



## Archbishop Palma celebrates Mass of the Holy Spirit



COME HOLY SPIRIT. The Archbishop of Cebu, Most Rev. Jose Palma, DD, presided the Mass of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter.

May 16, 2022 Cebu City. Most Rev. José S. Palma, D.D., Archbishop of Cebu celebrates Mass of the Holy Spirit on the first day of the 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial chapter together with concelebrating capitulars.

In his homily, the good bishop begins with the words, "I would like to manifest my desire to be united with you in prayer as you come to this propitious and significant event—the 8<sup>th</sup> provincial chapter." These are words of fraternal assurance to all delegates to have a sense of peace, confidence, courage, and to move forward as they are entrusted with a not-so-easy task to pave new paths for the Province of St. Ezekiel for the next years ahead.

As a form of thanksgiving, he revisited recent and forthcoming milestone celebrations of the Recoletos in Cebu which are fruits of missionary efforts: 400<sup>th</sup> Year of Presence in Cebu, golden anniversary of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, diamond jubilee of the University of San Jose-Recoletos. These, the bishop insists, are grace-filled events and moments of how God lavishes and continuously showers blessings to the Order through the years.

He likewise acknowledged the recoletos's ministerial efforts in the fields of evangelization, education, formation,

and mission which undeniably, the good bishop, positively believes to have borne positive and laudable results.

The bishop also issues challenges to the capitulars to embrace the spirit of synodality that Pope Francis constantly exhorts for everyone. And he poses a challenge that "The spirit of community, participation, and mission to be maintained. What better way to proclaim as a church and as a religious than to be examples of communion first to God and then to one another?"

Recognizing the missionary zeal of St. Ezekiel Moreno, he says, "this missionary spirit of St. Ezekiel should always be present today. We hope and pray that what we do now will bring conversion, hope, and growth in the far-flung barangays."

His Most Reverend Archbishop José concludes his homily reiterating his oneness with the chapter delegates with the words, "I may be out of sight after the coffee break, but my heart remains with you in prayer for a fruitful Provincial Chapter."

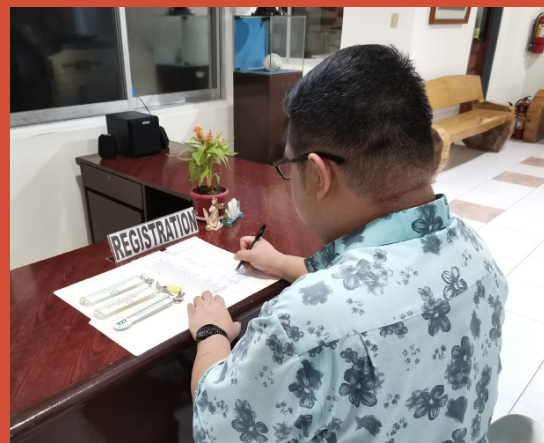
## SET OF TWENTY-SEVEN TRICKLES IN

**CEBU CITY** - On May 15, 2022, Sunday, the halls of Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos echoed with cheers, greetings, and wheel-rumbings of luggage bags as the participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter started trickling in, completing the presence of twenty-seven delegates.

Although a number of the capitulars started arriving on Friday evening, this day is their final schedule of reporting to the Chapter's venue. Their presence is so crucial since this gathering of the highest governing body of the Province would revisit, determine, and set in place vital matters and concerns affecting the life, mission, and direction of the Province and its members for the next three to four years.

Comprising this year's set of delegates are Fr. Miguel Ángel Hernandez—the newly elected Prior General of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, Fr. Dionisio Selma, OAR—the outgoing Prior Provincial, the members of the Provincial Council, and the other twenty delegates representing the various area of apostolates of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. Added to them is Fr. Lauro Larlar, OAR, who will serve as the official translator (English–Spanish) of the Prior General throughout the Chapter.

With all the capitulars present, the 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter is set to open formally the next day.



SIGNED IN. Fray Rafael Pecson penned his informations as he and other capitulars arrive in Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos, Cebu City.



TELLERS DON'T TELL. Appointed Tellers of the Chapter swore an oath of secrecy in front of the President of the Chapter after the opening of the 8th Provincial Chapter.

# 8<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter opens with election of tellers and council members

May 16, 2022. Fray Miguel Angel Hernández, the newly elected prior general of the Order of Augustinian Recollects, officially opens the 8th Provincial Chapter of the youngest province of the Order—St. Ezekiel Moreno province.

## Fr. General's Opening Message

Fray Miguel reads his message in Spanish as its English translation is provided to the capitulars.

Following the thoughts of Eduardo Card. Pironio, the Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated and Apostolic Life, Fr. Miguel states that, "a chapter is always a paschal celebration." The chapter becomes a paschal celebration only to those who manifest the attitudes and mindset of "dream[ing] it, imagin[ing] it, desire[ring] it." He also said that the "future belongs to the great dreamers, to those who have nothing to lose, to defend or to keep."

To be able to celebrate the chapter correctly, the president shares three basic attitudes: the attitude of poverty, prayer, and fraternal charity.

Treading the synodal path of the Church, Fray Miguel cited some aspects for the province to walk in communion with the whole Order. He stresses the importance of accompaniment in the different stages of formation, especially for the professed religious in the permanent formation. Although academic degrees

are important to support the formation of the religious, Fray Miguel reiterates that accompaniment is not just "filling our heads with ideas and information, but in making our hearts attuned to the feelings of Christ..."

He likewise gives accent to the need to share the charism with the laity. Citing the message of Pope Francis during the special audience of the capitulars of the 56<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, he reiterates the need to form the laity, especially those who share the charism "not because we are fewer ... but because what we love cannot be kept under locks and keys..." Thus, there is the need to accompany them in their faith process

He also desires that, in the provincial level, the social actions and the ARCORES be strengthened. Likewise, the care for minors and vulnerable adults be realized in the communities and in centers of pastoral works. He also emphasizes the necessity to live and share the Recollect identity to the recollect administered parishes.

As a final statement, Fr. Miguel wishes that the motto of the 56<sup>th</sup> General Chapter which is echoed by the 8th

## THE CHAPTER OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Fray Miguel Angel Hernández

### MODERATORS

1<sup>st</sup> - Fray René Paglinawan  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Fray Romeo Ben Potencio, Jr.

### SECRETARY

Fray Jose Ernil Almayo

### COUNCILOR

Fray Dionisio Selma

### TELLERS OF THE CHAPTER

Fray Regino Bangcaya  
Fray Rafael Pecson  
Fray Feliciano Campomanes, Jr.

### IN-CHARGE OF PREPARING THE CHAPTER MESSAGE

Fray Ian Anthony Espartero  
Fray Rafael Pecson  
Fray Regino Bangcaya

### IN-CHARGE OF PREPARING THE LITURGY

Fray Anthony Morillo  
Fray Russell Lapidez  
Fray Henry Santiago  
Fray Corvin Maturan

### COMMUNICATION TEAM

Fray Romeo Ben Potencio, Jr.  
Members of the Chapter Secretariat

### IN-CHARGE OF SENDING AND REPLYING MESSAGES FOR THE CHAPTER

Fray Joseph Philip Trayvilla  
Fray Kenneth Joseph Onda

### BELL RINGER

Fray Allan Jacinto

Provincial Chapter—“Walking Together”—be an invitation for all Augustinian Recollects to learn from the recollection in the Philippines. Likewise, he encourages the members of St. Ezekiel Moreno Province to share the gift of the Filipino recollection with the whole Order. This is possible through close collaboration between the provinces and the general curia and among all the religious of the Order.

### Appointment of Chapter Tellers and Election of Chapter Council

After the opening message, the president of the provincial chapter, appoints tellers of the chapter. Following the tradition of the previous chapters, the oldest and the youngest capitulars and a religious brother are named—Frays Regino Bangcaya, Rafael Pecson, and Feliciano Campomes, Jr. respectively.

The election of chapter moderators, secretary, and councilor is done through a secret ballot. After receiving the absolute majority of votes, i.e. 14 votes and above, the elected moderators are Frays Rene Paglinawan and Romeo Ben Potencio, the chapter secretary is Fray Jose Ernil Almayo, and the councilor is Fray Dionisio Selma. These elected members are to help the president in steering the wheel of the 8th Provincial Chapter.

At end of the first session, the prior general prays: “May the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother of Consolation, and St. Ezekiel Moreno help us to arrive together at the most adequate decisions and proposals needed by the Province to continue advancing in evangelization, communion, revitalization, and authentic living of our Augustinian Recollect charism.”



THE CHAPTER BEGINS. (Top) Fray Campomanes, one of the three Tellers, collects the votes to be counted for the election of the Chapter Officers. (Below) Fray Hernandez instructs the capitulars, in Spanish and translated to English by Fray Paglinawan, during the afternoon session.



THE COUNCIL. (Top) Members of the Council of the Chapter pose after their election. (From L-R) Frays Selma (councilor), Potencio (2nd moderator), Hernández (president), Paglinawan (1st moderator), and Almayo (secretary).



IN JUST ONE TOUCH. Fray Boyax demonstrated the steps on how to use the tablet provided for the capitulars.

## 8th Provincial Chapter goes paperless

With new technology, the 8th Provincial Chapter goes paperless via virtual cloud, online conference and voting apps.

These innovations were through the technical expertise in computer engineering and programming of Fr. Boyax. He programmed the v-cloud for the documentation services of the 8th provincial chapter and thanks to Rhodel who programmed the voting app.

Fray Reynaldo Jaranilla, current president of Recoletos Communications, Inc., gives the technical orientation to the capitulars who are "generally" considered technology migrants.



FAST LEARNERS. The capitulars getting acquainted with the tablets and its apps to be used throughout the chapter.

# Fr. Elias Ayuban, CMF shares thoughts on Jesus as Model of religious leadership

The second half of the afternoon was dedicated to a recollection with Fr. Elias Ayuban sharing thoughts on Jesus as model of religious leadership.

Fr. Ayuban, who formerly worked in the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Rome under Cardinal Joao Braz de Avizz as Prefect, reflects on four verbs to define leadership of Jesus—LIVES, SERVES, INVOLVES and ACCOMPANIES. To live refers to Jesus's preaching and teaching as coming from his very own wealth of life experience. Jesus taught his very life, not something he simply learned from manuscripts and others. To serve is to give one's life as Jesus did for his sheep in contrast to the use of power to dominate, control or monopolize. To involve refers to shared leadership, to inspire others to cooperate, and participate in the mission of the community. To accompany is to lead people to self-transformation through the sharing of personal experiences, instructions and verifications. This also means to build up others in moments of weaknesses and support them in times of weariness.

From his experience as provincial superior of the Father Rhoel Gallardo Province (formerly the Philippine Province) of the Claretian missionaries, Fr. Ayuban, juxtaposing Matthew's "Temptation of Jesus" and John's "confession of Peter" narratives, provides the capitulars hints and notes on temptations and challenges to leadership. The three temptations he calls, Efficiency, Fame, and Power.

He connected efficiency to the temptation of the devil, "if you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread" (Mat 4:4). To the temptation of broadcasting success and competence is Jesus query to Peter which involved personal relationship and contemplative prayer, "Peter do you love me ...?" (Jn 21: 15, 16, & 17).

The antidote of producing fruit, which involves much effort and hardwork, is to bear fruit which means naturalness as an outflow from ones true nature. This is a product of love.

Fame is another temptation to leadership. Fr. Ayuban associated this to the temptation for Jesus to throw himself down. This is a temptation to be popular, to assert competencies and to prove ones qualities. The antidote to such temptation is Jesus's call to service "Feed my flock" (Jn 21: 15, 17). True service leads to forgiveness, and forgiveness leads to healing.



RECOLLECTION DAY. Fr. Elias Ayuban, CMF (center) sets the tone of the provincial chapter with a recollection. Frays Potencio (left) and Hernandez (right) listen, together with other capitulars, to the reflection of Fr. Ayuban with the theme: "How was Jesus as a Superior?"

Third in the list is the temptation for power. This is to act like a messiah, to dominate, and to command. In contrast, Jesus reminded Peter after his three pronouncements of commitment to love, "... someone will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." It is a commitment to shared leadership and to be disposed to listen so as to be led by others.

The first talk was a fitting in-pur since the capitulars first activity after the recollection is to choose who will shepherd the province for the next quadrennium.



## Magic 3: Some curious possibilities

Very soon, the next Prior Provincial of this youngest province of the Recoletos will be chosen by the 27 capitulars. Does that mean that the Prior Provincial-elect will be the 28th member of the Chapter?

Not necessarily.

Remember, the election for Prior Provincial will home in on the magic three only: Frays Leander Barrot, Bernard Amparado, and Ian Anthony Espartero. All of them have been a member of the Provincial Council. Barrot, 56, was a Provincial Councilor once. Amparado, 60, had been a Provincial Councilor four times. Espartero, 42, is finishing his second term as Provincial Councilor. Moreover, like Espartero, Amparado has also served as Vicar of the Province.

All three have already participated in the Order's General Chapter. Amparado in the 54th Chapter held in Granada (Spain) while Espartero and Barrot in the recent 56th Chapter, in Rome.

The youngest of the three is *a iure* participant of this Provincial Chapter. If he is elected to the said office, the total number of capitulars will remain 27. The possibility of having 28 will only be realized if either of the two older ones gets elected.

Academically, these three friars have obtained an ecclesiastical degree in Rome: Barrot is a scripturist, from *Biblicum*; Amparado is a philosopher, from *Pontificia*

*Gregoriana*; and Espartero is a moral theologian, from *Alfonsianum*.

Little wonder they are all professors and formators of our seminaries. Amparado is prior/rector of Casiciaco Recoletos Seminary in Baguio. Barrot is rector of the Recoletos School of Theology in Miranila, Quezon City, where Espartero holds office as Dean. Concurrently, Espartero is president of the Secretariat of Spirituality and Formation while Barrot is chairman of the Commission on History, Culture and Heritage-Recoletos.

Continuity and novelty are surefire possibilities. In terms of age, Barrot may follow Dionisio Selma who was 56 when he was first elected Prior Provincial. Amparado may follow Emeterio Buñao, Regino Bangcaya, and "the third" Lauro Larlar who were elected to the same office at age 60. (Larlar was elected Prior Provincial thrice, at ages 51, 54, and 60.)

The past seven "elected" Priors Provincial – or eight, to include Victor Lluch (from Mindanao) who was the very first, albeit appointed Prior Provincial – were all products of *Marcilla*. Will Amparado join the queue? If either Barrot or Espartero

emerges, then it will be a first time that a product of Miranila will man the steering wheel of the province. If Espartero gets elected, he will also become the youngest – replacing Larlar – to become the father of this 24-year-old province.

In addition, the previous elected priors provincial were from Bohol (Buñao), Negros Island (Larlar), Panay Island (Bangcaya), and Cebu (Selma). If Amparado gets elected, he will succeed not just a fellow Cebuano, but also a townmate. If Barrot takes the absolute majority, he will be the first Waray, from Leyte. If Espartero makes the cut, then he will be the second Negrense to take the post.

Quite interesting, so far. But, in the end, we must factor in the non-negotiable intervention of the Holy Spirit whose standards always go beyond all human categories.

So we fervently pray: "Lord, you commanded Peter and the other disciples to put out into the deep, make the hearts of the capitulars receptive to your call so that they may elect a Prior Provincial who will lead us towards renewal, unity, and charity." (Prayer for the Provincial Chapter)