

MESSAGE
GOLDEN JUBILEE OF OLCC
DECEMBER 26, 2013

His Excellency, the Most Reverend Archbishop Rolando Tria-Tirona; members of the Clergy; Religious men and women; friends; and SPC Sisters all over the Philippines, thank you for joining our celebration to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Our Lady of Chartres Convent.

Last year, when we launched the Golden Jubilee of Our Lady of Chartres Convent, I said it is another Nazareth because it stands as a symbol of the spiritual ideals of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Paul of Chartres in the Philippine Province, serving four-fold purposes: House of Formation, House of Leadership, House of Prayer, and House of Discernment, situated on a hilltop, away from the busy life in the city. It is a sanctuary to many of us, Sisters, a place where many beautiful memories are created.

I would like to repeat what I have said last year to underscore how significant is OLCC for all of us.

This is a House of Formation. In many ways it is a school for all of us where we are taught how we live our spiritual life – our identity; our charism; our life style; our life of consecration; our vows; our values; our love for the poor; our way of loving. Sisters, you, who have lived here, are like clay in the hands of the Potter. You are handled with so much care. You went through much re-shaping, not only of mind, but of interiority, the shaping and forming of hearts.

This is a House of Leadership where the Council and the Sisters of the Provincial Administration earnestly seek for the Jesus way of “creating vision, shaping values and empowering change.” A leadership of transformation - to become a leader like Jesus - is what we constantly beg for in our prayer. We know that Jesus in us continues to lead, through us.

This is a House of Prayer. This is the place in the Philippine Province where Sisters learn to stop, become still before the Lord in His presence, meditate,

contemplate, spend time with the Lord. This place literally can be regarded as “holy” or “sacred” because the most holy activity of formal prayer has happened and has taken place here. God’s presence and work have tremendously come and reigned.

This is a House of Discernment. Big and crucial decisions are done here (through a prayerful, contemplative process of discernment). We have to be led by the Spirit because every decision that we make affects the individual lives of our Sisters and their missions as well. This has a great impact on the entire Province, in terms of mission, priorities, vision and mission, ministries affecting in many ways the lives of the people we serve.

For fifty years, Our Lady of Chartres Convent lived up to the ideals for which she is known for and the reason for its existence. Like a light that never grows dim, it continues to be a haven of peace and serenity, a spring of life, a place of on-going formation and renewal.

All the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres join me today in jubilation and gratitude to our dearest Lord for the overflowing blessings He has poured on the Philippine Province. What we have been and are, are His doings, His workmanship, His care and love for all of us.

Again, I would like to thank especially the past Provincial Superiors and their respective Councils, and the Sisters in the provincial administration: Mother Charles de Jesus Weiss, (may her soul rest in God’s peace) the builder of OLCC and the one responsible for transferring the location from Quezon City to Antipolo in 1963; Mother Marie Madeleine (may her soul rest in peace), the first Filipino Provincial Superior; Mother Marie Javelosa, Sister Agnes Therese Teves (may her soul rest in peace); and Sr. Mary Magdalen Torres. My predecessors are gifted spiritual leaders, visionary and dynamic. If not for their unequalled leadership, all of us could not have been here, reaping and enjoying the fruits of their labors.

We say thank you to our Formators, past and present, for their dedication and role modeling. We have been afforded holistic and solid formation to be transmitters of hope in our broken world. They have nurtured us to be more “docile to the transforming action of the Spirit inviting us to be sensitive and responsive to the challenges and needs of the world in its

religious, ecclesial, social, economic and political dimensions.” (Capitular Acts 2007)

I would like to thank in particular the men and women who are faithfully working with us here in OLCC for many years, for their loyalty and concern: the laundry women, the cooks, the secretaries, the office staff, the handy men, the drivers, the housekeepers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, gardeners, security guards. They do their works so well, thus, allowing us to devote ourselves to do more important tasks in the ministries and the mission entrusted to us.

We are also grateful to our lay partners, the Friends of St Paul, friends, and benefactors; and worth mentioning here too, are our own Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres, for their generosity and support, spiritually, materially, and many more.

Thank you too to our Pastors and friends from the Clergy and Religious, the Bishop of Antipolo, priests, who have been very faithful in celebrating daily the Eucharist with us. We are grateful to our Retreat Directors, Counselors who have journeyed with our Sisters through spiritual direction and counseling; our resource persons in all conferences, assemblies and renewal programs. Our Sisters benefited so much from all these spiritual enrichments.

I would like to thank especially on behalf of my Sisters, the main celebrant for today, His Excellency, the Most Reverend, Archbishop Rolando Tria-Tirona, our priests friends who came to concelebrate (I won't mention anymore your names; I am sure the Sisters and our guests know you very well).

As we look forward into the future with much hope, given the challenges of our consecrated life, in the context of our SPC Charism, Spirituality, Identity, Mission, and works of Evangelization, we entrust ourselves more and more in the hands of our LORD, our divine Potter who shapes us to bring out the best in us.

However, we are presented with the following challenges:

The first challenge is clearly stated by His Holiness, Pope Francis when he said, "To be and to think with and within the Church."

The second challenge is very close to our hearts and everything that matters to us, Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres. The recently concluded 47th General Chapter in Rome, urges us to interiorize and live out the Capitular Acts of 2013, which has yet to be implemented after the Session on Chapter Implementation is convened.

The Capitular Acts of 2013, invites us, urges us Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres, Philippine Province to:

First, "Rediscover the authentic light of faith through an experience of the mystical encounter with Christ, through the Word of God that touches our hearts and acts through various activities in our life as religious."

Second, "We have to come out of ourselves, out of our comforts and passivity, to bring the presence, the Word, the compassion of Christ. Therefore, we must have the audacity to go beyond our fears, to transcend our limits, and to let go of our psychological and material securities in order to be available to others and live the Paschal Mystery. In our poverty and weakness, we heed the call to evangelize in and out of season."

Third, "Evangelize by the force of our witness of Fraternal Communion. Sisters, let us place ourselves in the school of Jesus who heals and teaches, who is humble and gentle of heart and who leads us into the school of Trinitarian love. Our fraternal communion proclaims the Risen Lord who stoops down to wash each other's feet and reach out in forgiveness."

Before I end, I would like to wish all of you a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year. May we learn to incarnate the Child Jesus in our lives through our acts of charity and compassion. *Caritas Christi Urget Nos*. May the Charity of Christ Impel Us. Echoing the theme of the General Chapter 2013, I say most sincerely, "ALIVE IN THE WORLD; LET US BE LIGHT." Thank you and may God bless us all.