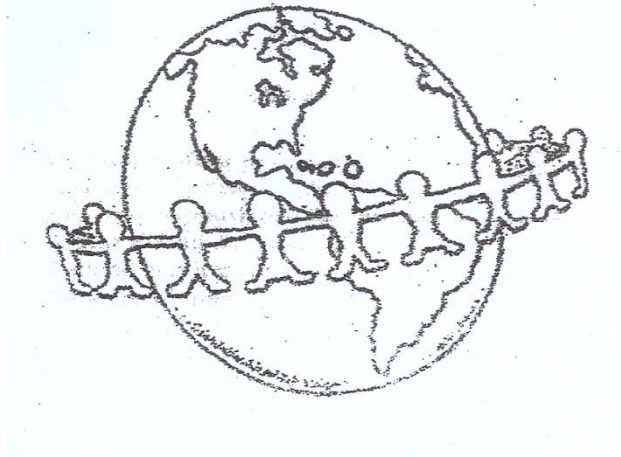


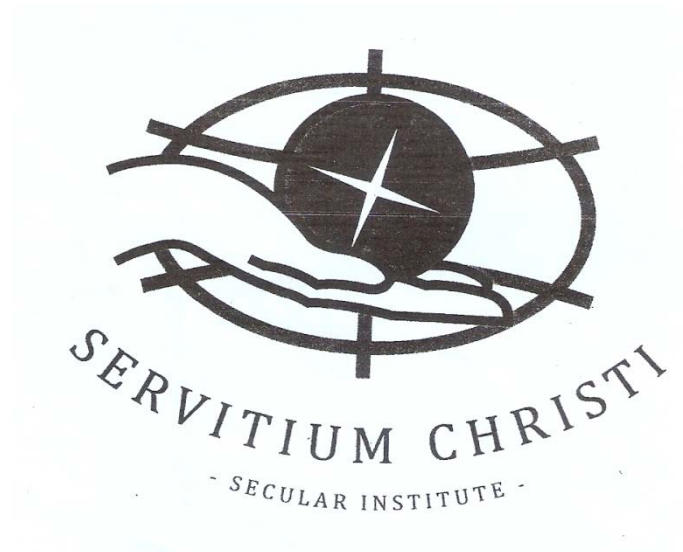
Vinculum



Newsletter of

**The Secular Institute
Servitium Christi**

August 2018



Celebrations in the Philippines

Having left Dublin on 14th March 2018 and flown via Abu Dhabi and Manila I arrived at Davao Airport early on the morning of 16th March 2018. In effect, I had not lived on 15th March 2018! Such are the intricacies of long-haul flights.

On arrival at Davao, I was met by Susan, Lorna and Virgie, and it was as if we took up where we had left off the last time we had met - five long years before. It was wonderful to be back and to meet the Group that I had seen grow from very small beginnings in 2004, into a mature and progressive Centre. I was taken to the Convent of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament in Davao, where I was to stay during my visit. En route there, we stopped off at the nearby Assumption Parish church, where to my great surprise, Fr. Bong Luistro was visiting.

My visit was occasioned by the Final Professions of Lorna Castanares and Susan Matutina. The ceremony took place in Assumption Parish Church, in the presence of Fr. Mike Garcia sss, Spiritual Assistant to the Philippines Members, several concelebrants, the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, and family and friends of the Members. It was a most joyous occasion, with inspiring Liturgy, and wonderful celebration afterwards in the House of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers.

In the days that followed, I had the opportunity to spend time with the Members both at meetings and in informal social settings. It was good to be with them again, to hear of their challenges and their progress, and to meet a new Member who had joined since my last visit. All the Members engage in parish apostolates and are clearly highly regarded by all who know them. I was sad to leave them behind, but I still needed to visit the Manila Members, and I really looked forward to that visit also.

Fr. Mike accompanied me on the flight to Manila, and from there to the Provincial House of the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, there I stayed for the rest of my visit. I was pleased to be present at the renewal of Vows of Veron, Lou and Fatima (who I was meeting for the first time). Sadly another Members, Marive, decided not to renew her Vows, and has left the Institute. She came to discuss the matter with me, and though sad about the situation, we were both satisfied that her discernment was correct.

This group had been really shaken by the untimely death in September 2017 of Angie Galang, and indeed by Marive's departure, so it was good to have some time with them both at formal meetings, and also in the less formal settings of restaurants and a shopping Mall. The Blessed Sacrament Fathers were wonderful hosts, and even invited us all to join them for lunch in a nearby restaurant. When the time came to leave, Fr. Joseph Matitu, the Provincial Superior, drove me to the airport (accompanied by some Members) stopping en route for Mass at the shrine of the "Black Nazarene" in Quiapo. This experience really gave me an insight into the faith and devotion of the Filipino Church, and I could not help feeling more than a tinge of envy.

My overall impression of Servitium Christi in the Philippines is of a very mature, well-grounded and organised group, under the careful and effective guidance of Local Directresses Gene (Manila) and Virgie (Davao). Their Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Mike Garcia sss is an invaluable support to them. They have grown in confidence, and now feel ready to be erected as a Region. Please God this will come to pass during our General Assembly in 2019.

Many thanks to all who contributed to making my visit both fruitful and enjoyable: The Local Directresses in Manila and Davao, Connie Gonzales, my Colleague on the General Council, Fr. Mike Garcia sss, a wonderful and loyal friend and mentor, my hosts the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, and of course the Members themselves, who have made this Group such a shining example of the joy of being a Member of Servitium Christi.

Mary Keane
General Directress

IN MEMORIAM

Tribute to Joana

"The consummation of this world will be granted in the experience of Jesus Resurrection and of each of us, no longer tied to the categories of this world; it will be a reality occurring in the world, but beyond the world, being a historical transcendent reality".

Joana Sousa Cavalcante was an outstanding member who made history at the founding of the Fortaleza Center. Her perpetual profession took place in the Parish of San Benito, on May 31, 1976, about forty years ago. She died on March 4, 2018.

She served as the Local Director of the Centre of Fortaleza in the 1980s. She chose the Centre's Formator in the first Encounter carried out.

Her personal testimony was remarkable for the members of the Fortaleza Centre, mainly due to her remarkable solidarity. She cared for every member, and she used to offer accomodation, if needed, or welcome Institute's members at home.

As for the beginnings of the foundation, she collaborated with the co-founder Antonietta Maria Jacqueline Golsteijn, to whom she joyfully offered accommodation in her housing. She happily remembered the co-founder. Both of them became good friends, and created good fraternal bonds.

On the other hand, in every opportunity she had, she gave clear testimony of having met and worked with the founder of the Institute, Rev. Fr. Goodfried Spiekman, sss, and with the collaborator to the founding of Servitium Christi in Fortaleza, Fr. Pedro Hanse, sss.

In the San Benito Parish, she would be ready to serve all the time, assisting the Sacramentine Fathers. She founded the choir "God with us", and continued participating for many years. She also served as a Minister of the Eucharist.

The Parish community, jointly with the Sacramentine Fathers, paid her a solemn tribute in gratitude for all services rendered in favor of the Kingdom of God.

The members of the Centre of Fortaleza shared our sorrow at her unexpected death.

Nevertheless, the Sacred Scripture has certainly comforted us: *if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live With Him*" (Rom 6, 8).

Eliete Gomez
Local Directress
Centre of Fortaleza

Our prayerful condolences to the members of the Fortaleza center.

International Convention, Rome, 3 - 6 May 2018

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) organised an international Convention in the Antonianum, Via Merulana, Rome from 3rd to 6th May 2018. The theme was "Consecrated and Consecrated by Evangelical Counsels", with the focus on what it is that makes "Consecrated Life" important to the Church, and what distinguishes it from the Consecration we all receive in Baptism. All General Moderators were invited to attend or to send a representative. I found accommodation on via Merulana, just 100 metres from the Redemptorists House, where St. Peter Julian made his Great Retreat in 1865.

As with all gatherings organised by the Holy See, the Convention was very well organised, even if on this occasion, it was held with rather short notice to participants. There were four Main Speakers:

- Nuria Culduch Benages MN: The Biblical Dimension of Consecration (How to be Prophets Servants and Disciples)
- Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo OFM: Consecration: A Step on the Journey
- Jose Christo Rey Garcia Paredes CMF: Theological Dimension of Consecration
- Sebastiano Paciolla O. Cist: Juridical dimension of Consecration.

There was also a Prayer Vigil in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, and a special audience with Pope Francis.

Secular Institutes were well represented at the Convention, as CMIS had encouraged all Institutes to be present. The final day consisted of discussion on set questions, with a late afternoon feedback session.

Though impossible to give a full account of such a rich Convention, the following is a summary of the main points:

1. We are witnesses of God in a torn world. Consecrated Life does not shun the world. God's place is in the "public Square", and we need to take risks to be there, just as did the Prophets of old and as Christ Himself Who became the "Suffering Servant". Consecrated Life has a public and political dimension. We should strive to create a counter-culture for dignity and justice. Our Consecrated Life is rooted in the figure of Jesus.
2. "Sequela Christi" (Following/Imitating Christ) is the core aim of Consecrated Life which begins with Baptism, and leads to total dedication to God. We must love with the love with which we have been loved. God consecrates us. We become Prophets by the way we live. Each form of Consecrated life has something special to offer the world, and this diversity is a constitutive element of Consecrated life.
3. As Consecrated persons, do we adapt to life, or do we expect life to adapt to us?
4. Our Consecration "cannot be reduced to a specific moment in life that generates permanent status, but first of all it is a 'consecration continuata'".
5. By our Baptismal Consecration, we are incorporated into the Church. Religious Consecration (or Consecration in a Secular Institute) is different from, and grafted onto Baptismal Consecration, and is of a higher degree of intensity. It is a "Specific Consecration". Canon Law does not say that a Baptised Person is "consecrated". Many new communities are emerging which claim to be "Consecrated Life", but very few of them are accepted by the Holy See as fitting the parameters set by Canon Law, which in turn grew from the documents of Vatican II. The style of life, the form of life, the stability of life, and the nature of the Vows/Promises all need to be considered.
6. In a case where a Member of an Institute of Consecrated Life is a priest, he should bear in mind that he is primarily a Member of Consecrated Life. He subsequently becomes a priest in order to serve the Church. Archbishop Carballo OFM, Archbishop Secretary to CICLSAL made this point, saying that it was Pope Francis himself who gave him this advice on his appointment to CICLSAL. It illustrates the importance of Consecrated Life.
7. It emerged from the final day of discussions, that there is unease about the title "Secular Institute", given the negative inference in the word "Secular". Both Archbishop Carballo, and the Prefect Cardinal Aviz agreed with this point of view and undertook to consider an alternative title. Another form of Consecrated Life whose title included a negative phrase ("Without Perpetual Vows") had its title amended in consultation with CICLSAL, so there is a precedent for this, and the Holy See is not only open to the idea but supports it.

I do hope that this has given you a flavour of what transpired at this Convention, and the kind of matters that arise for discussion at such gatherings. There was a wonderful atmosphere of fellowship between the Secular Institute representatives, and this was very nourishing. The CICLSAL staff, together with the Cardinal Prefect and Archbishop Secretary, are warm, welcoming and helpful people, who conduct these gatherings in an atmosphere of family gathering.

My attendance at this Convention left me with a deep sense of gratitude for my Membership of the Church and for my Vocation to Servitium Christi - my two Consecrations!

Mary Keane
General Directress

We celebrate

*150th Anniversary of the Death of
Fr. Eymard.*



Eymard's Self-Reflection

This is from the life of St. Peter Julian Eymard. His words are drawn from Peter Julian Eymard: Apostle of the Eucharist by Father Andre Guitton, SSS

Imagine if you will, a death-bed conversation between Saint Peter Julian and his favorite Archangel: Raphael. In the early afternoon hours of Saturday, August 1, 1868, the bells began to ring in the little town of La Mure. Everyone asked each other: "Why are the bells ringing?" They were very quickly given the answer: "Our Father Julian is dying." All the townspeople ran towards the house, 67 Rue du Breuil. As many as could fit inside started to pray; the rest stood outside. In all the rush and commotion, no one noticed the entry of the Archangel Raphael who went to the second floor room where Peter Julian Eymard lay in bed.

As Peter Julian opened his eyes, he saw the figure of a young man dressed in white who looked at Peter Julian and said, “Peter Julian, I am the Archangel Raphael. Since you have used me as an example of a true adorer of God and one who has always served him to edify the people you have inspired, I have been sent to assist you in remembering the touch of God in your life.” Peter Julian answered, “Thank you for coming to help me. What a joy for me. I am moved to say ‘O Jesus, receive my spirit, my body, my heart, my entire being!’

(From Congregation Blessed Sacrament)

Han’s Birthday

With great joy and gratitude we celebrated Han's 95 anniversary last June 24th.

May God bless her and reward her for her service to our Institute as co-founder.

She’s an example for her commitment and gift of self.

Congratulations Han!



Appointment of the Bishop of Kaolack (Senegal)

It has just been announced that the Holy Father has appointed as Bishop of Kaolack (Senegal) **Fr. Martin Boucar Tine, S.S.S.**, our Ecclesiastical Assistant and until now Vicar General of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

May God bless him in his new Ministry and reward him for his service and kindness to us.

Mary Keane
General Directress

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