



The Centralian LINK

Intriguing
CEW
Questions

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SPECIAL ISSUE • March 2015

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3 Centralians now sit at MIWD Board

BY RIANNE PALAGUAYAN

In the hope of working for the resolution of problems surrounding the Metro Iloilo Water District, Iloilo Governor Arthur D. Defensor appointed Central Philippine University (CPU) President Dr. Teodoro C. Roblesas part of the new set of MIWD Board of Directors. Soon thereafter, Defensor also appointed two other Centralians, former CPU President Dr. Juanito M. Acanto and Dr. Jessica Salas.

Dr. Robles, representing the academic sector, replaced MIWD chairman of the board Dr. Danilo Encarnacion whose term ended, December 31, 2014. He now serves as Chairman of the Board.

Dr. Acanto took over the position vacated by Engr. Adrian Moncada who resigned December 31, 2014, to represent

the professional sector.

Dr. Salas replaced Bernadette Castellano who resigned, December 31, 2014. Supposedly, the term of Castellano representing the women sector still ends by 2016.

Dr. Robles, who was inducted by Gov. Defensor, December 15, 2014 is a CPU graduate of Bachelor of Science



Acanto



Salas

in Electrical Engineering, April 1964. He took his masteral degree in Electrical Engineering at the Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, June 1969 and in that same school, took his doctorate degree.

Dr. Acanto who was ap-

pointed January 6, 2015 was CPU President from 1999 to 2008. He also served as part-time faculty of College of Law from 1968 to 1972 and Dean of the College of Law from 1991 to 1995. He fin-

3 Centralians... ▶ 2

U.S. Ambassador Goldberg visits CPU



A forum was held with U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Phillip Goldberg morning of January 26 at the CPU Educational Media Center.

Ambassador Goldberg talked about the on-going

projects that the Philippines and American government are working on together to help develop the economy of the Philippines...Iloilo City, in particular.

The U.S. Ambassador pointed out how privileged he was to be in Iloilo, as it is one of the first cities to be involved in the U.S. Government's City Development Initiative.

Ambassador Goldberg is looking forward to working on more projects to achieve development in the Philippines, especially the business programs they've been

U.S. Ambassador... ▶ 2

World-class art exhibits highlight Dr. Drilon Day

CPU celebrated Dr. Rex D. Drilon Day with the theme "Living Out the University Mission Through Culture and the Arts," February 23, 2015. The celebration started with a Memorial & Wreath Laying service at the Evangelical Memorial Garden in Balantang, Jaroparticipated by members of the CPU Administration, faculty, staff, alumni and members of the Drilon family led by Dr. Drilon's son Lincoln Rex.

At 9:00AM there was a formal turning-over ceremony of the artworks and collection of Ms. Nelfa Querubin together with the opening of the ex-

hibits of Dr. Rex D. Drilon memorabilia. Ms. Querubin, an alumna of Central Philippine University, is an internationally - acclaimed clay artist and a consummate ceramicist. Seeing the need for students to be exposed to art, she decided to donate her works and art collection to the University in support of its plan to build a museum. In recognizing Ms. Querubin's donation, CPU provided a temporary home for her works of art at the 4th Floor of the Henry Luce III Library. The exhibit is opened to the viewing public.

World-class... ▶ 6

Kinder inaugurates new classroom

BY MRS. HANNAH SIOSAN

The Cpu Kindergarten inaugurates its new classroom they named "Room 5", Friday, January 16, 2015.

Room 5 is located beside the existing Room 4 and between the Anatomy Building of the College of Medicine and the back portion of the University Church.

The event was attended by a handful members of the CPU family including the Administrators and the stakeholders of the

newest addendum to the department.

It was blessed and dedicated by Rev. Francis Neil G. Jalandoon and Rev. Samuel Escobin. No less than President Ted Robles came to deliver his Opening Remarks. Ptr. Mary Grace Labis of the Chaplain's Office called the attendees to celebrate.

A Special Music "Ode To Joy" was rendered by the Rainbow Ringers – a bell choir composed of K-2 pupils. Cute and unique.

Alaetha Cumy Nabor, K-2 Goodness

Pupil, the Kindergarten teachers, and Mrs. Rosalinda Hinolan, KPAA President accepted the blessing with thanksgiving.

According to Principal Mrs. Hannah Siosan, this new classroom came as a result of the many years of praying and the "blossoming" of the department. She acknowledged the support of President Ted Robles, the Board of Trustees, the Vice Presidents, Engr. Rhett Baldonado, Engr. Benjie and the whole kindergarten family, but most of all to God be the glory!



3 Centralians... ◀ 1

ished his Associate in Arts (Pre-law) and Bachelor of Laws at Central Philippine University and his Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration at International University, Independence, Missouri, United States of America.

Dr. Jessica Salas, on the other hand, is a Fulbright Senior Researcher at Cornell University on August 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006 and joined the Fellowship at Cornell Institute for Food and Agriculture (CIFAD) Cornell University and has written a book entitled, Watershed Walk. She also finished her Doctor of Education at Central Philippine University in 1981.

They were appointed by Gov. Defensor for their management expertise, integrity and fairness.

Meanwhile, Architect Ramon Victor Singson was also appointed as one of the Board of Directors of MIWD but declined by reason of his dual citizenship.

This new Board of Directors, according to Gov. Defensor, need to identify the existing problems as well as the processing needs that should be addressed immediately to save the year for the people of the city and province, particularly in relation to the Asia Pacific Economic Forum or APEC hosting.

Dr. Robles, in an interview, said that he will help resolve the on-going conflict with water distributor, Flowater Resources Iloilo, Inc. with an open mind.

On the other hand, Dr. Acanto said that he will begin to seriously study all the challenges and opportunities that are being presented.

Dr. Salas thought of the appointment "a challenge yet an opportunity to help the city and province."

The new MIWD Board of Directors will serve the water district until December 31, 2016. (PNA)

U.S. Ambassador... ◀ 1

working on to help Filipino entrepreneurs. "... this could generate more jobs for the country, long-term jobs to help this economy – an economy you will be part of building, pretty soon," Ambassador Goldberg said as he addressed the college students, faculty and staff of Central Philippine University.

Goldberg also stressed some of the international issues affecting the country, especially global warming and U.S. relationship with other countries.

The American Ambassador was here also to visit the American Corner of the CPU Henry Luce III Library, one of the 10 American Corners in the county. In acknowledging the historical relationship of the United States with Central Philippine University, the ambassador reiterated the role of the Baptist missionaries to the Philippines in the founding and development of the school, and the legacy of education and service.

Goldberg was appointed by U.S. President Barack Obama as U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines in 2013. (*With reports from Cyrus A. Natividad and PNA*) (See photos on page 5)

CHRIST EMPHASIS WEEK 2nd Semester 2014-2015

Theme: "TRANSITIONS" Texts: (OT) Isaiah 42:16; (NT) 2 Corinthians 5:17

SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS for COLLEGE CONVOCATIONS

Time	Jan. 26, 2015 (Mon)	Jan. 27, 2015(Tues)	Jan. 28, 2015(Wed)	Jan. 29, 2015(Thurs)	Jan. 30, 2015 (Friday)	
10:00 am-11:50 am Venue: RMA	Opening Celebration (CBA, CHM, NURSING & HFLM) Speaker: Rev. Cris Sian Praise team – UC Opening prayer –HFLM Welcome Remarks – VP Bible Reader – CBA Intro for Speaker – CHM Special No. – CNAHS	Venue: RMA PWT: XA Counselors: XA; CVCF; YA	CBA Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	Venue: RMA Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	Venue: RMA Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	Closing Celebration (All Colleges) (Praise Jam) c/o UC Rev. Cris Sian Para-church Bands
		UC PWT: CHM Counselors: PK; GT	CHM Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	UC Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	UC Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	
		EMC PWT: Theology Counselors: YR; Journey; Life Box	NURSING & HFLM Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	EMC Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	EMC Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	
4:30 pm – 6:10 pm Venue: RMA	Opening Celebration (CAS, EDUC,CARES, THEO, ENGINEERING, CCS) Speaker: Rev. Cris Sian Praise team – UC Opening prayer – Theo Welcome Remarks – VP Bible Reader –Eng'g Intro for Speaker – Educ Special No. – CAS	RMA PWT: BSP/SOF Counselors: YA; YR; CVCF; PK; GT	CAS, EDUC,CARES,THEO Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	RMA Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	RMA Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Pastor JhoLabis	
		UC PWT: Engineering Counselors: PK; GT; CFC; CBF	ENGINEERING Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	UC Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	UC Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Rev. F. NielJalando-on	
		EMC PWT: Youth Alive Counselors: YA; CFC; LifeBox	CCS Speaker: Pastor Lloyd Basco In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	EMC Speaker: Pastor Ronald Parpa In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	EMC Speaker: Pastor Roger Quimpo In-charge: Rev. Samuel Escobin	

Note: Each College must provide the following: 1. Praise Team (if none, pls. contact the Chaplain's Office); 2. Welcome Remarks; 3. Bible Reader; 4. Introduction of the Speaker; 5. Special Number

SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS for HIGH SCHOOL

Jan. 26, 2015 (Monday) 8:00 am-9:30 am	Jan. 27, 2015 (Tuesday) 8:00 am-9:30 am	Jan. 28, 2015 (Wednesday) 8:00 am-9:30 am	Jan. 29, 2015 (Thursday) 8:00 am-9:30 am	Jan. 30, 2015 (Friday) 8:00 am-9:30 am
Speaker: Pastor RaymanPalada In-charge: Pastor Albert Java PWT:HIS Praise Team	Speaker: Pastor RaymanPalada In-charge: Pastor Albert Java PWT:HIS Praise Team	Speaker: Pastor RaymanPalada In-charge: Pastor Albert Java PWT:HIS Praise Team	Speaker: Pastor RaymanPalada In-charge: Pastor Albert Java PWT:HIS Praise Team	Speaker: Pastor RaymanPalada In-charge: Pastor Albert Java PWT:HIS Praise Team

SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS FOR ELEMENTARY

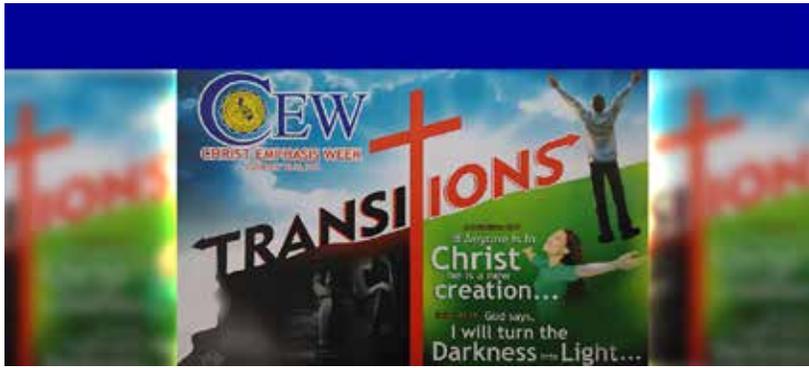
Jan. 26, 2015 (Monday) 3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Jan. 27, 2015 (Tuesday) 3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Jan. 28, 2015(Wednesday) 3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Jan. 29, 2015 (Thursday) 3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Jan. 30, 2015 (Friday) 3:00 pm-4:00 pm
Speaker: Pastor JustinePalmes In-charge: Pastor Jho Franco-Labis				

SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS FOR KINDERGARTEN

TIME	Jan. 28, 2015(Wed)	Jan. 29, 2015 (Thurs)	In-charge:
9:30 am-10:30 am	Pastor Niza Joy F. Santiago	Pastor Niza Joy F. Santiago	Rev. Ruth Lunasco
2:30 pm-3:30 pm	Pastor Niza Joy F. Santiago	Pastor Niza Joy F. Santiago	Rev. Ruth Lunasco

OTHER SPECIAL CONVOCATIONS:

DATE/ TIME	VENUE/IN-CHARGE	GROUP	SPEAKER
Jan. 23, 2015(Fri) 4:00 pm-5:30 pm	University Church In-charge: All Chaplains; PWT: SOF/BSP	Faculty and Staff	Rev. Dr. LemuelEquiña
Jan. 28, 2014 (Wed) 5:45 pm-7:30 pm	EMC In-charge: All Chaplains; PWT: SOF/BSP	College of Law and College of Medicine	Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Fabula
Jan. 24, 2015 (Sat) 10:00-11:30	EMC In-charge: All Chaplains; PWT: SOF/BSP	Graduate Studies	Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Fabula
Jan. 24, 2015 (Sat) 8:00-9:30	RMA In-charge: All Chaplains; PWT: SOF/BSP	NSTP	Rev. Samuel R. Escobin



CEW

Christ Emphasis Week

January 23-30, 2015

Theme: "Transitions"





Rev. Cris Amorsolo Sian

Full House Praise Jam during the Closing Celebration of the Christ Emphasis Week

Thank you for the four bands that rendered their services for the Lord -- Seeds of Faith, University Church, Pastor's Kids and Chi Alpha.

Special thanks to Rev. Cris Amorsolo Villafranca Sian for spearheading the event.

To God be the glory! - Rev. Francis Neil Jalandoon



U.S. Ambassador Goldberg visit



The Welcome Party



The Presidential Welcome



The Talk



The Open Forum



CPUR Prime Minister Dogie Gumata asks the US Ambassador

Selected Questions from CEW Convocations

JANUARY 23-30, 2015. (VENUE: UNIVERSITY CHURCH)

3. If all religion wants peace, why can't we have the peace?
4. *Ngaa ang mga Christians pero na belong sa iba-iba nga religion gabantayanay* different beliefs? *Pero* above all we only believe in one God. Is God happy *kung ga gub-anay* or *gaaway parti sa religion*?
16. Is homosexuality a sin?
17. How will I know if the Lord has already forgiven me?
30. There are hidden stories from the Bible. One of them was Jesus and Mary Magdalene were in a relationship. Is this true? Since there was this painting found having Jesus together with Mary Magdalene with a female baby.
36. Does science need faith to prove its existence? Or does faith need science to prove its worth?
45. If God forgives, why does hell exist?
47. Why is it so hard to forgive without forgetting?
49. Are gays allowed in heaven?
50. Is a lesbian/gay a sin? Are they condemned to spend eternity on hell?
55. If God is so good, why does he let people, most especially, teenagers of minors involved in drug addiction, prostitutions and other things that may destroy their future?
56. Do gays and lesbians have to give up their homosexual lifestyle to enter God's kingdom or heaven?
59. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven.
62. Pastor, sa Bible nakasiling sa Lev. 28:19 "Thou shall not have any marks in your body for I am the Lord your God." But why there are still Christians *nga nagapa tattoo* although *nga nagapa tattoo sila* for God's glory?
65. Do I really have to confess my sins to a priest or can I just kneel down and ask forgiveness to God from the bottom of my heart?
69. *Ngaa manami ang bawal?* Can u help us/tell us how to avoid temptations? thanks! ☺
72. Does science contradict the Bible?
74. *Kung nabaligya mo soul mo sa demonyo pwede ka pa kabalik kay God? Pwede ka pa kapalangit?*
83. Why can't there be world peace?
88. *Tuod gid man bala* Pastor *nga* not all Christians are Christians?
96. *Sa 17 years ko di nga kabuhi sa kalibutan daw halos tanan nga struggle nabatayanan ko na. Namatyan na ko papa tapus si mama may sakit pa. Te ngaa Pastor na patay gid si papa? Te ngaa gapangabudlay kami subong?*
103. *Ngaa may mga mangaranon? Kag nga-a may mga imol? Kung ang hambal Nila Equal lang ang tanan?*
108. Can God still forgive someone who has done one of the seven deadly sins? How?
115. *Bisan ano kadamo sang mga katuntuhan nga gina pang himo kang tawo amo man japun nga angkunon sa sang Ginoo kag tawgun nga bata sang Diyos ?*
116. What is the evidence of our salvation?
121. Is it a person's choice to become a LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual & Transgender) or is it God who had created them for who they will be?
133. Why does failure need to be experienced?
135. If God really can forgive all of us, so that means there is no hell anymore?
136. What is the first step to get close to God?
142. How do I become a Christ-like person?
146. Is masturbation really a sin? Why?
147. *Ang panonood ba ng "porn" ay kasalanan?*
151. "For God so love the world" Why do you think there are some people born to experience poverty, sickness and cruelty?
153. Pastor, you said earlier that God's hope is unlimited. They say that "Purgatory" is also his way of giving us hope. Does "purgatory" exist?
157. *May Forever?*
158. Why is it that God permits war, hunger, calamities, and other bad things to happen? Why is it that sometimes He doesn't answer the prayer of some people who are desperate for help?

(If the questions made you thinking, watch for the other selected questions from the other venues (Rose Memorial Auditorium and the Educational Media Center) in the next issues of the Centralian Link. As of press time, the Religious Affairs Committee is assessing the questions and formulating the answers. If you want to suggest answers, please email to centralianlink@gmail.com. We may publish your answers.-Ed.

World-class... ◀ 1

After the turning-over ceremony, the 3rd Dr. Rex D. Drilon Memorial Lecture was held at the Conference Room 1 of the Henry Luce III Library which is also at the 4th Floor. Dr. Agustin A. Pulido, former University President and presently member of the Board of Trustees, was speaker.

Other activities held on campus were the Launching of the Center for Local Governance and Indigenous Studies at 11:00 AM at the NSTP Office, Franklin Hall and the yearly Debate Match sponsored by the Dr. Rex D. Drilon Debate Society which was held at the Pagsuberon-Cruz Celis-Ancheta Hall Chapel at 1:00PM. A forum with Ms. Nelfa Querubin followed at the 4th floor of the Henry Luce III Library at 2:00 PM. / By *Cyrus A. Natividad*



Ribbon Cutting (L-r) CPUAAI Pres. Dr. Felice Garigalao-Molina, Lincoln Rex Drilon, Nelfa Querubin, Pres. Ted Robles, and former Pres. Agustin Pulido



The Turning Over



Wreath-Laying



The Lecture



Wreath-Laying



Sample works (below) of world-class artist Nelfa Querubin. See them at the 4th floor of Henry Luce III Library



A Hermeneutics of the Kingdom of God

(Continued from previous issue)

IV. Ministry Recommendations

If Christians believe that their duty is to proclaim and help build the kingdom of God in which there is love, justice, peace, and compassion for the weak and the powerless, how are they supposed to translate this conviction into concrete plan of action/s that will contribute towards peace and development in Mindanao?

Given the current socio-economic, cultural and political injustice reigning in Mindanao, this study recommends the following political agenda (based on the above interpretation of the kingdom of God) for genuine and lasting peace in Mindanao:

Economic Transformation

The conflict in Mindanao has its roots in the socio-economic marginalization of the Moro people. Their economic displacement is largely a historical outgrowth and the cumulative effect of a long process of discriminatory laws, policies, and programs, including development programs. The most visible sign of displacement of the Moro people including other indigenous and minority groups in Mindanao has something to do with their rights to land. The historic discriminatory land policies and legal statutes favoring Christians and large scale multi-national agriculture and mining corporations during the American colonial rule and the Philippine Government's policies of resettlement of Christians to Mindanao had resulted in a slow but sure abrogation of traditional Moro property rights and their eventual marginalization from mainstream economic growth and development.

Statistics show that in spite of the government's comprehensive land reform program, millions of people especially the marginalized and poor Muslims in Mindanao remain landless. In many parts of Mindanao, vast tracks of land are owned by multinationals and super rich who dominate the economy and making the poor poorer.

The state of land distribution in the Philippines shows that land ownership is concentrated in the hands of a very few people. Statistics show that 45 per cent of the country's agricultural land is owned by only five per cent of the total landowning families. Another document pointing to the glaring inequality of land ownership notes that roughly 80 per cent of the total cultivated land is controlled by only 20 per cent of the landowning families. Not only do few landowners own large tracts of lands, they also possess the most fertile lowlands. Multinational corporations such as, DOLE, Del Monte, and United Fruits utilize more than 80 percent of the country's most fertile lowlands for export crops.

In this particular context, peace in Mindanao would mean, inclusion of key issues of reparations, economic redistribution, and land reform. The economic displacement of the Moro people must be at the center and not the periphery of the peace and development challenge in Mindanao. Peace-building program in Mindanao should first and foremost, address the land problem. Current development approaches of assisting minority Muslims with micro projects such as livelihood programs, community assistance, rehabilitation projects for victims of war and other dole out economic approaches are mere palliative since they do not address vital issues and the real roots and causes of poverty in Mindanao. Concrete steps are to be done to break the chains of oppressive

economic structures through the implementation of genuine land reform program.

To address the issue of landlessness which significantly contributes to poverty among the Muslim masses, the Philippine government needs to legislate laws to regulate and limit the size of the family holding of land and in the process implement land redistribution program to cater to the needs of the landless masses in Mindanao. No peace can occur in a situation where big and powerful land lords continue to dominate the economic and political sphere at the expense of the weak and the poor. Addressing the problem of economic marginalization in Mindanao also requires that the government should create laws and implement inclusive and far reaching economic programs that are accessible to address the economic well-being and dignity of the poor and the marginalized. Laws and policies need to be established to prevent and penalize abusive and exploitative economic practices, and ensure the protection of the poor and the oppressed, provide equal economic and political access, establish mechanism for consultative and participatory leadership where the marginalized could take part in the decision-making process to determine their future and destiny.

Socio-Cultural Transformation

Another important issue that must be addressed in relation to the search for peace in Mindanao is the continuing socio-cultural marginalization of the Moro people. Stereotypical negative concepts of Muslims as "savage", "uncivilized", and people of "inferior race" that has been institutionalized since colonial era, and has been reinforced by subsequent Filipinization program of the Philippine government has not ceased to disturb and affect significantly Christian-Muslim relations in Mindanao. Despite the Muslims' resistance, the central government insists on its integrationist policy which seeks to mainstream minority Islamic and other indigenous cultures into the majority Filipino culture. Muslims find themselves at odds with what constitutes the "national identity" of the majority lowland Christian population who in their view had been assimilated into the cultures and ways of the two major colonial regimes.

The inculcation and imposition of the majority Filipino culture is interpreted by many Muslims as an attempt to eradicate Moro culture and identity. The Moro people have been longing for the recovery not only of their lost causes but also the restoration of their dignity and worth as a people. Equitable sharing of wealth, political and social justice are the recurring themes that Muslims in Mindanao have been clamoring for up until now. Conflict resolution or transformation in Mindanao is the process of addressing these causes and working with those concerned to redefine relationships and bring about a change in the conflict context.

To address the problem of conflict in Mindanao, a culture of peace and mutual recognition of both Islamic and Christian values and culture, has to sink deep into the social fabric where cultural openness, social unity and pursuit of peaceful means to resolve conflict is appreciated and practiced by all. Social and cultural reforms are one of the key ingredients of lasting peace and development in Mindanao. Without them the issues that underlay the breakdown of peace and social order will continue to exist. Peace and development in Mindanao needs a sustained effort at

social justice, good governance, and corporate social responsibility. To achieve mutual respect and appreciation between and among Muslims and Christians in Mindanao, relationship building across sectoral, social, cultural and religious divides is of primary importance.

Solution to the Mindanao problem is anchored on the creation of a national consciousness sensitive to cultural diversity. This means, the government and the majority Filipino populace must recognize the value and distinctiveness of Moro cultures and identities. Consequently, it also means that the government should adopt culturally-sensitive policies that seek to honor and preserve Islamic cultural heritage. The government must through its Department of Education (DepEd) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED), review and effect changes in the history curriculum in so far as the history of Islam in the Philippines is concerned, to correct negative images of Muslims and emphasize positive and unique cultures and values that they share towards peace and development.

The government also needs to formulate laws and policies that promote cultural understanding and ethnic awareness. Giving Muslim Mindanao autonomy and addressing their socio-economic problems are not enough. Their cultural identities must be recognized and accommodated by the state. The Moro people must be free to express these identities without being discriminated against in other aspects of their lives. In a nutshell, cultural liberty is a human right that must be enjoyed by the marginalized Moro masses—and thus worthy of state action and attention.

Political and Structural Transformation

Political domination and marginalization, graft and corruption, clan and patronage politics, and fraudulent electoral systems which perpetuate traditional political elites in power remain to be one of the major causes of conflict and violent confrontations in Mindanao. The government has failed to make concrete political actions to address the aspirations of the poor and marginalized majority Muslim masses. Instead, it caters to the whims and caprices of Christian and Muslim powerful elites who are taking advantage of their positions at the expense of the weak, and therefore, privileging only the dominant segment of society. The dominance of the powerful and the marginalization of the poor and powerless has been the pattern of relationship that characterizes the Philippine society.

The pacification and demobilization approaches employed by the government which seeks to address the conflict by cooptation of leaders and followers through the offer of positions, or livelihood, or integration has left the deeper roots of the conflict unaddressed. Obviously, power and resources are concentrated in the hands of a few political elites while the masses (mostly Muslims) are being pushed to the periphery of human existence. Philippine politics has been reflective of extensive patron-client networks wherein access to political power is greatly dependent on one's loyalty to those who already wield it. Once in office, politicians are often able to perpetuate themselves in power, and as soon as their term limits end, they easily move on to occupy some other positions. This results to only a few political dynasties competing for political power leaving the weaker segments of society powerless.

The ties of traditional Muslim elite leadership with the central government has kept the marginalized Muslims' struggles unaddressed and deprived them of their right to self-determination. It has ►

◀ been noted by a number of analysts that the same traditional local elites amass contemporary political power in the form of elected positions by entering into a political economic bargain with the national political elites to barter Internal Revenue Allocations (IRA) from the central state treasury in exchange for delivering votes and security for the competing national and local political actors.

Exercise of absolute authority by traditional political elites are made possible not only by political patronage from the national government, but also by "laws and regulations permitting the arming and private funding of civilian auxiliaries to the army and police; lack of oversight over or audits of central government allocations to local government budgets; the ease with which weapons can be imported, purchased and circulated; and a thoroughly dysfunctional legal system." The question is how can the government prevent the emergence of overly dominant political clans and warlords who set their own rules and use their power to exploit and oppress the weak and the poor?

Precisely, the Mindanao problem is a political and structural problem. Thus, it requires a political and structural solution as key dimension. No significant changes in so far as addressing the problem of conflict in Mindanao can take place unless policies change; and for these change to happen, the country's politics must change toward more participation, involving especially the marginalized sectors in making decisions that affect them. Any social, economic, and political strategy that attempts to effectively address problems of conflict in Mindanao will have to be comprehensive, inter-sectoral, communal, and participatory.

It has been observed that, despite numerous development projects and financing programs that have been channeled through different government agencies since early 1970s to solve the problem of poverty in Mindanao, the economic and living conditions of the Moro people has not significantly changed. This was mainly because of defective bureaucratic structures that were known for their graft and corruption. Obviously, social intervention and economic development devoid of appropriate and viable political structure is insufficient.

Concrete steps should be done to minimize (if not totally eliminate) rampant graft and corruption practices both in the higher and lower echelon of the government. This requires stricter and fuller implementation of anti-graft laws and their corresponding punishments as well as creation of preemptive structures such as "Graft watch" composed of highly credible representatives coming from the government, civic, business, political and religious sectors. The establishment of anti-graft measures is important not only to prevent corrupt and anomalous practices in the government, but also to ensure protection of the economic interests of the poor and the marginalized and to pave the way for economic progress.

The government also needs to develop massive and sustainable grassroots based programs of peace

and development by establishing mechanisms that would enhance and ensure peoples participation, by initiating continuous and regular public consultations involving the poorest of the poor, the indigenous people, the women and the youth, and by making concessions not with the political elites but with the Moro masses who are the actual victims of oppression and marginalization in Mindanao.

God's will is peace, love, hope and justice. The situation of unpeace in Mindanao brought by the continuing oppression and marginalization of the weak and the poor is radically opposed and incompatible with the biblical vision of a just, humane and peaceful community where persons live with peace and dignity. This biblical vision must come in contact with the socio-cultural, economic, and political realities reigning in Mindanao.

In a nutshell, the peaceable kingdom of God as understood in the context of Mindanao provides political and theological basis for asserting a notion of peace and justice, the content of which are defined in concrete socio-political, cultural and economic terms. There is a direct link between the theoretical concept of God as Liberator and Defender of the poor and the political, economic, and social injustice in Mindanao. This calls for moral and political responsibility to act responsibly on behalf of justice and freedom and to work towards the establishment of a just political, social and economic structure which is in harmony with the divine vision of a peaceable kingdom.

(Due to lack of print space, the 60 footnotes were omitted. To see them please email the author at the above e-mail address – Ed.) •

Rev. Dr. Narciso is an ordained minister of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, Inc. He was born in Koronadal, South Cotabato. He finished his Bachelor of Theology in 1988 and his Master of Divinity in 1995 both at Central Philippine University. He also finished his Master of Theology at the Southeast Asia Graduate School of Theology in 2006 and earned his Ph.D. degree in Religious Studies at the Indonesian Consortium for Inter-religious Studies (ICRS), GadjahMada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Dr. Narciso has served as a local church pastor for 15 consecutive years. Among others, he served as Senior Pastor of Jaro Evangelical Church, University Chaplain of CPU and Pulpit Minister of the University Church. Aside from pastoral work, Dr. Narciso has served different posts in the leadership of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches (CPBC), Central Philippine University and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. He was elected President of the Convention Baptist Ministers' Association-Iloilo Chapter (1994-1996), President of the Evangelical Ministers' Federation of Iloilo City (1992-1994), National President of the Convention Baptist Ministers' Association (2000-2003), member of the CPBC Faith and Order Committee (1992-1996), the CPBC Board of Trustees (2004-2008), and the Peace Commission of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (1992-1996), Dean of the Convention Baptist Ministers' Association (1992), and member of the CPU Corporation since 1996 to the present.

His main interests of research are Peace Studies, Interfaith Dialogue and Contemporary Issues. His latest publications are: Christianization in New Order Indonesia: Discourses, Debates and Negotiations published in Melintas, an International Journal of Philosophy and Religion, Department of Philosophy, Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung Indonesia; A Historical Narrative and Critical Analysis of the Roots and Causes of Armed Conflict in Southern Philippines published in Kawistara, a Refereed Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, Graduate School, UniversitasGadjahMada, Yogyakarta Indonesia; A Critique on Freud's Critique of Religion and Christianity and Legitimization of War and Violence, both published in the Institute for Advanced Theological Studies Journal. Dr. Narciso was a Research Fellow at the Asian Research Institute, National University of Singapore in 2010 and was a presenter during the ATESEA Teachers' Academy in Yangoon, Myanmar on September 1-6, 2013.

As part of his professional growth, Dr. Narciso had several opportunities to participate in seminars and conferences abroad namely: Chaplaincy Conference in Yonsei University, Seoul South Korea (2000), Chaplaincy Seminar in Bangkok, Thailand (2002), Chaplain's Academy in Taiwan (2003), the Billy Graham Evangelistic Conference in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2000). He was a participant to the Haggai Leadership Institute in Maui, Hawaii in 2002. In 2005, he was invited to a preaching tour in Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay and preached in around 90 churches for three months.

Currently, he is a full time faculty of the CPU College of Theology. He teaches subjects on Ecumenics, Contemporary Theologies, Liberation Theologies, World Religions, Psychology of Religion and Christian Ethics. He is happily married to MedyDagmil, a native of Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, with whom he is blessed with three lovely children namely: Karmida Paz (23), Xaren Faith (21) and Joshua Andrei (13).

Goodnight... to our alumni & friends



February 25, 2015
1Lt. Ferman James Magbanua (PA), KIA, landmine blast, Patikul, Jolo, Sulu, HS'97, Commerce '01, Cross Swords Fraternity



March 7, 2015
Rev. Dr. Edwin Lariza, Social Work Department Head, leukemia

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