



On August 26, 2018 : A golden Jubilee in Kauswagan, Lanao del Nort

samedi 1er septembre 2018

Sensitive to signs that accompanied us in our comings and goings through this celebration of consecrated life ... we cannot but notice God manifesting HIS PRESENCE through rainfall - a downpour of water to assure us this is time of the GREAT JUBILEE and blessings are promised us in abundance. Mother Marie Eugenie surely calls us to heed the call of the times : " Impelled by the Spirit ...let us risk at the frontiers at the service of LIFE... Love never says ... enough !"

On August 26, 2018, our 6 a.m. Sunday Lauds as offered as a praise of thanksgiving for our Assumption way of life. At the end of the Blessing we sang Happy Birthday to our beloved Foundress. By 8:00 a.m. all Sisters were lined up at the door of the Parish Church of St. Vincent Ferrer with Sr. Mary Sheryl, Sr. Ma. Anicia at the end, just before the lay ministers, Parish Priest Fr. Jake .Fr. Cornelio Jaranilla, OCD, Presider for the celebration. In his homily, Fr. Cornelio noted that the blessing of religious life is the taste of celebrating the love of the LORD. "When the Community unites , it becomes the presence of the LORD and this is the miracle of religious life."

Fr. Cornelio narrated how he posed this question to Sr. Anicia" How will you summarize your whole journey through 50 years ?" Sr. Anicia responded with her "word" : " I love the Father ! " Father Cornelio connected St. Peter's "To Whom shall we go " with Sr. Anicia's choosing God as the core of her life and situated this choice in the context of our times when seemingly God is dead. Amidst false hopes people search for drugs, corruption, selfishness, greed, I-Pad, facebook, messenger. How much we need to pray that people seek GOD , and seek for Everlasting Life, for this alone gives hope. He invited everyone to pray that many choose GOD always and above all things, and so receive true hope in what HE offers everyone : salvation !

The Mass in Cebuano Visayan beautifully sang by the Parish Choir, the Responsorial psalm expressively sang by Sr. Charlita was a fitting homage to the mystery of Jesus lived by Sr. Anicia, "the Incarnation " . Truly the Mystery of Jesus Incarnate was lived by her in the different communities she was assigned, serving people by penetrating the lives of the "common tao" together with the rest of the Sisters.

The week-end at Kauswagan opened us to a rare opportunity : a visit to the thickly populated business and residential MARAWI so heavily damaged. It was just right that Fr. Cornelio was around since the Military recognizes his presence so we were escorted by them to what they call "Ground Zero" (Fr. Cornelio Jaranilla, gave training to young volunteers from St. Vincent Ferrer School to act as facilitators for healing of trauma among other young people). The Community invited the Muslim student Asha, & her brother, to come along with us in the van to acquaint us with events that affected them during the siege. They

recounted how big bombs would just explode and the whole earth around them would shake like anything. Happily they do not live in that area and their school is outside Ground ZERO. They also narrated aspects of their culture -where their father took another wife and so they have "extended " brothers and sisters.

We were allowed to go down from our van just at the portals of Ground Zero-because the Military are still in the process of detecting hidden high powered bombs buried underground . A handful of people were gathering their belongings from their houses. One could surmise how difficult it would be for any family to return to live there ...heavily damaged homes , residences and stores. It is a dead town ! What an arduous task it would be to rehabilitate the place or assure its safety. That is why before leaving the place, Sr. Sheryl was moved to invite all of us to pray for Marawi and for the people . And the Spirit made us :“ Have Mercy, O Lord, have Mercy on Your People. “ And we begged the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Mother of God to heal the wounds of division between Christians and Muslim and Muslims among themselves.

Sr. Letty brought us to the Redemptorist Center to have a dialogue with Fr. Chito, the Priest who had escaped from ISIS kidnappers. He was not around but we were welcomed with songs by Catholic youth volunteers who were having their sessions. On our side , Sr. Rosa took the guitar and played the song : “ Shine Jesus Shine “. We then left them with this message : that having come from Marawi , seeing the sensitive times in which they are living : their presence moved us to hope ! How true it was : Jesus’ PRESENCE shines in them and works in them . Jesus is among the people through them ! Later on, Fr. Jerome a newly ordained priest from Baclaran came out and introduced these youthful boys and girls as the courageous volunteers who in the absence of the kidnapped Fr. Chito, (117 days) continued the ministry in that Center until his return.

Going through the streets of Marawi outside the heavily damaged area, we noticed the long garbed students both male and female with heads covered with veil or their Muslim cap going on their daily routine.

The Jubilee of Sr. Maria Anicia was for us an occasion to thank the Lord for our Sisters in Kauswagan who have allowed themselves to be truly Jesus’ presence in dialogue between Christians and Muslims as well as the corporate -unified support of our 3 Communities of Mindanao living our contemplative-apostolic life as one body. We from Luzon and Visayan communities were blessed to witness the truth of Fr. Cornelio’s :

“When the Community unites, it becomes the presence of the LORD and this is the miracle of religious life. ”

Sr. Bernadette Eugenie, r.a.

<https://www.assumpta.org/On-August-26-2018-A-golden-Jubilee>