



THE 7TH NOVITIATE YEAR (2019 - 2020)

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2020

LENT IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



Ash Wednesday, February 26, the novitiate community attended the Mass of the Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent, at Assumption Church Phuket. The following Sunday, the 1st week of Lent we were happy to celebrate with the people. To our surprise that would be our last Sunday to celebrate the mass with the public.

The diocese of Surathani in cooperation with the government issued a statement recognizing the widespread of the virus and thus the need to contain it by taking measures. The diocese thus, issued a mandate to suspend all religious activities with the public, encouraging all the faithful to stay home, participate masses online and keeping this season a season where we practice our religious activities at home.

Without exceptions, the Novitiate community complied to the mandate and so practiced our Lenten observance at home. The practices of penance at home is more felt: prayer, abstinence and almsgiving were observed in our small community in a more solemn way.

This year's celebration reminds us of caring for ourselves and for others. By abiding with the laws we care not only for the sake of ourselves but for the common good. We don't want to be infected the virus and we don't want others to be infected with the virus from us. This is charity practiced. We keep ourselves for the benefit of others. (page 2)

INSIDE CORDIALLY BLESSED

Birthday Celebration of Bisp. Joseph Pratan

KHAO LAK CHURCH FEAST DAY

Our Lady of Grace Celebration

RECOLLECTION OF THE MONTH

Recollection with Fr. Peter Pakpoom

Lenten Recollection with Fr. Ferdinando Ronconi

Lent in Time of the Pandemic



Novices post in front of Blood Center after blood donation



The Novices helping in preparing the Church Charity Boxes for Lent



Novices making Rosaries for souvenir.



(Continuition)

This time also God wants us to know of his love to us through the example of others. We can see the presence of God and God's Grace in the people who help care for those in need and the people who work to keep us safe.

In times like these, we are taught how fragile we are. This global crisis teaches us how weak we are as human beings. We are reminded by the palmist: "The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more" (Ps.103, 15-16). So, treasure our lives while we are still living, do not take it for granted. And as we age we should grow all the more in God's love.

Our discipline of lent is challenged this time. A lot of times we say we are in control, we are disciplined people. We think we are in control of ourselves and the events around us. But in reality we are not. In the face of the virus we are all vulnerable. We are not in control. Imagine the number of infected, almost 2 million people are infected now and still we say we are in control. Maybe it's time to say, we surrender to God and his plan.

The season of lent helps us to reflect trusting in God and not be overwhelmed by fear. We need more faith in Jesus. Like him who resurrected from a deep crisis, we too can finally rise from his crisis. We rise stronger like Jesus- the victorious one.

Finally, what we can share to the world is our ardent prayer. Prayer can move mountains. Everytime we stretch our arms, our faith, God does miracles.

Here, in the novitiate we are committed to pray for all. In this time of crisis we turn to God in prayer, asking him to be our strength each day as we battle for dear life. We pray for the frontliners, our government official and for the people affected. May we end victorious like the Risen Christ.

Cordially Blessed: A Birthday Celebration of Bishop Joseph Phratan, SDB

Surathani
Novice Revin

A gift of life is a blessing from God to His creation. This is where creatures find value in their existence. To exist is not merely a mode of enjoying oneself but it's more of a commitment to immerse loving, sharing and serving others. Thus, if the Bishop will then be asked about this gift; He will certainly say: "My God, You made a little of me, I grew the rest of myself".

On last January 17, 2020, the Novitiate community keenly attended the 74th Birthday celebration of Bishop Joseph Phratan, SDB at Surathani Diocese-Bishop's House. The celebration was simple yet overwhelming for all the diocesan priests and some religious (Both male and female) who were there to greet the Bishop a Happy Birthday.

The parishioners efficiently organized certain activities intended as an additive to fill the surroundings of fun and composure. They did have ball games, singing, dancing presentation etc. But what highlighted the celebration was the symposium of Bishop regarding "Querida Amazonia" It was all about the advocacies of the Holy Father Pope Francis towards the rehabilitation and preservation of the Amazon Region as well as the Amazonian Indigenous people. The symposium wished to offer a response to this process of dialogue and discernment that proposed a brief framework for reflection that could apply concretely to the life of the Amazonian region and to our environment in general. This was quintessentially explained by Bishop with matching reflections regarding life as a service to God and His creation. He genuinely envisioned how our lives could become if we dedicated it towards serving and loving the disadvantage.

It was indeed a celebration of life for everyone was hooked to realize that God made a part of us and it's therefore our commitment to grow in love and service to others. Happy Birthday Bishop!



The Bishop in his 74th birthday.



The Stigmatine Family with the birthday celebrator.



One of the novices handing gift to the bishop.



Afternoon schedule: Football match against the diocesan priests.



The parishioners and visitors offering flowers to our Lady.



The beautiful church adorned with flowers during the celebration.



The main celebrant at the center - Fr. John Amornkit joined by the pastor - Fr. Suwat, at the extreme left and the visiting priests.

FEAST DAY OF OUR LADY OF GRACE

KHAO LAK, PHANG-NGA
NOVICE KOLTAWAT

Khao Lak, Phang-nga Province. Last February 29, 2020, the novitiate community and Fr. Paul, Superior of Phuket community participated the feast day of the Church of Our Lady of All Graces in Khao Lak, Phang-nga Province.

Fr. John Amorkit Prompakdee, the vigar of the diocese, presided the mass in honor of Mother Mary of all Graces. In his homily he described the rich history and the community of the church. He mentioned that church was built in honor of the people, Catholics and non-Catholics who perished during the Tsunami disaster in December 2003. Five years after the incident, in 2008, a foundation stone was laid to officially build the church and was completed in 2012. On the same year after the incident a social welfare center was founded also alongside the building of the church, which becomes now the center for pastoral and social action of the diocese of Surathani.

Fr. John Amorkit invited the people to ponder of the Word of God, helping people, do social and pastoral action, the same way Jesus did and has set us an example. After the mass the blessing and offering of flowers to our Lady took place. During meal students from a youth center entertained the attendees with their performances.

The Pastor, Fr. Suwat thanked all the people who participated in their simple celebration. We also thanked him for inviting us in the celebration.

RECOLLECTION WITH FR. PETER PAKPOOM

NOVICE ELIAS



Recollection is a little getaway from reality. It is the act of recollecting or recalling to memory the graced moments in our lives, giving us encouragement and refreshment. It is a time to reflect on these graced moments and be able to thank and praise the Lord for these moments.

It was a pleasant Tuesday, last February 11, we had our monthly recollection with Fr. Peter Pakpoom in our chapel here in the novitiate. The topic for our recollection was about “Forgiveness”. Fr. Peter began our recollection with a short video clip about forgiveness. Forgiveness is the greatest gift that we can receive which is the lesson of the clip. “When forgiveness is properly understood, it is much easier to desire, give and receive”, Fr. Peter Pakpoom instructed us. “When it is not properly understood, forgiveness can be seen as a confusing and heavy burden and, therefore, as something undesirable”, he continues. Forgiveness it is not just a kindness to others but quietly it is a kindness to ourselves, the final message of the clip tells us.

As soon as we finished our recollection, we continued with confession with Fr. Peter and thanked him for a wonderful and meaningful recollection with his presence. After joining us at lunch he went back to Phang-nga province where he is presently assigned.



LENTEN RECOLLECTION WITH FR. FERDINANDO RONCONI NOVICE DAMIAN

On March 9, 2020, our community of Stigmata Novitiate Phuket held a Lenten Recollection activity together with Fr. Ferdinando Ronconi. Fr. Ferdinando is a Stigmatine missionary priest from Italy who has been here for more than 30 years already, working as a pastor in one of the churches here in Phuket.

In this recollection, Fr. Ferdinando talked about a number of things related to Lenten season, but he focused his discussion on Lenten liturgy. He also explained to us the meaning of the Lenten celebration and also the liturgical colours and time of its use in the liturgy. For instance, the red color means; The Outpouring of the Blood and the Fire of God's Love. Time of use on; Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost, Holy Martyrs and Chrism Mass. Green means; Fertility and Hope for life. When to use it on; Ordinary Period I and Ordinary Period II. Yellow has a meaning of Joy and Purity of the Soul. Time of use on; Christmas and Easter Period, and the Feast of God (not His Passion) and Saints are not Martyrs. Black has meaning; Signs of Death and Grief. Time of use on; Warnings of the Souls of the Believers and the Requiem Mass. Purple means; Introspection, repentance, sacrifice, and preparation. Time of use on; Advent and Lent can be charged for funeral Mass and Spirit Mass.

Therefore, in this Lenten season, priests always wear purple stoles and chasuble and all liturgical equipment are always purple. This means that we must be introspective, repentant, able to sacrifice and prepared.

Fr. Ferdinando, in speaking further said, that the liturgy was like a mother. In the sense that the Liturgy is a central element in the Catholic Church. Fr. Ferdinando also stressed that many of us ask questions about Jesus and many make spiritual activities, but there are still many who do not believe in Jesus Christ. But he said that liturgy has such great strength that it helps us to know Jesus Christ. With liturgy we can know more deeply and walk with Jesus Christ, but if there is no liturgy, we do not know Jesus and do not walk with Him.

To us who are practicing the season of Lent he said: Never choose a penance that you can't do. Choose a penance that you can no matter how big or small, hard or easy as long as you can do it, you are fulfilling the duty of a practicing Christian.

After the recollection a confession was held, and we thanked him for facilitating our Lenten recollection.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

FEBRUARY AND MARCH CELEBRANTS

FEB.07 – Fr. Wichien

FEB.19 – Fr. Niran

MAR.04 - Fr. Marlon

MAR.10 – Fr. Pornchai & Bro. Roy

MAR. 18 - Rev. Carlos

MAR. 20 - Bro. Donrich

MAR.21 – Fr. Sajan Jacob



H A P P Y E A S T E R

CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION



GREETINGS FROM ALL OF US HERE IN THE NOVITIATE