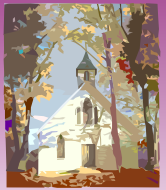




ANG BINHI



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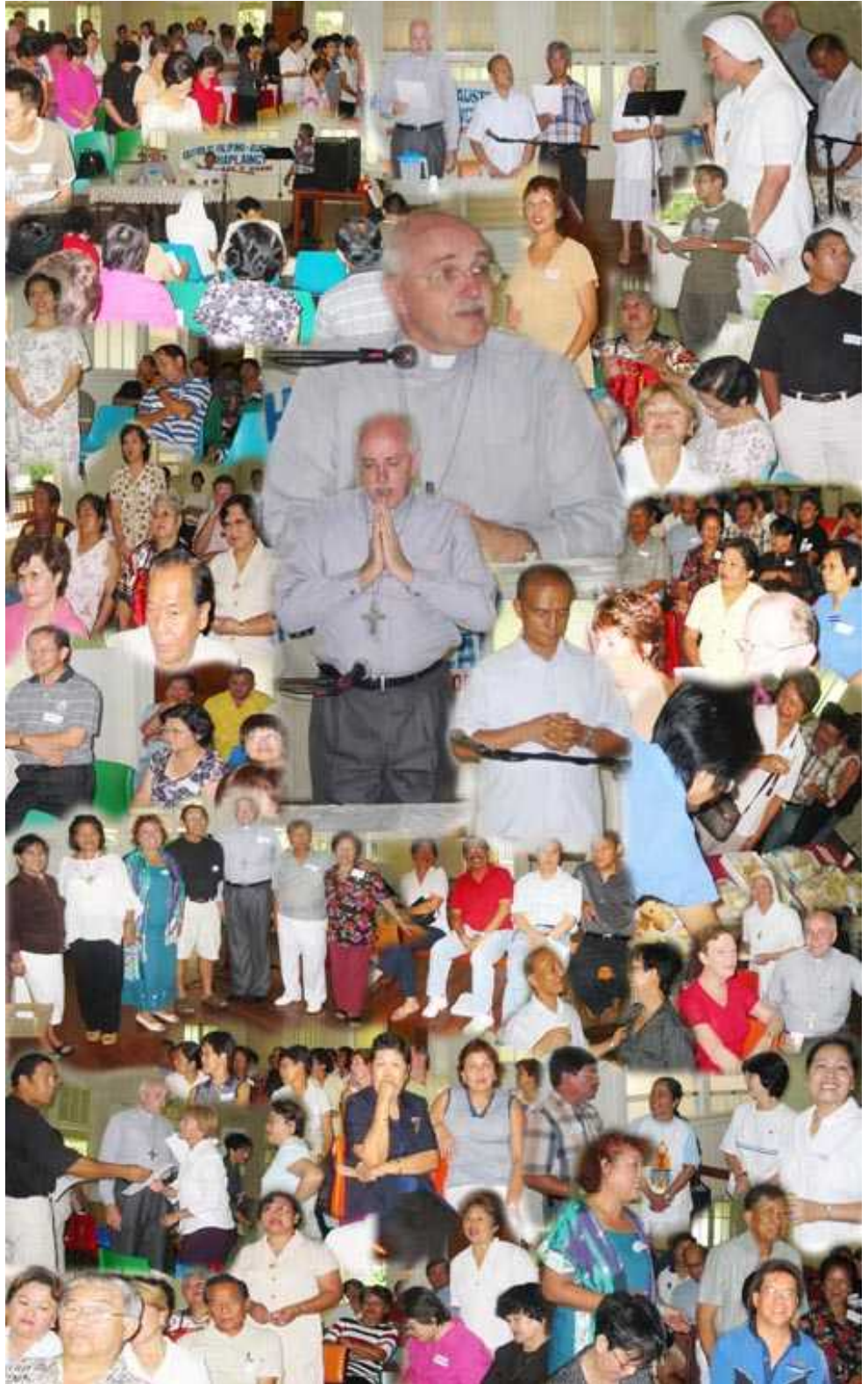
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The Catholic Filipino Australian Chaplaincy would like to say thank you to all those who attended the meeting with Bishop Joseph Oudeman on 5th February 2005 at St. Cecilia Parish Church Hall in Hamilton. The Bishop who is the Episcopal Vicar for Ethnic Communities officially introduced Fr. Marcelino Singson as Chaplain of the Filipino Communities of Brisbane. He will be temporarily assigned as Assistant Parish Priest in Booval, Ipswich and will be transferred to a parish central to many Filipinos in Brisbane soon. Everyone were enlightened about their role in the Chaplaincy as well as with the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The Pastoral Council of the Chaplaincy will transcribe the proceedings of the meeting and will be shown to the Bishop for his approval. Once approved, copies will be send to coordinators and leaders of different groups. In the meantime, those who were present at the meeting, spread the good news.

Bishop Oudeman meets Filipino Australian Chaplaincy

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Message from the Chaplain

LENT - A SEASON TO SIT IN THE ASHES



Last February 9 (Wednesday), whilst the Chinese community was hooked with a lot of physical and food preparations to celebrate their new year, the Catholic Filipino community went into fasting and abstinence. And in the evening of that same day, I was so amazed at the good number of Filipino Catholics (and not only Filipinos but other nationalities too) who flocked at St. James Church in Coorparoo for the Ash Wednesday mass to receive ashes smudged at their foreheads...an indication that Lent has begun. The following thoughts below are extracts from a Lenten reflection by Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI.

Why Ashes? What is symbolized by marking a sign of the cross with ashes on our foreheads? Perhaps the heart understands better than the head. We use the ashes probably because they are blunt, archetypal and speak the language of the soul. Something inside each of us knows exactly why we take the ashes: "You came from the dust, and into dust you shall return!"

To put on ashes on our foreheads is to say publicly and to ourselves that we are reflective, in a penitential mode, that this is not "ordinary time" of the year for us, that we are grieving some of the things we have done or lost, that some important work is going on silently inside us. We are, metaphorically and really, in the cinders of a dead fire, waiting for a fuller day in our life. All of this has deep roots. There is something innate to the human soul that knows that, every so often, one must make a journey of descent, be smudged with ashes, lose one's luster, and wait while the ashes do their work. All ancient traditions abound with stories of having to sit in the ashes before one can be transformed.

The Church taps into this deep well of wisdom when it puts ashes on our foreheads at the beginning of Lent. Lent is a season for each of us to sit in the ashes, waiting while some silent growth takes place within us, and simply being still so that the ashes can do their work in us.

Fr. Mars Singson

My Way

By Art N. Pagaduan



We decided to celebrate our wedding anniversary on a driving holiday, (along the east coast of Australia, from Brisbane to Canberra) something different from the previous thirty-three. Along the way, before Sydney, we came across a mountain ridge and stopped to view the great valley beyond. The road stretched as straight as an arrow, for as far as we could see. But as we came closer and closer to another mountain range, it looked like the road stopped dead. But we didn't stop, we kept on going. And sure enough, twenty kilometres down that straight road, we saw that the road gradually curved, it goes up and down until it became a pass through the mountains.

In reflection, that's the way God deals with us, our married life in particular. We get married, commit ourselves to each other even though we see a huge mountain range that makes it impossible to see beyond. Because we love each other, we just keep on going, and at the right moment, the end becomes a bend. The road is just fine (ok ngarud).

Happy 5th Anniversary to Marriage Enrichment Movement of Brisbane on 26th February 2005 There will be a mass, annual general meeting and program at St. Cecilia Parish Church Hall, Hamilton from 4:00pm. Also, congratulation to all married couples who are celebrating their wedding anniversaries for the month of January and February. Belated Happy Valentines to all!

The expectation of the New Year is that somehow circumstances will be adapted in a new and happier way. In the scorching hot midsummer, though, how can this be? The circumstances are all against us. The view that the manger and all that it means is apart from rather than a part of life has given rise to the problem of great expectations and greater disappointments. Somehow it promises so much and delivers so little. Christ is born, but the headlines read the same, wars persist, terrorism problems, graft and corruption in the public service, marriages and family relationships continue to decay. Is the world any different out there because we employ all the symbols to suggest that it is? The Tsunami that struck South Asia surely, Christians and Muslims alike will ask questions, why did God allow it to happen? Is there a benevolent God? My answers are, God did not allow it to happen, natural disasters happened as a result of the phenomenon of nature. As the Earth changes and shifts on its plates, it creates earthquakes and tidal waves. There is a benevolent God, just see the crucified Christ on the cross....

We are now in the Lent, a season in which the identity of Jesus, his real identity, is made clear and clearer to all of us who seek to know more about him. The season is that manifestation of God in the world where the message is greater than the manger and goes well beyond it. The forty days preceding Easter, we are governed by the Canon Law of the Church to observed fasting. The present legislation is as follows:

All Fridays through the year and the time of Lent are penitential days and times throughout the universal Church (Canon 1250).

Abstinence from eating meat or another food according to the prescriptions of the conference of the bishops is to be observed on Fridays throughout the year unless they are solemnities; abstinence and fast are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and on the Friday of the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ (Canon 1251)

Although not strictly obligatory, the observance of fasting on weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended.

Did you hear the story about a man who had a track record of a lustful life? Well, one day he went to the confession and told to the priest that he is already a changed man, He has learned how to avoid temptation and avoid sin. As a clincher, he said, "Father, I am a changed man. In fact, I don't even come near to my wife anymore, because my doctor advised, Iwasan ang taba (Avoid fats)!"

On Ash Wednesday, we were told once again that we are "dust and to dust we shall return", that we must humble ourselves before God. We are just dust in the wind (*abo*), so we should not be *abosado*, abusive. We must not be *aborido*, worried about our spiritual welfare because God himself will be our shield and strength. So in humility accept that we are dust (*abo*), then we will never be abusive (*abosado*) and worried (*aborido*).

*

This Lent everything we say, everything we do in the church or in the Chaplaincy for that matter in these coming weeks is part of this growing process of discovery of who Jesus is and where he is to be found. He is our Saviour and can be found in our hearts only if we allow Him.

When the situation seems hopeless, we Christians turn to Jesus, and because we believe in him we also believe and hope that all these problems in our communities and tragedies will eventually end and the world will be a better place to live.

Filipino Shrine Updates.....

By the time you are reading this column, the builders are probably already doing the excavations in preparation for the laying of the concrete foundation at the Filipino Community Shrine in Marian Valley in honour of our "Mother of Perpetual Help". Yes folks, we are going ahead with the Shrine according to plan. Numerous trips by the Shrine Committee to the Marian Valley (Canungra) to liaise with the builder and the Marian Valley staff, has now come to fruition. We are hoping to finish the Shrine by May 2005 in time for our annual pilgrimage to the Marian Valley as well as the inauguration/blessing of the Shrine on June 2005.



On the Finance side,

Letters asking for financial support for the Shrine have already been sent out. For those who haven't received theirs (it will be coming), and we hope you will give us your usual generosity.

We are grateful for those who have already deposited their donations towards the shrine. A complete list of donors will be published in the "Binhi" later. So, keep the donations rolling.

Until the next "Progress Report"

By: Ben Bulaong

(AFCCOM) BIBLE SHARING AND HOLY MASS 2005 SCHEDULE

11 February, Friday, 7:00 pm	Pat & Doreen Werda 2/120 Stafford Rd GORDON PARK
19 February, Saturday, 7:00pm	Bernie & Mila Golmayo 2 Latrobe Street FITZGIBBON
26 February, Saturday, 6:00pm	Ronnie & Tonette Alcon 443 Church Rd TAIGUM
5 March, Saturday, 7:00pm	Noel & Minda Wright 56 University Rd MITCHELTON
2 April, Saturday, 7:00pm	Pat & Doreen Werda 2/120 Stafford Rd GORDON PARK
7 May, Saturday, 7:00pm	Rudy & Flor Marquez 20 Lavercombe Drive KALLANGUR
20 May, Saturday, 7:00pm	Bernie & Mila Golmayo 2 Latrobe Street FITZGIBBON

Vacant Dates:

10 March, 17 March, 8 April, 14 April, 21 April, 29 April, 13 May and 26 May.

NOTE: Fr Mars has also a parish in Booval, Ipswich to attend to. Therefore please try to be open if, in the course of time, there is a change of schedule. But a notification of a change will be announced a week ahead of time.

Contact Persons: Rudy & Flor Marquez 38861951; Bernie & Mila Golmayo 3865 7638; Ben & Jima Sandiego 0431272060

The parable of the letter to God

The latter part of year 2004 two destructive typhoons crossed the Philippines, one after the other, caused a lot of damages and sufferings especially in the hard hit areas from southeastern to northeastern coastal part of Luzon, the province of Quezon in particular. The typhoons left more than one thousand people dead and destroyed many bridges, roads, houses and crops. The story is about a farmer Mang Dencio who lost his two carabaos, all his rice crops because of a severe flood and his house was totally destroyed. The whole barrio was affected so he had no one to turn to for help.

In sheer desperation, Mang Dencio wrote a letter to God:

"Dear God:

The typhoon destroyed our house, devastated my whole crop and also I lost my two beloved carabaos. We have nothing left. We have seven children. Please, God, send me five thousand pesos to tide us over.

*Sincerely yours,
Dencio*

He actually placed the letter in an envelope, stuck a stamp on it, and mailed it to "God in Heaven."

The letter reached the post office but it could not be delivered. However, the postmen had the time of their life laughing at the oddity of a man actually writing to God. Some people said God was dead, but here was a farmer writing to God out of sheer faith. The postmen decided to show the odd letter to their postmaster.

"Do you want laugh today, sir?" the postmen asked their boss. "Why, yes," answered the postmaster eagerly. And so the letter was handed to the postmaster who read the letter to God. But he did not laugh. Instead he re-read the letter in all seriousness and then faced the postmen. "We talk of social action," he said. "We all speak of the brotherhood of all men. Yet here is a man in dire need and you think it is funny? Shouldn't we pool our resources instead and help Mang Dencio?"

The postmen were embarrassed by the truth of the postmaster's remarks. So the group decided to pass the hat around and raise money among themselves to assist Mang Dencio. But they were few and money was difficult to come by, so all the post office personnel could raise was only four thousand pesos. Nevertheless, that was better than doing nothing. They also decided to play the game with Mang Dencio, so they placed the money in an envelope, put a stamp complete with stampmark, and wrote on the upper lefthand corner: "From God in Heaven."

A postman personally handcarried the letter with the money to Mang Dencio in the barrio, who was ecstatic with joy. "I knew God would answer my plea," he exclaimed. "God did not forget to send the money!"

Mang Dencio quickly counted the paper bills and found only four thousand pesos, instead of the five thousand pesos he had asked for. So he wrote another letter.

"Dear God:

Thank you for answering my prayer, God. But, please, next time, do not send the money through the post office, because the people there are thieves.

*Sincerely yours,
Mang Dencio*

Chaplaincy Activity Schedule (January to December 2005)

MISA DE GALLO

Jan 9 - Black Nazarene Mass,
C/o Ben & Vicky Bulaong
Feb. 9, 7pm - Ash Wednesday/
Group Reflection/Mass,
St James Church, Coorparoo

March 23 -Holy Wednesday

March 27, 4:30am - Easter Sunday
Mass (Salubong) Chinese
Community Centre, Runcorn
Contact: Sr Necy & Vicky Bulaong

May 15, 2pm - St. Paul's Church, 3 St.
Paul's Dr. Woodridge. Contact: Jim &
Ruth Palmani Tel. 38004685

May 28, 5pm - Flores de Mayo
St Bernardine's Church, 25 Vergulde
Rd. Browns Plains. Contact: Russel &
Pavie Milde Tel. 38003835

June 12 - Barrio Fiesta - FCCQ
Mass c/o Pastoral Council.
Contact: Art & Rose Pagaduan/
Adel & Monina Cos

June 18, 9:00am - Pilgrimage,
Marian Valley, Canungra. Choir - The
Bay Singers (Deception Bay).
Contact: Art & Rose Pagaduan/
Ben & Vicky Bulaong

July 24, 11:00am - Filipino Mass
St. Mel's Church, 88 Ipswich St. Esk
Contact: Carmelita Tworte 54241670

Sept. 24, 7:00pm - Feast of St.
Lorenzo Ruiz, St. Patricks Church,
70 Tobruk St. Beenleigh. Contacts:
Ben & Quennie Balaba 55465112/
Joel & Vinia Se Tel. 0412936444

Sept. 25, 11:00am - Filipino Mass
Sacred Heart Church, 1 Stewart St.
Childers. Contact Chris Gardner Tel.
41266197

October 1-30, 6pm
Month of the Holy Rosary, Our Lady
of Fatima Church, 350 Mortimer Rd,
Acacia Ridge. Contact: Mardi Britt /
Efren & Nora Altez Tel. 3273 7089

October 15 - Chaplaincy Night
(Time & Venue - TBA) Contact: Art &
Rose Pagaduan & Adel/Monina Cos

Nov. 2, 7pm - All Soul's Day Mass
Our Lady of Fatima Mass, Acacia
Ridge. Contact: Adel & Monina Cos

Nov. 27, Sunday, 11:00am -
1st Sunday of Advent, St. Joseph
Church, 177 Currie St. Nambour
Contact: Juanita Forman 55468334
and Imelda Brian

Dec. 3, Saturday, 1:30pm
Holy Mass, St. Martin's Church, Cnr.
Logan & Chester Rd. Eight Miles Plains
Contact: Nancy Spriggens

Dec. 4, Sunday, 11:30am -
Holy Mass, Sacred Heart Church,
50 Fairway Dr. Clear Island Waters.
Contact: Paul & Irma Courtney, Tel.
55273321

Dec. 10, Saturday, 11:00am -
Holy Mass, Christ the King Church,
54 Thompson St. Deception Bay.
Contact Marietta Savage Tel.
32031645

Dec. 10, Saturday, 7pm -
Holy Mass, Guardian Angel Church,
198 Bay Tce. Wynnum. Contact:
Grace Moon Tel. 3396 1157

LETTER FROM BR. JAN HOEKSTRA

December 29, 2004

Dear Fr Mars Singson,

Yesterday, I received the 42,000 pesos which was collected. Thanks for your effort and by the generosity of many Filipinos in Australia.

Thank you ever so much. In the meantime I visited Infanta. The destruction is very bad. In short as far as the agriculture center is concern it is completely destroyed. We are planning to build it all up again.. The destruction is a deep wound on the people and the environment. It will take a long time to heal the wound. But the Filipinos with the Filipino smile and determination will do it again and again.

February 14, 2005

I was in Infanta when your fax arrived in Merville. May I say this to you, thank you very much for your concern and your help for us and the farmers in Infanta.

Indeed your help and the help from the people in Australia was a great stimulation to renew and rebuild our lives. By separate mail I will be happy to send the statement of account to Mr. Art Pagaduan.

In the meantime I wish you so much consolation and blessings with your work in Australia.

With kindest greetings,

*Br. Jan Hoekstra
Mill Hill Missionary*

Dec. 15, Thursday, 7pm
St. Joseph & St. Anthony Church, 5
Eldorado St. Bracken Ridge, Contact:
Boyet & Doris Diaz Tel. 32614105

Dec. 16, Friday, 7pm
St. Williams Church, 67 Dawson Pde.
Grovely. Contact: Philip & Rose
Abundo Tel. 33550292/Noel & Minda
Wright Tel. 33550062

Dec. 17, Saturday, 7pm
St. Bernardine Church, 25 Vergulde
Rd. Browns Plains. Contact: Arman &
Lucy Abolencia Tel. 38000487

Dec. 18, Sunday, 3pm
St. Stephen's Cathedral, 249 Elizabeth
St. Brisbane. Contact: Art & Rose
Pagaduan Tel. 32735921 / Sr Necy
Esguerra Tel. 0401 367 236

Dec. 19, Monday, 7pm
Star of the Sea Church, 53 Passage
St. Cleveland. Contact: Darcy & Amy
Higgins Tel. 38246569

Dec. 20, Tuesday, 7pm
St Peter & Paul Church, 25 Main Ave.
Balmoral. Contact: Adela White Tel.
33999940

Dec. 21, Wednesday, 7pm
St. James Church, 165 Old Cleveland
Rd. Coorparoo. Contact: Jenny
Philipps Tel. 3843 0393

Dec. 22, Thursday, 7pm
Holy Cross Church, cnr Anzac Ave &
Chealsa St. Kippa-ring. Contact:
Bernie Gasper Tel. 3285 6796

Dec. 23, Friday, 7pm
Chinese Catholic Com. Centre, 80
Nemies Rd. Runcorn. Contact: Ben &
Vicky Bulaong Tel. 3216 8395

Dec. 27, Tuesday, 7pm
Holy Cross Church, 28 Chalk St.
Wooloowin. Contact: Pat & Doreen
Werda Tel. 3357 4745 / Cliff & Vivian
Bratby Tel. 33577872

**To all community leaders:
Please plan your activities around this
timetable to avoid overlapping and to
ensure a good attendance in all our
chaplaincy activities.*

*Prepared by: Sr. Necitas Esguerra, FdCC
Pastoral Associate*

*In consultation with:
Fr Mars Singson, OSB (Chaplain)*