



ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

INTERCULTURAL MINISTRY

FILIPINO CATHOLIC MINISTRY

September 15, 2008

Dear Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Bishop J. Sklba, Bishop William P. Callahan, Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings of Peace and Love!

The Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM) of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is alive and doing well, through the grace and mercy of God, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the loving intercession of our Blessed Virgin of Fatima and San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila.

To date, the Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM) continues to be an Archdiocesan lay organization under the new Intercultural Ministry Office headed by Ms. Eva J. Diaz (see letter of Ms. Diaz), who is our link to the Archdiocese. We warmly welcome Ms. Diaz's direction and guidance, as the FCM continues to carry on its mission of serving you all through the various ministries which are opportunities for us to journey together in faith guided by our Filipino devotions and traditions.

Since its inception and organization, the FCM was privileged to have had the services of a diocesan priest for liturgical celebrations, retreats, support and guidance in our organizational operations and functions in accord with archdiocesan policies. Rev. Paul Fliss was the FCM's link to the Archbishop's Office. For the Asians, especially the larger represented group – the Filipinos, we see this as a hopeful sign and a positive step toward a direct application of the Church in Milwaukee carrying out its response to the pastoral challenge presented by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity* to meet the challenges of immigrants today.

In this pastoral letter, the contributions and religious traditions of Asians and Pacific communities to the Catholic Church in the United States has been acknowledged and accepted as blessings and gifts to be shared and promoting harmony.

We believe strongly that this is the moment of special grace for the Catholic Church in the United States. As Asian Pacific communities, we bring a strong sense of family with a loving respect for the elderly and a profound and fervent religious faith. We contribute a spirituality which is eastern [and] rooted in Asian Pacific cultures. We also seek to live in harmony with each other and with the whole of creation. We deepen and challenge our understanding of the meaning of the universal Church, enabling all of us to be a church which is complete and whole.

With the new Archdiocesan structural changes, we have a stronger faith and hope that the Filipino Catholic Ministry will continue to be a stronger and viable lay organization in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee under the new Intercultural Ministry Office headed by Ms. Eva J. Diaz.

Your leadership group – the Filipino Catholic Ministry Board Members would like to present to you a report on the State of the Filipino Catholic Ministry of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

State of the Filipino Catholic Ministry Report (February 2006 – August 2008)

A bit of history...

For many years, the late Flora (Oya) Cochingyan was the recognized head of Filipino Catholic ministry in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. She worked with the Director of Asian Ministry – Fr. Paul Fliss, and was a member of the Asian Ministry Board. When Oya became ill, Fr. Paul Fliss and Sr. Virgie Azcueta worked to insure the future strength of FCM in the Archdiocese. As a result, the Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM) was formally organized in 2001.

The Asian Ministry Board was a consultative body for the Office of Asian Ministry and comprised of volunteer leaders from different Asian Catholic communities. It served as the bridge between the Asian Catholic communities and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The Filipinos, being the largest Asian community, were given four (4) membership positions in the Asian Ministry Board; hence, the term Filipino Asian Council Members or FACM.

The Filipino Asian Council Members (FACM) – an all-volunteer Filipino Catholic Ministry leadership group was composed of members who were nominated from the Filipino Catholic Ministry general membership. Officer positions were discerned. Aside from the duties and responsibilities of each position, each officer was also the coordinator of a specific ministry or special event. This added responsibility on each officer was performed and carried on well without reservation.

The following were the original members of FACM from 2001- 2006:

Mila Lamerand – Chairperson, Coordinator of Santacruzán
Gil Valencia – Vice-Chairperson, Prayer Group leader
Lourdes Ruta – Recording Secretary, Coordinator of Simbang Gabi
Edgar Azcueta – Corresponding Secretary, Coordinator of Family Rosary Crusade
Tessie Santos – Treasurer, Bible Study Coordinator
Elma Racadio and Jazmin Parcon Sandoval – Advisers and Bereavement / Sick and Homebound Ministry Coordinators
Sr. Virgie Azcueta – Consultant (until she left for the foreign missions in 2002).

Under the leadership of the FACM, the Filipino Catholic Ministry served the Filipino-American faithful and friends in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee through its sponsorship of various ministries and popular Filipino devotions and religious traditions, namely:

- 1) Family Rosary Crusade
Each week throughout the year, a family hosts the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Fatima and prays the family rosary each day of the week.
- 2) Simbang Gabi
The nine-day novena of masses before Christmas is held in nine (9) different parishes from Dec. 15-23.
- 3) San Lorenzo Ruiz
The Feast Day (September 28) of San Lorenzo Ruiz– the first Filipino Saint is celebrated in September each year.
- 4) Santacruzán
The Santacruzán or May Crowning, started by the late Flora Cochinyan, continued to be celebrated during the month of May, usually on Mothers' Day.
- 5) Other services offered:
 - (1) Bereavement / Sick and Homebound

Comforting bereaved families is expressed through sending Mass cards and / or visiting with them. The sick and homebound also received some care and concern from the members of this ministry.

(2) Bible Study & Prayer Group

These ministries were offered but did not have enough resources and active members to continue with it.

In the beginning, some of the activities and ministries of FCM, as with the other Asian communities, had been funded by the Office of Asian Ministry of the Archdiocese. However, funding was decreased and eventually cut due to budget issues of the Archdiocese. To meet the FCM goals of sponsoring and continuing its ministries, donations were solicited from the membership.

As the ministries of the board grew, and the needs of the Filipino Catholic community also became clearer, the Filipino Asian Council Members decided in early 2006 to look at re-structuring itself to better meet these needs.

To start the process, a leadership group had first to be chosen. A letter was sent to the general membership to solicit nominations for officer positions: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. All those nominated were invited to a meeting to choose the officers. The method of choosing the officers was by discernment in an atmosphere of prayer, respectful discussion and openness to the Holy Spirit.

The restructured Filipino Catholic Ministry

In June 2006, the discernment of a new set of officers to comprise the new leadership group of the FCM, called the FCM Executive Board, was held and facilitated by Ms. Eva Diaz and Fr. Paul Fliss. The officers are:

Lourdes Ruta – Chairperson
Jaime Soriano – Vice-Chairperson
Teresita Santos – Treasurer
Zeny Zinski – Secretary

In July 2006, the FCM Executive Board invited the other nominees to a meeting to present the restructured Filipino Catholic Ministry and enlist their support as coordinators of different ministries. The meeting was also to plan for a General Assembly of catholic Filipino-Americans in the Archdiocese for the purpose of introducing the FCM Executive Board members; enlist more membership in new ministries; formally install people to various committees and engage in a listening session from people regarding the ministries to be offered and needed.

Invited and present in this first planning meeting held on July 28, 2006 were: Rev. Paul Fliss, Lourdes Ruta, Tessie Santos, Jaime Soriano, Zeny Zinski, Nena Castillo, Edgar Azcueta, Elma Racadio, Belinda Tenorio, Mimi Ballesteros, Leo Vitangcol, Mina Vitangcol, Mila Lamerand, Josefina Gardinier and Arturo Ysmael.

As a result of this meeting, a general assembly was planned and organized to coincide with a Eucharistic Celebration on September 30, 2006 commemorating the Feast day of San Lorenzo Ruiz (which falls on September 28th) to be held at Our Lady of Good Hope Church. It also laid out plans for a subsequent session to choose other coordinators of different ministries.

The main components of the restructured Filipino Catholic Ministry presented to the planning group and eventually at the General Assembly are as follows:

1) Three major Working Committees

- Liturgy Committee
 - Santacruzán
 - Simbang Gabi
 - San Lorenzo Ruiz
 - Pabasa
 - Fatima Rosary Crusade
 - Music
- Christian Formation
 - Adult Retreats
 - Marriage Encounter
 - Youth Retreat
 - Bible Study
- Human Concerns/Outreach
 - Bereavement
 - Sick and Homebound
 - Human Trafficking
 - Service Projects

2) Each Committee will be represented in the FCM Board by a representative to be chosen from among the coordinators of the ministries.

- 2 representatives from the Liturgy Committee
- 1 from the Christian Formation Committee
- 1 from the Human Concerns Committee

A discernment meeting to fill the Ministry Coordinator positions was held on September 22, 2006:

Santacruzán / Flores de Mayo – Mila Lamerand and Mimi Ballesteros

Simbang Gabi – Nena Castillo and Josefina Gardinier

San Lorenzo Ruiz – Jazmin Parcon-Sandoval and Elma Racadio

Pabasa – Rebecca Abraham and Marie Rebancos

Rosary Crusade – Pelilia Yumang, Jimmy Soriano and Nena Castillo

Music – Josefina Gardinier and Nena Castillo

Adult / Youth Retreats – none

Marriage Enrichment – Edgar Azcueta

Bible Study – Arturo Ysmael and Fr. Paul

Bereavement / Care Team: Elma Racadio, Jazmin Parcon-Sandoval and Fr. Agustin Orosa

The new coordinators and other concerned members made some other recommendations for the structure of the FCM Board. These recommendations were the topics and focus of a series of lengthy discussions and serious deliberations of the FCM Board from October 2006 to October 2007, resulting in the identification of a different model for a new FCM structure that would be more inclusive and with increased membership in the Board. The FCMB would still continue to be an Advisory Body to the Coordinator/Asian Ministry of the Archdiocese. With increased board membership, ministries to be offered were also increased. Following is a summary of the model with the recommended structure changes.

The FCMB Basic Structure (Full Board as revised)

Composition

- 4 – Officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer
- 1 – Coordinator of Asian Ministry
- 5 – Representatives to working ministries / committees
 - 3 – Liturgy and Worship:
 - 1 – Christian Formation: Adult and Youth
 - 1 – Human Concerns: Bereavement/CareTeam & Outreach
- 1 – open slot for the Couples for Christ

Process

- 1) The number of representatives (liaisons) for the Liturgy and Worship (P&W) Committee is increased from two to three. Representatives are discerned from among the existing Coordinators of Ministries. With this increase in the number of representatives, there will be a total of eleven (11) members on the Filipino Catholic Ministry Board. The representatives are expected to bring their Committees' concerns before the Board so they will be given assistance and direction. The Coordinator of Asian Ministry is the link to the Archdiocese.
- 2) To give a chance for other FCM members to serve on the Board, term limits will be set. Officers will serve a 3-year term and representatives will serve 2 years. Representation will be staggered so that there will be continuity on the Board. However, with the inherent difficulty of the staggered process where 1/3 of the board is replaced every year, this process will be evaluated.
- 3) Each Coordinator of an upcoming scheduled event will have a spot in the Board meeting's agenda and will be able to participate in any decision making at that meeting. Coordinators will be scheduled in the calendar year as needed. For example: in February – Christian Formation; March – Human Concerns; April – Santacruzán; June – San Lorenzo Ruiz; August – Catholic Faith Formation; and, October – Simbang Gabi.
- 4) Any FCM member can request to bring any valid issue they want the Board to address. Time will be set aside in the Board's monthly meeting agenda for FCM members to voice their concerns in an open, honest and respectful dialogue.
- 5) In addition to the monthly opportunity to dialogue with the Board, an Annual Town Hall meeting will be held. The goal will be to provide a forum for members to dialogue with the Board and provide input for future planning.

Board Meetings:

- 1) Nine regular board meetings are scheduled throughout the year.
- 2) The mode of decision-making is by consensus. This is in keeping with diocesan norms for most types of consultative/advisory bodies.
- 2) Prayer and formation are important parts of the meeting.

Transitioning into the new structure was taking much unforeseen time. The FCM Board membership was not yet complete as of August 2007. Regardless of this, most of the ministries continued to function successfully led by the Coordinators who wholeheartedly volunteered their time, talent and resources. The general membership also supported and participated in these FCM-sponsored activities.

In October 2007, new coordinators to replace those who resigned were appointed and discerned: Mina Santiago-Vitangcol and Evalynne Espejo-Pickeral – coordinators for Christian Formation, Apolonio Ortiguera – coordinator for Simbang Gabi and Leo Vitangcol for Music Ministry. Paul and Yolanda Estante will coordinate the Outreach Ministry.

As we continue to serve you - Brothers and Sisters of the Filipino Catholic Ministry, I would like to report to you about our progress – joys and success. It is therefore with great pride and humility that I give you a good report of our Ministry.

- The new ministries mentioned above and most of the ministries originally started from the beginning, continued to function and are still on-going successfully with the hard work and dedication of the Ministry coordinators and volunteer members: Family Rosary Crusade, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Santacruzán / Flores de Mayo, Simbang Gabi, Bereavement / Sick and Homebound.
- The Family Rosary Crusade (FRC) schedule for 2009 is almost filled; 2010 is already filling up. The active members of the FRC committee are: Jimmy Soriano, Elizabeth Bueno, Yolanda Estante, Pelilia Yumang and Evalynne Espejo-Pickeral.
- The Filipino Catholic Ministry, especially the Liturgy Committee, has been cooperating with other Filipino-American community organizations by helping out in liturgical celebrations.
- Aside from the social and human concerns involvement of FCM members in the greater Milwaukee area, FCM also donated last Lent 2007, the amount of \$500.00 to the World Missions Office, care of Sister Frances Cunningham, Director.
- Our youth have been participating in the Asian Youth retreats – the latest one in October 2007, with Alex Bueno and Eunice Rebanco as youth leaders.
- New ministries / opportunities for spiritual growth were offered such as the Pabasa (the continuous chanting of the Passion narrative in Pilipino) that was held at Mount Mary College last April 2007, the Prayer Ministry, Waves of Healing Retreat /Conference in June 2008, in collaboration with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement of the Archdiocese.
- Individual members of the FCM are very active members of their parish communities in the Archdiocese as extra-ordinary ministers, as well as officers and leaders of the larger umbrella Filipino organization – the Filipino American Association of Wisconsin and other groups.
- FCM continues to be represented in the Asian Ministry Advisory Board (AMAB) of the Archdiocese.

Early in May 2008, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee announced that it was undergoing structural changes. Fr. Paul Fliss informed the FCM Board of the changes and that the FCMB will remain as a consultative body to the Archbishop through a new Office - the Intercultural Ministry headed by Ms. Eva J. Diaz. In view of the new Archdiocese structure, the relationship between the Archdiocese and the Filipino Catholic Ministry will be clarified as it continues to operate. The restructured FCM Board will also be evaluated in view of this change. The Filipino community will also continue to be represented in the Asian Ministry Advisory Board.

Brothers and Sisters: the Filipino Catholic Ministry is now going in its 7th year in operation. Your leadership group thanks you very much for your continued participation and accepting what we offer in order for us to journey together to strengthen our faith through our Filipino devotions and religious traditions. Our ministries have been successful because of all of you, and especially the untiring and unselfish commitment of the FCM leaders. In particular, I am humbled and grateful for letting me lead you, with your help and support. Maraming Salamat - Thank you, to all of you mentioned here and those not mentioned for whatever contribution of time, talent and treasure you have shared for the Ministry.

The Filipino Catholic Ministry is a work in progress. Like the mustard seed, there are many weeds and birds along the way that can stifle its growth and progress. But, together, we can nurture the mustard seed to grow into a big and strong tree with its branches spread over wide to give shade and comfort to those resting under it. We have rich cultural and religious traditions from the Motherland that we can draw on to make us stronger in our Catholic Faith here in our new place of abode.

As we break bread and share bread in the daily or Sunday Eucharist, we hear the words, “Do this in memory of me.” The challenge that the Lord puts before us all is the call to share with each other, not only our bread but also our very selves. We welcome and invite you all to continue supporting the Filipino Catholic Ministry of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee:

- Pray for your leadership group – the Bishops of the Archdiocese, Ms. Eva Diaz (Coordinator of Intercultural Ministry); and the members of the FCM Board.
- Participate in our FCM- sponsored events.
- Give financial support to fund ministries.
- Volunteer your time and talent in any of our ministries
 - call the Ministry Coordinator to join a committee
 - be a Ministry coordinator or nominate yourself for a board position
- Attend our Board Meetings – share with us your **good** news, ideas and concerns. Just let us know when you wish to attend so we can include you in the Agenda.
- Teach or pass on these revered Filipino catholic religious traditions to your children/grandchildren

Who are the Filipino Catholics? By virtue of our baptism, we are all Filipino followers of Christ, his disciples. To trace his footsteps in our times means to utter his word to others, love with his love, to live with his life... The Filipino’s inmost ways of thinking and acting has a deep affinity to Christ’s message. Much of the Gospel has become part of us – of compassion, forgiveness, caring, piety ... (PCP II 15) and we show this in our participation, not only in FCM activities but in our daily activities at home, work, and community. We must continue to “inculturate” our Catholic Faith into our Filipino ways. (e-Catechism for Filipino Catholics) We need to support each other as a group spiritually journeying together.

All praise and glory to God as we lift up our Filipino Catholic Ministry to Him, through the intercession of our Lady of Fatima and San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila! Amen.

Thank you very much and may the Lord continue to bless us all.

Lourdes B. Ruta
Chairperson, Filipino Catholic Ministry
Tel: 414.371-1147 (eve)
414-333-6609 (cell)



September 1, 2008

Dear Members of the Filipino Catholic Community,

Earlier this year, Archbishop Dolan announced a major reorganization of the central offices of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The restructuring resulted in the loss of valued diocesan personnel and the closing of various offices. Among those closed, the Office for Multicultural Services which included Asian/Pacific Islander Ministry, Black Catholic Ministry, Hispanic Ministry, Native American Ministry and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministry.

Recognizing how critical these particular cultural ministries are in supporting and strengthening the faith of their members and the whole Catholic community, a new position was designed to serve as archdiocesan liaison to and support of the leadership bodies of each of these multicultural areas: Coordinator of Intercultural Ministry. I am the person who was hired for the position of Coordinator. Fr. Paul Fliss, former Director of the Office of Asian/Pacific Islander Ministry, now serves as associate pastor for the parishes of St. Eugene, Fox Point and St. Monica, Whitefish Bay. We are deeply indebted to Fr. Paul for his many years of service to the Asian Catholic Community.

In the role of Coordinator for Inter-Cultural Ministry I have begun working with the particular leadership committees and commissions to support their ministry to and with the communities they represent. Our mission is to foster a vision of inclusiveness, working together to strengthen the unity of the Body of Christ while honoring and celebrating the cultural diversity of the Church.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with the Filipino Catholic Ministry Board and appreciative of the gracious welcome I have received. I want to assure you that the activities and events you have enjoyed as members of the Filipino Catholic Community will continue to take place through the guidance and vision of the Filipino Catholic Ministry Board and your own continued participation and support.

With my prayers for and abundance of blessings for you and your loved ones I remain

Sincerely yours,

Eva J. Díaz, Coordinator
Inter-Cultural Ministry

FILIPINO CATHOLIC MINISTRY

Description of Ministries

Liturgy and Worship

This committee is devoted to nourishing and providing direction for the liturgical aspects of FCM. The committee prepares for liturgies/celebrations by discussing how to celebrate them well. The committee seeks to insure that the members are provided with opportunities to deepen their faith through traditional Filipino cultural celebrations and prayers. Members of the committee serve to coordinate the various ministries and committees that serve to assist and enhance liturgical celebrations throughout the church year.

Simbang Gabi

Simbang Gabi is a Filipino religious tradition consisting of a nine-day novena of masses held before Christmas. Dating back to the 16th century, Simbang Gabi masses (also known as Aguinaldo Masses) were celebrated in the early morning hours. As the tradition evolved, Simbang Gabi is an expression of the Filipino people's love for God through his mother, Mary. Filipino immigrants brought this tradition with them when they came to the U.S.

Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo

May is a month devoted to Mary. In the Philippines, children offer flowers to Mary after the praying of the rosary and on the last day of May, a crown of flowers is placed on the head of the statue of Mary.

Santacruzán is a tradition in the Philippines that is also celebrated in the month of May. It is a commemoration of Queen Helena's finding of the cross where Jesus was crucified following her son Constantine, Emperor of Rome's decree to excavate the Lord's grave. The celebration is usually done at night with people processing with candle lights around the town. At the end of the procession is a young lady dressed as a queen holding in her hand a cross and walking beside her side is a young man dressed as a king. The Filipino tradition has added young ladies wearing a sash to remind the people of the 3 theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. People pray the rosary during the procession and sing the Hail Mary in Spanish with a music band playing.

Here in Wisconsin, Oya Cochingyan started the celebration of Santacruzán and May crowning thirty-one years ago, usually taking place on Mother's Day at the Schoenstatt Shrine in Waukesha. It is now a recognized Archdiocesan event. In many Filipino communities in the United States, this devotion is celebrated in different ways.

San Lorenzo Ruiz

San Lorenzo Ruiz and his fifteen companions, martyred in the same persecution, were beatified by Pope John Paul II in Manila on February 18, 1981 and elevated to full honors of the altar by canonization on October 18, 1987 in Rome. Their feast day is on September 28th. San Lorenzo Ruiz holds the distinction of being the first person beatified outside the Vatican. He also holds the honor of being the first Filipino saint, the "most improbable of saints," as Pope John Paul II described him during the canonization ceremony.

"The Lord gives us saints at the right time and God waited 350 years to give us this saint," the Holy Father then said. "It is the heroism which he demonstrated as a lay witness to the faith... which is very important in today's world. The witness of San Lorenzo is the testimony we need of courage without measure to show us that it is possible. Faith and life for Lorenzo was synonymous and inseparable. Life without faith would have been without value...he proved that sanctity and heroism are there for anybody and the final victory is made to size for each one of us."

The Ministry primarily, involves organizing a Eucharistic Celebration in honor of San Lorenzo for the purpose of making the Filipino faithful aware of the life of the first Filipino Saint and how his life can be an example of how we all can live our faith as witnesses of Christ. As part of the celebration, a fellowship is held after the church liturgy.

Christian Formation Ministry

The role of this ministry is to promote personal conversion and growth in faith. This is a lifelong process and is aimed for, as part of the mission of the larger Church. At the present time, it includes a Prayer Chain Ministry (called "Jesus 911") where the members pray for specific requests regarding personal, spiritual, emotional as well as physical needs that are received from the community. It also includes, but is not limited to organizing retreats to promote spiritual growth. It is a new and evolving ministry. Activities will be developed as the Spirit leads.

Human Concerns Ministry

There are 2 ministries involved: 1) Bereavement and Care Ministry and 2) Outreach Ministry

Bereavement Ministry involves comforting individuals who experience death within their families, friends or loved ones. This is carried about by: offering prayers for the bereaved family in coordination with the Prayer Chain Ministry; sending Mass card for the dead to the bereaved family; sending sympathy card; phone calls, visits to the homebound; attending wakes and funerals when possible and other related activities. This is to make sure that people in our community who experience loss of loved ones are consoled in their sorrow, feel cared for, feel that they are not alone, and feel support in a more personal way. A follow-up call is usually done.

Within the scope of this ministry is also Ministry to the sick. This is carried out by visiting the sick in the hospital or in their homes so as to give comfort to both the sick individual and his/her family. It involves finding out what are the pressing or immediate needs of the sick. Ministry to the sick also involves making phone calls and or sending get-well cards. Follow-up calls are of tremendous help especially for the chronically ill. Observance of privacy is of strict importance which means respecting the sick's wishes of confidentiality. Compliance to privacy rules and laws are observed.

The Outreach ministry is of an ongoing type of ministry and is evolving. One way to carry out this ministry in a more community-like way is volunteering to work in/at community related activities, such as the Free Clinic established and headed by Dr. Violeta Singson. The Free Clinic is located at the Philippine Center and is open to the Public on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. One can do various kinds of help like checking in patients, organizing medicines, and clerical work.

The following pages are reports from some Ministry / Committee Coordinators.

The current Board Members are:

- Lourdes B. Ruta – Chairperson
- Jaime Soriano – Vice-Chairperson & Coordinator of Rosary Crusade
- Apolonio Ortiguera – Acting Secretary
- Teresita V. Santos – Treasurer
- Mila S. Lamerand – Coordinator, Santacruzán /Flores de Mayo and Representative to the Board
- Mina Santiago-Vitangcol – Coordinator, Christian Formation & Representative to the Board
- Elma Racadio – Coordinator, Human Concerns Committee & Board Representative
- Other current Ministry Coordinators:
 - Leo Vitangcol – Music
 - Paul & Yolanda Estante – Outreach
 - Jazmin Parcon-Sandoval – Co-ordinator, San Lorenzo Ruiz
 - Evalynne Espejo-Pickeral – Co-ordinator, Prayer Chain Ministry

CHRISTIAN FORMATION Status Report – August 2007 – July 2008

GOAL:

To promote the spiritual growth of the members of the Filipino community and deepen their faith in their ordinary lives through activities such as retreats, bible study or prayer groups for the youth and adult.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

1. BOB CANTON WAVES OF GRACE HEALING RETREAT – June 7, 2008

This one-day retreat with Bob Canton held at St Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in New Berlin was sponsored in cooperation with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal group of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Bob Canton is a Charismatic Lay Minister with a gift of healing. He goes all over the world praying for people. The retreat was attended by about 212 people. One major speaker, Andy Meier, shared his miraculous healing on their way to a pilgrimage in Medjugorje. Their bus fell off a ravine, but he lived to tell his story of God's saving love and our Blessed Lady's loving intercession. Retreat participants also witnessed several instantaneous healings: 2 people took off their hearing aids and could hear; 2 individuals walked without their canes; some were healed of carpal tunnel syndrome, chronic infection that would not heal despite surgery; and others.

**GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME!!!
HOW MARVELOUS ARE YOUR WORKS, O LORD!!!**

2. INTERCESSORY PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY – “JESUS 911”

This on-going ministry was started in October, 2007. To date, it is made up of 31 intercessors (prayer warriors) praying for various concerns in the community. We believe in taking care of people's concerns first before we can address the spiritual dimension. Prayer requests are not confined to SE Wisconsin but come from all over. They are directed to the Prayer Chain Coordinator (Mina Santiago-Vitangcol), who calls 4 other prayer group leaders, who in turn calls one other member, and so on, down the line, thus the term “Prayer Chain”. The rest of the members are notified by email.

From October 2007 through July 2008 we received 151 prayer requests. The prayer warriors are daily “on their knees”, interceding for our brothers and sisters in the Lord. The requests are mostly for illnesses, hospitalizations, deaths in the family, emotional concerns, but can be myriad in range. Sensitive issues are especially held in confidentiality. The prayer warriors are encouraged to attend frequent Masses and receive the Sacraments, pray the Rosary, Chaplet, attend Eucharistic Adoration, read Scriptures, etc. How can God refuse one who calls on Him frequently?

**“ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE, SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND,
KNOCK AND IT SHALL BE OPENED TO YOU.”**

SUCCESS: We do not count success as prayers the way we want them answered, but all according to His will. In total faith, we know that God answers ALL prayers, although sometimes, the answer is “Wait – in My own time; not yours.”

INVITATION: If you are interested in doing a bible study, or be a member of the Prayer Chain, please call 262-790-0550 or send e-mail to leominav@wi.rr.com.

Submitted by:
Mina Santiago-Vitangcol
Coordinator, Christian Formation Committee

HUMAN CONCERNS COMMITTEE
BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY/MINISTRY TO THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND

Status Report – August 1, 2008

Who we serve...

For the last 6 years we have continued to minister to the needs of people in the community who have experienced the deaths of family members, friends and/or loved ones. In addition, we serve those who have experienced illness, undergone surgeries, and who may be homebound.

How we serve...

The bereavement ministry is carried out by sending mass cards, sympathy cards, prayers, and phone calls to the families of the bereaved. We visit the bereaved, attend wakes, funerals, and assist in making wake and funeral arrangements if needed. Follow-up calls are also made to provide continued care and communication.

Ministry to the sick and homebound is carried out by sending get-well cards, making personal phone calls, and providing hospital and home visits to comfort both the sick and their families. We also listen and attend to pressing or immediate needs. Follow-up calls are made, which is of tremendous help, particularly to the chronically ill. However, strict compliance with privacy and confidentiality rules and laws is always observed to respect the individual and his or her family.

In addition, ministry to the sick has been also carried out in the community by volunteering at the Philippine Center Free Medical Clinic for those who are uninsured and underinsured. Volunteering at the clinic is done twice a month every other Saturday morning. The work involves checking in patients, organizing and dispensing medicine, performing laboratory and clerical work, and a variety of other, crucial special projects and tasks.

Our goal...

The goal of bereavement ministry is to make the bereaved feel the company and support around them in a more personal, immediate way. The goal of ministry to the sick and homebound is to provide solace, companionship and practical assistance to those and to the families of those who are ill, alone or financially insecure. All of our services aim to make sure the bereaved, sick and homebound in our community are assisted, comforted and consoled during their times of need.

Success...

Bereavement Ministry/Ministry to the Sick and Homebound were first introduced in 2002. To date, the Bereavement Ministry and Ministry to the Sick and Homebound have served hundreds of individuals in the community who have needed comfort, company, prayers, and medical assistance on an ongoing basis. While thanks is neither expected nor required, the community has been appreciative of these ministries and responded with beautiful cards of thanks that we have been blessed to have received throughout the 6 years of our service.

Many thanks to the countless individuals who volunteered their time for the ministry to the bereaved families and sick/homebound in the community.

Submitted by Elma Racadio

Bereavement Ministry and Ministry to the Sick and Homebound for FCM

SIMBANG GABI

Status Report – August 2008

From 2001 – 2007, the Filipino community offered the gift of Simbang Gabi to different churches in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The following parishes/churches accepted to host:

St. Alphonsus	Holy Family
St. Anthony (Pewaukee)	St. John Vianney
Basilica of St. Josaphat	St. Joseph (Wauwatosa)
St. Bernadette	Lumen Christi – Thiensville
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist	St. Margaret Mary
St. Catherine of Alexandria	(Old) St. Mary Church
Divine Mercy (College Ave.)	Mater Christi Chapel
St Dominic	St. Matthias
St. Francis Seminary	Nativity of the Lord
St. Eugene	Our Lady of Good Hope
Gesu Parish	

Simbang Gabi (also known in other regions of the Philippines as Misa de Gallo or Misa de Aguinaldo) has been successfully celebrated every year in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee since 2002. Masses are held in different parish churches, generally in the early evening during week days and in the early afternoon during weekends for nine days starting from December 15-23. In the Philippines it starts on December 16 and culminating on the Christmas Eve mass on the December 24th. (In Milwaukee, parish masses are held on December 24th.) Aside for the Coordinator for the day, usually a member of the FCM Board, Filipino Catholics in the parishes coordinate these special gatherings to share this religious tradition and culture with the whole parish community.

Generous donors and sponsors from the Filipino community give financial support for the expenses incurred during the nine-day celebration. Numerous volunteers help out during the event – for the Eucharistic celebration as extra-ordinary ministers, members of the choir and during the fellowship following the mass.

The liturgical celebration is enhanced with some of the cherished traditions of the Filipino people:

- Presenting gifts to their host parish community as a symbol of hospitality;
- A candle procession participated in by children and youth, representing the carrying of torches in the fishing villages to guide fishermen to shore;
- The age-old practice of showing respect to elders in the form of the “Mano Po” (pressing the hand of the priest or elders on one’s forehead to ask for blessing);
- The most beloved of all Philippine Christmas symbols, the Parol, is displayed during mass and carried from church to church, symbolic of the Star of Bethlehem;
- The “Panunuluyan” depicting Mary & Joseph’s plight in Bethlehem; and,
- Popular Christmas Tagalog songs are sung during mass and traditional Christmas carols at the conclusion of mass.

After the mass, we break bread together at a reception with Filipino food and delicacies.

Submitted by:

Lourdes Ruta

Coordinator, Simbang Gabi 2002-2005

Nena Castillo,

Coordinator, Simbang Gabi 2006

Apolonio Ortiguera

Coordinator, Simbang Gabi 2007

**OUR LADY OF FAMILY
FAMILY ROSARY CRUSADE (FRC)**

Status Report: July 2006 – August 2008

The Family Rosary Crusade through the intercession of our Blessed Lady of Fatima is doing very well. Filipino families wanting to schedule weekly, continue to grow. We are pleased to report that since we took over the Ministry in 2006, we were able to add a good number of new families in our list. The 2009 calendar is almost filled and many have requested to be scheduled for 2010.

Through the hard work and dedication of all the Committee Members, we were able to maintain a very smooth process of transferring the Statue of the Blessed Lady of Fatima from house to house weekly. We still continue to receive donations from host families for the Ministry.

For the new families participating in our Crusade, we take time in explaining the procedure (please see the FRC Procedure), emphasizing the importance of praying the Rosary daily. Families are encouraged to pray together every night to foster our mission.

As a Committee, we have discussed some ideas for the good of our ministry – that it would be practical to hold a Marian celebration to bring together the participating families and friends to renew our commitment or rosary pledge to the Blessed Mother. Last year, the celebration focused mainly on blessing our Ministry and the statue of our Lady of Fatima. The committee recommends holding a Marian celebration once every two years or whenever practical.

It is really a blessing to have an extraordinary group of people in our Family Rosary Crusade committee: Beth Bueno, Yollie Estante, Fely Yumang and Evalynne E. Pickeral.

Our gratitude to Edgar Azcueta for organizing and leading the Family Rosary Crusade from 2002-2006.

Peace to all.

Jim Soriano
Coordinator, Family Rosary Crusade

OUR LADY OF FATIMA FAMILY ROSARY CRUSADE (FRC)

PROCEDURE

This procedure for the **Our Lady of Fatima Family Rosary Crusade** of the **Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM)** is set as a guideline for all interested and involved host families.

1. To schedule or request to host the Family Rosary and visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM).

- a) First, check the Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM) website at <http://www.filipinocatholicministry.org> to check for an open slot in the rosary schedule. Then, send an email to Filipinocatholicm@yahoo.com to make the request to host. One of the Family Rosary Crusade (FRC) committee members will confirm that you have been scheduled either by phone or email. If you do not receive any confirmation of your request, please follow-up by calling any one of the contact persons listed below.
- b) If you do not have access to the FCM website, you can also schedule to host the Family Rosary by calling any one of the contact persons who are listed below.

2. Transfer of the Blessed Virgin Mary statue from house to house.

- a) It is the responsibility of the household hosting the Rosary to coordinate with the recipient household when to transfer the statue and rosary materials. Telephone numbers can be requested from any of the contact persons listed below.
- b) The standard time for a household to receive the Blessed Virgin Mary statue is at 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays.
- c) In the event that both host and recipient households are not available on the day and/or time of transferring the statue, arrangements can be made with any of the contact persons listed below to accommodate the needs of both households involved.
- d) The recipient household should check the Rosary materials/items that come along with the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary – a bag containing the following:
 - 1) Crucifix
 - 2) 2 candles
 - 3) Rosary Crusade Guide booklets (5)
 - 4) Rosaries
 - 5) Envelopes for monetary donations to FCM.
We appreciate any monetary donations to the Filipino Catholic Ministry to support its ministries. Thank you very much in advance.
 - 6) Other related items

Note: Please check that all Rosary materials/items are complete (in the bag) before transferring it, along with the statue of the Blessed Mother to the next host family.

3. The Family Rosary

- a) We encourage families to receive the Blessed Mother's statue and pray the rosary with due reverence, i.e. reciting the rosary prayers and meditation as slow as possible. Kneeling is also encouraged.
- b) As the Blessed Mother's statue is received into the household, the family will pray the rosary, led by either the father or the mother of the household.
- c) The Rosary Crusade Prayer Guide Book includes the prayers to be said for the Rosary, including the Welcoming Prayer and Blessing Prayer. After the rosary prayers, the song Our Lady of Fatima will be sung. Other songs in the book may be sung, if so desired.

- d) The Mysteries for meditation during the rosary will be:
 - i. Glorious Mysteries - Wednesdays & Sundays
 - ii. Joyful Mysteries - Mondays & Saturdays
 - iii. Sorrowful Mysteries - Tuesdays & Fridays
 - iv. Luminous Mysteries - Thursdays
- e) If the family so desires, any appropriate mysteries (to fit an occasion or intention) can be chosen and used for rosary meditation.
- f) The household members are to recite daily the Holy Rosary during the duration of the Holy Mother's visit.
- g) On departure day of the Blessed Mother's visit, the household members will recite the Holy Rosary along with the Farewell prayer and sing the Our Lady of Fatima song. Again, other songs in the book may be sung, if so desired.

4. Mass Requests

- a) If the recipient family wants to celebrate mass for a special intention on the day of hosting the Blessed Mother in the home, mass requests must be made through any of the Rosary Crusade committee members listed below at least two (2) weeks prior to the mass date. The Rosary Committee members will contact the officiating priest to celebrate mass for the family and bring the necessary liturgical items.
- b) If a family intends to personally invite or contact a priest to officiate the mass for them, any of the Rosary Committee members must be informed.
- c) It is the responsibility of the family requesting the mass to give the officiating priest a stipend. If you have questions about this, please refer it to any of the Rosary Committee members.

5. Reception

- a) Please keep in mind that providing food either during the Blessed Mother's arrival or departure is absolutely optional and voluntary.

6. Contact Information:

Jimmy Soriano	(414) 423-1081	Fely Yumang	(414) 483-0587
Beth Bueno	(414) 354-0141	Yollie Estante	(414) 254-6836
	Evalynne Pickeral	(414) 529-4557	

THANK YOU for participating in the Family Rosary Crusade.
 May our Lady of Fatima intercede to her Divine Son, Jesus,
 to bless our families with Peace, Love and Joy.

LITURGY AND WORSHIP
SANTACRUZAN AND FLORES DE MAYO

Status Report – May 2002-August 2008

Santacruzán, and Flores de Mayo is held annually in the month of May at the Schoenstatt Shrine in Waukesha, and is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is usually held on Mothers' Day. The procession is called Santacruzán (Festival of the Holy Cross), a commemoration of the finding of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem by Saint Helena (Reina Elena), mother of Constantine the Great. Flores de Mayo means the "Flowers of May". The Spaniards in the Philippines introduced the Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo and it has since become part of Filipino tradition.

On May 10, 2008, at 10:30 a.m. the Filipino Catholic Ministry of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee sponsored the Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo with the community congregating at Schoenstatt Center Provincial House Chapel to attend the Holy Mass. The concelebrants were Reverend Paul Fliss and Reverend Agustin Orosa, Jr. Before the mass started, a colorful parade of female participants wearing lovely gowns or Filipino costumes and a sash, of male participants wearing barong tagalog and a sash, and of children wearing white dresses or their Sunday best entered the chapel with fragrant cut flowers and offered them to the crown of the Virgin Mary located near the main altar, while the congregation sang hymns to the Virgin Mary, accompanied by the soloist and guitarist, Leo Vitangcol, and the pianist and organist, Michael Hey. The rest of the congregation also offered sweet-smelling flowers to the crown of the Virgin Mary. The participants were arranged in this order: Reina Banderada, Reina Libertad, Obispo Macario, Salome, Fe (Faith), Esperanza (Hope), Caridad (Charity), Mary Magdalene, Veronica, Angels and Escorts, A-V-E M-A-R-I-A, Carosa with Crown of Mary, Reina Sentenciada, Reina Saba/Minda Mora, Reina Ester, Infanta Judith, Divina Pastora, Ruth, Reina Justicia, Rosa Mística, Reina Estrella, Reina de los Flores, Reina Elena and Principe Constantino.

The Holy Mass was followed by a Procession to the shrine. The highlight of the procession was the queenly Reina Elena, Anissa del Rosario Schiek, 16, dressed in an elegant gown and a sash, who carried a small cross and walked with her consort, Principe Constantino, Boe Patawaran, 13, dressed as a king in barong tagalog and a sash, who carried the crown. The Reina Elena and Principe Constantino walked under the flower-decorated arch carried by four young males. Immediately behind her was the crown of flowers, followed by the congregation who was praying the rosary and then singing the prayer: Dios Te Salve (Hail Mary). At the shrine, the Coronation of the Virgin Mary happened when the Reina Elena placed the crown on the head of the statue of the Virgin Mary and when she offered the crown of fragrant flowers to the Virgin Mary.

After the procession, the congregation proceeded to the Schoenstatt Retreat Center for lunch, where the favorite Filipino food and dessert catered by the Schoenstatt Sisters, and the lechon (roast pig) donated by a generous member, were served.

The Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo celebration was a success and most of the congregation indicated their willingness to come back next year as participants and/or devotees.

Submitted by:

Mila S. Lamerand
Coordinator, Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo
2002-2005, 2007-2008

Mimi Ballesteros
Coordinator, Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo in 2006
Co-Coordinator, Santacruzán and Flores de Mayo in 2007-2008

FILIPINO CATHOLIC MINISTRY
San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila Celebration
Ministry

The Feastday of San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, the first Filipino saint and martyr has been celebrated here in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee since 2003 in the month of September. The actual Feastday is September 28th of the catholic calendar year.

For the past 5 years, we have been successful in this ministry with excellent response from the people. The first celebration was in September 2003, in the Cathedral of Saint John the Evangelist with Archbishop Timothy Dolan officiating. The subsequent celebrations were held in different parishes in the Archdiocese. Last year's celebration included the introduction and presentation of all Filipinos in the Archdiocese who are serving as members of religious orders / communities.

As the Ministry evolves we are looking and asking for your ideas and participation. If you want to share your time and talent for this ministry, call: 262-784-5811.

Coordinators: Jazmin Parcon-Sandoval
Elma Racadio

Submitted by Elma Racadio

FILIPINO CATHOLIC MINISTRY

Standard Practice and Instructions / Guidelines For Cash Receipts & Disbursements of Funds

The Filipino Catholic Ministry (FCM) is a recognized non-profit lay organization operating in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, supported by the generous contributions from the community. The donations are deposited in a designated Filipino Catholic Ministry account in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for use by the organization (FCM) to defray costs incurred in all events throughout the year. As costs are incurred, a requisition is submitted to the Business Office of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to reimburse the person in charge/coordinator of the event.

Cash Receipts

1. For internal control purposes, cash must be collected by people authorized by the FCM Board. After the collection, cash must be counted in a secluded area and signed by at least two people, also appointed by the FCM Board.
2. The two people who counted and signed must fill out a deposit slip on the same day to be turned over to Eva Diaz, Coordinator, Intercultural Ministry, for deposit in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. In the absence of Eva Diaz, one of the Board Members, except the Treasurer, must keep the money temporarily. A copy of the deposit slip must be given to the Treasurer for recording purposes.
3. In the case of the Fatima donations/contributions which is on a weekly basis, the Chairperson /Coordinator keeps the money temporarily until it is turned over to Eva Diaz. A copy of the deposit must be given to the Treasurer for recording purposes.

Cash Disbursements

1. Every item purchased and requested for reimbursement from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, must be documented by a receipt from the vendor. A master card/visa receipt is not acceptable. The receipt from the vendor must indicate the following:
 - a. Vendor's name
 - b. Date of purchase
 - c. Name of item purchased
 - d. Amount
2. Purchases other than food can be tax exempt. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee's tax exempt number will be given to legitimate requests.
3. Recording of FCM funds is in accordance with the accounting system of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Personal purchases must be separated from the FCM's expenses. This will also expedite the processing of requisition for reimbursements. (Ref: ArchMilwSPI Cash & Disb)
4. All receipts and appropriate documentations must be submitted to the FCM Treasurer as soon as possible after the FCM event for processing the request for reimbursements.

Other FCM Expenses:

All other expenses of committees will follow the same documentation and reimbursement procedure stated above.

Submitted by
Teresita V. Santos
Treasurer, FCM - 2002-2008