



mission

magazine

FALL 2020



FINDING STABILITY:

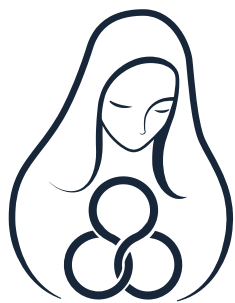
Fr. Jose Maria A Bombita, SOLT

UPDATES FROM ASIA-PACIFIC:

Various Contributors

BUILDING FOR A PURPOSE:

Sr. Mary of the Holy Spirit, SOLT



SOCIETY *of* OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity

A message from the
**GENERAL
PRIEST
SERVANT**



The SOLT Asia-Pacific Region

As our short thirty-minute boat ride to the island of San Miguel, Philippines, was reaching its conclusion, we could hear festive, celebratory music coming from the shore. At first, I wondered what event must be coinciding with our arrival on the island, but I quickly realized the crowd was there to welcome and greet us. The crowd on the shore made way as our two boats approached the sandy beach and our group of eighty priests, sisters and laity, walked down planks to the firm footing on the beach. There was a marching band dressed in their best regalia playing music; dignitaries and town folk standing and smiling to greet us; and, banners hanging from above welcoming the members of the SOLT community to the island of San Miguel!

From the beach, we took a forested pathway up about sixty stairs toward the peak of the island. Each step had two children on it, one on each end, dressed in their absolute Sunday best. With every step you took, you would hear either one of two words: "Welcome," or, "Thank you." It seemed like the entire island was either down on the beach or along the path, except when we reached the summit and walked out into the opening, we could see the church of San Miguel and its surrounding area packed with what must have been the rest of the island preparing to celebrate Mass and a grand reception that followed.

I was stunned and incredibly moved by the reception and outpouring of gratitude offered by the people of San Miguel. In particular, the little children offering their accented "thank you" made me feel entirely



*SOLT brothers and
priests at prayer in the
Philippines.*



Disciples of Jesus through Mary living in Marian-Trinitarian communion, serving on Ecclesial Family Teams in areas of deepest apostolic need

unworthy of their appreciation since it was my first time setting foot on the island, but it also filled me with a sense of great pride to think that the forty years of service of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity on San Miguel was so appreciated and esteemed that it elicited such a heart-warming, generous response!

As I pondered the reason for their gratitude, the packed church with its overflow crowd pouring out of the front and sides of the church explained it all – they believed that it was Jesus they were encountering in the Mass, and they understood that the purpose of the presence of the SOLT missionaries in San Miguel was simply to facilitate their encounter with Jesus Christ! Their gratitude was an expression of a deep and abiding faith.

The 2006 SOLT General Chapter and International Assembly in Bacacay, Philippines was my first time ever travelling to the Philippines – an interesting experience in and of itself. However, it was on that

Sunday celebration on the island of San Miguel that I came to see the inspiring beauty of the SOLT Asia Pacific Region, and the faith of the many people that we are privileged to serve there. While I wish each person could have experienced the beautiful welcome we received that Sunday in 2006, I will have to settle for hoping that this issue of the Mission Magazine will provide you with at least a glimpse of the beauty and faith of our members and missions there, as well as those whom we have the pleasure of serving.

FR. PETER MARSALEK, SOLT

Fr. Peter is currently serving as the General Priest Servant of SOLT. He resides in Corpus Christi, TX.

CONTACT INFO

Director of Mission Advancement

Sr. Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, SOLT
P.O. Box 4116, Corpus Christi, TX 78469
(361) 654-0054 ext 101
srmariamediatrix@solt.net

Discover more at solt.net
Instagram: @soltlife33
Twitter: @solt33
Facebook: /soltlife

VOLUNTEER

Sr. Maryam Caritas Sparke, SOLT
soltvolunteer@gmail.com
www.solt.net/volunteer

VOCATIONS

Priests & Brothers Vocations

Fr. Beau Schweitzer, SOLT
vocations@solt.net

Sisters Vocations

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, SOLT
soltsistersvocations@gmail.com

S O L T

Asia-Pacific Region



CHINA

MACAU

THAILAND

RATCHABURI
CHANTABURI

AUSTRALIA

BROKEN BAY

PAPUA, NEW GUINEA

MT. HAGEN

PHILIPPINES

CACERES
LEGAZPI
SORSOOGON
DAET
NOVALICHES
LIBMANAN
SAN JOSE IN
NUEVA ECIJA



Finding Stability in the Will of God

Regularity! Stability! Permanency!

This is very often the heart's desire of people who accept job invitations in the corporate world. Stability in work provides the opportunity for them to settle into an area with their family and pursue the kind of life they desire for their family. It also provides an opportunity to make plans for the future and receive benefits to secure future needs. While this desire is generally true in the lay state, my own experience in consecrated and priestly life has taught me that I should never settle in too deeply or make too many future plans because one never knows when the phone call may come for a new assignment in a totally

new location! Admittedly, all of this is something that consecrated priests should know they have signed up for by the very nature of their vocation.

The decision, through prayerful discernment, to enter into consecrated and priestly life must be the right response to the deep longing of one's heart to be settled, not in a particular place or job, but rather, totally settled in the will of God and the peace that comes from that. In consecrated life, the will of God is manifested in a particular way through the assignment that we receive from our proper superior in the community. As such, the exercise of our freedom is made in the decision to choose the consecrated life in the particular





Previous page: Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary (OLMHTCS), Naga, Philippines.

OLMHTCS gate getting colorful . Thanks to donors and Fr. Noel Balderas, SOLT, the artist.

Congratulations to our newly professed brother, Br. Ronald Aries M. Pirante, SOLT.

Above: Fr. Jose Maria, SOLT serving children of the parish in Naga, Philippines.

Below: The small and simple chapel at Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary

community we belong to, and then is further expressed in being able to respond affirmatively to the assignments given to us! Therefore, freedom in the priestly and consecrated life is rightfully exercised by one's obedience to superiors, in which is found the will of God. Precisely in this promise of obedience, one finds a beautiful stability in God's will which gives a great sense of peace and security.

While all of the above may be perfectly good in theory, it also requires the grace of God to assist one in being able to respond to changes that sometimes catch us by surprise. For the past couple of years, I have been assigned as the Secretary of the Regional Priest Servant in the SOLT Asia Pacific Region and have been assisting with the pastoral

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I have wholeheartedly enjoyed giving the gift of my priestly ministry to the people there and looked forward to building a great relationship with the people there.

needs at Pope St. John XXIII Church in Palanas, Pilar, Sorsogon. It has been a great joy to serve in this new environment after serving my first five years of priesthood at the Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary in Naga City.

After working in formation and education with college students, it has been a real blessing to be in a more regular pastoral setting at St. John XXIII Church. I have wholeheartedly enjoyed giving the gift of my priestly ministry to the people there and looked forward to building great relationships with the people there, hopefully for many years to come. As such, you can imagine my surprise when I heard the voice of my superior saying: “May we bring you back to the College Seminary in Naga?” Interiorly, I cried! However, I also realized that it was an opportunity to renew the freedom of my promise of obedience and respond with a resounding “Yes”!

In obedience, real stability in the will of God is present! Now, I am happily back again in the College Seminary with a strong commitment to live out the Call!



Above: Fr. Jose Maria, SOLT, celebrating school Mass in the Philippines

Right: SOLT Ecclesial Family Team dinner at Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary. Self-sustained celebration: fried chicken from Fr. Willy’s backyard poultry, vegetables from Fr Edwin’s garden, view deck built by Fr. Jim, food cooked by Kuya Jo, food prepared by Sister Rosary and Sister Mercy. “We serve as one, we enjoy mission as one.”



FR. JOSE MARIA A BOMBITA, SOLT

Fr. Jose Maria Bombita is originally from Tabaco City. He was ordained a SOLT priest in 2013 and is currently the Dean of Studies at Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary in the Pilgrim City of Naga, Philippines.



Updates from SOLT Asia-Pacific



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In the midst of this pandemic the mission still goes on. We are visiting all the villages with the image of Our Lady of Salvation. She will stay overnight in the village and they will have vigils, rosary and catechesis... while everyday they are praying "Perdon."

-Sr. Agnes Abordo, SOLT

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There is no place for selfishness, and no place for fear! Do not be afraid, then, when love makes demands. Do not be afraid when love requires sacrifice.

-Saint Pope John Paul II





Opposite page (from top):
Children celebrate at SOLT Foundation Day gathering in July, in Manila.

Priests, sisters and lay faithful gather for the foundation day celebration and profession of perpetual promises of Br. Thomas. Picture from the Men's rebirth center in Chombung, Ratchaburi, Thailand.



This Page (from top):
Priests, sisters and lay faithful in the Philippines gather for good food, games and prayer to celebrate the 62nd anniversary of the founding of SOLT.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity statue stands in a simple SOLT chapel in Thailand.

Sr. Mary Rosary, SOLT, is excited to eat the community meal.

Missionaries travel between the islands in the Philippines regularly. There is no cell service on many of the islands and the conditions are often rustic and challenging. This photo was taken on the way to the Parish of Calaguas Island, photo by Fr. Witne Willie.

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May our Mother, Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, intercede for us.
Amen.



"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be."

John 14:2-3

Building for a Purpose

A few years ago, our beloved

Sr. Mary Handmaid of Jesus was struck by a truck while she was walking on the road. She was injured badly and required a large amount of convalescent care. When she was released from the hospital, we brought her to the convent, in order for her to continue healing at home.

At that time, we came to realize that our place was not designed to meet her needs. We had no ramps for wheelchairs and the rooms were too small to comfortably care for someone who was injured or sick. We were limited in our movements and our ability to care for her.

As sisters in a community, it is our responsibility to take good care of our sick, injured and elderly missionaries. Our eyes were opened to the challenge before us, which was to provide a home where we can care for those sisters in need. We





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We hope that this will be a place where the sisters' gifts continuously flourish and their community life is nourished.

decided to commit to building a home for that purpose. With that realization and subsequent decision, we began to fundraise, to ask for help from those who were willing and able to help us, and to source out work to complete our project.

Because of the Providence of God, we are currently building the first phase of our project. Phase one includes the first floor, with four spacious rooms, all with individual bathrooms. We are planning to add more rooms on the second floor and we pray that God will help us complete the project in time.

We dream of a home where our older missionaries can rest and retire and where our sick members can find healing and peace. We work with the goal to build a place where sacrifices and prayers will continue to be a manifestation of the sisters' missionary lives, even though they are afflicted by sickness or old age. We hope to give them a

home where they can live out their vocation, so that their espousal with Christ remains steadfast. We hope that this will be a place where the sisters' gifts continuously flourish and their community life is nourished.

Our new convent will be located at the SOLT Regionalate Center in Putiao, Sorsogon. This future home is perfectly conducive to cultivate the vulnerable sisters' creative energies for arts, music, writing, gardening, spiritual activities, mentoring the other missionaries, or even writing books or memoirs. This is where the oil of the lamp is kept burning until the dawn when the bridegroom will take his spouse for the final homecoming.

We are grateful to all of our benefactors around the world, and we humbly ask for your prayers as this project continues to grow. God bless you.



SR. MARY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CIMANES, SOLT

Sr. Mary of the Holy Spirit Ciman, SOLT, is from Mayon Daraga, Albay in the Philippines and has been a perpetually professed member since 2005. She is currently serving as Regional Sister Servant for the Asia-Pacific Region.

Previous page (from the top): Sr. Mary Handmaid, SOLT, recovered from her injuries years after her accident; elderly sisters in Sorsogon; members of the community celebrate a meal together.

Above: The SOLT Asia-Pacific Region is now building a home for the elderly and infirmed sisters. Phase one of the project is underway.



Above: SOLT Ecclesial Family Team prepares a meal at Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity College Seminary.



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INSIDE

FINDING STABILITY IN THE WILL OF GOD

Fr. Jose Maria A Bombita, SOLT

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Sr. Mary Holy Spirit, SOLT



On the front cover: Prayer at a SOLT Asia-Pacific gathering.

Right: Distributing Communion during a SOLT community Mass in the Philippines.



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