



# Τα Στιγματα

NEWSLETTER OF THE STIGMATINE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY-CARMONA, CAVITE, PHILIPPINES



## THEOLOGATE COMMUNITY

*Envisions for a  
fruitful future*

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JUNE  
JULY  
2018



## *Annual Retreat, Self-Transforming Learning Experience*

Bro. Jeofrey Dantayana, CSS

Tagaytay City, a cool place to visit. With its calming ambiance and God given bucolic sights, its busy streets can never lessen the religiosity of the place. Hence, a lot of religious communities, Churches and retreat houses are situated in this place. One of these is San Damiano Spirituality Center, a Franciscan Missionary of Mary managed retreat center.

On June 4 – 8, 2018, the Stigmatine Religious Brothers and Fathers held their annual retreat in the said venue with Sister Evelyn Falguera as their retreat master.



The 14 temporary professed brothers and two priests experienced in five days the revitalizing solemn moments with God through the talks and activities given with family as their focal topic. The retreat dealt about family dynamics, self-awareness, healing and reconciliation.



The day began with the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Lauds, then conferences follow. In the afternoon, Mid-afternoon prayer opened the session followed by conference, then personal meditation. In the evening, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Mass were celebrated, then a short conference took place.



Sister Evelyn, aside from giving talks also offered a one on one encounter and processing every afternoon; Most of the participants avail the said encounter and well benefitted from it.

With its transforming and self-renewing learning experiences, the Annual Retreat was proven to be fruitful and successful.



### *Feast Day of Saint Gaspar Bertoni- Our Founder*

Bro. Jerson Rey Avinido, CSS

The death of the saint on earth is glory in heaven. Today is the 165<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of our dearly founder St. Gaspar Bertoni. We Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers around the world are overflowing with joy and gratefulness as we celebrate this glorious day in our Congregation.



Every Stigmatine community around the globe has its own creativity in expressing their happiness for this great celebration. Here in the Philippines we have also our own expression of love to our founder and to our congregation.

We started our day by celebrating the Lauds in the community. The invitatory antiphon was a very inspiring phrase for us Stigmatine; "Let us praise the Lord our God on this feast day of St. Gaspar Bertoni." This simple phrase shows the meekness and purity of soul granted to St. Gaspar Bertoni as he lived his life for the greater glory of God.



After breakfast we planted some fruit trees in our farm. Perhaps, planting during this day is the normal activity that we do here in the seminary every year. But what was new for this year was that we had the blessing of Fr. Romolo Bertoni as our formator in the religious house this year. For us, new generation, temporary professed brothers it is a great blessing to have the first stigmatine missionary priest in the Philippines celebrating with us in this feast day. Just looking at his life and example it seems that we experience the presence of St. Gaspar Bertoni in our midst.

The celebration continues. In the afternoon, we went together in the parish of the Five Wounds, Las Piñas City, where our beloved Fr. Abel was appointed as the new parish priest in that parish. It was a great joy for us Stigmatines, perpetual and temporary professed brothers, seeing our Stigmatine father invested into the chair of the parish as pastor of the people. Some of us were servers in the celebration and what an opportunity to be one among them. It was like witnessing a heavenly celebration. Praise to be God!



In the end, we finally get home after the lavish dinner at that celebration. Well, the day of celebration was not that simply ended with that lavish dinner. While on the way home Fr. Romolo gave us a good night "pabaon". He recharge our tired body and spirit saying thank you and "be happy to be a Stigmatine."

*Happy feast day and  
Mabuhay Stigmatino!*





### *Theologate Community, envision for fruitful future*

Bro. Crizaldy Suganob, CSS

On June 25-28 2018, we, the Stigmatine Theologate House, had our week-long assembly in Bertoni Center of Evangelization with the agenda of making Vision and Mission, attaining the Five Pillars of formation, and listing all the activities for the current academic year. The speaker during our retreat Sr. Evelyn Veloso extended her service to us as she voluntarily facilitated the event. The night on her arrival, Sr. Evelyn gathered us together for an orientation and overview of the event. As part of the program, we were divided into five groups that represents the Pillars of Formation (Pastoral, Academic, Community, Human, and Spiritual). Considered as the new form of house committees this year, each group were instructed to discuss some possible programs that are in-line with the Pillar they were representing.

On the next morning, Sr. Evelyn gave us a talk about the significance of having a vision and mission in the community. She shared that these two guiding principle would help us on building our identity as Stigmatine Brothers and to become goal oriented religious. Thus, after the talk we started to deliberate our Vision by giving each brother a chance to list down five constructive words that they want to see on the statement or affirming words that best describe a Stigmatine. After posting the list and dividing them according to the similarity of their meaning or concept, we noted the three words (with the highest number) and were essentially



emphasized in the final draft. In the afternoon, the same procedure was conducted for making the Mission. And by the end of the day, we successfully formulated Vision and Mission Statement of the Theologate House- and had it framed and blessed during the Holy Mass.

The following day was dedicated for the year planning. The session started with the month of July. Each group were given a chance to present their set of programs and

the facilitator wrote them on the board. The same process was made for the following months until July 2019. On the last day of the assembly, after final checking and additional suggestions, the community was able to list all the Pastoral, Academic, Community, Human and Spiritual related activities of the brothers throughout the year. Truly it was a fruitful week for all of us. It was also an opportunity for us to feel the fraternity and unity in our community. Thus, with the Vision and Mission as our light and guide, we look forward for the fulfillment of our goals and on becoming affective heralds of the gospel in our future ministries.



## VOCATION CAMPAIGN- *Go out and Inspire Young People*

Bro. Carlos Pezaña  
Avenido, CSS



It was just an ordinary day in the Religious community of Saint Gaspar Bertoni Seminary, Carmona, Cavite-Philippines. The religious brothers woke up just fine like any other day of the month. It was the first day of July, and it was loomed with a beautiful radiant light of the sun raging through the windows of the religious house. The school year has not started yet, hence, all have just woke up from a long hours of good sleep, taking their time preparing for the Morning Prayer and the Mass – an indication to start the daily routine. It was a normal day with a regular community schedules, and the brothers have chosen



not to talk about it even during breakfast. Who would have thought that in their rooms traveling bags have already packed all set to go for vocation campaign later in the week? Yes, the brothers who were just came back from family vacation were preparing once again to set out, not for another vacation though but for vocation campaign.

The plan for vocation campaign was pushed through due to the late start of classes of the brothers in the school. The first ones to set off were Bro. Jerson Rey and Bro. Norielgar who would endure twelve hours of travel by bus going to the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao. They



travelled on the night of July 1 and arrived at Solana, Tuguegarao on the following day- they stayed in St. Vincent Parish for five days. Bro. Jestonie set forth with the brothers who would go to Tuguegarao until the Bus Terminal, but travelled separately going to Ormoc, Leyte, and arrived in his destination after twenty hours-he stayed at the Seminary in Ormoc for nine days. Bro. Jayson found his own way later that night and journeyed for Pangasinan where he would stay for eight days in particular Parish Church.

On the following day, July 2, 2018, Bros. Dan Dave, Crizaldy and Yolleces left together to the airport to board a plane going to their respective destinations. Bro. Dan Dave would go to the Province of Bohol where he would stay for eight days. Bro. Crizaldy, would roam around the Province of Agusan del Sur for eleven days, while staying in our Parish at Sta. Irene, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur. Bro. Yolleces would go to Davao City and reside in the house of a friend for ten days. In a separate destination later that day, Bro. Joefrey headed off to the Bus Terminal to go to his hometown in Mindoro Occidental. He would stay there for nine days. While Bros. Adrian and Joshua, spent the whole day giving letters to the vocation directors of the Diocese of Paranaque, San Pablo and Imus asking permission to have vocation campaign in the schools and parishes under them.

The brothers who left for vocation campaign had only one major mission under the order of the Rector, i.e. to introduce the Congregation to every school and parish church they arrived at. Giving examinations to those who are interested to enter the Seminary was only a secondary reason of the campaign. For more than five days, the brothers worked hard to fulfill and complete their mission. They went to different schools and parishes to post posters about Stigmatine Congregation. Some brothers





were allowed by a few schools to talk in front of the students and give examinations to those who were interested, while others just allowed them to post posters.

After more than a week of being away, the brothers came back to the seminary one by one bringing different news from their experience. For more than three days, the topics during meals were their different experiences in the campaign. Seeing their faces, it is very clear that they loved their experience very much and wanted to try again sometime. When I asked Bro. Joefrey about his feelings he said, "I feel this hope for the Congregation while going to different schools and parishes to invite young people to enter the Seminary. There are so many young people out there who don't know about seminary life, so, I give them information about our life and some of them became interested to try. And because of this, I saw a ray of hope regarding the future of Stigmatine Delegation in the Philippines."

Indeed, there is no really such thing as drought of vocation because if we just keep on inspiring people through our works and actions they will imitate and follow us. That is why, we should always go out there and inspire young people through our words and works because if we just keep on waiting for them to come to us, I guess nothing will happen. WE SHOULD ALWAYS TAKE THE FIRST MOVE TO GO AND INSPIRE THEM.



### *Holy Spirit Mass at Don Bosco Center of Studies*

Bro. Adrian Petecio, CSS

The Don Bosco Center of Studies (DBCS) an affiliate of the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome in Paranaque City opened the school year, 2018-2019 with the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit on July 13, 2018.

The Institute of Theological Formation (ITF) celebrated the mass with the students from different Congregation together with the teaching and non-teaching personnel, faculty professors, and formators and priests of different congregation enrolled in ITF program taking Bachelor in Sacred Theology (SThB) and Theological Pastoral Studies (TPS). The mass was presided over by the new president and Dean of Studies Rev. Fr. Renan Michael La Guardia, SDB with concelebrating priests who are formators and professors in the institution.



In his homily, Fr. Mike, the new dean stressed the nurturing of relationship with God as students who study theology that the God we meet in the chapel is the same God that we meet in our studies. Fr. Dean said "Your studies must be personalized; learning is a personal affair," and he put in in Tagalog as "Personalan na!" and he added "Theology is not just an academic enterprise or exercise but a loving relationship with God. This perspective will motivate you to study diligently."

After the homily, the dean took the oath of fidelity and profession of faith together with the other professors. By the end of the celebration, the New President and Dean of Studies of DBCS declared the school year 2018-2019 officially opened.

### *How to be a good Stigmatine?*

Bro. Herbert P. Aninion, CSS

To be a good Stigmatine is no easy task. It is difficult. Yet, it is possible. And there is only one way to become one, be like Jesus. Our beloved founder St. Gaspar Bertoni beautifully puts it, "Be a portrait of Christ." Scholars would say that the emphasis in the Gospel of Matthew is on the teaching of Jesus. Simply put, the word of Jesus. This claim is supported in Mt.19:16-30. In this particular episode, Jesus is called teacher by the rich young man. He is a teacher that is more of words than action. While in the Gospel of Mark the emphasis is on action. Here, Jesus is described as an "action star." He is always doing something. Healing here and curing there. Going here and going there. This claim is supported by frequent word used in the said Gospel "euthys." It is a Greek word which has equivalent word in English that is "immediately." So with immediacy Jesus would perform something may it be healing, deliverance from demonic possession, or traveling.

We don't know for sure which is true between the Gospels in question. But, one thing is for sure, Jesus when proclaiming the kingdom of God, he did it not only in words but also in action.

The very reason why Jesus was incarnated into flesh is His love for humanity as John 3:16 says, "For God so the world He gave us His only Son." Jesus' mission is to spread And so as disciples He commanded us to love one another as has loved us. In the language of father Gaspar it is, "love is principle of action." In everything we do, love is the motivation. But, the question is how to put these words into How to love others? Yes, we are good in preaching about love. our action conform our words?

This reminds me of a story about a son and a father who to raise chickens for fighting. One day the boy asked the father to allow him to raise chickens. The father said to him to start with feeding them. So, the boy fed them by just throwing their food on the ground and left. The father blocked his way and said, "thank you. You did a great job, but the way it was done is wrong." He continued, "If you want to raise chickens or any other pets, you should understand them first. Start with feeding them



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correctly. You do not just throw their food. Call them in the language they understand. Speak like them. Learn to be like them.

Jesus Christ meant what he preached. He preached love, so He showed His love to us. He knew our greatest weakness. He knew us since the day of our conception until our last breath. He knows our hopelessness before sin. He understands our brokenness because of sin; that's why He became one of us to save us all. He loves us by understanding us.

In the same manner, like Jesus, to be good Stigmatine is to love our brothers and sisters by understanding them. Learn to be like them. The church puts emphasis on it as it dreams to be a church that goes to the periphery; that smells like sheep.

However, we won't be effective in this mission, if we fellow confreres are like dogs and cats. We should start it in our family as it is commonly said, "first, infiltrate the inside and the outside will follow." Let us understand one another. Let us learn to become Filipino, Italian, and Thai.

A good Stigmatine first loves his fellow Stigmatine because he understands him. Love one another as I have loved you. Love is the principle of action. Be a portrait of Jesus.



Dear Friends,

The symbol of our bicentennial celebration as Stigmatines was a heart exploding into sparks. A little spark is now thrown into the media net through this virtual newsletter.

No great ambitions, no great programs, not high expectations. Receive it and read it as a friendly whispering of a friendly voice, the voice of the Religious House of the Stigmatines in Cavite.

We are here, we grow here, we are expecting you to communicate with us, because we need you, your prayers, your opinions, your moral and (sorry to say) financial help.

Therefore, good luck and see you here.

Fr. Romolo Bertoni, CSS

Formator

fr.romolo@yahoo.com

**LAUS DEO SEMPER!**