, off Mindoro, as assistant.
27. He was held prisoner by the revolutionaries for 19 months until February 1900. In May 1902, he sailed for Palawan, where he would spend the next 36 years of his life. He first worked in Araceli as assistant missionary, then in Bacuit and Taytay (1903), then as chaplain of the Iwahig penal colony from 1907 to his nomination as prefect.
28. His vision as prefect was to make Cuyo the heart of the prefecture and from there to pump blood to the rest. Cuyo received the most of his attention in the first years of his administration. Though the capital of the province was Puerto Princesa since 1872, making it the seat of the prefecture was not seriously contemplated until 1926. "The prefecture is Cuyo and Cuyo is the prefecture," Fr. Román said at the start of his administration.

⁷ Fr. Javier Aríz (1873-1917) was a missionary mostly in Cuyo. He was likewise assigned to Lucbuan, in Palawan, and during the Revolution he was a conventual in San Sebastian Convent and San Nicolás Convent in Intramuros, Manila. He passed away in Intramuros, Manila. Cf. AVELLANEDA, 395.

⁸ Fr. Eduardo Abaurrea (1874-1936) served the missions of Puerto Princesa and Cuyo and was in-charge of the Apostolic Prefecture (1915, 1926) during Msgr. Román's visit to Rome. He was also a prior/vice prior of the Immaculate Conception Convent in Cebu City, in the Spanish convents of Monteagudo, Navarra, thereafter at San Millán de la Cogolla, La Rioja. He died in the convent of Marcilla, Navarra. Cf. AVELLANEDA, 115-116.

29. In 1910, Palawan had more than 46 thousand inhabitants, 33 thousand of whom were Christians, 8 thousand pagans and 5 thousand Muslims. The Christian territory was divided into one parish (Cuyo) and six missions (Puerto Princesa, Araceli, Taytay, Agutaya, Coron and the Cagayancillos). Cuyo was the base of all missionary activities. Secondary centers were Puerto Princesa and Coron. The missionaries of Puerto Princesa would attend to the needs of the main island, those of Bacuit and the whole of the northern part. With Coron attending to the whole of Busuanga island and Araceli the whole of Dumarán island, plus the chaplaincies of Iwahig and Culion, a minimum of organization would be possible in the prefecture.
30. Knowing that the Palawan field was humanly appealing to missionaries, Fr. Román started to build churches while waiting for reinforcements. Only the church of Cuyo and the church and convent of Puerto Princesa escaped from the terrible typhoon of 1 November 1910. Fr. Román started work in the churches of Agutaya, Coron, Bacuit and Dumarán. He would exhort the town's inhabitants to raise funds for construction materials, with himself opening the subscription.
31. Alongside his personal supervision of the material reconstruction of the prefecture, Fr. Román crisscrossed the Christian territory to confirm the people's faith and to establish a minimum of ecclesiastical organization. Through his letters we can trace his itinerary: for example, in mid-January 1912, he visited Iwahig then Caramay; then he proceeded to Coron, dropping by Culion on the way, circumnavigating Busuanga island. During the 14-day expedition, he subsisted on a meager diet of milk, tuna, fish and some rice. He was grateful for the robust health that he had. The stomach did not complain, he mused in his letters, though at times he went hungry and lacking the barest necessities. Sleeping was his least worry as he could doze off in his ubiquitous folding bed, aboard any embarkation or on the sand of any beach or under the shade of any tree.
32. By March, he was in Bacuit, where he had earlier worked as missionary. He stayed until after Holy Week, alternating the spiritual assistance of the people with the material construction

of their place of worship. He visited Dumarán island in June. And by August he was back in Cuyo. Back to Dumarán in October, he was in Puerto Princesa and Iwahig for the Christmas season. The following year, he was occupied with the same task, going from post to post in traditional missionary fashion.

33. In the specific missionary program, Fr. Román traced out for the Prefecture, the establishment of the Catholic school and organization of the Apostleship of Prayer occupied central positions. In 1912, the American government had established a municipal school in Cuyo where 300 boys and girls were enrolled. There was also a normal school, several high schools, and a well-mounted industrial school with steam machinery.
34. In 1911, Fr. Román asked for the services of some religious from Santa Rita to run the school but the dream became a reality only in 1912 when Colegio de San José of Cuyo started operations.
35. Fr. Román also wanted to establish the Apostleship of Prayer in the Prefecture, for he had seen what he considered no less than prodigious effects in Tagalog towns where, however decadent religion might be, a nucleus of apostles of prayer and devotees of the Sacred Heart preserved the faith and enhanced the external splendor of the cult. The confraternity was founded in January 1914 and before the end of the year it had 670 members. By 1921 all the settlements and islands of Cuyo had their apostles of prayer. Their consultative body with see in Cuyo town, had an ample function: to foster everything related to the Catholic interests of the town, with emphasis on the material, moral and spiritual progress of the individual person and of the family. One way of achieving this was to Christianize the school. The apostles of prayer were also the eyes and ears of the missionary, effectively preventing disturbance from progressing. In 1922, the confraternity extended its activity to the political scene, presenting candidates to all the public offices of the municipality of Cuyo.
36. In a letter to the provincial on 8 July 1923, Fr. Román announced that he was in Brooke's Point. He calculates that there are some fifteen thousand pagans in that district and that

now is the time to work with those in the coastal areas; after the rains, he would go into the interior. He hopes to finish the chapel before the end of the month. He says that the Muslims are impossible to convert as they are attached to their religion but he plans to visit them in September.

37. In a letter to Fr. Benedicto, dated February 1924, he talks about his visit to the *Contracosta*, in the river basin of the Eran River, where he met a tribe of some four thousand. He sent notice and 80 men came to meet him: strong, proud, in g-string of tree bark, armed with bows, spears, blowpipes and *kampilan*. He conversed various hours with them through an interpreter. When the time came to leave, they made gestures that they wanted him to stay longer; they had a feast ready for him. He continued further in the western coast, reaching the southern tip of the island, visiting the Moros and the Palaweños.
38. Father Javier Sesma writes: the Coron Mission has 31 barrios from the Población; all travel is done by sea and navigable rivers, because it is more economical and less laborious; but the boats are inadequate, personnel and resources are insufficient, so the missionary needs “a good dose of patience, good will and apostolic zeal.” The missionary can be happy with reaching all the barrios of the mission. The church of the mission is in a sorry state, the nipa roofing full of holes, the naked floor becomes muddy when it rains; because of lack of personnel, Coron has no resident missionary. For the next visit, he wants the pagans to be baptized: in preparation they would have to be instructed for a month; that means catechists have to be supplied, and they would have to be fed. They would have to be given clothes for baptism, and later, catechism books, *estampitas*, etc. After that they would have to be convinced to live in various villages near the población, so they could be visited more frequently and a follow-up done on their Christian faith.
39. Distances in Palawan: from the northernmost point, Tara, to the lighthouse of Melville in the southmost tip, 563 kms. From Cagayancillo island in the east to its parallel in the west, which coincides with the island of Balabac, some 400 kms. away. There are some 700 islands, of which more than 100 are

inhabited. Inhabitants: 60,000 Christians, and between 25,000 and 30,000 Moros and pagans. There are only one parish and three quasi-parishes with resident missionary and 120 barrios. There are twelve priests, including the apostolic prefect, and the two chaplains of the leprosarium and the penal colony, who can exercise only within their jurisdiction.

40. The circular of Fr. Celestino Yoldi on 22 September 1927 for religious of Palawan denies that missionaries sent there are “punished;” he encourages the missionaries in their difficult job, and reminds that the prefect is in the prefecture like the bishop in the diocese; “although he is a religious, in his character as prefect, he is not subject to the authority of the provincial or general” and the missionaries, from the moment that they accept the care of souls, are subject to his authority on the matter of residence, instructions regarding the cult, administration of sacraments, collections; as religious they are subject to the provincial.
41. Status in 1935, on the 25th year of the Prefecture: two chaplaincies, Culion (under the Jesuits) and Iwahig penal colony; quasi-parishes of Cuyo, Puerto Princesa, Agutaya and Lucbuan, and the missions of Bacuit, Coron, Araceli, Aborlan and Brooke’s Point. Celebrations from 24 August to 4 September (Feast of the Our Lady of Consolation).
42. Fr. Román’s life was of many deprivations, fatigue and effort against a difficult climate. His health was affected, and he almost died. He was at the point of death from malaria, together with his also sick servant, in a miserable hut at the shore. Providence came to his rescue through a government ship that passed that way; he was brought to Iloilo where he recovered his health.
43. At the end of 1938, he was sick and exhausted. He resigned his post. In 1939, the new prefect, Fr. Leandro Nieto, took possession. He had been a missionary in Romblon, in Sum-ag and La Carlota (Negros Occidental) and other conventual posts. In 1937, being Vicar Delegate, he founded the Seminary of the Prefecture. Two years after he became Apostolic Prefect, the Japanese forces invaded Palawan. Its consequences were the killing of the populace, persecution of the missionaries,

destruction of churches and convents. After the war, he visited the mission places and administered baptisms, weddings, confessions... the people hungered for the presence of the priest. Beset by health problems, he went to Manila and later to Spain, but he was broken. He still went back as shepherd, but in 1953, he resigned his post. Father Gregorio Espiga took over his post.

Apostolic Vicariate

44. On 3 July 1955, Pope Pius XII elevated the prefecture to the rank of apostolic vicariate, under the leadership of the Recollect Gregorio Espiga. He was ordained bishop on 10 September 1955 at San Sebastian Church, by the Manila Archbishop Rufino Santos assisted by Bishops Manuel Yap of Bacolod and Peregrin de la Fuente of Batanes. Archbishop Santos also installed him in Puerto Princesa on 18 September.
45. Bishop Espiga started to build the cathedral on 11 September 1958. The seminarians, the faithful and the Iwahig inmates helped in the construction. It was inaugurated on 12 March 1961.
46. The temple, of neo-Gothic design, is 53 meters long by 18 meters wide; it has a transept of 20 meters wide. The façade is 22 meters high. The dome is 17 meters high and the towers are 40 meters high. Worthy of note are the Ipil and mahogany Via Crucis, and the 106 pews of noble wood, both made by the prisoners of Iwahig penal colony.
47. The 1957 census put the number of inhabitants at 142,000, more than 100,000 of them are Catholics, 7,000 Muslims and 32,000 pagans. Bishop Espiga's work: visiting the faithful which would take him four months, founding schools, formation of catechists, fomenting religious associations, improving the seminary, establishing new missions (like Panacan). There are 15 quasi-parishes with resident missionary.
48. In the same period, aside from the schools opened by the government at the priests' instance, the Vicariate administers several elementary schools, five high schools, one normal school and another professional school. Bishop Espiga gave great

emphasis on the formation of catechists; in his own words, they are “the great instrument of the apostolate. They see the needs and they put the remedy. Our most fruitful work is that which we do with the catechists.”

Conclusion

49. What did the Recollects give to Palawan and what did Palawan give in return to the Recollects? It was in Palawan where the Recollect missionaries had the longest continuing presence, from 1622 to 1987 – except the less than two decades of absence in the 17th century. Dozens of missionaries have spent the best years of life and several gave their lives in the service of the faith that they had come to spread among the Palaweños. Their greatest legacy must be the Catholic faith, which was their privilege and sacred duty to share. Because faith is wrapped in culture, though not bound exclusively to any one culture, Catholicism also came with education and civilization, with arts and architecture. Towns and temples, forts and schools existing to this day, have vital links to the Catholic faith brought by the missionaries. Moreover, the spreaders of the faith, though not lacking in the foibles and weaknesses of human nature, have their examples of sacrifice and hard work and dedication to the Palaweños, as well as shepherds with the heart of a father, whose memory is etched in the minds and hearts of the faithful.

50. Palawan in return gave much to the Recollects in the Philippines in particular and the whole Order in general. If gratitude is not the only narrower kind you feel when you receive something, but the larger kind when you are able to give something, then by giving Palawan some of its best friars, missionaries like Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Victoriano Román, Javier Sesma, Leandro Nieto, Gregorio Espiga, to name only a few of recent history, Palawan brought the best from its mission heralds. The lay leaders, catechists, *fiscales*, teachers and simple faithful in Palawan, through the centuries, have also given our missionaries lasting lessons in fidelity, generosity, and gratitude.

51. Some Palaweños are also giving back to the Order by coming one of its own, like Louie Gabinete, Felizardo Daganta, Marlon Beof, Kenneth Onda, Roy Baluarte, Kenneth Caligdong and Jhoben Rodriguez.⁹

⁹ More Augustinian Recollect religious have been added.

Samahang Walang Katulad: A Brief History of the Procuración General de Manila and San Miguel Corporation¹

The beginnings

Father Juan Labarga was the *procurador general de Manila* of the Order of Augustinian Recollects from 1912 to 1919. He patiently laid the foundations for the economic development and growth of the *Procuracion General de Manila*. In 1919, Fr. Jacinto Marticorena became procurador general de Manila. The year 1919 would witness the most significant event in the history of the Procuración General de Manila as in this year commenced the close association of the Procuración General with San Miguel Brewery.²

¹ A paper read at A Tribute to The Last of the Mohicans Fr. Emeterio D. Buñao OAR, the Last Recollect Director, SMC Board of Directors, on his 79th Birthday, organized by Fr. Rene F. Paglinawan, Church historian and local prior of San Sebastian Convent, It was held at Fr. Domingo Carceller OAR Little Theater, San Sebastian College-Recoletos Claro M. Recto Avenue, Manila on 4 March 2017.

² San Miguel Corporation is a Filipino multinational publicly listed conglomerate holding company. It is the largest publicly listed food, beverage and packaging company in South-east Asia. It is the Philippines' largest corporation in terms of revenue with over 100 major facilities throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Its flagship product, San Miguel Beer, is one of the largest selling beers and among the top ten selling beer brands in the world. San Miguel's manufacturing operations extend beyond our country's market to Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Australia. Its products are exported to 60 markets around the world. Since 2008, SMC has ventured beyond its core businesses, becoming involved in fuel & oil (Petron Corporation), power generation and infrastructure. Its revenues in 2013: US\$ 17.614 billion; its net income US\$ 1.195 billion; Total assets: US\$ 27.564 billion. Number of employees: 17,151. Cf. San Miguel Corporation, in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Miguel_Corporation. The total consolidated assets of SMC in 2015 amounted to Php 1.246 trillion and its consolidated sales revenues Php 673.9 billion. Cf. SMC Annual Report 2015.

From 1901 to 1919, the funds of the Procuración General merely consisted of money from sale of their haciendas, bank deposits, company investments and agricultural lands in the wake of the Philippine Revolution of (1896- 1901).

The negotiations for the Recollect haciendas and their purchase by the American colonial government under William Howard Taft had come to a happy end in 1903. The Americans had earlier negotiated with the Holy See for the acquisition of the friar haciendas.³ After several negotiations and haggling with the agents of the religious orders, the sum of US\$ 7,237,195 was paid by the Americans to acquire all the friar haciendas for 400,000 acres or 168,437 hectares.⁴



[Left to right]; National Scientist Dr. Raul Fabella, Fr. Emeterio Buñao, Prior Provincial Fr. Dionisio Selma, Prof. Romanillos, after the lectures in the program at San Sebastian College Manila on 4 March 2017.

Of this, according to Fr. Emil Quilatan in his 2008 dissertation *The Friar Hacienda Controversy in the Philippines at the turn of the Century...*,⁵ the Augustinian Recolects received in 1903 the total amount of \$1,351,759 for the sale of their haciendas: Hacienda de San Juan Bautista de Imus, Cavite (\$1,045,000) and Hacienda de San José, Mindoro (\$306,759).

³ Simeón ASENSIO, *La Procuración General de Manila*, in Jesús SOBEJANO, *Los Augustinos Recoletos, 375 Años en las Islas Filipinas. 1606-1981* (Quezon City 1981) 25-28.

⁴ José Javier LIZARRAGA, *El Padre Enrique Pérez, último vicario y primer prior general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos (1908-1914)* (Roma 1990) 262; Emilio Edgardo A. QUILATAN, *The Friar Hacienda Controversy in the Philippines at the Turn of the Twentieth Century—Facts and Fiction: The Case of the Augustinian Recollect Hacienda de San Juan Bautista in Imus, Cavite (1896-1906)* (Rome 2008) 82.

⁵ QUILATAN, 78.

Fr. José Javier Lizarraga, however, in the *Haciendas de Filipinas* chapter of his 1990 dissertation on the first prior general Fr. Enrique Pérez contends that the amount was less: \$1,331,437.⁶ In his narrative *Síntesis histórica de la Procuración General de la Provincia, especialmente durante este siglo*, Fr. Simeón Asensio, procurador general in 1945-1970, disclosed where all that American payment went. Part of the proceeds from the hacienda sale was used as dowry [seed capital] for the new Recollect province of Santo Tomás de Villanueva, carved out of Saint Nicholas Province.⁷

The funds deposited in a bank in London were added to those of the *Procuración de Shanghai, China*, against the wishes of the general council in Rome. These were of minimal benefit to Saint Nicholas Province and to the missions in China.⁸

The hacienda sale proceeds were chiefly allocated to the sustenance of the convents and seminaries, namely Lodosa, Monteagudo and Marcilla in the Spanish province of Navarra. They gradually dwindled and were eventually depleted by 1917.

Business ventures

A Spanish national and close friend Señor Pascual advised and convinced Fr. Labarga to invest in the first cement factory in the Philippines which later became Rizal Cement based at Binangonan, Rizal.

Then Don Enrique Maria Barretto de Ycaza, founder of the first brewery in the Philippines—*Fábrica de Cerveza de San Miguel*—on 29 September 1890, also went into an agreement with Fr. Juan Labarga to establish the second brewery—Oriental Brewery—in the country.



Excmo. Sr. Don Enrique Maria Barretto y de Ycaza.
Fundador de la Fábrica de Cerveza de San Miguel.

⁶ LIZARRAGA, 262. The amount was 2,000,000 Spanish pesetas.

⁷ Ibid., 127-167.

⁸ SOBEJANO, 26.

Before Don Enrique Barreto left for Spain, he had sold his shares in San Miguel Brewery to his partner Don Pedro Pablo Roxas in 1895, father of Don Andrés Soriano's mother Doña Margarita Roxas de Ayala. Decades later, after his return from Spain, Barreto set up the Oriental Brewery with Fr. Labarga. He had informed the Recollect procurator general about the available machinery of a brewery which had closed down in Hong Kong. By mutual agreement, Fr. Labarga and Barreto equally shared in the purchase of the machinery. A land parcel in Aviles [Jose P. Laurel Street today] was acquired for the installation of the Hong Kong machinery. Much later, another piece of land was acquired for their ice-making subsidiary.

The Augustinian Recollect representative was company president; Don Enrique Barreto was technical director or manager. In 1913, Oriental Brewery started the production of its beer. The new brewery then began to put their product in the market. It did not take long before when Oriental Brewery proved to be without much economic success on account of its bargain-priced product and the stiff competition posed by San Miguel Brewery. On top of that, there was a serious conflict or misunderstanding between the company president of Oriental Brewery and Señor Barreto. Not long after, Barreto divested himself of all his shares in Oriental Brewery in exchange for the complete control and ownership of the cement factory.

Pact between the two breweries

Initially, the two breweries agreed to share the beer market: Oriental Brewery had the right to one-third of the market and San Miguel to two-thirds. Apparently, this arrangement was not completely satisfactory, especially for the *Procuración General de Manila*. For some years, the *Procuración General* underwent terrible economic hardships. In 1917, the *Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas* with its provincial curia at San Nicolás Friary in Intramuros, Manila, had to sell large portions of the land properties of San Sebastian Convent and those of the Convent of the Immaculate Conception in Cebu. Fr. Marcelino Simonena, author of the informative chapter on Immaculate Conception Convent in Licinio Ruiz's *Sinopsis histórica* (1925)

corroborated this sale of the choice lot.⁹ As prior of Cebu in 1916-1919, Fr. Simonena recorded that an undeveloped portion—6,000 square meters—of their total land area of 10,000 squares or one hectare was sold in 1917 and the remaining area was merely 4,000 square meters where the University of San Jose-Recoletos and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish-Recoletos stand at present.¹⁰

Saint Nicholas Province was further put in charge of the funds of the *Obras Pías*, because of which the Province was committed to hand the monthly interests over to San Nicolás Convent in Intramuros and to San Sebastian Convent. This was faithfully implemented until the Second World War (1941-1945).

In the provincial chapter of 1919, Fr. Juan Labarga was elected vicar provincial of Spain. However, Fr. Labarga resigned soon after from the post of vicar provincial affirming that after his failure as procurator general he would without a trace of a doubt similarly fail in the new vicarial provincial post in Spain. He preferred to work as a missionary in Cuyo, Palawan; this personal request was approved by the newly-elected prior provincial Fr. Marcelino Simonena. Fr. Jacinto Marticorena, a long-time missionary in Calapan and Naujan, Mindoro, was named procurador general in that same year 1919 to replace Fr. Juan Labarga.

The Don Andrés Soriano Era

Don Andrés Soriano y Roxas (1898-1964) became acting manager of San Miguel Brewery, Inc. in 1919. He was totally convinced of the convenience of eliminating every competition in the beer market, deemed then as now cutthroat competitive strategy. He was barely twenty-one years old. He was a “man of great vision,” as Fr. Simeón Asensio viewed



Fr. Simeón Asensio OAR, procurador general de Manila, 1945-1970

⁹ Marcelino SIMONENA, The Convent and Church of the Immaculate Conception in Cebu, in Emmanuel Luis ROMANILLOS, History of the Augustinian Recollects in Cebu since 1621. Studies and Sources (Cebu City 2021) 74-108.

¹⁰ Licinio RUIZ, Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas I (Manila 1925) 155.

the young Filipino-Spanish businessman. Don Andrés Soriano was an astute businessman, capitalist and industrialist with keen business acumen, “a genius in the field of commerce and entrepreneurship.”¹¹

The close association of the *Procuración General de Manila* with Don Andrés Soriano y Roxas was to be the greatest open secret to the success of the long business relationship of the Order of Augustinian Recollects and San Miguel Brewery in subsequent decades. Through the mediation of Jesuit Fr. Joaquín Villalonga, Don Andrés Soriano commenced the negotiations with the owner of Oriental Brewery. As a result of these negotiations, Oriental Brewery would transfer all its rights to San Miguel; San Miguel in return would transfer to the owner of Oriental Brewery, the *Procuración General de Manila*, an amount equal to the capital of its shares it owned in Oriental Brewery.

This business transaction would go down in history as the most transcendental and most significant, not much on account of the amount involved but to the importance this deal would entail in the future for the Augustinian Recollect Order and San Miguel. From that day onwards, the “Don Andrés Soriano Period” commenced in the history of the *Procuración General* and the economic trend would be all uphill, moving upward for a very long time.¹²

To perpetuate the significance of this historic event in August 1919, Don Andrés himself wanted to put up a commemorative landmark that would last for all time. However, something happened that constrained Don Andrés Soriano to desist from the commemorative marker project. The Procurador General, Fr. Jacinto Marticorena, asked for exlaustration. He decided to leave the Recollect Order, seeking incardination to the Diocese of Pamplona in Navarra, Spain. Soon afterward, he became a diocesan priest. “Once again this occasion shows,” comments our chronicler Fr. Simeón Asensio, “that Divine Providence writes straight with apparently crooked lines.”¹³

Fr. Celestino Yoldi, procurador general in 1919-1922, and his successors in the *Procuración General de Manila*, could attend comfortably to the ordinary financial obligations of the Order and

¹¹ Simeón ASENSIO, in SOBEJANO, 27.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

Saint Nicholas Province. The *Procuración General* could make more investments with its savings. These investments continued during the terms of Fr. Isaac Gridilla in 1922-1928 and Fr. Pedro Pérez in 1928-1934. During the term of Fr. Hernán Biurrún in 1934-1945, this Recollect economic manager invested in mines from 1935 to 1940.

The gauntlet of World War II

During the Second World War, the *Procuración General de Manila* underwent economic setbacks for some years. San Miguel Brewery was confiscated by the Japanese Imperial Army Forces. Don Andrés Soriano was commissioned as a colonel and served as an aide to the American General Douglas MacArthur. Meanwhile, the *Procuración General* was incapable of defraying even the expenses for the basic needs of Saint Nicholas Province. On account of this wartime crisis, the Recollects decided to close the minor seminary in Lodosa in Navarra, Spain temporarily. For some time, many Recollect houses underwent miserably penury and dearth of provisions. The formation houses in Spain were affected most; they suffered great scarcity of food and other supplies.¹⁴

To aggravate the economic woes of the Recollects was the tragedy in Intramuros during the Battle for the Liberation of Manila. Procurator General Fr. Hernán Biurrún was murdered by Japanese troops on 5 February 1945. Five more Recollect friars were slain with him in the dungeons of Fort Santiago in Intramuros. Fr Simeón Asensio termed this tragic event as providential somehow. “Just as the blood of martyrs, was the seed of Christians,” continues Fr. Simeón, “many times do I believe that the blood shed by the Procurator General—martyred by the Japanese—has been likewise the wellspring of abundant blessings that the *Procuración General* has received in the wake of his martyrdom.”

Postwar plight

The procurators general thereafter have learned their lesson from such economic setbacks during World War II. They opted to put an end to their policy of centralization: the main funds or source of income of the Province had always been put only in a single major investment

¹⁴ Ibid., 28.

or business enterprise. In other words, they should not put all the eggs in one basket. The dispersion of capital should be accommodated according to different regions, especially those where main formation houses were located.¹⁵

After the global war, San Miguel mounted a large-scale expansion program. In 1947, San Miguel acquired and modernized a second brewery in what is now Valenzuela City in 1947. More plants were opened: the Manila glass plant in Farola, the carbon dioxide plant in Otis, Manila; the carton plant, Iloilo Coca-Cola plant; the Farola power plant. Succeeding years witnessed the exportation of their flagship production: San Miguel Pale Pilsen. Soft drink plants were opened in Davao and Naga. Mergers were inked. It went international in the 1950s and continued in subsequent decades.

Don Andrés Soriano Jr. as president of San Miguel Brewery continued the close association with the Recollects, even after the demise of Don Andrés Soriano Sr. in December 1964. The giant beer company had changed its corporate name to San Miguel Corporation in early 1964.

Two economic windfalls hit the *Procuración General* in the wake of the war. The governments of the Philippines, United States of America and Japan indemnified the Recollects with war damage reparations for the destruction of their San Nicolás friary and church in Intramuros. Later on, the lot on which two heritage structures stood for centuries was sold. Part of the double windfall was spent for the construction of the Elementary/College Building of San Sebastian College Manila which was finished in 1966. Another portion of the war damage claims was channeled to the construction of the new edifice of Colegio Apostólico de Santo Tomás, the old minor seminary in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental, now named Saint Ezekiel Moreno Building.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Msgr. Pedro Lerena, San Sebastian College Cavite and San Miguel Corporation

In 1616, the Augustinian Recollects set up their convent and church in honor of Saint Monica in Cavite Puerto in 1616. Both edifices survived for almost four centuries until the Americans pulverized in 1898.¹⁶ In 1871, the parish of San Pedro Apóstol in Cavite Puerto was handed over to the Recollects. After the expulsion of the Spaniards, the Recollects returned to accept in 1921 the pastoral ministry of the parish of San Pedro and the town of San Roque where they constructed the kumbento.



Msgr. Pedro Lerena (1901-1972)
Parish priest of Cavite City

One of the Spanish missionaries who left behind his brilliant legacy in Cavite City was Fr. Pedro Lerena. He lived and worked in Cavite City for forty-three years. He was born in Berceo in the Spanish province of La Rioja on 1901. He joined the Augustinian Recollect Order in 1918 in Monteagudo, Navarra.

He was ordained as priest in 1925. That same year he travelled to the Philippines and worked as missionary in Calapan and later in Naujan in Mindoro Island. He transferred to the parish of San Pedro Apóstol in Cavite Puerto in 1929. He repaired the churches of San Pedro and San Roque.¹⁷

Fr. Lerena was then put in charge of the old church of Porta Vaga.¹⁸ He saved the framed image of Our Lady of Solitude of Porta Vaga

¹⁶ RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica* I,10-111; Ricardo JARAUTA, *Album de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*, Zaragoza 1931. One account of the shelling by the American fleet at Cañacao says the church was destroyed, except the belfry and convent. The convent was turned over to the Augustinian Recollect Sisters who converted it into a school for young children.

¹⁷ Miguel AVELLANEDA, *Continuación del Padre Sádaba o segunda parte del «Catálogo de los Religiosos de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos de Filipinas desde 1606 hasta 1936»* (Rome 1938) 147.

¹⁸ Virgilio SÁENZ MENDOZA, *A Tribute to a Pastor: Msgr. Pedro Lerena y Lerena*, in *Souvenir Program of the 1995 Cavite City Fiesta, Ciudad de Cavite 1995*, no pagination

which he deposited in the vault of *Philippine National Bank*. On the eve of the transfer of San Roque Parish to the diocesan clergy, Fr. Lerena sought exclaustation in order to continue serving the parishioners of Cavite Puerto, later in the adjoining San Roque Parish until his death.¹⁹

Msgr. Lerena had always dreamed of erecting an Augustinian Recollect school in Cavite City. To make his ardent desire a reality, he gave a generous donation to the Province of Saint Nicholas. The former Recollect priest's donation consisted of shares he had bought from San Miguel Brewery.²⁰ The donation was approximately the same amount invested by the Province of Saint Nicholas in the future San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite, inaugurated in 1966. Yes, Msgr. Lerena lived to see his dream come true. He passed away on 25 May 1972. This Recollect institution is a living and perpetual testimony of Msgr. Lerena's deep sense of unity and belonging to, sincere gratitude and affection for the Augustinian Recollection whose forbears evangelized Cavite Puerto and adjoining communities since 1616.



**San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite: Recipient of
Msgr. Pedro Lerena's beneficence and affection for the
Augustinian Recollection**

¹⁹ Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Chabacano Studies. Essays on Cavite's Chabacano Language and Literature* (Imus City 2006) 173-174.

²⁰ ASENSIO, in SOBEJANO, 28.

Epilogue

Despite the expenses defrayed for the 1970 purchase of the new vicarial house in Quezon City—now the provincial curia of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province—and the subsequent construction of the Church of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in 1973, the current funds of the *Procuración General* approximately remained the same as the previous years, as revealed to us by the chronicler Fr. Simeón Asensio who passed away in 1974 at age 69 in Manila. Fr. Antonio Ausejo had taken over the office of Procurador General in 1970; he was assisted by Fr. Clemente Jubera.²¹ But in fact, the real value of Recollect funds had diminished to two-thirds on account of the adverse economic situation of the country under Martial Law as well as other corporate factors in San Miguel Corporation.

²¹ Fr. Ausejo returned to his Maker in 1992 at age 69.

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Glossary of Terms

alcalde mayor — chief executive of a political province, provincial governor.

amancebados — person living in concubinage; person who establishes a marital relationship without the marriage bond.

ánimas — The tolling of bells in churches at a certain hour of the night with which the faithful are informed so they could pray to God for the souls in Purgatory.

andas — portable platform.

ara — altar stone.

arancel — stole fee.

arrabal — district in Spanish Manila.

Audiencia — the highest advisory body in Spanish Philippines whose members were the governor general/vice royal patron, provincials of the religious orders, and other officials.

Augustinian Recollect — also known as *Agustino Descalzo*, *Recoleta*, Discalced Augustinian, Recollect, Recollet.

Ave Maria — Latin, *Hail Mary*.

barangayanes — big native rowboats that transported troops.

beatas — pious lay women, synonymous to terciarias.

beaterio — residence of the beatas.

brother — non-clerical professed member of a religious order.

Bullarium — compilation of papal bulls and other documents researched at the Vatican archives and other dicastery archives and compiled by Fr. Jenaro Fernández in various volumes.

cabecera — the population center of a town where a municipal building, parish church and kumbento; town with several barrios; capital town of the province.

cabeza de barangay — head of a barangay, village or barrio.

cal y canto — another term for mampostería, rubblework.

- canonical collation — official appointment given by a local ordinary to a religious as a parish priest of a curacy. He cannot be removed from his post by his prior provincial unless a provincial chapter assigns him to such positions in the Order as prior provincial, commissary or any high office.
- cantamisa — the singing the first mass by a newly-ordained priest, according to the *Royal Spanish Academy Dictionary* (2014 edition), page 415. Today the newly-ordained priest often concelebrates with the ordaining bishop who presides the Mass of their sacerdotal ordination.
- capitán general — the governor general as head of the armed forces.
- caroza — carriage with the image of Christ, Blessed Virgín or the patron Saint, specially prepared to take part in a religious procession.
- cartilla — primer, reader
- casa tribunal — the edifice housing the offices of the gobernadorcillo and officials, and sometimes the jail. Also simply known as *tribunal*.
- cédula — residence certificate
- chapter — provincial chapter, triennial assembly of superiors and delegates from the entire province to take up major decisions affecting the religious life, the province's or order's state, financial and other matters.
- cirial — processional candleholder.
- cofradía — confraternity of devotees to promote devotion to Jesus or to the Blessed Mother Mary under a particular invocation or to a Saint.
- companion — *compañero*, in Spanish. During the Spanish era, it refers to the coadjutor, assistant priest, curate, parochial vicar, assigned to a curacy chiefly to learn the language of the place in view of his future ministry in a mission, island or region where that language was spoken.
- convent — monastery or residence of a community of religious priests or brothers.
- convento — local term for rectory or residence of the curate. Also *kumbento*.
- corista — a religious assigned to sing in the choir until his sacerdotal ordination. An archaic term referring to a student undergoing theological formation before his ordination to priesthood; the present-day term is *formand*.
- cosas notables — a book in a parish or convent where remarkable events of the parish or monastery were chronologically recorded.

councilor — religious elected as member of the council of advisers of the prior general or provincial, serving for six or three years, respectively.

Crónicas — Chronicles. It refers to any of the thirteen volumes of the *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos* or similar title, the Order's general history written by various authors.

curacy — the ecclesiastical territory under the supervision of a pastor (parish priest).

curate — parish priest, or assistant parish priest, parochial vicar.

dalagas — young women.

desamortización — despoliation or confiscation of ecclesiastical property in Spain from 1835 to 1837, suppression of thirty-two convents (except Monteagudo), expulsion of monks and friars from them, and their subsequent sale to forestall the deficit of the State budget. In Colombia, desamortización took place in 1861.

diocese — ecclesiastical territory of several parishes under the jurisdiction of a local ordinary, the bishop.

diocesan clergy — priests working in a diocese whose local ordinary is the bishop.

doctrina — curacy served by a regular or religious priest with canonical collation; a town of natives recently converted to the Faith when it is not yet set up as a parish or it has not acquired yet parish status.

doctrinero — minister or missionary in charge of a doctrina; teacher of catechism.

donado — conventual with no professed vows who cultivates the farm or orchard for the religious community.

ecónomo — a clergyman tasked to administer the property of a diocese, or one assigned to a parish by the prelate to do the parochial work on account of the vacancy, sickness or absence of the proprietary parish priest.

encargado — administrator or manager of the hacienda in the absence of, or appointed for the position by, the owner of the landed state.

encomendero — person granted an encomienda, a royal grant of jurisdiction to a Spanish official who administers a portion of the conquered or reduced natives and collects tribute from them.

escribiente — recorder, scribe, clerk, secretary.

- fiscal celador — in Recollect colonial parishes and some Latin American countries, a layman who was put in charge of a church or chapel, supervised the worship services and assisted the parish priest who appointed him.
- Flores de Mayo — a Marian devotion in May wherein a child bears a pole each with a big letter of the AVE MARIA, walk slowly to the main altar of the parish church or chapel as songs or prayers are sung or chanted, and offers flowers before the image of the Virgin Mary, symbolizing affection and veneration.
- formand — aspirant, postulant, novice or theology student who undergoes formation before profession of religious vows and priestly ordination. Formerly *corista* in Spain and defunct Recollect San Nicolás convent in Intramuros.
- Fray — apocope of *fraile*, friar; ordinarily used before a proper name.
- friar — member of a religious order, or any mendicant orders: Augustinians, Augustinian Recollects, Dominicans and Franciscans.
- general chapter — sexennial assembly of delegates from the provinces to take up major decisions affecting the entire Order.
- gubernadorcillo — chief executive of a town during the Spanish era.
- hacienda — tracts of land planted with sugar cane, as in Negros Island, Batangas or northern Cebu or palay and other agricultural products in Imus, Cavite.
- hacendero — owner of an hacienda or land planted with sugar cane or palay.
- kumbento — local term for convento, rectory, residence of a parish priest.
- kutá — fort, rampart, citadel, fortification, also cota.
- legajo — dossier, file, box or bundle of manuscripts or folders of manuscripts usually of a certain year, topic or subject, kept at the archive.
- legua — old Spanish linear system equivalent to 5,572 meters.
- mampostería — rubblework. Also *cal y canto*.
- mantelatas — mantled women or *beatas*, tertiaries during Spanish era.
- mestizo — half-breed; a person of mixed race; an offspring of a native and a European, mostly Spanish.
- misión viva — active mission.

Modo de administrar — *Manual of Administration*, the pastoral handbook used by Augustinian Recollect priests in managing a parish during the Spanish era.

Observants — the original Augustinians, in contrast to Discalced or Recollects.

Octava cerrada — the eight days following a solemnity within which the memorial or prayer to a saint is permitted.

oidor — judge of the Royal Audiencia.

orden tercera — third order, whose members are called terciarios, tertiaries.

palapala — temporary portable shade or scaffolding, used in religious processions.

parish — basic Christian territory composed of visitas or chapels, entrusted to a canonically collated pastor, assisted by his vicars or *compañeros*.

Pasyon — chanting of the Passion and Death of Jesus during Lenten season.

peninsular — Spaniard born in the Iberian Peninsula.

philosophate — seminary where philosophy is taught.

población — population center, where church, public buildings, town square and numerous private houses are built.

polos y servicios — corvée labor, statutory community service. *Polista* was a person who rendered such labor.

presidente municipal — also presidente, mayor of a town during the American regime.

principales — members of the *principalía*, composed of the incumbent and past *gobernadorcillos* and cabezas de barangay; leading class of a *pueblo* or *visita*.

prior — superior of a community of religious brothers and priests. He sees to it that everyone fulfills his duties.

prior general — the highest authority of a religious congregation or order.

prior presidente — superior of a religious house in the twilight of the Spanish era and early American Occupation.

prior provincial — religious superior of a province, who governs the province with ordinary power either by himself or with his council.

prior vocal — elected but chiefly honorary position of a prior of a parish with right of representation at a provincial chapter, without residence in that parish.

procurador general — In the first two centuries of Recollect evangelization, the procurator's main tasks were to gather confreres for the Philippine missions from various Spanish convents of the Congregation, to accompany the volunteers to Sevilla or Cadiz where they boarded ships for Manila. Also commissary.

province — a group of religious convents occupying a definite territory, headed by the superior or prior provincial.

provincial — see prior provincial.

provincialate — office, term of office or ministry of a prior provincial of a province of a religious order; residence of a prior provincial and provincial councilors.

pueblo — town or municipality during the Spanish era.

reducción — resettlement of catechumens and natives or rebel surrenderees.

reducidos — literally, reduced or subjugated. Resettled natives or rebels.

regular — religious priest or brother, not diocesan nor secular.

remontado — an apostate, a Christian who turned his back on his religion, went out of the reducción or pueblo and took refuge in the mountain.

sacras— the three printed papers or manuscripts with their corresponding cardboard, plastic or glass frames placed on the altar so the Mass celebrant can easily read some prayers or parts of the Mass without having recourse to the missal.

Salve — Salve Regina, Marian hymn sung after Masses on Saturday and other feasts in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

sede vacante — episcopal see that is vacant due to the demise or resignation of its local ordinary, the bishop. An administrator temporarily manages it.

terciaria — female member of the third order of a religious order.

terna — list of three priests made by a superior and presented as candidates for the post of parish priest in a vacant curacy to colonial authorities that select one of them. Under the Patronato Real system, it was a list of three candidates to vacant episcopal see presented to the Spanish monarch for his/her final choice.

theologate — seminary for theology students or school of theology.

tribunal — see casa tribunal.

triennium — three-year term of a local prior, vicar provincial or prior provincial.

vara — linear measurement equivalent to twenty-eight feet.

Via Crucis — Latin for *Way of the Cross*. The Stations of the Cross refer to the fourteen scenes depicting the trial, Crucifixion and Death of Jesus.

vicar general — second highest-ranking superior of a religious Order.

vicar provincial — the superior of a vicariate, a religious elected or appointed to administer the province in the absence or unavailability of the prior provincial.

vicariate — group of religious houses under the jurisdiction of a vicar provincial.

visita — barrio or annex village which is an integral part of a parish or town, without a resident priest. A chapel is built for worship and administration of sacraments.

visitation — official or canonical visit made by the bishop to the parishes of his diocese or by the prior provincial to his religious subordinates and houses in order to confirm their priestly and religious life, to check violations thereof and inspect the canonical books. Now termed as renewal visit.

vows — solemn promises made by a monk, nun or friar by which he or she is bound to chastity, poverty and obedience. Simple or temporal vows are professed for a period of time and renewable for valid reasons.

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The Coauthors

ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ ARANGUREN was born in Barasoain, Navarra, Spain in 1801. He professed the monastic vows in 1825 at the Augustinian Recollect convent of Alfaro, La Rioja, Spain. A young professor of Sacred Theology, Fray José Aranguren de San Agustín taught future missionaries at Alfaro and at San Nicolás Convent in Manila since 1829. In 1831, he administered Capas, Tarlac. In 1835, he served Masinloc, Zambales parish where he built a strong church made of hewn stones and lime. In 1843, he was elected prior provincial. He and his council approved the *Manner of Administration* in 1844. Pius IX appointed him archbishop of Manila in 1846. Out of zeal for souls and for God's glory, the prelate twice visited almost all the parishes and far-flung missions of his vast archdiocese. Aranguren staunchly defended the interests of the native secular clergy. After his death in 1861, his secretary Pedro Peláez as vicar capitular of the archdiocese *sede vacante* took up the cudgels in behalf of the native clergy.



MIGUEL AVELLANEDA OAR was born in 1892 at Casalarreina, La Rioja, Spain. After his ordination in 1915, he was sent to Venezuela. In 1920 he taught philosophy and theology at Monteagudo and Marcilla in Spain for thirteen years. He was put in charge of musical direction and the church organ. He was vice prior in San Nicolas Convent, Manila (1931-1934), before his Rome assignment. He is the author of *Segunda parte del "Catálogo de los religiosos de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos"* (1906-1936). He penned historical and literary works. He authored a book of thirty-five sermons for religious feasts and composed hymns for various festivities. He passed away at the Recollect seminary in Fuenterrabía, Guipúzkoa in 1962.



EMETERIO D. BUÑO OAR hails from Carmen, Bohol where he was born in 1938. He is the first elected prior provincial of Saint Ezekiel Moreno Province. He professed in 1963 and was ordained priest in 1967. He finished his theology in Marcilla and his M.A. at Saint Louis University. Among his offices: Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary Baguio City rector (1973-1979, 1982-1985); director, San Miguel Corporation board (1968-1979); USJ-R Cebu City president (1988-1999); RFC prior (1985-1988); San Sebastian College Manila president (1979-1982, 2003-2006); prior of the UNO-R community in Bacolod City (2006-1012); UNO-R president (2012-2015). He resides at San Sebastian Convent, celebrating Masses and other sacraments. His research articles were published in *History of the Augustinian Recolects in Cebu since 1621. Studies and Sources* and in *Recollectio*.



FIDEL DE BLAS DEL CARMEN OAR was born in Arnedo, La Rioja, Spain in 1845. He exercised his pastoral ministry in Antipolo, Mindoro and Cavite. He was prior of San Sebastian, vicar provincial, provincial councilor, prior provincial of Saint Nicholas Province. At age 69, Fr. Fidel de Blas was raised to the Order's highest post as prior general (1914-1918). His advanced age and continuing ill health constrained him to resign as prior general. On 19 March 1920, he found eternal repose in Marcilla. He was a superior who displayed utmost discretion and prudence in his decisions. His *Labor evangélica de los Padres Agustinos Recoletos en las Islas Filipinas* was published in 1910.

LUIS DE JESÚS OAR wrote the second volume of the *Crónicas*. He originated from Toledo, Spain in 1622. He professed at the convent in Madrid of Castile Province. His successive posts: theology professor in Salamanca, provincial councilor, prior of Valladolid, prior provincial (1678-1683). After the first chronicler's death, Luis de Jesús took his place. In his *Crónicas*, published in 1681, he wrote only about facts and did not engage much in ascetic reflections. His history abounds in expressions of love for the Recollect Order. Luis de Jesús bewails the

dearth of historical sources and the “neglect of great religious to use the pen and leave news for posterity.” At 71, he died in 1693 in Madrid.

JUAN DE LA CONCEPCIÓN OAR is known for his fourteen volumes of *Historia general de Philipinas* (Manila 1788-1792). He was born in Madrid in 1724. His parents were Manuel Romero and Antonia López. Juan Romero y López professed his monastic vows as Juan de la Concepción in 1740. In 1752, he was preacher and master of the professed at San Nicolás Convent in Intramuros. He was assigned to Iba, Zambales. He was theology professor at San Nicolás in 1756 and shortly after curate of Casborrán [now Alaminos, Pangasinan]. He was prior provincial in 1759-1761 and provincial chronicler for 21 years. He was in assigned in Bolinao, Manila and Vigan. In Cavite Puerto, he passed away in 1786.



ENRIQUE B. EGUIARTE OAR is from México D.F. He professed his vows in Monteagudo in 1980. He finished theology in Marcilla, Navarra (1984) and was ordained priest in México (1985). He holds a licentiate in Latin American Literature (1991) and Modern Languages (1996) from the Ibero-American University of Mexico City. He earned his doctoral degree in Letters and Philosophy from

the University of Navarra, Pamplona, and another doctorate in Theology and Patristics from the *Augustinianum* in Rome. He authored articles and books on literature, culture, Saint Augustine and saints. He had taught in Mexico City, Marcilla and Madrid. He is president of OAR Institute of Augustinology and editor of the scholarly journals *Mayéutica* and *Avvgvstinus*. Based in Rome, he gives Augustinian Recollect spiritual exercises in Europe, America and Asia.

RAFAEL GARCÍA OAR was born in Fuentes de Ágreda, Soria, Spain in 1911. After his seminary formation in Lodosa, Monteagudo, San Millán de la Cogolla and Marcilla, he was ordained priest in England. He exercised his pastoral ministry in Dumaguete, San Carlos, Kabankalan, Isabela and Sum-ag in Negros Island. Fr. García was vicar



provincial of the Philippines, and in Spain he was provincial councilor, and later provincial chronicler and provincial archivist. He served as chaplain of monasteries, especially those of Recollect nuns. He penned countless articles on OAR history in periodicals, but chiefly in Recollect publications. He wrote histories of towns in Negros, Palawan and Marianas. He died in 1977.

JOSÉ JAVIER LIZARRAGA OAR professed at Monteagudo in 1972 and was ordained priest at Marcilla in July 1976. He acquired his Licentiate in Church History *magna cum laude* and later his Doctorate in Church History from the Gregorian University in Rome, Italy. He was prior of *Collegio di Sant'Ildefonso* at Via Sistina, Rome. He taught Church History at their theologate in Marcilla. He was general chronicler of the Order in 1986-1992 and in 2009-2015 as general archivist at the OAR curia in Rome. At present, he is the provincial archivist in Marcilla. He authored *Un Camino de Fidelidad. Mariano Gazpio, Agustino Recoleta* (2017) and *Correspondencia de Fray Mariano Gazpio* (2023).



The competence of **ÁNGEL MARTÍNEZ CUESTA OAR** encompasses Church history, history of Spain, Philippine history, history of Recollect Contemplative Nuns, OSA and OAR history and culture. He was born in Brullés, Burgos, Spain in 1939. He professed the vows in 1957 was ordained priest in 1961. After Manila (1961-1962), he went to Rome and acquired from the Pontifical Gregorian University both his Licentiate and his Doctorate in Church History *summa cum laude*. The English version of his dissertation *Historia de la Isla de Negros, Filipinas, 1565-1898*, was published in 1980. He authored the three volumes of *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos*. He edited and published Saint Ezekiel Moreno's four volumes of correspondence. He is the editor of the *Recollectio* since 1978. Based at the general curia in Rome for over six decades now, he travels to America, Asia and Europe to deliver his research papers.



GREGORIO OCHOA DEL CARMEN OAR was born in 1874 in Pamplona, Navarra. In 1897, he joined the faculty of the short-lived Colegio de San Jose in Bacolod City. He finished his Bachelor of Arts at University of Santo Tomas and then took up Law. As the Order's general chronicler, he authored three volumes of the *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*: vol. 7 [1706-1754] 722 pages; vol. 8 [1755-1796], 640 pages; and vol. 9 [1797-1835] 509 pages. He further authored the biography of the Augustinian Recollect martyrs in Japan—Francisco de Jesús and Vicente de San Antonio. The historian possessed exquisite literary talent and contributed countless poems in Recollect newsletters and Manila periodicals. He passed away in Marcilla in 1956.



RENE F. PAGLINAWAN OAR obtained his Licentiate in Ecclesiastical History *magna cum laude* from the Gregorian University in 1984. He was ordained priest in 1982 at Marcilla, Navarra. He served as dean of studies, Church history professor and thesis adviser of Church history majors at Recoletos School of Theology (RST) in Quezon City. He was. His past offices were: CaReS formator, RFC prior/dean of studies/master of the professed, vicar provincial (QC); provincial councilor (Madrid), general councilor (Rome); provincial secretary of Saint Ezekiel Province and head of its Commission on Recoletos Heritage, History and Culture; prior of San Sebastian Convent in Manila and prior of the Tondo Recollect community. He worked in the mission of Sierra Leone in West Africa. He composes songs, draws portraits and translates works on saints, directives and documents into English. He is now the general archivist in Rome.



PABLO PANEDAS OAR was born in 1953 in Mucientes, Valladolid, Spain. After his seminary formation in Lodosa, Fuenterrabía, Monteagudo and Marcilla, he received the holy order of priesthood, he received the priesthood in 1976 at Valladolid City at age 23. He obtained his Licentiate in Spiritual Theology *summa cum laude* from the Gregorian University in Rome where he later acquired his Doctorate in

Spirituality from the *Pontificia Facoltà Teologica Teresianum*. In 2010-2016, he was general councilor of the Order and local prior of their Via Sistina house in Rome. He was a theology professor at Marcilla and in 1993-1994 at RST. He researched on Recollect churches in the Philippines for *Recollectio*. He was editor of *Canta y Camina* and *Mayéutica*. He authored books on the Recollect Martyrs of Japan and their correspondence. In 2016-2022, he was general archivist and prior of the general curia community in Rome. He is presently local prior of their convent at Marcilla, Navarra.

SERAFÍN PRADO Y SÁENZ OAR was born in Estollo, La Rioja, Spain on 12 January 1910. He professed his vows in 1926. He studied his theology in Rome where he received the presbyterate in 1934. He further finished his Licentiate in Theology at the Gregorian University. Thereafter, he taught at the Recollect formation centers in San Millán de la Cogolla in La Rioja as well as Marcilla and Lodosa in Navarra. In 1940, he was assigned to Venezuela where he taught at various colleges in Caracas, San Cristóbal and Palmira. In 1948, he returned to Marcilla where stayed for the rest of his life. He was named prior of Marcilla in 1955-1958 and provincial councilor 1958-1964. He professed his great love the Recollect community and his total dedication as formator for nearly five decades. A brilliant homilist and orator, he was often invited to deliver sermons. “A poet of light and color, who seizes beauty in varied circumstances of his life,” Fr. Serafin had his exquisite poems published posthumously in *Mirada azul* [Azure Gaze] in 2013. At age 77, he died at a hospital in Pamplona, Navarra on 19 January 1987.



JESÚS GABRIEL PÉREZ RECIO OAR born in 1944 at Fuentelsaz, Soria, Spain, and he professed his vows in 1964 at Monteagudo. He received the holy priesthood in 1968 at Marcilla. Fondly called *Ilongo* by confreres, he is the longest-serving curate of San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish in Talisay City, Negros Occidental in 1969-1986. He was assigned in Guam and Lodosa, Navarra. He spent most of his ministry in parishes in the United States like New York City, New Mexico and Texas. He served Saint Anne Church in Vauxhall, London.



EMILIO EDGARDO A. QUILATAN OAR was born in Manila in 1964. After his profession in 1986, he finished his theology in 1991 at RFC, Quezon City. A priest since 1992, he obtained his Licentiate in Church History and his Doctorate in Church History—both *magna cum laude*—from the Gregorian University. His doctoral dissertation focused on the Recollect Hacienda de Imus. His research works are published in coffee-table books and scholarly journals. Since 2009, he is Church History professor at RST, UST Faculty of Sacred Theology, Immaculate Conception Major Seminary in Bulacan and other theology schools. He was RST Dean of Studies. He lectures on Church history, Philippine Church history as well as histories of OSA, OAR and AR Sisters at national, local and online conferences and in courses of preparation for solemn profession. He is often interviewed on TV on such topics as Virgen del Carmen and Black Nazarene. He is the administrator of *Archivo Recoleta*, Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City.



The Author, Editor & Translator

Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos is a retired Full Professor 6 of Italian, Spanish and Latin of the Department of European Languages, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City (1986-2015). He finished high school at Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental and graduated from Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in Baguio City with an AB Classical degree. In 1972-1976, he studied theology at the Recollect School of Theology in Marcilla, Navarra, Spain. In 1978, he obtained his Church History Licentiate *magna cum laude* from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He got his *Diploma de Lengua y Cultura Española* from *Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo* in Santander, Spain. He pursued doctoral studies in Hispanic Literature at UP Diliman where he handled over twenty courses in Italian language, literature, history, translation and research methods for twenty-nine years. He also taught Latin, Spanish language, thesis writing, translation as well as Chabacano language and literature.



A teacher since 1975, he taught at various schools: Colegio San Agustín (Valladolid, Spain), Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary, University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Recoletos School of Theology [Affiliate of UST], Lyceum of the Philippines University, Far Eastern University, San Sebastian College Manila, Miriam College, Magsaysay Institute of Shipping and Carlos P. Romulo School of Diplomacy of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

A prolific writer, he authored over twenty books on biography and history as well as Basic and Intermediate textbooks in Spanish and Italian. In 2022, his books *History of the Augustinian Recollects in Cebu since 1621: Studies and Sources* and *History of Bohol, 1521-1937: Essays, Notes and Sources* were launched in Cebu City and Tagbilaran City, respectively. He penned two articles in *Tubod: The Heart of Bohol* (2004). His research works are found in such books as *Cavite Cultura e Historia* (2002), *Recoletos: History, Legacy and Culture* (2005), *Handurawan. Visita Iglesia Negros y Recoletos* (2006) and in journals

like *Recollectio*; *UP Linguae et Litterae*; *Pintacasi*; *Quaerens. Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life*; *The Journal of History* and *Philippine Social Science Journal*. His research studies are compiled in the special issues of *Quaerens* vol. 15 (2020), vol. 16 (2021) and vol. 17 (2022).

Since 2005, Romanillos is a member of the *Academia Filipina de la Lengua Española, Inc.* Prior General Miguel Miró conferred on him the title of Brother General of the Order of Augustinian Recollects in February 2022.

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