



APG Newsletter

Make a friend,
Be a friend,
Bring a friend to Christ

JUNE 2024



RENEWING THE SPIRIT OF ECCLESIA IN ASIA

by Fr. Paul Van Nguyen & Rev. Anthony Tran Xuan Sang, SVD

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PALANCA OFFERING

Send emails of prayers and sacrifices for the success of the upcoming events in APG Member Countries.

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CURSILLO UPCOMING EVENTS

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KOREAN PILGRIMAGE TO NAGASAKI, JAPAN

by Laurencia Gangsook Lee (CM Korea)

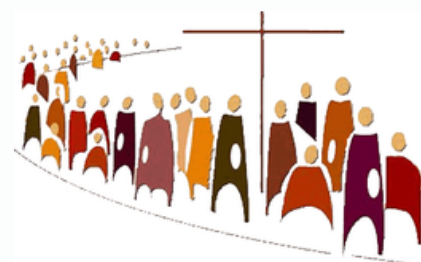


To learn and feel connected to the history of Christianity in Japan. The Korean Pilgrims journey to Nagasaki.

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by Conrado P. Dizon



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RENEWING THE SPIRIT OF ECCLESIA IN ASIA

by Fr. Paul Van Nguyen &

Rev. Anthony Tran Xuan Sang, SVD

A recent conference on evangelization in Southeast Asia, hosted by the Office of Evangelization of the Vietnam Bishops' Conference, gathered a diverse group of 45 participants from eight countries, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, India and Vietnam, and a Franciscan Brother from the US. The event, held at the Bishop's House of Xuan Loc Diocese, included bishops, priests, religious sisters and brothers, and parishioners, with engaging sessions and discussions over five days.

Participants united in prayer, shared, and delved into topics about Synodality with the Universal Church and the challenges and opportunities in Proclamation the Good News in Asia. This was all in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Apostolic Exhortation of the Church in Asia (Ecclesia in Asia) of Saint Pope John Paul II and the 50 years of the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Saint Pope Paul VI. In addition, 2033 will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Catholic Church in Vietnam. Five hundred years full of persecution and martyrdom, and yet, a celebration of faith as people had a chance to receive the Christian Faith in this S-shape land. Because of the profound significance of these upcoming events, the Department of Evangelization under the Vietnam Bishops' Conference hosted this pivotal conference.

It must be honestly said that the Apostolic Exhortation of Saint Pope John Paul II sent to the Church in Asia has passed its 25th year. However, it seemed that the Apostolic Exhortation has still been very foreign to the mainstream people in Asia in general and Catholics in this vast continent in particular. That was why this Conference invited all participants to renew the spirit of the Apostolic Exhortation, or in other words, reviving the Teaching of the Holy Father, who earnestly invited the shepherds and evangelizers who proclaim the Good News must always be present and accompany their laity to proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior and His mission of love and service in Asia, as well as in response to the



invitation to participate in the mission of proclaiming the Good News, which the document in Bangkok in 2023 was given by the bishops as a guideline for practice: "Journeying together as peoples of Asia."

The challenges of proclaiming the Good News in Southeast Asia

Participants attending this congress recognized that the challenges raised in Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation "The Church in Asia" 25 years ago were still current and topical and had become even more complicated by new realities and circumstance.

Jesus was born in Asia, but paradoxically, most of the people in this vast continent still don't know Him and still see Him as a character from the West, a person foreign rather than Asian (EA, 20). Choosing to incarnate as an Asian, yet His message has not been fully integrated and accepted into the cultures of this continent and its diversity. Cultural integration and efforts to find a language and expression to convey the closeness of the God-Man Jesus to the peoples of Asia were nearly impossible. The difficulties in proclaiming Jesus as the only Savior were compounded by secularism, relativism, urbanization and globalization, and ideologies and cultural barriers.

The original message of God's love in Jesus is often forgotten in the digital age and social media. Internet addiction is sometimes even more robust than its use. Illegal drugs make people today,



especially young people, confused about what is real and what is virtual. In a hyper-connected world, people find themselves lost and isolated.

Asia is also a continent with religious pluralism, multiculturalism, and different ideologies, including atheism. They also need salvation. It's been a long time since the Catholics would like to confront other forces and ideologies that often oppose them. However, evangelizers who proclaim the Good News in the 21st century need to reset their missionary strategies in searching and dialoguing with people of different beliefs, religions, non-believers, same opinion, other cultures, and even dialogue with non-believers of communism. Those are some of the comments of a bishop who presented the challenges of spreading the Good News in the coming years.

Opportunities for spreading the Good News in Southeast Asia

The challenges we face in proclaiming the Good News mentioned above can be transformed into opportunities and open doors to discover new paths in the proclamation of the Gospel in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia.

The witness of those who proclaim the Good News needs to be encouraged and wholeheartedly promoted. The testimony of married couples and groups of married people in announcing the Good News in local communities is the first sign of hope that should not be extinguished. Enthusiastic, Spirit-filled parishioners and trained evangelizers sent on missions always need the companionship of pastors to have the missionary fire because the mission cannot lose its zeal and dynamism.

The testimony of bishops, priests, and religious always accompanies their collaborators in a humble, joyful spirit, ready to share their dreams and experiences with other participants. It will make everyone feel the love of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the One who will never abandon His flock.

A sharing by the bishop in charge of the Proclaiming the Good News Committee about

the formation and development of the Church in Vietnam since the seed of the Good News was planted up to the present time. The many ups and downs, oppression, persecution, and even sacrifice of one's life to maintain one's faith are living testimonies of the proclamation of the Good News.

In other words, the methods of the local churches on how to reach out and be close to people with different beliefs and religions, as well as those who have been baptized but are now indifferent towards the life of faith. The exchange of gifts, stories, and the best methods of the local churches have rejuvenated the missionary activities of the conference participants. The Conference plans to fully use available missionary tools in proclaiming the Good News. Comments and sharing from lay participants in the conference also contributed significantly to the success of spreading the Good News, following the process of synodality proposed by the 16th World Synod of Bishops. The participation of lay people with missionary enthusiasm always brings promising results for bountiful harvests.

Thanks to the Conference of Evangelization to "Renew the spirit according to the Apostolic Exhortation of the Church in Asia." Thank you for the sincerity, simplicity, and complete pastoral love from the Vietnamese bishops and bishops from other FABC member countries. We are the church and want to do something for the church, not just stop at reports or events with winged words. The challenges and opportunities that this conference presents, as well as the ways new developments in proclaiming the Good News in Asia in general and Southeast Asia in particular, will take shape our church soon. May the Holy Spirit ignite a fire of passion in our souls so we can live and renew the spirit of the Apostolic Exhortation of the Church in Asia. We hope that by walking together as the peoples of Asia, always knowing intentionally fraternal and communion, the synodal missionary Church may gradually become a reality, and we will be constantly urged to "Go and make all nations followers!" O Mary, Mother of the new creation and Mother of Asia pray for us, your children. Now and forever.



APG AS A POTENT FORCE OF EVANGELIZING THE ASIAN REGION

by *Conrado P. Dizon*

Be informed that in our face-to-face meeting in Vietnam last November, 2023, it was discussed and planned that there will be two (2) APG Encounters during our term of office 2023-2027.

The Apostolic restlessness and witness of life of the Hierarchy and lay leaders of Vietnam to increase the Catholic population in Vietnam by 2023. The Catholic Church in South Korea has shown exponential growth. The Catholic Church in Taiwan is slowly growing. And now Fr. Jose, a Spanish Missionary priest from Madrid, Spain is living in the diocese of Osaka, Japan and planning to use Cursillo as a tool in evangelizing Japan. That is why in the Think Tank Meeting it was mentioned that the APG is a potent force in evangelizing the Asian Region.

With these current developing events in our APG Group that started in Can Tho Ultreya in Vietnam, we can say that communication and exchanges of experiences is necessary to develop a vibrant International Group of the OMCC. Furthermore, a true and authentic friendship would be bolstered by a face-to-face contact. And the holding of the 23rd APG Encounter to be held in the Philippines with a theme "Cursillo, a tool of evangelization in the Asian Region" will elicit response as a new way of walking together as a Synodal church.

Our target speakers and suggested topics are: the OMCC Spiritual Advisor, topic: Cursillo as instrument of Christian renewal and evangelization, the President of Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC); topic: Evangelization of the Asian Region, the Vice-President of FABC; topic: Renewal in the Philippines church.

De Colores!



PALANCA OFFERING

Please send your palancas to these local contact people, for offering prayers and sacrifices for their upcoming events:

- **Seoul Archdiocese, Planning of 14 Cursillos (Men 6, Women 6 & Youth 2)**
Email: sjoanlee@gmail.com / cursillo@catholic.or.kr
- **253rd Cursillo Women's Sinhala weekend to be held from the 4th to 7th July, 2024 at Tewatta, Sri Lanka.**
Email: russellj@martin-bauer-hayleys.com
- **3-day Cursillo Weekend, Cursillo Leaders Workshop 1 and National Spiritual Conference from June to October 2024 in Vietnam**
Email: thinhpq@titaresearch.com.vn
 - **Men's 3-day Cursillo Class**

Date	Diocese
• Jun. 10-13	BMT
• Jun. 12-15	Long Xuyên
• Jun. 16-19	Bà Rịa
• Jul. 4-7	Nam Saigon
• Jul. 10-13	Xuân Lộc
• Aug. 1-4	Phát Diệm
• Aug. 12-15	ACần Thơ
• Aug. 19-22	Ha Noi
• Aug. 19-22	Phú Cường
 - **Women's 3-day Cursillo Class**

• Jun. 14-17	BMT
• Jun. 16-19	Long Xuyên
• Jun. 20-23	Bà Rịa
• Jun. 27-30	Nu Saigon
• Jul. 15-18	Xuân Lộc
• Aug. 5-8	Phát Diệm
• Aug. 16-19	Cần Thơ
• Aug. 23-26	Ha Noi
• Aug. 23-26	Phú Cường
 - **CWL1**

• Bắc Ninh	May 21-23
• Vinh	Jul. 2-4
• Da Nang	Aug. 1-3
• Cần Thơ	Sept. 23-25
• Xuân Lộc	Oct. 2024
 - **National Spiritual Advisor Conference**
 - Early September 2024
- **21st National Encounter in the Philippines on July 18-20, 2024**
Email: bessimonteza@gmail.com / cpdizon463@gmail.com



KOREAN PILGRIMAGE TO NAGASAKI, JAPAN, MAY 2024

by *Laurencia Gangsook Lee*
(CM Korea)

To learn and feel connected to the history of Christianity in Japan. The Korean Pilgrims journey to Nagasaki.

The journey began in Kyushu, Japan with a visit to the beautiful Urakami Cathedral, the birthplace of the Japanese Catholic Church. This cathedral holds significance as it was the site of an atomic bomb attack in 1945, where many believers were killed. The cathedral now stands as a place of prayer for peace. The pilgrimage also included a visit to the home of Professor Nagai Takashi, a radiologist who dedicated his life to treating patients exposed to radiation from atomic bombs. The water spewing into the Peace Park and Fountain for patients with skin damage was a poignant reminder of the devastation caused by war.

The pilgrimage in Kyushu continued with a visit to the Twenty-Six Martyrs Monument, dedicated to 24 Christians who were persecuted in 1597. The bronze statues on the granite wall depict their martyrdom. A Mass was held in their memory, and a handwritten quote from Paul Mickey reflected their strong faith and forgiveness towards their persecutors. The next day, the group visited Shimabara Cathedral, built to commemorate the 30,000 residents who were executed in 1613 for their Catholic faith. The cathedral's stained glass windows depict the harsh reality of persecution, including scenes of torture and martyrdom.

The pilgrimage continued with a walk along the Minami Shimabara Olle Trail, which offered beautiful views of the sea, forests, and paddy banks. The challenging trail led to the Kuchinotsu port, where the group applauded and welcomed the first arrivals. The following day, the group visited the martyrdom site on Mount Unzen, where martyrs were executed by being dropped into hot sulfurous water. The Unzen Cathedral was built in their honor, and the stained glass windows hold significant meanings.

I would like to thank our spiritual advisor Rev. Peter Oh for planning and leading the pilgrimage of grace giving us health in mind and body. Also I praise our Lord and thank President Francis Choi, VP Helena Yoon and everyone who devoted themselves. May we rejoice with honor to our Lord!!!



Cursillo Upcoming Events

- **Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain**
August 5-11, 2024
- **V Conversations of Cala Figuera in Mallorca, Spain**
October 24-27, 2024
- **World Ultreya in Rome**
June 06, 2025
- **APG Encounter in Philippines**
2025



APG SERVICE COMMITTEE 2023-2027



Bro. Conrado P. Dizon
President, Philippines



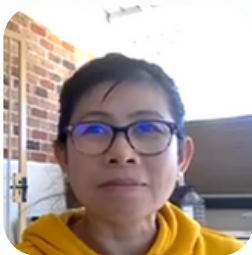
Fr. Paul Tung Nguyen
Spiritual Advisor, Vietnam



Bro. Anthony Thinkh Phan
Vice-President, Vietnam



Sis. Goreth C. Bendoy
Secretary, Philippines



Sis. Maria Anh Tran
Treasurer, Vietnam Diaspora



Bro. Alfred Bonggi
Int'l Rep. - Australia



DE COLORES!

