

PHOTO PAGE



The Community with Ate Leah at the end of our session.



The Formation Team of the Novitiate.



Celebrating the end of Cebuano classes.



Getting set for the Christmas party with the Lay Marists.



Enjoying the Jeepney ride around town.



The Balay Pasilungan kids dancing budots



With one of our foster family members.



Thinking of how to get these 'Joes' on a tricycle to Eden

ORIENTATION TO EACH OTHER

LEONARD WUIZ AMORA



To choose Mary's way is to enter into a special relationship with her, which teaches MARISTS to relate to their neighbor in such a way that through them Mary can be present to the church of today as she was to the church at its birth.

On the 18th of November 2018 we novices arrived in the Philippines from our respective provinces and districts. There was great joy and anxiety of meeting each other and the excitement of seeing and experiencing the atmosphere of a new environment. From our own experience we encounter this new environment with our own cultural values, assumptions, and beliefs; and these actually brought shock in each individual. In this culture shock we had an emotional reaction to the loss of what is known and understood, we felt homesick, we had feelings of anxiety, helplessness and fear. But at the same time it was a great pleasure for us all.

The second week of our arrival, from the 26th November to the 2nd December we had our orientation to each other. We shared all about our own countries, our family backgrounds and most importantly we shared our own personal lives, which enlightened us and gave us new insights into each person's life, his character and his own way of living. At the same time we began to feel more relaxed, self-confident and happy to be with each other. In other words we started to know each other and build respect and trust and feel more open to talk freely with each other and to our formators as well.

In addition to this, some other activities we had after the orientation to each other contributed in knowing and understanding each other well. Like sports, outside manual labor, stay with Pilipino family and MARIST families in different places.

From the orientation to each other and these other activities we had, we come to understand ourselves more and accept what we encounter in staying here as a new person to each other. Moreover, it put us in a good pace of journey together as brothers. Though if we face difficulties, challenges and trials, we will be able to share them and help each other. Therefore we will have fun and more exciting things learn as we discern our call to be MARIST.

As we have just began our novitiate we will journey together with our mother Mary, thinking, judging, feeling and acting as Mary for the greater glory of God.

ORIENTATION TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY

JOEL AMA



For many years, the question on culture in the Community has been a concern for all in the Society. Culture is an element in which each individual identifies and asserts himself, and when confronted with another, it often creates sparks that can

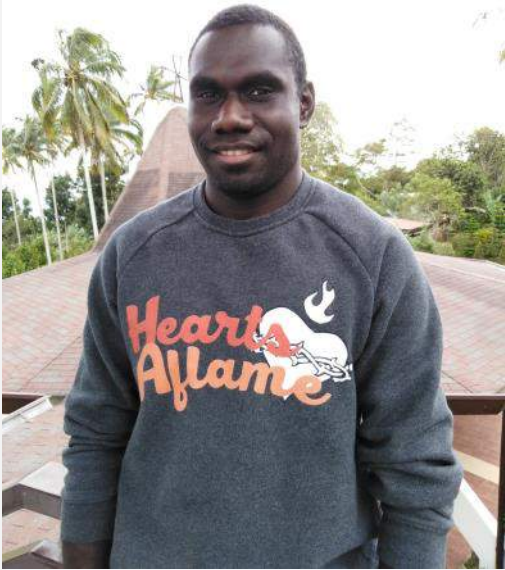
source of enrichment to us as an individual and to the community as a whole. So, she recognized that one can never forget or replace his or her culture with another, she further affirmed that we must learn and accept from the other despite our differences.

The Superior General in his letter of Friday, January 18, 2019 reminded us of the importance of having and being a member of an international novitiate, which goes in line to affirm the lectures with Ate Lea. It is therefore important to learn to enrich oneself through our differences to better meet the demands of our current Society, and of the future. At the end of these sessions, all had only one sentence on their lips: I want to learn something new from my brother.

have serious repercussions in living together. It is in order to prevent these possible crises that we received training and integration sessions in a culture different from ours. At the beginning of her session, Ate Leah reminded us of the importance of our diversity and that our origin is a

LIVING TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

LESLEY KINANI



Living together as community is always life giving for me whether with relatives or strangers. Most of the time the life in the community would bring a lot of happiness and joy particularly when each member respects one another. All the community members have to participate in every activity that

they are allocated. Our new community here in the International Novitiate is made up of seven different nationalities which means there are seven different cultures within it. This is not my first time to be part of the community which made up of many cultures because I was in Marist community in Suva. I think the others too might already have some experience of community living in their formation houses. The first week in our community was challenging for me and maybe the others too because for me most of the community members are new and I am not used to them. But it was the cultural orientation which really helped all of us to know each other and also a bit of our cultures. So, in our community we still keep on sharing our thoughts and ideas to get to know more about ourselves.



Living in a community also has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of living in the community is when the community come together to do things as brothers or when we participate in activities: for example, manual work, playing sport, meal times and also praying in the chapel. Not only that but also when we help one another in our responsibilities, as well as when some one is in need. On top of that, as community members we also take care of one another to maintain peace and unity

among ourselves. As Fr Lauro presented to us during his sessions about living in the community, each individual plays a big role in the community. By playing our own roles we are contributing a lot to the community.

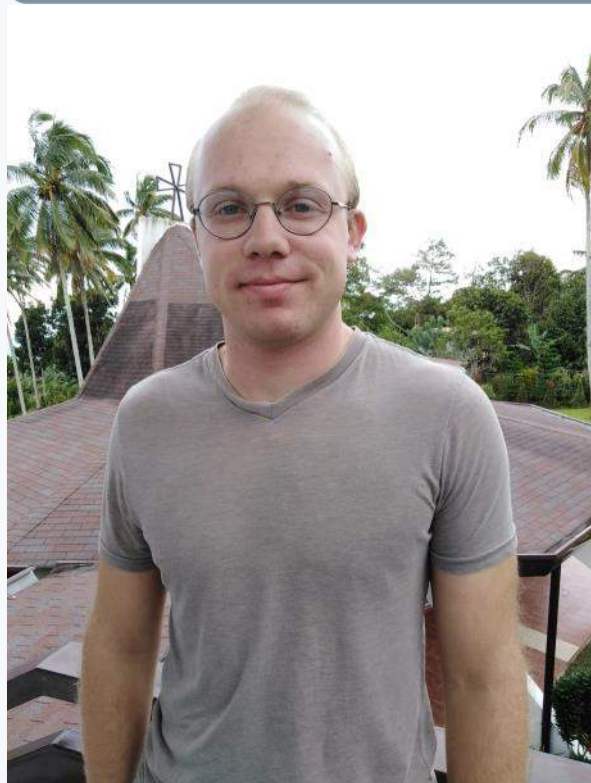
Some disadvantages of living in a community are when people start to argue with one another, attack each other and fight. This normally happens when there is lack of respect. Being selfish is another disadvantage of living in the community because when someone is selfish in the community, he/she is blocking herself/himself from the others. This one is not helping others who are in need and also disrespecting the leader of a community. To create a good community, members can always have a good connection and good relationship among themselves.

Though, our new community here in Eden is going very well every week since we arrived. Members of this community show support to each other by helping one another. There is always respect among ourselves, the members. So far, we are enjoying our stay as a community and I hope we will continue this good spirit till the end of the novitiate.



ORIENTATION TO FILIPINO FAMILY

NIK RODEWALD



On 23 December 2018, the ten incoming novices journeyed from the novitiate house in Eden to Digos City and the Matti District Catholic Center, staffed by the Marist Fathers and Brothers of the District of Asia. The novices were divided into pairs, and then each pair was sent to a different Filipino family, with whom they would spend the next 10 days, including Christmas and New Year's. Personally, I was paired with Leo Wuiz Amora, from Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. We were placed with Nanay Evelyn (Belyn) and Tatay Feliciano (Junjun), so we expected at first that it might be a rather quiet time in Digos. However, much of Nanay's extended family lived nearby, so we were rarely in the house with only Nanay and Tatay, except to sleep! The Christmas and New Year's celebrations were full of a lot of joy, karaoke, conversation, and playing with the many young children in the family. On Boxing Day, we went to the beach at a small fishing village, the home of a family friend, and enjoyed swimming, boating, and (more) karaoke.

Overall, the experience in Digos was rewarding and educational. We were all forced to confront some cultural challenges and difficulties. In particular, I found that – as somebody who is rather introverted and likes a fair bit of personal space – I very rarely had time to myself, which was somewhat difficult. Additionally, the curiosity of Filipinos was such that, anytime Leo and I went anywhere, we were greeted with stares or large groups of curious children. Even so, many in the Barangay proved friendly and genuinely very happy to have us present.



On Christmas Day, I tried to call my family back in the USA late in the evening, once celebrations had died down, but got caught in a rainstorm about 1km from the house. One of the local store owners welcomed me out of the rain into his store and, once the rain had slowed, drove me back to the house on his motorcycle.

Though we were in different families, the novices often tried to visit each other. We would also see each other in Church and for the parish Family Day celebration on 28 December, during which we were asked to put on a “presentation” that included much dancing. It is said that the Philippines is the social media capital of the world and, judging by the number of cell phones that I saw recording us, I think it is safe to say that the video of Marist novices dancing the ‘Waka Waka’ has made its way through certain networks of Facebook friends here in Mindanao. Overall, we were grateful for the time and cultural encounters, and most especially for the generous families who opened their homes and holiday celebrations to a motley crew of 10 novices, hailing from six different countries.