



# St. Therese Parish BULLETIN

Issue No. 08-09

AUGUST 2009



## A Sacerdotal Ordination

By PJ Ghunner Balasabas

### “Many are called but few are chosen.”

This line keeps on taunting me as I recall the event last June 16, 2009, the ordination of our very own Fr. Cherish Chester D. Serana.

At the newly-furnished and edifying Metropolitan Cathedral, the Archdiocese of Cebu received 12 new priests including Cherish Chester Serana who hails from Sitio San Miguel of Barangay Apas, belonging to our parish. The ordination was concelebrated by more than 40 priests coming from the different parishes of Cebu, with Auxiliary Bishops Most Rev. Emilio Bataclan and Most Rev. Antonio Rañola. Present among the STP Team of Pastors were Fr. Rolando Manayon and Fr. John Jonah Orat.

The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist started at 9AM, led and officiated by His Eminence Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, the beloved Archbishop of Cebu, and the ordaining prelate.

On that fine Tuesday morning, the atmosphere of the Cathedral looked vivid as people gathered and filled the church. It became vibrant as the choir started to sing the entrance hymn with the lyrics, “You are a priest forever in the line of Melchizedech.” People present gazed with so much joy and excitement towards Rev. Chester who was assisted by his mother Rosario Serana and



twin sister Cheerful as they marched through the aisle to the altar. Looking around I saw familiar faces of our co-parishioners — Lourdes Mumar, Mabel Abella, Jasper Durano, Frederick Yongco, some of the lay ministers and our Parish Catechists led by Nene Navaja. Family, relatives, friends and benefactors of Fr. Chester were also there.

One of the touching parts of the ordination rites was the Chanting of the Litany, where Fr. Chester prostrates himself before the altar. It was quite long yet it can move you to tears. Then the laying of the hands, one by one the priests alongside the Cardinal laid their hands on Fr. Chester while the people remain seated in silent prayer. The laying of hands signifies that they are one in the priesthood of Christ. Finally, in the changing of the vestments, Fr. Chester’s mother and his sister were emotional as they

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## A Sacerdotal Ordination (cont'd.)

assisted him in wearing the Chasuble. All of us were happy and elated to see Fr. Chester wearing the vestment of a priest.

What a worthwhile experience to witness and be part of the ordination of a friend and a fellow parishioner! It is definitely a blessing for our STP to have another priest coming from our parish, the 7th if I'm not mistaken.

Indeed Fr. Chester is one of the Chosen Ones of the many who are called. In fact, when Fr. Chester entered the Seminary after high school, there were about 30 of them. I hope that the ordination of Fr. Chester inspires more young people of our parish to consider and answer the call to priesthood or religious life. Especially at this time that the Church needs more priests, as the Bible tells us, "The Harvest is great but the Laborers are few."

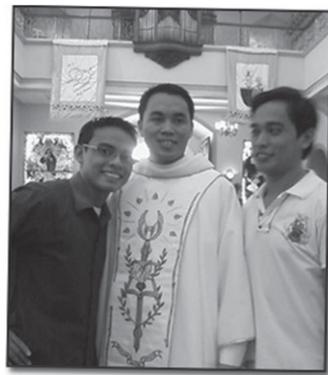
Moreover, the solemn celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the ordination rites ended

with so much blessings, gratitude and joy in the hearts and faces of all.

Afterwards, family, relatives, friends and co-parishioners of Fr. Chester proceeded to SPFY Covered Court at the Archbishop's Palace Compound for the reception.

*Send more Laborers into your harvest,  
O Lord. Amen. ■*

***Congratulations, Rev. Fr. Cherish  
Chester "Kit" D. Serana!***



Frederick Yongco, Fr. Kit and PJ Balasabas

## Church Construction Updates

As of this writing, only half of the church floor area, altar included, has been laid with floor tiles while the other half is still undergoing tileworks. According to Engr. Joseph Yu, the church construction project has finished the civil works phase and is now moving on to the plastering phase wherein a substantial quantity of cement and sand are needed. He is soliciting for bags of cement to be donated at this phase.

Moreover, the dwindling of donations for the construction has put the STP Foundation in a huge debt that suppliers are now wary of extending credit limits. Engr. Yu's construction company, JOVIMA, handles the procurement of materials for the church construction to spare the Foundation from the complex accounting works involved by just sending us the bill. The Foundation will then issue the corresponding checks to each supplier involved. So once again, the Fundraising Committee is asking parishioners, devotees and friends to donate.

The Parish is blessed to have Engr. Joseph Yu as the Vice President of the STP Foundation as well as in-charge of plans and construction of the new church. His technical services, company and staff, and the use of heavy equipments for the church construction are all free of charge. This is his way of supporting the church project.

Engr. Yu continues to assess that while construction work is focused on plastering, waterproofing has already been done on the big dome. Also, works are on the way to finish the two gigantic belfries on each side the cavern of St. Therese. The image of St. Therese which has been retained from the original church building will undergo restoration and beautification before it will be finally laid in its place between the two belfries. ■



## The Sacrifice is a Covenant

*Amazing! How so many forget that before Jesus Christ suffers and dies on the cross, he had already offered himself as a victim of sacrifice.*

What? Are you saying that before the sacrifice on the cross he had already sacrificed himself?

*Precisely, that is what I am saying. The fullness of the destruction of the victim, that is, Jesus Christ himself, already happened before his death on the cross.*

Please explain. I do not understand.

*You remember the Last Supper? He took bread. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples and said, 'This is my Body!' It was his Body he broke. It was his Body he sacrificed. The apostles did not question that. They believed it was his Body. Neither do we question that. We believe it is his Body. So has the Son of God declared and so have we believed that it is so as he says it is!*

That is why catechism teaches us: The Eucharist is the unbloody sacrifice, Mt. Calvary is the bloody one. Two sacrifices, one offering!

*You are right and you are wrong!*

What do you mean?

*Because one cannot be separated from the other. The sacrifice at Mt. Calvary was once for all time. He suffered and died for us on that cross once for all time. He paid the ransom for our redemption once for all time in that very bloody death. On the other hand, when*

*he broke his Body on that supper table, he made sure that this unbloody sacrifice was not just going to be once for all time. 'Do this in remembrance of me!,' he tells them.*

And so we continue the unbloody sacrifice in the celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Jesus commanded it. We believe and we obey.

*My dear chap, you are almost there! As I was saying, one cannot be separated from the other because they are actually one and the same. So many criminals died at Mount Calvary. It was a place of execution. And there Jesus Christ was executed as a criminal too. That is the ordinary interpretation. For those who did not know him that is the only interpretation.*

Wait a minute! I see where you are going. Jesus Christ instituted the Eucharist so that we will be able to make the correct interpretation of what his Sacrifice on Mount Calvary meant.

*That is so right! With the institution of the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ fixed the definitive meaning of His sacrifice on the cross. It was personal and voluntary. Not only that. It was the establishment of the New Covenant.*

From the Old Testament to the New.

*It was necessary. It was an integral part. You cannot take one from the other. The institution*

*Continued on page 4*



***With the institution of the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ fixed the definitive meaning of His sacrifice on the cross.***



# FUND RAISING



ACTIVITIES

## Chit-chat (cont'd.)

*of the Eucharist places our Lord's Passion and death in its deepest and complete revelation.*

Wow! The Sacrifice is a covenant. Thus, he says, 'This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant.

*Yes. Eat. Drink. He tells us. He lays down the terms of the New Covenant.*

But it is up to us if we will follow him, right?

*Right. The Son of God sacrificing his life for us, dying for us so that we can partake of his Body and Blood. But it is always up to us to eat and drink his Body and Blood. It is always up to us to do that same "sacrifice" in memory of him.*

It is so sad to think that there are those who refuse to partake of the Eucharist. Sadder, to think that there are those who call themselves Christians but does not even believe it is his Body.

*This holy and pleasing sacrifice is accepted by the Father at the same time it unites us with the Son and through him with the Father! And we who receive him are united with one another. What greater communion can there be!*

We become the new people of God because of the Eucharist! We are Church of the New Covenant because of it!

*Come to think of it. Because of the Eucharist, we belong to God's family. ■*



The Fundraising Committee of the St. Therese Church Construction Project suggested to sell floor tiles to parishioners to augment the dwindling church construction funds. The scheme is simple: after every mass, churchgoers buy a tile or two (or more), but instead of bringing home the tile/s, they will donate the amount to the church project. Official receipts will be issued as proof of their purchase as well as their show of support to the tile donation campaign.

The scheme was taken up and approved by the STP Foundation Board during their meeting last July 23, 2009 attended by all members of the Board of Trustees, Fundraising Committee, Fr. Vicente Tupas (Spiritual Director) and Fr. Rolando Manayon, Team Moderator.

And so, on July 25, 2009, in spite of a heavy downpour, committee members and volunteers came to sell tiles to mass-goers at the parish church, Gaisano Country Mall and JY Square mall where Sunday masses are also held regularly.

On another note, Msgr. Rudy Villanueva has volunteered to extend his expertise in music. He will train members of selected choirs in the parish in preparation for a chorale concert to be held soon in the church. Msgr. Villanueva is expected to meet the choir leaders or representatives of the St. Therese Little Flower Choir, Shepherd's Flock Choir, USP Children's Choir, Dawn Rosarian Children's Choir, Malubog Central School Children's Choir, and CCRM Youth Choir.

Parish Youth President Lorina Lepon and church construction Project Coordinator Ma. Lourdes "Odette" Jerez of USPF are also expected to join the said meeting on Friday, August 7 at 8PM in the St. Therese Parish church. ■

## Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for August 2009

**General:** That public opinion may be more aware of the problem of millions of displaced persons and refugees and that concrete solutions may be found for their often tragic situation.

**Mission:** That those Christians who are discriminated against and persecuted in many Countries because of the name of Christ may have their human rights, equality and religious freedom recognized, in order to be able to live and profess their own faith freely.



Taizé is a meditative prayer service that incorporates simple, repetitive song and chant, scripture readings, and periods of group silence in a setting of peace and soft light that fosters communion with God. Through Taizé, participants can worship in a community setting, yet remain open to the voice of God and discover the prayer within themselves.

# Praying the Taizé

Taizé Prayer is an ecumenical form of prayer meant to foster reconciliation and peace among all people. Christians of all traditions share in this ecumenical group. Taizé Prayer is meditative common prayer. Gathered in the presence of Christ, we sing uncomplicated repetitive songs, uncluttered by too many words, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity.

Last July 8, 2009 at 7 in the evening at the Metropolitan Cathedral, I, together with the STP Youth Coordinating Council witnessed the most tremendous prayer for the youth, the Taize Prayer. It was handled by Bro. Andre, an Indonesian national but a religious brother from Taize, France in coordination with the parish youth of the



Cathedral together with youth of District One in the Archdiocese of Cebu. Before the prayer had begun inside the Cathedral, many youth were able to attend

and witness the prayer [Taize prayer is well known here in the Archdiocese of Cebu but with the presence a Taize Brother, the expectation of the youth was a little bit different because of its process and pattern and that it may coincide to the Taize prayer which parish youth do initiate]. We were given copies of the prayer sequence. And when the prayer has started, the spirit of the prayer aroused each one to feel the presence of the Lord as the choir sang with joy and gladness. The venue was dark but lighted candles gave radiance and

solemnity to the prayer. Bells were ringing as the Taize Cross was enthroned while everyone sang the song "We Carry". *Veni Sacnti Spiritu* or Come Holy Spirit was sung repeatedly as Taize Songs are simple Latin or English meditative songs and everybody was in the midst of God. The Gospel of Matthew was then read.

After the Gospel everybody sang "Lord Jesus Christ, Your light shines within us. Let not my doubt and my darkness speak to me." Following was the silence of the heart calling God to dwell in the midst of us. Inculcated in this Taize is the Prayers for the Faithful for the uplifting of petitions and intentions of the youth with a response of a song "O Lord Hear My Prayer, come and listen to me." As Catholics, we cannot forget the words our Lord Jesus has taught us, and part of the Taize was the Lord's Prayer, and singing through it, it renews the strength we need. A prayer was said by Fr. Sherwin, Spiritual Director of the District One youth.

The last and most wonderful part of Taize was the Veneration of the Taize Cross. Together with Bro. Andre and Fr. Sherwin who venerated first the cross, we all knelt and bowed down our heads with prayer and petition to the cross while the choir sung the several solemn songs.

After the solemn veneration of the Cross, Fr. Sherwin gave his blessings in order for us to give light among our fellow youth in Christ's Name. Amen.

By Frederic Yongco





## FLA elects new set of officers

Members of the Family Life Apostolate (FLA) recently held the election of its new set of officers.

**Couple–Coordinator:**

Bro. Roy & Sis. Belen Villa

**Couple-Asst. coordinator:**

Bro. Joe & Sis. Arlene Duque

**Couple-Secretary:**

Bro. Nap & Sis. Lides Comar

**Couple-Treasurer:**

Bro. Frank & Sis. Chiong Alaba

**Couple-Auditor:**

Bro. Boy & Sis. Marvae Saavedra

**Couple–PRO:**

Bro. Danny & Sis. Lita Sumanting

The election was undertaken to heed the request of former FLA Couple-Coordinator Bro. Frank and Sis. Julie Lastimosa who requested to be replaced. They cited that health reasons and old age has impeded them to be effective servants of God in this particular ministry.

During the same meeting vis-a-vis election, FLA Spiritual Director Fr. John Jonah Orat discussed with the members the controversial Reproductive Health Bill (House Bill 5043), encouraging the FLA of our parish to take action on this issue after receiving a letter from Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal in support of the Archdiocese's strong stand against the said House Bill.

On another note, Fr. John urged the FLA to revive its regular monthly meeting every 3rd Sunday of the month. For more than a year now, FLA programs and activities, especially the Pre-Cana Seminars in our Parish have been temporarily suspended because there have been no weddings held due to the unavailability of venue as the church is undergoing construction. He stressed our responsibilities that as Children of God we must at all times continue to work hand-in-hand for the "preservation of humanity." It is during the regular meetings that important matters relating to the Apostolate can be discussed and addressed. ■

By Bro. Douglas and Sis. Vilma Arcillo

## Duaw Museum

The Team D of the STP Mission Team, spearheaded by its indefatigable team

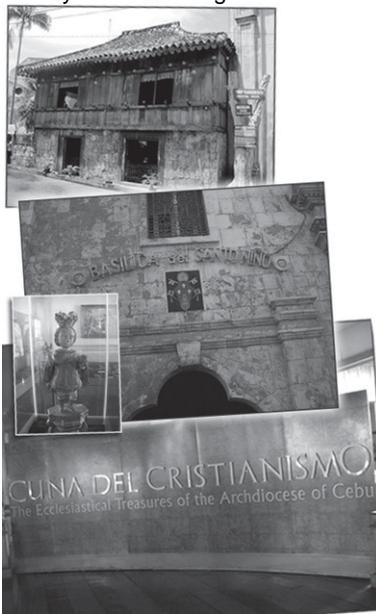
Priest-In-Charge, Fr. Jonie Tupas, culminated their "Duaw Kapilya" with fun and spiritually rewarding activities last June 20, 2009. Together with some chapel leaders and guests from the other teams, they had their "Duaw Museum". They visited five (5) museums in the city: the Basilica Museum, Museo Sugbu, Yap-Sandiego Ancestral House, Casa Gorordo, and the Metropolitan Cathedral Museum. For lunch, the team proceeded to "AA" in Plaza Independencia. Afterwards,

the team went on pilgrimage to the Holy Door and offered a Thanksgiving Mass at the Metropolitan Cebu Cathedral.

Indeed, the day made each one realize that, to be able to reach and attain one's true destiny, one must be able to know one's own roots and in the process achieve that sense of belongingness. To be able to see and appreciate the richness of the great Cebuano Cultural Heritage is truly rewarding experience.

Being "HINIUSANG SIMBAHAN" has never been more highlighted and emphasized as on that red letter day!

By Evet Trocino and Charo Ruiz



# Peregrinatio Pro-Christo: Journey Towards our Vision

After almost two years of painstaking preparations, 7 daring members of the Legionaries of Mary coming from the different parishes in the Archdiocese of Cebu had gathered to make their vision in bringing the Blessed Mother to the people via **Peregrinatio Pro-Christo** (Pilgrims for Christ) a reality. *Peregrinatio Pro-Christo* is an official activity of the Legionaries wherein they bring the Blessed Mother and her teachings to people in places near and far.

The preparation took quite some time for 2 reasons: lack of funds and distance of venue requiring immense groundwork.

Nevertheless, on May 15, 2009, the day came for us to make our vision come true. From the North Bus Terminal we travelled 135 kms to Daanbantayan. Then we hopped on a motorboat and braved the rough seas for the next half hour to reach our destination. Kinatarcan, a modest town in Sta. Fe, Bantayan, was chosen as our venue by the Senatu (Archdiocesan head of the Legionaries).

Compared to the other towns of Langob, Bitoon and Hagdan, local folks admit "Kinatarcan" is such a serene place well-suited for a missionary site. Even its sea is not as salty as it should be. Water supply is not readily accessible though it can be found in deep wells that abound the area. Locals store rainwater in giant clay jars that provided our daily needs.

In spite of its rural environment, the place where we stayed was

awesome. Each house was equipped with restrooms. There was even a prayer hut where we spent our prayer and scripture time. We took turns in cooking our food the crude way. Fire was no problem as firewood was very much in abundance. The locals were also very accommodating. In short, our needs were answered.

It rained so hard during our first night in the place. So on the next day when we traveled, our feet were covered with

mud that it looked like we had boots on, but made of mud. We went thru this ordeal for several days, including the daily 3 km "habal-habal" (motorbike) ride to our mission venue. Each time we go back to our shelter, we were so exhausted (body and soul included) to the point that we seem to feel that our bones were broken. But alas, a couple of days later, "manna" came from heaven as Sister Elvie Kiesler, a lay from Kinatarcan, literally brought food for our physical body. In

addition, when priests from a nearby church arrived and celebrated mass, our spiritual thirst was quenched. Imagine being in the island for days without the celebration of the Holy Mass! Truly, God provides for all our needs - physical and spiritual!

The highlight of our mission was being able to organize a "Flores de Mayo" for the children and parents in the place. Only a little over 5 children came to attend on

the first day. On the second day, to our astonishment, the attendance increased to a magic 13 and for next few days, the numbers kept on increasing with 43 as our highest count. We were so happy in the Lord for this incredible outcome in our mission.

*Each time we go back to our shelter, we were so exhausted to the point that we seem to feel that our bones were broken.*

Sadly, the day came when we have to leave and head home. This would mean that the "Flores de Mayo" will have to stop at the height of its inception.

Gladly, Imelda Layaog, a resident in the area volunteered to continue and lead the "Flores de Mayo." We were then inspired to hand over to Imelda the responsibilities that come with the celebration of the "Flores de Mayo." Alas, we left our mission field with a joyful heart!

As we ponder on our mission, we saw in their eyes their longing to have a priest solely assigned to their place so that masses can be celebrated regularly and the priest can attend to their other spiritual needs. Presently, they have to wait for several days before a priest from neighboring towns will come to say the mass. They believe that there are no barriers in our faith in God. Their present condition and adversities will not discourage them from nurturing their faith. They believe they will soar high as in eagle's wings. We hope and pray someday soon, a regular priest will be assigned to them.

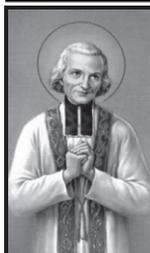
By Maris and Charlita, LoM



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Pre-Cana Seminar resumes

The Pre-Cana Seminar of our parish will soon resume and will be scheduled every 3rd Sunday of the month. Pre-Cana seminars are given to couples who are candidates for a church wedding. Couples seeking matrimony in our church are advised to visit the Parish office for more details and information.



## Year for Priests

19 June 2009 - 19 June 2010

Announced by His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Members of the Congregation for the Clergy on the Occasion of their Plenary Assembly Monday, 16 March 2009.

◀ St. John Vianney, *Patron of Priests*  
Feast day: August 4

**Good news!** Cardinal Vidal has signified his intention to lead in the Fiesta Mass as well as consecrate the new church building on October 3, 2009, the day the parish of St. Therese will celebrate her feast day.

*Please support our*  
  
**ONE DOLLAR**  
*campaign*  
 to finish our Church construction.  
 After all, a dollar ain't much but it can build a church!

## CHURCH SERVICES

### Holy Mass

#### Weekdays:

6:00 am	Cebuano
12:00 nn	English (except Saturday)
6:00 pm	English

#### Sundays:

5:30 am	Cebuano
7:00 am	English
9:00 am	English
10:30 am	Cebuano (with baptism)
4:00 pm	English
5:30 pm	Cebuano
7:00 pm	Cebuano

### Special Services

Pre-Jordan Seminar	Sunday morning
Pre-Cana Seminar	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday 8:30 am
Eucharistic Vigil	1st Friday
General Mass	1st Saturday 4:30 am
General Bible Study/ Prayer Meeting	1st, 2nd, & 3rd Monday, 8 pm
Healing Mass	Last Monday, 8 pm
Feeding Program	Last Sunday
Bible Study with Msgr. Dakay	Friday, 7:30 pm

## STP Bulletin Available Online

If you want to receive the monthly STP Bulletin online, send your e-mail address to our Parish Office or to sarahcanete2004@yahoo.com. Salamat.

## FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE CHURCH PROJECT

(As of July 22, 2009)

Estimated project cost ..... P43,000,000.00

Total cash donations received

(7/22/09) ..... 17,257,892.52

**Amount needed to complete  
the construction ..... P25,742,107.48**

Donations can be given to the parish office or deposited at our Chinabank Account No. 279-040901-6. Please make checks payable to St. Therese Parish Foundation, Inc.

Official Receipts will be given.



Do pray **1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, 1 Glory be...** each day at 8PM for our church construction project.



### St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish

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**Spiritual adviser:** Fr. John Jonah Orat.

The St. Therese Parish Bulletin is the official monthly publication of St. Therese Parish. It aims to foster unity and love among parishioners by providing schedules of services as well as articles that may upbuild the church through testimonies as well as other stories.

For comments and/or suggestions, please feel free to call the parish office at 231-4380 and look for Jeanna Villarante or Euvy Bascon Bucio during office hours.

