



Cerdon Newsletter

Second Edition, Series 2026

July - September

Eden, Davao, Philippines

CONTENTS

Editorial

Safeguarding Workshop

Fourviere Day

Formation Institute of Religious

Mid-Year Evaluation

Kadayawan Festival

Community Project

Community Outing

Celebrating with the SM sisters

Holy Name of Mary

Intercultural Workshop

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Fr. Xavier Sarman SM

Fr. Thilo Saft SM

Fr. Chris Ganzon SM

Dick Tawake

Emmanuel Wafeu Tagne

Marcellin Kamin

Pierre Vincent Nanga

Jordan Charlehand

Joseph Cupertino Vu

Didier Binidi

Paulo Veitoyaki





From the Editor *by Xavier Sariman SM*

Warm greetings to you all from all of us here at *Cerdon International Novitiate*. This is the Second Edition of the *Cerdon Newsletter* for the series of this year, 2026. This issue marks the end of the first half of the novitiate year, 2026-2027. We are glad to bring you all the happenings of these past few months. We hope that you will enjoy the photos and the accompanying short articles.

This year we decided to use the opportunity offered by the Formation Institute of Religious (FIR) here in Davao. The novices benefit from the modules, courses and classes offered by the FIR program. They also get to meet other novices from different congregations, genders, personalities, countries and they get to share their experiences. This is a welcomed added help to our programs here in the novitiate.

Please keep the novices in your prayers as they prepare to enter the 2nd and 3rd week of Spiritual Exercises starting from the 12th to the 24th of October 2026.

May God bless you all and may Mary our good mother, continue to inspire and pray for us all. Happy reading!



SAFEGUARDING WORKSHOP *by Emmanuel Wafeu Tagne*

Safeguarding is essential for creating safe environments in which children, young people, vulnerable adults, and all community members are protected from abuse and exploitation. This is the reason for which we had the opportunity to spend a week with Sr. Lilibeth Cajés SM learning about the importance of safeguarding.

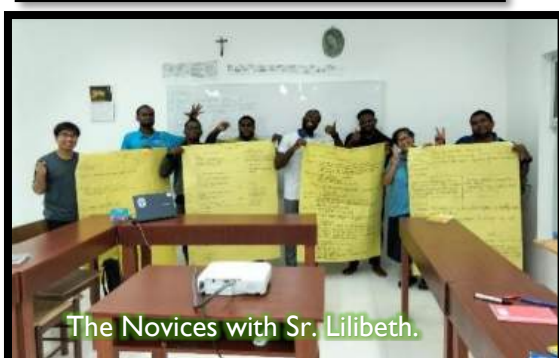
This experience greatly helped me to develop an awareness, especially as I am called to hold positions of trust and authority. Most of all, this workshop enabled me to be conscious of establishing healthy boundaries and adopt appropriate behavior, after having identified the different forms of abuse and their warning signs.



Didier presenting a thanksgiving card to Sr. Lilibeth on behalf of the community.



Sr Lilibeth and Joseph taking time to listen to Jordan.



The Novices with Sr. Lilibeth.



Joseph, Jordan, Didier, Marcellin, Pierre, Emmanuel, Dick and Paulo. (From left to right)

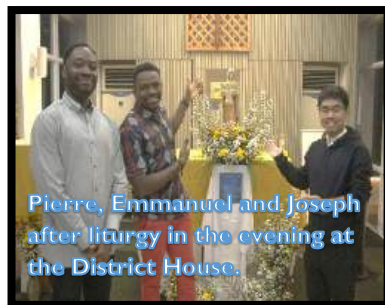


FOURVIERE DAY *by Marcellin Kamin*

Our community celebrated Fourviere Day in the morning with prayer, reflection, and the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at St. Michael Quasi Parish in Eden. The day of celebration ended with a lovely gathering with the Marist family at the District house in Tulip Drive, Davao City. For me, it was an opportunity for us as Marists to renew the spirit of the Fourvière Pledge in our own lives in our time. Like the first Marists who gathered at Fourvière in 1816, we are invited to trust in God's call, walk together as a community, and make ourselves available for the mission of Mary in the Church and in the world today. Thus, Fourvière Day continues to inspire me not only to remember our Marist beginnings but also to live the Marist vocation faithfully in the present and with hope for the future.



The Novices with their Formators after the Mass at St. Michael's Quasi Parish.



Pierre, Emmanuel and Joseph after liturgy in the evening at the District House.



Paulo, Sr. Edna sm and Marcellin.



Marist family took a photo after the celebration.



The beginning of our program as we gathered prayerfully in our chapel before the walk in the morning.



Fr. Xavier, Paulo, Joseph, Fr. Thilo and Fr. Chris ready for the walk up to the parish.



Gathering for sharing before the Holy Mass.



The reenactment of the 12 seminarians who walked up the steps to sign the Fourviere pledge.



The Cerdon community taking photo with the Parish staffs.



Pierre and Sr. Mariana sm



Fr. Thilo presiding Mass, with concelebrants Fr's Xavier and Chris.



The Fourviere day celebrations ended with a gathering of the Marist family at the District house for evening prayer and meal. The Novices were also formally welcomed by the District Superior, Fr Kevin Medilo SM.



FORMATION INSTITUTE OF RELIGIOUS

by Jordan Charlehand

The FIR program integrates human, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and community formation. These separate dimensions form together an integrated and holistic way of approaching formation. We attended three programs so far: the Orientation session, the Intercultural Workshop, and

the Art of Theological Reflection. Each program gave me opportunities not only to acquire knowledge but also to reflect on my own experiences, so to understand myself and others more deeply, and connect what I learnt with my own vocation and daily life.



Paulo, Marcellin and Jordan are joined by a fellow participant in the Orientation.



Jordan, Fr. Pat, Paulo and Fr Thilo on the far right is joined by a Blessed Sacrament priest.



This is a photo of cousins as Marists and Blessed Sacrament Brothers joined together for a photo.



Didier and Joseph are posing with two other participants in the Intercultural Living program.



Paulo, Jordan and Marcellin as they arrived.



Jordan and Didier are joined by two other female Novices.



Emmanuel and Didier having a discussion with other participants.



Pierre, Didier and Emmanuel practice their cultural dance with other African religious.



Pierre, Joseph and Br Cong FMS.



Jordan, Sr Ann (Presentation Sr's Novice) and Paulo.



Jordan, Didier and Dick taking a photo with a sister from the Solomon Islands.



Jordan, Paulo, Dick and Marcellin presenting an Oceanian cultural dance.



Fr. Thilo, Pierre and Didier sharing a laugh together.



A dance from the Marist Novices during orientation.



The whole participants taking a photo together during Intercultural workshop.

MID-YEAR EVALUATION

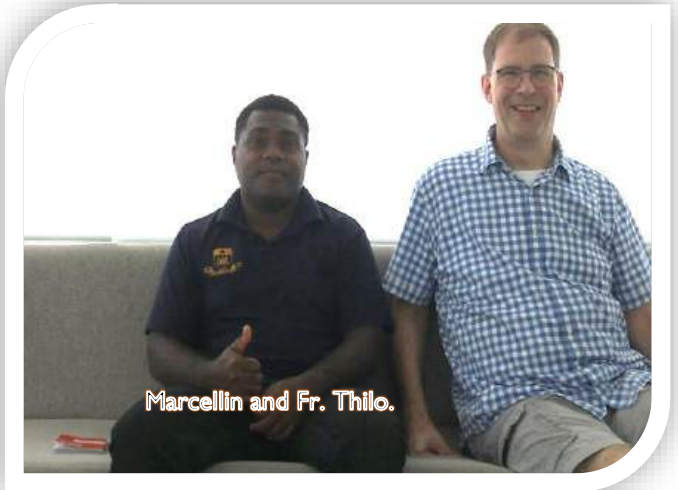
by *Pierre Vincent Nanga*



The Mid-Year Evaluation began

with a three-day retreat in August designed to spiritually prepare us for a process of honest reflection and self-awareness. The evaluation comprehensively assessed our personal, spiritual, community, academic, and pastoral growth, allowing us to examine our strengths alongside our attitudes, relationships and opportunity areas of growth.

Outside community projects during the evaluation time, such as creating a "pigeonhole," fostered deeper mutual understanding amongst us, the novices. In the week that followed, valuable feedback from formators offered an objective perspective that challenged everyone to address areas of concern. Ultimately, the experience for me served as a meaningful reminder to remain humble, open, and guided by the Holy Spirit as an ongoing opportunity for personal and communal growth.



Marcellin and Fr. Thilo.



Paulo, Marcellin, Joseph and Jordan evaluating each other.



Joseph with full attention to Jordan.



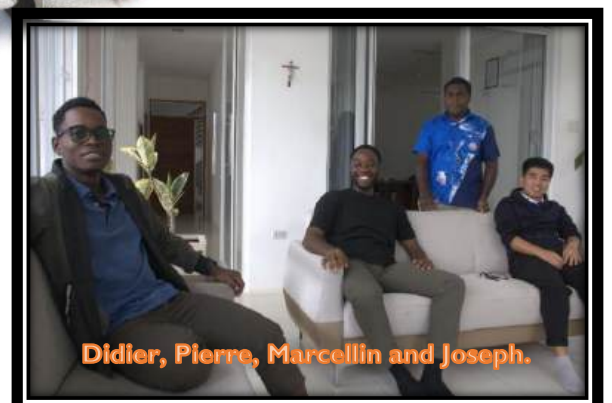
Paulo, Pierre and Joseph.



Pierre and Didier taking a break from the evaluation process.



Dick and Paulo



Didier, Pierre, Marcellin and Joseph.

KADAYAWAN FESTIVAL *by Paulo Veitoyaki*



Experiencing *Kadayawan* was so amazing. I have never seen or experienced something so big, diverse, colorful, and beautifully loud in my life before.

The festival celebrates thanksgiving for the blessing of nature, a bountiful harvest and the rich culture of Davao. The seemingly endless parade of colorful floats and dancers made it an unforgettable experience. The music, dances, costumes, flowers, and the people coming together created a beautiful celebration of joy, unity, gratitude and cultural pride.



It was a one-week festival. We were invited by the community at the District house for meal and some entertainment. We took a picture together as we come to the end of our gathering.



Two of our aspirants from the District of Asia tour guiding Pierre, Dick and Jordan during the festival. 🍌



Different tribes showcasing their costumes and dances.



Jordan watching with amazement.

The Novices with their newly built pigeonhole for the community.

COMMUNITY PROJECT COMMUNITY PROJECT

by Joseph Cupertino Vu



Alongside the mid-year Evaluation program, we carried out several Outdoor Community Projects, such as making a pigeonhole for our prayer books and kneelers, cleaning the glass windows, installing a roof cover for outdoor sitting area, constructing and painting a dog-proof fence, etc.

This was a wonderful opportunity for us novices to work together, share our talents, and contribute to building a better and stronger community. Moreover, these community projects helped strengthen our fraternal bonds and deepen our understanding of each other.



Didier showing Joseph and Marcellin how to use the saw.



The process of making a pigeonhole.



Paulo, Joseph and Pierre learning from Didier.



Paulo, Marcellin and Didier with full focus.



Marcellin, Didier, Jordan and Dick.



Marcellin and Jordan.



Paulo and Marcellin busy creating new kneelers while Didier and Joseph focus on the windows.



Brothers discerning on the next move.



Joseph instructing the brothers on what to do.



Taking a break.

Emmanuel cleaning the window of Belley house.



COMMUNITY OUTING

By Didier Binidi



Following the mid-year evaluations, we had a four-day community outing from 25th to the 28th of August, providing a welcomed break from the regular routine of the novitiate. The outing took place at **Magnaga Beach Resort** in **Pantukan** and served as a meaningful opportunity for relaxation, recreation and fellowship.

It was also a time for the members of the community to step away from their usual activities, enjoy the beauty of nature, meet new people and strengthen their bonds as a community. Overall, the outing was a refreshing and enriching experience that allowed me to return to the novitiate with renewed energy and spirit.



Dining together on the first night.



The community arriving at the resort for a break.



Members of the community taking a photo together.



The community having breakfast together after the Holy Mass.

200 YEARS OF MARIST SISTERS FIRST PROFESSION & LAUNCHING OF THEIR YEAR OF VOCATION *by Dick Tawake*



On September 6, 2026, the Marist family gathered at the residence of the Marist Sisters in Mintal, Davao to joyfully celebrate the bicentenary of the first profession of the Marist Sisters in Belley, France. The meaningful occasion commenced with an inspiring para-liturgy, followed by a warm communal gathering and shared fellowship over delicious food. For those who were present, particularly those of us journeying as Novices, the celebration offered a profound moment of reflection on the historical gifts and enduring contributions of the Marist Sisters to the Church, ultimately adding spiritual depth to our ongoing journey of discernment.



Sr. Sheila sm, Sr. Mariana sm,

Sr. Lilibeth sm and Dick Tawake.



The aspirants of the District of Asia taking photo with the Marist Sisters.



Fr. Thilo, John (Marist Aspirant) and a Marist laity.



Marist family taking photo together before enjoying the meal.



Fr. Gill sm giving the final blessing after the liturgy.



Didier, an aspirant and Marcellin.

HOLY NAME OF MARY FEAST DAY *by Fr. Thilo Saft SM*



On September 12, our community and staff joined in the celebrations for the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. This feast holds a special meaning for Marists, since we bear Her name. The District of Asia hosted the event, and the Marist aspirants from St. Peter Chanel, Tulip, did an excellent job organizing it. The wider Marist Family gathered in the gym of the Agro-Industrial Foundation College. Holy Mass was presided by Fr. Roque. In his homily, Fr. Xavier said: "A name is not just a simple label or word. It is the icon of the person, the presentation of a person's core truth, inner identity,

and spiritual mission given by God". The fellowship shared during a festive meal and the lively presentations by the various groups bore witness to the joy we all share in our mission under the name of Mary. The evening concluded with a beautiful gesture in honor of Mary, when roses were brought to Her statue and the Salve Regina was sung.



Novices preparing their costumes as well as a Fijian traditional dance for the feast.



Novices dancing a Fijian traditional dance.



Marist Novices singing a Marian hymn before presenting their dance.



Fr. Roque presiding over the Mass of the feast and concelebrated by his brother priests.



Fr. Xavier delivering the homily.



Fr. Pat, Francis (Marist Aspirant) and Fr. Xavier.



Emmanuel (second from left) taking picture with our Marist Brothers (FMS).



The whole Gerdon community including the staffs.



Marist Fathers with their Novices and Aspirants.



Novices with the staffs.



Fr. Chris in the middle, with St. Michael's Parish staffs.



Marist Brothers (FMS)

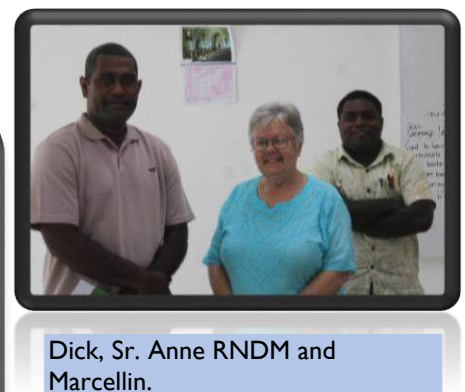
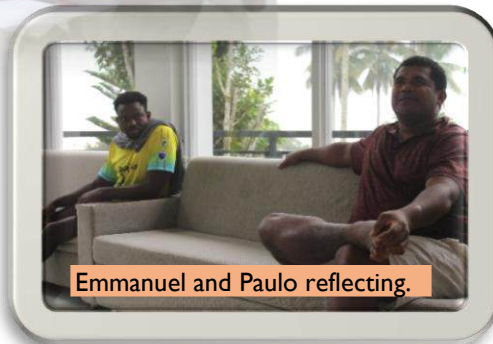


Marist family taking photo after the Mass.

INTERCULTURAL WORKSHOP

By Dick Tawake

From September 14 to 18, we were fortunate to be guided by Sr. Anne Skelnars of the RNDM Sisters. She conducted an enriching workshop concerning Intercultural Living. This workshop provided profound enlightenment, fostering a deeper sense of awareness, understanding, and sensitivity amongst us. By bridging cultural perspectives, the sessions successfully equipped us, the novices, with the tools we needed to embrace diversity and cultivate harmony as we collectively strived for unity in both our religious and community life.



MORE COMMUNITY PHOTOS



Pierre, Joseph and Emmanuel enjoying their time during social.



Joseph ready to dance the Fijian dance while they are still preparing their costumes.



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is a vital part of religious life.



Jordan leading the choir of Novices as we begin Mass.



Emmanuel and Didier in full conversation as they enjoy washing eating utensils.



Didier, Marcellin, Cristita (Cook) and Emmanuel.



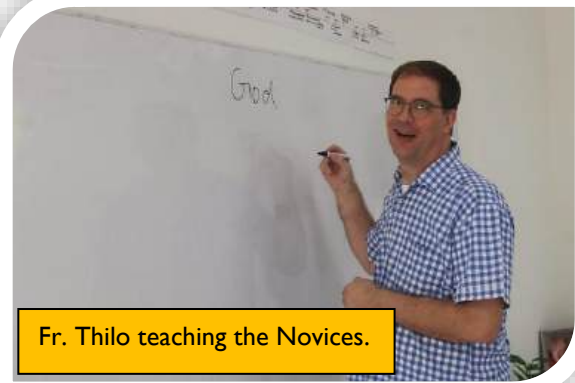
Fr. Xavier presiding the Eucharistic celebration for the day.



Paulo, Pierre and Joseph taking a break from class.



Dick and Joseph relaxing.



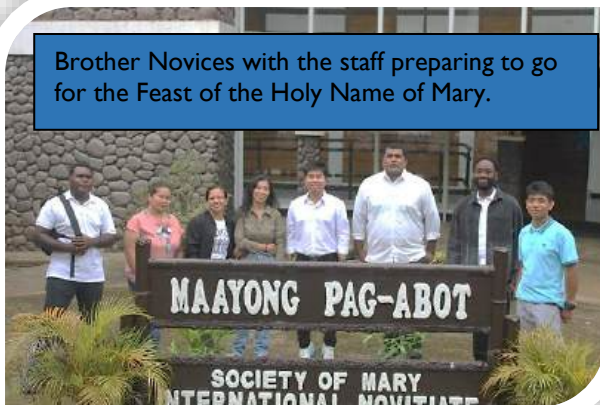
Fr. Thilo teaching the Novices.



Pierre, Paulo and Jordan during Lectio Divina.



The community during breakfast.



Brother Novices with the staff preparing to go for the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary.



Marcellin, Jordan and Didier during work.



Marist Novices joined other Novices ready for the F.I.R program.



Marcellin and Emmanuel presenting in class.



Novices after sports.



Fr. Chris with some Novices having lunch before they continue their journey for outing.



Dick, Pierre and Fr. Thilo.



Marcellin and Emmanuel taking a break



Marcellin, Dick, Joseph, Paulo and Fr. Chris at Magnaga resort.



Pierre, Dick, Emmanuel and Fr. Thilo taking a break from class.



Jordan, Dick and Joseph enjoying breakfast together during outing.



Marist Brother (FMS), Emmanuel and Sr. Mariana.



Novices performing their dance during the Fourviere celebration.



Fr. Chris and Joseph at the District house chapel during the Fourviere celebration.



Fr. Chris and Francis.



Paulo and Joseph coming back from the farm.



Emmanuel, Joseph and Paulo enjoy the farming.



Sheila, Cristita and Elaine.



Joseph teaching Emmanuel and Paulo how to farm.



Pierre sharing his feelings of the day to his brother Novices.



Brothers take time to listen during sharing.



Dick and Joseph after sharing.



Fr. Roque, 2 Marist laity members and Fr. Xavier before the Mass.



Marist fathers Aspirants as altar servers, Marist Fathers Novices with 2 Marist Brothers (FMS).



Ready for breakfast.



Jordan was fortunate to have a barber in the community.