

News

Filipino Foreign Missioner on home leave

by: Jun Mercado, OMI --- 8/13/2010



Fr. Luis "Loy" Sabarre, OMI

Fr. Luis Sabarre, OMI or Loy as he is fondly known is on home leave. He is making rounds of his former assignments in the Diocese of Cotabato (Pigcawayan and Dulawan) to the delights of his former parishioners.

Loy is celebrating his ruby presbyteral jubilee or 40 years in the priesthood (ordained on April 6, 1970).

He now carries an Argentinean passport and prefers to speak the Castellan language to his native Visayan tongue. He has spent 28 years of missionary life in Argentina and he is presently assigned as 'coordinador' of the Oblate community in Mendoza.

The OMI Communications - Philippines has conducted an interview with Fr. Loy.

Q. How did you discover your call to go on foreign mission?

Fr. Loy: When I was ordained priest, I wanted to be a missionary *ad gentes*. But I received my first obedience from Fr. General for *the Philippine province*.

After 12 years I wrote again explaining my desire for the foreign missions. Finally I was asked to apply for Indonesia, but that application waited for 3 years and was forgotten. Again I wrote and this time I was given Mexico and I was ready to go when I received a personal letter from the provincial of Argentina inviting me to work there for a time before proceeding to Mexico. After my experience in Argentina I decided to be part of the province.

Q. What were your pastoral ministry before embarking into foreign mission?

Fr. Loy: My assignments in the Philippines were very sporadic and fast. First, I was in Makilala; then in less than a year to Kidapawan, next to the Nuling diocesan seminary, then Edcor, Alamada, from there I moved to Mlang. The real more permanent assignment was Pigcawayan where I stayed 5 years.

From there I was waiting to leave but then I got my last assignment in Datu Piang (Dulawan) for a year then left for Argentina.

Q. What have you been doing in Argentina these past 28 years?

Fr. Loy: In Argentina, my first job was to learn Castellano in Buenos Aires and after 2 months I was sent to the mission in La Rioja to help out in the parish. After 4 years, I was transferred to Buenos Aires in Madre de Dios parish.

Then to my surprise, I was appointed provincial treasurer and I accepted it reluctantly. I was commuting between 2 parishes to help out during weekends. This lasted for a year. The other parish in the suburb was Santa Rosa de Lima. In Buenos Aires. I assumed a specific mission to work with the marriage encounter movement.

After 3 years I got transferred to a new parish in way up north of the country, Formosa, parish of Nuestra Sra. de la Merced. I stayed 3 years in that parish working with the indigenous tribes. This was my last assignment before I proceeded to Mendoza where I am still at present. I helped out in the parish taking care of an incipient community San Juan Diego.

Besides all these pastoral works I am also connected now specifically to the World-Wide Marriage Encounter as an ecclesial regional team in Cuyo based in Mendoza. I offer my services not only to Argentina and the neighboring countries of Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile but also to the different states in the USA - California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon.

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