



Montfortian Synergy: Annual Outing, Ongoing Formation, and Annual Retreat

QUEZON CITY, Philippines - This October, the SMM - Philippine Delegation embarked on a holistic journey that weaves together the joyous camaraderie of a sports fest, the tranquility of an annual outing, the dedication to lifelong learning through ongoing formation, and the deep reflection of an annual retreat.

The festivities kicked off with a burst of energy on October 19th as the sports fest set the stage for friendly competition and community bonding. Members from various communities gathered, starting the day with *Shibashi* that was led by the Novitiate Community. This was followed by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, presided over by Rev. Fr. Paul Arnel LUCERO, SMM. After the service, participants enjoyed breakfast before commencing the sports events. This year's sports fest was divided into two teams: '*Bagong Pilipinas*' and '*Angat Buhay*'. All participants enjoyed the activities and displayed commendable sportsmanship. Following the games, they shared a lunch during which the October birthday celebrants were serenaded with songs and presented with a delightful cake. Afterwards, there was time for a short rest.

In the afternoon, the group departed for the *Aurora Private Resort and Event Place* in Bustos, Bulacan. The evening was spent in recreation, filled with laughter and memorable moments. The following day, members immersed themselves in the serene beauty of the resort during the annual outing, stepping away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life to foster connections with one another in a setting that

promises rest and rejuvenation. Before heading back to the SMM delegation house, Fr. Angelito PUSIKIT, SMM, presided over the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

After two days of recreation with the temporary professed, novices, pre-postulants, and staff from the different communities within the delegation, the perpetually professed members dedicated two days, October 21-22, to Montfortian Ongoing Formation. This event took place at the delegation house and commenced with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, presided over by Fr. Norwyn BAYDO, SMM (on the first day) and Fr. Reynaldo BULLAS, Jr., SMM (on the second day). The days were spent in study, reflection, and sharing about RATIO II, facilitated by Fr. Norwyn. Those in initial formation joined the group for Mass, meals, prayers, and the contemplation of the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This spiritual deepening acted as the prelude to the annual retreat, where silence and solitude provide the backdrop for contemplation and renewal.

The Delegation Annual Retreat was held from October 23 to 26, 2023 at Little Flower Retreat House in Baguio City. It was facilitated by Rev. Fr. Kenneth C. MASONG of the Diocese of Iba, Zambales. Fr. Kenneth chose the theme of the retreat from Pope Francis' recent apostolic exhortation, '*C'est la confiance*', on the 150th Anniversary of the Birth of St. Therese of Lisieux.

"C'est la confiance et rien que la confiance qui doit nous conduire à l'Amour." "It is confidence and nothing but confidence that must lead us to Love." (St. Therese, Letter 197 to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart (17 September 1896): Letters II, p. 1000).

"Happy to be Montfortians"

Glory to God Alone!

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