

rue neuve

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PARC LA SALLE NOVITIATE 2017-2018

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HIGHLIGHTS

03 COVER STORY

LSN GOES TO LA UNION

Summer heat, rushing waves and the gift of community life give excitement to the summer outing of LSN community in La Union, Philippines.

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The Joy of Coming Home to the Heart of Christ

Resurrection is both a message of joy and of returning to the heart of God.

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A Gift (A Reflection on Consecrated Life)

Received with openness and acceptance, the gift of consecration to God for the educational service of the poor empowers us to be more loving and life-giving.

ARTICLE BY BR. JEANO ENDAYA nFSC

Published by:





EXPLORE. When the sea meets the sky in lurid tangerine hue. Vinta (traditional Filipino sailboats) sailing off shore Boracay Island, Philippines.

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t the heart of our life is Christ, calling us in this unique way of life. The joy of the Eastertide remains at the very core of the community as we experience this month full of excitement and grace-filled moments.

April is one of the hottest months in the tropical country of the Philippines. I would like to share the vibrant chronicle of our summertime as our community went for an almost 10-hour drive up north of the country. In our cover story, Br. Sajawal retells our tale of daring the waves of the West Philippine Sea. It is our hope that through grace, we may continue to live community life in complementary hue.

The heat of summer intensified the fire in our hearts as we started to learn more about the vows and the consecrated life. The way to following Christ through the vows as our guide is also the same road to wholeness and transcendence. In his reflection, Br. Ivan shared how vows empower us to be more loving and life-giving. Indeed, life consecrated to God for the service of others is a beautiful gift that we freely receive because we are loved.

I would like to describe this month's experiences in the words of Mark Twain. "Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." With the vows as our guiding stars, we venture the life of consecration and discover the uncharted territories where grace is waiting for us.

Fraternally,

C. Escolano
BR. CYRILL KINO ESCOLANO nFSC

LA SALLE
NOVITIATE



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WHAT IS RUE NEUVE?

Rue Neuve was a street in Rheims, France where the first house of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was located. The humble and modest abode which the Brothers occupied on June 24, 1682 was where all the transformation happened: teachers became Brothers, seculars turned into consecrated men, a human work became the work of God. As Blain put it, the house on Rue Neuve is considered as the cradle of the Institute.

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FEEDBACK?

You may send your comments & suggestions to the Editor through e-mail at cyrill_escolano@dlsu.edu.ph

COVER STORY

LSN GOES TO LA UNION

Article by Br. Sajawal Javed nFSC



EQUANIMITY. Br. Henry maintaining his balance on the surf board as he glides with the rushing waves.



There

was a great excitement in the community a day before we went for our summer outing.

Everyone was busy preparing. Some were looking for their attire, some were finalizing the activities, but absolutely everyone was looking forward to their surfing experience. Saturday morning came, we left the community at 4:00am heading to the province of La Union in Northern Philippines. Including stops for meals and toilet breaks, it took us 10 hours to reach the destination. The place was beautiful and the environment was fresh as compared to the major towns in the country we visited during the trip. It was a sunny day and the waters in the pool and on the sea were inviting.

It happened that Br. Dennis Magbanua FSC was also in the same place. Together with his two friends, he visited us and treated us with an hour of surfing experience. We finished our welcome drinks and took some rest. About 3:00pm in the afternoon, we moved to another beach area for surfing. All of us were given personal instructors who would guide and teach us how to surf. Upon taking the first plunge and first ride on the surfing board, all our fears were entirely replaced by adrenalin rush. Looking at the other Novices, I believe they were also feeling the same. We were in the sea having fun till evening. We played, swam, ran on the beach, and made our time together memorable in the company of each other.



DRY RUN. The novices were given a brief orientation to ensure safety and precaution prior to the actual surfing experience.

The hotel offered beach sports facilities so we decided to play beach volleyball. Although it was only for a very short time, it still added to our fun. Aside from sports activities, we also enjoyed the food served to us. We had our community gathering and socials in a small hut made of hay and bamboo materials. The night came with very clear sky full of stars. The wind was blowing carrying the summer breeze. The vibrant rays of moonshine changed the colors of the sea water. The sound of the sea was dominated by the rushing of powerful waves touching the

shore. We joined the sea by singing few songs from different cultures. Exchange of stories sealed our night with excitement for the next day.

Soon after finishing our breakfast, we left for the Parish Church nearby to attend the Sunday Mass. The Parish of St. John the Baptist is an ancient Catholic Church. The homily of the priest was relevant and inspiring. We spent half of the day together in the same place and we had our lunch at Elyu Café, one of La Union's pride.

We again went for surfing. The second time was more relaxing and pleasant because everyone was able to adjust immediately. After surfing, we started walking along the seashore towards our hotel before the evening arrived. Friendly waves carried us to the peak of this joyful experience.

PILGRIMS. The community visited the Basilica of Our Lady in La Union to pray and give thanks on the way back to Lipa.



MUSEUM TOUR. A short visit of the community to Museo Iloco (Ilocos Museum) to discover more about the culture and history of the province.

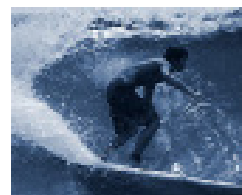


PRE-DEPARTURE. A group photo before the actual surfing adventure.



BREW WITH BRO. To cool down the warm sea breeze, Brothers Mico, Ivan, Jeano, and Shanuka joyfully wait for their ice cold coffee by the beachside.

ONE MORE THING



LA UNION

is a province located in the Northern part of the Philippines. It is considered as the surfing capital of the North.

**I appreciate
so much our
community life.
It is indeed a
blessing from God.**

BR. SAJAWAL JAVED nFSC

During the outing, I really felt blessed to be called to Brother's life. The intense joy within my heart and soul encourages me to have a strong resolve in this life and be thankful to God for all the graces he showered upon me. I appreciate so much our community life. It is indeed a blessing from God. How lovely it is when Brothers dwell in community and how great news it is when the Director of the Novices brought us to a memorable community outing. **FN**



GUIDING LIGHT. Brothers Vince and Weegee in their first profession of vows last August 12, 2017. (File Photo)

The vows must not be considered as a limiting factor that makes us less human. Instead, the vows will make us complete and be better versions of ourselves.

- BR. IVAN KARLO UMALI

Using various sources ranging from books or articles from popular theologians and spiritual writers, to Institute documents and The Rule, Br. Dodo explained the need for profession of the three vows which should be a product of a free choice resulting from a long process of formation and discernment. The novices also learned that the three vows impact the three fundamental domains of human life and experience, which are sexuality and relationships (chastity), material goods and ownership (poverty), and freedom and power (obedience).

After listening to the rich discussion on the vow of chastity, what resonates in us is the positivity in the paradigm shift towards this vow – from looking at it as a denial of our natural capacity to have lifelong partner and expression of sexual urges, to a gift, vocation, and a call, which gives us the capacity and freedom to love more. This brings us to grounding towards a lifelong commitment to Christ experienced in an inclusive passion for life and affection that kindles fraternal relations.

Relativity to cultural situations is the key idea which flourished in our understanding of the vow of poverty. This vow could not be understood uniformly because its applicability depends on the cultural circumstances. Hence, personal reflection will always play a role in practicing prudence in the vow of poverty. But despite its diversity, the underlying values which unite the differences in its application and impact of the religious poverty today is the trust that we should have in God's Divine Providence, and a commitment to promotion of justice and equity, which may prompt us to be involved in political ministry.

Listening to God's influence in our lives and attuning ourselves to His will are what the vow of obedience asks of us as religious. With complete submission to the movement of the Spirit, seeking the will of God does not have to be searched from afar, but rather it can be found in the midst of the daily human events, through the larger society, our superiors, and the Body of the Institute. Obedience makes us seek a more loving union with God and be united with Him.



CONNECTION. Br. JJ talks to one of the students of the Sunday school apostolate of the Lasallian Formation Center. (File Photo)

Finally, after carefully discussing each vow, what struck the most for us was Br. Dodo's sharing of his personal experience as a Visitor in accompanying Brothers in their struggles about the different aspects of the vows. This sharing presented a more human perspective of the vows, and how the meaning of vows differs on the various stages of a Brother's life. Moreover, the vows should not be viewed as a limiting factor that makes the religious less of a human. Instead, the vows will make them more complete and better versions of themselves. Because of a healthier relationship with God grounded on faith, the religious will be propelled to be more like open hands; allowing themselves to have more space to give and receive, and making them more available for the mission of building the Kingdom of God. **FN**

TO A BETTER ME

Article by Br. Ivan Karlo Umali nFSC

A REFLECTION ON THE VOWS



As the year of the Novitiate comes into its final months, our minds are brought to a perspective setting where we become more open to acceptance and integration of the life as religious. This month, to help us enter into deeper thoughts about religious life, we had a session about the vows with Br. Dodo Fernandez FSC as resource speaker. In his three-day class last April 9-11, 2018, Br. Dodo clarified important points on the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, or more commonly known as the evangelical counsels or vows. The novices genuinely appreciated the interactive discussion as they are beginning to have a deeper understanding of the vows as religious Brothers.



LISTENING. The novices are intently paying attention to the discussion of Br. John Cantwell on the Vow of Association.

IN ASSOCIATION

FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE POOR

Article by Br. Gulfam Gulzar nFSC

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*What did association mean for the Institute?
What does association mean for the Institute today?’*

T

he 4-day session with Br. John Cantwell on Association started 2nd of April. With so much creativity, he was able to process and deepened our prior understanding of association. In the 300 years of our existence as an Institute, this vow always sits at the heart of our consecration to God for the educational service of the poor. Brother John started the class by asking the following questions: What did association mean for the Institute? What does association mean for the Institute today? To give an academic answer was an easy task for us as we had gone through the history of the Institute

and writings of the Founder but we really wanted to touch the practical part of this life-giving plus life-changing matter. Hence, we did our best to say whatever we could in defining the term first but the desire has always been there really to listen first to the experience of Br. John Cantwell and then proceed to the definition of association in the past and now in the present as our Institute is ever ready to embrace the signs of the times.

Brother John aided this concept with various subjects like: Theology, Christology, Scriptures, and Institute Documents, to make us realize the importance of this principal commitment of a Brother's vocation. After talking on association, we integrated all our understanding in the following four letter word, 'with'. The synthesis becomes the sustaining metaphor of association's beginning, continuing and end state. **FN**

in-house classes

APRIL 2018 • WRITE-UPS BY BR. MICO DE LEON nFSC



EVANGELICAL VOWS

FACILITATED BY BR. DODO FERNANDEZ FSC



CONSECRATED LIFE

FACILITATED BY BR. VIC FRANCO FSC



EMERGING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

FACILITATED BY BR. FELIPE BELLEZA FSC



DIALOGUE WITH RELAN NOVICES

FACILITATED BY BR. JAMES JOOST FSC

April 9-11, 2018. Br. Edmundo Fernandez FSC, Visitor of LEAD, facilitated a session on the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Rooted on his experiences as a Visitor, Br. Edmundo initiated an inspiring conversation of the Brothers' understanding of living the vows today. *Thank you, Brother!* **FN**

April 19, 2018. Br. Victor Franco FSC graced La Salle Novitiate with his lively presence as he discussed consecrated life using the Institute Bulletin released in October 2017 entitled, "Creative and Courage: Living the Promise of the 39th General Chapter". *Thank you for your inspiring insights, Hermano!* **FN**

April 20, 2018. The Novices had a session with Br. Felipe Belleza FSC on the emerging leadership challenges of young Brothers today. We thank Br. Felipe for sharing his realistic view of the situation in our schools and practical suggestions to positively handle them. **FN**

April 30, 2018. We had the first historical cyber dialogue through a zoom session with the RELAN Novices discussing the PARC document, "The Lasallian Experience of Inter-Religious Dialogue in PARC". It was an enriching and educative experience as the novices from two different sides of the world interact using modern technology. *It was nice meeting you, Brothers!* **FN**



IN THE KNOW



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BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The community celebrated the 30th and 24th birthdays of Brothers Kino and Shanuka on April 25, 2018. Happy many returns, Brothers! **FN**

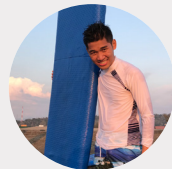




A GIFT

A REFLECTION ON CONSECRATED LIFE

Article by Br. Jeano Endaya nFSC



EMBRACING. The Brothers giving the accolade to the novices in their habit taking last August 12, 2017. On the left is Rembrandt's portrayal of the return of the prodigal son in his painting.

For someone whose way of learning is through the technical and detailed side of the coin, the Code of Canon Law perfectly fits the process for my understanding of a life of consecration. However, if someone comes to you with more than 50 years of experience in the said life, I cannot help but to be astonished. Br. Vic Franco FSC recently visited our community to give a session on the Consecrated Life. More than the facts and the definitions, it was more of his life dedicated to the mission that inspired me. Allow me to share some of my thoughts and reflections about the life that we are hoping to take soon.

In order for you to be someone you have never been before, you have to give something you have never given before. Consecration, then, for me, has something to do with offering something to be someone. A person is invited to surrender his whole being for him to be associated more closely with Jesus. Yet it is not just any association with Christ, one is being set aside from the rest for a purpose. It is this purpose that makes consecration even more special. Anyone

can dedicate himself to God but to what end remains an important piece of the picture. As the case for us, De La Salle Brothers, we devote ourselves for God's glory through educating the young, especially the poor.

More than three times, the Trinity was mentioned in the explanation provided by the Code of Canon Law about the consecrated life which concretely shows the primacy of God in the said state of life. After all, this call for service that we try to follow and live originated from Him. This call is followed by a movement from within to others. From having myself as the priority for everything, I am moved to consider first others before myself.

The call and the process of consecration are special; however, as Br. Vic gently reminded us, novices, that it is the caller and His great mystery that are truly special and not the one being called and undergoing the process. Consecration, thus, is a beautiful gift that we do not rightfully deserve but has been freely given to us anyway for we are loved, and that cannot be taken from us.

At times, in my personal prayers, I ask God the question, "Why me? Why am I

here in this journey instead of someone else?" Not long ago, I heard a song that somehow gives clarity to my questions on God's will for me. The lyrics of this song seamlessly answer my concern and summarize as well my thoughts about the consecrated life.

*"Here I am Lord, is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night
I will go Lord, if You lead me,
I will hold Your people in my heart"*



In order for you to be someone you have never been before, you have to give something you have never given before.



THE JOY OF COMING HOME TO THE HEART OF CHRIST

Article by Br. Henry Gyi nFSC

Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Father is waiting for our return. To deepen the experience of the Eastertide, our fourth Day of Reflection with the theme "The Joy of Coming to The Heart of Christ." The material is based on Henri Nouwen's book, "The Return of the Prodigal Son" the story of homecoming inspired by the parable of the prodigal son. The sincerity of the coming home of the younger son and the forgiving and the unconditional love of the father are joyful news for us all. At the same time, it is the message of God that He will never forsake us as long as we get repentance and return to Him in the spirit of genuine conversion.



I am familiar with the parable prodigal son, but I never had the opportunity to set aside time to reflect on this parable. The day of reflection allowed me to grasp this moment and to put myself the joy of this homecoming. I started my reflection with the presence of God. I focused first on the provided reading about FAITH. What strikes me most was a realization that "ordinary faith is not faith at all." I stop thinking for several minutes whether my faith is ordinary or extraordinary. So far, I cannot hold on to definite answers. Nonetheless, I am glad to check how strong and how consistent my faith in God is. That faith gives me joy and allows me to share in the joy of the father welcoming his lost son.



Today, I come to accept myself. I am both the elder son and the younger son. The example of the father's love for his two sons invites me to be loving and embracing of myself and of others most especially.

- BR. HENRY GYI nFSC

When I heard the prodigal son during my younger years, I usually see myself being the elder son. On one hand, it was leading me to appreciate the elder son too much. This was how I wanted to be and how I wanted to live my life in the future. On the other hand, I hated hearing the behavior of the wasteful younger son. My ideal was ever to be the "elder son", I have never thought of being the younger son of the father. I asked myself, was there a time when I ever acted like the younger one? It moved me to reflect. Through prayerful disposition, I felt encouraged to share with my brothers in the community how I became a wasteful son and felt how the unconditional love of the father exemplifies the absolute love of God for us.

Today, I come to accept myself. I am both the elder son and the younger son. The example of the prodigal father's love for his two sons invites me to be loving and embracing of myself and of others most especially. The unstoppable joy of the father is the same as the joy of the repentant son and the joy of God.

How will I move forward after this homecoming? If there will be a description of consolation for me, it will be the "discipline of gratitude." Faith is the beginning of the journey, and discipline is the continuation. **FN**



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