



# TUNGKO NEWSLETTER

## TRIPOD - PIETY - STUDY - ACTION



### FCIC –LA SECRETARIAT

#### MARITESS TAN TORRES

Lay Director

#### Lucena “Len” Balino

Asst. Lay Director

#### Doris Agtarap

School of Leaders Chairperson

#### Lisa Lascano

Pre-Cursillo Chairperson

#### Mike Marcelino

Cursillo Proper Chairperson-Men

#### Vina Dungo

Cursillo Proper Chairperson-Women

#### Ramon Geluz

Post Cursillo Chairperson

#### Leo Nobleza

Secretary

#### Gerry Fernando

Treasurer

#### Albert Franco

Auditor

#### Zen Alejo

Liturgy Coordinator

### 2023 FCIC-LA SECRETARIAT

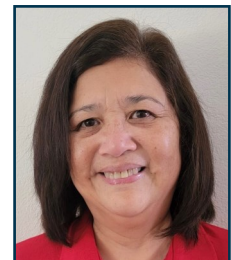
The new set of officers of the **Filipino Cursillos in Christianity of Los Angeles** (FCIC-LA) Secretariat was sworn into office during the annual Christmas Party held on December 10, 2022 in Luminarias Restaurant, Monterey Park, CA other than the Lay Director who was then outside the country. The following are the members of the current FCIC-LA Secretariat:



**Maritess Tan Torres**  
Lay Director



**Lucena “Len” Balino**  
Asst. Lay Director



**Doris Agtarap**  
SOL Chairperson



**Lisa Lascano**  
Pre Cursillo Chairperson



**Vina Dungo**  
Cursillo Proper Chair  
(Women)



**Mike Marcelino**  
Cursillo Proper Chair  
(Men)



**Ramon Geluz**  
Post Cursillo Chairperson



**Leo Nobleza**  
Secretary



**Gerry Fernando**  
Treasurer



**Albert Franco**  
Auditor



**Zen Alejo**  
Liturgy/Worship  
Coordinator

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## LAY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



I thank God for giving me the opportunity to be a part of the most active and vibrant Filipino Cursillos in Christianity Secretariat (FCIC-LA) under the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. My predecessors, Ramon Parcon, Rudy Bautista, Ronald (Ron) Parcon, Romy Uy, (+)Manolo Robles, Gerry Torres, Rico Bagsic, Alice Ricafort and all the dedicated and committed members of the FCIC-LA Secretariat & fellow cursillistas have put us to where we are now since it was formed in 1990. I am humbled at the opportunity to serve God through the Cursillo Movement.

I am very happy to report the following activities that we have so far undertaken for the First Quarter of 2023:

**January 22, 2023** - First School of Leaders (SOL) meeting held in Holy Family, Artesia .

**February 11, 2023** – FCIC Grand Ultreya held in St Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, Reseda, CA.

**March 23 to 26, 2023** – Women's Cursillo Weekend No. 1019 held in Pomona Cursillo House.

The FCIC-LA Secretariat will continue to implement the new Step-by-Step Rector's Guide provided by the National Cursillo and we will continue to inform members specially those serving in the cursillo weekend through the School of Leaders (SOL) and formation meetings and we included in this News-letter the guidelines we have so far implemented during the recently concluded Women's Cursillo classes.

We hope that we will be able to provide this year Workshops for Ultreya Coordinators and Rollistas as well. Please continue to include in your prayer and palanca the FCIC-LA Secretariat that God may continue to grant us wisdom and knowledge and with His grace we will be able to carry out our functions according to His holy will.



### Women's Cursillo Class No. 1019

The recently concluded Women's Cursillo Class No. 1019 held on March 23-26, 2023 in Cursillo House Retreat Center, Pomona, CA was very fruitful with 10 new Cursillistas. Rectora Heidi Catabas and Vice Rectora Choi Camiling led the team of women auxiliaries. Rev. Frs. Rey Matunog and Al Enriquez acted as in-house Spiritual Advisors with the assistance of four Deacons, John Manalo, Gus Mora, Del Davis and Santi Gorospe.



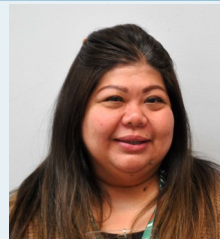
The new Cursillistas were welcomed on April 2, 2023 in St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church hall in Pasadena hosted by Women's Cursillo Class No. 1010 headed by Rectora Linda Pascual and Vice Rectora Tonette Layao. It was preceded with a Holy Mass in the church.

**De Colores!**



## LAY WITNESSING OF NEW CURSILLISTAS

Hi! My name is **Catherine Ramirez** from Holy Family Catholic Church in Artesia, CA. I belong to the table of St. Cecilia of Class No.1019. First, I want to say THANK YOU to Sister Vina Dungo and to the Holy Family Church Cursillo Community for inviting me and generously shared God's love with me.



What I have discovered about myself, Christ and the church during the 3 days Cursillo weekend is that I established an intimate relationship with God, an open and personal friendship. By living the life of grace of being Catholic fulfills an **ideal**. My heart is filled with the life of Christ in me by my religiousness or **piety**. All of life speaks to our abilities as a gift from God by our **study**. And we share our lives with others as we put our will into **action**.

I've learned to know myself better and experienced the presence and love of Jesus Christ. Also, to know and love our brothers and sisters more as the image and likeness of Christ.

What I intend to do with what I have learned is to also share God's love to others as you ALL shared with me. It helped me deepen my faith more by being with an amazing and supportive Cursillo Community. You showed me an action to serve others by showing kindness, care, encouragement, and Christ's love. We were wrapped in God's love by the entire team. The speakers were so down-to-earth with their talks and we all learned some great lessons.

Throughout the weekend, I have met incredible faith-filled women and it was a privilege to meet them. All of the team members and candidates had a chance to really get to know each other both on a personal and spiritual level. We all started out as strangers, but we definitely finished the Cursillo weekend as friends and Sisters in Christ.

I am thankful to God that not only has He helped me through this adventure of my life, but also for the gift of life in order to continue to serve Him, and for the overwhelming support from all of you. I thank each and every one of you for your prayers. I knew God would watch over me and I would be closer to Him!

Brothers & Sisters, God smiles as we give and receive. So, I will use my time, talent and treasure to make a friend, be a friend and will bring a friend to Christ. As a result, the world changes for the better.



**Anna L. Rellin** from the Table of St. Catherine of Siena

The Cursillo movement gave me wisdom and strength to persevere in my faith through the Holy Spirit.

I discovered that Christ is always with me even in the darkest moments of my life when He showed me the light and gave me hope through His great love and mercy.

Since my journey during the Cursillo weekend, I have learned to be more patient especially with my co-workers and people I interact with and I am now slow to anger and treating them just like my brothers and sisters in Christ.

I intend to encourage my Catholic friends to join the Cursillo and to be more charitable of my time and resources by giving alms to the homeless and help with the feeding program for the homeless in my church. De Colores!



## We Are Change Capable by Vina Dungo-Cursillo Proper Chairperson -Women



Major change happens moment to moment. We need to re-wire ourselves to be more comfortable with and open to change; we need to become more change-capable. Increase in understanding, clarifying and reinforcing priorities, giving control and priorities are ways to help people change in a

positive way.

We understand that hesitation around change is normal — rather than assuming that people are “change-resistant” or “negative” — and support people through the necessary mindset shift, it’ll be much better if we build a critical mass of people who will understand, accept, and adopt the change reasonably quickly. More importantly, it will help people to become more change-capable and to have habits of mind to approach change in a more neutral and open way.

Last September, during the class of Rectora Linda Pascual, in obedience, we started implementing most if not almost all of the changes based on the “Step-By-Step” Rector’s Manual presented to us by the National Cursillo.

Below is the summary of the changes we are implementing during the Cursillo Weekend and some terms we need to get familiar with:

- When we JUMP we say, “Table Group of “St Cecilia, for instance instead of “Decuria” of St Cecilia
- Way of the Cross –to be led by the Rector/a Vice Rector/a
- After Piety rollo – instead of Challenge, it is now called Intervention
- New Cursillistas - new term for Candidates and Table Head – new term for President of the Decuria
- No more taking of watches and cell phones from the New Cursillistas
- Thursday Dinner - there will be “Bankruptcy” reading by the Dean of Piety
- Friday Mass – Prayers of the Faithful to be read by the Rector/a
- Corridor Work (after Rollo No. 6 (Study) -The Deans of each Department mingle with the New Cursillistas during lunch and dinner, to get to know them and interact with them.

- When introducing the Rollista, The Rector/a simply states: “The next Rollo is given by...” This is repeated before every Rollo.
- On Friday, after Rector/a’s talk, PROFESSOR COOK will be read by the Rector/a before Rollo 1 -Ideal.
- Explain the use of Hobbies Sheet (to be distributed after Rollo 1- Ideal)
- Visit to the Blessed Sacrament every after the Staff Meeting, every night.
- “Special Lunch” instead of “Agape”
- No more procession of Mama Mary on Saturday, only Singing and Offering of Flowers
- Sunday Mass, Dean of Piety assigns staff or auxiliaries to read the First Reading, Responsorial Psalm (if Music group won’t be singing) and Second Reading. Rector/a or Vice Rector/a will read the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Clausura – there will be singing of De Colores song as the New Cursillistas process in the church. Action team will line them up, with the Rector/a, Vice Rector/a, Cursillo Proper, Priest/s or Deacon/s.
- Quadrant Sheet – to be distributed during the Staff Meeting on Thursday
- NO more reading of Palanca love letters from Family Members by Clergy Rollista. Rector/a will explain the meaning of Palanca and he/she will read some of them.
- **CLAUSURA**  
After the sharing by the New Cursillistas, we invite the “distinguished visitors” or one of the Staff, to speak, whom we know can encourage the new Cursillistas.
- We end the Clausura with the Lord’s Prayer which we offer for three intentions:
  1. To give thanks for the spiritual and apostolic success of the weekend.
  2. For those who have prayed and made sacrifices for the success of the weekend.
  3. For the success of the next Cursillo weekend.

Then we applaud to the Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament and we sing “De Colores”.

“The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.”  
-Alan Watts

May we all DANCE IN HARMONY!



## School of Leaders (SOL) Report by Doris Agtarap - SOL Chairperson



We had our first School of Leaders (SOL) meeting on January 22, 2023. Introduction and opening prayer was given by Doris Agtarap. For the benefit of the new

Cursillistas, a short definition, goals and the elements of the SOL were discussed. Since Maritess "Tess" Tan Torres was not inducted during the Christmas Party last December 11, 2022 due to previous commitment, she was officially inducted into office by Deacon John



Manalo as the new Lay Director of FCIC-LA followed by her Technique Presentation: **"The**

**Call to Leadership, A Vocation"**. She mentioned that being a leader is a commitment and willingness to do what God calls us to do and she gave a witness of her spiritual journey as a leader in the FCIC-LA Cursillo Movement. Then the Doctrinal Presentation was given by Deacon John Manalo, "Come After Me and I will Make You Fishers of Men". Section Reports were given by Pre-Cursillo Chairperson Lisa Lascano updating us with the potential new Cursillistas for Women's Class No. 1019, talking about the new changes in Step-by-Step Rector's guide by Vina

Dungo and the Post Cursillo discussed by Ramon Geluz updating the different Ultreya Centers and the plan to visit each Ultreya by members of the Secretariat. He also dis-



cussed the details of the Grand Ultreya that was scheduled on February 12, 2023. Final blessing was done by Deacon Santi Gorospe followed by the closing prayer of Zen Alejo. For the months of February and March, there were no schedules for SOL because of the scheduled Grand Ultreya and the Women's Cursillo Class No. 1019 set on March 23-26, 2023. De Colores!





In the beginning, I was overwhelmed and I was not sure if I will be able to fulfill all the responsibilities of Post Cursillo Chairperson of the FCIC-LA, after learning of the numerous duties of this position from other Cursillo members at the Holy Family Ultreya Center and reading the School of Leaders' Manual.

While working fulltime, even after my full retirement, has enabled me to continue supporting the different organizations and churches I have served all these years, it has also become difficult to perform my duties for the Cursillo, like the Cursillo Rites which I have to complete in the evening during weekdays, with the traffic and if the locations are at least 2 hours away from my place of work.

My wife Lani and I also continue to contact, visit, and attend the different Ultreya Centers on the weekends, including the farther ones from LA County. But, thanks to the motivation and support from our former Post Cursillo Chairpersons: Ray Ramirez, Ruben Catabas, Nestor Casino, Fred Lopez, Caloy Sabas, and Danny Dimacali, we are still able to fulfill the requests for Cursillo Rites from the families of our departed Cursillo brothers and sisters. I have also prepared a Cursillo Rites information and instructions for the immediate family members and a template they can use for the Cursillo Rite songs and prayers.

**In Memoriam :** We have been requested and rendered the FCIC-LA Cursillo Rites for the families and Ultreya brothers and sisters of: Peter Ramirez, Fredolina Del Sabado, Dina De Leon, Steve Lara and Remy Andrada. Thank you Ray Ramirez, Nestor Casino, Caloy Sabas, Danny Dimacali and Sonny Layao for your continued support.

I am also very thankful for the inspiration I get from the dedication of the Secretariat officers most specially Tess Torres and Vina Dungo who are always available to help me during this learning period. I will always be grateful for their wisdom and guidance and for always being available and making sure that every project of the FCIC-LA is a success, like our most recent 2023 FCIC-LA Grand Ultreya, SOL and Formation Meetings and the Women's and Men's Cursillo Weekends.

And of course, our brother in Christ, Sonny Layao, who is always urging and challenging me to do more for the FCIC-LA.

From my experience so far in visiting the different Ultreya Centers, like the time we spent at the Antelope Valley Ultreya in Lancaster and St. Christopher Ultreya in West Covina, I realized that the FCIC-LA is made up of a diverse group of God-given multi-talented and dedicated individuals all ready and willing to contribute their time, talent, and treasure for the upcoming projects of the FCIC-LA. I have met great singers, dancers, actors, actresses, comedians, musicians, cooks and writers. They are all amazing. I truly believe that our Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit has gathered all these great men and women to be able to continue to spread His Good News through their God given talents. I am so excited to invite and work with all of them in our upcoming projects of the FCIC-LA.

But most of all, when I am with my Cursillo brothers and sisters, I feel the warmth of their love which started when my wife and I joined the De Colores Choir, which continues and has become even warmer and

multiplied a thousand fold as we have become members of the FCIC-LA Family.

As the Coordinator of the Holy Family Ultreya in Artesia, almost all of the leaders of the different religious organizations and committees in our church are also very active Cursillo members, including Veekee Eugenio, Cora and Gene Toledo, Cora Ocampo, Vina Dungo, and our Deacon John Manalo and his wife, Lou Manalo, and many, many, more.

The De Colores Choir will be performing Excerpts from the Life of St. Pedro Calungsod Musical at the HFC Hall on April 22, 2023 in celebration of the San Pedro Calungsod Fiesta.

I will always remember what Vina told me, that the most important accomplishment of the Cursillo Weekend is the 4<sup>th</sup> Day, when the FCIC-LA has produced Leaders who with their God-given talents and newly acquired zeal to promote their Catholic faith will continue to propagate the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church and exemplify what a good Catholic person should be wherever they decide to continue their Cursillo way of life.

I have learned so much in the few months as a member of the FCIC-LA Secretariat.

Please pray for all of us so that we may always be led towards the right direction by the Holy Spirit. Thank you and God Bless. De Colores!





# Annual Grand Ultreya



The annual Grand Ultreya of the Filipino Cursillos in Christianity of LA (FCIC-LA) was held on February 11, 2023 in St. Catherine of Siena Church hall which was preceded with the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Rev. Fr. Mau Goloran, Pastor of the church.

The theme for this year's celebration was "Moving Forward with Faith, Hope, and Courage" which was the main topic discussed by Rev. Fr. Rey Matunog during his Inspirational Talk.

The opening prayer was led by new Cursillista Ramon Tuazon while Dr. Ramon Geluz, over-all head of the event, welcomed all attendees and friends. Billy Ricafort led the praise and worship songs which paved the way for a joyful event ahead.

After the delicious lunch served by FCIC-LA Secretari-

at, the highlights of the celebration were two sets of very powerful and touching Lay Witness and Affirmation talks given by the following:

I. Lay Witness Speaker—Bebs Nonato

Affirmation/Echo Talks—Olive Almodovar and Agnes Alonzo.

II. Lay Witness Speaker—John Tuquero

Affirmation/Echo Talks—Wilson De Jesus and Noel Bravo.

Deacon Santi Gorospe requested Deacons Gus Mora and Pedro Lira to do the Summation of the lay witness and affirmation talks who both did it with flying colors. The closing prayer was led by Deacon Pedro Lira.

The two Masters of Ceremonies were Lemon Dy-Liacco and Betty Defensor who did a very good job in making the celebration as joyful as ever.



## SHORT BIO - DATA - FCIC-LA SECRETARIAT



**Lay Director**

Maritess Tan Torres, married to Gerry M. Torres, Jr., was born and raised in Manila, Philippines. She is a Certified Public Accountant and a graduate of the Philippine School of Business Administration in the Philippines in 1979 with a degree in Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). She had worked for Sycip, Gorres & Velayo and Co.(SGV) as an Auditor immediately after her graduation from College until 1982. She worked as Accounting Manager from 1992 to 1999 for Luen Thai Garments Group of Companies in Saipan before she migrated to the United States of America in July, 1999. She worked as Accountant for the City of Los Angeles under Board of Public Works-Office of Accounting in 2007 and retired as Senior Accountant in August, 2022 after fifteen (15) years of service.

She lived her Cursillo weekend in 2001 at Divine Word Retreat Center in Riverside, CA under Women's Class 572 with Ethel Quitasol as Rectora and Delia Uy as Vice Rectora. She served as Assistant Lay Director from 2009-2011 and as Auditor from 2016-2018 with FCIC-LA Secretariat.



**Asst Lay Director**

Lucena "Len" Balino is the second child of the eight children of Teodulo A. Cortes & Rosita Cortes of Pura, Tarlac, graduated from the University of the East, Manila in 1976 with a Bachelors' Degree in Business Administration major in Accounting. She was an employee at United Coconut Planters Bank for over 9 years in the Philippines. She is married to Rodelio Balino and they have two daughters, Therese & Katherine C. Balino, both graduates of Days With the Helpers of the Lord (DWHL) Class #1.

Len joined the Filipino Cursillo Movement in April 1996 under Class No. 28. She belongs to Table Group of St. Rose at Divine Word Retreat Center, Riverside, CA. This is her 3rd term as an Ultreya Coordinator at San Gabriel Valley Ultreya Center. She served in the FCIC-LA Secretariat as Treasurer, Cursillo Proper Chairperson and presently as Asst. Lay Director. She volunteered in the Accounting Dep't. at St Christopher Catholic Church in 2019 and a Eucharistic Minister at St John the Baptist Catholic Church. She worked in the real estate and property management, Coopers and Lybrand CPA firm & various film industry in Los Angeles and retired in January 2020. She enjoys gardening, cooking, watching movies and listening to good oldies music.



**SOL Chairperson**

Doris Marie Agtarap was born in Iligan City, Philippines. She joined the Filipino Cursillos in Christianity under the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on August 11-14, 2016. She belongs to the Antelope Valley Ultreya of St. Junipero Serra, Lancaster. She is currently attending the Bible Study and Apologetic Class at Holy Family Catholic Church in Artesia since 2016. Being a Cursillista, she believes that knowing and understanding the Holy Scripture and Catechism of the Catholic Church are essential in our mission of Evangelization together with our Charisma of love and friendship.



**Pre Cursillo  
Chairperson**

Lisa Lascano is married to Eric Lascano with three kids, John Erick, Lerisa Joy and Eriza Maye who are all professionals and gainfully employed. She is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (BSEE) and of Early Childhood Education. She also obtained her Masters of Arts in Administrative Education.

She had worked as Elementary teacher of the School of the Future Program in the Division of City Schools in Manila for 15 years and currently works at Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment as Headstart Site lead for 15 years as well.

She is an active Church volunteer at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Los Angeles.

## SHORT BIO-DATA - FCIC-LA SECRETARIAT



**Cursillo Proper  
Chair-Women**

Vina Dungo is from the Parish of Holy Family in Artesia, CA. She lived her Cursillo in Riverside, California on September 22-25, 2005, Class # 653 and from the Table Group of St Cecilia.

She was born and raised in Bamban, Tarlac, Philippines, married to Bong Dungo of Class # 690. She graduated Radiologic Technology in Lyceum University, Dagupan City, Philippines. She never used this course in her career and was exposed more with Management, Operation and Marketing, wherein she thought, fit well with her personality. She has been in the Real Estate Business for 20 years now. Currently, she is an Associate broker. Growing up, she always heard her grandfather singing the De Colores song. So, the song was familiar to her when she attended the Cursillo Weekend.

She was called to be a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord in the Cursillo Movement. She knows that she is an insufficient instrument of God but it comforts her knowing that He will guide her. She entrusts herself to your prayers and support, that the Lord and Mary, our Blessed Mother, will help her and will always be on her side. She is confident that God will accompany her closely and help her with His grace.



**Cursillo Proper  
Chair-Men**

Michael Tiangco Marcelino was born in Bataan, Philippines on March 4, 1960 and currently resides in Oxnard, CA. He is married to the former Leila Muncal and they have two daughters, Dianne and Tracy and two grandsons, Christian and Liam. He is the oldest of 6 siblings. He joined the US Navy in September 1983 in Subic Bay, Philippines and served for 23 years. He is currently a civilian government employee working as a Logistician in Port Hueneme, CA. He enjoys playing golf and travelling.

He joined the Cursillo in Divine Word Retreat Center, San Bernardino, CA in November 2012 under the rectorship of Ray Ramirez. He belongs to the Table Group of St Peter. He has been actively involved in the Filipino Cursillo Movement since he joined the Cursillo weekend.



**Post Cursillo  
Chairperson**

Ramon Sison Geluz joined the Cursillo in May, 2019 in Divine Word Retreat Center, Riverside, CA after experiencing the closeness and dedication of the De Colores Choir at the Holy Family (HF) Catholic Church who are all Cursillo members. He later became the Choir Director of the De Colores Choir and the Coordinator of the Holy Family Ultreya. His wife, Lani Del Rosario Geluz, also joined the Women's Cursillo weekend in the same year and assists him with the De Colores Choir and the HFC Ultreya. Their only child, Michael Raymond is a Music and Sound Technology College professor and works as a Sound Engineer for Hollywood musicians and singers.

Bro. Ramon is also a Cantor and Choir Director at St. John of God and St. Linus Church in Norwalk and at St. Philip Binizi Church in Fullerton, CA.

He completed his medical education and training at the University of the Philippines College of Arts and Sciences and at the University of the Philippines and De La Salle University. After working as a Medical Director for years, he began a career in healthcare education and worked for different healthcare colleges in CA. He is currently the Campus Director and Dean of Clement Career College in Gardena in partnership with Tricare Scholarship Inc. providing educational and career opportunities for deserving nursing students. As a multi-awarded Opera and Broadway Composer, he composed the first originally written Filipino Opera, "Karim at Jasmin" and other religious themed musicals: "A Voice in the Wilderness, St. John the Baptist"; "Song of the Sparrow, St. Teresa of Kolkata"; "The Martyrdom of St. Lorenzo Ruiz." As the FCIC-LA Post Cursillo Person, he hopes to be able to use his medical and healthcare education experience and talent in music to motivate and energize the existing FCIC-LA Ultreyas and activate more Ultreyas and support them in all their Fund Raising Events.

## SHORT BIO—DATA - FCIC-LA SECRETARIAT



**Secretary**

Leo Nobleza Jr. belongs to the IHMC Ultreya Center in Los Angeles and his parish is St. Brendan Catholic Church in Los Angeles where he is a part of the Music Ministry. He lived his Cursillo weekend in Pomona Cursillo House in November 2016.

He is a Political Science graduate and wanted to become a Lawyer but as fate would have it, his plan was not God's plan. He is currently a Fund Manager in the Finance Office of David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA where he has been working for 11 years now. True enough, fate has brought him here which eventually became a gate way for his other family members to come to America.

When he joined the FCIC-LA, Leo quoted: "It has strengthened my faith and sealed my desire to serve God the best that I can be. I love being in the weekend classes because it gives me time to be with and talk to the Lord Jesus Christ peacefully and at the same time serve Him and our new Cursillistas. It is such a joy being a Cursillista - the love is evident and the desire to serve God and other people is very strong." God is good all the time and all the time God is good!

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**Treasurer**

Gerry V. Fernando came from a family of Cursillista in Meycauayan, Bulacan. He lived his Cursillo in Pomona Cursillo House last November 17-20, 2016, Class # 888. He belongs to the Table Group of St. Lorenzo Ruiz. He is also the current Treasurer of the FCIC-Los Angeles Secretariat.

Gerry is the Accounting Supervisor at St Anne's Family Services, a Los Angeles County's premier provider of a comprehensive array of services and support for young families and their children. He is also the founder/CEO of DG Bookkeeping & Tax Services LLC based in Los Angeles, CA. Gerry is an innovative and financially and operationally driven accounting professional with over thirty (30) years of accounting and finance experience. He is a California registered tax preparer and an IRS professional tax preparer (PTIN holder). He was a cum laude graduate of Bachelor in Accountancy from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. He has an MBA from Far Eastern University and holds a PhD in Business Management from Manuel L. Quezon University in the Philippines.

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**Auditor**

Albert Franco joined the FCIC-LA Cursillo Movement in 2016, belongs to the Table Group of St. Peter and also an Oblate of St. Benedict. He is a graduate in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Santo Tomas and Business Management in Jose Rizal College.

He is a former professional Graphic Designer and Illustrator working extensively on graphic, layouts, including logos, brochures and advertisements. He worked as Dental Office Manager from 2002 and retired in 2019. His work consisted of administering the day-to-day activities of the business office, including: patient and employee relations, management of marketing and communications effort; ensuring regulatory compliance, ensuring that filing and documentation are kept up to date and assisted the dentist with other tasks as assigned.

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**Liturgy/Worship  
Coordinator**

Zen Alejo is a graduate of Women's Cursillo Class No. 785, from the Table Group of St. Catherine of Siena with Lou Dulos as her Rectora and Carmen Bognot and Heidi Catabas as her Vice Rectoras.

She is married to a Brother Cursillista, Janus Alejo, a graduate of Men's Class No. 833. They are proud parents of Janzen, a graduate of Days with the Helpers of the Lord (DWHL) Class No. 12.

She is a Eucharistic Minister, past Ultreya Coordinator and belongs to the Parishes of St. Christopher in West Covina and St. John the Baptist in Baldwin Park.



## MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! By Ron Parcon



**For the 13th year, We have done it again!!!**

We have completed the **2023 Annual Feed the Hungry Program** of the FCIC-LA last January 30, 2023. With the help of our brothers and sisters, we

fed about 300 children in Mexico, Pampanga and gave aid to their families. The children and staff were fed a delicious lunch and was handed a 'loot bag' with canned goods, coffee, 5 kilos of rice, sugar, coffee and several food supply that will last them for several days. The kids enjoyed

availability of four large lechons, donated by a kind brother who prefers to be anonymous. Lechon was distributed to the kids who mostly saved it and opted to bring it home to be shared with their whole families. After the feeding, the volunteers were treated to a sumptuous lunch compliments of the Franco family. It was a catered buffet that was



their new backpacks with school supplies in it. It was a blessed day of sharing, caring and giving.

The charity event was attended by more than 50

Cursillistas and volunteers from southern California who actually helped distribute the blessings themselves. The local 'Kapangpangan' population surprised the volunteers by preparing local delicacies like home made tamales, assorted kakanin, pansit, and the famous *Sampelot* (ginatan).

"We plan to continue this Christian mission as far as our earthly being can endure, says Rey Alonzo, one of the main volunteers for this apostolate. This year was even made more grandiose with the

served in their humble abode at the luxurious Lake Shore Subdivision in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Mike Marcelino, a member of the FCIC-LA Secretariat, wishes that this project to go on yearly. "When we fed these children, we fed Jesus" he said. Linda Pascual, a former Regional Coordinator of Region X1 RST team, was touched upon witnessing the joy into these kids' eyes as they partook of the treats, including the generous serving of imported chocolate candies compliments of some 'balikbayans.' This mission has grown into exponential growth since its birth. It was started by feeding approximately 20 random street children in the slum areas of Tondo to this huge tradition. We never intended to solve the World Hunger but just a humble vision to have less children go hungry for a day. Our fruitful partnership with 'Haligi ng Bata' took care of the physical demand of the mission such as repacking, hauling of goods, and peace and order in the distribution of aid.

We thank all who helped in this endeavor and invite everyone to join us in Jan/Feb 2024 for the feeding next year. Our own children who came with us were truly evangelized and have a better outlook of how fortunate we are in this part of the globe.

**GOD IS GOOD!!! - ALL THE TIME!!**



## A Holyland Pilgrimage Should be on top of a Catholic's Bucket List

By Raynard R. Ramirez, Class 31

My siblings and I together with our better halves, (less one) just returned from a Holyland Pilgrimage to Israel and Jordan from February 28 to March 8 just as Lent started five days previous. We signed up with Chaplet Tours and Pilgrimages out of Buena Park originally for March, 2020 but the Covid-19 pandemic put everything on hold including our tour. But this year, with Tour Manager Chris Basilio from Chaplet and Shepherd Rev. Fr. Mauricio "Mau" Goloran, 'all systems are go'.

Our party: Rod, Class 610 with wife Gisela, Remy Nelson, Class 32 by herself and myself, Class 31 with my wife, Lori, along with 43 fellow Pilgrims from the Los Angeles area composed mostly of Filipinos, a couple of Caucasian husbands, a lady from Indonesia and another from Vietnam boarded Lufthansa at LAX on **Day One, January 27<sup>th</sup>** for Tel Aviv via Frankfurt and on **Day Two, February 28<sup>th</sup>**, arrived at Ben Gurion Airport where we were met by our Israeli native Roman Catholic guide and our bus driver. We checked-in, stowed our luggage and had dinner at our hotel, Ramada Nazareth, and bedded down for the night.

**Day Three, March 01:** after breakfast, we headed for the port city of Caesaria built by King Herod the Great, which included his palace, a Roman Theater, Aqueduct and a Gladiator Arena. Next stop was the high-tech city of Haifa and Stella Maris Monastery, both on Mt. Carmel. We headed back to Nazareth for lunch, then Eucharistic celebration at the Basilica of the Annunciation, the largest church in the region, a visit to St. Joseph's church and workshop, Mary's well, then dinner back at our hotel, a short 'wedding rehearsal' and retired for the night.

**Day Four, March 02:** After breakfast, first stop, Cana, Galilee, at the church marking the spot of Jesus' first Miracle. Eleven and-a-half couples (the other half in California via facetime) renewed wedding vows, from as little as 15 years to as much as 44 years of marriage. Next stop the Sea of Galilee and the Ministry Sites also known as "The Gospel Triangle". Seaside lunch of "St. Peter's Fish" (Tilapia); Capernaum; Mt. of Beatitudes; The Primacy of St. Peter; Tabgha or the site of the 5,000 fed with two fish and five loaves. Then on to Magdala where an ancient church and an old Synagogue just got

unearthed and a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Then dinner at our hotel and bedtime.

**Day Five, March 03:** We packed our bags the night before and left them early at the hotel lobby for loading in our bus. After breakfast, on to Mt. Tabor, mount of Transfiguration, above the Valley of Megiddo (Armageddon) for morning Eucharistic Celebration. Then south to Jericho, the oldest city in the world and the baptismal site of Jesus and renewed our Baptism Rites with water from the Jordan River, albeit a little murky. Drove to the Mountain of Temptation where Jesus spent 40 days and 40 nights amidst temptations from the Devil. Lunch at Jericho and then on to Bethlehem where the rest of the day was spent shopping before heading for Jerusalem and checking-in to our new Grand Court Hotel.

**Day Six, March 04:** After breakfast we visited the Church of the Assumption but due to construction inside, we were not able to enter. Then to the Garden of Gethsemane, at the Grotto, and Eucharistic Celebration at the Church of All Nations as we gathered around the Altar over the 'Rock of Agony' where Jesus shed sweat and blood. Then climbed up the Mount of Olives, enjoyed the view of the walled city, Mt. Zion and the modern Jerusalem on the horizon. Had a group photo with everyone in the entourage taken overlooking the walled city. More churches: Pater Noster Church where the Lord's Prayer was first invoked; Chapel of the Ascension where we kissed the rock last stepped on by Jesus here on Earth. Then on to Dominus Flevit and St. Magdalene Church, St. Peter in Gallicantu, site of four ancient churches and the house of Caiaphas where Peter denied Jesus three times. Then back to the hotel for dinner and bedtime.

**Day Seven, March 05:** Entering the Jewish Quarter of the walled City through the "Dung Gate" and stuck prayers and petitions between cracks and gaps in the rocks of the "Wailing Wall" portion of the Western Wall of the Temple, with The Dome of the Rock Mosque right above. Then on to Shepherds' Field where the Angels Announced the Holy Birth to those tending their flock and had Mass inside a cave chapel used to keep flocks safe for the night in Biblical Times. A visit to the Church of the Nativity where Jesus was born followed, then to Ein Karem, home of Elizabeth and Zechariah where John the Baptist

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Wedding at Cana



Wailing Wall



# A Holyland Pilgrimage Should be on top of a Catholic's Bucket List

By Raynard R. Ramirez, Class 31

was born and the Church of the Visitation.

**Day Eight, March 06:** Left our packed bags at the lobby and at 4:00 AM, entered the walled city's Lion's Gate through the Muslim Quarter and traced the Stations of the Cross along "Via Dolorosa" Then to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter and finished the 14<sup>th</sup> Station at the Rock of Golgotha, a spot under a rock where Jesus laid for three days is kept. Then back to our hotel for breakfast. After breakfast, entered the Sheep's Gate to St. Anne's Church, birthplace of the Virgin Mary, near the pool of Bethesda. Then drove to the Allenby Border to cross into Jordan, had lunch along the way and gave our well-wishes to Bassam, our guide, and Joseph, our driver, and met our Jordanian Roman Catholic guide, Ruby and our new driver at the border station. Checked-in at the Holiday Inn Resort Hotel, Dead Sea. Some of the Pilgrims soaked in the waters of the Dead Sea and after dinner, enjoyed belly dancing shows at the lobby.

**Day Nine, March 07:** Petra, the "Rose Red City", walked a total of three miles into and back out of "The Treasury", a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Nabatean Kingdom-built tomb out of solid sandstone rock face, featured in the film "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" Then we had Mass at the Chapel of Our Lady of the Holyland, and then back to our hotel for dinner and more belly dancing.

**Day Ten, March 08:** Breakfast is always great at the Holiday Inn Dead Sea. Then off to Mount Nebo, stayed at the summit and saw what Moses may have seen of "The Promised Land", but was not allowed to set foot on. After Eucharistic Celebration, we visited a famous workshop specializing in colorful stone mosaic artwork, household utensils, paraphernalia and jewelry. At our hotel, last call for Dead Sea dipping; a special room was set up for our group for our final get-together: our "Secret Prayer Partner" reveal. Each of us was given a name of a secret prayer partner and all throughout the Pilgrimage, we would pray for that person, and that person would in turn pray for his or her prayer partner. At the reveal event, each Pilgrim had a present or token for his or her Prayer Partner. We packed our bags for our drive to Amman Airport

past midnight.

**Day Eleven, March 09:** Our flight for Frankfurt was at 2:30 AM. We obviously had more than what we came with. Our suitcases were almost bursting at the seams and obviously overweight. We were frantically weighing our bags and re-distributing the contents between them. There was a huge receptacle where passengers discarded clothing, personal effects, even whole suitcases since they were overladen. We just prayed for the best. At the check-in counter, the Jordanian Lufthansa personnel told us we could check-in our carry-on bags for free; Hallelujah, God is Great! At Frankfurt, all went well; same as at LAX, and back at the Flyaway Station in Van Nuys where we boarded our Uber ride for home, sweet home.

Now as a Filipino Roman Catholic and a Cursillista, I highly encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ to join these Holyland Pilgrimages before embarking on other Holy destinations; I am sure many of our members have already done it, even more than once, several times over. It is an eye-opening experience that sheds light on our religious practices and why we do them. In fact some of our members were in the Holyland at the same time we were doing our Pilgrimage, but due to the huge numbers of tour groups, and the various itineraries and choices of places to visit, it's easy not to cross each other's paths, pardon the pun.

Maybe I can do a 'Part Two' or more series of features for future issues of "Ang Tungko". I will give you a teaser: did you know that all the mysteries of the Rosary: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous, the events, places, objects and significance mentioned in them I actually experienced, have seen, touched and marveled upon in the Holyland, except for one; can you guess which one it is? De Colores!



The Promised Land



Chaplet—Mt. Olives



Mary's Birthplace



The Treasury—PETRA



# Visita Iglesia - SWAP Family Project

This year's **Visita Iglesia** was held on March 10-12, 2023 with six-van ride to Santa Cruz, CA organized by the SWAP (Serve With A Purpose) family headed by Deacon John Manalo and fellow Cursillistas from the Holy Family Church in Artesia, CA.

The pilgrimage started in front of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Artesia, CA with the blessing and sprinkling of water by Deacon John Manalo upon all the five vans and 61 Pilgrims for a safe journey.

This was the 10th year of the Visita Iglesia Project Team spearheaded by the SWAP family, the first three years of which were held in 21 Mission Churches all over California.

While on the way, the Pilgrims prayed the Holy Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet as well as a lot of bonding, laughter and camaraderie with new and old friends alike notwithstanding abundant food and drinks. Although there was heavy storm prediction in Northern CA that weekend, the Lord worked in mysterious way as only some rains and drizzle were experienced by all the Pilgrims. Some churches were closed at the time we arrived but the Lord allowed us to do the Stations of the

Cross, etc. anyway including some picture taking opportunities.

We visited a total of 7 churches during the 3-day pilgrimage from Friday to Sunday and did two Stations of the Cross, sang the Anima Christi and heard some reflections for each church we visited.

It was a very solemn experience with a lot of joy in every van despite long travel.

The Pilgrims stayed in Holiday Inn in Pismo Beach overnight before heading to Solvang for our last stop in the outlets and Santa Ynez Church, one of the 21 Mission Churches built by St. Junipero Serra in CA. on our way to Artesia.

Thank you very much to the SWAP family Project Team: Deacon John and Lou Manalo, Bong and Vina Dungo, Bernie Macapinlac, Chris and Buena Lopez, Zaldy and Olive Almodovar, Ted and Cora Guevarra who also acted as our van drivers and navigators including Arnel Perucho and Riz Bautista.

We thank God for guiding and protecting us on a very safe pilgrimage and we hope to see each other again next year for this life time experience. De Colores!



## AN OBLATE CURSILLISTA By Albert Franco, OSB



*Cursillo has given me the tools in my spiritual journey, and since becoming an Oblate of Saint Benedict, that is when I correlated the practice of silence and listening as a Benedictine lay to my passion as an artist.*

*As an artist, I developed the skill of silence and listening while creating my artistic inspirations and became more fully conscious of God.*

*One more thing I learned since becoming an Oblate is when we live in harmony with God's will, then our tongues are under control, and we live good lives. As Michael Casey wrote in the book-The Road to Eternal Life "Unholy speech leads to Unholy attitudes and in due course, will be expressed in Unholy behavior".*

## Lighter Moments

**I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEIR AND THEY'RE. THEIR SO DUMB.**

---

**Lawyer cross examining the defendant: What did you did to him when you see him?**

**Judge: Will you please rephrase your question?**

**Lawyer: What do you do now?**

**Judge: The problem with you Lawyers is that you talk as if you are not education.**

---

**What did one [ocean](#) say to the other ocean?**  
**Nothing, it just waved.**

**What's the difference between "incomplete" and "finished"??**

– A man without a wife feels incomplete.  
Once married, he's finished.

---

**My parents told me that they don't have a favorite child...**

– It was tough, considering I am the only child.

---

**Knock, knock.**

**Who's there?**

**Nobel.**

**Nobel who?**

**No bell. That's why I knocked.**

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**OBITUARIES:** Please pray for the repose of the souls of Deacon Roland Abalos, Carmen Dungca, Hyacinth Gabuelo, Dina De Leon, Remegia Andrada, Steve Lara, Peter Ramirez, Georgina Rigonan, Fredolina Sabado, Hoang Tran, Bishop David O'Connell and all those who have gone to be with the Lord. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in eternal peace with God.

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### INTERCESSORY PRAYERS:

Please pray for the continuous healing of Bishop Alex Aclan, Billy Ricafort, Gilda Manalo and all those suffering from physical and spiritual challenges. We pray for them through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Mighty Name of Jesus. Amen.

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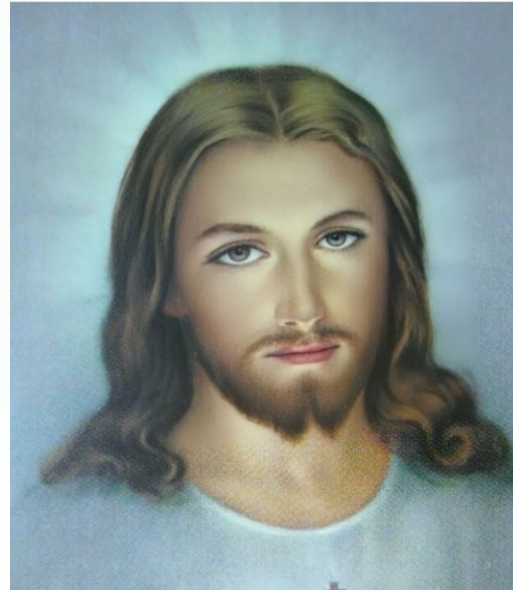
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**Christ is counting on you!**

## CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

**April 30, 2023 11:00am to 5:00pm**

Men's Cursillo #1025 1st Formation Meeting  
School of Leaders Meeting  
St. Catherine of Siena Parish Hall

**May 21, 2023 12:00 pm to 3:00pm**

School of Leaders Meeting  
Holy Family Church Hall

**June 11, 2023 from 11:00am to 3:00pm**

Men's Cursillo #1025 2nd Formation Meeting  
Venue: TBA

**June 22 to 25, 2023**

Men's Cursillo Weekend  
Cursillo House Retreat Center, Pomona

**July 7 to 9, 2023**

DWHL Weekend Class  
Cursillo House Retreat Center, Pomona

**July 20 to 23, 2023**

**33rd National Encounter**  
Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

**August 10 to 13, 2023**

Women's Cursillo Weekend  
Cursillo House Retreat Center, Pomona

**October 20 to 22, 2023**

Region XI Fall Encounter  
Venue: TBA

**November 2 to 5, 2023**

Men's Cursillo Weekend  
Cursillo House Retreat Center, Pomona

**December 2, 2023**

FCIC Annual Christmas Party  
Venue: TBA