

St. Scholastica's Center of Spirituality
Tagaytay City

COMMON LETTER NO. 197

JANUARY 6, 2012

PEACE!

Dear Sisters All Over the Priory and Overseas,

I am actually writing this on the eve of New Year. It will be the first letter I will send out in the year 2012. I wish you all :



A HAPPY NEW YEAR AND A BLESSED EPIPHANY

Do you know that the word January comes from the name of the God-Janus who has two heads, one looking backwards and the other looking forward? I thought it is very apt for us on the first month of the year to look backward to the past year and then to look forward to the coming months of the new year. We are all

used to this in our apostolate because yearly we do a year-end evaluation and a strategic planning . In our own personal lives, it is also salutary to do so—to go over the past year 2011 and thank God for all the blessings of the past year. And whatever happened, even if humanly speaking some events may appear negative , actually all are blessings. Remember that wise story of GOOD NEWS? BAD NEWS? WHO KNOWS? If you don't or if you have never heard of the story, here it is:

There once was a poor rice farmer, who had a very small field just large enough to feed his family.

Then one day a herd of wild horses came running through the village. They ran into the farmer's rice field and got stuck in the mud, and since they couldn't get away, they were his.

His neighbor came running over and said, "This is good news! Such good fortune! You are rich, this is amazing!" And the rice farmer said, "Good news, bad news, who knows?"

A few weeks later the farmer's 12-year-old son jumped up on one of the wild horses for a ride, only to be thrown off and have his leg broken. The neighbor comes running over and says, "Oh no, this is such bad news!" And the farmer said, "Good news, bad news, who knows?"

A week later a Chinese general is marching through the farmer's village on the way to war. On this march, the army is conscripting every healthy boy over 10 years of age. So they took every boy in the village except the farmer's son because of his broken leg.

The neighbor comes running over and says, "Yes! This is wonderful news, how lucky are we!" And the father replies, "Good news, bad news, who knows?"

Our answer is : GOD KNOWS

If we look at our lives not only this past year, but all the years before, is this not also true of us? So we look back with gratitude. And as we face the future, we are excited by the new challenges that we will encounter. And we just open ourselves completely to the graces that await us. Looking forward does not mean making a meticulous blue print of what we want to do in the future, but rather it means a total surrender, a readiness of the heart to embrace whatever God sends us. It is an attitude of FIAT which we learn from Mary, whose motherhood we also celebrate of New Year's Day. It is learning to FLOW WITH THE NOW.

This attitude of openness and readiness to do God's will is exemplified to a great degree by the Magi, the Wise Men who are the main protagonists of the feast of EPIPHANY, who left their comfort zones to seek Someone whom they did not know and to go somewhere they had no idea about . They simply followed the STAR!

So as we contemplate on the message of the New Year and of EPIPHANY, let Mary and the Magis be our role models in their total surrender to God and let us open ourselves to what eyes have not seen nor ears have heard neither has it entered into our hearts , the things prepared for us by the GOD who loves us.

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❖ MORE TRANSFERS

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|----------------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. Sr. Angelica Leviste, OSB | SBH | Tagaytay |
| 2. Sr. Margaret Mary Mirate ,OSB | Back to Bacolod after prayer leave in SBH | |

SISTERS WHO WILL STUDY ABROAD

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| 1. Sr. Agnella Capili, OSB | Catholic U, USA, Liturgical Music |
| 2. Sr. Christine Pinto, OSB | MA, PH.D in Educational Adm- Boston University |
| 3. Sr. Teodora Bilocura, OSB | I year Mission Studies in Connecticut, USA |

• CONGRATULATIONS TO



SR. STEPHANIE ZAMORAS, OSB
WHO HAS BEEN MISSIONED TO JINJA, UGANDA

❖ REUNION WITH THE MADRIAGAS

I am sure you remember Dante, his wife Eileen and their 7 children who were also in our sanctuary because of the NBN-ZTE Deal. I haven't seen them since they left the Hospicio de San Jose where they had their sanctuary. So Sr. Fely and I took them out to lunch on December 24. Wow, how the children have grown. The little Denise who was 4 years old when we first met her is now 8 years old . The children are still their well behaved selves. In fact I have never met such well behaved children who really genuinely love and care for each other and are never magulo . But neither are they shy or introverted. Dante has now a job as Head of Engineering Department under Secretary Coloma of the Office of the President. But his salary remains low even if he was given a vehicle and some allowances once in a while. Their apartment in Paco has three rooms, but it has absolutely no furniture, no beds, no sala set, no dining set. So I am busy begging from my friends to provide them with these necessities.

❖ MERIENDA WITH GOLDIE'S FAMILY

Do you know Goldie? She is the student assistant of Sr. Asuncion and Sheila in the parlor and also helps in the procurator's office. She graduated valedictorian

from our Night Secondary and so got an Academic scholarship in our College taking up accounting. She is now third year and has all A's in her report card. She has 6 other brothers and Sisters- 3 boys, 3 girls. The sad story is when their father died, their auntie, his Sister drove them out of the house where they were all born – somewhere in Dagonoy. Now Goldie and Lovely are living in Nursia sharing the room with Manang Necia and her daughter. The youngest ones, a girl of 14 and a boy of 7 sleeps in a neighbor's house whose daughter happens to be a friend of Crystal the 14 year old girl. One brother, Emmanuel sleeps in the computer café where he works. The Mother, Cecilia and the eldest brother Christian Ray manages to steal into their old room to sleep. But soon they have to move out because the whole house is being demolished to build a condominium. I thought how appalling for this family not to have a place where they can be together and so just to let have a common meal, I invited them to have a merienda-cena on my feastday at the parlor. The eldest boy has just been interviewed for a job in my Sister's company and I hope he gets the job.

❖ BLESSING OF TANAY VACATION HOUSE



On January 5, Sisters of the Priory Community, SBH, and Marikina went to Tanay for the blessing of the vacation house. It is not completely finished yet. Some painting and finishing touches will still be made. It provides a beautiful view of the surroundings. You are invited as communities to spend your vacation, statio, etc. there. It is very conducive to prayer and recollection.

We are about to leave for Tagaytay for our Election Chapter and our 18th Priory Chapter. Welcome to our new Prioress!

Lovingly yours,

Sgd.

Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB