

MONTFORTIAN

The Official Publication of the
SMM Philippine Delegation

PHILIPPINES

Vol. XVI No. 3 December 2011

Totus Tuus



**From the
Desk of the
Delegation
Superior**

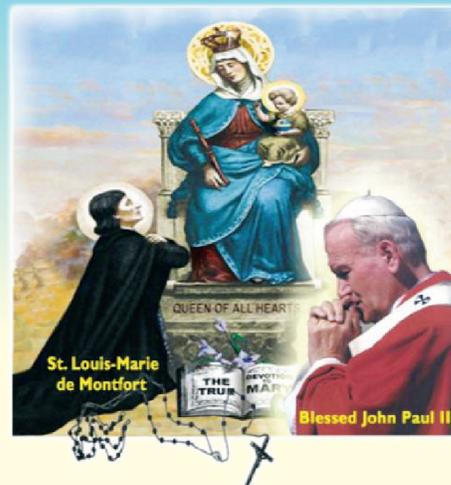
In the very early hours of May 1, 2011, we went to St. Peter's Square for the beatification of the Pope John Paul II by Pope Benedict XIV in a very Solemn Mass with more than a million people attending. We had to allow ourselves to be squeezed by the shoulder-to-shoulder crowd moving like a wave of thousands of people trying to get as close as possible to the heart of St. Peter's Square where the Roman Pontiff was to declare this "Montfortian Pope" as one of the blessed in the Catholic Church. Montfortian pope? It was Pope John Paul II who at the Pontifical level carried in his life and ministry as the Representative of Christ on earth a motto so dear to St. Louis Marie de Montfort: TOTUS TUUS.

Describing the Montfortian character of Blessed John Paul II's life and papacy, Pope Benedict XVI said in his homily during the beatification Mass: "... the theological vision which Blessed John Paul II discovered as a young man and subsequently maintained and deepened throughout his life. A vision which is expressed in the scriptural image of the crucified Christ with Mary, his Mother, at his side. This icon from

the Gospel of John (19:25-27) was taken up in the episcopal and later the papal coat-of-arms of Karol Wojtyla: a golden cross with the letter "M" on the lower right and the motto "Totus tuus", drawn from the well-known words of Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort in which Karol Wojtyla found a guiding light for his life: "Totus tuus ego sum et omnia mea tua sunt. Accipio te in mea omnia. Praebe mihi cor tuum, Maria - I belong entirely to you, and all that I have is yours. I take you for my all. O Mary, give me your heart" (True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, 233, 266).

In the Philippines in 1986, the same Spirit of the Montfortian "TOTUS TUUS" was introduced, made known and became a spiritual way of life for many Filipinos. Fr. Claude Sigouin, SMM and Fr. Mario Bellotti, SMM, the first Montfort Missionaries who arrived in the Philippines in 1984, organized sessions called TOTUS TUUS JOURNEY (TTJ) to the lay faithful who were interested to know, to study and to live out this Montfortian secret to holiness. Every year in these past twenty five years, a batch or two of TTJers made their Montfortian consecration in very solemn celebrations presided by Montfortian priests. This Totus Tuus Journey initially started in Manila but later on as the Filipino Montfortians started to extend their mission in Cebu, the missionaries introduced the same Montfortian journey to the laity in that island. The latest of the Act of Consecration which the celebration I presided was a big batch of 27 participants in March 2011 in Cebu. These participants zealously and faithfully attended the 33 TTJ sessions given weekly at the Mission House in Minglanilla, facilitated by priests, seminarians and lay formators who have been formed to assist the Missionaries in the Totus Tuus Program. Many other TTJ batches completed at the Montfort Center and in parishes in Metro Manila organized by the Fathers at the Montfort Center in New Manila, Quezon City all through these past years.

The Totus Tuus Journey Program is a process oriented approach towards learning the Montfortian spirituality that would enable each participant



to understand the role of Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church, the need to renew their Baptismal Promises by Consecrating themselves to Jesus Christ, Incarnate Wisdom, through the hands of Mary and to realize their vocation to become effective apostles in our world today. Each participant has to faithfully attend the sessions which are divided into four major parts or weeks, namely: 1) The first period on the Knowledge of the World which is composed of fourteen sessions; 2) The second period on the Knowledge of Self which is composed of seven sessions; 3) The third period on the Knowledge of Mary which is divided into seven sessions; and 4) The fourth period on the Knowledge of Jesus which is again composed of seven sessions. Going through these thirty-three days of journey if done with zeal, fidelity and love will make the participant enter into what Montfort calls "God's garden of Paradise" which will make him or her sublimely happy (SM 19-20)

In Chapter 6 of the *True Devotion to Mary* written by Montfort, he lists the wonderful effects of the "TOTUS TUUS", the Consecration to Jesus to the hands of Mary. These are: 1) Knowledge of our unworthiness, 2) A Share in Mary's faith; 3) The Gift of pure love; 4) Great confidence in God and in Mary, 5) Communication of the Spirit of Mary, 6) Transformation into the Likeness of Jesus and 7) The Greater glory of Christ. At the beginning of this short article,

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A Blessed Christmas to All!

FROM THE EDITOR

Fr. Ramon M. Pedroza, smm



Since the beatification in 1888 and especially canonization in 1947, St. Louis Marie de Montfort (1673-1716) has been repeatedly extolled by the Magisterium of the Church through his writings -- a channel of missionary communication in our time. His writings have been proposed as authentic expressions of the Church's teachings, or to use the words of Pope Pius XII, *flagrans, solidica ad recta* -- ardent, solid and correct. The love of Pope John Paul II for this vagabond preacher is well known openly declared his admiration for the saint and choosing to pull out from Montfort's writings, the short formula for consecration (cf. True Devotion # 233) as his Episcopal motto, the motto which he has retained as Supreme Pontiff: Totus tuus. John Paul II did not hesitate to declare -- with so many others -- that reading Montfort's True Devotion, where this motto is found, "was to be a turning point in my life." (Patrick Gaffney, Light, Wind and Water: The Life and Spirituality of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, Bay Shore, New York: Montfort Publications, 2001 pp. 1-2)

On the part of Pope Benedict XVI, Montfort was and is the inspiration of a spiritual renewal. In 2009, he recalled before priests and clergy how 17th century France was "marked by opposing religious phenomena and serious political problems, [and] the Thirty Years' War, which devastated not only a large part of Central Europe but also souls. He characterized France in the time of Montfort as "contempt for the Christian faith... spread by certain currents of thought which then prevailed", so similar to our current times. He then underscored "the Holy Spirit was inspiring a spiritual renewal full of fervour with important figures such as St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort.

"Father Frederick William Faber an Oratorian and member of the Oxford Movement that is a group of clergymen at the Oxford University in the 1930's who sought to restore Catholic faith and practice within the Anglican Church noted in 1862 that Montfort has had "a remarkable influence on the Church...and bids fair to have much wider influence in the years to come. His preaching, his writing and his conversation were all impregnated with prophecy and with anticipations of the later ages of the Church. (Benedict XVI, Saint John Eudes And the Formation of the Diocesan Clergy General Audience, August 19, 2009)

In the Encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II *Centesimus Annus*, he said that "The need for a new evangelization helps the Church to understand that "today, more than ever...her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of action than as a result of internal logic and consistency"

As we celebrate the 25 years of the Totus Tuus Journey in the Philippines, we try to listen and reflect the words of these great men in our Church who in a way extolling the missionary endeavor of our founder St. Louis Marie de Montfort, an indefatigable itinerant preacher whose life was imbued by the Holy Spirit and tirelessly worked to make Jesus and Mary loved by all. May we be all the more, be inspired to live the spiritual heritage of our founder.

Totus Tuus... from page 1.

we highlighted the example of Blessed John Paul II. His beatification (considered the fastest in the history of the Catholic Church) confirms the fact that because Pope John Paul II was faithful and zealous to his "TOTUS TUUS" way of life, his consecration to Jesus through the hands of Mary, he incarnated the fruits above and wonderful effects revealed to us by Montfort. This happens not because he was a pope but simply because he was a baptized Christian like any of us who lived out the spirituality of Montfort: TOTUS TUUS. The challenge then will be, how zealous and faithful are we who have made the Totus Tuus Journey, religious and lay alike, to this Montfortian way to holiness.

After 25 years since the seeds of the TOTUS TUUS way of life was sown in the Philippine Church, we feel so blessed for this great treasure given to us. On the other hand, we continue to see the challenge how to spread this more and more to others who may have the desire to know it in the different parts of the country. More importantly still, the greatest challenge is the question: Who

among us who have started the journey are still on it? Who among us have taken one step or two into living it out in daily life? And who among us remain all through the years like Blessed John Paul II? The same challenge was once posed by Montfort to his followers when he wrote the True Devotion: "As this devotion essentially consists in a state of a soul, it will not be understood in the same way by everyone. Some -- the great majority -- will stop short at the threshold and go no further. Others --- not many --- will take but one step into its interior. Who will take a second step? Who will take a third? Finally who will remain in it permanently? Only the one to whom the Spirit of Jesus reveals the secret. The Holy Spirit himself will lead this faithful soul from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from light to light, until at length he attains transformation into Jesus in the fullness of his age and of his glory in heaven." AMEN. (TD 119).

Fr. Paul Arnel L. Lucero, SMM
Delegation Superior

Happy Silver Anniversary to the TTJers! and Merry Christmas to All!

My Experience in Nairobi, Kenya, Africa

By: Alvin M. Baldesco, smm

International Scholasticate House of the Montfort Missionaries in Nairobi, Kenya-Africa has 17 members: eight in first year Theology, two in second year Theology and five in third year of Theology with two formators. With the mandate from the General administration, this International Scholasticate Community officially started last 2010 with the New Statutes: *Ad Exerementum*. The aim is to foster international collaboration among scholastics coming from different nationalities in view of the future mission of the Congregation. We come from seven different countries namely: Uganda, Congo, Malawi, Zambia, England, Kenya and the Philippines. The members of our community are Bros. Alvin (Philippines), Gideon (Kenya), Dido (Congo), David (Uganda) and Jailos (Malawi) 3rd year Theology, Bros. Arnel and Benjie (Philippines) 2nd year, Bros. Anthony and Peter (Malawi), Emmerson and Gener (Philippines), Phephe (Zambia) and Henri, Martin and Theophile (Congo) 1st year. Fr. Fred Scragg from England is the assistant formator and Bursar. And Fr. Ernest Akhonya, is the Master of Scholastics and the Superior of the Community. We are studying in Hekima College, a Constituent College of Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). The College is run by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and it offers a three year program of Theology which satisfies the requirements for the Bachelor of Theology Degree. Apart from academic program, the members are also engaged in various apostolic works such as with the youth, the deaf, Legion of Mary, Vocation Promotion and BEC programs. As stipulated in the statutes, "the time of scholasticate is a time of growth and deepening; of the living out of religious life after the commitment made by the

profession of vows at the end of Novitiate with a view to definitive commitment in the Company of Mary" (*New Statutes: International Scholasticate of Nairobi, no.1, p.2*).

This becomes essential to the daily life of each member of the community but honestly speaking, to be away from home is a struggle, so much so to be away from our homeland. We come from different countries and families, we have different cultures and attitudes but the most important thing is that we are united in this diversity. We are united in the sense of our calling for a specific lifestyle (religious life). It is a vocation of committing oneself to be an instrument of God's love for his people - the people of God. We live in one community sharing our joys, burdens and struggles. This is also our way of expressing this love for his glory alone.

As our founder St. Louie Marie de Montfort puts it, "If you don't take risk for God, you won't do great things for Him". Though we are far from our homeland, families and friends, we are still connected and bonded with God's love and protection. The hardships and challenges become easy to bear. It is also because of the unending maternal protection of the Blessed Mother Mary and because of her love "no one who asks for her intercession is rejected" (*TD no.85*). We are glad to have this amazing experience and we wholeheartedly hope that it will bear fruits that will last, not only for our Congregation but also for the Church for the greater glory of God, the Father and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ who came into this world through the mystery of Incarnation, which is the heart of our Montfortian Spirituality, so as to bring the salvation of God to the entire human race.

Greetings from St. Mary Gate of Heaven Parish



Hello Everyone!

It's Christmas time once again. People in all corners of the world are filled again with lots of joy in this last month of the year. There's no place in the world where one finds a meaningful celebration of our Savior's birthday except in our country. This is what I realized being away from our country. This is my second Christmas here in the United States and I'm so nostalgic when the month of December comes.

I am very grateful to the Lord for the gift my missionary vocation. So far I am happy with my being part of the parish of St Mary Gate of Heaven. Our parish is under the guidance and care of

the Montfort Missionaries (US Province) for over a hundred years. I am inspired by the dedication of our confreres to their pastoral work. They are good preachers no wonder they are in demand everywhere for retreats and parish missions.

There are good numbers of Filipinos in our parish as well as in our neighbouring parishes. It's almost a year that we started celebrating Filipino mass once a month. The Diocese is very supportive of many immigrants and so Filipino Diocesan Apostolate (FDA) was created to give support to the Filipino communities in all parishes and to enliven their devotion. They also organize fiesta celebrations of San Lorenzo, Santo Niño and Our Lady of Antipolo (of Peace and Good Voyage) at the Diocesan level.

I have been to those celebrations and I am so happy on how the Filipinos are really bringing the richness of our faith expression in a foreign land. This becomes my objective in organizing the Filipinos in our parish which is multicultural in nature. Coming from the only Christian nation in Asia I believe we can give witness to our Christian faith when we are bonded together and bringing them to be part of our parish community.

It is my wish that as we commemorate the coming of the Word made flesh in and through Mary, we may all be inspired and active in giving birth to Jesus in any place where we are sent and through apostolic ministries entrusted to us. Let us be always united in our prayers.

A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND GRACE-FILLED NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!

FR. RICHARD SMM

CEBU COMMUNITY

NewsBits

by Erlyn Segudino

TTJ Facilitator's Seminar

On July 2011, Fr. Norwyn Baydo, smm, informed us that they are going to train new Totus Tuus Journey facilitators from among the TTJ'ers in Cebu Community.

In that connection a one day training was held on August 20, 2011 at the Montfort Mission House in Minglanilla, Cebu. Fr. Carmelo Esteban, smm of the Montfort Center in Manila gave us an introduction on how to facilitate the TTJ sessions. He presented some topics like 1. Mary in the Trinitarian Love, 2. Mary in the Mystery of Christ, 3. Mary in the Mystery of the Holy Spirit and 4. Mary in the Mystery of the Church.

After two months of preparation, the newly trained facilitators were asked to share to the group an assigned session of the TTJ in the presence of Fr. Paul Arnel Lucero, smm. And last November 20, 2011, the seven newly trained facilitators took turns in helping out

conducting TTJ sessions to Batch 8 at the Montfort Mission House in Cebu.

Medical Mission

The Montfort Missionaries headed by Fr. Paul Arnel Lucero, smm, assisted by some volunteer TTJ members, organized a Medical Mission in Sitio Kabuwan, a former mission area of the Montfort Missionaries in Cebu, it is a mountainous area which belongs to the Parish of the Holy Rosary, Inayagan, Cebu.

The group has to set on foot leaving the mission house at 6:00 am, after three hours of mountain trekking they reached the place of the Medical Mission. At first they rested so as to give time to settle everything needed for the Medical Mission. They opened the Medical Mission with the celebration of the Holy Mass with Fr. Paul Arnel as celebrant. At 11:00 am after the registration of the beneficiaries of the mission, they started giving out the medicines, weighing the patients especially the children and checking the blood pressure of adult patients through the help of Ruby Navales and Kristine Saya-ang, Registered Volunteer Nurses of Naga, Cebu.

The Medical Mission ended at 3:00 pm with 100 patients being served and attended.

STP

by Linda Igna

FEAST DAY OF ST. THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS

The Sta Teresita Parish of Brgy. West Rembo, Makati City celebrates the Feast Day of her Patroness St. Therese of the Child Jesus on the first Sunday of October. A nine day novena mass was offered with a theme each day which reflects her personality as simple, sweet and a loving child of God.

The highlight of the Feast Day celebration last October 2, 2011 was marked by a High Mass led by Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, Most Rev. Bernardino Cortez, DD together with the Montfort Fathers, Fr. Ariel Aquino, Fr. Nelson Cabanero, Fr. Carmelo Esteban, Fr. Reynaldo Bullas, Fr. Melvin Ordanez, Fr. Rene Punnappanal, Fr. Wim Peeters. After the mass, blessed roses were distributed to her devotees on the feast day itself – the symbol with which St Therese became known all over the world.

RETREAT AND RECOLLECTION OF STP

Last October 28-29, 2011 was the recollection and planning of Parish Activities 2011 at the Layforce, San Carlos Seminary, Makati City. It was well attended by our parish priest, Fr. Ariel Aquino together with Fr. Nelson Cabanero, STP Pastoral Council Officers and members from the different mandated religious organizations/ministries and zone coordinators.

The group arrived at 1:30 pm in the venue and was led to a spiritual journey by the Layforce retreat masters Bro. Roberto Rosario and his wife Sis. Gaines Marie Rosario. It was memorable and touching as the group travelled back in time to recall the past and reflect on all the happy and sad memories and eventually through that activity to get rid of all the pains of yester-years and become reconciled with oneself, others and with God.

The second day started with the celebration of the Holy Mass followed by a hearty breakfast. We then proceeded to a successful planning session. It was a joyful bonding time for everybody as we brainstormed some activities to be implemented for our parish community.

The group went back to the parish after lunch ready to face the challenges of tomorrow and serve as renewed and effective evangelizers of God.

TTJ... Truly a Journey A Reflection... By Remedios Budi Kraft

Malaysia: Truly Asia is the catchy slogan of the *Malaysian Airlines*; and presented with the scenic and cultural assets of the country, the slogan serves as a very attractive and effective marketing device that encourages tourists to visit Malaysia.

It is in this context that I thought of reflecting on the *Totus tuus Journey*, familiarly referred to as TTJ by those who have joined the caravan of spiritual travelers. Having been introduced to TTJ in the late 1990s, I initially looked at it as a weekly activity to attend to – not really something new, because the TTJ periods are similar to the 33-day preparation we undergo before the ACIES, the “great central annual function of the Legion,” when all Legionaries renew their fealty to Mary, Queen of the Legion. In pre-TTJ years as a Legionary, I looked at the ACIES preparation more as a focused awareness of dependence on Mary as Commander-in-Chief of the Legion of Mary; and as such, I tried to understand what is being prescribed as slavery to Mary by undergoing the 4 periods of *Knowledge of the World, Knowledge of Self, Knowledge of Mary, and Knowledge of Jesus*. Using the references Secret of Mary, True Devotion, and Imitation of Christ, as well as selected passages from the Bible, the ACIES preparation became just an annual ritual.

In my first TTJ, we were told that there will be 33 weekly sessions, but it is not a seminar. My initial reactions were a combination of **anxious indifference** (*what – 33 sessions, that’s too long, I don’t think I can finish it.*); **challenge** (*well, if others were able to go through it, why can’t I?*); and **curiosity** (*what more is there to learn about Mary and Jesus – am I not a good and practicing Legionary already?*). But attend I did – week after week, rain or shine – going through the four periods (*Sister Paz was such an inspiring and untiring facilitator*), from which I learned, became more aware, and began to appreciate God’s creations: *our world* which is His gift to us; *ourselves* which He patterned after His own image; *Mary* whom He appointed as the means to bring about the God-Man, Jesus Christ; and *Jesus*, God’s Word Who became Man to bring about man’s salvation, the reunification of God and humanity in Heaven, the ultimate realization of God’s Love for humanity. The 33 sessions were really a journey from realizing how man keeps on taking for granted God’s gifts to mankind; it is a journey that makes one realize one’s nothingness without Mary, a realization of one’s complete dependence on Mary – that man cannot get to his ultimate goal – Jesus – except through, with, in, and for Mary.

From my first TTJ session, I have joined 3 or 4 more Journeys, and each time, there are new learnings, new realizations, such as being sensitive to the world around me and to the needs of people around me; but more than anything, it has somehow improved my spiritual life. I now truly believe that Jesus, having come into this world through Mary, wants all of us to experience being molded in Mary. In capsule, if we go through Mary, she will certainly lead us all to her Son Jesus. Thus, the TTJ is truly a journey through this life, and we can surely reach our ultimate goal – the kingdom of Heaven – if we consecrate ourselves to Mary, our Mother: **I am all yours, my Queen, my Mother, and all that I have is yours . . . TOTUS TUUS, MARIA!**

THE GREATNESS... EXPERIENCED IN NAVOTAS

To be great,
You don’t need
To own Castles or Mansions,
To rule over the people in depress area,
To possess all knowledge,
To sail every sea,
Or to go to the moon.
The paths to greatness are open to all,
Especially to the ordinary people who live in Navotas.

You are great
Each time you forget your own advantage
and help someone in need,
Each time you close your eyes but not your
Heart to someone who
needs your presence.
Each time you go to the limit of
your strength to help them,
Each time you pursue an
Ideal without flagging,
Each time the warmth in your
heart warms up another life,
Each time you welcome those who need
you even though the only thing
That you can offer is your
love and presence.

Indeed, you are great
When you are good to others,
When you are tolerant,
When you GIVE,
When you LOVE.

I can tell you that I know
The Families especially the Mothers who accepted us in their house.
Who are GREATER than any Head of State, because they count
neither their time nor their self sacrifice.

There are Scholars of PPF, young Men and Women greater than
prince and Princess because their generosity and gift of themselves
are so admirable,
Constant sinner’s Greater than Pious people, because of their trust
in the Mercy of God. And their efforts to pick themselves up go on
endlessly from the poverty that they suffer. These and many like them
are GREATER People. God is seen as wonderful through them.

“Anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant
and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all.”
(Mk. 10:43-44)

Jhun Escanilla

Blessed Are The Eyes That See What You See.



Jesus' ministry was characterized by healing; the blind, the deaf, the paralytic among others. The healing of these physical deformities were means to help them not only to focus on outward defects but also to realize of their spiritual defects, the worst defect was that of not realizing Jesus as the Messiah. This gives a glimpse of what Jesus requires of us. To see clearly what surrounds us, to hear and then move out and transmit His message of healing not only in physical deformities but also spiritual one: and this is a dimension which makes missionary work efficacious. How blessed are the eyes that see what technology has done and use it to make the kingdom of God a reality!

Thanks to the progress of science. A missionary now takes shorter time to reach his mission area than ever before. Not only has science eased movement but also has eased, seeing; through satellites we are able to see very far. Hearing is not a big problem; telephones, radios have eased this. However, it seems the more the seeing, movement or hearing, the more was the increase of spiritual blindness, deafness and paralysis. I do not need to plunge myself into pointing out the defects that have emerged with scientific realism moreover, the strength it has are

evident and worthy of an applause.

Today we talk of the world as a global village; it is because of the influence that science has exerted on people's minds. In a more radical way, in our Montfortian formation the legacy that science enacted is visible; we could not dream of internationality devoid of modern scientific means of travel. International Novitiate is just one example and I am glad to say something about it.

More than three months have elapsed since the second batch of the Montfort International Novitiate started. It was a Monday, 1st Aug, 2011, when filled with awe and uncertainty, swimming in a pool of wonder of how the novitiate program would be that we started our novitiate. Nine novices were expected to start their novitiate together, but this was not possible because of the inconveniences that emerged from the delaying of travel documents of the Indian novices. However, this did not hamper the novitiate program. With our eyes focused on the horizon when only hope and trust could prevail, the African novices were invested in by the Delegation Superior of the Philippines Fr. Paul Arnel Lucero SMM. The Indian novices started their novitiate also on 1st August in Kanathi (India) under the guidance of Fr. Michael and finally arrived a month later and received the cassock and cord on 25th of September.

The International Novitiate is a congruent of people from three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. It is composed of three formators: the novice master Fr. Wim Peeters (66 yrs, from Holland, but Indonesian citizen) together with his assistants Fr. Reni Joseph Punnappan (37 yrs, from Kerala, India) and Fr. Roy Millano (41 yrs, from Leyte, Philippines).

The novices are Ronald Musinguzi (30 yrs), Doroviko Ahimbisibwe (28 yrs, called Ludovico) and Norbert Tukwatanise (25 yrs), all from Uganda; Joseph Shikuku Sakwa (26 yrs from Kenya and Christopher Mtonga (26 yrs, from Malawi; and the Indian novices: James Antony Joseph (19 yrs, from Karnataka), Karthik Kumar Chinnaswamy (19 yrs, from Karnataka), Abhishaik Lazarus Kedari (sometimes also called Blaise, 18 yrs, from Maharashtra

and Joyce Paulose (18 yrs, from Kerala). By simple counting you can find out how many countries are represented. Then you can imagine how many cultures are involved in the international novitiate. How marvelous it is seeing such young enthusiastic men staying together sharing joys and sorrows in pursuit of the same mission!

Remember that culture is the complex whole of religion, art, philosophy, and language; the vital core and life of a people, the vital lymph which sustains and feeds a society. From this brief preview, you can deduce that there is always a multiple world view of things. Can you then imagine of peace and harmony in our community? Whatever imaginations you may have, if you try to take either cosmocentric or anthropocentric views about this reality, possibly you are likely to ascertain that harmony in such a community is impossible. I wish to appeal to you to look at this fact in theocentric perspective. A human being does not rise from the confines of his or her own being so as to submerge him or herself into nothingness, but rather to immerse oneself in God, who is the only being capable of taking a human being to the perfect and perennial realization of him or herself. It is therefore, the love of God made manifest in Jesus that compels us to live together in harmony. Nevertheless, humanitarian dynamics such as adjustments, mutual dialogue and acceptability are incorporated in our community living.

Till now we have experienced a great deal of peace, joy and cheerfulness amidst the diversity of our cultures. Thus we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord. Indeed there are many facets through which we deem our source of strength. Where seems a sign of diversity, we turn back to our mother Mary, the spring through which virtues of harmony flow from and gain refreshment. The source of joy, peace and tranquility in our community is not rooted on any ideology or propaganda but rather on the person of Jesus. Blessed then are the eyes that see such a community and marvel at its richness amidst cultural diversities.

Bro. Ahimbisibwe Ludoviko, novice SMM.

ANOTHER KIND OF EXODUS

As anyone would, the very first moment I heard about the *EXODUS* program as a part of our Novitiate formation, many questions rolled over my mind as I tried to make connections between what once happened during the great Exodus of the Israelites and what our life was going to be in the *EXODUS* of the inter-congregational formation program for novices in Quezon City. Although my Novice master explained that the name was an abbreviation for "Exchange Of Dreams in a Unified Struggle for Relevant Formation," still, it wasn't easy for me to draw a clear picture of what would happen. Maybe to put it well, it was an affair of curiosity, and this curiosity was no less than that of an empiricist.

There comes the day for the module, the appropriate time for solving my puzzle. We arrived at the venue, crammed full of novices of different nationalities and continents, sent by their different congregations present in the Philippines. How was the situation? I experienced it as a tremendous challenge with loads of activities that can help a young man or woman in search of his or her vocation in getting to know him or herself better, in identifying and appreciating his or her position in a religious life within a contemporary world, and in preparing to face the future with its possible challenges. It is another kind of Exodus, a lively environment for future religious men and women to bring out the best of their potentials and abilities in all aspects of a human person in their keenness to leave many things behind and dedicate themselves to God. No doubt that it's

an "Exchange of Dreams in a Unified Struggle for Relevant Formation." Actually this joint formation program for novices began twenty-four years back in this holy land of the Philippines.

We may thank the SMM 'gurus' who later on decided that their candidates would participate in this program. As one of the African novices who were given the opportunity to take part in it, I find it not only an unusual program, but very rich in transforming and empowering each individual participant. In the true sense of the word "Exodus," the whole set-up is that of a departure to new and relevant dynamics of formation that responds to the needs of the time. Though our group was not able to attend the first two modules on Theater Arts and

Body Prayer, we fully participated in the other modules on the following topics: Enneagram; Sexuality; History or Religious Life and Spirituality; Vows in Context; Inculturation, Mission and Ecology.

Like the Israelites during their Exodus, we also had to be on the move for every module of *EXODUS*: we had to leave Novitiate House in Bulacan and "set up our tents" in Fr. Arie Van der Hulst's Mission House in the compound of the Delegation House. Thanks to our SMM confreres at the Delegation and Scholasticate houses, for their hospitality, generosity and arrangements ensure every time again our happy stay there. Also thanks to the efforts of our formators who are helping us to get involved.

MUSINGUZI K. RONALD



A Personal Reflection... MY LIFE IN THE SCHOLASTICATE COMMUNITY.

By: **Bro. Joel B. Padua SMM**

After my first profession in August 1, 2011, I became member of the scholasticate community. I discovered and felt that I need to adjust in my new community in terms of human dynamics and relationships. I have tried to be particular to the daily routine like the schedules of prayer, task and apostolate.

In community life I have to relate of course with my formators and my confreres with whom I live. As days, months passed by I can say that my community is composed of brothers who are willing to help, to understand and to guide me in my daily chores, routine and conduct of community living.

There were time that I missed my novitiate days specially the wearing of religious habit every morning mass since it is not the practice in the scholasticate community. Nonetheless, I enjoy my apostolate, I thank the good Lord that he has given me a chance to share my gifts and talents in parish community at Sta. Teresita. We help in conducting BEC sessions together with my confreres Bros. Rene and Ting. In addition, I used to serve during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and also I was assigned by Fr. Ariel to an area in the parish for my pastoral visitation. There, I am given opportunities to interact with parents, children and the youth. We share God's Word from the Holy Scriptures where the people try to draw and integrate their daily faith life experiences.

I sometimes experienced some struggles and challenges which has to be addressed like; my personal prayer and meditation wherein I easily get distracted. I know that prayer is to be in communion with God but I am determined to overcome this difficulty by perseverance and hoping that one day I will reach that union with Him through prayer. Another challenge is how to focus in my studies, given the fact that there are many concerns within our community but I am trying to strike a balance wherein I can give ample time to every aspects of my formation.

As I continue to journey in my formation, I would like to be attuned to God's invitation to serve Him fully and my brothers and sisters. I try to discern well by looking on how I value things, there is an inclination in me to desire worldly wisdom but I submit it to the one who has called me in this vocation. As I persevere in religious life, I ask the grace from God to purify me and my intention of serving Him. May there be point in time that I will be solid and be filled with confidence in my giving of oneself to God and His Church.

Lastly, I thank God through the people I have met in my journey. Indeed, it is not yet that long but God is letting me experienced His love through my formators, priests of the congregation, my family, relatives and friends. With all of them around to support me, the more I am energized to respond to the invitation of God to share in His life and love.

THE CHRIST IN NAVOTAS...

There are many questions that play in my mind as regards my exposure. But, why am I excited to go to Navotas? Will there be something to treasure there? Will there be a new good story in that exposure? Or will there be hope and joy that I will experience as I immersed myself with the people in Navotas?

My experience in Navotas was a beautiful and memorable one. The people were very joyful and friendly when it comes to visitors like the Jesuit Fathers and brothers, and the Montfort Missionaries Brothers like us. When Sister Tere and Nenet, (staff of Pag-aalay ng Puso Foundation) introduced us to the host families, I was happy because I felt the warm welcome they have accorded me not as a visitor but part of them. When I entered the home of my first host family, all of them were so accommodating. It was a family with thirteen members plus myself makes it fourteen. My first day with the family was spent by trying to bond with them, too much talking, sharing about their family experiences. They were sharing about their past experiences in life, how were they able to survive the typhoons, the floods, and the fire that were part of their tragic experiences. I was touched as they shared such eventualities in life. Their family seems to be prayerful. They have simple dreams as they asked God a simple life. There I experienced the wisdom of the old persons with their grandfather (lolo) and grandmother (lola) as concrete manifestation of witnesses of love as they served the family members of inculcating good moral values but especially the Love of God.

The life of the people in Navotas mirrors the majority of the life of the people in our country living in abject poverty. My immersion with them brought me to look at the mirror of the reality of life. Looking intently in that mirror, as if I have reached the crossroads where I have to choose. What will be the path I have to tread? Is it a life of serving these people in the near future, who for me mirrors the Christ that I love, adore and would like to serve or a life of complacency and insensitivity? These were the questions to ponder as I continue to search where my respond to answer God's call is leading me.

Bro. Juvy A. Adivino

MONTFORTIAN PHILIPPINES

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From Navotas With Love

It was a day of the unknown, queries, and anxieties when October 5 came. I have a lot of questions in mind about the conditions of Navotas, knowing that the typhoon Pedring brought destruction to the area just days before our exposure date. I was speechless from the time that we got to Navotas until we were introduced to families and headed on our respective houses. I was very quiet and just observing the new environment and new faces. I met Kuya Dong (foster father) and their children Emil, Robert, and John (mata). My foster mother was very enthusiastic. She is Rhodora but she prefers me calling her Mama Iwa. Although I am not used to calling anyone “Mama” except for my Lola, I found it delightful to say it. She was indeed a very jolly person and a very nurturing mother. Mama Iwa was the real “supermom”. She juggles work and family. At home, we were a bit serious because we sometimes talk about stories about family and relatives, but never did the smiles in our faces disappear. She had very interesting stories to tell about life that I never thought really happens in real life. She even shared with me her struggles to make ends meet, about relationships, and how hard it is to let go of their Aruppe visitors, but through her strong faith in God, it helped her gain the courage to live life. She also told me about her past visitors and compared me sometimes with them. She proudly said that most of her visitors were foreigners and now I’m a Filipino yet, I look like a Korean and *handsome*. I was really fascinated with the people because really I would pass as a foreigner because I fooled a handful of persons doing conversations with me in English. When we were outside with other foster mothers and my brother postulants, it’s a different story. Even the simple talks we shared were a joy to my heart because Mama Iwa would always have little punch lines that would make us all laugh. I was touch with the gesture of my mother because it seems that most of the attention she gave on my visit. She even missed out work doing laundry and other important meetings just to attend to my needs.

My first family gave me a feeling of warmth as they welcomed me in their humble home. There were still traces of the just recent typhoon as they had holes on roofs and some parts of the walls were missing. Whenever it rains, there were few leaks and the floor was shaking due to loud thunders. I never imagined that I would be able to sleep with the whole family since I prefer sleeping alone. It was a good feeling, except from a few punches and kicks I got with my foster brother, Mata as he might be dreaming to be punching Manny Pacquiao (just kidding). I also not fond of small children as I have limited patience with them, but Lander and Lyka, my foster cousins would bug me every morning with questions and stories. I admit that I like being their big brother in the house as they were very delightful to see and listen to. I guess, the most significant experience I had was about God’s gift of friendship. It was a great opportunity to really know JM, an SSA postulant and Juvy, my brother in the community. Since we were neighbors, we often times see and talk with each other. It was a very nice experience because not only among us brothers that we developed friendship, but also our foster mothers and some friends, Juvy’s mother, Nanay Marikit, JM’s mother, Ate Letlet, my Mama Iwa and Ate Cristy, etc. We were one happy family, as we shared bonding moments together with endless laughter.

Although there were flooded areas on our paths, my Mama Iwa never let me walk on it. She was worried that I might get sickness from the dirty waters. It was only when we had a procession one time that we were caught unprepared for the heavy rains. We all got wet and had to go on foot going home with an almost knee high flood water. After that night, I got sick and it was a time where I saw how Mama Iwa took care of me. She bought all my medicines out of her own pocket and gave me all the necessary things like face towel, powder, alcohol, even a new umbrella.

We have been to many places within Navotas, but my most unforgettable was my boat ride going to Malabon. It’s my first time to ride a boat with one balance beam. I was faking my smiles for fear that we might be thrown to the “dark water” and it looks deep. Even with a very busy schedule of masses, prayer gatherings, processions, etc, we still managed to have time with each other and celebrate the presence of everyone. I remembered that our *nanays* were always there to accompany us wherever we go. They have given really their best to make us feel that we were cared for properly.

Aside from many good places we went to, we enjoyed our company with good people and clean fun. One thing that I would always value in my stay with

NewsLetter

By Sanny P. dela Cruz

“The New Seeds of Generation, Montfort Missionaries Postulants 2011”

At exactly 1 o’clock in the afternoon on May 24, 2011, Bro. Jayvi D. Lusung arrived at the Montfort Missionaries Postulant’s House. His arrival has been long awaited by Fr. Reynaldo Bullas Jr, smm so as to start with the new seeds of generation of the Montfort Missionaries Postulants 2011.

The new community of Postulants composed of Bros. Sanny P. Dela Cruz, 34 years of old, from Davao City. Jayvi D. Lusung, 31 years old, from Lubao Pampanga, Juvy A. Aldivino, 28 years old, from Legaspi City, Francois Leonard P. Ancheta, 31 years old, from Las Piñas City, Ronald B. Baruela, 26 years old, from Panay Capiz, and lastly, Brother Rodolfo A. Escanilla Jr. 30 years old, from Marikina City. Fr. Melvin Ordañez, SMM, from Cembo Makati City, Vocation Director and Community Bursar, and the Superior of the Community Fr. Reynaldo Bullas Jr. SMM, from Panay Capiz, also Postulant Formator.

In the meeting, we discussed one of the major programs in the calendar activities of the postulant, the “Sojourn”. In preparation for the program we discussed the time and days of the different modules, the place where it will be held and persons responsible for the Sojourn. We also included in the meeting, the formation structures which comprise different responsibilities of each postulant. The responsibilities were divided into three areas like; *Social*, *Technical* and *Manual*. The *Social* Committee takes care of the community diary, community calendar, liturgy, sacristy, mass, prayer, newsletter, library and website updating. The *Technical* Committee has to take care of the house maintenance, computers, audio problem and light technical problem. And lastly, the *Manual* Committee is responsible for the kitchen, information, porter, time keeping, and house decoration.

We took time out also to elect our community coordinator where Bro. Jayvi D. Lusung was chosen for the post. He will be responsible for the management and updating of the community calendar. At the end some details were shared as regards community matters and group apostolate of the Postulants. It was a hectic day for us but we are all assured that it will be for the betterment of the community of postulants...the new seeds of generation 2011.

them, will be the significance of bonding together as a family. I will never forget what my foster father, Kuya Dong, one night drunk, he asks for a favor for me to reserve a day for me to stay in the house and to have a bonding time with me. I might have convinced the whole family to attend the Sunday mass together, but they showed me that genuine love and support of each member, accompanied with faith in God, made it more than a “home” and not just a house. Although our time with my first family felt so short because of our hectic schedules, it was a very memorable one.

My Navotas experience gave me a lot of things to things about and a lot of insightful encounters. Things that I never expected to happen in this stage of my formation. I even never thought that these people will give me more that I can give to them. Even though I could not help them financially to uplift their condition in life, I somehow felt that there is more to material things. I understood now why God feels for the simple people. It is because from simple things, there greater things happen and the people I have met in Navotas taught me that. Indeed God’s love dwells everywhere even to unfamiliar places and people especially in Navotas. In my life, we have our own struggles to face we just have to trust and hope that all things will be well in God’s great design.

FRANCOIS LEONARD P. ANCHETA

My reflection on the 25th Anniversary of the Totus Tuus Journey in the Philippines

By Gelly Soriano-Fernandez

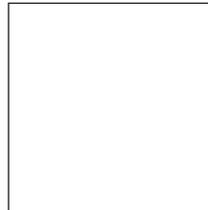
TTJ@25 I am all yours. . . Sama-Samang Pagbalik Tanaw at Pagtugon sa Hamon ng Buhay

I was infanticipating my first child when I took the Totus Tuus Journey (TTJ) for the 1st time. The year was 1989 and the place was the Legion House. I was invited by no less than my mother, Sis. Paz Soriano who now is a TTJ icon and who rests in Heaven. I had been fortunate to listen to the inputs and the Marian way to Wisdom from the founding Fathers, Fr. Claude and Fr. Mario. Sis. Carmen and Sis. Pons were in my batch and I remember I had not much to share vocally then, much more to say that I have absorbed the essence of the each sessions I attended, I can only say now that for sure that that was the beginning of the journey of the beautiful “Montfort lessons” in my life.

25 years had passed so quickly and I had not realized it till I returned on its 25th year! Either I was busy rearing my 6 children or looking after the in and outs of the home. The Montfort Missionaries had been our friends for the longest time I could remember, so from time to time I tried to make myself physically available for meetings or whatever little help I could extend like. . . like being a judge to the Harana kay Maria Chorale Competition some years back. I remember Fr. Ariel and Ana Marie gave an introduction of me as “sariling atin to”. I felt elated and loved. But all my sprouting out came when dear Mommy left us. Fr. Arie, Sis. Paz, Pope John Paul II all died weeks apart from each other in the same year--2005. Why could it be so? As I look at that now, it just made St. Louis’ teachings more brilliant in my life and how significant is the saint’s contribution to the Catholic Church. And so fast did Pope John Paul become Blessed Paul. . . Benjie, my husband had taken the TTJ a year after their deaths. We embrace the legacy Sis. Paz had left.

Last year, I decided to take the Totus Tuus Journey one more time. I renewed my consecration in December 2010 after more compressed sessions than 32 weeks, with the meaning that the consecration has been interconnected with my life; the choices I make, the values I preserve, my very own family, true friendships, the parish to serve, special children, music classes, and the treasure of the Legion of Mary, quite all along. Truly again and again, I want to say, I am all yours, Mary and all that I have is yours. It will be a lifelong courage with the faith and a lifelong reliving of Mary’s fiat.

Thus have the activities for the anniversary been set forth in 2011. As I have attended the launching in March 25, 2011; the mass for the Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Louis Marie de Montfort; and my family’s attendance in the pilgrimages to Our Lady of Piat in Tuguegarao, Pampanga churches and the Rosary Garden in Bulacan—and Naga anticipating) I sincerely look forward to the Marian Congress with Fr. Mario and to close the anniversary year wherever Mary wants it to be. See you there where Wisdom waits for us! Bring a handful of smiles!



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