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Orden de San Agustín

Order of Saint Augustine

Ordine di Sant'Agostino

Province of Cebu - Philippines

FIESTA SEÑOR STO. NIÑO

AT THE HEART OF FILIPINO LIFE



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OSA INTERACTIVE

I-2011

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Editorial

A WORD FROM US

The current issue of **OSA INT** brings a change, not in the presentation or focus of our magazine, but in the friars responsible for its preparation and production. Since the third issue of 2007, Fr. Emanuel Borg Bonello, O.S.A., who was elected last year as Prior Provincial of Malta, had been serving as “Director pro tempore” of the publication, generating a well-composed and neatly executed product. His four-year, temporary, labor of love, has come to an end now, and we offer him our sincere thanks and hearty congratulations for a work very well done!

Succeeding Father Emanuel in the work of composing and directing **OSA INT** is a new team consisting of friars Michael Di Gregorio, Robert Guessetto and Melchor Mirador. Actually, Fr. Melchor is the newest addition to the team, the others having served on the Editorial Board until now. But even Fr. Melchor is no stranger to long-time readers of **OSA INT**.

A member of the Province of Santo Niño of Cebu, he previously collaborated in the production of the magazine from 1990 to 1992. Since that time he has worked in his province in various areas of responsibility, including as Prior Provincial. We welcome Father Melchor back to Rome and to **OSA INT** and we hope that together we will be able to continue the quality of writing and presentation we have become accustomed to in recent years.

This is also an appropriate moment to express gratitude to the many friars, friends and associates whose indispensable assistance as translators, editors, photographers, writers, and mailing staff, makes **OSA INT** a reality. This is a work of many people as you can see from the inside cover of the present issue.

FR. MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, O.S.A.
Coordinator of Communications

An Annual Cebu Fiesta with a worldwide influence

One of the best-attended annual Christian religious festivals in the world, the Fiesta Señor Sto. Niño (“Festival of the Holy Child”), is conducted by the Augustinians in Cebu, Philippines, on the third Sunday of each January.

An estimated 2,200,000 persons witnessed the solemn procession of the Sto. Niño image on 16th January 2011, a tally that increases annually. The Prior Provincial of Augustinian Province of Cebu-Philippinas, Fr. Eusebio Berdon O.S.A. explains: “Generally the Catholic Filipino people have a great love for the Holy Child, and have a strong faith in Him. A great number are also religiously attached to the Sto. Niño, as He may have touched their lives in various ways. Most Filipino migrant workers come home from abroad for Christmas and, as part of their promise and devotion to the Holy Child, make sure to remain for the Sto. Niño feast.”

The origin of the devotion to the Sto. Niño goes back to the arrival of the first Europeans in the central Philippines in March, 1521. Soon afterwards a small statue of the Sto. Niño was presented to the Queen of Cebu by the Portuguese naval explorer and head of the expedition, Ferdinand Magellan. The baptism of the queen to the Catholic faith along with the other members of the Royal Family had just been celebrated.

The small statue of the Holy Child was rediscovered in Cebu in 1565 by members of the expedition led by Conquistador Miguel López de Legaspi who had come from New Spain (Spanish-controlled Mexico) to make settlements in the Philippines. When the natives refused to allow the foreign visitors to land on their shores, the de Legaspi expedition strafed the village of Cebu with canon fire. As the natives rushed to the mountains in fear, the Spaniards landed.



The Santo Niño Pilgrim Center and the forecourt of the Basilica filled with the “Sinulog” dancers and the devotees



4 It was a Spanish soldier who found the statue of the Sto. Niño. The finding was considered miraculous as the native dwelling hut that contained the image was the only structure that remained undamaged following the bombardment. On this exact location, Commodore de Legaspi ordered the construction of a chapel in which to enthrone the Sto. Niño. The five chaplains of the de Legaspi expedition were all Augustinians, led by Fray Andres Urdaneta O.S.A. These friars thus became the first missionaries in the Philippines and the custodians of the Sto. Niño.

De Legaspi's rudimentary chapel has long since been replaced by the present Basilica shrine (officially, the *Basilica Minore del Santo Niño de Cebu*). The original Sto. Niño statue of the sixteenth-century today has pride of place in a bullet-proof glassed chapel at a side altar of the Cebu Basilica, where an endless queue of devotees pays homage daily.

Although the annual celebration features a huge procession, the festival actually begins eleven days earlier with a nine-day novena of Masses, followed by another three days of more solemn Masses. Ten Masses are celebrated in the Basilica between 4.00 am and 8.00 pm on almost all of these days. The number of worshippers at the Masses increases as the feast day comes closer. And on the Feast Day itself, between 10,000 and 30,000 people attend each Mass, the crowds flowing over beyond the Basilica compound and into the neighbouring streets. As many as seventy priests concelebrate at some of the Masses.

In addition to these festival Masses, there are two large pro-



His Eminence Ricardo Cardinal Vidal (Cardinal Emeritus of Cebu) with the image of Señor Santo Niño, and the present Rector of the Basilica: Fr. Rodolfo A. Bugna O.S.A.

cessions on the Saturday immediately preceding the feast day. The first of these is called the “fluvial” procession, held in the morning; this was added to the celebrations in the early 1980s. From the nearest sea port to the Basilica, the landing of the statue (involving a replica of the Sto. Niño image) is re-enacted. Then a walking procession moves to the Basilica grounds for the re-enactment of the first baptisms in the Philippines - that of the then local chieftain and his queen, followed by their people.

In the afternoon of that same Saturday, the great solemn procession is held. For this ceremony, the Sto. Niño image (formerly the original, but because of its fragile physical condition, now a replica blessed by the Pope) is taken from its urn and re-dressed with new expensive vestments donated by devotees. The Sto. Niño image is the much-awaited feature of the procession, in which innumerable devotees participate through prayer and songs of praise throughout the procession.



The Pilgrim Center Santo Niño

The original Sto. Niño image, believed to come from Flanders, Belgium and dated around the beginning of the 16th century, is made of wood and stands about one foot (30 centimetres) high.

In general, the Sto. Niño fiesta is a major public attraction in Cebu each January. Some foreign tourists are attracted by the more cultural side of the celebrations called the “*Sinulog*” – street competitions that pay homage to the Holy Child through prayer dancing. The dancers express different forms of prayer-dance to the Sto. Niño, asking favours (healing of sickness, success in an endeavour), or giving praise and thanksgiving. In essence, the “*Sinulog*” is a religious dance, presented by devotees as an offering to the Sto. Niño. The dance, before an image or at least facing the Basilica, may be performed by the devotee personally or vicariously through the “women *sinulog* prayer-dancers” who frequent the Basilica vicinity.

And why this great popularity of the Sto. Niño? It is widely believed that the Sto. Niño played an important role in the introduction of the Catholic faith to the Philippine Islands. In practice, the devotion is passed down in families from one generation to the next. As presented by the testimonies of devotees, ordinary people from different walks of life attest to how the Sto. Niño has granted a million petitions and answered their prayers.

At present there are eight members of the Augustinian Community who live at the Basilica.

Their main apostolate is to attend to the spiritual needs of all devotees who visit the Basilica (providing Masses, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and counselling, directing the different mandated organizations of the Basilica) and propagating devotion to the Sto. Niño.

The present Rector of the Basilica is Fr. Rodolfo A. Bugna, O.S.A.

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Devotees during the feast of the Santo Niño

Father Miguel Olaortua Laspra OSA,

appointed new bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos (Peru)

Most Reverend Father Miguel Olaortua Laspra was ordained bishop on April 16 of this year at San José Church in Bilbao, Spain. The Ordaining Bishop was His Excellency, the Most



The Ordination of Bishop Olaortua

Reverend Ricardo Blázquez Pérez, who had served as pastor of this diocese for 15 years. He was accompanied by the Apostolic Nuncio, Bishop Renzo Fratini. The new bishop will exercise his pastoral ministry in the Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos, Perú, the mission entrusted more than a century ago to the Augustinian friars of the Province of the Philippines (Spain). He will begin his ministry there on May 22.

Father Miguel Olaortua Laspra was born 48 years ago in Bilbao (Spain). The first part of his primary schooling was in the French College of Bilbao and the last part of primary schooling, secondary schooling and leaving certificate was with the Augustinian Fathers, in the Andrés de Urdaneta secondary school of Loiu (Bizkaia), entering in 1981 into the Novitiate run by the

Augustinian Province of Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas in the city of Valladolid. The following year he takes his Temporary Vows in the Order of Saint Augustine and begins his ecclesiastic career in the Augustinian Theological Centre of Valladolid, completing it in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Deusto, in Bilbao. In 1986 he takes his Solemn Vows and in 1987 is ordained priest by the then bishop of Palencia, Mons. Nicolás Castellanos, likewise an Augustinian. Sent to Rome, he studies in the Salesian Pontifical University, where he graduates with a degree in Educational Sciences, and specialization in Youth Ministry and Catechetics.

In 1990 he was assigned to San Agustín secondary school of Zaragoza, where he has worked until the present time, on the teaching staff, in the Pastoral Department and occupying various administrative posts. Meanwhile he has collaborated in the parish and diocesan pastoral, being Parish Vicar in the Parish of Saint Rita of Cascia, Council member of the Cascian Augustinian group, teacher in the School of Catechists of the Diocese of Zaragoza and member of the Diocesan Catechesis Team of that same city.

Since 1998 he has been a Provincial Council member, taking over for twelve years the Area of pastoral work of the Augustinian Province of Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas and, as from the middle of 2010 the Area of Education.

At the time of his appointment, Father Miguel Olaortua Laspra, besides being a Provincial Council member, was Prior of the Community of Zaragoza, Head of the Secondary school and Parochial Vicar.

The Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos, situated in the north-east of Peruvian Amazonia was entrusted by the Holy See to the Augustinian Province of the Very Holy Name of Jesus of the Philippines in the year 1901. The Vicariate is located in the city of Iquitos, which comprises a large number of parishes, to which should be added a further two along the Marañón river and one beside the Tigre river. Together with the Augustinians, who with their 19 members represent the most numerous group, there are lay priests working in the Vicariate, both of the same Vicariate and from other parts of Peru and the world, men and women religious from various congregations, to whom should be added a convent of women religious of contemplative life and hundreds of lay pastoral agents, who both along the rivers and in the city of Iquitos carry forward the whole of the pastoral work set in hand in the Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos by Bishop Julián García Centeno, bishop from whom his newly appointed colleague is now taking over.



Bishop Miguel Olaortua, OSA

Meeting of the OAE - Organization of the Augustinians of Europe

28 February to 4 March 2011

“We saw and felt the clarity of your Presence”
Short history of a Presence

The word “CLARE” - the name of the town in England where we are meeting - is almost the beginning of another word “clarity”, which perfectly summarises the living in faith of our meeting: a life of transparent fraternity. The second part of the word, “ITY”, marks the carrying out of our Rule: “unanimis habitetis in domo”, the ideal we are attempting in these days, with simplicity, to make real together.

All of our meetings begin by lighting the candle received as a gift in the course of the Pope’s visit to England and which symbolises the “light of Christ” which is – as we requested - always with us; the shared experience and dialogue that we want to achieve throughout these days make it possible to feel ourselves brothers.

The first of our meetings, following the welcome on 28 February, was held on 1 March, dealing with the first topic of our meeting: the promotion of vocations. After the first session of welcome we celebrated the Eucharist with the people in the chapel of the “Good Counsel” parish church located within the Augustinian Monastery of Clare Priory itself (founded in 1248) where the meeting took place. This is the best way to express the life of this “house of spirituality” and of our meeting dealing with the concerns and hopes of all the brothers and sisters of Europe. Continuing our meeting, all the Provincials made known their opinions and actions in the 12 provinces. That afternoon the topic was the organization of the Novitiate in



Clare Priory (1248)

Europe and, as an orientation for the future Novitiate (interprovincial) of the “Blessed Esteban Bellesini” of the South of Europe, the Statutes and Plan of formation were presented, accompanied by an audiovisual projection on the Monastery of Santa María de la Vid (in Spain) where the said Novitiate is now taking place, with novices from Italy, Portugal and Spain. In the aforesaid dialogue difficulties arose but, above all, the hope of being able to integrate in the Novitiate of Europe, which is intercultural and interlinguistic, the projects and achievements already existing in each of our countries.

On 2 March the opportunity arose of holding a preparatory course for all those in Europe preparing to take their solemn vows, as was decided in the Intermediate General Chapter of Manila (IGC '10 P2). The difficulty was in deciding on how and where, as well as on the date. Various offers of places and approaches were forthcoming, so that the Secretariat of the OAE was asked to take responsibility for its organization. In addition, the topic of collaboration with ongoing formation was also put forward ('07 OGC P1).

In the afternoon session we dealt with the present situation and the possibility of collaboration between the different Study Centres of the Order, with special attention paid to the Augustinianum of Rome, the Saint



Provincials at work

Augustine Theological Centre (CTSA) with which three Spanish Provinces are involved and the Augustinian Theological Study Centre of Valladolid. All of these are of great quality and of international and cultural scope. Mention was also made of those of Leuven (Belgium), of Würzburg (Germany) and of Eindhoven (Netherlands) and the Augustinian Spirituality Institute of Malta. One aspect which seems particularly hopeful is the existence of translations of Augustinian works (in English, Spanish, Italian, French and German) in digital format, available by referring to the address: www.agustinus.it where the life, writings, thought and present pertinence of Saint Augustine appear as conceived and carried out in collaboration with the Italian Publishing firm Città Nuova.

Finally, completing the themes laid down for the meeting, the city of Palermo has been chosen as the site for the forthcoming OAE Assembly scheduled to take place from 11 to 17 March 2012, while the topics are briefly defined as: 1) Vocations in Europe based on evangelical radicality; and 2) Evaluation of the trajectory followed in the OAE.

Under the head of information, Luciano reported on the meeting held in Buenos Aires in preparation for the forthcoming World Meeting of Lay Augustinians. David Middleton spoke with great feeling of the Meeting of Young Augustinians of London (2011) while the Father General spoke of presents World Youth Day (WYD) due to be held in Madrid and the Augustinian activities foreseen both in Madrid itself and in El Escorial, inviting all those intending to take part to sign up at the earliest possible opportunity. The information session



Participants at the OAE gathering

was closed by Miguel de la Lastra who commented on the meetings of young religious of the Order, speaking especially of this year's meeting which was entitled: "On the road from Emmaus: profundity and joy".

In fact our presence in Clare (England) corresponded perfectly to this hope of living with "profundity" and "joy" because we all succeeded in "walking together", complying with the Rule of our Father Saint Augustine: "unanimus habitetis in domo et sit vobis anima una et cor unum in Deum" (Rule, 1, 3).

Simple details like serving at table, washing the dishes, chatting or being silent, praying together, sharing a meal or a concern helped us to "return to the heart" and there to share and meet with the Truth. The excursions of the last day (3 March) to Ely and Cambridge, visiting these marvellous places together, marked the cultural complement of our Experience of Fraternity.

We concluded the Meeting of Provincials of the OAE in the physical space of Clare Priory where from 1248 to 1538 the Augustinians (or Austin Friars as they were called) bore witness to a faith and spirituality, to the point of laying down their lives and, since 1953 until the present time are sharing and offering a place of prayer and a community experience under the advocacy of Our Mother of Good Counsel.

On 4 March, giving thanks to God, we all set out on our return journey to the 12 countries from which we had come only a few short days before. Until next year, in Palermo, we are faced with the challenge of carrying to our Provinces the Spirit of Clare-ity consisting of "transparent fraternity" as lived by us in Clare Priory.

Agustín Alcalde, OSA
4 March 2011



Church and garden of the priory

AFA 2011

Triennial Conference of the Augustinian Federation of Africa Kinshasa / Democratic Republic of Congo

The Augustinian Federation of Africa (AFA) held its triennial conference of 2011 from the 9th to the 14th of January in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The theme of the Conference was: *Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Post-synodal Africa*.

1. Participants

The AFA conference in Kinshasa was attended by 43 Augustinians friars and sisters from Africa and Europe. The Curia was represented by the Prior General, Very Rev. Fr. Robert Prevost and the assistant general for Africa, Fr. Franz Klein. His Excellency Bishop John Namaza Niyiring, OSA, bishop of the Diocese of Kano/Nigeria actively participated in the Conference. Fr. Michele Falcone (Province of Italy) represented the Commission for Vocations. Fr Paul De Wit, President of the Federation of the Congo was involved in the various gatherings as Major Superior of the Vicariate of the Congo.

The following congregations and circumscriptions took part in the AFA Conference Kinshasa: the Province of Nigeria, the Community of Annaba, the Delegation of Kenya, the Vicariate of Tanzania, the Community of South Africa, the Augustinian Sisters of Shuwa/Nigeria, the Augustinian Sisters of South Africa, the Augustinian Sisters of Notre Dame/Togo, the Sisters of Saint Augustine/Benin, the Augustinian Sisters of Lubumbashi/DR Congo, the Augustinian sisters of Dungu-Doruma/DR Congo as well as the Vicariate of the Congo.



2. The Conferences

There were four talks around the theme of *Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Post Synodal Africa*, the theme of the 2011 Conference. These were:

1. The Second Special African Synod: The urgent task of Evangelization – our service to reconciliation, justice and peace. By Bishop John Niyiring.
2. Peace and Reconciliation in the New Testament. By Fr. Guillaume Migbisiegbe, OSA/Congo
3. Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Africa according to St. Augustine. By Fr. Stephano Msomba, OSA/Tanzania
4. Augustinian Spirituality and the call of the second synod for Africa. By Sr. Justine Ameadam/Benin.

3. The Vocations Congress

Beside the conference, a Congress for Vocations was held over two days at the request of Fr. Joseph Odour, OSA/Kenya, in charge of vocations in Africa. For that very reason, vocation directors and formators were invited to attend the Conference. Fr. Michele came especially for this Congress and gave an excellent talk on the current problem of vocations. After the Conference, Fr. Bob Karanja, OSA/Kenya and various vocation directors shared their experiences with participants.



The Prior General Fr. Robert F. Prevost, OSA
with a young professed student

4. The major issues that emerged in the various discussions

1. Peaceful coexistence between Christianity and Islam.
 - a. Peaceful coexistence of these two religions is possible. There are positive signs on the side of Islam in Algeria. Cf. Fr. Raphael Abdilla Annaba.
 - b. Peaceful coexistence and open dialogue between the two religions are illusory for the time being. Cf. OSA/Nigeria.
2. The role which the Order of Saint Augustine with its charism of **anima una cor unum** can play in an Africa torn by conflict and in need of development, justice and peace.
3. The financial difficulties of the circumscriptions and the costs of travel in Africa do not facilitate the achievement of inter-circumscription activities.
4. The Augustinian union across the Continent with regards to formation, exchange of staff and other programs or projects will strengthen the Order of Saint Augustine and make it more effective.

5. Other activities at the Conference

1. The cultural evening at St. Rita Convent

On Thursday, there was a dinner and cultural evening at the Convent of St. Rita in Kinshasa. The evening was animated by the Scholastics and the Bees Music Group of St. Rita; it was a real success. We thank the community of Santa Rita, Kinshasa for the pleasure it offered to the participants of the AFA.

2. The trip to the Botanical Garden

The tour took participants to Kinsantu Botanical Garden, 130 km away from Kinshasa. Apart from the unfortunate delay of the bus and flat tires, participants experienced the realities of Congo outside Kinshasa. They visited the beautiful greenery and some species of the botanical garden Kinsantu. On their way back, they visited the large Cathedral of Kinsantu which is undergoing renovation.



Participants of the conference celebrate Vespers with the community of the formation house in Kinshasa

6. The major achievement of this Conference 2011/Kinshasa

Under the impulse of the Prior General, a charter was developed for the creation of the Union of African Augustinians for a closer cooperation in formation, the common use of available personnel and the initiation and implementation of common projects and programs.

7. New AFA Board and the Next Conference

New AFA board is presented as follows:

1. Chairman: Fr. Hyacinth KANGYEP, Provincial of Nigeria
2. Vice-President and Treasurer: Sr. Francisca ABORENG, Superior of the Augustinian Sisters of Shuwa/Nigeria.
3. Secretary: Fr. MIGBISIEGBE Guillaume, Prior of the community of Saint Rita's, Congo.

The next AFA Conference (2014) will be held (barring unforeseen contingencies) in Lome, TOGO. We thank all who contributed in any way to the organization of this Conference.

Fr. Michel Mivunguba, OSA
Chairman Emeritus.

Meeting of Secretaries of the Order of St. Augustine

10-14 January 2011, Rome

A meeting of Secretaries of Circumscriptions of the Order was held in Rome between the 10th and the 14th of January 2011. 25 secretaries took part. The third edition of the Order's "Manual for Secretaries" was presented and handed to each participant. The Secretary General, Fr. Miguel A. Martín Juárez OSA and the Procurator General, Fr. Alejandro Moral OSA, were the main lecturers, presenting themes linked to the different aspects of the administrative tasks of the Secretary: structures of the Order and the circumscriptions, admissions, dispensations, practical aspects of difficult situations (expulsions from the Order, sexual abuse, irregular status of a number of Religious...), as well as information on current archives, and recommendations for the treatment and conservation of documents. Participants were led by the Archivist General of the Order, Fr. Luis Marín OSA, through a visit of the Archives General of the Order.



An Augustinian Nun at the foot of the cross

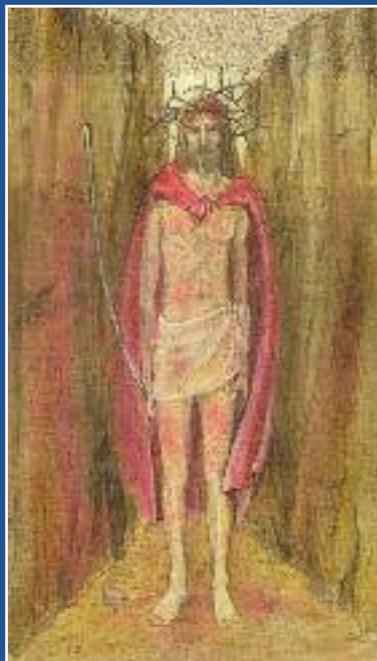
The Augustinian Contemplative Nuns of Italy were in the news this Spring owing to Pope Benedict XVI's selection of Mother Rita Piccione to prepare the meditations for Good Friday's Way of the Cross at the Colosseum in Rome. Mother Rita is the President of the Italian Federation of Augustinian Contemplative Monasteries and is presently stationed at the Monastery of Santi Quattro Coronati in the Eternal City. Once she accepted the invitation, presented to her in the Pope's name by the Cardinal Secretary of State, Mother Rita invited another of her sisters, Sister Elena Manganelli, of the Monastery of Lecetto, to prepare the drawings which would accompany the meditations.

In an interview published in the Italian language edition of L'Osservatore Romano on April 6th, Mother Rita spoke of an unusual source of inspiration which she found in the preparation of her text: a wooden owl which was the gift of the nuns of one of the Federation's monasteries in the Philippines, "It might seem strange, but it was his eyes, accustomed to peering into the surrounding darkness, that directed my inspiration. It was while looking at that owl, thinking of its ability to see in the dark, that I found the key - and I hope it was a correct one - for the meditations. If darkness represents the night, then it's necessary to seek the

face of God which illumines even the deepest shadows... This nocturnal bird, with its big bright eyes that search the night, called me again and again to seek the face of God, because only with God's eyes can the night become light. And the Way of the Cross - isn't it a touch of night?"

Mother Rita is not the first woman invited to prepare the meditations for the Way of the Cross, nor is she the first nun, but she is the first Augustinian, and so part of the interview also raised the question of Saint Augustine's influence on her text. "...the presence of Augustine, this good companion for the journey, as the Pope referred to him in his audience of last August 25th, is felt in the glance directed at our Savior's humanity, at his humility; it's felt in the call of truth, which is more or less continuous, and is found in some brief expressions of the bishop of Hippo which are woven here and there into the text. The theme of truth is also a point of contact, of harmony, between the Pope and Augustine: the honest search for truth brought Augustine to God, the service of truth has always been the soul of the ministry of Joseph Ratzinger."

Coincidentally, or maybe not, the Great Easter Feast falls this year on April 24th, the anniversary of the baptism of the convert Augustine by Bishop Ambrose in 387.



2010 ASSEMBLY OF THE FEDERATION OF AUGUSTINIAN CONTEMPLATIVE SISTERS

Federations of Our Lady of the Pillar and St. Thomas of Villanova

The Holy Year of 1950 was a year of grace for the contemplative life. In that very year, in fact, Pope Pius XII promulgated the Apostolic Constitution *Sponsa Christi*, with the purpose of adapting the life of the enclosed sisters to the new contemporary realities.

The practical measures indicated in *Sponsa Christi* go in three directions: to remind the religious that their vocation is an entirely apostolic one (SCh 38), highlight the place of work as a way of sustaining the monastery, and to overcome the isolation of the individual monasteries, giving rise to federations, which according to the indications of the Constitution *Sponsa Christi*, and also the Instruction *Inter Praeclara* which followed it, should bring together monasteries of the same Order and observance.

The Federations “Our Lady of the Pillar and St. Thomas of Villanova” (within whose federation council is the service of secretariat) and that of “Our Lady of Good Counsel and St. Alonso de Orozco”, in Spain, together with the Italian Federation, bring together the majority of the monasteries of contemplative life of our Order. Our Federation is composed of 19 monasteries, of which fifteen are in Spain, two in Ecuador, one in Chile and one in Peru. The 166 sister (including those still in initial formation) who live in the monasteries situated in the regions of the North and the East of Spain, live a withdrawn life, dedicated to silence, to prayer, to interiority, to study and to common life, following the steps traced out by our Holy Father Augustine.

From the 18th to the 22nd of October, the 10th Ordinary Federal Assembly of the Federation of “Our Lady of the Pillar and St. Thomas of Villanova” was held at Zaragoza. Twenty five sisters, prioresses and delegates, from the different contemplative monasteries of the Federation of the North East of Spain,



attended, in the presence of the religious assistant, Fr. Alejandro Moral, OSA. The Chapter began with the celebration of the Eucharist, during which the guidance of the Holy Spirit was invoked, so that we would succeed in carrying out the tasks given to us, with a generous and open attitude, searching for the greater good in the service of the Kingdom of God. The President of the Federation, Sr. Maria Gracia Flor outlined the present state of the Federation and the most significant happenings in the six year term from 2004-2010. After the financial report and questions regarding the reports from the different communities, the work continued with the election of the new President of the Federation. Fr. Alejandro made a brief address to the Assembly, thanking Sr. Maria Gracia Flor for her service, always carried out with a spirit of simplicity and generosity.

In the election, Sister Natividad Salvador was elected to the office as President of the Federation with an absolute majority. The formal confirmation in office was carried out in the chapel, with the intonation of the Te Deum, and an exchange of embrace by all the members as a sign of their communion.

Once the voting concluded, the Assembly moved on to the themes proposed in the Letter of Convocation: the Ratio Formationis, initial and ongoing formation, the future of the communities, vocations, the bulletin “Anima Una”, economic help to the communities, the proposal of the Intermediate General Chapter of the Order regarding our Contemplative Life



Participants at the assembly



Fr. Alejandro Moral, OSA with the Council of the Federation

Communities, and the juridical status of the Federation.

During the celebration of the Eucharist on the 21st October, we remembered the sisters who had died during the last six years with a special remembrance of Fr. Mariano Martín, who was our Assistant from 1999 to 2002. At the end of the day, after the signing of the Acts, we had a festive gathering.

The Assembly ended on the 22nd with the celebration of the Eucharist, thanking God for all that we achieved during these past days, the fraternal exchange and the encouragement received to live with hope and on openness to others.

Sr. Cecilia Torres, OSA
Secretary

SHORT NEWS

Italy – Bishop Giovanni Scanavino, OSA

On March 5, 2011 Pope Benedict named Bishop Giovanni Scanavino, O.S.A., bishop emeritus of Orvieto-Todi, Italy. He was subsequently named President of the Italian Federation for Retreats by the Episcopal Conference of Italy. "With this appointment we affirm our esteem and respect for our brother bishop," declared Monsignor Mariano Crociata, Secretary General of the Conference.

When he was nominated bishop in 2003, Bishop Scanavino had been serving as Prior Provincial of the Italian Province since 2000. Previously he had also been prior of several communities in Italy, Assistant General of the Order and Master of Professed.

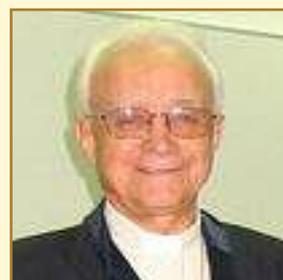


Perù – Bishop Julian García Centeno, OSA

On February 2, 2011 it was announced that the Holy Father accepted the resignation of Bishop Julian Garcia Centeno O.S.A., from the pastoral care of the Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos, upon having reached the age limit.

Bishop Centeno was professed for the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus of the Philippines in 1954, ordained priest in 1958 and bishop in 1989.

He, too, had served the Order as Assistant General and previously as Prior Provincial of his province. He was succeeded in Iquitos by Bp. Miguel Olaortua Laspra O.S.A., whose nomination is recorded elsewhere in this issue of OSA INT.



Living in love

Every other year a group from the Lindenholt Parish in The Netherlands goes to San Gimignano. In 2010 they made their fifth trip. They prepared a reflection on the Rule of St Augustine, saying: This is a Rule for living in community. Since our group is also a community, let us see what we can learn from this Rule of St Augustine. Back home, they wrote a reflection about their experience and their reflections. Ian Wilson, a friar-member of the Augustinian community of San Gimignano took part in this reflection.

St. Augustine's Rule for the Community was the central theme for our moments of reflection during this year's stay at the friary of San Gimignano. After a general introduction to the Rule, we studied in particular what we could learn from the Rule, what we could pick up from it for daily life in our own country, The Netherlands.

San Gimignano offers us the opportunity of a life lived in simplicity: working together, having meals together, spending some free time and praying together. The daily structure in the friary takes hold of us and puts us at rest. In all our activities there arises the opportunity to reflect about life, and in particular one's personal life. Back in The Netherlands, we dwelt on the insights which had occurred to us during this year's stay at San Gimignano.



Some parishioners from Lindenholt, the Netherlands with Fr. Brian Lowery, OSA and Loretta (cook)

PUBLICATIONS

An Outline of New Testament Spirituality

Fr. Prospero Grech, OSA
Eerdmans Pub. Co.

In this compact book Grech considers a wealth of biblical texts, including Genesis, the Psalms, the Synoptic Gospels, Paul's epistles, the letter to the Hebrews, and John's Gospel, Letters, and Apocalypse. He uncovers the New Testament church's spiritual response to God's gifts in each of these texts; its inherited response to God's Old Testament Covenant with Israel; its response to Jesus' preaching, to the Paschal Mystery of his death and resurrection, and to Christ the Light of the World; its response to its own place in history displayed in Acts and Revelation. Weaving these various theological strands together, Grech traces the contours of a dynamic yet contemplative Christian spirituality – one that not only saturated the New Testament church but also continues to animate Christian life today.





Youth from the Netherlands with members of the community

would be any arguments, but it does mean that everyone is accepted as she or he is. For God dwells in each one of us.

By living according to these insights, everyone of us receives her or his own place. One does not have to fight for it, it is being consigned to you by God. It is the place where one can develop her/his abilities, faculties, talents, and where you can be the person you really are. This will make you grateful and opens a space for love. This love is creative, love makes us one

heart and one soul on our way to God.

First of all, we became aware of the importance of equality. The Rule says that we all have our own needs, and that we do not all enjoy the same health. Not all have equal physical strength. Within our group, therefore, there was a distinction between some light jobs to be done, and jobs requiring more strength. These latter jobs, such as carrying heavy materials, plowing the garden, were assigned to the physically stronger ones in the group. Then, at meals, it was noticed that they also needed more food.

The simple life in San Gimignano offered us the space for spiritual growth. Because, while the above mentioned principles maybe rather complicated in themselves, at San Gimignano they came to us naturally and helped us to experience greater spiritual richness. It is up to us, now, to live out this richness outside the walls of the friary.

The important thing, however, was that there was no such thing as envy in the group. Those working hard, did it with love, knowing that they were able to do it, and knowing also that the rest of the group was doing a useful job also. The distribution of work did not result in some kind of hierarchy, but was assigned to everyone.

The world is full of love, gratefulness and forgiveness. By living them in our personal lives, we will be able, as a group, to grow further—living out of love.

In his Rule, St Augustine asks us to act out of love for man and a hatred of sin. This is the second insight we gained during our stay at San Gimignano. Every group and every community consists of different members. They are not the same, but within the group all are equal.

Everyone brings her or his own talent, strength and wisdom, as a service to the group or to the community. However, this can only be realized when the members do not judge one another. This does not mean that there never

Three young women from Lindenholt, the Netherlands



A CREATIVE COMMUNITY FOR INFIRM FRIARS



The Provincial of Chicago, Fr. Bernard Scianna, OSA during the dedication of the new community



Bishop John McNabb, OSA with other friars during the dedication ceremony

In 2010, the Augustinian Midwest Province (Chicago) embarked on what may be a unique venture, establishing a new Augustinian community within a non-Augustinian health care facility in Lemont, Illinois. The facility is named Franciscan Village, and the Augustinian community that now has its home there was founded under the patronage of Blessed Stephen Bellesini, chosen for his noted and courageous ministry among the sick of his parish at Genazzano, Italy.

The decision to embark on this venture was made after much research and discussion and in consultation with the National Religious Retirement Office. This organization, under the auspices of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, coordinates the annual national appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes financial assistance for retirement needs to eligible religious institutes. It supplied an expert facilitator and funded the process of consultation for the Province, which included commentary solicited from every Province member, and development of a

“Covenant of Senior Care” which preceded and informed the decision to start Bellesini Friary. The goal was to provide a place where sick and infirm friars in need of health care would be provided with the best possible attention without forfeiting the familiar and valued experience of Augustinian community life. Previously, those in need of special care lived at Tolentine Monastery in Olympia Fields, a very large building originally designed as the Province’s student house of philosophy. Recently, the Province made the decision to sell the monastery as it had become exceedingly expensive to maintain, and the quality of care able to be given to infirm friars was judged inadequate, sometimes requiring those who needed special care to be placed in nursing homes. Franciscan Village is a facility which makes available all levels of health services, from independent living to hospice care. This new arrangement allows the members Bellesini Friary to pray, take meals, and socialize together each day. Additionally, it has become a venue for ministry for several of the friars among the other residents of the Village.

The National Religious Retirement Office in the United States has recognized this initiative of the Province and plans to feature the Augustinian community in its annual report and campaign literature. Provincial, Father Bernie Scianna, sees this as a great affirmation of the Augustinian commitment of quality care in a community setting for its friars.

At the dedication of the new community on August 27th last year, friars of the Province gathered with some 100 benefactors and friends in the Village’s chapel for evening prayer and a tour of the community’s quarters, followed by a reception. At its opening, Blessed Stephen Friary was composed of five friars who previously had been receiving care elsewhere, as well as three friars who have been assigned as members of the community and serve as the on-site, support team of care-givers.



Fr. Scianna greets some young students



Participants at the dedication of the new community in the chapel at Franciscan Village

MINISTRY IN THE FORMATION EXPERIENCE IN PAPUA, INDONESIA.

Condensed and edited from an article by Anton Tromp O.S.A.

The Order of St Augustine ministers in over forty nations, and in the Asia-Pacific region these include Indonesia, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand and Australia.

In 1953 the Dutch Province introduced the Order to what is now West Papua, Indonesia, and by March 2011 the Augustinian Delegation of Papua had a total of twenty-four friars in solemn vows (14 priests, three non-clerical brothers, and seven men still in initial formation), twenty-three still in simple vows, five novices, and seven postulants.

Except for three senior friars who are Dutch-born, the other fifty-six are all Indonesian-born. These statistics clearly indicate that the future of the Delegation is in local hands, and hence the formation of its candidates is a vital factor for its effectiveness and further growth.

A decision has been adopted that candidates will not become isolated by studying continuously for a number of years without the insertion of periods of full-time ministry along the way. It is anticipated that the insights gathered from such pas-

toral experience will heighten the students' desire to study, and also make the focus of their study more relevant to the lives of the people they will serve.

Of the twenty-seven Augustinian professed at present on the path to priesthood, the twofold experience of ministry



and study being received by Paulus Willem Ulipi (usually called Jaap) is an example of this process.

Jaap, the youngest of seven siblings, is thirty-three years old. He was born into a Catholic family in the Talaud Islands, a part of Indonesia that lies north of the Equator in the Celebes Sea between North Celebes and the southern end of the Philippines. The family then moved to the city of Manado where Jaap attended a minor seminary, novitiate and for

one year the theologate of another religious order.

When he left there in February 2001, he moved to West Papua. He worked as a cook with an oil company for ten months, as a self-employed carpenter and farmer at an oil-palm plantation for two years, and then taught English for a year at a Catholic Junior High School in the village of Tofoi in the Bintuni Bay region of West Papua. There he came to know an Augustinian who was visiting the area, and soon afterwards sought to join the Augustinian Order. With this goal in mind, as a time of postulancy he accepted an invitation to move to

the St. Augustine's Student Hostel in Sorong, and to assist the ministry of the Augustinians living there. This was followed by his novitiate year with three other candidates in 2005-2006 in Sorong at *Biara Tagaste*.

Jaap then spent 2006-2009 undertaking further studies for priesthood. For this he lived in the Augustinian residence, *Biara Kasisiakum*, at Waena near Jayapura, and studied at STFT (Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi) seminary nearby at Abepura.

His first full-time pastoral experience, for a period of occupied twelve months from August 2009 to July 2010, was to assist the Augustinian pastor at the remote inland parish of Yuruf, not far from West Papua's mountainous border with the neighboring nation of Papua New Guinea.

The Parish of Yuruf covers approximately 2,000 square kilometers. It is sparsely populated, with 500 persons in the town of Yuruf itself and the others in a series of isolated villages. The total population of the parish is only about 1,500 people, which averages less than one person per square kilometre.

The villages are linked by rough trails through the dense tropical jungle. Outside of the town of Yuruf, most of the people are subsistence farmers, and in the entire parish there are only thirty kilometers of roads, which are passable only by four-wheel-drive vehicles. Pastoral opportunities in Yuruf

that Jaap led or assisted included opportunities for religious instruction, liturgy preparation, visiting the sick, and work with youth and a women's group. Jaap said, "I enjoyed the hiking in the tropical rain-forest. But sometimes I had to hide my disappointment when the parishioners that I met there were not very responsive to attending prayer services."

He said that his experience at Yuruf was quite challenging, "I felt accepted and valued by these indigenous people, my fellow-men who are living in poverty. These 'simple' people, living in a very remote and isolated area, have to be accompanied, and their life has to be shared so as to exchange with them faith and feelings of brotherhood. We can learn from these kind people the essentials of life, the core items, the fundamentals."

After finishing his fieldwork report to the STFT seminary about his year of pastoral practice at Yuruf and then making



Jaap

profession of solemn vows, Jaap went straight to Villanova Senior High School at Susweni in late August 2010. There he began teaching Indonesian and English language classes for sixteen hours a week.

Reflecting more broadly, Jaap said, "Everybody talks beautifully about what is expected from him/her, but does not always fulfill what is planned. By living among the people and sharing their daily lives, I can try to become more sincere, and by sharing people's lives help to build up community from below."

In conclusion, Jaap commented, "By August 2011 I will be back at STFT in Abepura for my final period of full-time study, and then six months ministering as a deacon before seeking priesthood. I am very much enjoying my time here at Villanova. If the Order later asked me to return here when I am a priest, I would be delighted. For me, that would be an exciting possibility."



Paulus Willem Ulipi O.S.A. ("Jaap")

Jaap in the classroom

PUBLICATIONS

ENCUENTROS DE FE. Horizontes de nueva evangelización (Encounters with Faith. Horizons of a new evangelisation)

Vicente Domingo Canet Vayá, OSA, publisher - 439 pages
San Agustín Theological Centre, Madrid 2011

The volume comprises the various documents presented in the course of the XIV edition of the Augustinian Days, held in the Colegio San Agustín, Madrid, on 12 and 13 March 2011. "The reports focus on three main topics: *encounters with faith, environments which promote faith, places of faith*. On the basis of their reflections and their own experiences, the different speakers analyse the various precincts highlighted, thus facilitating access to the study of a *religion in movement* and the understanding of its concrete meaning for present-day society... With the publication of this work, the San Agustín Theological Centre wishes to add one more grain of sand to the collective commitment of proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel".

<http://www.agustinosctsa.com>



PUBLICATIONS

NUEVA EDICIÓN DE LAS OPERAS COMPLETAS DE SANTO TOMÁS DE VILLANUEVA (New Edition of the Complete Works of Saint Thomas of Villanova)

For the first time in over four centuries, here we are presented with a critical bilingual edition of the literary work of Saint Thomas of Villanova (1482-1555), an Augustinian religious and Archbishop of Valencia, thanks to a team of Spanish Augustinian researchers: with preliminary study, critical edition and indexes by Laureano Manrique, OSA; biography by Javier Campos, OSA; translation by Isidro Álvarez, OSA; and critical appreciation by José Manuel Guirau, OSA.

Various motivations led the authors to undertake this arduous task: the difficulties in finding the works of the saint, the last edition of which is that of Manila (1881-1883; 1897); the need for a version in Spanish, since almost all his prayers and his sermons had been published exclusively in Latin (only 32 discourses were published in Spanish in 1952, out of a total of 454 all of which are included in the present edition); the desire to bring to the knowledge of everyone, whether religious or lay, the particular language used, throughout his preaching, by a wise and far-sighted man of God; the propriety of a word which formed the most brilliant minds of our Golden Century of literature, with its measured eloquence always in accordance with the sincerest faith of the Church; and, above all, the need to meet a desire, widely felt within the Order to which the saint belonged, and by the archdiocese of Valencia which he served during his lifetime, to make his teaching clear and accessible so that without undue delay he may be honoured with the well deserved title of Doctor of the universal Church.

Without any doubt Saint Thomas of Villanova speaks to us today still in a new language and, by his exemplary behaviour, illuminates our disoriented and ageing Europe of the twenty-first century.

Information provided by the Catholic publishing house (BAC) in the first of the 10 volumes of the bilingual and critical edition of the hymns and other works of Saint Thomas.

NORANG NARANG, a Group Home for Boys.

The first solemnly professed Korean working in the Delegation of Korea of the Order of St. Augustine, Barnabas Kim, is a lay brother. When he was soon followed by three other vocations interested in the Augustinian lay brotherhood the question naturally arose as to possible future apostolates for them. All in fact were studying Social Welfare, so in 2000 because of Bro. Barnabas' special interest, a small group home for boys was started in a house located behind the present priory in Incheon.

Bro. Barnabas, having the top qualification in Social Welfare, was able to take on such an initiative. From the start the idea was to keep the project small, a family rather than an institution, a true 'home' in fact. Hence the name given to the project, *Norang Narang*, which means 'You and I together'.

Although Norang Narang was first designed as an apostolate for Bro. Barnabas to launch into, it has never been conceived as exclusively a 'brothers apostolate.' Like the welfare projects of other Orders with both clerical and lay personnel, Norang Narang is a project for all Delegation members, such that all of our recent deacons have worked there for a while, and Fr. Kim Jonah is presently assigned there.

Norang Narang caters to boys mainly from broken homes. When a divorce occurs in Korea it is common that neither parent wants the children living with them. The father wants to start a new family and often the mother cannot financially care for the children. Then there also cases where a mother will run away from a violent relationship, leaving the children in a precarious situation. For example, one boy came to us who was living with his older brother and grandmother but because of the violence of his brother he was sent to us. Originally children were referred to Bro. Barnabas by other Catholic welfare groups but, with recent changes in the law, they are now referred to the home exclusively by the Government Department for Child Welfare.

At first our project was a private enterprise funded fully by ourselves but as the Government came to oversee the many private projects operative in Korea with the elderly and with children we came under their regulations. So now we are funded 49% by the local and city departments and raise the other 51% from approximately 250 members of Norang Narang's support group. This situation has its disadvantages, one of which is the necessity of employing a part-time secretary to oversee the bureaucratic side of things.

In 2006 with the building of St Rita's Hall on the site of the original Norang Narang home a new two-storey home was built adjacent to it. At present there are two friars living in Norang Narang with the boys, Bro. Kim Bok-Chon Johan and Fr. Kim Jonah. Bok-Chon Johan receives a wage which is paid into the Incheon Priory account.



Members of the Delegation of Korea with Fr. Brian Buckley O.S.A. (Province of Australia, 4th from right)

From the beginning, we have employed a house mother who adds that needed feminine, motherly touch to the home. She is expected to fully interact with the boys, prepare the meals and supervise the laundry. The three initial house mothers were unmarried and lived in Norang Narang. The present housemother, however, is married, so while being with the boys each afternoon and evening she sleeps over only twice a week and has the week-ends off. Obviously the former situation is to be preferred. The boys themselves have always been expected to take part in the house-cleaning. The house-mother is also paid a wage by the Department.

Bro. Bok-Chon Johan took over the care of Norang Narang after Bro. Barnabas became the Delegation Superior some six years ago. Bro. Bok-Chon Johan is a solemnly professed friar who is also presently working on his doctoral thesis on Child Welfare which involves his attendance at university once a week. He also gives university lectures himself two days a week on general Social Welfare, the stipend for which also goes to the Incheon priory. In addition to this he is on a team who give regular talks to seminarians, parents and high-school students on teenage sexuality. Fr. Jonah, in addition to his duties with the boys, is studying Social Welfare by correspondence.



Group photo of the Delegation of Korea together with Fr. Tony Banks O.S.A. (Provincial of Australia and Korea)

Since the year 2000 eight boys have passed through the home, and six are presently resident there. The policy had been for the boys to leave after graduating from high school, but this year three have remained to begin university study as they did not have family or financial support on which they could rely. Two others have also gained entrance into universities but are living elsewhere, one with a relative and the other we have set up in student accommodation. This is quite an achievement as all of these boys had a poor early education.

PUBLICATIONS

LE SORPRESSIONI DEL SECOLO XIX E L'ORDINE AGOSTINIANO (The Suppressions of the 19th Century and the Augustinian Order)

Edited by Luis Marín de San Martín, OSA - 792 pages
Institutum Historicum Augustinianum, Rome 2010

This work is a collection of twenty-nine presentations delivered during the Congress of the Augustinian Historical Institute which was held from October 19 to 23, 2009 at the Patristic Institute in Rome. As the title clearly indicates, the material considers the suppression of religious houses and its effects on the lives of the friars and its consequences for the whole Order.

Thus, even those parts of the Order not directly affected are treated. Each presentation is printed here in the language in which it was delivered: Spanish, Italian, English, German.





The Norang Narang building (viewed from the front): a basement garage, two levels of living space, a small unit for the house mother, and a flat for recreational use

Of the eight boys that have left the home, one has since been in jail twice for minor offences and is now doing his military training. Two others ran away during their time in high school and our contact with them has been lost. As for the others they are usually connected with some member of their family and are employed.

When a boy comes to the home he is usually in primary school. If he is not baptized, he usually receives the sacrament during his time in Norang Narang. The boys all attend catechism classes at the local church. Having three university students at Norang Narang this year

has changed the atmosphere somewhat as they are understandably away for long periods of the day and expect greater freedom of movement.

With the extensive need to assist Korean youth in difficult living situations, and with five members of the Augustinian Delegation having or currently obtaining qualifications in Social Work, the future of the Norang Narang project looks doubly assured. It has been a useful and relevant service to contemporary Korean society, has afforded invaluable experience in ministry and social justice to members of the Delegation, and has witnessed to the laity familiar with the Augustinians that all Augustinian ministry is not necessarily priestly.

Kim Bok-Chon Johan O.S.A.
& John Sullivan O.S.A.



In the dining room at Norang Narang with Fr. Kim Jonah O.S.A. (head of table)

FLASH

New Provincials-elect

California – Fr. Gary Sanders (2^o term)

Germany – Fr. Alfons Tony

Mexico – Fr. Mario Mendoza Rios



Bro Patrick and Bro Nestor with the Prior General

Solemn Profession of two members
of the Province
of Sto Niño de Cebu-Philippines
students at St. Monica's
in Rome.
Bro. Nestor Bravo Bandalan, Jr., OSA
Bro. Patrick Paul Moraleda de Castro, OSA

Saturday, 7 May 2011

Sto. Niño Spirituality Center (8)

Brgy. Tolotolo, Consolacion, 6001 Cebu, Philippines
Tel. +63 (032) 516 2508 - Reception; +63 (032) 513-0163 - Director

Facebook and YouTUBE Account (type):
STO. NINO SPIRITUALITY CENTER

Sto. Niño Spirituality Center which was inaugurated in January 15, 2009 during the closing activities of the Silver Jubilee celebration of the Augustinian Province of Santo Nino de Cebu-Philippines is located in the hills of Tolotolo, Consolacion, Cebu, about a 45 minutes drive from the city of Cebu. Its idyllic charm is ideal for Retreats and Days of Recollection and its serene ambiance is conducive for reflection and meditation. Overlooking a valley, which provides a continuous flow of cool breezes, and offering an impressive view of the city skyline, it is truly a restful and relaxing center, away from the hustle and bustle of daily living. The peaceful and pleasant atmosphere at SNSC really makes it a comfortable and conducive place for retreat and other spiritual exercises. Seminars, Workshops,



Conventions and other functions can also be accommodated.

The Santo Nino Retreat House and Spirituality Center was built in response to a great need of the Cebu Province to have its own place for spiritual renewal and reflective solitude in order to serve the needs of the members of the Province and the people in their ministries.



