



# THE THOMASIAN ALUMNI COMMUNITY

VOL. NO. 4 ISSUE NO. 2

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE UST ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

## Newsletter



### New Archbishop of Manila is an ALPA

Pope Francis appointed Jose Forte Cardinal Advincula as the 33rd archbishop of Manila in an announcement released on Thursday, March 25, 2021. He was appointed to succeed Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle whom he appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in the Vatican in 2019.

#### Why Pope Francis appointed a cardinal from Capiz the new Manila archbishop

A fellow priest sheds light on what could have been the reason Pope Francis appointed Jose Forte Cardinal Advincula the 33rd archbishop of Manila "The God of Surprises strikes Capiz again!"

Bishop Victor Bendico of Baguio made the exclamation after Pope Francis appointed Capiz Archbishop Jose F. Advincula one of the 13 new Cardinals last November. Now that Cardinal Advincula, 68, had been named by Pope Francis as the new archbishop of Manila, the premiere See of the country. Bishop Bendico, who was rector of the Capiz cathedral under Advincula before he was appointed Bishop of Baguio by Pope Francis in 2017, was exclaiming to the heavens once more: "Another surprise!" When Advincula was made cardinal, everyone

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## NEW USTAAI LEADERS ELECTED

*Congratulations!*



Evelyn A. Songco, Ph.D.  
President

Inocencia Ida S. Tionko, RN, MHPed  
Vice President

God bless them as they continue to lead USTAAI to more years of unending grace.



UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INC.  
2021 *General Assembly* 13 MARCH 2021

Dr. Evelyn A. Songco, College of Education Alumni Foundation, Inc., was reelected President while Dr. Inocencia Ida Tionko, College of Nursing Alumni Assoc. Inc., was elected Vice President of the UST Alumni Association, Inc. The election was held during the USTAAI's General Assembly on March 13, 2021 via Zoom.

The election was held immediately after the election of the Board of Trustees that was presided by the Election Chairman Atty. Dwight M. Ramos. The new members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) are: Junior High School Alumni Association, Inc.; Faculty of Pharmacy Alumni Association, Inc.; College of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc.; Philets & Artlets Alumni Association, Inc.; Faculty of Civil Law Alumni Foundation, Inc.; Faculty of Medicine Alumni Association, Inc.; Graduate School Alumni Association, Inc.; Tomasinson Kapampangan; Alumni Priest Association; Atelier Alumni Association, Inc.; Tomasinson Bikolano; Faculty of Engineering Alumni Foundation, Inc.; College of Rehabilitation Sciences Alumni Association; College of Commerce Alumni Foundation, Inc.; and, College of Education Alumni Foundation, Inc.

### USTAAI Website Launched

USTAAI's official website was inaugurated during the General Assembly on March 13, 2021, via Zoom. Taking almost a year to finish, the website was conceived under Team Presence in July 2020. To develop the website, USTAAI contracted senior IT students Armand Betan III and Linette Guillermo.

Dr. Jocelyn Zamora Mariano, Chair of Team Presence launched the website, aptly calling it a "labor of love." The launching presentation opened showing the Arch of the Centuries and the vision statement of the association.

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# From the VICE RECTOR



## MESSAGE

### *Thomasian Alumni Community Newsletter*

We constantly await the promise of Easter every year. It is God's most beautiful pledge to humanity that through his beloved Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, he would redeem us through his suffering and death on the cross for our salvation... and *resurrect on the third day!* His glorious resurrection will fulfill our yearning and longing for spiritual conversion and renewal.

Easter had become even more meaningful when the Covid-19 pandemic happened. A year has passed since its effects tremendously changed everything, especially how we see ourselves and live our lives during these challenging times. On the other hand, Easter signals a renewal of our hope for a better life and a better place for us - it is a genuine testament of God's unending love for us. This wonderful celebration enables us to experience profound joy and happiness and constantly reminds us to reassess our lives, searching for a much deeper meaning in the things we do. Despite the difficulties we continue to face, the pandemic has empowered us to reexamine our priorities and focus more intensely on what is essential.

While we reflect on and do our best to address challenges due to the corona virus spread, the University of Santo Tomas remains steadfast in its commitment to providing quality education to its students. Work has never been disrupted in the University. Communication lines with stakeholders remain open, seeing how each one is coping with the pandemic. But one thing is sure; our dear alumni continue to traverse new trajectories in their respective disciplines, playing a vital role for the University as they reap prestigious accolades. As partners, they take an active stance in putting UST on the national and global map with their stellar achievements. As members of the Thomasian family, they likewise show their unwavering support to their Alma Mater's projects and programs. And I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to them, for they genuinely exemplify God's unending grace. The ties that bind them with the University have become stronger and more meaningful. It is excellent to know that the Thomasian alumni take pride in their roots and act to achieve a common goal, demonstrating their authentic love for their alma mater - the University of Santo Tomas.

Happy Easter to all!

REV. FR. ISAIAS D. TIONGCO, O.P.  
*Vice Rector*

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## From the President's Desk

Happy Easter to all the Thomasian alumni!

I have been reflecting on our past episodes of Bridges, the regular Sunday show of USTAAI where we invite Thomasian alumni to share their advocacies, their expertise, and their life experience.

The idea of Bridges came about after the USTAAI's webinar series on God's Unending Grace: Now and Beyond last June, July, and August 2020. We were inspired by the thought that Thomasians from different parts of the world participated in these webinars.

To continue reaching to as many Thomasian alumni as possible has been a dream for us. The chance to realize this dream was offered by Dr. Carl Balita, an alumnus of the College of Nursing and a 2017 TOTAL Awardee who owns and operates CBRC.TV. I must confess that we were not prepared to have a show. But since October was the Teachers' Month, we thought that we had a good topic for the month. The Committee on Academics decided to take the chance and the rest is history.

The show is more than six months now. We have a lineup of topics and guests for the several coming months. We are beginning to have followers. We are getting more and more confident in what we are doing. We are happy working with one another. The CBRC.TV administration and staff are all efficiently supportive. Members of the team learn a lot from the alumni guests and from the experience of running an online show. We are hoping to get more sponsors for the show.

As the Committee on Academics continues to

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## UST Alumni Relations launches upgraded alumni portal website

The UST Office of Alumni Relations rolled out a reconstructed Alumni Information System (AIS) website with new features to serve its stakeholders better during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The goal behind this project is to encourage all Thomasian alumni to reconnect with the University through sharing relevant and updated information regarding their professional background and accomplishments," said the OAR Director Asst. Prof. Fredeswindo R. Medina, MACHS.

The AIS is a website where alumni could update its records such as their married name, contact numbers, addresses, etc. It is a database that allows the University to keep track of and determine the attainment of graduate outcomes after completion of degrees from the institution. The extracted data have been utilized for the past international accreditation and licensing.

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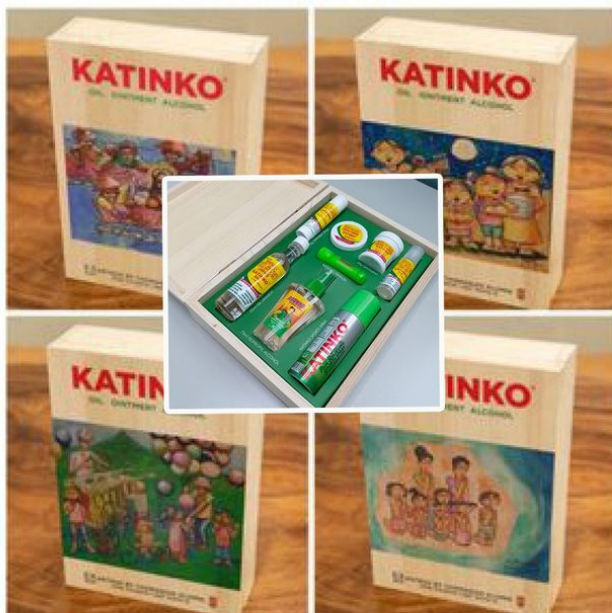
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# A Gift to be Given: 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines

When one receives a gift, one thinks that gift is meant for him to keep. One does not have to feel that he has the obligation to share it with others. Think about this: how can the mug you might have received last year be shared with others?

This year marks the 500th year since the Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan reached our country's shores bearing a gift that he gave to our ancestors. He did this even with the knowledge that he only stumbled upon our islands and our people on the way to get to the spice islands of Moluccas.

However, the gift was not a mug nor anything else that may have any semblance of temporal value. It was a gift of a spiritual nature: it was the gift of the Christian faith. Unlike the mug you may have received, the Christian faith is a gift to be given and Ferdinand Magellan, five centuries ago, might have echoed through his actions the very instructions Jesus tells us through His disciples in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 10:8 NABRE) when He was sending them out on a mission, "...Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give."

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## THE #500YOC LOGO ELEMENTS

## Chrisma Bangaoil: Serving the Church through the Poor

*Editor's Note: In celebration of the 500 Years of Christianity, we are featuring an alumna who has devoted years of her life in the service of the Church.*

While so many churches have struggled to keep the crowds from participating in the celebration of the sacraments, a lay Thomasian missionary has continued to reach out to the least, the lost and the last, even more during the pandemic.

Chrisma C. Bangaoil graduated with the degree of Behavioral Science from the University in 1992. She has been an active lay missionary in various parts of the country for the past 20 years, 13 years of which has been mostly spent doing mission with the poor in various barangay chapels in the Diocese of Dipolog in Zamboanga del Norte.

Chrisma is from northern Luzon, an Ilocana who started out speaking zero Visayan, Ilonggo or any of the dialects in the region where about 80 percent of the residents are Subanen. She has discovered, however, that some areas in Mindanao have Ilocanos as minorities or tribes, and that Mindanao is not really as dangerous as some think.

Together with Fr. Joel P. Agad, alumnus of the UST Ecclesiastical Faculties, Chrisma has been deeply involved in pastoral work called "**Love the Poor Program**" which won first prize in the 2020 Capstone Projects Award of the Pontifica Universita della Santa Croce (Pontifical University of the Cross) in Rome.

But how did it all start? Chrisma shared that her missionary spirit had been greatly influenced

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## Testimonial for Atty. Jack Castañeda

The Association tendered an appreciation testimonial for Atty. Edward "Jack Castañeda" at the Champaca Room, Club Filipino on Saturday, February 13, 2021.

Dr. Robert C. Sy awarded the plaque of Appreciation to Atty. Castañeda for having unselfishly demonstrated steadfast dedication and invaluable support to the UST Alumni Association Inc. for 11 years as member of the BOT (2009-2020); as Vice President of the USTAAI (2015-2016); as Board Adviser (2016-2018) as Legal Adviser (2017-2020). Atty. Jack, as he is fondly called, generously contributed immensely to the achievement of the mission and vision of the USTAAI by sharing his time, talent, and treasure in support of the various activities of the Association through the years.

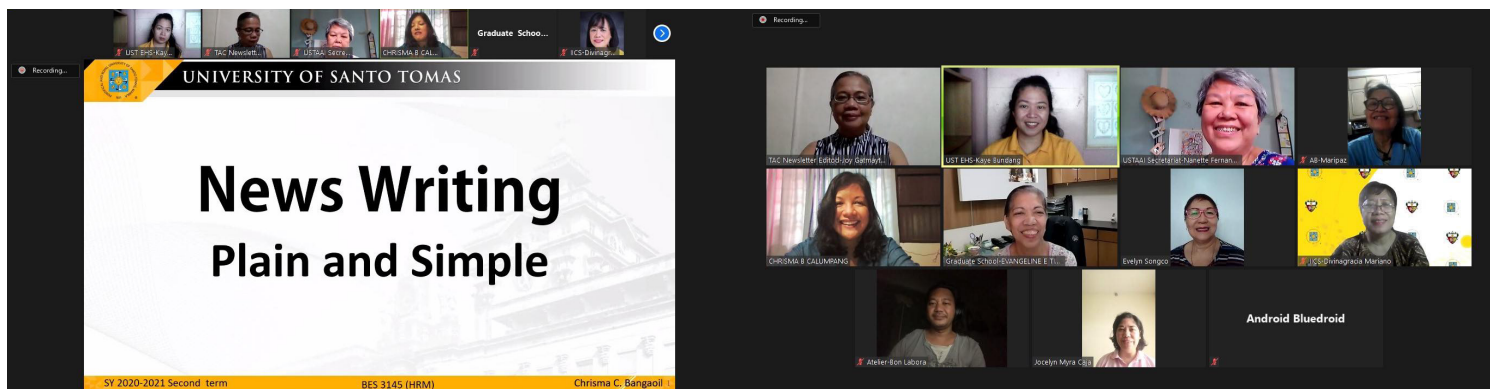
As the immediate Past President of the UST Law Alumni Foundation, Inc., Atty. Jack is an epitome of a truly inspiring Thomasian alumnus who is in constant solidarity with his alumni associations and the USTAAI.

The following gave testimonials: Dr. Robert Sy, Chairman Emeritus; Dean Henry Tenedero, Chair of the USTAAI and past president; Engr. Frederick "Pakoy" Parayno whose speech was read by Engr. Jerenato Alfante, chair of the USTAAI Advocacy Committee.

In attendance were: USTAAI President Dr. Evelyn Songco; Atty. Ellen Francisco, President of the UST Law Alumni Foundation, Inc.; Atty. Dwight Ramos who served as moderator; Dean Ellen Manansala, President of the UST Pharmacy Alumni Foundation; and Mr. Lito Malabaan, President of UST Education High School. - *Henry Tenedero, AB General 1980.*



## TAPNET holds seminar - workshop



The USTAAI held a news writing orientation on Saturday, March 6 via Zoom. Ms. Chrisma Bangaol facilitated the orientation that was attended by members of the Thomasian Alumni PRO Network (TAPNet).

Titled "News Writing Plain and Simple," the two-hour orientation focused on the basics of writing news and news features, and the common errors made in writing these. To contextualize the orientation, Ms. Bangaol used the original and edited versions of some articles in the newsletter. She pointed out the errors in the articles and the ways to make them better.

Ms. Bangaol is a graduate of AB Behavioral Science, batch 1992. Her writing and editing skills were honed when she was with the Varsitarian where she started as news writer, became Special Reports Editor and then as Associate Editor in her last year in college. She was the Publications Adviser of the UST Publications Office in from 1995 until 2002. She has taught at San Beda College, the Faculty of Arts & Letters and is currently teaching Essay Writing and English Language Enhancement at the Ecclesiastical Faculties of UST.

TAPNet is the group of PROs and writers of the different member associations of the AAI. - *Joy Viray-Gatmaytan, AB Translations 1980*

## New Archbishop of Manila is an ALPA

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was asking: Why him of all the bishops in the Philippines?

All the news that followed gave us some hints, but not enough to answer the big question. Fr. Cris de Asis of the Archdiocese of Capiz found it disturbing that it might suggest Msgr. Advincula was unworthy when "in truth he really is worthy."

Perhaps, this little mystery is because of the fact that Msgr. Joe, as we fondly call Advincula, served zealously yet silently away from the limelight. Let this little window allow us to see our Cardinal Jose F. Advincula (born 1952) in a better light – particularly his pastoral ministry.

A cursory look at Msgr. Joe's 45-year ministry as a priest and as bishop would tell us that nothing seems spectacular about it. Except for some years spent in Manila where he took up theology at the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, and in Rome, where he finished canon law at the Angelicum, Msgr. Joe spent most of those years as professor and formator in four seminaries, namely: St. Joseph Regional Seminary (Jaro), Immaculate Conception School of Theology (Vigan), St. Pius X Seminary (Capiz), and Sancta Maria Mater et Regina Seminarium (Capiz). He served as rector in both seminaries in Capiz.

He served as pastor of a parish for barely two years before he served as Bishop of San Carlos for 10 years. Then he was appointed as Archbishop of Capiz where he has been serving until now for almost nine years.

As a bishop, he has served in various capacities in the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. At present, he serves as vice chairman of the Committee on International Eucharistic Congress and the Office on Women. In the apparent absence of anything that seems spectacular, what is extraordinary about our new Cardinal-Archbishop of Manila is how faithfully and zealously he fulfilled his pastoral responsibilities to the best of his ability for almost 45 years.

So, why him as Cardinal and new primate of the Philippine Catholic Church? Fr. Marvin Funa of the Archdiocese of Capiz gave his opinion: "Because Msgr. Joe's pastoral priorities answer the pressing need of the Church today, that is, reaching out to the 'peripheries'." Gerald O'Connell of America magazine highlights a similar point: "The primacy of the church at the peripheries has been a key theme in Francis' selection of cardinals. He has used the cardinalate to reach communities in countries that are experiencing poverty, conflict and political tension."

Our Holy Father must have seen how the Cardinal-elect has long shared his pastoral vision as reflected in the latter's pastoral ministry for 45 years.

Msgr. Joe's pastoral ministry indeed leads us towards reaching out to the peripheries. Among his pastoral priorities, the following stand out: the establishment of mission stations and mission schools, the establishment of Merciful Missionaries of St. Joseph, aggressive initiatives

in the areas of social action, mass media, infrastructure, education, diocesan synod, ongoing formation and further studies of the clergy, and the sending of priests to help other dioceses (within and outside the country) and to serve the need of the Universal Church.

Such concrete initiatives paint, in broad strokes, the pastoral profile or ministry of Msgr. Joe. According to Bishop Bendico, "Are they not means and ways of bringing the church closer to the poor, to the peripheries" in accord with the pastoral vision and priorities of our Holy Father?

Msgr. Cyril B. Villareal, vicar general of Capiz, recalled how Msgr. Joe as a priest (two decades and a half ago) zealously created and implemented a pastoral program for the Capiz theology seminarians of reaching out to the people in the far-flung upland areas of Tapaz, Capiz in order to evangelize and catechize them and thereby prepare them for the reception of the sacraments.

In fact, his pastoral program of establishing mission stations and mission schools in far-flung areas in the dioceses of San Carlos and Capiz must have been the blossoming of such pastoral vision of tending to the peripheries. As it turns out, it was, in retrospect, undoubtedly a concrete step along the pastoral direction of Pope Francis. In an interview with Vatican News last October, Msgr. Joe shared how he worked in two rural dioceses in his ministry as a priest and bishop. With that in mind and after speaking with his fellow bishops and priests, he came to this realization: "Perhaps the Holy Father really wanted to communicate to the people in the peripheries that they too are being attended to by the Church." And Advincula shares the same conviction: "I always thought that the Church has to be closer to the people, especially those that are in the peripheries. So this might be a way the Holy Father wants to convey to the people the presence of the Church in the peripheries."

Such pastoral works are born out of the core pastoral conviction of Msgr. Joe, as fruits of his episcopal motto, Audiam (I will listen). "Listening," said Fr. Virgilio Ciudadano Jr., former chancellor of Capiz, "as an essential aspect of communication, creates closeness and builds Christian communities; it provides an encounter rooted in mercy which our Holy Father constantly proclaims."

Msgr. Freddie B. Billanes attests from his personal experience how Msgr. Joe has listened to him: "When I went through some concerns and difficulties as rector of St. Pius X Seminary and now as rector of the Cathedral, Msgr. Joe was and continues to be fully supportive to me in his distinctive ways. I am assured that I can always talk to him about my concerns both as my Archbishop and as my father."

When the Vatican announced he would be made cardinal, Msgr. Joe told Fr. Emil Arbatin, the Capiz archdiocesan mass media spokesperson: "I ask God for the grace that I may be able to perform this task given to me. Lord, this is your Church.

Use me as your instrument, use your priests, use your people."

In a letter to Msgr. Joe, Pope Francis wrote: "It will do your heart good to remember, amid such joy, the entrance of Jesus in Jerusalem... and the Friday that followed." Isn't this the very same spirit that truly fills the heart of our beloved Cardinal—and new Manila Archbishop—Jose F. Advincula Jr. - *Fr. Francis Payo, Licentiate and M.A. Theology and Ph.D. Philosophy*

## Who is Cardinal Advincula?

CARDINAL JOE, as he is fondly called, was born in Dumalag, in the Archdiocese of Capiz, on March 30, 1952. After completing his elementary studies in Dumalag, he moved to St. Pius X Seminary in Roxas City, where he obtained his high school and philosophical studies. He then attended theology courses at the University of Sto. Tomas in Manila.

He was ordained a priest for the archdiocese of Capiz on April 4, 1976 by the late Archbishop Antonio F. Frondosa. He was later appointed Spiritual Director of St. Pius X Seminary, also holding the positions of Professor and Dean of Studies. Later, he began his studies, first in Guidance and Counselling at the De la Salle University in Manila and then in Canon Law at the Angelicum in Rome, obtaining Licentiate in Canon Law.

Returning to his homeland, he served in the Immaculate Conception School of Theology in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, the Regional Seminary of Northern Luzon and then in St. Joseph Regional Seminary of the Western Visayas in Jaro, Iloilo.

In 1995, he was appointed Rector of the St. Pius X Seminary of Capiz, also becoming Defender of the Bond, Promoter of Justice and finally Judicial Vicar in Capiz archdiocese. In 1999, he became the first rector of Sancta Maria Mater et Regina Seminarium, the major seminary of Capiz. He was also assigned in Sto. Tomas de Villanueva Parish in Dao, Capiz as parish priest.

Msgr. Joe was appointed Bishop of San Carlos in Negros Occidental on July 15, 2001 and he received episcopal consecration on September 8, 2001 at the Immaculate Conception Metropolitan Cathedral.

On November 9, 2011 he was transferred to the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Capiz, on the Island of Panay, in the archipelago of Visayas. He was a member of the Episcopal Commission on Doctrine of the Faith and the Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

Pope Francis created him Cardinal in the consistory of November 28, 2020. - *Official press release from the Chancery, Archdiocese of Capiz*



# It's about Time! The Birth of TomKap



*Tomasinong Kapampangan First General Assembly, Sept. 29, 2017.*

**As our beloved Alma Mater beckons, the Thomasians will find each other and come wherever they may be.**

It was during an alumni event in UST in 2015 when Asst. Prof. Fides Maria Lourdes F. Carlos, then Director of the Office for Alumni Relations (OAR), approached Dr. Ma. Salve C. Olalia (former UST Health Service Director) to request assistance for possibly organizing an alumni chapter in Pampanga. This is part of OAR's mission to have UST Alumni Chapters in all the regions of the country and engage the Thomasian graduates in delivering community services align with UST's mission and vision.

One of the highlights of that event was the impressively inspiring presentation of the accomplished projects of Tomasinong Bicolano under Dr. Rollo Milante. Dir. Carlos believed that this can be done in the other provinces like Pampanga. This idea was further reinforced by OAR's Spiritual Director and a Kapampangan, Rev. Fr. Pompeo De Mesa, O.P. He verbalized that he had been wondering how come there were alumni chapters already existing in many areas of the country but none in Pampanga. After a few minutes of discussion, "It is about time!" was the united conclusion. Dr. Olalia opined that the dynamic civic groups in Pampanga were mostly Thomasian-led and the time had come to gather them all under their beloved Alma Mater's umbrella.

Having worked with many of the driven women leaders of the province, Dr. Olalia called up one of the most prominent amongst them - Dr. Miguela T. Santiago - and informed her of the OAR Director's request. It only took this one phone call when a core group was born. Moved by the strong sense of loyalty to UST, the following Thomasians immediately responded: Alejandro P. Alviz from the College of Science, Teresita Cochon-Guanzon from the College of Commerce (Bus Ad), Violeta David-Gaerlan from the College of Commerce (Banking & Finance) and May Florence D. Narciso from the Faculty of Pharmacy. The following are from the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery: Dr. Aleni Estrellado-Araullo, Dr. Mildred Mañalac-Mariano, Dr. Olalia,

Dr. Miguela Ticzon-Santiago and Dr. Leticia Cordero-Yap.

Immediately, the group, now acting as the steering committee under the leadership of Dr. Mariano, planned and agreed that an organizational meeting for all Thomasian graduates of Pampanga should be held.

With great resolve, this meeting was held on July 4, 2015 in Bale Ugnayan in Betis, Guagua, Pampanga. With more than 70 loyal, enthusiastic

and cheerful Thomasian alumni of Pampanga, TOMASINONG KAPAMPANGAN was officially born. The event was graced by the presence of Dir. Carlos who inspired those present with her message that we should be proud Thomasian alumni upholding competence, compassion and commitment as we align ourselves with our Alma Mater's mission to reach out to communities in need of Thomasian expertise and care. The momentous event was capped by an agape and a prayer for God's guidance and blessings. It ended with the UST Hymn sealing the bond among the Tomasinong Kapampangans.

From the many places of Pampanga, Thomasians came and found one another again renewing the love and allegiance to our beloved University of Santo Tomas.

From then up to the present, under the very able leadership of Pres. Mariano, Tomasinong Kapampangan, after some birth pains, treads the path with many accomplished goals ranging from disaster relief assistance, community outreach activities, and fellowship events for the members. It will continue to reach out - extending services and fostering the Thomasian spirit with deep commitment and with the Thomasian brand of compassionate care.

We are proud to be Thomasian Alumni!  
Each one is Proud to be a TomKap!

*-The Tomasinong Kapampangan Team*



*Tomasinong Kapampangan supports the UST Growling Tigers in one of their Pampanga practices*



*July 4, 2015 Foundation day of Tomasinong Kapampangan*



# The Fulbright Experience: Scholarships for Research and Study in the US

The USTAAI Team Academics, true to its mission of creating an avenue for life-long learning for the students and alumni of the University, conducted a free webinar on "The Fulbright Experience: Scholarships for Study and Research in the US" on February 22, 2021. This was conducted in partnership with the UST Research Center for Social Sciences and Education (RCSSD) and the Philippine American Education Foundation, Inc. (PAEF). It was participated in by invited alumni, faculty and students of the University.

USTAAI President, Dr. Evelyn Songco opened the program by stating AAI's aim to discover opportunities available to Filipinos to become students and scholars in the US. Inspirational messages were delivered by Mr. Julio S. Amador III, Executive Director of PAEF and a 2012 Fulbright scholar himself, and Prof. Belinda de Castro, PhD., Director of RCSSD.

Mr. Amador acknowledged UST as the top source of FB scholars in the country. He presented the different Fulbright programs available on leadership, teaching, research, and undergraduate studies. Dr. De Castro

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## Catch BRIDGES @ CBRC TV



## Bridges Show Gaining Regular Viewership... Fast!

The partnership between the UST Alumni Association and a UST College of Nursing Alumnus, media personality Carl Balita, through a Thomasian program aired on Balita's CBRCTV platform titled Bridges, is without a doubt bearing good fruits since its take-off late last year. With a total of over 20 episodes to date from October to February on Sundays at 6:00- 6:30pm, this advocacy of the Team Academics led by Ms. Ida Tionko of the College of Nursing Alumni can be predicted to make bigger leaps.

Undeniably, the main host of the program, USTAAI President Dr. Evelyn Siongco, has truly captured audience interest in the show. Her icon of true Tomasino recognition shows it is most deserved with both her communications skill and winsome spirit showcased here. As a support to the program, other fellow Tomasians co-host with her. Among those already featured are Mr. Henry

Tenadero of the Faculty of Arts and Letters, Mr. Claude Despabiladeras of the College of Education, and Atty. Dwight Ramos of the Faculty of Civil Law. All co-hosts gave their time and talent gratis et amore, all for the love of serving the USTAAI.

The featured topics and guests in Bridges have also generated good reactions from viewers across varying age brackets and sectors. From December to February, episodes covered the topics of care for the environment through urban gardening and waste management, music, arts, food, crafts, entrepreneurship, parenting, and opportunities to gain a degree in the USA through the Fulbright Scholarship, among others.

One episode featured an alumna of the College of Architecture and Fine Arts, Ms. Joanna Papa Rabustillo. She demonstrated her craft of recycling waste materials (plastic bottles and copper wires among them) into beautiful, artistic and unique items that command a good price in the local and international markets. Through her way of helping save Mother Earth, she has also helped some jobless individuals earn for their daily bread and

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## Cargasmus, The Flying Carabao: Imagination and Folklore Beneath Its Wings *A Book Review*

Fiction, the playground for a writer's imagination, is where Dominican priest Rev. Fr. Edgardo D. Alaurin chose to frolic after a probative research book, a Mariology on a patroness' image in his provincial diocese. Fantasy adventure was even



more an unlikely genre for him to single out.

By his account however, his childhood cradled a playful and creative nature. In Legaspi City in Bicol province, amid mountains, hills, and a river, he immensely enjoyed a carefree life which included what his father taught him: riding a carabao and a horse. He also sustained a pastime love for comic books when his mother bought him The Classics Illustrated collection. Thus, his second book, *Cargasmus, The Flying Carabao*, took roots. And took flight to another world, another time.

In the author's mind, *Cargasmus* was sired by Pegasus, the beautiful flying white horse in Greek mythology (750-650 BC), who, when out of boredom in snowy Mount Olympus, flew far and wide, eventually landing in an island called Pearl of the Pacific. There, felled by volcanic rumblings, he was nursed by a female carabao whom he later got pregnant, unknowingly, and left to return to his realm of the gods. Mother died while the offspring half-carabao, half-horse survived.

Parallel to the birth of the baby carabao was the birth of Pikoy whose blood an *asuwang* (vampire) tried to lick through the roof of a nipa hut while his mother was dying. The father Maguilas battled with this creature who, after transforming into a boy during the chase, explained he merely inherited the curse from his grandfather who stole the *mutya*, a twin pearl in a vast ocean called Sulu. A good relationship then blossomed with the lad Aswud taken into

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## Mythical Carabao Story Instills Pinoy Values

Kids today have a new hero, who not only saves the day but also teaches them the importance of Filipino values. Meet *Cargasmus, the flying carabao*, whose Filipino adventure tale was penned by Fr. Edgardo D. Alaurin, O. P., a Bicolano Dominican and currently the Regent of the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts and Design.

*Cargasmus, the Flying Carabao* is imbued with mythology, fantasy, and to some extent, folklore, in which the opus is familiarly Filipino. Inspired by Pegasus, the flying horse of mythical fame, *Cargasmus* is a native carabao owned by an amiable, angelic-looking boy named Pikoy (christened Angelo Serapiko). *Cargasmus* and Pikoy are intimately linked by extraordinary coincidence that brought them together like inseparable twins.

The initial setting is the pre-Christian era in a small village at the foot of Mt. Magayon (Mayon) where Pikoy and his pets, Labuyo, the wild rooster and Kahol, the mysterious dog, grew up together with his childhood friends and the faithful servant Aswud, who had a dark past that practically dominates the story. Pikoy's widowed father, Maguilas, raised him until he was twelve years old. This is where the story launches into more adventures that explore exotic places, such as Mas-bate (Masbate), Pan-ay (Panay), Gui-maras (Guimaras), Palaw-an (Palawan), Ming-danaw (Mindanao) and Sulukas (geographically possible, the Sulu deep).

Beautiful illustrations of carefully selected popular Filipino artists provide an experience filled with marvel, with the paintings and sketches of Roman Cruz, Thomas Daquiaog, Jaime de los Santos, Joseph Endiafe, Noel Flores, Caloy Gabuco, Jun Impas, Raphael Kalaw, Willy Layug, Ninoy Lumboy, Nemi Miranda, Al Perez, Augusto Santiago, Danilo Santiago, Ramil Tumampas, Noli Vicedo, and the author himself, Fr. Edgardo Alaurin. The details of the illustrations are described through story telling as Fr. Ed showed the rough drawings of ideas in a sketchpad that served as reference for the artistic rendition.

The gallery of artworks is also part of the virtual book launch held on November 22, 2020, in time for the author's birthday.

In his younger years, Fr. Ed was fond of reading storybooks and comics and watching movies, especially the classic novels of adventures, humor, and fantasy. He inherited his love of storytelling from his grandparents and imparted this to his nephews and nieces, and most recently to his grandnieces and grandnephews, who affectionately call him "Lolo Ed."

Following this cherished tradition of Filipino storytelling, it took nearly two decades for Fr. Ed to complete the saga of *Cargasmus*. It's a gratifying read, endowed with twists and turns, values, moral lessons and a riveting catharsis in the end.

"There is a hero and innate goodness within each and every one of us. Life is full of adventures, filled with ups and downs. Better things happen without us expecting it. Things are both real and imaginative," says Fr. Ed. "The human mind will always be in search for what is good, beautiful and true. Ultimately, life is a mystery; but, we would eventually come to realize the real value of things freely given us as they come and go. These are the lessons learned," says Fr. Ed as he reflects on creating a legacy that combines his love for storytelling, the values he cherishes and the universality of art.

- Asst. Prof. Mary Ann Venturina Bulanadi, Ph.D. Faculty, College of Fine Arts & Design, UST



# UST Gensan Campus on the Rise

The University of Santo Tomas recently started construction of one of its satellite campuses outside Manila. The decision to build a campus in General Santos city stemmed from previous studies based on the maximum number of current enrollees in UST Manila that were coming from the SOCCSKSARGEN area. Deciding on General Santos was a crucial decision at the time for the administration headed by previous Rector, Very Rev. Fr. Herminio V. Dagohoy, O.P., Ph.D. since it was also considering Davao. The decision was based on the fact that Gensan was a strategic location.

Rev. Fr. Dexter A. Austria, O.P., SThD, Director for the Facilities Management Office, together with Engr. Albert S. Surla, MSCE, Assistant Director and Engr. Romnick Amida, Inhouse Civil Engineer, visited the site. In an interview, he said that the perspective of UST Gensan would still incorporate the same European architectural design, reminiscent of the Spanish influence in the campus in Manila. The people of Mindanao will have something to look forward to in terms of another architectural milestone in UST Gensan that is situated in Bgy. Ligaya. The campus has a total area of 80 hectares, bigger compared with the 20-hectare campus of UST Manila and the 40-hectare campus of UST Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

According to Fr. Dexter, the University is looking at initially offering at least four major courses - Accountancy, Business, Pharmacy and Nursing. This may still change depending on the need when the University finally opens its academic doors to the people of Mindanao and other neighboring countries like Indonesia and Malaysia.

The construction of the Filial House of San Martin De Porres, which will house the Dominican priests, is nearing completion and is expected to be finished by the 2nd Quarter of 2021.

Another notable construction in the area is the Main Building. Although it has a modern architecture, the building will still have the iconic blue cross tower. It will be comprised of six floors with roof deck, according to Fr. Dexter. Taking into consideration the number of earthquakes in the area, the Main Building's structures and foundation are going to be built to be resistant to sideways loads and strong enough to take loads.

Another key feature being considered in this campus is the building of flood control catch basins. - Lynette E. Gallinero, UST Alumni SOX Chapter Secretary



*Filial House of San Martin de Porres*



*Main Bldg. The groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled either in March or April of this year.  
UST Gensan on the rise*



*Rev. Fr. Gerard Zabala, OP, obliged the UST Alumni - SOCCSKSARGEN (SOX) Chapter, headed by its president, Ms. Maria Carmella Royeca, along with a number of alumni-members from the area, a tour of the construction site.*



# Thomasians USA Induct New Leaders

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. – Through the online video platform Zoom, the newly-elected officers of Thomasians USA were sworn into office by David Canepa, the highest elected government official in the County of San Mateo in California.

In his keynote speech, he emphasized the legacy and contributions of Thomasians USA to the community where he grew up in, citing that since 1987, Thomasians USA have not only benefitted the alumni of the University of Santo Tomas and the Filipino community, but has transcended to become a beacon of social and educational empowerment to the very culturally diverse United States, particularly, through the leadership of the late Professor Alice Peña Bulos of then College of Liberal Arts, who was founding president of the organization. He also mentioned the state legislature's passage of resolution to



*The Oath-taking proper, with the oath administered by County Supervisor David Canepa*

## CEAFI Gifts Aeta Families in Tarlac



To celebrate the 500th Year of Christianity in the Philippines, the Apostolate Committee of the College of Education Alumni Foundation Inc. (CEAFI) had its New Year gift-giving project for 100 Aeta Families of Sitio San Martin, Sto. Nino Bamban, Tarlac on January 23, 2021. The site, a partner community of the College of Education, was also hit by typhoons in December 2020.

Led by Board Director Ces San Juan and Internal Vice President Marielyn Quintana, the project solicited donations from generous alumni and friends so that the Aeta community could receive over Php 500worth of food and home essentials. A coaster loaned by UST Simbahayan took the volunteers and the goods to Sitio San Martin's Day Care Center where the gift-giving took place.

The group who went on site was composed of CEAFI Board Members Ms. San Juan and Maureen Pickering, USTAAI Executive Assistant, Kaye Bundang, and other UST alumni and friends that included Coach Greg Colmenares and Jon Peran of TALA.

CEAFI coordinated with Loida Punzalan from Sitio San Martin, who helped organize the Aeta families there on the gift-giving day. Ms. San Juan said, "In spite of our early departure from UST and the continuous rain today, everyone went home happy."

Care was taken to distribute the goods in separate stations manned by CEAFI volunteers in the community day care center. Only 5 people at a time were allowed inside to practice social distancing and to comply with the COVID-19 precautionary measures. Station 1 gave out buckets with toiletries, slippers for adults and children, packs of rice, salt, and sugar. Station 2 handed out clothes, blankets and towels; 3 distributed Kopiko and chocolate tumblers; 4 gave giant loaves of bread; and the last station distributed grocery bags worth over Php 500, Katinko, and medicated shampoo. A box of toys was also donated to the Day Care Center. Extra goods were also repacked to benefit 25 more families not included in the original list. - Nanette Ochoa Fernandez, BSE 1976

name a stretch of the 87-kilometer California State Highway 35 after the late Professor Alice Bulos, a known Democrat stalwart, for her contribution to society. This is the first recorded occurrence of a state highway stretch in the United States being named after a Filipino.

The new set of officers are as follows:

- **President:** Jeffrey Manalang – a United States Army veteran, businessman, and philanthropist; accountancy graduate of then College of Commerce and Accountancy; former Mr. Thomasian and a showbusiness talent in the Philippines; attended the University of the Philippines for his master's degree in business administration;
- **Vice President:** Loreto Rojas, Jr. – Finished summa cum laude in his Bachelor of Philosophy, magna cum laude in both his AB Classical Studies and his Licentiate from the Ecclesiastical Faculties; finished his 2 master's degrees from St. Patrick Seminary in Silicon Valley where he is currently an education director; working on his doctorate at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome;
- **Correspondence Secretary:** Janice Madulid Francisco – alumna of the UST College of Education's Food Technology program; acquired her master's degree in business administration from Ateneo de Manila University; attained her Certificate on Project Management from California State University, East Bay; currently working at the Johnson and Johnson's Development Corporation, the venture capital subsidiary and innovation division of J&J;
- **Recording Secretary:** Carmela Cucucuo – graduated cum laude in both CFAD Painting (Continue to page 17)





## Bridges episode: Vertical Gardening

The weekly "Bridges" Talk Show at CBRC YouTube channel featured on January 10, 2021 "Vertical Garden in Urban Spaces" with Dr. Evangelina T. Estrada, PhD as the invited guest speaker.

Dr. Estrada is an alumna of the UST College of Commerce and the Graduate School. She is a member of the Mountaineering, Gardens and Plants Enthusiasts group and the founder of the "Luntiang Pader ng Makati City" project. She emphasized the benefits of vertical gardening from beautification of the community, improvement of air quality, promotion of biodiversity, regulation of temperature, to economic gains from the harvests of herbal and edible gardens, among others.

During her talk, the senior citizens of the Sitio 6, Barangay Kalinawan, were featured as active participants of the "Luntiang Pader" project, displaying their beautiful vertical gardens on the walls, windows and grill gates of their homes. Dr. Estrada delightfully shared the recitation of the creed by the participants of the project to signify their commitment to the protection and preservation of the environment through their vertical gardens.

This Bridges' episode earned one of the highest viewership on a national and global scale. Hence, on February 7, 2021, Dr. Estrada returned to Bridges as its guest speaker sharing practical tips on the topic "Mag-Vertical Gardening Tayo." She showcased the beautiful hanging and wall gardens of the senior citizens uniquely named as garden of love, garden of responsibility, garden of happiness, garden of generosity and garden of wisdom, among others. She shared surprising but practical materials used in designing unique miniature garden spaces which include boxes re-purposed into planters, inexpensive chicken wire, old bed springs, disposable plastic bottles and of course, the fertile soil.

The show concluded with Dr. Estrada's sharing the idea of vertical gardening as a form of admiring the beauty of God's creation and as a "prayer" itself.

These episodes were made possible through the partnership of the UST Graduate School Alumni and Grant Association Inc. (GSAGAI) and the UST Alumni Association Inc. (USTAAI).

-Prof. Fernando Pedrosa, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Evangelina Timbang, UST GSAGAI

## From the President's Desk

(From page 2)

provide life long learning to the viewers of Bridges especially the Thomasian alumni, teamwork has come alive among the members of the Committee. The "I" has become a "we." The "me" has become "us." The Committee went through the four stages of Team development as described by Tuckman (1965): forming, storming, norming, and performing. From these stages, the team was born.

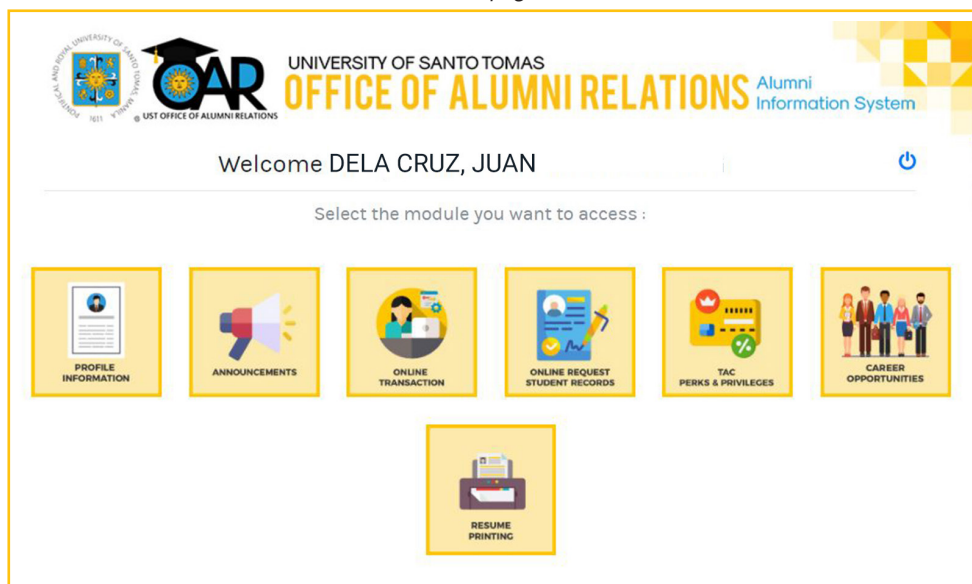
A team is characterized by trust, open communication, support, cooperation and acceptance. With trust, each member believes in the words and actions of one another. When open communication prevails, the members feel comfortable in expressing oneself without fear or reservation. Everyone supports a good idea. The strength of each member is used to support one another. Consequently, the co-operation in a team is strongly manifested and the acceptance of one another is heightened. It has become a beautiful team that is bonded by great passion to serve.

The Committee on Academics is just one example of how God's unending grace works in in USTAAI in ways that many times we do not understand. We simply believe. The pandemic has separated all of us but it has failed to divide us. It has made the environment dangerous but it has failed to weaken our resolve to serve. Despite the pandemic, the Association is still able to gather dedicated volunteers who quietly serve to keep the USTAAI going.

I hail and praise our Thomasian alumni volunteers! Your presence in the Association is a celebration of the Filipino spirit of "Bayanihan." Together, we carry the USTAAI on our shoulders, carefully lifting it and moving it slowly towards our shared vision: a cohesive, pro-active and vibrant alumni association that effectively serves its alma mater, the alumni, the country, the church, and the family.

## UST Alumni Relations launches upgraded alumni portal website

(From page 2)



Upgraded gateway page of the Alumni Information System.

In 2019, OAR conducted a survey of all AIS registrants concerning the improvement of the website. Suggestions and comments from the alumni community were all taken into consideration in upgrading the system. After a year of revisions and test runs, OAR, with the assistance of Santo Tomas e-Service Providers (STePS), deployed the reconstructed website on soft launch to cater to the Class of 2020. Two new modules -- for announcements and for online transactions - were opened. The first module will let the alumni view interests-related announcements directly from their accounts. And the latter-mentioned module will direct the users to Thomasian Alumni Card applications and yearbook delivery service.

OAR aims to open the service to all batches by the start of the third quarter of 2021. This move will hopefully strengthen the community network and the number of registered alumni in the system.

"All Thomasian alumni are highly encouraged to register and update their information in the Alumni Information System. This will give positive contributions to the programs and projects of the University particularly in tracking their alumni to properly recognize their achievements. This would also help in providing essential information in local and international accreditations that would maintain and even upgrade the status of the University as a premier and world-class Higher Educational Institution," stated by Asst. Prof. Medina as a call to his fellow alumni.

Currently, the class of 2000 to date may register through the AIS website (<https://ais.ust.edu.ph>). Older batches may register at <https://bit.ly/USTALUMNI>. Extracted data from the link will be manually verified by OAR and transferred to the system to be accessed by the registrant.



# Pax Romana Medicine Holds Wellness Forum

The UST Pax Romana Alumni Association - Medicine Unit held its first episode of "PAXa: Ating Pag-usapan" on February 13, 2021. The online event was titled "Pax Romana Way: Saludem et Sanitatem" (Health and Wellness) and discussed the importance of self-care, mental health and resilience during these difficult times.

The program started with a prayer led by the UST Marian Evangelization Community, followed by the introduction delivered by Dr. Egidio Elio, President of the UST Pax Romana Alumni Association.

The first speaker was Dr. Willie N. Lagdameo, a pediatric surgeon, former Pax Romana Liberal Arts (now Science) Unit President, and co-founder of Health and Wellness Coaches Philippines, Inc. He discussed Energy Medicine and pointed out that everything in the universe is made up of energy that impacts our health and affects our relationship significantly.

The second speaker was Dr. Mary Jean Villa-Real-Guno, a pediatric gastroenterologist, former Pax Romana CCC President, and the President and CEO of Home Health Care Inc. She talked about the importance of self-care and of seeking help from others, and shared pointers on financial health and resilience.

The program concluded with the message given by Dr. Patrick Bernard Elio, President of the UST Pax Romana Alumni Association - Medicine Unit followed by a prayer by Dr. Peregrina Gonzaga, adviser of the UST Pax Romana - Medicine Unit.

The project was held in partnership with various Thomasian organizations, medical groups and schools throughout Metro Manila. - *Dr. Patrick Bernard Elio, President, Pax Romana Medicine Unit.*

## PAX ROMANA WAY: SALUTEM ET SANITATEM

HEALTH AND WELLNESS TALK

FEBRUARY 13, 2021 | 3:00 PM

VIA ZOOM | STREAMED LIVE ON FACEBOOK

WILLIE N. LAGDAMEO, MD,  
FPCS, FACS

Title of talk: Energies of Love

SPEAKERS

MARY JEAN VILLA-REAL - GUNO,  
MD, MBAH

Title of talk: Financial Health & Resilience

## EHS Alumni Honor Frontliners, Jubilarians in First Virtual Homecoming

The UST Education High School Graduates' Association, Inc. honored its alumni who are now serving as medical and government frontliners. Their contributions amid the COVID-19 pandemic were recognized during the first virtual Grand Alumni Homecoming hosted by the Association, in partnership with the Office of Alumni Relations (OAR). The event also recognized Class Jubilarians, led by Class 1971 that celebrated its 50th anniversary.

### Gratitude for being good examples of Thomasians

In separate messages delivered during the event, EHS Regent Fr. Maximo P. Gatela, O.P. and Principal Marielyn C. Quintana hailed the alumni for the contributions they have made in their own spheres of influence since graduating from EHS. Fr. Gatela said, "I would like to thank you for your commitment that has already been proven in time, for your compassion that has already reached numberless people, and love that has been unmatched through the ages."

This was echoed in Ms. Quintana's statement, "The work that you do is a manifestation of the University's mission of producing graduates who serve the nation, the Church, and the global community." Indeed, she praised the alumni for living out the University's core values. The University was also represented by OAR Director Fredeswindo Medina, who congratulated the alumni and encouraged them to continue reconnecting with UST even through virtual means.

The UST EHS Graduates Association, led by its President, Mr. Arnelito M. Ocampo of Class 1976, also congratulated the alumni, those in the country and abroad, and assured them that once the pandemic is over, the face-to-face reunion will take place.

### A salute to frontliners

In a video presentation delivered by UST EHS GAI Vice-President for Local Alumni, Ms. Marilou Madrona-Mendoza of Class 1984, the Education High School's medical and government frontliners were honored, including the physicians, nurses, scientists, and police and military personnel from the different batches. Those who have also passed on in the line of duty were remembered.

### Celebrating the jubilarians

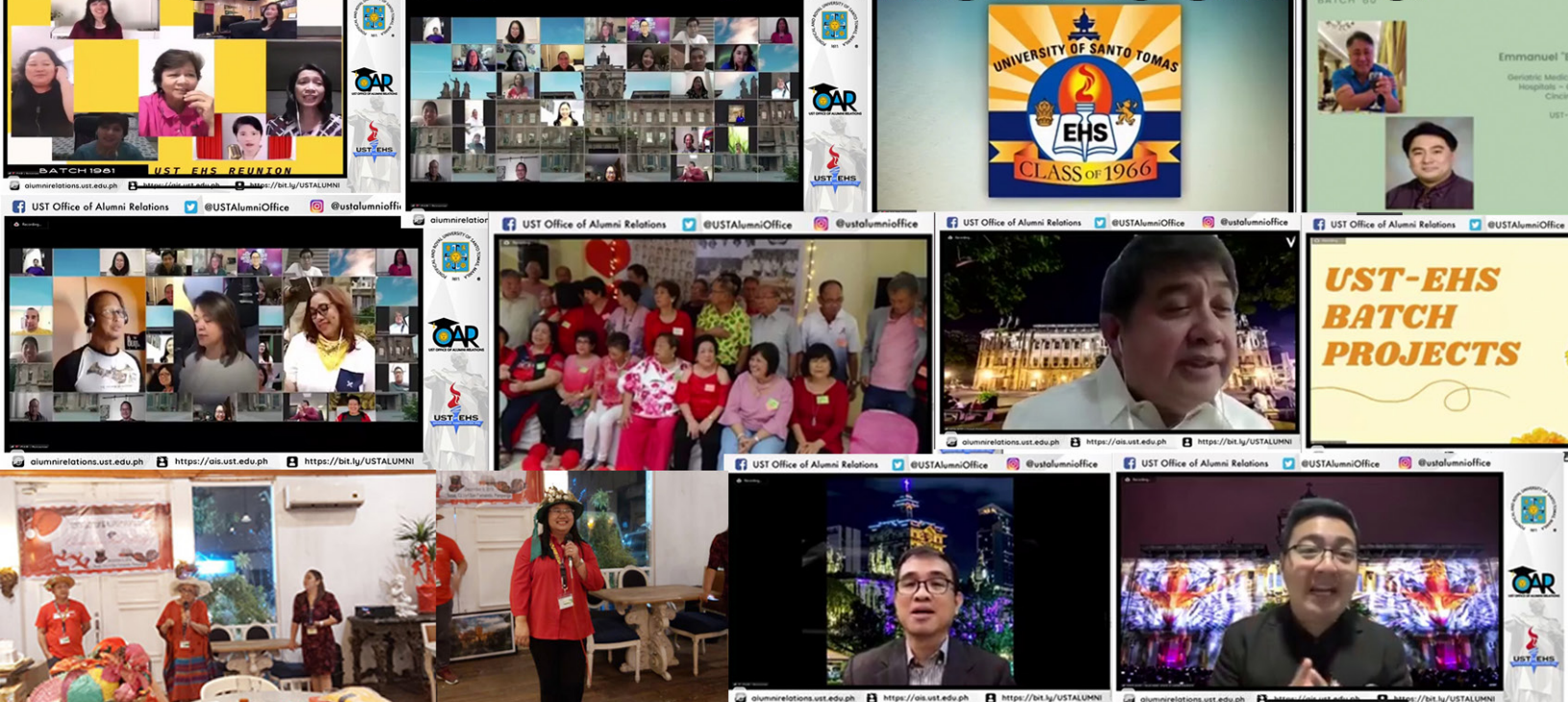
The virtual celebration was a chance for the alumni family to honor those celebrating their milestones, namely Batch 1956 (65 years), 1961 (60 years), 1966 (55 years), 1971 (50 years), 1976 (45 years), 1981 (40 years), 1986 (35 years), 1991 (30 years), 1996 (25 years), 2001 (20 years), 2006 (15 years), 2011 (10 years). The virtual homecoming was organized by the UST EHS GAI with OAR and assisted by UST Educational Technology Center. - *Philippe Jose Hernandez, BSE English, 2007*





**CLICKER-RAZZI**

**UST-EHS VIRTUAL HOMECOMING**



# TOMASINONG KAPAMPANGAN



**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ALUMNI FOUNDATION INC.**





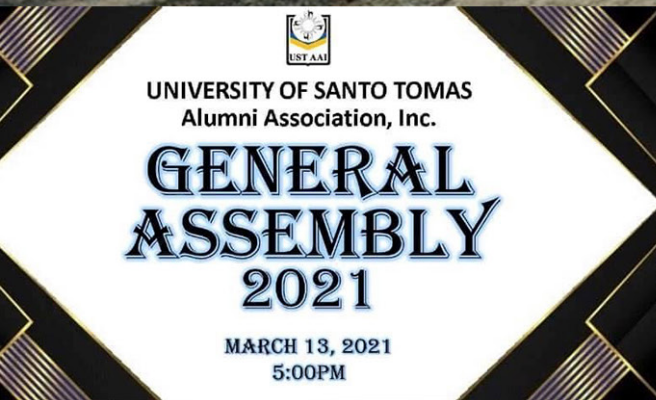
# TOMASINONG SOCCSKSARGEN



Welcome Dinner for Father Dexter Austria, OP  
( Director for Facilities Management Office - UST )



UST Gen San site visit and Lunch with Fr. Gerard Zabala, OP



**CLICKER-RAZZI**



# Thomasians USA Induct New Leaders

(From page 11)



*The Presidents of Thomasians USA through the years*

and the UST Graduate School's Master of Fine Arts programs; freelance artisan based in San Francisco, running her own art gallery; former fine arts faculty member at the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts and Design and at the Far Eastern University Institute of Architecture and Fine Arts;

- Treasurer: Sylvia Valdez Omuro – reelected as treasurer; an architect and planner, product of the now reorganized UST College of Fine Arts and Architecture; attended San Francisco State University for professional programs in architecture; a senior designer at PGH Wong Engineering, a top construction firm in the United States, handling several government infrastructures; serving in the leadership of the United Architects of the Philippines – Northern California chapter;



*County Supervisor David Canepa and Thomasians USA President Jeffrey Manalang*

- Auditor: Lota Torres Clemente – reelected as auditor; alumna of the College of Commerce; retired programs specialist for the City and County government of San Francisco, under the Human Service Agency; core member of the Filipino Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Francisco;

- Sergeant-at-Arms: Rose Wenceslao Flores – alumna of the College of Commerce and Accountancy; Top 10 Outstanding Economics Students, 1997; UST Red Cross Youth Council Silver Cross Medalist; UST Quezon Leadership Award; running her own skincare line and a centralized business and financial firm in Silicon Valley; organizer of Silicon Valley's Bayanihan Fil-Am Foundation and a convener of the Thomasian Global Trade Expo; and

- Public Relation Officer: Maria Sarina Estaniel – alumna of the College of Commerce and Accountancy; attended the University of Phoenix for Master of Business Administration; former Ms. Thomasian; ramp model; Proposal Manager at Dell Technologies. Several alumni sit as Board Members:

- Lilia Cabaccang (Education) – one of the seven original founders of Thomasians USA; obtained her master's degree in Mathematics and Physical Sciences from the University of San Francisco;

- Joseph Palafox (CAFA) – architect and board examiner for architecture; immediate past president of Thomasians USA; runs his own Bay Area-based architecture and design firm;

- Estelle Oloresisimo (AB) – The Varsitarian alumna (Amihan); Bachelor of Literature in Journalism; immediate past vice president of Thomasians USA; President of the Filipino-American Friendship Network; Communications Director, Filipino Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Francisco; runs an administrative consultancy firm;

- Princess Baylosis Muñoz (Nursing) –

immediate past Correspondence Secretary; registered nurse and an investments advisor with Transamerica Corporation;

- Eris Rodriguez (CAFA) – immediate past Recording Secretary; alumna of UST CAFA; woks at PGH Wong Engineering and serves as consultant to various architecture and design firms;

- Carmel Sanchez (CAFA) – architect and urban planner; Construction Administrator at MEI Architects, a firm servicing Stanford University, UC San Francisco, and the San Francisco International Airport; and

- Julius Romel Fernandez (AB) – two-term president of the AB Student Council serving the quadricentennial and neocentennial era; former Board Speaker of the Central Student Council; former communication faculty at California State University, East Bay.

Since 1987, Thomasians USA has been under the leaderships of four presidents:

Professor Alice Peña Bulos (AB Sociology from the UST College of Liberal Arts, MA in Social and Behavioral Science from the UST Graduate School) served from 1987-2016; Amelia Fernandez (Bachelor of Philosophy from the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, and Master of Psychology and Philosophy from the UST Graduate School) served from 2016-2017; Joseph Palafox served from 2017-2021; and Jeffrey Manalang (incumbent).

The induction of officers was witnessed by former San Mateo County Parks Commissioner Marico Enriquez and his wife Fe Enriquez, a UST alumna; and the President of the mother alumni organization and longtime dean of students, Dr. Evelyn A. Songco of the USTAAL. This set of leadership will serve for a term of three years.

- *Thomasians USA*



*The current Board of Directors of Thomasians USA*



## A Gift to be Given: 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines

(From page 4)

The instructions of our Lord have become the inspiration of our jubilee this year, the “Year of Mission,” and the guiding principle of its theme “Gifted to Give.” This concept of being given to also give might be deemed as one of the many mysteries of our faith, a mystery that we cannot even start to understand because we give mugs to other people without really expecting them to share those with others or to pass them on to others. But even as mug-giving Christians, especially Filipino mug-giving Christians, we cannot deny ourselves this innate tendency of sharing our mug of Christian faith in the awe that we have about this divine mug of ours.

This awe has even been recognized by Pope Francis when he said, “You received the joy of the Gospel... and this joy is evident in your people... in your eyes, on your faces, in your songs and in your prayers. In the joy with which you bring your faith to other lands.” He even referred to us being “smugglers of the faith.” In celebration of this wonderful gift that we have received, the Church in the Philippines commemorates the 500 Years of Christianity this 2021.

In this commemoration, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has commissioned and approved on September 18, 2020 a logo of the celebration. The centerpiece of the logo shows Magellan’s Chaplain, Fr. Pedro de Valderrama baptizing Rajah Humabon. This depiction was adapted from the painting of our National Artist Fernando Amorsolo, “The First Baptism in the Philippines.”

(Insert logo and its meaning here)

The Conference has also prepared activities and projects to be implemented throughout the year to further highlight the gift that was given to be given despite the situation brought by the pandemic. On April 4, Easter Sunday, as we commemorated the Resurrection of Jesus, the Jubilee Doors in all cathedrals were simultaneously opened

and the jubilee year of the 500 Years of Christianity was opened in all parishes. On April 14, a reenactment of the first baptism took place in front of the Magellan’s Cross in Cebu City and a Mass was offered along with the renewal of baptismal promises and the baptism of ten children at the Basilica del Sto. Niño, also in Cebu City. That was followed by a cultural show in the evening. In commemoration of the first baptism on the third Sunday of Easter 500 years ago, on April 18, cathedrals and parishes held baptisms. As our celebration also coincides with the Year of St. Joseph, a national consecration to him will be celebrated simultaneously in the parishes and cathedrals on May 1, while in the National Shrine of St. Joseph, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker will be commemorated. April 18 to April 22, 2022 will mark the second National Mission Congress, mission sending, and the closing of the jubilee year that will be held in Cebu City.

On December 8, on the feast of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Year of St. Joseph will officially conclude. This closing will be followed by a consecration of families to St. Joseph as well as the official launching of the Confraternity of St. Joseph.

Lastly, as we continue to take on the challenge and the opportunities of online evangelization, various online activities connected to the celebration of the 500 Years of Christianity and Year of Mission have also been prepared. Most of these will be livestreamed at the Facebook page of the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Mission and other partner organizations such as Radio Veritas, TV Maria and other FB pages featuring 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines.

As customary during jubilee years, plenary indulgence will be received, as granted by Pope Francis through a decree dated February 25, 2021. The indulgence is gained when the faithful make a pilgrimage to any one of the jubilee churches before April 22, 2022 to receive the Sacrament of

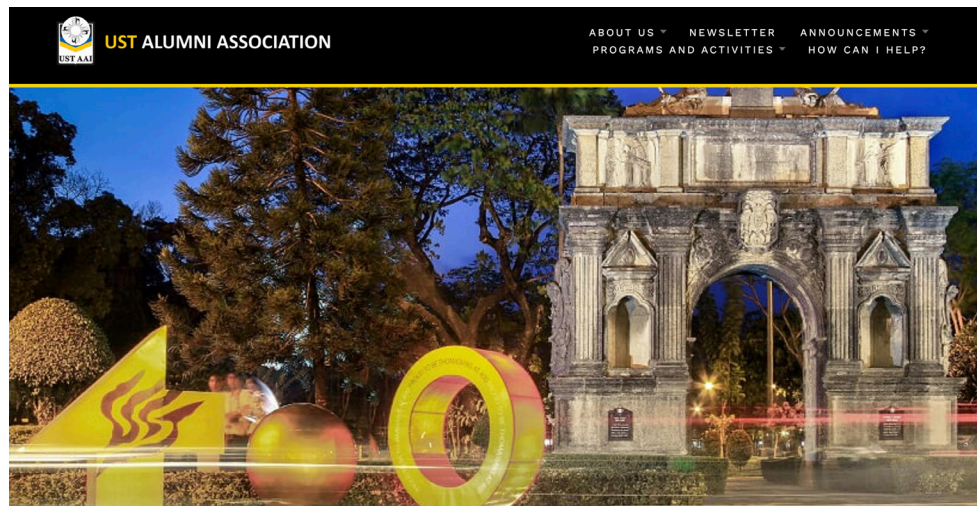
Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist and to pray for the intentions of the Holy Father. This should include praying for the fidelity of the Filipino people to their Christian calling, for the increase of priestly and religious vocations and for the defense of the family, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer, the profession of faith, and an invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary. A plenary indulgence removes all temporal punishment to cleanse us of our sins.

In the midst of the immense suffering that we have all been experiencing since last year because of the pandemic, we still and must find it in ourselves to seek joy and comfort in the gift of the Gospel, of the Good News, of the mug that has introduced us to the God of Israel, to the God of Ferdinand Magellan, and, ultimately, the God of our lives. This is because it is in Him that we have also found in ourselves the strength and will to survive the storms of the past year and the years to come. Much like 500 years ago, after a long and arduous journey through the seas of the Atlantic and the Pacific, we should be like Ferdinand Magellan and his crew after 2020 – hungry, thirsty, sick, abandoned, mistrustful, and fearful. However, after that journey, on the island of Homonhon, they found the grace of God through our ancestors that welcomed them through giving them food, nursing their sick, and providing them a place for shelter.

We, too, find the grace of God through the Catholic Church that continues to nurture us and welcome us despite us being worldly mercenaries. It is now time for us to be missionaries, to let others take a sip from the mug, to give the gift that was meant to be given to those that are also hungry, thirsty, sick, abandoned, mistrustful, and fearful, and to take on the instructions of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 28:19 NABRE) to “Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” – Fr. Carlo del Rosario, *AB Philosophy*, 2004; *STB*, 2007; *JCL batch 2010*

## USTAAI Website Launched

(From page 1)



Dr. Mariano presented to the 100 attendees of the General Assembly the features of the website, clicking on each part to show what it contained. These parts include the Newsletter, Membership, About Us, USTAAI Officers, Announcement, Programs and Activities, Gallery, In Memoriam and How Can I Help?

Prominently featured are pages for each member association, marked by a wall of the member association’s logo. By clicking on the name of the association, a photo of its president with a bio-note appears. The page also holds its Vision-Mission statement, photos of its Board of Directors, and a link to the particular association’s social media platform if any.

The website can also be accessed through the USTAAI’s Facebook Page, UST Alumni Association, Inc.- *Nanette Ochoa Fernandez, BSE 1976; Chair, UST AAI Secretariat*

## Chrisma Bangaol: Serving the Church through the Poor

(From page 4)



by her parents who were devoted servants of the Church. She grew up in a parish which was under the CICM missionary fathers.

Her present involvement in the local Church, however, started much later, after a number of her speech students at the UST Central Seminary had been ordained priests. They invited her to give talks and formation in their parishes, seminaries, schools and other assignments. In 2008, she was invited to give a talk to the college seminarians of the Cor Jesu Seminary in the Diocese of Dipolog. Since then, she has embarked on a more serious dedicated holistic mission to reach out to and help the poor. The Love the Poor Program. Even prior to the declaration Of 2014 as Year of the Poor, Chrisma, together with Fr. Joel, was already doing a number of initiatives for the poor parishioners of the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in Polo, Stipitan City in Zamboanga del Norte. On this same year, 2 years after Fr. Joel erected the parish, he was transferred to a much bigger parish in a third-class municipality. It was there where the Love the Poor Program formally took shape. With the parish initiatives for the poor during the Year of the Poor, Chrisma saw the

deeper need of the poor parishioners in the very remote barangays. She observed that the poor were not only financially poor. Because of their poverty, they were also spiritually and morally poor. It's a vicious cycle of poverty. There was hunger and thirst in such far-flung areas that needed to be sated. Chrisma pointed out that poor people were not able to attend masses because they did not have the means to go to the church. They also needed to work to eat for the day.

"When we launched the Love the Poor Program, it was never meant to address only the need of the materially poor or spiritually poor but more the need of those who were both spiritually and materially poor. Eventually, the Love the Poor Program even became more encompassing to include those who were poor in other ways." Contrary to the understanding of a few, Love the Poor Program is not a dole out program nor a one-time or a seasonal gift giving that is funded by a few rich people. It is a life-giving program. It is a holistic program aimed at evangelizing the poor – particularly, but not limited to, those who are both materially and spiritually poor. It includes catechesis, parenting, youth and



adult faith formation, life skills building, creative and expert facilitation and conduct of Pre-Sacrament and Pre-Cana seminars, among others. Chrisma, together with the Love the Poor team (consisting mostly of youth she has also trained), visits barrio chapel communities, public schools, markets, and neighborhoods to bring Jesus' message of love and mercy.

**What has sustained Chrisma and her missionary work?** Chrisma beamed with joy with the question. She said that it is the grace of God that flows out from people who also share the heart of her mission but can't go for certain reasons. Chrisma's group never solicited or demanded people to give. Help keeps coming - another proof of the success of the program and the Divine stamp on it.

**Until when will she do what she does?** She answered, "As long as I can still walk the slippery rough roads to reach those who can't go to or have been away from the Church. I would like to serve the Church still even when I am much older. When I don't anymore have the energy to walk up the mountains, animate the youth and the children, handle one training after the other from one place to another, I pray that I can still continue to serve the Church particularly in the Church Tribunal. But I have to have a degree to do that." Chrisma is in the last stretch of her Licentiate in Canon Law. She confessed that she struggled to finish her academic requirements because she also juggled between her regular work, teaching job, other engagements and mission work. She confessed that she needs to work and do other projects so she can sustain her mission (she pays for her fare and all other expenses).

The greatest struggle though that Chrisma has to deal with is not the language or the culture or the expenses or the dangers, but the attitude of some of the clerics and few clericalized lay who are not only unsupportive of missionary work but are also critical saying it's not sustainable and not Catholic.

But Chrisma, with the support of her family, friends, collaborators and Fr. Joel, continues to believe that when the Lord calls, He equips those who respond to the call; when the Lord sends, He sustains. "It's never about me. It's never about us. It is always about the Lord, His work, His mission. His grace suffices." - *Chrisma Bangaol with Winchell Campos.*





# FELINO A. PALAFOX, JR.: THE QUINTESSENTIAL THOMASIAN ARCHITECT

(From page 22)

received more than 200 awards and recognitions in the past 25 years, most notably as the first Filipino architectural firm included in the Top 500, Top 300, Top 200, and first ASEAN firm in the top 100 Architects of the World cited by the World Architectural Firms in the World of the London-based World Architecture Magazine. In fact, it is the only Southeast Asian architectural firm included in the list. In 2012, Palafox Associates ranked 89 in the list of the world's top 100 largest practices and top 8 in leisure projects.

Among his string of accolades, Arch. Palafox also studied Advanced Management Development Program for Real Estate and seven other special courses at Harvard University. In May 2017, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Fine Arts (Honoris Causa). In April 2018, he was conferred with these Honorary Titles: Doctor Fellow on Royal Institution of Singapore; Royal Institute of Architects, Singapore; Royal Institute of Development Consultants of Singapore; Royal Institute of Town and Regional Planners of Singapore.

This Thomasian architect has given lectures on urban planning and environment-friendly architectural development in more than 20 countries in Asia, Europe, and North America, including institutions like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard University. He has travelled to and has observed more than 1000 cities in 79 countries. He has actively participated in conferences, lectures, seminars, and fora organized by international groups, of which he is an associate or a member. He was also cited by Forbes Asia Magazine as one of the 48 Heroes of Philanthropy in Asia – one of four from the Philippines.

Arch. Palafox has served both the government and private sectors for four decades. In fact, BCI Asia has awarded Palafox Associates as BCI Asia's Market Leader in Architecture in the Philippines for nine consecutive years – 2005 to 2013. He is also the first architect-urban planner to become the President of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) in 2011, and now its lifetime member and President of the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners (PIEP) in 2013 and 2014. At present, he is a Fellow and Executive Director for Government and External Affairs of the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP).

In a capsule, Arch. Felino A. Palafox, Jr., together with his Palafox Associates and Palafox Architecture Group Inc., now boasts of several local and international feathers in his cap. Some of these landmark projects are:

International: Urban Planning of Dubai, UAE; SM China; Saigon Golf and Country Club, Vietnam.

Metro Manila: Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning, Manila; Rockwell Center, Makati; La Mesa Eco Park, Quezon City.

Luzon: MRT 7 Intermodal Transit-oriented development, Bulacan; Manila Southwoods, Cavite; Splendido Taal, Batangas; Summit Ridge, Tagaytay.

Visayas: Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning, Iloilo City.

Mindanao: Puerto Princesa Streetscapes, Palawan; Divine Mercy Healing Shrine, Misamis Oriental.

MALLS: SM Malls - Las Pinas, QC, Pampanga, Iloilo, and Davao; Robinson Malls - Pampanga, Rizal, Pasig, and Mandaluyong.

Aside from the distinguished awards won by his firms, Arch. Palafox has received quite a number of awards, local and international, to his name, among others:

1. The Best of the Best 2010 & 2011 – BizNews Asia Magazine
2. Gusi Peace Prize 2011
3. The Outstanding Filipino (TOFIL) award for Architecture and Urban Planning 2017

On top of all these awards and trophies, however, what Arch. Palafox treasures most is the fact that he belongs to a THOMASIAN FAMILY: his father, Dr. Felino Castro Palafox, Sr., graduated from the UST Faculty of Medicine & Surgery. His siblings are also UST alumni: Lauro – UST Central Seminary; Mary Margaret – Faculty of Medicine & Surgery; Fernando – Chemical Engineering; Francisco – Civil Engineering; Joseph – Architecture; Mary Hildegard Conservatory of Music; Liborio – Mechanical Engineering. The love of his life is Wilma Villanueva Palafox – Arts & Letters 1974, Major in Economics, and Miss Arts & Letters 1974. His eldest child, Suzanne Katrina, graduated from the UST Faculty of Medicine & Surgery in 2002. There is no architect among his children, but the closest course in the build environment is Karima, who finished her Masters in Environmental Planning from the Oxford Brookes University in England in 2005. Arch. Palafox, his wife, and Karima are all Licensed Environmental Planners. During these pandemic times, the Palafox family has spent a lot of quality time together, with their Family Bible Study focused on a chapter or verse of their choice, followed by a discussion and sharing of each one's experience and personal insights.

When asked to comment on the crisis that the world is going through because of the pandemic, Arch. Palafox says that although he is not categorically making a paradigm shift, he is considering the planning and designing of projects to suit the times, with his environment advocacy as the ultimate goal: Covered courts for basketball, tennis, and volleyball; golf courses; restaurants with al fresco area (open air); indoor plants/ indoor gardens for interior design of houses; al fresco areas; and rainwater Harvesting. He also plans to be a moderator/speaker/host in webinars that are the landmark fashion of the period in order to answer the needs of our people at present.

Indeed, UST takes pride in its quintessential THOMASIAN architect, Felino A. Palafox, Jr.

- Prof. Myrna Plata Hilario-Munda, litt. B. Journalism, 1976

## Cargarus, The Flying Carabao: Imagination and Folklore Beneath Its Wings A Book Review

(From page 9)

Maguilas' household, becoming like an older brother to Pikoy. Similarly, the two also brought the baby carabao and a wild rooster during their trek home enabling the son to grow into the pets' boy-master.

This trio of characters – Maguilas, Pikoy, Aswud – up to the time the amiable Pikoy turned thirteen makes the story a wild adventure and the fantasy unfolding as pages in our early history. There are piracy in the ocean, banditry in villages, gory battles on the shore and underwater, captivity and slavery, tortures of captives and animals, kidnaps of women, treachery, and viciousness highlighting savagery in those times.

There are good people who exhibit valor and heroism, and also big doses of Christian virtues obviously reflecting the mission of the author-priest. In the end, as in all comics sagas, heroes triumph and get their rewards as Maguilas, son Pikoy, and his friends do. So, do the boy's pet animals who also inject brawn and humor in the adventures: Cargarus (name given by Pikoy) flying over opponents and knocking them over with his super horsepower and magical ivory horns, and likewise, Labuyo, an omen-warning fowl.

Readers will find in this book ingredients that normally make for a good read: action, suspense, love, romance, humor, twists and surprises, even a grand wedding at the end. And a rare one too: about a hundred deftly rendered artworks (oil on canvas, pen/pencil/ink sketches, plates) depicting scene highlights and key characters. These obviously were intended to aid readers in picturing the other-worldly characters and scenarios in the author's creative imagination. They were done by notable artists with roots at the College of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Santo Tomas where Fr. Alaurin is the current Regent. Two artworks were from the author himself including the one gracing the cover.

Who will enjoy this book? Most likely, the generation entertained by characters in the cinema, TV and computer screens, even handheld mobile phones. Maybe, also their parents and grandparents around the author's age, raised likewise on comics (like Robin Hood, Three Musketeers, Ivanhoe) and continuing to contemporary screen heroes (Superman, Terminator, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter et al).

Frankly, it may not be for the faint-hearted like me (and maybe, other women) who might find the conflicts in some chapters too graphic for comfort.

*Cargarus The Flying Carabao* can earn a place in Philippine literature, a new folklore with strong and inspiring characters, a familiar Philippine setting (there are references to Sulu, Palawan, Guimaras, Pan-ay, Ming-danaw), Filipino pillars like (bahay kubo, bayanihan, balangay), a spate of Christian traditions in the country like the Semana Santa, patron saints and archangels, Kristo, kapilya. Additionally, the name and concept of Cargarus alone are a stretch of a borderless imagination. - EA Lopez, Litt B in Journalism, UST Faculty of Arts and Letters 1969



## The Fulbright Experience: Scholarships for Research and Study in the US

(From page 8)

emphasized the wonderful opportunities and value that education brings as it improves in gigantic leaps one's personal and professional life.

Ms. Joanne G. Fajardo, Program and Communications Officer of PAEF, presented the Fulbright Experience Scholarship for Study and Research in the US. She also presented the history of the Fulbright Program in the US and in the Philippines, its mission and vision, the different programs for scholarship and fellowship, fields of study, Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship and application period, and timelines for the programs. She also mentioned notable alumni of the program some of whom are Thomasians.

Then, Ms. Christine Grace Catindig of Education USA, a Cultural Affairs Specialist and Senior Adviser of the US Embassy, familiarized the audience with the different education opportunities in the US, the procedures of navigating their websites, the application process in the different institutions and programs, and the available financial assistance.

To highlight the wonderful opportunities afforded by the Fulbright program, Judge Philip Aguinaldo, a Hubert H. Humphrey 2012 Fellow from the University of NY in Buffalo and the University of Minnesota, shared the benefits he got from his HHH Fellowship program. He said that the program helped him develop a more global mindset, that he was able to adjust to different cultures, and how people view their governments. He also admitted that he was able to see the Philippine culture from a different perspective.

From the sharing and the presentations, some of those who attended expressed their appreciation of the success of the Fulbright program in developing candidates who become ambassadors of the Philippines as they bring the face of the Filipino culture to converge with the cultures of the Fulbright family in the world.

The open forum that followed clarified some points about the scholarship programs available.

The Webinar was ably emceed by Atty. Dwight Ramos, the VP of the UST Law Alumni Foundation, Inc  
- Ida S. Tionko, Chair, Team Academics



## Bridges Show Gaining Regular Viewership... Fast!

(From page 8)

eventually start their own craft trade.

Another episode entitled 'Yummy Bites' featured Ms. Joan M. Reyes who demonstrated baking decorative cookies in the simplest way. This encouraged viewers to earn extra for the Christmas season. By profession a medical technologist, she had earlier decided to go into business for additional income in raising her children.

Another Thomasian, Ms. Rovile Caingat from the College of Education, shared her thoughts on a family legacy of a known brand of notebook, the Corona notebook. On the company's recent achievement of its 100th year, she disclosed its secret as the maintenance of good quality and personal management by up to the third generation. In behalf of the owners, she emphasized how personal touch is important in being top-of-mind among users.

Dr. Minerva Calimag took center stage with her sharing on 'When A Child Is Born.' The topic revolved around her life as a busy doctor with eight children who have all followed their parents' footsteps as doctors. At an early stage, she had to be a solo parent due to the untimely demise of her husband. Her secret is a blend of simple time management and good cooperation in the family in sharing the burdensome responsibility of parenthood.

Vertical gardening, a new field with benefits to a growing number of urban dwellers, has also been showcased in Bridges. In two episodes, Dr. Evangeline Estrada shared how everyone can go into vertical gardening within the limitations of city spaces. This episode registered one of the highest viewership. Still in line with care for mother earth, Dr. Arlene Ancheta presented the hazards of improper solid waste management. This topic was reinforced by Ms. Eisa Mercado who tackled the topic Solid Waste Segregation from the Source, emphasizing how households can actively help save our planet by segregating own domestic waste before bringing them out for collection.

Considering February as the Love Month, Bridges featured Dean Eugene de los Santos to explain the relevance and origin of our very own Kundiman. This episode was capped by his rendition of a kundiman that touched the hearts of the viewers who sent a lot of compliments in the chat box. Still highlighting love in February, the lovely couple of Dean Raul Isidro and wife Annabella Isidro unfolded how love flourished way back during their college days and how they sustain a beautiful relationship after almost 50 years. They said Trust and Christ are the main ingredients to keep the fire aflame.

From all these featured topics so far, it is easy to make a habit of viewing and participating in Bridges every Sunday at 6:00 to 6:30 pm. Join us via Facebook at CBRCTV Bridges and we promise interesting topics that can uplift and inspire you to start a bright week ahead. As Ralph Ellison said, "Education is all a matter of building bridges," and Bridges proves that education continues beyond the 4 walls of our esteemed institution. - Marilyn Cano, BSE English, co-major in Philosophy, 1970





## Alumnus Ruben Nepales Donates Copy of His Book

Alumnus Ruben Nepales recently donated to the UST Miguel de Benavides Library a copy of his best-selling coffee table book, "Through a Writer's Lens" which was originally released as a limited hardbound edition that quickly sold out. The book is published by Bessie Badilla, a creative multihyphenate who also served as the art designer and layout artist of the book. This 254-page classic is a compilation of Nepales' two-decade work of more than 1000 often candid, refreshing snapshots of the Hollywood Stars whom he has interviewed and featured in his Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) column Only In Hollywood, a popular source of "What is New?" among the Hollywood celebrities, such as Oprah Winfrey, Jennifer Lopez, Sandra Oh, Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, and a score of Filipino-American talents.

The book was received by Rev. Fr. Angel A. Aparicio, O.P., the Prefect of the Library; Ms. Maria Cecilia D. Lobo, the Chief Librarian; and Ms. Dianne Padilla, the Asst. Chief Librarian. Witnessing the event was Dean Marilu Madrunio of the Faculty of Arts & Letters.

Nepales is a proud alumnus of the UST Faculty of Arts & Letters. His wife, Janet, is an alumna too, and both of them are journalists based in Hollywood, USA. In 2012, Ruben held the singular distinction of being the first and only Filipino to have been elected as the Chairman of the Board of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), an association of international journalists that votes on and presents the prestigious Golden Globe Award. In June 2019, he was elected executive secretary of HFPA and was the managing editor of a special anniversary commemorative book, "Hollywood Foreign Press Association: A History (75 years of the Golden Globe Awards)."

At present, he also serves in the Board of Directors of the Filipino American Symphony Orchestra (FASO), the only Filipino symphony orchestra outside the Philippines. In 2012, Nepales published his first book, "My Filipino Connection: The Philippines in Hollywood" which won in the print journalism-book category of the Migration Advocacy and Media Awards presented by the Office of the President of the Philippines' Commission of Filipinos Overseas. It was in November 2020 when he released his second book, "Through A Writer's Lens", which became popularly acclaimed.

Nepales is also an award-winning journalist whose honors include prizes from the National Entertainment Journalism Awards – a U.S.- wide competition, and the Southern California Journalism Awards, presented by the Los Angeles Press Club. In the 60th Edition of the latter contest in 2018, Nepales won First Place for his feature on Angelina Jolie in the category Entertainment News or Feature (newspapers over 50K) over other finalists from the Los Angeles Times, LA Weekly, and Bloomberg Businessweek. He has found a new home in RAPPLER. He also contributes a monthly Hollywood Feature to SMILE Magazine, Cebu Pacific's inflight magazine.

He believes that upon leaving PDI and now at home in RAPPLER – "after 15 years when a door closes, another door opens."

The well-received book is now available on paperback on Amazon. - Prof. Myrna Plata Hilario-Munda, *Litt. B. Journalism, 1976*

## TALA Launches Tala ng Pagmamahal

The Thomasian Alumni Leaders Association (TALA) launched an outreach program activity in February 2021 named Tala Ng Pagmamahal, in time for the season of love. Led by UST TALA Chairman Emeritus Angie S. Tuason, Tala ng Pagmamahal is a 10-day feeding program for the children in Brgy. 12 Kaunlaran Village, Caloocan City.

The program is in collaboration with the Jesuit Mission Station and supported the Busog Puso Feeding program headed by the Sacred Heart Chapel Chaplain Fr. Wilfredo Samson. TALA provided meals every Tuesday and Friday to 200 children in this barangay from February 12 until March 16, 2021.

Milk and home-cooked meals were given to the children. Baker's Fair specially made and provided heart-shaped breads as take home, making the activity a meaningful celebration of love. As the TALA volunteers observed, the joy and the smiles on the children's faces were simply awesome.

TALA also extended the program when the team went to Tarlac on February 25, 2021 (EDSA Revolution Day) to spread the love and bring joy to the indigenous community affected by the pandemic. The team gave gifts and food packs to 200 Aeta families living in Sitios Gayaman, Malani, and Buok in Bamban. This activity was coordinated through Lucy Acosta Guya and Froilan Alipao of the UST Simbahayan.

The Tala ng Pagmamahal project was made possible through the generosity of TALA volunteers, TALA's partner organizations and donors, namely: Quezon City Dynamic Lions Club (District 301-D1), Sanyo Seiki, Igan Foundation, Mitsui Trading Phils., Quezon City Jail Female Dorm, NBI Batch Sanlahi and the UST Alumni Association Inc. – *Athena Greco, BS Commerce, Economics, 1992*





# FEATURED THOMASIAN

## FELINO A. PALAFOX, JR.: THE QUINTESSENTIAL THOMASIAN ARCHITECT

A true gold Thomasian alumnus, Architect Felino "Jun" Palafox was given the distinction and recognition by the UST Alumni Association Inc. (USTAAI) in 2009 by granting him The Outstanding Thomasian Alumni (TOTAL) award for his insurmountable contribution to, and advocacy for, environment-friendly architecture and internationally acclaimed urban planning projects here in the Philippines and abroad. In the same year, he was named among the People of The Year by the People Asia Magazine. His classic values were honed in his secondary education from the Christ the King Seminary (SVD) and these values were complemented and refined at the University of Santo Tomas where he earned his B.S. Architecture degree in 1972. In 1974, he obtained his master's degree in Environmental Planning at the UP Diliman through a scholarship grant by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). He was also named as one of the Outstanding Thomasians among the UST 400 during the Quadricentennial Anniversary of the University in 2011.



Perhaps it is quite an interesting coincidence that this year, he celebrated his birthday on the 500th Anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines. With the Holy Mass concelebrated in Rome by Pope Francis himself and Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle on the Quincentennial Jubilee of the Church in the Philippines, Arch. Jun Palafox could not ask for anything more.

In his student days in the College of Architecture and Fine Arts (CAFA), he was the perennial class president. He became the Editor-in-Chief of The Vision Magazine of the College. He garnered the highest number of votes among the candidates in the first ever popular election held in UST for the Central Board of Students (CBS). A devoted catechist, he was also the Student Representative named to welcome Pope Paul VI in UST. He was an energetic member of the Student Tourist Guides Bureau and the UST Representative to the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP). But providentially, he was not among those activists who were incarcerated in the "First Quarter Storm" of the 70's. "I had a mission to fulfill," he admitted telling himself.

At 27, Arch. Palafox worked in the Government of Dubai, UAE, as Senior Architect and Planner from 1977 to 1981. It was here where he met Henry Sy, of the populist SM Malls, who later became his client and who encouraged him to return to the Philippines to pursue his advocacies of good governance and anti-corruption, as well as environment-care measures.

He founded the Palafox Architecture Group, Inc., his crowning glory. He led and managed his Palafox Associates and Palafox Architecture Group, Inc. in the planning of more than 16 billion square meters of land and the design and architecture of more than 12 million square meters of building floor area with more than 1,739 projects in the Philippines and in 39 other countries, to date. His firm has

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