

MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR



Newsletter

**“IT IS MERCY,
I DESIRE”**



ALSO

- **Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood**
- **Philippines typhoon's relief program**



Vol.02

Lent/Easter - 2021

www.missionariesofthepoor.org

Newsletter 2021

“IT IS MERCY, I DESIRE”

“Which is easier: to say, your sins are forgiven, or to say, get up and walk? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”

We live in a world where we are quick to judge but we are slow to understand. We are quick to point fingers but we are blind to our own mistakes. We are relentless when we condemn but we run away from owing the blame.

But forgiveness opens a door to new life. To a new beginning, to something we have never walked before and to something we have never known before. It brings forth fresh relationships, stronger bonds and a more united spirits. It opens new opportunities – opportunities of better understanding and richer living.

It teaches us new lessons in life. Lessons that we would never have come to know if there was no sin and forgiveness and it gives us a wisdom that we have acquired if there was no sin and forgiveness.

But above all, in forgiveness we come to know the greatest love of all. We come to know the very Heart of God – the Heart of Mercy.

How many relationships in our lives are paralyzed? How many hearts are broken and how many souls are grieving – all because we cannot forgive.

Do we realize the weight and the

within we have been nursing?

Why hold on to your hurts? Why cling to your misgivings? Why dwell in the dark memory of the past? When you can simply unchain yourselves from the shadows of the past and walk in the freedom of new life.

It is now the time to forgive and forget the errors of the past and walk in the light of the present. It is now

the time to once again hold each other's hands and walk side by side and walk from strength to strength. It is now the time to once again see the beauty of God in each other's faces and marvel at what God has done.

It is mercy that heals and not our cruelty. It is sympathy that binds and not our rigidity. It is kindness that restores and not our stiffness and it compassion that brings

hope and not our condemnation. The law condemns but love redeems and the law distances but love embraces for “it is mercy I desire, not sacrifice”

By: Br. Arnold Ancheta, M.O.P.



burden we have been carrying, load upon load of accumulated anger and pile upon pile of stored hurts? The sleepless nights and the restless days. Do we realize the pain we have been enduring and the wounds deep

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Is the Official Newsletter of the
Institute of the Missionaries of the
Poor.



**Br. Pratap Kiro, MOP
Consoling a resident at
Lord's Place**

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Mission Focus: MOP - Naga

The Power of God



Brothers distributing food packages to typhoon victims in the mountainous community of Nino Jesus in Iriga City, Camarines Sur.

It all began with Quinta, a typhoon which swept through thousands of houses in Bicol starting in the dark afternoon with great anger and intent.

The Brothers had gone to the Nazareth Pre-school, built and run by the Brothers for poor children in the garbage dumps and our neighbourhood, now turned into an evacuation center for over 200 people: some huddled, children with their parents on the mattresses, the Brothers running to and fro attending to their needs.

The power of God could be felt—12-15 hours of fierce power. This typhoon had a life and personality of its own. On and on the fierce wind and rain swept and slammed down trees, shacks and zinc roofs. The frail coconut wood buildings with patches of cardboard and broken wood

yielded to the power and might of the Almighty God.

The people, the Brothers, the homeless and destitute could only be obedient. We give thanks to God for all that is wonderful and good. Should we not give thanks to God also for what is evil?

The mystery of life and death, the terror and majesty of God—yes, He is in control. What can we say but let it be.

It seemed just a few days after, just in the wink of an eye, once again, the announcement



Brother's relief operations in the coastal barangay of Binahian, Sipocot, Camarines Sur.

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that a “new super typhoon—Rolly—will be striking Camarines Sur and the rest of Bicol, fiercer than Quinta.”

After about a week, it was here. It swept through the land, driving so many poor people to the Nazareth Pre-school once again. The premises could only receive 275 evacuees, mostly children and women. The men seemed to stay closer to home base for the sake of protecting what little goods and scraps of the home they had. There are also the animals—some goats, sheep, and chickens—that might die in this ruthless typhoon.

On and on it went, flinging its fury, this terrible giant. People wept and prayed throughout the night. It was pitch black and furious—the winds bawling in fury. Everything seemed to be swinging in God’s fury. We were totally at His mercy.

After nights and days of terror and destruction, the sun appeared.



Brothers Loading relief goods for the people of Caorasan, another coastal area of Bula, Camarines Sur.

People started picking up from what was left by the massive destruction. The process of rebuilding has begun, life must go on!

Some 16,000 individuals have benefited from the food packages the Brothers distributed. The Brothers have gone through barangays in Camarines Sur and Catanduanes, especially the poorest. Presently, they are now rebuilding the dwellings of a number of those who have lost their homes—some of them the poor

families of our Brothers.

The Brothers go out each day carrying supplies for building. They build some dwellings from bottom to top. They stay at a local government-run day care centre. The people are quick to help themselves as the Brothers help them. And with your continued help and support, we will continue to help and rebuild the lives of these people and together, praising God for His goodness and kindness.



Brothers constructing housing unit in Brgy. Caroyroyan, Pili.

Signs of New Life

My dear MOP Brothers and Sisters, associates, friends and benefactors. As we journey towards Easter, I cannot help but reflect on the New Life won for us by Christ in his Passion, Death and Resurrection. I cannot help but think of the seventy odd years of Lent that I have lived consciously and the years that you, my friends have also lived consciously. And then I ask myself, Is the world a better place because of those many Lents that I (We) have lived? Has the New Life won by Christ taken deeper and deeper hold of my life and of the lives of others with whom I have interacted? Despite my weaknesses and difficulties, God has been good to me and I dare say to all of us. It is important however that we be able to recognize the signs of New Life which like little plants we need to nurture so that they begin to bear fruit.

One year ago, all the superiors and bursars of the Missionaries of the Poor gathered here in Jamaica to look at ourselves and at the Institute to discover whether we were being faithful to our founding intuition and to discover ways in which the founding intuition needed to be expressed to be relevant in this new world that is coming into being. We expressed our purpose in this way: ***"As Missionaries of the Poor we live the love of God in restoring dignity to the Poor." The way of doing this is through "Qualitative Care and facilities for Residents."***

Here in Jamaica, at this moment the Missionaries of the Poor care for approximately 400 residents many of them mentally and physically chal-



Br. Alphonce with Ashani from Bethlehem Home for children.

nged. These residents run the gamut from babes in arms to persons in old age and persons suffering from HIV Aids. Many of these 400 residents have been abandoned by family and by society. These 400 residents are cared for in 6 residential properties. New Life for these residents means that we look at ways in which the human dignity of these residents is enhanced so that they see themselves and we see and treat them as sons and daughters of God, our loving Father and as our sisters and brothers in Christ. And that which we do in Jamaica, we do also in India, Kenya, Uganda, the Philippines, East Timor, Indonesia, Haiti and we hope in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in a few months.

My dear MOP Brothers and Sisters, associates, friends and benefactors, New Life for our residents will in fact mean New Life for all of us. This New Life is necessarily expressed in action. We have done very well in the past, we

have given hope to many who had lost all hope but we cannot rest on our laurels. Stagnation leads to death and so we have to always ask ourselves, what does New Life mean in the situation in which we find ourselves?

My dear associates and benefactors, you have been with us you have seen the work that we do, I ask you not only to continue praying for us but to suggest to us ways in which you think we can improve the human dignity of our sisters and brothers who God has placed in our care. We value your input do not be afraid to send us your suggestions. The world can be a better place after this Lent if you send us your ideas and suggestions. May God bless us all and do have a Happy and Holy Easter.

+Mgr. Joseph E. Harris
Pontifical Commissary

All for the Glory of God

"I have called you by name, you are mine." Isaiah 43:1

Fr. Amarjose Dungdung M.O.P., was ordained to the sacred priesthood by Most Rev. Kishor Kumar Kujur, bishop of Rourkela India at St. Mary Church, on February 5, 2021.

As I remember It was winter and we were all sitting around the fire. One by one we were all asked; what do you want to be in the future? I don't really remember what other had said, but I clearly remember saying this; I wanted to give my life to God and serve his people. I would have been around seven or eight years old. I was not thinking about my future at that age but this was my first thought came into my mind, that I should live my life to God. Many were surprised with my answer because I was like any other children of my age. All that we knew was to go to school, play, eat and sleep.

We used to go to masses every Sunday. Now and then we serve at the masses as altar servers. I studied in the Catholic school throughout my school years. And so, God and the church was always close to my heart. The priests and nuns that I knew were so friendly, loving and so



Fr. Amarjose Dungdung, M.O.P.

and so nice to relate to. There is something in my heart would always say; you ought to be like one of them. It is always at the back of my mind that one day I will give my life for God.

However, as I was in the high school, growing in age, the initial dream of living for God was disappearing from my mind. I had said many years ago, in a way of re-directing me what I wanted to be. I won't listen to any of those things. I was in the world and the world was so pleasing. I still went to church, served as an altar boy, get involved in the youth programs but to join a reli-

gious to become a brother or a priest was not appealing. I was living in the world as any other boys of my age would have, given into drinking, movies, sports, partying and so on...

Growing up I did not lack anything; I did not know what struggle is. I would do whatever I want, go wherever I wanted, spend night anywhere. My life was completely given into the world and the things of the world. However, I began to feel empty in my heart. First, I thought I was happy, life is going to remain the way it was. Things began to change, the more and more I got indulge in the world, the more and more I began to feel empty in my heart. I began to reflect of my life, what am I doing? Am I going to live the rest of my life this way? There was no direction, there was no one to guide me, neither do I sought any guidance. My life continued this way for some years. I did not know what to do. I was living my life without any direction and purpose.

During this period of my life, Brother Suresh who passed away in 2005, at Kingston Jamaica came with the news of a religious community called; "Missionaries of the poor." He had seen me living life without any meaning, doing things which I am now ashamed of. He did not know much things about MOP. He did not know what is the charism or the purpose of MOP. The only thing that he knew was that MOP, live a life in community and serve the poor. Being a convert, he was passionate about faith and life. When I heard about MOP, I said to myself this is where I should go. Even-though I did not know much about MOP, the desire to serve God



and his people stirred in my heart. I did not have much time to gather all the required documents from the time I got to know till I joined the community but I could not wait. Did I know what life would be in MOP like? No, I did not. I wanted to run away from that emptiness that I felt in my heart when I was in the world and I felt this is a way God is calling me.

When I joined the Missionaries of the Poor, I was very happy but very soon life took a different direction. I was happy but at the same time I was struggling with many things. I wanted to serve God but same time wanted to be in the world, doing things of the world. Desire of the world was very strong. I had never seen any deformed men in my life. As MOP we take care of orphans, men and women with many different of diseases, men who are marginalized by society. And so, to find them all in one place was overwhelming. I realized I could not serve them, all the days of my life. Thoughts keep coming into my mind; there must be another way to serve God. At the end of day, it was so tiring, I wanted to serve God and his people but not in this way. I was left in between, should I go back home or continue on my vocation. And it came to a point when I wanted to go home. I came to ask permission, if I could be allowed to go home. But instead of allowing me to go home, I was asked to do a novena prayer. During this time, I began to reflect life more deeply. What is the purpose of my life, I am in the world and not living for God? What am I doing, what is the point? What will happen to me at the end of my life. God gave me life and I am throwing it away. What will I answer Him? And then one day during prayer and reflection when I am battling with all this questions in my head, the scripture like Matthew 25 and Luke 4 flashes in my mind.

*"The king will reply,
'Truly I tell you, whatever
you did for one of the least
of these brothers and sisters
of mine,
you did for me.'" (Matthew*

*"The spirit of the Lord is on
me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the
poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim
freedom for
the prisoners and recovery of
sight to the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the
Lord's favor." (Luke 4: 18-19)*

there was a great calm and sense of peace I felt. On that day I made a decision, that this is where the Lord wants me to be. If the Lord wanted me to be somewhere else and serve him in different way, I could have joined any other communities. But up to this day why did I not look for any Society. Why that desire never took place.

I began to see life in a way which I had not seen before. I began to realize the joy and happiness of living for God. Not everything, but little by little the love of the world disappeared, then I began to realize the true love of God. I did not do anything which made me what I am today. It is all God's grace. When I look back and reflect my life, the way



Mr. Noas Dungdung and Mrs. Magret Kullu, parents of Rev. Fr. Amarjose Dungdung M.O.P.

my life was and what God has done in my life, I humbly say; To God be the glory. Together with our blessed mother; "for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name." (Luke 1:49)

Life has not always been easy; it has not been a smooth sailing. It is filled with ups and down, light and darkness, joys and sorrows, nevertheless, there is a true peace and joy in my heart. There is a meaning and purpose to my life. Have I always been very happy? No, I am not, but I know I am not alone. I am living my life with the Spirit of Jesus Christ. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me." (Philippians 4:13)

By: Fr. Amarjose Dungdung, MOP





Brothers' Lenten gift-giving in Buhi in collaboration with the Daughters of St Augustine (DSA) from Iriga City.

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