



PR UPDATES

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¡Cristo ha resucitado!



*La Resurrección de Jesús es la Respuesta del Padre.
El amor vence al poder de las armas,
rompe el egoísmo humano;
el amor es más fuerte que las injusticias, las mentiras,
las pandemias de coronavirus y la muerte.*

Contagiad la esperanza: ¡Feliz Pascua a todos!

*Fr. Miguel Miró Miró, oar
Prior general*



OAR PRIOR GENERAL SENDS HIS EASTER MESSAGE

EASTER MESSAGE OF BISHOP BUZON



“If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” (Rm 6:8). In this short verse taken from the letter to the Romans, St. Paul summarizes the significance of our Lenten celebration, which we have just concluded, and the meaning of Christian life itself. The Church often refers to this as the Paschal mystery. What does Paschal mystery mean? It simply means that by his passion, death and resurrection, Christ conquered sin and death and won for us a new life. Christian life consists in sharing and living this new life in Christ. But in order to do so, we first have to share in his passion and death. We need to die to ourselves, to our sins and vices, to our pride and lust... in a word, to everything in us that is not of Christ, so that Christ can live in us. May our Lenten observance of prayer, fasting and charity bear fruit in the transformation of our own life into the life of Christ himself. As we happily end today our 40-day (Cuaresma) Lenten observance with the celebration of Easter, we find ourselves still having to serve another 40-day (Quarantine) observance, the Enhanced Community Quarantine.

When will this end? I do not know if a forty-day lockdown will suffice in combatting the Covid-19 virus. Even as we celebrate Easter, it feels like we are still in the season of Lent, in a time of pain and penance, purification and conversion. Could it be that God wants us to extend our Lenten observance and continue to live these days of the pandemic in the spirit of the Paschal mystery? If we bear this present ordeal in union with Christ and die to our own self-centeredness and pride, we shall experience his healing and salvation not only when this pandemic finally ends, but already even now. I can see this in the many life-changing transformations happening around the world and right here in our diocese. In the midst of the dark and horrendous specter created by Covid-19, the innate goodness of humanity shines brightly, offering much hope. Confronted with his utter helplessness, proud man is brought to his knees and returns to God. We read stories of atheists converting and of 13 million Italians attending Mass once again via TV2000 (Vatican station). We are moved by the heroism of the frontliners, who risk their lives to save ours, the generous spirit of volunteerism, as exemplified by our own Covid Warriors and many youth groups, the quick and immediate response of our people to our

appeal for the Food Bank. Most of all, I also would like to highlight the silent heroism of ordinary people and their families who abided with the call of government and the Church to stay at home. By doing so, they have done a great contribution. They helped contain the spread of the virus and in the process, spare the lives of millions from the infection.

When will this end? Again, I say I don't know. Even Jesus, after his resurrection, asked his apostles to wait for 40 days more and another 10 days until the Holy Spirit would come to renew their spirits. Only then did they come out of the upper room and travelled the whole world to fulfil their mission of proclaiming the good news of salvation.

Perhaps, the more important question to ask ourselves is: how will this end? My hope and prayer is that this terrible and unprecedented experience of suffering and pain becomes a Paschal experience and ends with an Easter celebration of the birth of a new life, a celebration of the resurrection of a new people with a new heart where God reigns; a new politics and a new economics where man is valued above profit, and common good above personal interest; a new attitude and behavior towards creation that is more responsible and caring. By now, hopefully, this pandemic has made us and our families realize with growing clarity the essentials and the non-essentials in life. I pray that when this catastrophe is finally over, everything does not go back to normal, to what it used to be, but to a new normal, a new way of life. The lesson instilled to us by this pandemic is too precious to be squandered. Let turn every pain that comes our way into a Paschal experience for all suffering when borne with Christ can only be salvific. May the joy of Easter fill your hearts and your homes. God bless, and stay safe always.* *(lifted from Visayan Daily Star, April 13, 2020)*

PROVINCE AND CITY UNDER ECQ

Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Lacson placed the entire province of Negros Occidental under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) from 12:01 am of March 30, 2020 to 11:59 pm of April 14 2020 by virtue of Executive Order #20-20. Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia issued Executive Order #26 raising the General Community Quarantine of the city to ECQ from March 30-April 14, 2020. Bacolod City is a Highly Urbanized City, thus the Mayor has to issue an EO for the City.

PROVINCE AND CITY EXTENDS ECQ

Before the end of the Enhanced Community Quarantine(ECQ) on April 15, 2020, Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Lacson and Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia announced the extension of the ECQ in the province and in the city until April 30, 2020 by virtue of Lacson's EO #20-20A and Leonardia's EO#29 , April 8, 2020.

BISHOP BUZON ISSUES PASTORAL LETTER ON COVID-19



Bacolod Bishop Patricio Buzon, SDB, DD issued a Pastoral Letter on Covid-19 entitled as "For I hold you...Do not be afraid". He started by asking "what is happening to us? What is the meaning of all this? He reminded us that the Church is the "Mater et Magistra" and she accompanies us in understanding the situation in the light of faith. It is by opening our ears to the Word of God that we can make sense of the situation, he added. He further asked What is the message of God to us in the present crisis? Going back to the Old Testament, he retold the story of how the Hebrews approach the plagues and calamities. Fasting, prayer, repentance and returning to God were the responses of the Jews of the Old. They believed that all crises are brought by their sinfulness. So, he further asked, Is the Covid-19 a punishment from God? He gave an uncertain answer to this question but gave a definite response that this pandemic is our own making. We failed as stewards and have abused and tampered with God's creation. "WE HAVE MADE THIS MONSTER. WHEN WE PLAY GOD , THIS IS THE KIND OF WORLD WE

CREATE." The bishop reminded us that **God is sending His message that we have to return to Him; that we are our brothers' and sisters' keeper; and that we have to put ourselves in God's hands.** So, he ended his letter by a quote from a Negro spiritual saying that goes "He's got the whole world in his hands. . . He's got you and me brother in his hands . . . He's got you and me, sister in his hands. . .He's got the whole world in his hands." He closed his pastoral letter by entrusting the world, our country, our diocese, ourselves, and our families to God, the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and St. Sebastian.

DIOCESE ISSUES GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY WEEK



Bacolod Bishop Patricio Buzon, SDB, DD, through the Diocesan Commission on Liturgy, issued the Guidelines for the Celebration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Holy Week). The Bishop issued the guidelines after he issued a Pastoral Letter during the feast of St. Joseph, March 19. The said guidelines is in line with the guidelines issued by the Vatican's Congregatio de Culto Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum and the Catholic Bishops' Conference in the Philippines' Circular on the recommendations for the celebration of the Holy Week during the quarantine period. All Masses and ceremonies shall be aired over traditional and social media. The Chrism Mass will be held but the renewal of Priestly vows shall be dispensed. On Holy Thursday, the washing of the feet and transfer of the Eucharist to the Altar of Repose shall also be dispensed. Other ceremonies shall continue but without the physical presence of the faithful. The faithful are encouraged to attend and respect all the ceremonies at home with the father as the leader of the "Church in the home". Spiritual Communion shall be prayed during communion.

VP-ACADEMICS SENDS OUT MEMO ON GRADING

Fray Jose Alden Alipin, OAR, VP-Academics issued a memorandum which states that, "in connection to the unprecedented suspension of classes caused by COVID-19, the following shall guide all Faculty Members both in the undergraduate & graduate levels in coming up with the Final Grade in Courses enrolled this Second Semester, AY 2019-2020:

* In consonance with CHED Advisory No. 3, par. 5, "Students are to be evaluated on the basis of available indicators as of this time and forego other curricular activities for the remainder of the semester;" the Teachers can now proceed with the computation of the Final Rating. The Deans of the different colleges agreed to use 40-40-20 formula to come up with the Final Grade or the duly approved formula used by the College, whichever is favorable to the student.

*The sudden suspension of classes loses the chance of students to make-up for any insufficiencies in any of their subjects, all Teachers are advised to be more considerate and lenient in cases when students fall short of the required or passing grade.

*Online examinations are strongly discouraged due to lack of luxury of high speed and reliable internet connections of students especially those who are residing outside the city. Other alternative activities in any subject that would endanger the students must be avoided.

For subjects that require thesis, capstone, etc. as final requirement, the Teachers should find the safest alternative for students to comply.

*Grades are expected to be ready for viewing anytime when normal office hours resume. Hard copies of grade sheets shall be collected within the week after the resumption of office.

*The School of Law is expected to adhere to advisories and instructions coming from the Legal Education Board, while the Basic Education Department must observe strict compliance to advisories and instructions given by the Department of Education.

DIOCESE OF BACOLOD TAPS UNO-R HEARTMEDIA PRODUCTIONS

The Diocese of Bacolod tapped the services and expertise of the UNO-R Heart Media Productions in bringing the Holy Week celebrations to every home. Mariano Antenor, Florian Adolfo, Hope Donasco and Joey Jolito helped Frs. Roy Gesulgon, Henry Donasco, and Gregorio Neri. The team covered the Masses since the Votive Mass and Palm Sunday Mass until the Easter Sunday Masses. It televised over the social media and radio (DYAF and Bombo Radyo) the Masses of the Bishop on Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday ceremonies, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday Masses. Fr. Donasco is the head of the Diocesan Commission on Liturgy while Fr. Gesulgon is the diocesan Chancellor and the head of the Commission on Social Communications. The Bishop thanked Fray Don Besana, OAR and the UNO-R Religious Community for their generosity.

HAPPY EASTER, CHRIST HAS RISEN, ALLELUIA!

STAY SAFE, STAY HOME.

