



“Let us make ourselves known by our good spirit, our modesty, our simplicity” (FS, 90:5)

From the Novice Master



*A*s we reach the first quarter of the Novitiate year 2025, we bring to you some stories from this formation house especially to share our experiences so far in this beautiful county, the Philippines. Our community is made up of seven novices (7), three (3) formators and a professed Marist priest who is in-charge of the St. Michael Chapel Community which is very near to our novitiate. We have seven (7) nationalities coming from the Districts of Asia and Africa, and from the Provinces of Oceania, New Zealand and Europe.

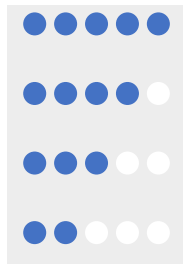
We want to thank you all for your continued support in thoughts and prayers for our novices. We also want to assure you of our prayers. In gratitude for this, the novices want to share their experiences with you, as your prayers contribute greatly to their discernment journey. We hope you enjoy these stories and photos as much as we have enjoyed putting them together for you.

Yours in the family of Mary,

Xavier Sariman sm

Beginning of the novitiate.

The Novitiate year marks an introduction to religious life. It is a time to really “Taste God”, a time to build my relationship with God and to know myself more deeply and the Society of Mary. These happens through programs like Mass, Prayer of the Church, studies (Marist history and origins, etc.), reflections and sharing, sports, work, social and some ministry experience like pastoral, all within the Context of community life. It was a joyous feeling finally arriving in this place that we heard so much of. Each of us have our own experiences, but I can only speak about myself. I must say that with the support of each community member and the formators, the programs mentioned above, really help me personal and I believed they do also for the others. The spiritual growth that I have encountered so far, I believe come from a personal experience through my daily spiritual journey in this community. I pray that in this year of discernment; I may bring forth the love of God I experience here in the novitiate to those I encounter or reach out to, *Ignatius GLOBUN* intercession of Mama Mary.



EXPERIENCE OF HOLY WEEK AND EASTER IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Experiencing Holy Week and Easter in Davao was a profound encounter with the Filipino people's deep faith and vibrant devotion. From the joyful Palm Sunday processions to the solemn Good Friday reflections, each moment was marked by strong communal participation and rich cultural expressions. They offered us a meditative journey through Christ's Passion, while public reenactments of the Passion of Christ through the station of the cross down and up the hill brought the Gospel vividly to life. These expressions reminded me of Mary's quiet yet faithful presence at Calvary a presence we, as Marists, are called to imitate. The dawn of Easter Sunday brought the moving **Sugat celebration**, where we witnessed the symbolic meeting of the Risen Christ and His Mother. The lifting of Mary's mourning veil by children dressed as angels captured the joy of the Resurrection in a deeply touching way. Sharing in these devotions allowed me to see how faith is not only celebrated in churches but lived fully in the streets, voices, and hearts of the people. It renewed in me the Marist call to stand like Mary both in sorrow and in joy and to be a gentle, compassionate presence in the lives of others. *Brandon NGUA*



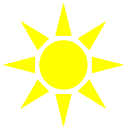


PHOTO ALBUM



EASTER CELEBRATION



A tour in Paradise Island



PASTORAL



The Novitiate is a time to “**taste God**” and it is also a time we are introduced to religious life. An important aspect of being a religious is taking part in pastoral ministry. Here in the Novitiate, we are divided into different pastoral areas. Some work with the youths and children of SMCC (St. Michael Catholic Community), Some work with the Missionary Sisters of Charity catering for special needs people and others work with street children at the Balay Pasilungan community. It is an honor to be part of the pastoral ministry at Balay Pasilungan. This ministry was founded by the Marist Fathers with its aim focusing on the vulnerable and neglected street kids. It is an experience that enlarged my viewpoint of mission. I learned that mission is not about preaching or teaching only but also and importantly, being present. I cannot do much in this pastoral but all I can offer is being there, being present as a big brother to my small brothers at Balay Pasilungan. This experience has enkindled and encouraged me more in my discernment journey towards Marist religious life. *Vea **POUONO***

Spiritual Exercises

Just as Father Colin encountered God deeply at Cerdon, the Novitiate is also a special time when the Marist Novice is invited to experience intimacy with God. This happens by growing in love through service to others, especially in community life, and more profoundly through prayer. To help us deepen this relationship with God, the formation team organized our First Week of Spiritual Exercises. It began with a day of preparation, followed by six days of silence and prayer. The goal was to create a space for inner reflection and encounter with God. For me personally, it was a meaningful and renewal time. In the silence, I was able to reflect on my relationship with God, to question myself, and to listen more deeply. I became aware that God loves me unconditionally, even with my sins and limitations. I also experienced His healing presence in a quiet but powerful way. This retreat reminded me of the importance of silence and prayer in my spiritual journey. It strengthened my desire to follow Christ in the spirit of Mary, with simplicity and trust. It was truly a grace-filled time of renewal and inner peace.

*Sylvestre **MBULA***



PHOTO ALBUM

First Mass at Saint Michael Chapel



Thursday: Community Adoration



50th Presbyterial Anniversary of Fr. Rob Devlin, sm



VISITS



VISITS



VISITS

VISITS

VISITS



Visit of Fr. Miguel, sm



Visit of some Marist Benefactors in our community

ENNEAGRAM PROGRAM

One of the key objectives of the novitiate is for the novice to discover himself more fully. Throughout the year, the novice is offered a number of opportunities in order for this discovery to take place. Within the month of April, the novitiate community hosted Ate Mau, a laywoman specialised in the human aspect of religious and priestly formation for over thirty years.

Ate Mau lead us the novices in a week-long workshop, helping us to find our particular personalities and their corresponding number on the enneagram scale. Through the discovery of our numbers, we were able to understand personal traits that appear in our own personalities. So that we, not only learn more about ourselves but also how to adapt and form one community even with a range of different enneagram numbers.



Thomas MANIHERA

Marist Gathering

On Monday the 28th of April, we joined St. Peter Chanel community and the District (of Asisa) house community for the celebration of the martyrdom of St. Peter Chanel. This was my opportunity to meet the other Marist family (Marist sisters, Marist brothers and the Lay Marists). the celebration started with the Mass celebrated by Fr. Kevin Medilo SM, the Superior of the District of Assia. Afterwards, we had our meal together and later some items for entertainment. We had songs sung by the aspirants, the Marist sisters put on a dance and we the Novices put on the highlight of the day, a drama of St. Peter Chanel leaving his family for the missions in Oceania. It was amazing to see the Marist family together sharing and commemorating the Life of their Model (St. Peter Chanel). On the 13th of May, we were once again invited by Marist priests at Our Lady of Fatima parish in Digos to join them in their feast day

celebrations. We were very punctual and arrived there at 7:45am. The main celebrant was the Bishop of Digos, Most Reverend Guillermo V. Afable, D.D. After the mass we share nice meal and returned home afterwards. I was inspired by the brotherhood and the togetherness of the Marist fathers.

Finally, on Friday 6th of June, we were invited by the Marist Brothers (FMS) in the occasion of the death of St. Marcellin Champagnat. We animated the liturgical music during mass. The Marist sisters also participated in this celebration. Overall, I enjoyed the warm family collaboration between the Marist branches.

Bernard NGALA



PHOTO ALBUM



Classes and Presentations



Birthdays Celebrations



MAP MEETING

From June 15th to 17th 2025, the annual MAP meeting took place with major superiors from the Provinces of Ocean and New Zealand and the districts of Asia and Australia. Seven Marist superiors and their vicars were present, together with Fr. John Harhager, sm (Vicar general of the SM).

For three days, they had the opportunity to discuss some concerns about the Society of Mary in relation to their various units. In the evening of Monday June 16th, the Marist International English-Speaking Novitiate had the privilege of hosting the participants of the MAP gathering. It was a great evening which ended with a fraternal dinner. In addition, Fr. John Harhager seized the occasion of his presence in Davao to carry out a canonical visit to the Novitiate. It was a wonderful and blissful week spent with him in our community.

Arnaud Komi ELO



RNDM TP's opening Mass in preparation to their Perpetual vows



Visit of some Marist Aspirants

Photo Album

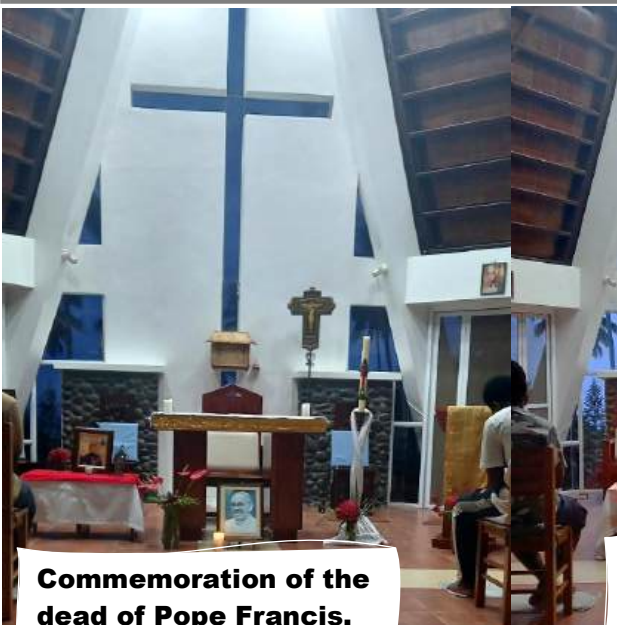


Marketing

Social night



Visit of some Lay Marists



**Commemoration of the
dead of Pope Francis.**

**Celebration of
Mother's Day.**



**Night view towards the city
from the Terrace**



SUMMER YOUTH CAMP 2025 AT SAINT MICHEAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY (SMCC)



NB: SMCC granted the permission to publish these pictures





SOCIETY OF MARY CERDON NOVITIATE



All for The Greater Glory of God and
The Honour of Mary, Mother of God.

Const. N° 180

