



# PAKIKIBAHAGI



2020  
Year of the Ecumenism  
Interreligious Dialogue  
and Indigenous People

Philippine Region

Religious of Notre Dame of the Missions

August 2020

*“The Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look toward those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.”*

(Pope Francis: Urbi et Orbi Blessing – March 27, 2020)

## IN UNITY AND SOLIDARITY

***In solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples during this time of great need caused by the COVID 19 pandemic, it is with great joy and thanksgiving to share our hearts with the Manobo Dulangan tribe located in Kulaman, a geographically isolated and disadvantaged area in the province of Sultan Kudarat.***

*The RNDM sisters and Delesan Kailawan staff organized various initiative to respond to some needs during this time of pandemic. Together with youth volunteers and friends in mission, we stitched and distributed facemasks for the frontliners of our local hospital, rural health unit, barangay officials in check point areas and some vendors in our local market. Through the generosity of our partners in mission, in coordination with the local government unit we distributed relief goods and medicines for 124 households which includes Delesan Kailawan scholars, community health workers, women beadworkers and tailors on April 27 to 29 in remote villages. Milk and multivitamins provisions were distributed to severely malnourished children under the nutrition program.*



*In our simple way, we expressed our loving concern with the Indigenous Peoples who are struggling during this time of crisis. Through this COVID -19 outreach, we felt the tribe and frontliners’ happiness and gratitude. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to generous peoples and groups that made it possible for us to be channels of hope and joy. The experience helped us to see that indeed, we are all truly united and we are loved!*

**By: RNDM Kulaman Community**

## BEING IN QUARANTINE

I finally arrived in Cotabato City, Mindanao on June 14, 2020. I was fortunate enough to have travelled without any needed adjustments or cancellation of flight. Aside from that, upon arrival at the Cotabato airport we were given RAT test for Covid-19. I was happy that my result was negative.



However, following the health protocol, I had to have 14 days of home quarantine. During those days my health was being monitored by the barangay nurse.

I would say “All the good things that happened is because of the Lord’s doing!”

After my home quarantine, while still observing the government protocol, I went to Pikit with Sr. Schola to be oriented with their work on Interreligious Dialogue. I was able to attend some of the activities in the barangays. One of these activities was the seminar for the youths. I was not only delighted to have met the youths of those areas but was touched by their vision-mission; and their interest to participate in building their barangays into a developed and healthy community. I found the youths to be filled with passion and commitment towards building lives.

**By: Mary Jeme, RNDM**

## New Way of Being Connected



The RLT's meet and greet with the region sisters made possible through virtual communication under the "new normal"

## SHARING OUR FRUITFUL BLESSINGS

*Life as we knew it  
Went out of sight  
Took to flight  
Left with masks  
Handwashing tasks  
Social distance marks  
Yet life around  
Continues to abound  
Calling for newness of sight  
For what is really essential  
Finding ways to relate and connect  
Valuing the sense  
of our oneness with all.*



Throughout the lockdown, Balay Euphrasie ground produced much fruits and vegetables. We were able to share it to our neighbors and friends in the area as well as to the children and young adult under the care of the Marist Fathers and Sisters.

**By: Sr. Weeyaa Villanueva, RNDM**

## MISSION AMIDST THE PANDEMIC:

### *Bringing Hope and Healing*



This year of pandemic will not be forgotten in the annals of Kuya Center! From mid-March, we have continued to provide care medical, psychological and educational intervention for boys- between the ages of 6 and 15 years of age who call KUYA their family. Despite the stringent lockdowns in Metro Manila, staff of Kuya Center have persisted in their mission of rehabilitation for street children. Without the availability of public transportation, many of them have been getting their "workout," walking hours or riding their bikes to the Center each day in the hot humid climate. The resiliency of both staff and children has been strengthened as together we journey through this time of pandemic. Walking to markets, to banks, to government offices and standing in queues for hours has become the norm. Yet despite the challenges, our focus remains the

same—bringing hope and healing to traumatized children. For a period of six weeks, street staff were able to walk the streets and reconnect with the children living there.

Many, however, have been "rescued" and are in prison-like government welfare institutions. We have welcomed new boys to the Center, pending testing and safety precautions, some directly from the streets, and some from government welfare institutions. The children have continued their education inside the Center, despite the closure of schools. Cooking classes, building volcanoes in science lessons and making videos to share with our partners in Australia and Italy have been highlights for the boys. Since mid-March, they have not been permitted to leave the Center's premises according to lockdown laws. They share their sadness of not knowing if their families are safe; nevertheless, they have not complained. They regularly offer prayers of thanks for their safety and for the wellbeing of others.

Like everywhere in the world, maintaining employment is key to the health and wellbeing of families. Here in Kuya Center, we are challenged these days to reinvent our street and community programs so that we continue to be sustainable. Access to online activities is impossible for the children on the streets as it is for families on the streets or in the slums. The "digital gap" places so many more people at risk of being "left behind," so to speak. This pandemic certainly raises many challenges, along with new possibilities for creatively collaborating with others.

**by: Kate O'Neil, RNDM**

**If you wish to become part of the life and mission of the RNDM Sisters,**

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