

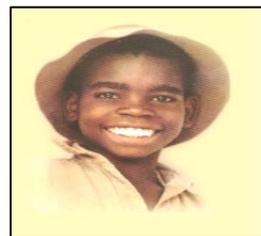
Birthdays and E-mail contacts updated

FILIPINO MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA			Date of Birth
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STUDENTS IN FORMATION IN CEBU			
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RABELAS	christophermrabelas@yahoo.com	Christopher	30-05-1981

Latest News:

March 26 – April 7, 2009: Fr. Richard Baawobr (middle of the community picture) came over from Rome for his first visit to the Philippines.

In preparation for the 2010 Chapter we will meet for the pre-capitular assembly with our confreres in India Frs. Tom Reilly, Cor de Visser, Jean Pierre Roth, Leo Laurence and Martin Grenier, probably during the month of October 2009 at a venue yet to be decided.



AFRICA CALLING

Newsletter
of the
Missionaries of Africa in the Philippines
1/2009

WELCOME TO THE PHILIPPINES!

“A Portrait Full of Light and Shadows” is the title of an article by Ma.



With Sr. Anne Healey SSHJM in Pier 6

Ceres P. Doyo commissioned by the Comboni Missionaries. “Being Filipino” was the title of the November 2008 issue of the World Mission Magazine. In her article Mrs. Doyo explores how the dynamics of

Filipino history and culture that have contributed to the Filipino being a “global citizen” par excellence “who continues to carry the traits and characteristics that ... make every Filipino distinct and, sometimes, inscrutable.”¹ Among “Filipinos’ best qualities”² are: “getting along with others, family orientation, joy and humor, flexibility, adaptability and creativity, hard work and industry, faith and religiosity and the ability to survive.” On the shadow side Mrs. Doyo enumerates “extreme personalism, extreme family centredness, lack of discipline, passivity and lack of initiative, colonial mentality, the each his/her own” mentality – what she calls the “Kanya-kanya syndrome” and finally according to the author’s list of shadow traits “lack of self-analysis and self-reflection”. On this background I

¹ Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, “A Portrait Full of Light and Shadows” in “Being Filipino”, World Mission – The Asian Catholic Monthly Magazine No. 217 Vol XX, November 2008, pp 14-19.

² From a study entitled “A Moral Recovery Program: Building a People, Building a Nation” to which Ma. Ceres P. Doyo refers.

would like to share my experience as I have already reached my fourth year of life in this beautiful world of the Philippine Islands.

“Hey Joe, where are you going?” - I was stunned at first at the humorous way I was greeted as an obvious foreigner in the Philippines. I was equally surprised that my friendly greeting “Maayong buntag!” - a literal rendering of “Good Morning!” in Cebuano would only elicit a casual raising of the eyebrows and a smile. It was after having launched myself into the language course at the Maryknoll Institute for Language and Culture (MILC) in Davao/Mindanao that I discovered that “Joe” would be the equivalent of “white man” in Northern Ghana and could qualify as common denominator for any long-nosed foreigner, that the answer to the question where I was going could be a simple “over there”, and that lifting the eyebrows with a friendly smile would be as good as any casual greeting formula. Meanwhile I am more than happy that after persevering for the six months of formal language learning I am now comfortable in one-to-one conversations in which the partner in conversation discovers that not every foreigner is “Americano”, that there is a world beyond the islands bigger than “America”, that the once colonizer Spain is part of Europe, that Mexicans are not Spaniards, and that Africa itself is a continent with 53 countries and more than 3,000 languages whose inhabitants are as different as are the Japanese from the Koreans or Vietnamese.

Arriving in this archipelago in my middle years (the Philippines are composed by over 7,500 islands - one third of which are inhabited and of which I have so far been able to visit some ten or so) I have learned to live comfortably and with a growing sense of peace with the complexity and ambiguities of this unique country and culture - a culture which continues to be molded by so many diverse influences.

From time to time I recall my former mentor Fr. Raphael Esteban’s insight that cultures impact on each other with unequal strength.

What Raphael used to call “the cultural assault” of the colonial experience has left its imprint in the hearts and minds of the people visited by the blessings and distorted interactions of the colonizing empires: on the African continent the British, French, Italians, Arab and Portuguese, in the Philippines Islam, China, Spain, America, Japan and once more America.

Sr. Mary Nieri, a Filipina contemplative Carmelite nun believes the Filipino mind is American and pragmatic; its heart is Spanish and religious and its soul is Malay and mystical.

Fr. Armand Galay (originally from Kidapawan/Cotabato writes from BURUNDI: “Peace! I’m sending you the annual report Nouvelle Espérance (the name of the project meaning “New Hope”) has become an essential partner of the Burundian government in its effort to fight AIDS in the country. Fr. Armand was recently honored as “most outstanding Asian personality” in East Africa. His Filipino cultural genius and creativity gave birth to the idea of “friendship meals” hosted by people living with AIDS in order to break down walls of prejudice and isolation. The latest newsletter



from Nouvelle Espérance informs us that Armand’s has handed-over as coordinator to Fr. Roger Ouedraogo, a Missionary of Africa from Burkina Faso as he awaits an appointment to the North American Province.

Julius Maniego de la Cruz from General Santos City has been appointed to the Tanzania-Kenya-Sudan Province and has started to learn Swaheli.

Fr. Walter Tubis is on home leave in the Philippines. In recent months he has worked in his home diocese of Dumaguete with Redemptorist Missionaries in the promotion of the BEC apostolate in Mangganay chaplaincy/Bais in the mountains of Negros. You will find beautiful impressions of life in Africa if you visit the photo gallery on his website at <http://www.freewebs.com/waltertubis/>



Welcome to our new arrival **Fr. Emmanuel Lengaigne!** The arrival of our new rector will hopefully boost the morale of our students as learners of French. Already now the Magnificat and Benedictus in French have become part of our weekly prayer menu. Fr. Emmanuel has just completed the period of formal language learning at the Maryknoll Institute for Language and Culture (MILC) in Davao. Before taking over as the new rector from Fr. Charlie he will walk the mountains of Talamban in Guba Parish for a period of language practice.



NEWSFILE

Congratulations!! On March 19, 2009 a Master's Degree (Master of Science



in Elementary School Management) was conferred upon Br. Lito Garay Doguiles by the University of Cebu. He had successfully defended his thesis on "Contents and Strategies of the Existing Human Sexuality Modules at San Carlos Seminary College". During the time of preparing for

his master's Lito accepted to be the human formation coordinator and counsellor at the Archdiocesan San Carlos College Seminary. Presently Lito is preparing himself for his new appointment to Tabora/Tanzania. We have been greatly enriched by his presence with us as a volunteer member of the formation team.

First Cycle - Cebu:

Chapel Renovation:

The picture shows the silhouette of Africa designed by Bernard Monteron and beautifully worked in stone by Raul Simblante. On the picture from l.2r.

F.Brian Redondo, Lito Doguiles, Ryan Contamina, Charles Timoney, Bernard Monteron, Clayb Caputolan,



Chris Rabelas. Lower level: Thomas Schwiedessen, Geovannie Robilla, Richard Baawobr, Emmanuel Lengaigne.

Having myself moved "out of Africa", which, to be more precise, was for me the Islamised north of Ghana and more specifically still the remote rural area of Bunkpurugu (meaning an "old place" somewhere near the end of the world), life has started for me all over again since my arrival at the age of 46 in the Philippines. I continue to allow myself "to be stretched" – a favorite expression of my long time companion missionary Kevin Rand – by the complexity of Filipino life and culture, by the intercultural dynamics of our witnessing community with Charles Timoney from Ireland representing the grandfather generation of the Society, with myself representing the mid-lifers and the two younger Filipino "pioneers", Bernard Monteron and our first Filipino Brother, Lito Doguiles, representing the resilience of youth and the emerging Asian



face of our society. I consider myself blessed for being privileged to experience life in the rapidly urbanising centre of Cebu - fast merging with its

adjacent cities of Talisay and Mandaue. I am kept young and energized by my encounters on campus ministry with a new generation of Filipinos who will be the engineers, entertainers, computer programmers, caregivers, educators, pilots and seafarers of tomorrow in Dubai, Taiwan, Hongkong, Toronto, Rome and Berlin – and, God willing, who will also be to-morrow's Missionaries of Africa in Tunis, Tamale and Tanzania.³

³ This article was originally written for the Missionaries of Africa publication monthly magazine "Petit Echo".

Health in Africa

Professor Battles Enemy from African Waters

The Yangtze River is the central artery of China. Flowing through numerous provinces, it passes landscapes of agriculture, industry and areas given over to conservation and tourism. The river is essential to them all. Why mention the great Chinese river in this magazine dedicated to Africa? The answer is that the Yangtze has always shared one characteristic with many African rivers. The people who live alongside these rivers have lived in fear of one dreaded killer above all: malaria!

Malaria continues to decimate communities in Africa, with children particularly vulnerable. Malaria was a constant threat to the people living on the banks of the Yangtze, too. Recently however, malaria infections there have dropped by ninety per cent. What is happening?



Professor Yoel Margalith survived two German concentration camps to become Director of the Centre for Biological Control at Ben Gurion University. In 1993 he started to work with Palestinian and Jordanian scientists to eradicate mosquitoes in the Jordan valley.

All it takes for the mosquitoes to breed is for some water to grow stagnant in a discarded tin can or on some grass, but the stagnant waters of rivers and pools breed millions of the deadly killer insects. Of all the various mosquitoes that inhabit the world, only the female of the *Anopheles* genus passes on the disease-carrying parasites on to human beings. Male mosquitoes do not feed on blood and so do not transmit the parasite.

The solution pioneered by Prof. Margalith is called Bti: *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*. It is a variation of the *Bacillus thuringiensis* which has been in use since 1980. The bacteria work by fatally damaging the gut of mosquito larvae which eat it. Unlike synthetic sprays, the bacteria only harm black flies and mosquitoes. The environmental impact is minimal.

The effect in the Yangtze Valley has been spectacular. Bti has been used in eleven African states, where it has been credited with reducing the incidence of river blindness. With huge sums of money pledged for the battle against malaria, T.B. and HIV/AIDS the use of Bti promises to save

millions of lives. Prof. Margalith should not take it amiss when people call him *Doctor Malaria!* ⁴

Global Crisis hits Mining Industry in Congo



The global economic crisis has caused the collapse of the local mining industry in the Katanga province in the Democratic Republic of Congo in central Africa. The region relies heavily on mining and since September 2008 when global demand for natural resources plummeted and prices fell to all-time lows, 300,000 people have lost jobs and another 60,000 may soon lose their jobs too. The Congolese franc, the local currency,

has also lost half its value, seeing an increasing number of children and beggars on the streets. MONUC, the local UN mission has been wary of security issues surrounding the crisis, and the region has recently seen an increase in violent crime. The mining crisis is beginning to affect other businesses in Katanga as well. On the other side there has been a lowering of the cost of food and petrol prices from their enormous peak during the middle of 2008. ⁵

Prayer for the 2010 Chapter

Father of Jesus Christ, we give you thanks for the countless blessings you have showered on our Society since its foundation. You have entrusted us with your message of love and hope to the African world, for which we thank you. As humble servants we stand ready to take up the challenges of the future. Grant us the grace to remain faithful to the inspiration of Cardinal Lavignerie, while taking the risk or imagining the future with audacity and wisdom.

May your Holy Spirit enlighten us in discerning together the ways of responding to the needs of Africa today. Rid us of all that divides us. Strengthen the bonds of our unity, so that beyond our differences we may be but one

⁴ Thanks to: www.beyondimages.info/ and [www. Israel21c.org](http://www.Israel21c.org)

⁵ <http://sparechangenews.blogspot.com/2009/02/joblessness-rises-in-congo-as-global.html>