

Discovering the Pearl within



RNDM International Formation Center
13th RNDM TPs Session
2018



We the 13th batch of Balay Euphrasie program would like to thank the Congregation Leadership Team and sisters of all the provinces and regions around the globe for your prayers and support in preparation for our perpetual profession in Davao. We are glad to introduce ourselves to you and the program we just began. Welcome dear sisters to our first newsletter. We are sure you will be delighted to have a bird's eye view of each participant. So here you find us as you turn the pages. We hope you will enjoy reading.

Hello! Dear Sisters,

I am very happy to introduce myself. I am **Sr. Kesetewle Agatha Nriame** from North East Province India. I belong to Haflong parish in Assam.

In my family we are eight siblings, three boys and five girls and I am the youngest in my family.

Being six years in RNDM Congregation is a blessing for me. I have learned a lot through my sisters and by attending different courses. I am really thankful to all my sisters in my province for all that they had done for me especially deepening my relationship with God. Now I am enjoying in religious life and feel at home in our RNDM Congregation. Having experienced the realities of life, my heart is drawn to love the poor and to be with them. That is my desire, I long for it. God is so good and He has a wonderful plan for every one of us so place everything into the hands of God.

Now I am in Balay Euphrasie, Davao and enjoying the beautiful nature. The place is very peaceful, serene and lots of birds chirping around our house. I just fell in love with the place and am also enjoying with varieties of fruits.

I thank God for these experiences and please do remember me in your prayers so that everything may go well during these six-month program.

Thank you.



I am **Nguyen Thi Doan Thuy**. I am Vietnamese. I was born and grew up in a big family in the Western Highland of Viet Nam. I have five elder and five younger brothers and sisters.

I was invited to join RNDM's vocation promotion seminar in 2005. After three days of praying and discovering the call of RNDM, I was called to become an aspirant in Thu Duc, Viet Nam.

From there, I began a new lifestyle in RNDM family. I have been educated and learnt about the mission as well as charism and Trinitarian Spirituality. Furthermore, the good example of Mother Euphrasie Barbier, our Foundress has impressed and attracted me very much in my life. She was a brave woman with a beautiful heart and strong mind in

serving God and people. I love mother Euphrasie Barbier and admire her life and her works. She spent her whole life in very difficult times and situations to start our congregation. Her life of service has inspired me and given me an inner empowerment to live proudly as a RNDM sister and I want to follow her footsteps in my daily life. I made the first vows on 6th August 2012. Then I spent two years and a half at Iakring community. I had a precious chance to go to Ireland for studying English. Now I am in Davao preparing myself for the perpetual profession.



I am **Laily Margaret Rozario**, from Bangladesh province. My father's name is Late Monto Rozario and Mother Malati Rozario. We are four siblings in our family. I am the third born. In 2006 after finished my secondary school I joined the congregation. I made my first progression 2012. After my profession I experienced community life with my sisters. I experienced God's love through the people in my ministry. From the six years of religious life, I experienced so many challenges, happiness and joy. This challenge and happiness made me to be more courageous and energetic in my life. At the end of my temporary profession I feel that in the last six years I was blessed by God. I thank all my directresses, animators, my parents and my friends

and all those who supported me to walk in this holy and happy life.

Now I am in Davao to prepare myself for perpetual profession. Here through the different classes I am discovering myself more deeply. I am trying to be more close to God through my prayer. I am very happy here with all my sisters.

Life is a miracle

My name is **Magarita Pham Thi Thuy Giang**. I was born on 26th March 1985 in Xuyen Moc town of Ba Ria-Vung Tau province. I am the oldest in a family of four. At the age of two, I suffered from a serious illness but thanks to a miracle of Mother Mary, I was saved. After that, we moved to Cam Ranh which was a small town of Khanh Hoa province to live near our grandparents. Cam Ranh is a land of a new economic zone so everything is difficult. The Catholic people of Quang Tri migrated here from 1975, so this is a whole catholic area. It is a good place to provide vocations for the Church. Since childhood, I have inherited the moral lifestyle of my parents and Christians here.



In 2004, after high school, my great aunt Doan Thi Khiem (a nun of the Holy Cross Congregation who knew the Notre Dame des Mission Congregation through sr Bich Huyen RNDM) took me to Our Lady of the Missions Convent where I heard the name for the first time. I thought I was only here for a short time. But after a month, I didn't want to go home because of the openness, simplicity and enthusiasm of the sisters. In a special way I was attracted by the missionary stories of Mother Euphrasie and our sisters. While I was living in aspirants' house, I was studying English at the University. On 6th August 2009, with the desire to continue living in our congregation, I was admitted to Postulancy in Da Lat. On August 22, 2010, I joined the Novitiate in Thu Duc. On 6th August 2012, I made my first vows in RNDM family. After two years studying theology at the Thi Nghe community, in August 2014 I was sent to the Thach An community with a ministry in the kindergarten, as well as the community bursar and also parish ministry. Then I studied English and lived with the sisters in Perth. I thank God for the miracle He has done for me. Please keep me in your prayers. Thank you very much.

I am **Ridalin Syiem** from Meghalaya, North East India. I have four brothers and three sisters together with my parents, and I am the fourth child in the family. Through the encouragement of my parents my aunt Sr. Aisilin Syiem Rndm and encountering the Rndm sisters, I joined the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions in 2003. Having lived my religious life in the congregation I feel at home and happy. During these years as a temporary professed sister I was involved mostly in Pastoral Ministry in different places. This ministry was very life - giving and inspiring because I came in touch with the real life situations of ordinary people.



This is my first time to be out of the country and here in the Philippines, I began to admire and like the people and the beautiful place. I am very fortunate to be with my companions from different countries and cultures for these six months. It is good for me to know each other better as we journey together in the path of Euphrasie. Kindly continue to keep me in your prayers as I prepare myself for the perpetual commitment.



My name is **Maria Teresa Dieu Hien** and I am from Vietnam. I was born on the 19th April. I am the eldest in my family; I have two younger brothers and one younger sister. My family is non-Catholic.

I was baptized in 2004 and I joined the RNDM in 2006 to experience their way of life. I found it inspiring and I felt gratitude to God for God's faithfulness. I feel happy in my consecrated missionary life and in reading and learning about the Rule, the Constitutions, and the documents of the congregation. I am glad that we are members of one missionary community and that we have one mission and form one body (chapter doc.2008). I hope that I can live the joy of love in the community and in the mission of the congregation.

After my first Profession, I studied 2 years of theology. Then I went on a mission to Xuan Loc and Thu Duc Community for two and a half years working as administrator at the Kindergarten school. Then, for the past 18 months I have been studying English in Canada. I am grateful for these opportunities because my community with whom I lived in Canada helped me in many ways to learn English.

Now I am very happy to be here in Balay Euphrasie Davao, Philippines and be part of the 13th Session of the preparation for perpetual vows. I am happy to meet my sisters who came from different countries. I am having a very good time with my religious sisters and I want to deepen my understanding of religious life in preparation for my perpetual vows.

"The more we understand our humanity, the more we will trust the goodness of a tender, loving God, who loves us just as we are now" (Euphrasie Barbier, 1869)



“Weaving Sorrows and blessings into one joyful step in Davao...”

Being an RNDM is a great joy for me. I, **Pushon Bartha Rozario** from Bangladesh, grew up in the village in a very simple and usual way as any other girl. Being the youngest of the family I had the freedom to be in my own way to play, to enjoy with my friends, with nature and spend my whole day without any tension, any responsibility for household tasks. I am so blessed to be loved by my parents, teachers, the SMRA Sisters, friends, cousins and obviously my siblings as my friends. All of them played their own role in my life pre-planned by God Himself. Their inspiration, care and living witness led me to feel that God has chosen these people to lead and guide me to the way of God’s invitation for me. I with a grateful heart remember my aunt Veronica Shefaly Rodrigues who was so much expected by our Sisters to be an RNDM, and who shared with me about the RNDMs. This led me to be interested and curious to hear the voice of God whispered to me. It will not be right for me to proceed ahead without mentioning the name of the people who have given themselves to help me to stand on my own feet and introduced me how to walk in the way of consecrated life. Manifold thanks to Sisters Jyotsna, Rani, Supriti, Shongita and Probha for their inner strength that has inspired me till this time to go ahead. I value my vocation as the most precious gift in my life. I have and till now experiencing God’s intimate love in my life. My parents formed me physically, mentally and their daily living has taught me the meaning of life. This has reflected in every sphere of my life, my community living, ministry and my journey with Jesus. United in the Spirit I believe that I am connected with all the RNDMs throughout the congregation and I ask your blessing for my “Journey” in Davao for the next step of my life.



I am **Maria Pham Thi Lanh**. I was born on February 15, 1984 in Tay Ninh, Tien Hai district, Thai Binh province. I was born into a normal peasant family. My family is composed of six members: my parents, elder brother, young brother, sister and I.

I took my first vows on August 12, 2011. Through the periods of aspirancy, postulancy, especially, in the two years of the Novitiate, I was purified by God to realize my purpose and intentions. From living a sense of inferiority as a person, I know now to open and accept myself. I received the gift of God's grace, the grace of faith that the Lord gave me to be rooted in God so that I might be born again in the Spirit and live a new life without the feelings of inferiority but to really believe in God and trust in the love and kindness of the Lord in our congregation.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to God for all the blessing I received through the CLT members, Vietnam province and all the sisters in the congregation.





Hello, (nomoskar) everyone, welcome to India, Odisha District. I am **Manjula Beck** meaning (loveable, beautiful or spring). I belong to central province. I was born in a small family of four siblings. I have my parents. My father's name is Mr. Ramesh Beck and my mother is Mrs. Prisca Beck. I have three brothers. I am the third child of my parent's love. I did my primary and middle schooling in my parish school and moved on to other place for high school. I was influenced much by the spirit of prayer and faith conviction of my mother and later on when I was sent to school, I was touched by life of the sisters in my parish. This is how I was inspired to be a sister. Thus, after my matriculation, I joined the RNDM family, left for Kolkata on 30th

June 2005 with sister Anita Dung Dung Rndm with another companion Mary Anna who is also an Rndm sister. I made my first vows on 10th February 2012, since then it had been quite a long journey of my life in the RNDM family. I was involved in the social, education and pastoral ministries.

I feel very fortunate to tell you my experience in Balay Euphrasie, Davao. I arrived here on 9th of June. The day I entered the campus of Balay, I said, oh! It seems like a retreat place. I love the beautiful surroundings with new creativity that is being maintained here. Everything seems very reflective and effective. I feel the interior silence in my heart. I am able to walk in the footsteps of Euphrasie, listening to the whispering voice of God. I am enjoying the program here with all my companions from different countries.

My heart is filled with joy and gratitude to God and each of you dear sisters for the support and opportunities I received in my life in order to grow spiritually, psychologically, mentally and physically. Now I am at the door step of making my perpetual commitment. I need your prayerful support to continue journey with me in my discernment to say yes to God for a life long journey.

I am **Teresa Hai** and I am the fifth in a family of 8 children. I knew the call from God through the stories of St Theresa Lisieux and Francis Assisi. I want to be like them to love God and serve the poor.

My sister, Hien, had left home to go to RNDM's Community in Nha Trang, Vietnam in 1995. This led me to join the apostolic school at the age of 12. This was the time for me to grow deeper in my desire and dream to be a missionary through many stories of sisters. After the death of my father in 2000 which was a big change in my life, I left the convent to go to the College and experienced living and working among the youth and the poor for 6 years. I would like to be among them as a companion and a witness of God's mercy and love. In 2007, I returned to the Convent which was my home God had already prepared for me. I found my rest and joy, peace and happiness as well as challenges in my journey under the guidance of God.





Greetings to all of you dear sisters! I am **Beauty Benedicta Gosal** from the country of the Green and Red flag and that is Bangladesh. I am from a catholic family and grew up with my two older siblings. In my early childhood I heard the call from God to be a religious and kept it in my heart. After completing grade 10, I left home to join the Congregation at the age of 16. Still I am walking in the path of Jesus through the way Euphrasie showed us. I am growing in this wonderful life and journeying with Jesus every day. I love the Charism and ministry of our RNDM Congregation. It is my 7th year as an RNDM and now I am in Davao for the preparation of my Perpetual Vows. I am eager to offer myself forever to God in our Congregation.

Here I am experiencing international living and I am enjoying it. Through different sessions I am deepening my faith in God and knowing the mission of Congregation more profoundly. The reflective nature of Balay Euphrasie helps me to experience inner silence. I am getting to know my companions from different countries and it helps me to fall in love with the Congregation more and more as I know the vastness of our diversity in mission.

Dear sisters please keep me and my companions in your prayers that we may grow together in Christ in Balay Euphrasie. Your blessings will be our strength and courage in our religious life.

I recognize God's mercy in my life and I can see the world is full of God's mercy through other people's stories. I feel happy to realize God's love and God's graces in my life as a valuable gift. I really want to share what I experience with all the people around me.

My name is **Maria Dinh Thi Thanh Thuy**. I was born in 1983 in a happy family and with many children. I have seven sisters, one brother but he died when he was just one week old. When I was a child, in my soul I always had a desire: How to bring God's Word to people who do not know about God and who are very poor, both spiritually and materially. So I really wanted to join a missionary congregation. The first time, I only knew about Dominicans Sisters. So I joined the Dominicans Youth and I was very active with them. I thought after I finish high school, I could join them. But everything happened not as I thought. By chance I came to know about our congregation and I joined the Aspirants House on September 9, 2002. I am very happy about the vocation which God has given to me. I feel and have experienced that to be called to the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions is to receive from God the gift of the sharing in the Divine Missions, and I always pray for God's help to live in the spirit of Mother Mary, to be attentive to the Word and put it into practice in my life, in order to glorify God.



**"Help us, Euphrasie, strong woman of fire, to follow your footsteps, to burn with desire"
(Song in honor of Euphrasie Barbier, our Foundress)**





Hello everyone, my name is **Elizabeth Nipa Pereira**. I am part of the 18 participants of Davao this year and am happy to be here. I am the youngest in the group. I come from Dhaka, Bangladesh. I have 3 older sisters who are married and my younger brother is still with my parents and he works in Dhaka. On the fourth of February 2012, I made my first profession in Chittagong. My first community was Hashnabad. There I completed my Bachelor of Business studies as well as helping in the Crèche, where we have around 28 children aged 1 to 5. I enjoyed and loved being with the children. I taught them dance and art. I arrived in Manila, Philippines on 30th March

2018; it was my first time to be out of the country. It was a very good experience. While waiting to go to Davao, I attended a 10 week program of CPE in Manila along with my three other companions. I enjoyed being with the patients and I learned a lot. I even learned some Tagalog words during my time there. I was happy to know that my name Nipa, in Tagalog means 'the roof that is used for the traditional home' ... Nipa hut or *bahaykubo*.

I am **Mary Anna Topno** the daughter of Mr. Sushil Topno and Mrs. Philomina Topno, born on 14th December 1987 in Sambalpur, Odisha. I am the first child of five children, three girls and two boys. The second girl child has gone to God in her very early age. I was born in a Catholic family and received the Catholic Faith from the Family. Right from the beginning of my class I till class 10th I stayed in St. Luke's girl's hostel and obtained my education in Christo Jyoti High School Madhupur, Bargarh. There I had the opportunity to attend daily Holy Eucharist and Catechism classes. It was there that I was strengthened in my Catholic faith more as well as had the desire to become a nun.



I had many invitations from many different congregations, but I was not interested to join them. After completing my class 10th while I was at home, early in the morning I had a sudden & surprise visit from Sr Anita Dung Dung to my house. Sr. Anita the first RNDM that I met, introduced to me about the congregation and asked me if I would like to join the Rndm and was given few hours to decide it. To take this decision was quite hard. After my final decision I agreed to join the unknown and unheard congregation. I left my home on 30th Of June 2005 on that same day and travelled with her to Park Circus, Kolkata and arrived on 1st of July. Few days later I joined the aspirancy in Barasat. I lived with the sisters, saw the lives of sisters and their ministries and was attracted to continue with them. After one year I was sent to Patna and pursued my Pre University Degree studies in Patna Women's College.

I made my first Profession on 10th February 2012. After my first profession I was missioned to Nirmala Niketan Convent, Mangalore, in South India Province. Since my first profession I was involved in teaching, visiting families, faith formation, prison ministries etc..... Now I am happy to join my companions in Balay Euphrasie, Davao for the preparation for Perpetual Vows.



I am Sister **Maria Nguyen Thi Hoi**. I was born in the Province of Thanh Hoa, Viet Nam. My parents have 9 children. I am the third in my family, and I have a younger brother who is studying Theology at the Seminary. I am very pleased to be in our big family. My family has great relationships with each other. I am grateful to my parents who always support and pray for me. I left my family when I was 15 years old. I went to Nha Trang city, and I worked at the restaurant for 9 years. This was a challenging time for me. However, I had many good experiences in my life. During this time, the experiences helped me to live independently and at the same time I had the opportunity to get to know religious life because I worked at the restaurant next to the RNDM community.



I graduated from college in 2008 and became a Kindergarten teacher. I joined the RNDM aspirancy in 2008 for one year, and I was a postulant in Da Lat community in 2009. I made my first vows on August 6, 2012. Then, I was sent to Thi Nghe Community to study theology. In 2014, I was sent to Cu Chi Community on Mission. My mission was to serve as Administrator of our Charity School. I also taught Catechism to the children of the Parish. I was very happy in this mission because it showed me how to live simply. It also helped me to deepen my understanding of the three Vows. Besides that, I learned to trust in God.

On January 8, 2017, I was sent to Canada to study English. I was very happy and lucky because all of the Canadian sisters love me so much, and they are very devoted, patient, gentle, and generous to me. I had the opportunity to study about our Mother Foundress in English although it was only for a short time. I also learned how to adapt to new circumstances. During the winter, the weather was cold, and there was the challenge of living in a new culture. However, I learned how to live in an international community. I was very happy when I lived in Canada. I thank God and am grateful to all the CLT sisters, Vietnamese Sisters, and Canadian Sisters who have given me the opportunity and the best conditions to learn English. May God always bless and accompany you in your Mission.



Time sure flies fast. It seems it was just like yesterday when I found myself at the doorsteps of the RNDMs in Mabolo Manila and here I am in Davao with 17 other TPs preparing for our perpetual vows. My full name is **Elaine Madonna Villanueva** but friends call me Weeyaa. I am second in a family of seven. I come from Daraga, Albay, a province on the southern part of Luzon Island, one of the major three islands in the Philippines. After my first profession, I became part of the RNDM Kulaman Community, living and being with an indigenous tribe, the Dulangan Manobo. I have been blessed too, to experience life with the RNDMs in Senegal region on two occasions, the first time during my second-year novitiate and again from March 2017 to

April 2018. It has been an amazing journey, trying to live out our ideals of being one, being love and I look forward to where and how life unfolds as the path continues on. I am grateful to be here at this time.



I am Sr. **Pricilla Lugun** and was born on 14 March 1989. My Parents are Mr Augustus Lugun (late) Mrs Bilasi Lugun (late). I have my two brothers and three sisters. I am the fifth child of my parents. I belong to Birmitrapur parish, Rourkela Diocese, Odisha. I grew up in a Catholic family surrounded by Protestant and Hindus. My life has been enriched as I grew up.

Thanks to my lovely parents, brothers and sisters who brought me up in Catholic faith. I studied in Catholic parish school, later on for my high school I went to hostel run by sisters. I always admired the sisters their way of living and hard work. I am blessed to join Rndm family in the year 2005 after my class 10th. and did my aspirancy in Barasat (Kolkata). For my PUC, I came to Bangalore. After that I joined for my pre-postulancy in 2009 Barasat and postulancy in Shillong Meghalaya. For my Novitiate I came to Bangalore in 2010 for two years and made my first vows 10th February 2012.

After my profession I was missioned to south India province and there I was placed in different communities for experiences as well as for my studies. After completing my degree I went for my spirituality course for a year in Indian institute of Spirituality (IIS). I feel proud to be an Rndm, and my vocation is strengthened as I journey, following the footsteps of Euphrasie Barbier our Foundress. Thanks to my sisters for their love, care, support and helping me to grow in life.



Being a member of a big family of nine children was an advantage for me to live harmoniously with other sisters from different places with variety of traditions and customs. I, **Maria Dinh Thi Sen**, was born in a small village in North Vietnam. I am the seventh. I appreciate my parents' love, care as well as my siblings' support and encouragement.

What made me to decide becoming a sister in our Congregation was the impression of the tabernacle in the Chapel of Thu Duc Community. It is designed with a wavy roof as I have seen at the Cathedral of my Diocese. I spent one year in the aspirant house in 2008 to have experience and to learn about our charism, spirit and RNDM lifestyle. Moving to the Postulancy in Da Lat, I could say that it was a great experience with a small group of 6 sisters together with both advantages and challenges. We learnt to work together and understood our backgrounds so that we could

live honestly and friendly. My time in the Novitiate was like a pilgrimage to return to my deepest place in my heart, spirit and mind. I was trained to know myself, call the names of feelings, emotions as well as dreams, desires; to understand my strengths and my limitations; to discover gifts, opportunities and struggles and conflicts inside. I was growing day by day through my time of theological study, being in mission in Long Dien community and learning English in Melbourne, Australia. Now I am here with all the blessings and graces God have given to me.



WELCOME TO THE PHILIPPINES



On 9th June we were welcomed warmly by Srs. Lissy and Bich Quyen (CLT) and Srs. Anita, Martha and Ngoc Duyen (the Team at Balay Euphrasie). Although we landed at the airport at different times the sisters took turns to come to the airport and welcome us. We felt so grateful for our sisters' generosity and their love as well as their care for us. We felt at home among our sisters and enjoyed the well prepared meals and fresh Juice. We had two days to settle down before we started our program. It was so good for us to know each other as well as to be familiar with the environment around us.

We enjoyed the Opening Ritual and vision of Balay Euphrasie. We gathered in the Chapel

in our traditional dresses. We were so excited and happy to be a member of Balay Euphrasie in 2018. We prayed for our congregation, all sisters around the world as well as for the Team and for ourselves. We experienced our connectedness with the whole congregation in every single step we took. For me, it was such a sacred and blessed moment.

On 12th June, we celebrated the Opening Liturgy in the presence of Bishop George Rimando, our auxiliary Bishop and Fr. Maximo, our Parish Priest and some other guests.

We enjoyed our lovely celebration with songs in different languages, and a delicious meal in the Philippines style. All of us were really aware of six months of blessings and graces ahead of us. We would like to ask you please continue to keep us in your daily prayers so that we could always recognize and live in God's love, care and providence as well as be ready for mission beyond boundaries.



Maria Sen rndm



NEW EXPERIENCE IN DAVAO:



“If you know the gift of God...” (Jn 4, 10). This is the theme that I would like to take to express my own experience about the sacred place which I am living with other 15 companions. On the day when Sr. Anita mentioned about TLC (Tender Loving Care), all the participants in the Session Hall laughed and had a lot of fun with this expression. This was the first time I came across this expression. Although it was mentioned in a humorous way, as I reflect I can experience God’s love

and care for us through the songs of birds, the sound of the rivers, the colors and blessings of the trees and plants, fruits in our garden, perfume of flowers, the hospitality of local people, smiles of tricycle drivers...

Now what I can say is how blessed and happy I am! My deep desire is to find the way to respond to God’s love in my life. For me, I am ready to share my love, care and tenderness with my companions, nature around me, as well as reflecting and living what we receive from different sessions during 6 months here. Staying in Balay Euphrasie, I also experience about the lovely sisterhood among us although we come from different nationalities, backgrounds and personalities. Like the woman at the Jacob’s Well leaving the jar to proclaim The Good News, I wish all of us put our own dreams and desire in God’s hands so that we can live in God’s blessings and graces as a new Euphrasie for the new generation.



Ter Hai Rndm

A VISIT TO DAVAO CITY

“A time together strengthens our relationship”

We as a group were very privileged to get an opportunity to visit Davao city on 17th June 2018. We were filled with excitement and joy to have fun together with Sr. Bich Quyen and Sr Anita Moolan. We left the house at 7 am by jeepney (common mode of travel in the Philippines). It was the first experience for most of us and a time of bonding. We were able to feel deep within our heart the same phrase **“we are one, we are love”**. We cherish the moments together as we sang along in different languages. Then we proceeded to the **Shrine of Infant Jesus**. This was a very prayerful place where we spent sufficient time to pray and see around. Many people came to attend mass and pray novena. We were also very lucky to meet crowds of people in San Pedro Cathedral. It was a beautiful magnificent prayerful place. We then visited the souvenir shop and most of us did window shopping. The last stop was at Gmall to have a look around in groups of three and four in case we miss the exit. It was indeed a day of sharing our joy and laughter.



Ridalin Rndm

CO-WORKERS

We give thanks to God because we have co-workers who are like members of our RNDM family. They have been helping us in many different ways. Kuya Mariano who is a gardener, has green fingers to look after our garden. Our meals are prepared by Manong Jun, who cooks and presents different kinds of delicious meals. Ate Ging Ging helps in a variety of ways around the house, the laundry, breakfast and with the evening dishes. We are blessed to have them with us and we look forward to spending more time in their caring presence.

Doan Thuy Rndm



(Ate Ging Ging, Kuya Jun, Kuya Mariano)

SHARING OUR SACRED STORY

We had four days of sharing our sacred story. Through the sharing, we felt closer to each other and we recognized that each of us is so different and unique. In each one's story of life, we learnt many things especially we recognized that our vocation is from God who is always there to protect and support us in many ways, like Isaiah wrote: "Now thus says the Lord, he who created you, he who formed you...Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Is 42, 1). We give thanks to God because of His Love and Care for us always and everywhere noticed or unnoticed.

Thanh Thuy Rndm



AN AFTERNOON DELIGHT, CHIT-CHAT ABOUT PHILIPPINES



On last 1st July, I appreciated the sharing of Weeyaa who comes from the Philippines about her culture. For me, as an overseas sister, I am really interested in listening to her talk. Now I would like to share with you the conversation between us.

Sen: *Thank you so much, Weeyaa, for coming and sharing with us about the Filipinos culture today.*

Weeyaa: I am grateful to be here. It is an honor to be sharing with you the Philippine culture.

Sen: *As you know, this year Balay Euphrasie gathers sisters from 5 different countries: Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, Myanmar, and of course, thank you for being here, from the Philippines. Can you introduce your country to us?*

Weeyaa: It would be my pleasure. The Philippines is an archipelago of 7,107 islands. That in itself speaks diversity already. Spread through the islands, are about 100 million people speaking 175 to 180 dialects, 13 of which are indigenous language. It has been said that Filipinos at times have an American mind, a Spanish heart and a Malay root. Different influences from different parts of the world have colored the lives of the Filipinos, then and now.

Sen: *Can you share more about the Filipino people and your culture?*

Weeyaa: There are some core values of the Filipino personhood that are considered as indigenous and which continue to be present in our person today. ‘*Pakikipag-kapwa*’, or shared identity is an understanding that the other is an extension of self, a “shared self”. Another value is that of *Pakiramdam* (knowing through feeling) which most of the time stirs one into voluntarily sharing self, initiating unexpected deeds of kindness. Finally there is *Kagandahangloob*, usually translated as generosity, yet the bigger understanding is an inner sense of beauty and goodness. This grounds the Filipino person, to live out gratefulness knowing somehow that we are in relation with all that is and basically life is about letting the sense of beauty and goodness from within, be expressed and seen around us. A whole lot of Filipino traits and behaviors can stem from these core values. This relatedness, translates to knowing that relationships with all there is, takes center stage in lives of Filipinos. One could sense strong family ties and it follows that we give importance to welcoming and generously pouring out care and attention towards all that are entering



into our homes, our land. One would note though, that Filipinos have high regard for respect, which can be seen in the way we even relate to each other. Rarely would one just barge into our space without announcing presence from the outside of our homes, only when we acknowledge their presence are they free to enter and share lives.

Sen: *Wow, these are very interesting really. We in Balay are excited to be having this chance to share lives with the Filipinos here in Davao. One of the most important ways of connecting with people is language. Any tips on how we can say a few words in the language?*

Weeyaa: I guess wishing our neighbors “*Maayong Adlaw*”, which translates to “**Good day**” is a good way to start connecting, and I am a firm believer that if even just remember to simply “**Thank you very much**”, “*Salamat or Salamat Kaayo*” we already have found a way to snatch a smile from the heart.

Sen: *Then, Salamat Kaayo Weeyaa for having this chit-chat with us.*

Weeyaa and Sen

FOCUSING AN “ODE TO A CAPABLE WIFE” PROV (31:10-31)



We had the session on Focusing with Sr. Bich Quyen from 25th to 29th June. I would say focusing was just like “Ode to a capable Wife”, who finds things out and looks things differently. We entered in to the topic by writing down our feelings and emotions in the pieces of stickers. We then placed them in to two different sections both positive and negative. Through these exercises we were able to see the percentage of our feelings likely fall more on positive or negative. Focusing is one of the helpful tools that helped each of us journey inwardly and discover the true self. It is to be mindful of our senses, feeling and bodily presence. The number of exercises guided by Sister helped us discover things that were hidden deep within our being. We were able to uncover our potential by focusing. I am sure all of us had the “AHAH” experience. We were surprised by the number of unexpected images, and guests we had to encounter with.

Focusing is more likely to journey to our interior castle which St. Teresa of Avila speaks about. We journey inside layer by layer and arrive to our core being, where the source, the divine resides. Focusing is all about becoming aware, accept, and befriend with. There is no right and wrong or positive or negative. It is not a tool to solve the problem but to become aware of it. It also challenged us to become aware, accept all the guests that come into our life and be friends with.

We shared our experiences with each other and it was very enriching and life giving. We appreciated the uniqueness of each other’s experience.

Thus, focusing gave us a broader understanding of how we can make our communities a heavenly place by our awareness, acceptance and friendship. I would like to quote the Art 43 from our constitution “**We are friends in search of God**”. I believe this statement defines the meaning of religious search in spite of our differences.

Manjula Rndm.



Responding with Joy

It's like the "Second Novitiate" that we Temporary Professed Sisters from Bangladesh, India, Philippines and Vietnam have stepped into for the very first time here at "Balay Euphrasie" on 9th June 2018. At the beginning of our program, we were guided by Sisters Lissy Sebastian and Bich Quyen to prepare and set our mind and heart ready for all the rich experiences we are going to have for the next six months at Balay Euphrasie. The atmosphere here is so sacred and silent that gave us a sense of a retreat house. It was a peaceful and relaxing time with the Lord.

The first day's theme was **"God's Invitation"**. Once again we were led to re-visit our own call. The journey we started from our aspirancy until now has given to us a vivid scene of how dearly God has planned, chosen and inspired each of us.

We were invited to ponder on the passage, **"If you knew the gift of God"** (Jn 4, 10). Jesus chose the Samaritan woman to proclaim His bountiful graces in all her life. Like her each of us is also chosen by God to share in His mission. This reminds us that today Jesus is still inviting us to trust, hope, love and serve Him.

The last day we reflected on **"The Visitation"**. With haste and joy Mary went to visit Elizabeth. Both women were moved and experienced the same joy and God's presence in their lives. Being an RNDM, each of us is also called to be and to live with joy in our life; especially in our community to celebrate the presence and lives of other people and creatures. At the end of an arduous journey, the prayer of thanksgiving rose up in Mary as well as in our hearts. We too have broken forth in the Magnificat from our hearts



Pushon Rndm

Prepared and complied by Srs. Pushon, Thanh Thuy, Manjula and Maria Sen.

"Everything will be when and how Our Lord wishes it. May His Holy Name be blessed! That is the one and only thing necessary"

(Missionary beyond boundaries, p.148)





The group was elated to join with Pricila and Mary Anna who arrived after a month and here you can see the complete group

2018 at Balay Euphrasie.

Thank you

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