

# NEWSLETTER

## Summer Discernment Week Workshop 2018



Top row from left to right: Br. Jeff(Staff), Raymayr(Aspirant), Ocatvius, Weizdon (Aspirant), Vienz, Mark, Arnand, Dennis, Neil, Nowelle, Mel, Br. Larry(Staff)  
Below left to right: Raymar, Venz, John, Christian, Br. Albert(Staff)

The Participants together with staff of the Summer Discernment Week Workshop 2018

The Marist Brothers held its annual Marist Summer Discernment Workshop from April 16 to 23, 2018 at Sacred Heart Formation Center in NDDU IBED –Lagao campus, Lagao, General Santos City.

Thirteen young men were gathered from previous Weekend Discernment Workshops held in different venues namely, Marbel, Dadiangas, Cotabato and Lagao. Among these young men, 11 were graduates from Senior High School and 2 were young professionals. Most of the participants arrived in the afternoon of April 16 and 3 of them arrived a day earlier the Workshop starts. The Participants were warmly welcomed by the Summer Discernment Workshop team composed of; Br. Albert Muñoz, FMS, vocation director, Br. Larry Sevilla FMS, and Br. Jeffrey Guino-o FMS, as staff members, assisted by Aspirants Weizdon Labajo and Raymayr Mayono.

## The Orientation and Settling Down.

April 16, 2018—It was formally started at the evening prayer led by Br. Jeff Guino-o and welcome remarks by Br. Albert Munoz FMS, followed by a dinner and an Orientation around eight in the evening in April 16, 2018. To give a glimpse of Marist way of community living a set of schedule, housework, committees and employment were given to the participants for the duration of the Summer Discernment Workshop. After the committees and employment schedule were assigned to the participants, Br. Larry gave an orientation on the admission process at Notre Dame of Dadiangas University. The twelve who were Senior High School graduates were scheduled to take the entrance exam the following day which marks the end of the first day of Summer Discernment workshop.



The workshopers and the staff in the chapel for orientation



The Participants filling up the form needed for their entrance exam at NDDU

## Community Building

April 17, 2018- The following day was full of learning activities for the participants in getting to know with each other. Rising around 5:00 AM, the participants attended the Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish which is adjacent to NDDU-IBED Lagao campus, followed by a morning prayer led by Br. Jef Guino-o. A breakfast was held together by the whole community as a part of the routine schedule of the workshop itself. After breakfast the participants went to Notre Dame of Dadiangas University to take their entrance test. They went back to Sacred Heart Formation Centre before lunch time. After Siesta, the participants gathered in the chapel for their First Session together with Br. Albert Muñoz, FMS on community building.



Manualia done by the participants

After the first session, a manualia was held and all the participants went to different areas assigned to them. They gathered for their recreation or sports activities. They were divided into two clusters or teams. Basketball and Volleyball were both played by two teams one after the other. At 5:30 PM they attended mass followed by evening prayer and dinner.

## The Calling “Who am I?”

**Day 3 April 18, 2018** – At the third day of the Summer Discernment Workshop, participants work on their Manualia before the start of their first session. The first session was given by Br. Albert entitled “Who am I?”. The Participants were actively engaged in the discussion and each one were given the chance to share their stories. In the afternoon the whole participants were accompanied by Raymayr and Weizdon in going to NDDU to take the personality test and after they went back to the formation house for their sports or recreation. Before the day ends the Participants have an indoor games like Table Tennis, Darts, Chess and Dama.

**Day 4 April 19, 2018** - The fourth day started with the Holy Mass with the workshoppers as the Choir. It was followed by breakfast and four different sessions namely; Dynamics of the Call by Bro. Larry Sevilla, FMS, Vocation stories with Khai and Weizdon, Champagnat and Marist Brothers by Bro. Allan De Castro, fms and Mary Spirituality by Bro. Ted Fernandez, FMS. After dinner the participants of the workshop have it's Choir song practice for the sponsorship of the mass in the next day.



“My Family Floor Plan Activity”



Evening Indoor Sports



Afternoon Outdoor Sports



Session on Formation



St. Michael's Adoration Chapel



OND Retreat House



Workshoppers with Brothers Today



Snacks with "Hermanos Hoy"



Adoration Chapel



Br. Tony with the Workshoppers

## A Time to Pause, To Pray, and To Decide by: Melkizedek Acosta

**April 20** – The day started with the Holy Mass with the workshoppers as the choir. They and the aspirants listened to the powerful input of the Brothers regarding the calls of the 22nd chapter. They learned a lot of things, from the experiences of the Brothers especially from those assigned in Syria and other places where conflicts are present, up to the renewal of the mission of the Marist all throughout the world. During recreation, they played the Mouse Trap game, where an armed mouse trap was passed around to each other while being blindfolded. The game holds a lot of lessons, which they learned about hope, fear, and trust. After taking the break for snacks, the workshoppers listened to Bro. Ernie regarding the formation of the Brothers when they would choose to be an aspirant.

In the afternoon, they went to the OND Retreat Center, where they would finally decide the outcome of their discernment. A short activity was undertaken, which was internalizing the contents of Psalms 139, then they were interviewed individually by Bro. Larry and Bro. Jeff.

**April 21** – the interview resumed, and a form was given out where they would indicate their choices whether or not they would proceed to be an aspirant, or to be part of the contact program. The recollection ended in the adoration chapel of St. Michael's Parish, where they prayed for guidance in the decision they are about to make.

After lunch they then went back to the Sacred Heart Formation Center in which they were given a brief time to prepare their things for the outing. They then went to the beach in Marian Resort at Glan, in which they played lots of parlor games like calamansi relay and egg catching. They spent the rest of the day swimming, talking about their discernments, and relaxing after a long week.



## A Long day of Preparation

by: Melkizedek Acosta

**April 22** – After breakfast, they went back to Lagao to prepare for the arrival of their parents. They prepared the tables, the program for the solidarity night, and other things needed for the day. At around 11 in the morning, their parents arrived and they all feast on a tasty lunch. After this, the parents and relatives of the workshopers were transferred to their lodging place, at Mother Francisca Spirituality Center, also in Lagao, to rest. Then they came back at around 2 in the afternoon for an input by Bro. Ernie in which he explained everything there is to know about the Marist Brothers especially about the formation stages and their responsibilities as parents. After this, the parents, together with the workshopers have a snack together. Most of the parents went back home while the workshopers attended the mass at the local Sts. Peter and Paul Parish.

In the evening, the workshopers, the remaining parents and relatives, and the Brothers celebrated the culmination night of the workshop activities. The workshopers rendered an intermission and message of thanks, and altogether they feasted on good food especially the turkey cooked in a traditional way using heated stones. The event went smoothly and successfully. After this, Bro. Albert once again interviewed each workshoper and gave them the list of requirements they needed and informed them on the upcoming home visitation.

**April 23** – the workshopers prepared their things for departure. On their way home, they first visited the General Paulino Santos Museum located at Notre Dame Dadiangas University and the Business Resources Center of the Marist Brothers in the same place. After this, the workshopers were ready for their trip back home. #

*Writer/Contributors: Nowelle Solinap*

*Melkizedek Acosta*

## SEEKING THE UNKNOWN BY: MELKIZEDEK ACOSTA



One of the hardest decisions in life is choosing a vocation. I am sure that it is more or less true to everyone especially to my fellow workshoppers during the discernment week held at Sacred Heart Formation Center.

After knowing my fellow workshoppers, we learned that we shared one thing in common! We don't really have a solid reason as why we are here. We are not sure as what being a Marist Brother means, and that we are just present here because we just went in with the flow.

But as the days go by, we learned things. Slowly but surely, the activities planned by the Brothers carved out the lessons they want us to see inside of our hearts. And, we realized that "we are here to answer God's call". Deep inside, we learned that God calls us to be one of the Brothers, but at the same time He would let us choose on what we want to be. After all, he has great plans for us. During our recollection, Bro. Larry let us read and internalized the contents of Psalm 139, and he let us know the omnipresence of God, His all-knowing virtue, and that He prepared "something great" for us. We concluded back then that "we are truly wonderfully made", but at the same time it is up to us to choose what we are made for. It is up to us to do the things we want to do, and by loving our work, achieve greatness in the eyes of God.

We were given a week to discern. On one of the talks given to us by a brother, we learned how Mary became a perfect disciple. Through the Gospel of John, we learned that Mary, on the first miracle on the wedding at Cana, was "noisy" and doesn't really know God's plan. Then, on the crucifixion, Mary stayed silent, indicating that she knows that God has plans ahead. This shows her growth, and just like her, we too can confidently say that we had grown. We may be far compared to her, but we can say that the experiences can be somewhat the same.

We came to this weekend workshop knowing nothing. We were noisy too, filled with questions and doubts. But at the end of the week, especially on our recollection, we stayed silent. We know how powerful silence can be, and in that silent moment, we discerned. For most of us, it was a really tough decision to make. We have somewhat planned our future lives ahead before this workshop by already choosing the course we would undertake in college, so the struggles we faced knowing that we can only choose one thing or the other is really hard.

But once again, in this silence we heard the calls of God. We listened to Him in stillness. And finally we discerned. He calls us on many things, and being a Marist Brother is one of those calls. We realized that we are here at this workshop to see, hear, feel, and to have a glimpse on the life we would have if ever we answer this call.

At this moment, we already had answers to the questions that we had at the beginning. We had given our "fiat" on one of His calls, and our discernment had finally ended. Another journey in life had reached its end, and once again we undertake a new beginning branching from the point on where we said "yes". From now on, we will walk to find the "Great Unknown". We will now move blindly move forward believing that this is the path He had laid out towards His great plan, and to be not just someone He wants us to be but a person who truly becomes himself. We have fears, but we believe in the hope given by the Truth, the Way, and the Life. And taking the last words of Jesus on the cross, "Father, into your hands I entrust my Spirit". May we all achieve happiness and know the unknown that we had sought for in life...

# DISCERNMENT WEEK WORKSHOP 2018 DIRECTORY

## STAFF



**Br. Larry Sevilla, FMS**



**Br. Albert A. Munoz, FMS**



**Br. Jeff Guino-o, FMS**

## ASPIRANTS



**Raymayr Mayono**



**Weizdon Labajo**

## **WORKSHOPPERS**



**Mark Neil A. Cordero**  
Tacurong City



**Vienz Charles A. Lagaña**  
Isulan, Sultan Kudarat



**Dennis M. Tan**  
Lamitan City, Basilan



**John Michael Arzagon**  
Tacurong City



**Christian Jay Lumacad**  
Tacurong City



**Raymar A. Gentollaga**  
Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat



**Melkizedek A. Acosta**  
Tacurong City



**Arnand Renie G. Dela Cruz**  
Tacurong City



**Mark Ivan Tacan**  
Tacurong City



**Venz Lester Boglosa**  
Isulan, Sultan Kudarat



**Neil Joseph Pracuelles**  
Espina, General Santos City



**Octavius T. Abelarde Jr.**  
Cotabato City



**Melchor Nowelle P. Solinap Jr.**  
Biñan City, Laguna