

ASC-FIS PROVINCIAL REPORT
10TH EAO COOPEARTORS CONGRESS (Hong Kong)

Servite Domino in laetitia!” (Serve the Lord joyfully!) DB

“Called to be with the young.” Through the different ministries that each one is engaged in; as professionals, teachers (private & public), catechists, civic and lay leaders that respond to the needs of the Church. We unite our very selves as the yeasts that brings hope, light, and direction to the lives of the young people that we encounter. Here’s some update from ASC-FIS.

A) MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

ASC-FIS had always been an active collaborator with the other members of the Salesian Family in sharing and living out of the charism of St. John Bosco. Each center is unique in its response to be the yeasts of their respective milieu yet we all are one in our loves for the last, least and the lost. Some of our centers continue to attract committed individuals to form part in this ministry for the young. The table below shows the membership of our centers.

LOCAL CENTERS	ACTIVE COOPERATORS	NEWLY PLEDGED	ASPIRANTS
PUNTA - LOURDES	63	7	10
PASIL	22	3	8
MINGLANILLA	14	3	10
DBTC	8	-	0
LAWAAN	45	7	-
LILOAN	8	-	8
MAMBUCAL, NEGROS	8	-	-
VICTORIAS, NEGROS	43	-	17
MATI DAVAO	9	4	10
BORONGAN, SAMAR	17	-	-
TOTAL (261) Active	237	24	63

Something very notable in our province is that during the pandemic, we were able to conduct formations for aspiring members. Tapping the use of technology, we were able to connect with the different centers for the so-called monthly blended formation. This was through the concerted efforts of the SDBs, the FMAs and the Full-Pledged Cooperators who voluntarily shared their expertise as our speakers or sharers. Each of these speakers were really abreast with the latest technology applications in making their talks very creative, innovative, and thought-provoking. Through their sharing, the aspirants made it through until their day of making their Pledge as full-pledge Salesian Cooperators.

We continue to ignite the lives of others through the ministries we do. Although we faced a lot of challenges, but this doesn’t hinder us to continue in living out our being Salesian Cooperators.

B) RENEWAL OF PROMISE

Although, we were still in the era of the dreaded COVID-19 scenario, ASC-FIS continued to revitalized the spirit of each members. Last November 27, 2021, a number of Full-Pledged Cooperators from the different centers in Cebu were gathered and renew their commitment. One with the Church, in building God’s Kingdom where love is the rule and active participants in the ministry with the young and the least privilege of our society.

Part of this gathering was the blessing of the Project for Apostolic Life (**PAL**) by Fr. Orlando Borres, SDB, ASC delegate. These were distributed to all the Cooperators present.

The day’s activity was highlighted by the joyful celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the Salesian Cooperators made their Renewal of Promise.

C. INITIAL FORMATION

The call to becoming a Salesian Cooperator is a free choice but each aspirant has to undergo the required initial formations to be one in the ministry of serving the young and the forgotten of

our society. ASC-FIS was optimistic for recruiting new members into the Association. Formations for the aspirants were done in different centers. This is to foster deeper the Oneness of all the full-pledged cooperators as they journey together with the aspirants.

Finally, last November 22, 2022 after completing the formations, 24 aspirants were accepted as full-pledged Salesian Cooperators. The Acceptance was held in the Chapel of Don Bosco Lawaan, Lawaan, Talisay City. A highlight of which is the acceptance of aspirants from the different centers of Cebu and Mati, Davao... Their saying YES though they have to travel far is never a hindrance.

D. Active involvement of ASC-FIS in the Archdiocese of Cebu

During the onset of the pandemic, as the Archdiocese of Cebu is celebrating its 500 years of Christianity, Bishop Jose S. Palma, Archbishop of Cebu had initiated the call to unite all the various Tertiary and Marian groups in the archdiocese. This prompted the creation of a Council that would organize in the sense unity in the works of the laity in service and charity. There were 15 tertiary founding members of the Lay Tertiary Council of the Archdiocese of Cebu and one of which is The Association of the Salesian Cooperators (FIS).

Last July 24, 2021 together with the other recognized Lay Tertiary founding members and Marian group, a Holy Mass was held officiated by Archbishop Jose S. Palma in the Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral, Cebu City. This was highlighted with the awarding of Certificate of Recognition (Accreditation) as members of the Lay Tertiary Council.

Several activities by the Lay Tertiary Council had been held for the celebration of 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines and ASC-FIS had always been actively involved.

E. Our Response to Pope Francis: *Laudato Si* as a Province

In May 2015, Pope Francis published an encyclical entitled 'Laudato Si'. This is to address the pressing situation of the world we are all living in. It focuses not only on practical ways to care for the natural environment but at the same this encyclical encompasses the care for all peoples of every race and color. It heightens too the relationships between God, we, God's creatures and the place we are all living in which we call home – the earth.

ASC-FIS in response to this call had initiated ***Mangrove Planting and Tree Planting Activities***

A number of our members in the different centers participated in these activities. Though small in number, we were very glad that we have contributed a little share in response to 'Laudato Si'.

F. Outreach Activities

Conducting outreach activity had brought us all into a deeper realization that we are all called to be instruments in making the lives of others become lighter through our sincere concern and support.

G. Formations (*Blended*)

Spiritual enrichment doesn't stop upon the date of Acceptance but it is a process. There is always a need to find time to see the directions of our vocation as Salesian Cooperators.

The regular Lenten and Advent recollections. These give us all the preparations needed to make each liturgical event in our church calendar not only a passing event but more of a deeper encounter with the Christ whom we are all called to follow as Salesian Cooperators.

H. MARIAN PILGRIMAGES and Celebration of Feast Days

ASC-FIS had made a pilgrimage to the newly built Capelinha de Fatima in San Remigio, Cebu last September 10, 2022. It gave all of us who participated in this pilgrimage the strength and courage to continue in our commitment as Mary's instruments in leading the young to Jesus.

We always celebrate the feast day of Blessed Alexandrina Da Costa every 13th of October and the feast of Mama Margaret every November.

ASC-FIS continues to be the yeasts among the young, the bridge that connects the secular world to the wholeness of our faith – living out as children of a God who loves us.

ASC-FIS FOR THE YOUNG PROJECT

As Salesian Cooperators guided by Don Bosco's Salesian Spirit we dedicate ourselves to the welfare of young people... we utilize the giftedness and expertise of the Cooperators in the province In response to the challenge of the last EAO Congress and gathering, in Japan & Cambodia, which is that of providing a concrete program for the young, the Provincial Councilors held series of meetings to address such challenges in our province.

As a result of these provincial councilors meetings, we were able to come up with programs or activities that provides direct application to our young recipients. And considering the resources both material and human, we came up these big 5 l's.

1. INITIATING QUARTERLY YOUTH ENCOUNTER (AGES 16 – 25)

In our province we are blessed with proficient and well-trained YE Facilitators, who shared themselves as models of witnessing in the call to servanthood.

Flora May Figuracion, Elaine Shara Pozon, Leonila Tabar, Annie Vic Cabije, Betchay Maneja Saban, Gilbert Ligaspe, Donna Paras Cezar, Eduardo Empellis and Ike Abastillas

Our projected dates of our Youth Encounters: April 21-23, 2023, June 2-4, September 22-24 & November 10-12.

2. Intensifying the facilitation of recollections and retreats to the students in the public schools, oratory and youth centers.

The pandemic had caused a halt in the formal gatherings with our youth as they were in their respective homes. It was then difficult to give them spiritual enrichment inasmuch that almost 85% of them do not have access to internet connection. Now, that almost all classes are onsite or actual person-based learning is in full swing in the public schools, there is the need to rekindle in them that spiritual connection.

3. IN-PROGRESS SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO DESERVING INDIVIDUALS

Bearing the charism of Don Bosco, whose heart was founded on the love of those who are impoverished, we as Salesian Cooperators (*individual and as a province*) had imbibe that uniting spirit to assist those who are needing support in various forms (financial or other forms of assistance). The table below summarizes the sponsors and number of recipients of the program.

Though it seems a small number (11 to be exact) but what matter most is the action of helping these individuals achieve their goals in life and would-soon become productive citizens of the land.

COOPERATORS	NUMBER OF SCHOLARS
Boots Figuracion & Elain Shara Pozon	1 seminarian
Mila Wuthrich	3
Mr. & Mrs. Ike Abastillas	1
Lissondra Libre	1
Minglanilla Center	5
TOTAL	11

4. IGNITING FORCEFUL SENSE OF SERVICE THROUGH TUTORIAL CLASSES AND CATECHESIS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The time of the pandemic had brought about a great deterioration both in the learning capacities of our young as well as to their spiritual growth.

ASC-South Province had seen the need to provide tutorials classes in English, Science, Mathematics and Christian Living Education. This tutorial programs will commence two months

before the opening of the regular school year. It will prepare them to meet the competencies that is required in their grade level. As most of the members are educators, they are in the right disposition to be of great assistance to these outreach students.

5. Involving in Family Ministry:

The Family plays a vital role in forming the young into good Christians and honest citizens and the character formation of children always starts at home. But the realities of our young people are different, many of them are coming from dysfunctional families, thus this resulted to problematic and distorted society. Thus, we see the need to give emphasis to the formation of young people and to prepare them to their great role of becoming very good parents. A good number of ASC-FIS cooperators committed themselves in the Family Ministry of their respective parishes (giving Pre Cana and Parenting Seminars) and are directly involve in Pastoral Invention Family Collaborators as learners and facilitators.

It is our hope to involve more Cooperators in this Family Ministry, for “The harvest is [indeed] plentiful, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (Matthew 9:37-38)

So, our challenge is to invite more people to become cooperators so as to participate in HIS plentiful harvest.

Thank you

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