



Cerdon English Int. Novitiate Newsletter.

Volume 3

September 2025

EDITORIAL



The midyear evaluations marked the first half of the novitiate year 2025. The novices gave themselves fully to the processes assisted by the formators and guided by the Holy Spirit through prayer. On behalf of the Novitiate community, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for

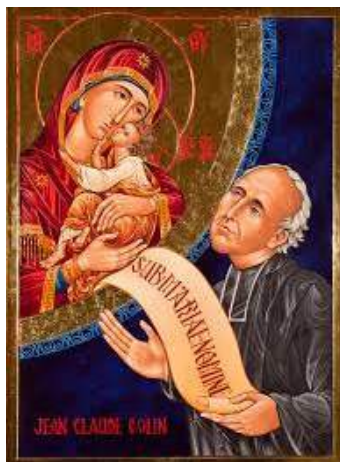
your support, especially through your thoughts and prayers.

Since you show so much interest in the vocational journey of our novices here in Davao, Philippines, the novices have put together a few photos with brief explanations to keep you up to date with their journey so far. Thus, this edition of the newsletter covers the period after midyear evaluations. We hope you enjoy it as much as

we have enjoyed putting it together for you.

May the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Loving Mother, continue to intercede for us all.

Fr. Xavier SARIMAN, SM



"For their part the novices should listen attentively to the word of God to allow the Holy Spirit to form them into better disciples of the Lord. In this way they will develop that spirit of faith and responsibility which will enable them to recognize the Society of Mary as the place to which God invites them and calls them together"

Const. of the SM N°64



Renovation of our Chapel.

Bernard NGALA



At the end of May, the novice Master announced the renovation of the roof of our chapel which was leaking when we had heavy rain since the beginning of our Novitiate year. So, we emptied the chapel and moved everything to our classroom in the Lyons building which we are currently using for our prayers.



Early June, we saw many materials arriving in the community.

On the 16th of June, we saw many workers in our community preparing to climb on the roof to remove it and also the ceiling. It took them some days to finish this first task. After this, they started to put the new roof. This second part took them more time to finish because sometimes it was raining so they were obliged to stop their work. After they finished with the roofing, there were some holes so, the formators called them again to repair all the holes. Actually, I think there is no more leaking in our chapel. They have started to put the new ceiling on Tuesday 8th of September. By God's grace we will soon move back into our renovated chapel for our daily prayers and the celebration of the eucharist. We are excited and look forward to this day.



Inter-cultural living workshop.

Ignatius GIOBUN



On the 1st to the 5th of September, we the novices had an Inter-cultural living workshop, which was facilitated by Sr. Anne Sklenars, an RNDM sister from New Zealand. The workshop was very enriching to me personally, as I came to understand that coming from different parts of the world to form a community is not easy. It requires understanding, openness, respect, flexibility, adjustment and clear communication. On the other hand, I was struck by the saying "there is more that unite us than divide us" (Sr. Anne). This reminded me to value my culture and at the same time value other cultures by accepting our differences. No culture is better than the other, we are just doing the same thing differently according to our cultures. Therefore, "different does not mean right or wrong, it is just different". So, I must embrace other's cultures with respect for unity especially in my community.



On August 29, the Marist Sisters of the Davao community joyfully celebrated the birthday of their foundress, Jeanne-Marie Chavoin. For this special occasion, they invited the international Cerdon novitiate community of the Marist Fathers to join them. The Eucharistic celebration, the central moment of the day, was presided over by the novice master, Fr Xavier SARIMAN, SM.

In a spirit of reverence and fraternity, both branches of the Society of Mary gave thanks for the gift of Jeanne-Marie Chavoin's life and mission, whose charism continues to inspire Marist religious life today. After the Mass, the evening continued in an atmosphere of joy and fellowship. Shared meals, fraternal exchanges, and warm smiles marked this festive moment, strengthening the bonds between the Marist Sisters and Fathers.



Celebration with the Marist Sisters: Anniversary of Jeanne-Marie Chavoin



Sylvestre MBULA



Fourvière Day 2025

As we know, the 23rd of July marks a significant milestone in the history and establishment of our Society. This year the novitiate community remembered this special day in a reflective and celebratory way. During our Wednesday community meditation, we meditated on the Fourvière Pledge, each sharing a specific word or phrase that touched our hearts. During Holy Mass each member of the community signed the pledge.

Committing ourselves to a Marist way of life. Later in the morning we gathered in the classroom where Xavier and Thilo gave historical and reflective inputs that widened our awareness of such a significant day.



Thomas-Claude
MANIHERA



In the evening the community gathered for a festive meal on the terrace, here the oldest and youngest members of our community had the honour of cutting the Fourvière Day cake.



"Community Projects"





Our recent community project works were a resounding success, fostering teamwork and camaraderie among the novices. We collaborated on various activities, contributing our skills and talents to achieve meaningful outcomes. Key highlights included renovating the chicken house, building a cat-proof screen for the refectory, and painting of our buildings. The project strengthened our sense of community, providing both purpose and fulfilment.



Brandon NGUA

Through this experience, we came to appreciate the importance of collaboration, creativity, and perseverance. I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside my fellow novices, and I look forward to future projects that will build upon our shared experiences and values, further deepening our bonds and services.



COMMUNITY OUTING

Vea **POUONO**



I entered the Novitiate with this mindset of 365 days inside the community. Our community outing changes my understanding of novitiate life. It was a great experience which reminds us, the novitiate community, that we are still human, we need a time to rest, relax and reflect on the journey so far. It was a great experience, which almost 4 to 5 hours' drive to our destination. It was a culture shock to experience the vastness of Davao Region. We spent our outing at Mati, the capital city of Davao Oriental at the Bahay Kubo resort. The clean ocean and the cool breeze helped to relax. We had time to explore Mati city which reminded me of Nuku'alofa,



the capital city of my home country, Tonga. The place might be new, the experience might be new, or the people might be new, but their hospitality is same whether in Eden, Davao city or in Mati. This is

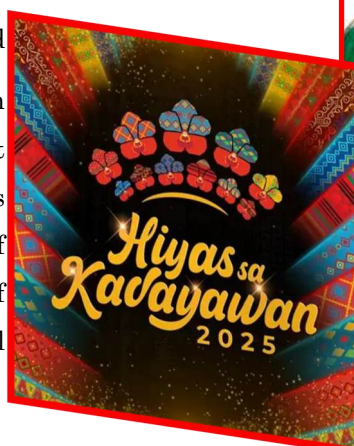


something that captured my attention since returning from our community outing. I am reminded of the phrase **"Welcome to the Philippines"**. This outing helped me discover a little more about the hospitality of the Philippines.



Arnaud ELO Komi

The **Kadayawan Festival**, held from August 15 to 17, 2025, in Davao City, Philippines, is a vibrant cultural celebration that honours the rich cultural heritage of indigenous tribes, the abundance of harvests, and the peaceful coexistence of local communities.





Marking the start of the fruit season, the festival transforms the city into a space of celebration with parades, traditional dances, music, and artisan exhibits. On August 17, we, novices, had the opportunity to witness the grand civic, cultural and colorful parade — a highlight that showcases Davao's vibrant cultural identity and offers visitors an authentic immersion into Filipino cultural heritage.

