

JUN - OCT 2019 ISSUE



WHITE & BLUE

THE OFFICIAL E-NEWSLETTER OF THE STUDENT CATHOLIC ACTION OF THE PHILIPPINES

The background of the entire page is a photograph. It shows a silhouette of a person standing with their arms raised in a gesture of praise or prayer. To the left of the person is the silhouette of a large, leafless tree. The sky is a mix of deep blue, purple, and orange, indicating a sunset or sunrise. In the distance, a body of water and some lights are visible. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

*solid
as
one*

CNTENTS

- | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|---|
| 1 | FROM THE NATIONAL DESK | 13 | SCA FEATURES
The Queen of the Rosary
<i>Felix Javier</i> |
| 2 | COORDINATOR'S THOUGHTS
<i>Jonel Bryan Reyes</i> | | |
| 4 | ACROSS SCA CLUSTERS: CENTRAL LUZON & NCR
SCA Tarlac, NCR receive St. JP II Relic, Youth Cross | 17 | SCA FEATURES
Tipping Point of Truth |
| 5 | ACROSS SCA CLUSTERS: SOUTHERN LUZON
Lucena, Gumaca ramp up SCA Orientation... | 20 | NATIONAL UPDATES
<i>Program Milestones & Representations for Jun-Oct 2019</i> |
| 6 | ACROSS SCA CLUSTERS: VISAYAS
SCAP joins CHR-CSO 7 Regional Dialogue
<i>Melvin Pedrosa</i> | 23 | NATIONAL UPDATES
Advocacy on Social Justice and Peace:
SCAP expands peace network with ACP3FI, GoJUST-CHR, FPT-AWP |
| 7 | ACROSS SCA CLUSTERS: MINDANAO
Blessed to serve more
Stephanie Mana | 25 | WHAT'S NEXT? |
| 9 | SCA BLOOD: Featuring Laurine Alexis Yonson
Working on Positive Change from SCA's See-Judge-Act | 26 | THANK YOU, DONORS |

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WHITE & BLUE

THE OFFICIAL E-NEWSLETTER OF THE STUDENT CATHOLIC ACTION OF THE PHILIPPINES

The Student Catholic Action of the Philippines welcomed another year of its celebration of the National Solidarity Month last November. During this period, all members, partners, and collaborators called for reflection and action to be brave in living out peace and to build peace toward social transformation.

Last year, SCAP partnered with other like-minded organizations. We sought to break the borders of exclusivity and welcomed friends from other faiths. It is but timely that in the same month, another cycle of the Church celebration switched from the Year of the Youth to the Year of Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue. The Year of the Youth concluded already but its theme, "*Filipino Youth in Mission: Beloved, Gifted, and Empowered*," shall continue to move our hearts in proclaiming the Gospel truths.

We borrow the theme of the 53rd World Communications Day, "*We are members one of another [Eph 4,25]*." Thus, leading us to create the tagline, *Solid as One* reminding the youth as one of the Church's strengths, gifted, empowered, and bold enough to face the challenges of our times, marred with injustice and loss of integrity.

We recently concluded the 5th Visayas-Mindanao Regional Leadership Conference in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro the last 26th to 29th of October 2019. The conference engaged us to share and to critically reflect the "values and truth of the Gospel of Christ" so we can be champions and influencers of Christian virtues in both the offline and online world. While the social web identity sadly creates opposition and division leading to the rise of prejudice (ethnic, sexual, religious, and other), it also serves as a platform to form online missionaries of Christ. SCAP desires to take a closer view, and deeper understanding and reflection of the established trends in the digital culture to create a relevant and timely plan of actions that would lead to building a community of responsible, accountable, dignified, and truth-loving people.

It is a challenge to bring these efforts to our grassroots. The cells are the foundation of our Christ's encounter. How can SCAns share and witness the love of Jesus Christ that should reign above all despite the pain, suffering, and corruption of human conditions? Christ chose Peter, the "Rock" [Jn 1:41-42]. Peter, whose past attitudes were attributed to impulsiveness, failure, and lies, yet Jesus saw in him the heart of reconciliation, trust, and authentic love. May we become Peter, who is not afraid to take the risks of faith, especially when we desire for justice and peace. May we be solid and united to speak the truth and to live the Gospel of Love.



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COORDINATOR'S THOUGHTS

by Jonel Bryan M. Reyes

Prayer & Action concluding the Year of the Youth

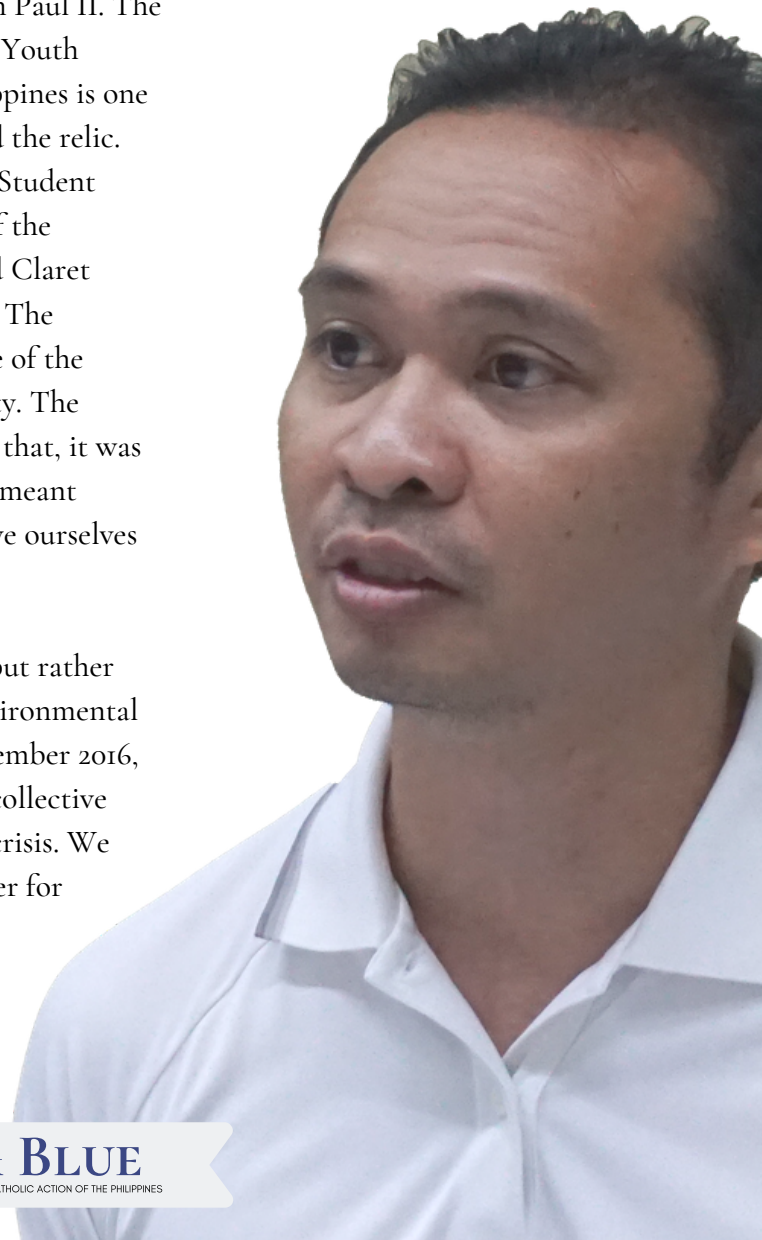
The SCA journey creates an everyday learning experience. Just like me, my SCA story began in high school. SCA taught me to strive to become a better person and a competent leader. Like Jesus, the model of all SCAs, He inspires me to pray with action and to follow His mission to serve others without counting a cost.

Let me share some of my thoughts and reflections during the celebration of the Year of the Youth.

One of the highlights during the Year of the Youth was the Pilgrimage of the National Youth Cross and the Blood Relic of St. John Paul II. The pilgrimage circulated around the 21 Federation of National Youth Organizations (FNYO) member-organizations. SCA Philippines is one of these organizations which hosted to receive the cross and the relic. SCA Tarlac, through the efforts of Tarlac State University Student Catholic Action and SCA NCR, through the community of the Daughters of the Assumption in Pasig Catholic College and Claret School of Quezon City, wholeheartedly accepted the event. The response and welcoming of the cross and relic reminded me of the power of praying not only as individuals but as a community. The experience was welcoming Jesus into our hearts. More than that, it was all about opening ourselves to a life of faith and mission. It meant recognizing ourselves as beloved and gifted and ready to give ourselves in God's trust.

It will be better if we do not make use of "climate change" but rather "climate crisis," especially when we are dealing with the environmental problem. SCA Philippines inked its commitment last November 2016, during its 1st Earthkeepers Summit to take individual and collective action to contribute to reversing the effects of the climate crisis. We also joined the yearly celebration of the World Day of Prayer for Creation and Walk for Creation.

Continue to next page.



COORDINATOR'S THOUGHTS

Cont. (Coordinator's...)

Aside from participating with other groups, last Sept. 21, SCA Philippines organized a bamboo growing activity together with different groups at Wawa Dam, Rodriguez Rizal. It happened simultaneously during the world youth strike for the environment. We joined hands together in planting hundreds of bamboos. This initiative is an important cause to save the watersheds of Manila and eventually answer the water crisis of the metro.

I believe that praying, shouting, and loudly speaking to convey a message on the streets are among great activities to express our thoughts and feelings. These actions, in turn, can move those who are in authority to do more significant steps. But, climate crisis does not only speak about what actions authorities can take to resolve today's ecological challenges. It is also about a change of heart. Transforming ourselves from becoming a citizen of our nation to becoming a child of the earth. We don't want to hurt our mother, who nurtures our life.

I am an SCAn. I strive to become like Jesus. I strive to take good care of others and the earth. I pray, and I would like to do what I pray.

What have you committed to do after the Year of the Youth?



PHOTO: Jonel (2nd from left) joins the ocular inspection team in preparation for the Bamboo Growing at the planting site of Mt. Karugo in Rizal Province.

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ACROSS
SCA CLUSTERS



CENTRAL LUZON
& NCR



SCA Tarlac, NCR receive Saint JPII relic, Youth Cross

SCA Tarlac and SCA NCR generously hosted the welcoming of the National Youth Cross and the Blood Relic of St. John Paul II last 25th to 26 of September and 2nd of October, respectively. Tarlac State University, through the help of SCA TSU, organized a campus-wide veneration of the cross and relic after the Eucharistic Celebration. The activities were held the same in NCR at Claret School of Quezon City.

The National Youth Cross and Relic of St. John Paul II went on a pilgrimage throughout the country in celebration of the Year of the Youth. SCAP, as part of the Federation of National Youth Organizations, took a significant time to receive the cross and relic and highlighted the movement's partaking to the mission of the Church.

The National Youth Cross was created in 2011 during the 25th year of the Episcopal Commission on Youth in 2011. The accompanying relic of St. John Paul II is a portion of the saint's blood contained in a vial. St. John Paul II is one of the contemporary saints greatly loved especially by the young. He is known as the pope who embraced the gift of young people to the Church.

ACROSS
SCA CLUSTERS

SOUTHERN LUZON

Lucena, Gumaca ramp up SCA Orientation and Membership Applications



PHOTO: New SCA members of Sacred Heart College in Lucena enjoy a blind-fold activity during their eSCAPade. (Photo courtesy of SHS Website)

Nothing's gonna stop us now!

Just like the popular love song, it seems that the rate of eSCAPade, SCA's unit-level membership orientation and application, have gone dashing for more interested students in the Dioceses of Lucena and Gumaca for the first two quarters of the school year.

Last August 3, even amidst a challenging weather due to typhoon "Hanna", the Sacred Heart College SCA in Lucena conducted its General Assembly. SCAP Animator, Andrian Reglos, discussed the organization's background and some of its future plans. He stressed that the organization is a platform to mold and shape the leaders among the members of SCAP. The program continued with interesting activities like finding each groupmates through shouting animals' sounds with a blindfold. A yell competition showing the members' creativity was also held. Games were played by old and new members who ardently showed their unity, trust, and cohesiveness despite not being familiar with each other yet.

Meanwhile, the SCA Lopez Chapter, through its core formators, started refreshing large memberships in Lopez National Comprehensive High School and Eastern Tayabas College in September. The Diocese of Gumaca now gives full support to organizing more SCA units even outside of the Parish of the Holy Rosary where the concentration of SCA membership is high. *(With reports from the SHS Lucena Website)*

ACROSS
SCA CLUSTERS

VISAYAS

SCAP joins CHR-CSO 7 Regional Dialogue

By

MELVIN PEDROSA

SCA Visayas Cluster Coordinator

Archdiocese of Cebu



PHOTO: Melvin Pedrosa, SCAP Visayas Coordinator (Standing 9th from left), joins the participants of the CHR Regional Dialogue in Cebu City.

The Student Catholic Action of the Philippines (SCAP) was invited to join the Regional Dialogue between the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in Region 7 last October 10-11, 2019 held at the Castle Peak Hotel in Cebu City. The said dialogue was attended by 15 CSO's coming from the City and Province of Cebu and the City of Tagbilaran.

The said gathering aimed at achieving convergence and partnership in pressing forward not only human rights but also civil and political rights of the people in the region. The group also embarked on discussions regarding some current and pressing issues concerning the environment. The dialogue was enriched by the discussions on the constitutional mandate of the CHR and the sharing of the different advocacies and projects of the various CSO's present in the gathering.

As the offshoot of the dialogue, the group was able to craft future long term and short term programs for the furtherance of Human Rights in the region such as the holding of a Business and Human Rights Conference in December 2019 that will focus on the environmental impact of doing business and the adherence of business entities to the international human rights standards. A Legal Literacy program to specifically address the alleged Human Rights Violations (HRV) committed by the state actors on the on-going Anti-Drug War Campaign of the government will also be fleshed out by the last quarter of this year. Build up sessions on HRV's and other related themes by the different CSO's present in the dialogue were also encouraged. The group will also come up with a position paper on the various HRV's committed against the weak and the vulnerable and for the CHR to issue Human Rights Policy Advisory to business sectors and government agencies when necessary.

ACROSS
SCA CLUSTERS

MINDANAO

CAGAYAN DE ORO - Here's a short narrative from one of the Senior High School Leaders of SCA in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro. She bravely accepted the challenge to manage one of the Local Organizing Committees of the 5th SCAP Visayas-Mindanao Regional Leadership Conference last 26th to 29th of October 2019. Let us read her story.

It was nerve-wracking!

Being part of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) in the 5th Student Catholic Action of the Philippines Visayas-Mindanao Regional Leadership Conference (5th SCAP VMRLC) was a serious responsibility and a blessing at the same time. I know how vital our obligations are in preparation for the conference. I felt like we cannot do it. Still, because of the support of Fr. Hawthorne "Bong" Galas, Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, our active core animators, Sir Zandro and Miss Sandra, together with the National Secretariat, we successfully made it.

Honestly, I never imagined myself being part of the LOC because I felt like I was not fit enough to handle some tasks. But it was a rare offer. I was so happy being part of the volunteers because I was able to bond with my fellow SCAns and got to know them more. Aside from that, I was able to serve. Up until now, it feels surreal. After being part of the LOC, something in me moves me that I want to serve more. I want to give and help others. Ultimately, I want to serve God more. The experience in the LOC was a blast for all of us.

(continue to next page)

Blessed to Serve More

By

STEPHANIE MANA

SCA Senior High Leader

Liceo de Cagayan University, Cagayan De Oro City



Another big experience was me being chosen as the representative for the SCA-Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro to the proper conference. I was affirmed that young people are really the hope of our nation- that we can create a change and difference to this world.

It was my first time to join a meeting strictly using the parliamentary rules together with my fellow SCAns. I had a tremendous learning experience listening to a lot of different ideas and thoughts from them.

“It (the conference representation) taught me to become a better leader who should have both vision and values”



PHOTO: Steph joins her co-volunteers from the Archdiocese of CDO together with SCAP National Secretariat during the Conference Solidarity Night

Each agenda was being discussed formally. I became nervous because I am not too confident enough public speaking. Still, the process inspired and challenged me a lot. I have to express what is in my mind and to go out of my comfort zone. It (the conference representation) also taught me to become a better leader who should have both vision and values. I truly admire my fellow representatives because of their leadership skills. I am starting to apply what I gained from the conference. The whole experience was fun and knowledgeable. I found and connected with new friends.

I found a home in SCA. I hope that the 5th SCAP VMRLC won't be my last conference. I will always bring the experience and memories of that event. I will forever be grateful because I never missed a day to make my involvement a meaningful one.

SCA BLOOD



Working on Positive Change from SCA's See-Judge-Act

By

LAURINE ALEXIS YONSON

SCA Alumna/Former SCA Coordinator
Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro

Tena koutou

Tena koutou

Tena koutou katoa, Fellow SCAns!

(Greetings! Greeting! Greetings to all, Fellow SCAns)

I am one of the eight Filipino youths to be part of the pioneering batch of the Mindanao Young Leader Programme (Philippines). This program is funded by the National Government of New Zealand through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as part of their aid program. The program is managed and run by UnionAID in partnership with Victoria University of Wellington and International Alert (an international peace-building organization operating in Mindanao). At the end of the program, young leaders hope to have a grasp on community development, good governance, labor rights, conflict resolution, Māori development, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, gender justice, environmental management. This also aims to develop young leaders with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to be leaders in a sustainable and peaceful development in ones' communities and the wider Mindanao region.

[Continue on next page >>>](#)

SCA BLOOD

>>> Continuation

Allow me to share about the impact of the program while staying in another country during my first few weeks. What I admire the most is the care for the environment. First, at home, my foster family here in Aotearoa (New Zealand) practice eating healthy and balanced food. Eating more vegetables and fruits did not only make me healthy. I also helped the environment and farmers, as well. Second, walking is highly encouraged. Despite the hilly terrain, I prefer to walk going to and from school since the pathways are walkable, and the air is fresh and clean.

Another thing is I find the bus system here very efficient (there is an online app to check the schedule). Lastly, leftovers are not encouraged when consuming meals. The waste segregation is strictly followed, and I barely saw sachets in groceries. Instead, shampoo containers are readily available.



PHOTO: The author enjoying the New Zealand landscape.



PHOTO: Alexis (right) joins one of the weavers in New Zealand to show a finished product.

Currently, I am a project lead for projects of ECHOsi (Empowering Community with Hope and Opportunities through Sustainable Initiatives) Foundation Inc. I work with women communities that involve weaving textiles, coffee farmers/producers & processed food in the Philippines. We partner with women micro-entrepreneurs in terms of product development, cultural preservation, and global market access. We always make sure that our advocacies are sustainable. There should be an impact on profit, people, and plants. The foundation has three imperatives - Good, Green, and Gender, to align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal. In our own little ways, the foundation makes sure to contribute. As I worked with the foundation, I witness the genuine dedication of individuals in creating sustainable initiatives to every WMEs within our network.

“As I worked with the foundation, I witnessed the genuine dedication of individuals in creating sustainable initiatives.”

SCA BLOOD

>>> Continuation

I was 15 when I involved myself in SCA. During that time, I am so engrossed with academics and school-based organizations. I became one of the pioneers of SCA during the revitalization period in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro. Since I joined SCA in 2007, there were always discussions about the environment during conferences and meetings. Several schools and arch/dioceses were initiating projects and programs in response to mitigating climate change. Themes of the sessions were aligned to take part in caring for the environment.

The See-Judge-Act methodology introduced in SCA helped me in several situations in my development work. Development work is complicated and messy, but the SCA Pedagogy guided me through. SEE - I witnessed issues at the grassroots level that need to be addressed. Local government units have limited capacities so as ECHOsi. These two marry through

private & public partnership initiatives. JUDGE - Paving a way to engage local stakeholders, the project proposal prepared me to take constructive feedback and to create effective and efficient programs for our partners further. ACT- Implementing projects may be easy, but it can become very exhausting from the preparation, implementation, and post activities. We always make sure that projects we do, is with the consultation from the community.

However, as I observe, WMEs are learning, trying, and now open to positive changes. It made me realize that all these sacrificial love for my fellow Filipinos is worth it. SCA strengthened my deep and flowing love for my fellow countrymen and women. I am here in New Zealand because I want to sharpen my knowledge and skills further and to serve my fellow Mindanaon and the Philippines better.

“The See-Judge-Act methodology introduced in SCA helped me in several situations in my development work.”

PHOTO: Alexis (far right) takes a pose with some volunteers of Trade Aid.



SCA BLOOD

>>> Continuation

I am grateful for how SCA impacted my life. In 2013, SCA generously invited me to be part of the pioneering batch of the Alternatives to Violence Project in Tagbilaran City, Bohol. AVP has trained several individuals in the Philippines and even in the neighboring countries. The workshop helped me to expand my youth network, build my character & relationships with other people, taught me the importance of how to constructively communicate under challenging situations, to better know myself first, how to react to conflict differently, and many more. In working in the different levels of society (household, local, national, & even international, a healthy heart & mind is needed. Conflict arises on these levels. The strategies of managing conflict are of great help.



PHOTO: The author on both photos (left-first photo and upper left-second photo) actively engages with the delegates and mentors of the leaders program in New Zealand.

SCA built the leader in me. Being a SCAn prepared me for a challenging yet surprising future.

For my fellow youth and SCAnS, I am happy at 26, and I am still looking for my own niche. I come from a family that needs to work to pay monthly bills. I need to balance work and rest, and love life. Grab every opportunity that knocks, pray and believe for signs, and look beyond yourself. Acknowledge your limitations and share your skills. Continuously practice your talents & gifts. It is never too late. Great things will happen to those who know how to wait. Keep searching, keep learning. No one is too old to learn. Have fun.

Do you have an SCA Story to tell?

Transform a personal narrative into written notes highlighting an account that truly runs in the SCA BLOOD. We may be able to feature your story in one of our issues.

Email us at mail@scaphilippines.org



SCA FEATURES

The QUEEN of the ROSARY: *Praying for us Sinners Then and Now*

By
FELIX JAVIER
History Student, UPSCA

**This feature was originally published on October 12, 2019 courtesy of BANAAG NEWSLETTER of the University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action | www.facebook.com/banaagUPSCA.*

The Holy Rosary has been a weapon of faith for centuries. As the Catholic faithful celebrate the victories with which the Rosary has helped them over the years, we take a look at this special devotion to Our Mother Mary. This article has been written during the celebration of the grand feast of Our Lady of the Rosary La Naval de Manila, let us remember and live out the saving power of her intercession.

Upon introducing the one true Faith in these Islands, the European missionaries were met with a childlike devotion to the Mother of God. Wrote the late Jesuit pro-life activist Fr. James Bertram Reuter: “The devotion to Mary in the Philippines is unique! You will find nothing like it anywhere else in the world. Other people in other nations call her the Blessed Virgin Mary. Some even say “our Mother Mary.” But the only ones who use that warm personal, loving name “Mama” are the Filipinos.” This trait may well be attributed to the high regard for mothers in Philippine cultures, even before the arrival of Christianity. And thus it was only expected that with this affection followed the practice of the Rosary. The Rosary is not said simply as a futile exercise in meaningless words. Through it, Mary invites us to contemplate with her on the life, death, and passion of her son, our Lord Jesus Christ. While the prayer and the beads have become staples of Marian devotion, some more unique traditions are celebrated in the month of its feast day, October.

Continue to next page.

SCA FEATURES

cont. (The Queen of the...)

Pomp, pageantry, and prayer

In the Ateneo de Manila, the blue and white are symbolic of her patroness who is the subject of her university hymn. Every Jesuit school in the Islands has the tradition for faculty and students to wear the Miraculous Medal. Originating from our Lady's apparitions to St. Catherine Labouré, the Sodalities of our Lady that were organized in Jesuit schools had popularized the pinning of the medal to one's shirt every October, alongside daily Rosaries.

In certain Catholic elementary and high schools, students alongside their teachers are to pray each mystery of the Rosary at certain periods of the day, with the dismissal concluded by the Salve Regina. Even in secular environments like the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, a Living Rosary is held to cap the Marian month. Individuals are assembled in the parish to each represent a decade of the Rosary while a microphone is passed among themselves to recite the respective prayer for their particular bead.

At the procession for La Naval, the faithful march the streets that surround the Dominican compound of the Iglesia de Santo Domingo along Quezón Avenue. Prior to the War in the days of the old church, it would've been the narrow cobbled calles of Intramuros where the inhabitants centuries ago prayed the Rosary for deliverance from the Dutch invaders.

In simpler, more intimate environs, rosary cenacles would dedicate a day or a few hours to prayer. And who would forget the Rosary Priest, the Venerable Patrick Peyton, C.S.C.'s "The family that prays together, stays together". Many Philippine families in October would gather to pray the Rosary either at a given hour or before their bedtime. Likewise, the passing of a loved one is characterized by the deceased's family praying the Rosary for his deliverance.

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PHOTO: La Naval de Manila Procession Diptych. Rafael del Casal. 1990

SCA FEATURES

Cont. (The Queen of the...)

The spiritual war

The Rosary is also a powerful tool for conversion. Many a distraught mother would turn to their Rosaries for the conversion of a wayward child. It was said too that the return to Rome and repentance of Isabelo de los Reyes, the founder of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, was made possible by the stalwart faith of his Catholic daughters who constantly prayed with Mary for his eventual return. We would see changes of hearts in a much larger scale in 1986.

The Rosary is also a weapon against the forces of Satan. It first originated in 1214 when Mary appeared to Santo Domingo de Guzmán, the founder of the Dominican Order of Preachers. In those days, the Albigensian heresy that had preached of the inherent evil which was the physical world against good, the spiritual, had grown rampant in the south of France. The Rosary served as a weapon to convert the heretics, a peaceful alternative to the violent skirmishes waged by the nobles.

Three centuries after, it was Christendom's response against the encroachment of Islam into Europe at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, when the miniscule fleet led by Don John of Austria bested the frightful might of the Ottoman navy. Pope Saint Pius V declared that day henceforth to be the Feast of Mary, Our Lady of Victory. This was later renamed by his successor Pope Gregory XIII as the Feast of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary.

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PHOTO: La Naval de Manila Procession Diptych. Rafael del Casal. 1990

Victory. This was later renamed by his successor Pope Gregory XIII as the Feast of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary.

Revolution and counter-revolution

For these Islands, it cannot be downplayed that 1646 had left the stamp of the Rosary so ubiquitous. The young Republic of the Netherlands, still fresh from its en masse embrace of Calvinism and secession from Catholic Spain, attempted to conquer the Philippines for its own dominion over Southeast Asia. With a Dutch fleet en route to Manila,

Continue to next page.

SCA FEATURES

Cont. (*The Queen of the...*)

the Spanish colonial government, terribly underfunded and with a scattered military had two merchant galleons under repair.

These were on hold as the sailors were on strike for uncompensated dues. The Spanish admiral Sebastián López with his wife Victoria proclaimed to the faithful on the steps of Santo Domingo one Sunday morning, begging them to lend their assistance to this upcoming tribulation. López made public his vow to Our Lady of the Rosary, assuring of her support for her children just as she did at Lepanto. By the grace of God, maintenance of the galleons commenced and merchants donated what resources they had.

Processions with the image of Our Lady were held around Manila to encourage the people to willingly give both physical and spiritual work, the latter being the Rosary. What ragtag group made up the Spanish-indigeno force of hastily retrofitted merchant galleons obsolete for its time, by miraculous fate, defeated the vastly superior Dutch navy in five separate battles. And from that point, the second Sunday of October was dedicated to Our Lady of La Naval de Manila, for just as Mary had interceded for Christendom against the shadow of Islam in the Bay of Lepanto, so too did she once again for the Church in the Philippines against the Calvinist Dutch.

“... *"Instead of guns, there were prayers; instead of bloodshed, celebrations; instead of casualties, converts," reported the Chicago Tribune that year. The People Power Revolution at EDSA, or less commonly known as the Rosary Revolution, was indeed a show of prayerful solitude against the excesses of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.*”

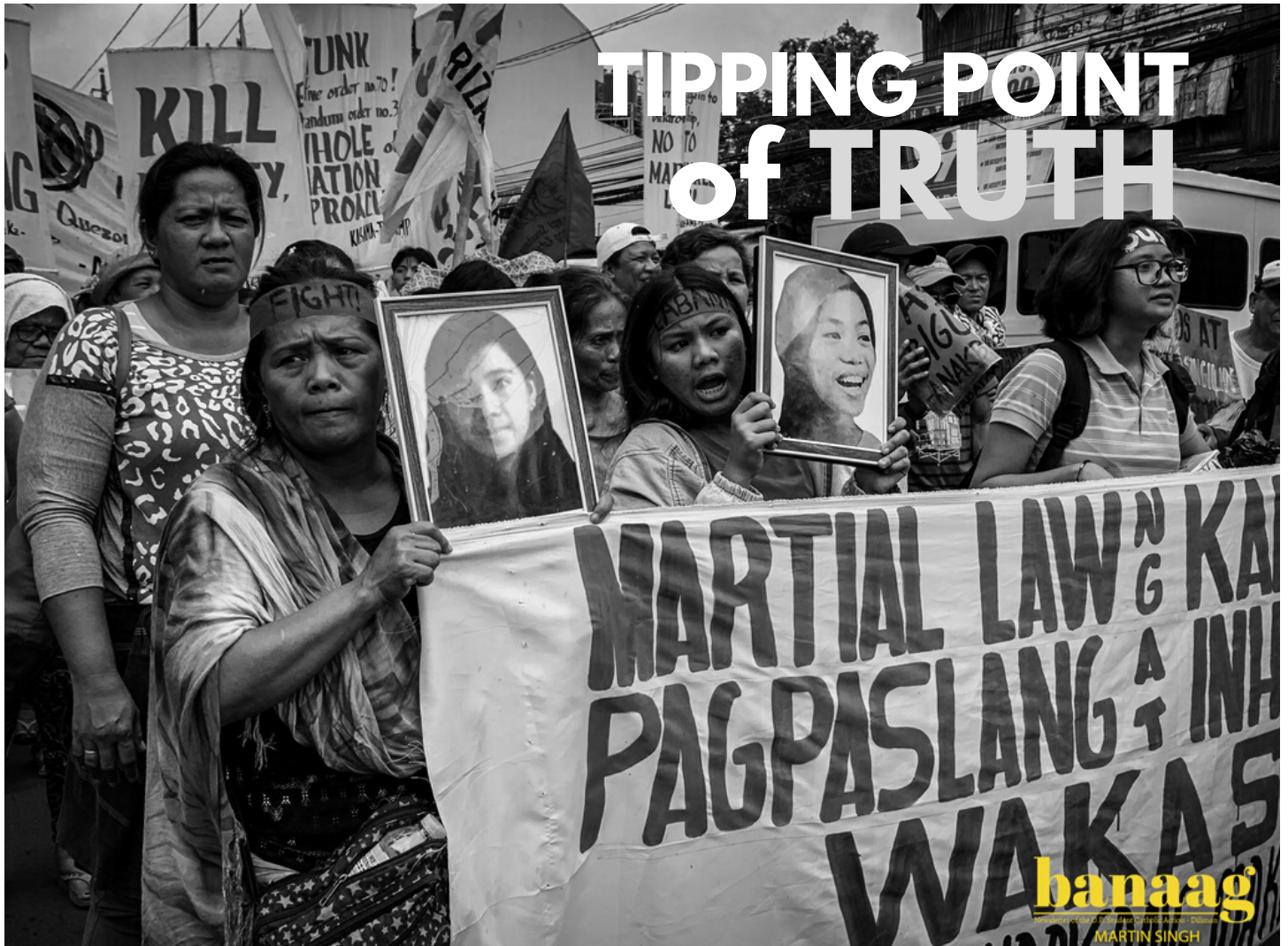
Of more recent memory was the revolution won by nonviolent arms in February of 1986. “Instead of guns, there were prayers; instead of bloodshed, celebrations; instead of casualties, converts,” reported the Chicago Tribune that year. The People Power Revolution at EDSA, or less commonly known as the Rosary Revolution, was indeed a show of prayerful solitude against the excesses of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

Truly did the Philippine Church manifest as the Church Militant, combating the worldly Caesar in the spirit of Faith, Hope, and Love. Against a cavalry of tanks and olive drabbed infantrymen were a multitude of people of all ages and backgrounds, armed with nothing but their standard-issue prayer beads. No sooner had the army then found solidarity with their fellow Filipinos.

The Rosary came at a turbulent time. Today, in the wake of increasing state deification and control, and the ideological colonization of diabolic gender ideology and abortion, we are called more than ever to reinforce Christ’s mystical body, the Church, which starts in us. Mary, in her purity, beckons us towards her son Jesus as we commune in the Rosary, reflecting on His life and praying for all of us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

SCA FEATURES

**This editorial was originally published on September 22, 2019 courtesy of BANAAG NEWSLETTER of the University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action*



Embers from the past spark the mind's eye, unfolding a sea of blood raging over a mass of people. The popular memory is evocative, traumatic even.

A salient point of disagreement on discourses about Ferdinand Marcos's martial rule rests on the question of objectivity and what actually happened. This question applies as well to present matters, where parties with ulterior agendas conflate experiences of reality with fabrications that align with their notions of progress.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said earlier today that the declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972 became a means to foster democracy and discipline among the Filipinos. Though this claim has been rehashed out of the many blinded sentiments from the said period, such a statement calls for thought what values we imbibe as a nation. The national memory is, after all, clouded by vague conceptions of truth; apologists thrash it with a narrative of a country in political utopia.

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SCA FEATURES

cont. (Tipping Point...)

It has been more than a decade since martial law ended, but the Marcoses continue to try and elevate their tale of inflicted gore to a story of meritorious progress. The fact, however, that killings spiked up to 3,240 and tortures to over 70,000, and that the country swam in a debt of as much as \$24.4 billion from 1971 until the end of martial law in 1891, as per Amnesty International, shows that there is more than just giving air to all sides to speak of the truth.

The flaw in martial law is its implementation, or so Panelo said. Its continued implementation in Mindanao that rural and indigenous communities grindingly bears speak multitudes of its innate, if not transposed flaws. If anything, it gives state forces absolute authority to go after their own and that of large corporations' whims—and this is often at the expense of rights and lives.

The constitution or the law, if ever followed, does not always indicate that the government has been scot free. The presence of state forces in Samar, Bicol, and Negros, following Memorandum Order No. 32 passed down on November 2018, led to as much as thirty killings in a span of ten months. On the other side of present-day bloodbaths in urban and rural communities, legislative measures to privilege the corrupt, and repression of rights, is a dictator's daughter desperate to save her family from completely going into the bowels of history. Imee Marcos, upon learning of a course on her father's martial law to be offered in UP, demanded on September 19 for what she believed was fair and objective. She only asked that their side of the grim period in history be given the same heed as the story of many who gave their comforts and lives up for the nation. But, at the heart of her demand for fairness is the even greater lie of false objectivity.

“The flaw in martial law is its implementation, or so Panelo said. Its continued implementation in Mindanao that rural and indigenous communities grindingly bears speak multitudes of its innate, if not transposed flaws.”

It is but compelling for agents of truth to be highly involved in the issues of the day. For the likes of tortured martial law activist and journalist Pete Lacaba, facts need not be sacrificed when making a realistic and even radical assessment of events, as seen in his vivid accounts of the protests since the First Quarter Storm. For the rigid objectivity of the past slowly lost its touch with reality and became monotonous that no one regards it with the slightest concern. And that kind of rigidity characterize pleas for fairness in imparting knowledge of the past.

There was, after all, a transition from the kind of practice that the mainstream media held dear, that is an objectivity that simply recorded everything without analyzing the truth behind the narrative. Today, with the media's broadening outlets and growing universality, it is inevitable for even seeming facts to thrive. But, that should all the more push the bounds of society's entrapment to an instinct that easily yields to palatable yet falsified narratives.

Continue to next page...

SCA FEATURES

cont. (Tipping Point...)

While there is no evil in knowledge of the other side of the martial law story and the technocracy of Marcos's rule, its intricacies must nevertheless be taken with a grain of salt. The narratives and counternarratives of the dictator's rule can still juxtapose the reality that people continue to face poverty and oppression. Meanwhile, countless people still live on the kick they get out of spreading falsities against those who seek the truth. Popular social media practices, such as blogs and vlogs, can embody this trend of subversion of truth upheld by the likes of Mocha Uson. The disparity, though, between the truth and its opposite seems to be inconsequential because of the consensus on universality, that everyone has the right to freely express themselves. Indeed, this right calls for action that corrects.

The embers of truth grow into flames, scathing the conscience that left behind past naivetes. The truth of the past demands nothing less than a recognition of what people have experienced. It is in this battle against lies that truth wipes out hysteria. The truth will hold when it is grounded on the experiences of the people who long to alleviate the ails of society. The blood of the martial law martyrs will continue to fuel this fight.

NATIONAL UPDATES IN BITS

PROGRAM MILESTONES & REPRESENTATION FROM JUN TO OCT 2019

Launching of Laudato Si' Gen | 22 June 2019

The National Secretariat and SCA NCR student volunteers joined the launching day of the Laudato Si' Gen-Pilipinas at the Quezon City Memorial Circle. The Laudato Si' Gen is the youth arm of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) which is also the partner-organization of the movement on environmental advocacy. The Philippine Bamboo Foundation was invited to provide SCAP Booth Exhibit's helpful information on bamboo growing and products and the upcoming project for the Manila watershed rehabilitation. More than 500 youth participants gathered and visited featured booths in the event.



200K Bamboohay Project Launching Day | 20 July 2019

SCAP, together with the Philippine Bamboo Foundation and Ang Mga Anak ni Inang Daigdig (mAID), launched the 200K Bamboohay Challenge at the Sacred Heart Parish Shrine in Quezon City. This youth project was in time in celebration for the Year of the Youth and in response to Pope Francis Environmental Encyclical *Laudato Si'* to "hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor". The project aims to grow as much as 200,000 and more native bamboos specifically at the threatened watershed areas of Metro Manila in a year. More than 30 organizations pledged to support SCAP's initiative.



Signing of Peace Memorandum of Cooperation | 1 August 2019

Frence Boiser from the National Secretariat represented SCAP for the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation of the University Belt Peace Consortium at the Commission on Human Rights Head Office in Quezon City. The signing parties desire in manifesting and undertaking to cooperate with one another for the furtherance and promotion of peace and human rights in the educational sector. SCAP's existing partners, Angel C. Palanca Peace Program and Commission on Human Rights-Go Just were among the parties that inked the memorandum.



NATIONAL UPDATES IN BITS

PROGRAM MILESTONES & REPRESENTATION FROM JUN TO OCT 2019

SCAP welcomes Romblon Parish | 3-5 August 2019

Jonel Reyes from the National Secretariat, together with SCA Southern Luzon Cluster Coordinator, Dexter Ferreras conducted an SCA Orientation at St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in Odiongan, Romblon. A core team was organized to mobilize concrete possibilities of organizing SCA in various schools in the island.



Walk for Creation | 1 September 2019

SCAP joined the Walk for Creation at the Quezon City Memorial Circle in celebration for the World Day of Prayer for Creation. Antonio Cardinal Tagle graced the event calling out the Christian faithful to join forces in protecting the integrity of life and creation. SCAP presented the 200K Bamboohay Challenge Project alongside with the Tree-Growing Project of the Couples for Christ (CFC).



200K Bamboohay Challenge Growing Day | 21 September 2019

More than 150 participants, including local guides and volunteers planted 270 bamboo propagules at the slopes of Mt. Karugo at the Wawa Watershed Area in Rodriguez, Rizal. The National Secretariat spearheaded the event gathering youth organizations in the Diocese of Antipolo, and other non-government organizations. The event is in partnership with the Mga Anak ni Inang Daigdig (mAID).



NATIONAL UPDATES IN BITS

PROGRAM MILESTONES & REPRESENTATION FROM JUN TO OCT 2019

5th SCAP Vis-Min Regional Leadership Conference | 26-29 October 2019

The Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro hosted the 5th SCAP Visayas-Mindanao Regional Leadership Conference held at San Jose de Mindanao Seminary in Cagayan de Oro City. Sixty (60) delegates from the host-archdiocese, Diocese of Bacolod, Archdiocese of Cebu, Dioceses of Talibon, and Tagbilaran and Diocese of Tandag congregated together to reflect and to make actions on the theme: *"Offline is Online: The Filipino Youth, Champions and Influencers of Digital Virtues and Citizenship."*

Skilled resources speakers coming from Angel C. Palanca Peace Program (Theresa Limpin & Marco Gutang), Commission on Human Rights (Arnel Galgo), including the home-grown SCA facilitator from the Diocese of Bacolod (Elmeer Meeynard Calimpos), firming engaging parallel workshops for high school, senior high school/college and animators. The workshops were geared toward SCA's work on social justice, specifically on human rights, online/digital integrity and sustainable environment.

The conference concluded with wrapping up conference plans and resolutions brought and written down by the official student representatives from each diocese. A separate document is available upon request.



NATIONAL UPDATES ADVOCACY ON SOCIAL JUSTICE & PEACE

SCAP expands peace network with ACP3FI, GOJust-CHR, FPT-AWP



PHOTOS: The resource facilitators focused on peace and social justice during the 5th SCAP VisMin Regional Leadership Conference in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro

Cagayan de Oro City - Sixty (60) student leaders (high school and college) including their animators from the arch/dioceses of Bacolod, Cebu, Talibon, Tagbilaran, Tandag and host-organizer, CDO converged for the 5th Student Catholic Action of the Philippines Visayas-Mindanao Regional Leadership Conference to reflect and act on the theme, "*Offline is Online: The Filipino Youth, Champions and Influencers of Digital Virtues and Citizenship*". The conference was held at San Jose de Mindanao Seminary from 26th to 29th of October this year.

The session tracks of the conference invited guests outside of CDO. The resource facilitators were coming from existing and developing partnerships of the organization such as the Angel C. Palanca Peace Program Foundation, Inc. (ACP3FI) and the Friends Peace Teams-Asia West Pacific (FPT-AWP). A national representative from the Government for Justice (GoJUST)-Commission on Human Rights (CHR) handled also one of the parallel sessions.

Common among these three organizations is SCAP's commitment to educate the members on peace and personal transformation. FPT-AWP has been introducing to SCA approaches on creating cultures of peace and nonviolent means since 2014. The practices introduced through the Alternatives to Violence Project, one of the programs shared by FPT-AWP, transformed the dynamics of SCA formation. SCA is enriching the experiential processes especially in facilitating training-workshops, retreats, and student accompaniment. Alma Aparece, who is also the current SCAP's Director, welcomed SCA Animators to be good companions or listeners to their students and co-workers. The "good companion" is an AVP practice that can help ease out the growing tensions and pressures young people face nowadays.

NATIONAL UPDATES

ADVOCACY ON SOCIAL JUSTICE & PEACE

ACP3FI has been supportive of SCA since 2017. Marco Gutang, its current President and Theresa Limpin, the Program Director, flew to CDO to facilitate a session on forms of violence, peace and human rights as well as a skills-workshop on encouragement and trust. ACP3FI is working on "Seeds for the Future," a networked-backed program for peace and human rights education offered for the academe.

Arnel Galgo, GoJUST-CHR's Consultant-Coordinator of the Social Mobilization Pillar, arrived in time for his workshop to simplify the concepts of Human Rights that will be easily understood in the youth language.

GoJUST is a project of the Philippine government funded by the European Union and the AECID. It seeks to "contribute to inclusive growth and poverty reduction through strengthened justice system," particularly by "increasing the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the formal justice system." Its fourth component is focused on strengthening the capacity of National Human Rights Institutions and civil society organisations in promoting accountability and fighting impunity in the face of major human rights violations. *(Source from CHR Website)*

It was hoped in the conference that SCA leaders and animators will be able to apply the skills especially in mobilizing the cells and units to participate in human rights discussion and to practice transforming values and behaviors.



First photo shows how Good Listening is done with Good Companions during the Animators Skills Workshop. Second Photo showcases believability exercise with ACP3FI Facilitator, Theresa Limpin.

WHAT'S NEXT?



S C A P N L C 2 0 2 0

The Diocese of Bacolod will be hosting the **13th Student Catholic Action of the Philippines National Leadership Conference** on **14th to 18th of April 2020**. The theme for the next conference will be *"Responding to the Call of the Times through Faith in Action"* with the inspiration from the Gospel Text, John 2:5.

Get ready for the updates and invitation this December 2019.

Thank you!

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