



St. Therese Parish
BULLETIN

Issue No. 03-09

MARCH 2009



Church Construction Gets a Helping Hand

By Albert Amor

THE ONGOING church construction of St. Therese Parish in Lahug, Cebu City gets a helping hand from Virgen de la Regla National Shrine Parish in Lapu-Lapu City. A couple of weeks ago, the Team of Pastors sent a letter to their Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Pete Arguilles, MSC, requesting that their second collection be donated to the church project of St. Therese Parish. To their surprise, they got a positive response from Fr. Pete who committed the second collection in all masses of the 22nd of February, a Sunday.

Anxiously, the Fundraising Team composed of Inday Holasca, Linda Laborte, Nemia Navarro, Tuding Capili, Ely Mellina, and a few others, headed to Lapu-Lapu early dawn on February 22. Though it was a hectic day for them at Virgen de la Regla National Shrine, yet it was worthwhile as they were able to bring some funds for the construction.

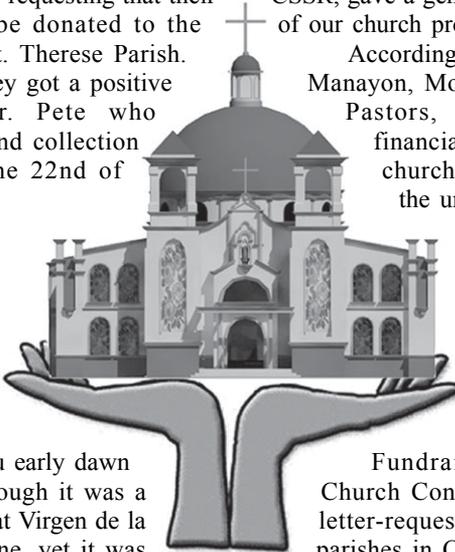
It is not just the MSC Community alone that had shown support in the construction project of STP. Early last year, a second collection in all the masses of one Friday at the Basilica Minore del Santo Niño was

generously given to the church construction project by the Augustinian Community.

Also, the Redemptorist Fathers of the Mother of Perpetual Help Church, headed by their parish priest, Rev. Fr. Macmahonn, CSSR, gave a generous amount in support of our church project last month.

According to Rev. Fr. Rolando T. Manayon, Moderator of the Team of Pastors, the scheme to seek financial assistance from other churches in Cebu stems from the universal mission that the church of God is not just for parishioners here in Lahug but for all Catholics as well. Also, their generosity will return to them a hundredfold.

To date, the Fundraising Committee for Church Construction has delivered letter-requests to other well-known parishes in Cebu City with the hope that they can share in building God's house here in this part of the city. As for now, the Church Construction Committee, together with all the parishioners of St. Therese in Lahug has a lot to thank parishioners in those churches that were generous to us. Thank you for your generosity! ■





45th Parish Founding Anniversary Celebrated at the New Church

In a momentous event last February 11, 2009, a thanksgiving mass was held in the new St. Therese, Lahug, Cebu City, for her 45th Founding Anniversary as a Parish.

Invited to lead in the Eucharistic Celebration was Msgr. Achilles Dakay, media liaison officer of the Archdiocese of Cebu. In the new sanctuary beneath the majestic dome etched with the heavens, Msgr. Dakay was with Team Moderator Rev. Fr. Rolando T. Manayon, co-pastors Rev. Fr. John Jonah A. Orat and Rev. Fr. Vicente L. Tupas, Jr., and Parish Vicar Rev. Fr. Jacinto Y. Rama, Jr. Rev. Fr. Pete Arguillas, MSC, Parish Priest of National Shrine of Nuestra Señora Virgen de la Regla in Mactan, Lapu-Lapu City, was present to witness this historic occasion.

Others who happily joined in the 45th anniversary were officers and members of the different Parish mandated organizations led by Parish Pastoral Council President, Jesus C. Alix who read the First Reading.

St. Therese Parish Foundation, Inc. (STPFI) President and Fund Raising Committee Chairperson Anita E. Cabinian led her members in ushering the use of the new church and in celebrating the STP's 45th Founding Anniversary. She read the Second Reading.

Spouses Joseph and Mary Ann Yu led the offering of bread and wine. They were highly acknowledged as they are very instrumental in the construction of the new church.

Eager to become a part in this very historic event was Jun Jereza, husband of Odette Jereza (Fund Raising Coordinator), who rendered the Psalm in a song. STPFI Board Member, Manuel Torres led the Prayers of the Faithful.

Friends, donors and devotees of St. Therese also flocked to the new church in utter anticipation of the very first mass being celebrated beneath the dome.

Next historic event in the parish will be the completion of the whole church structure by October in time for the Fiesta. See ya!



Photos (top): Msgr. Dakay as main celebrant of the 45th Parish Foundation Anniversary Mass; STPFI President Anita Cabinian for the First Reading; Jun Jereza led the Responsorial Psalm. (Bottom L-R) The half-finished new church; the tabernacle in its new place at the sanctuary; the stone image of St. Therese atop the façade of the old church taken down as demolition moves on to the other half of the church grounds.



The Scapegoat of Our Sins

Do you know that the Jews have a special day dedicated for atonement?

Yes, my dear chap. They call it Yom Kippur. Taken from Leviticus 16:33, it reads: He (the high priest) shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

Imagine, only with the celebration of this feast each year could the high priest pass behind the veil screening the Holy of Holies and enter into the Holy Place. That is how solemn it is! Thus, it is also called the Sabbath of all the Sabbaths! It is on this special day that burnt offerings of rams, bullocks and lambs are made. 15 animals all in all on this day alone!

Wow! And the whole services of that day was performed by the high priest, of course, assisted by more than 500 priests. What a grand ceremony that is!

Geez! Burnt offerings and the sprinkling of blood for the expiation of the sins of the priests and the people of Israel. But there was one animal, a goat, which was neither sacrificed nor its blood sprinkled!

I know that. Read Leviticus 16:20: ...Aaron shall bring forward the live goat. Laying both hands on its head, he shall confess over it all the sinful faults and transgressions of the Israelites and so put them on the goat's head. He shall then have it led into the desert... Since the goat is to carry off their iniquities to an isolated region, it must be sent away into the desert.

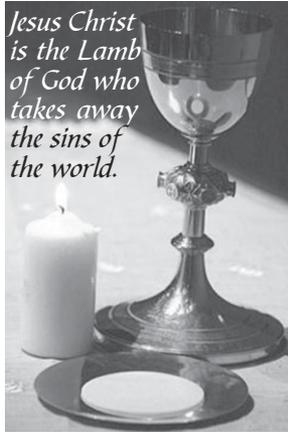
This is the origin of the word “scapegoat” which as we know means somebody who is

made to take the blame for something that he has not done. The sins of the people are removed and transferred to the goat but the goat is not killed but is led away into an uninhabited place.

Amazing. For me, this goes to show that in the Old Testament, sin is not really blotted out but only put away from the people and put aside in the wilderness.

That is so true. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God, not just a ritual goat, who takes away the sins of the world. No! And mind you, not just the sins of the Israelites does he take away, but he takes away the sins of the whole world!

You see, the Jews were limiting God just for themselves. But God is not just a God of the Jews alone but he is a God of the Gentiles, too. (Rom 3:29) He is broken, that is, killed not just for the transgressions of the Jews but for ours, too! He took our sins upon himself and he died for us!



On another vein, my dear friend, in the Old Testament: Those sacrifices in the Temple were only a remembrance of sins. A remembrance only made once a year. Come to think of it, the blood of bulls and goats cannot really take away sins that we have committed, right? (Hebrews 10: 3-5).

Not anymore in the New Testament is the blood of animals shed but his blood itself, the blood of the Son of God! He enters once and for all into the sanctuary, not with the blood of goats and calves but with his own blood, thus obtaining (for us) eternal redemption (Hebrews 9: 12).

And so, you recall, Jesus Christ, in the Last Supper, takes the cup and declares, “This is

the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven.” How fascinating! He takes away holocausts and sin offerings prescribed in the Old Testament, and establishes something he alone can do, (Hebrews 10: 9), his own personal sacrifice. And you know what, to his followers, he declares, “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Yes. Yes. That is why we do not repeat the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament anymore. We obey Jesus Christ who has instructed us to do “his Last Supper” in remembrance of him!

Look you here! Before being sent forth to the wilderness, this “scapegoat” was turned around to face the people, waiting as it were, till their sins were laid on him.

That, of course, is the prefiguration of Jesus Christ brought forth by Pontius Pilate and made to stand before the people, just as he was about to be led forth bearing our sins with him.

Now, don’t you forget the scarlet cloth which was tied to the horn of this goat.

Ah, that completes the picture, you see. That is a prophecy of total forgiveness which is yet to come. Taken from the Book of Isaiah: Though your sins be like scarlet, they will become white as snow. Though they may be crimson red, they will become white as wool (Is 1: 18). And as we know, the goat only symbolized it, it is the Son of God who really takes away our sins.

Wow! Isaiah was talking about obeying the will of God. “Put away your misdeeds,” Isaiah proclaims, “from before my eyes. Cease to do evil. Learn to do good. Make justice your aim. Redress the wronged. Hear the orphan’s plea. Defend the widow.” (Is 1: 16)

Now we have it. What are sacrifices for if we do not obey the will of God? And so Isaiah tells us, “To do your will is my delight. (Is 1: 9)”

And how Jesus Christ obeys God our Father! “Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth.” (Is 53:7) And how he loved us to the point of death! “Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep each following his own way; but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all!” (Is 53:5-6)

We remember how he loves us. And during this Lenten season, let us not just remember: Let us follow him. Let us convert to him. Let us make things right. Let us atone for our sins. Let us renew ourselves. Let us avail of the sacrament of reconciliation. Let us glorify him with our lives.

Let us say: “Behold we have come to do your will, O God.”

Precisely. ■

Gikan sa Gugma

by Rosario Alviola Orat

- Pagka-anindot sa kagahapon
- Sama’g panganud pagakab-
- uton,
- Langitnong lam-dag sa mga
- bitoon,
- Matahum dan-ag sa kagabhi-on.
- Sukad pa sa atong sinug-danan,
- Gibilin gyud ang kamatuoran,
- Gisapnay, gisabwag sa simbahan,
- Para subayon ug paga-abyan.
- Pagka-anugon sa kinabuhi,
- Kon sa gugma dili mopauli,
- Sa garbo ug bulawan nagpaulipon
- Walay pahulay ang mabudhi-on.
- Ayaw usiki ang buhing bahandi,
- Mahalong perlas, labing pinili,
- Pauli dayon, ayaw paglangan,
- Sa gugma nga atong gigikanan,
- Matinud-anon, mahimaya-ong
- Tugon sa Balaang Kasabutan.



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for March 2009

General: That the role of women may be more appreciated and used to good advantage in every country in the world.

Mission: That in the light of the letter addressed to them by Pope Benedict XVI, the Bishops, priests, consecrated persons, and lay faithful of the Catholic Church in the Popular Republic of China may commit themselves to being the sign and instrument of unity, communion and peace.

The Blessedness in Suffering

This month commemorates the anniversary of my graduation. Exactly a year ago, I wrote of my gratefulness and thanksgiving for the blessings that God bestowed upon me. Little did I know that I also graduated from my "comfort zone" because immediately after that celebration, I experienced, what some may call "getting into the thick of things," answerable for my decisions and responsible for my actions.

College life offered me a lot of trials: my family, my friends, my relationships. But when I started working, more serious trials and problems arose. I needed to choose things I never thought of before. I needed to let go of my indecisive self and had to stand up for what is right and what is best for me as I understood things to be according to what I most believe in.

Last month was one of my greatest heartaches. My friend was in danger of having cancer. She confided to me a month after she felt the symptoms because she didn't want to give me stress and worry. The feeling of unbearable pain struck her and pushed her to finally tell me what she was undergoing. No one from her family knew about this. I was stupefied because it never occurred to me that she was sick, and most probably, mortally. I noticed for some time now that she appears so weak. I didn't know what to do. How could she keep this away from me for a long time? I felt so helpless.

Sirach 2:1 tells us, "My son, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials." Trials, I thought, shouldn't be as serious as this. Somehow, a part of my heart complained why God has given this great burden upon my shoulders. She is my very close friend. She knows me so well like the back of her hand and vice versa. Needless to say, we experienced a lot of things together, things we can share with others and those we just have to keep to ourselves. I have had hurts before because I always felt that God is taking away all my friends. Now that I have a friend I want to have for life, He's taking her away from me, again! That was how I felt. Bluntly put, I do not want to lose my friends!

When you are in the middle of the hurricane, you feel so peaceful and safe, that is what they say. Like me, I am not directly affected, but seeing her experience such pain made me feel so troubled as well.

How can I see blessing in suffering then? I wasn't able to see any explanation, until I remembered what God said: "Accept whatever befalls you, in crushing misfortune, be patient; For in fire gold is tested...trust God and He will help you." I then realized that I must wait in Him. I must accept His will and, through prayer and humility, ask God's grace for healing and forgiveness. I will be able to carry through this great trial in my life.

This, to my mind, is the meaning of Lent, Christ suffering and dying for his friends.

By Hazel Joy M. Celestial



Jesus, too, through prayer and fasting, prepared Himself for the mission that lay before Him, marked at the start by a serious battle with the tempter.

At the beginning of Lent, which constitutes an itinerary of more intense spiritual training, the Liturgy sets before us again three penitential practices that are very dear to the biblical and Christian tradition – prayer, almsgiving, fasting – to prepare us to better celebrate Easter and thus experience God's power that, as we shall hear in the Paschal Vigil, "dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy, casts out hatred, brings us peace and humbles earthly pride" (Paschal Præconium).

– From Pope Benedict's Lenten Message: A Call to Fasting
www.catholic.org/clife/lent



My Vocation Story

Lord, what do you want me to do? This has been my question when I was still young and was actively involved in the youth ministry in the parish. You know, my ambition in life is to become a journalist but I just didn't know why the Lord has called me to this life. I have done all the possible ways of escaping from his calling but nothing happened. This was how my vocation story begins.



**Br. Benedict Maria
of Our Lady of
Solitude, SAP**

I'm Br. Benedict Maria, SAP. Born and baptized as Jubileo Navares Gacho, I was raised in a Catholic family. My parents are devoutly practicing Catholics. By heart I am a Catholic. It was just for the sake of curiosity that I joined a non-Catholic sect. With this decision my parents hated me. Every now and then they would confront me about it but I just shrugged it off. I even noticed many of my friends started to dislike me. I wanted to reach out to them to explain my side yet nothing happened. So I just focused on my studies.

I went through life smoothly until destruction came in to my life. Because of this I could hardly concentrate on my studies. This happened when my elder brother approached me and expressed his desire to enter the priesthood, a desire which

my parents didn't like although they are devout Catholics. They believed that one of them would die if any of their children would enter the priesthood or religious life. After some time, his decision changed and finished his first career. This posed a big question in my life. "Life in this world is constantly changing; can I be sure of anything?" With this, I was facing a decision of

changing religious affiliation. Without any second thought I made a rush decision and asked permission to leave the sect. Hesitatingly they freed me.

After these events, I kept myself busy in the Parish Youth Ministry. I enjoyed being and working with them energetically. My mind was opened to a new world view. I realized that career is not a matter of choice but above all it is a gift. It is the kind of life one chooses to live. I could hardly sleep thinking about these people. I even got feverish for one week, not knowing what the cause was. Finally, in the silence of my heart I asked the Lord, "What do you want me to do? What shall I do to my life?"

I was toying on the idea of entering the religious life or in the Seminary. But I

cannot decide. I was reluctant to discuss this with my parents. I really had a hard time discerning my call. But I have to make my decision. A passage from the Gospel opened my mind. It says: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren you do it unto me." I realized that nothing would happen to my life if I could not answer His call. I thought of what my teacher once commented that I was undecisive and could not stand alone. To prove otherwise, I made up my mind and entered the Society of the Angel of Peace. Founded in the Archdiocese of Cebu, it is a religious community whose apostolate is serving the Church by assisting the bishops, priests and parishes in celebrating the Liturgy and in Liturgical formation.

I made my simple profession of vows last March 26, 1996 and three years later I made my solemn profession. Years passed and I took further studies on Liturgy at San Beda College in Manila and later shifted to Theology were I believe that God is calling me and will be with me and in everything that will happen to me He will be there to help me. ■

By Br. Benedict Maria, SAP

Note: The Society of the Angel of Peace has a place called St. Martin House of Studies at Fulton St. in our parish occupied by theology students under the stewardship of Bro. Benedict. They assist as in our liturgical ceremonies every now and then.

Tinuig nga “Evaluation and Planning” gihimo sa mga STP Catechists

Ang mga Katekista sa St. Therese Parish naghimo sa ilang tinuig nga *evaluation* niadtong Pebrero 20, 2009. Gihimo kini nila tubuok adlaw diri sa atong parokya diin ilang gitutukan ang nagkalain-laing mga kalihokan nga sila nagmalampuson ug gitana-aw usab nila kadtong mga kalihokan nga wala sila nagmalampuson.

Gasugdan nila ang *evaluation* pinaagi sa pag

gahin ug panahon sa Dios diha sa pag-ampo, pagbasa sa basahon gikan ni Marco 3:13, pagpamalandong ug pagpa-ambit sa bibliya.

Gipaambit ni Nene Navaja ang Archdiocesan Pastoral Thrust nga “Growing together in Grace as the body of Jesus Christ.”

Samtang ang ilang *planning* para sa umaabot nga SY 2009 - 2010 gihimo nila niadtong Pebrero 23 ug 24 didto sa Alcoy Beach

Resort. Ang *Planning Sessions* naglangkob sa mga nagkalain-laing kalihokan sa pagpanudlo sa publikong tunghaan nga sakop sa atong parokya ug sa mga kalihokan nga pagahimoon sa simbahan.

Miuban sa ilang *Planning Sessions* mao ang STP Catechetical Spiritual Director ug Cebu Archdiocesan Catechetical Coordinator nga si Rev. Fr. Vicente L. Tupas, Jr. ■

Seminar for the 75th Anniversary of the Archdiocese of Cebu

A seminar on the Cebu Archdiocesan Pastoral Thrust was one of the several activities of the Archdiocese of Cebu. Last February 21, 2009, representatives from different organizations of St. Therese Parish were sent to attend the seminar. They were Aida Santinor (Charismatic), Nene Navaja (Catechists), Lolot Mendoza (BEC), Lita Sumanting (FLA), and Lorna Ynot (Dawn Rosarians). The theme was, “At 75 the Archdiocese of Cebu: Growing Together in Grace as the Body of Christ”.

Parish Lay Formation Teams, District 1 Metro Cebu North Parishes, were the official participants. Held at SPFY covered court Cardinal’s Compound, the activity started with registration of the participants. At 8:30 am, Rev. Fr. Pat Ornopia, SPFY Director, led the prayer. Then Msgr. Roberto Alesna, PA Episcopal Vicar, District 1, welcomed the participants.

The seminar was highlighted by the battery of speakers. The first speaker was our very own Rev. Fr. John Jonah Orat who discussed “Priestly Function,” centering on our vocation to love and to live holy lives. “Without striving to live holy lives, we cannot really be true Christians,” he emphasized. The second talk, “Prophetic Function”, was shared by Rev. Fr. Joseph Yntig. “We are all prophets by virtue of our baptism. When we find defects in others, we are not to condemn him but to look at him in a prophetic manner, that is, in a Christian manner, with love and understanding,” he stressed. Rev. Fr. Mhar Balili was the third speaker and discussed “Kingly Function.” Taken from the analogies on leadership of Pope St. Gregory the Great, he narrated: “Those who are blind and cannot see where his steps lead, those who are lame who can see where

his steps are leading but cannot walk towards it, the hunchback burdened by the weight of the world and cannot raise his eyes towards our heavenly abode and those with motes in their eyes who cannot see the light of truth, they are not supposed to lead. On the other hand, the leader is the one who is able to deny himself worldly pleasures, who is not afraid of trials and difficulties and who will teach with conviction the doctrines of the Church.”

The participants went home full of enthusiasm and eagerness to share the blessings to the STP parishioners. As I remember the verse from the Bible, Jn. 15:16, the Lord says, “You did not choose me; it was who I chose you and sent you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. And everything you ask the Father in my name, He will give you.”

Praise the Lord! Alleluiah! ■

By **Aida G. Santinor**

Lent provides us an opportunity to open our personal maintenance schedule and take a close look at ourselves as we journey towards eternal life.

As a general practice for all Catholics, the Church requires that we fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. We are also asked to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent.

Donations

List of donors are posted at the parish bulletin board. For your donations, please drop them inside designated boxes or you may give donations at our PARISH OFFICE.

Do pray **1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, 1 Glory be...** each day at 8:00 in the evening for our church construction project.

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 3rd Sunday 8:30 am
Eucharistic Vigil 1st Friday
Dawn 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 February 19, 2009)

Estimated project cost P43,000,000.00
Total cash donations received
(1/22/09) 12,476,119.68
**Amount needed to complete
the construction P30,523,880.32**

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.



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.

