



Chapter Chronicle

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St. Rita's Feast Inspires Third Day of Deliberations



CEBU CITY — On May 22, the feast day of St. Rita of Cascia, the Chapter proceedings continued into the third day of its Information-Discussion Phase.

The day began with a Holy Mass presided over by Fray Samson Silloriquuez, OAR. In his homily, he urged the capitulars to emulate St. Rita's spirit of reconciliation, emphasizing the importance of living in peace through mutual forgiveness and understanding. "A peaceful community becomes a source of peace for others," he reminded them. "As followers of Christ, who leads us and brings God's love to humanity, may we build bridges through dialogue and unity, always striving for peace."

The morning session was devoted to the Section on Vocation Ministry. Fray Paul Demillones, OAR, the Provincial Vocation Director, presented a comprehensive report detailing how the vocation ministry integrates the Order's plans and strategies. He also shared updates on the processes involved in promoting vocations and guiding applicants from inquiry to seminary admission, along with other related programs and initiatives.

The second session and part of the third were dedicated to the Secretariat on Mission and Ministerial Apostolate. Fray Anthony Morillo, OAR, President of the Secretariat, provided updates on the missions and ministries where the Province is present—both in the Philippines and in foreign missions including Sierra Leone, Saipan, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Cuba.

The final part of the third session and the entire fourth session focused on the Secretariat of Educational Apostolate, now officially known as EDUCAR Filipinas. Fray Rafael Pecson, OAR, its President, presented reports on the various educational institutions across the country under the Province's care, highlighting their programs, developments, and proposed innovations.



• Homily

PEACE THROUGH THE WOUNDS OF LOVE

Fray Samson Silloriquuez, OAR, began his homily by recalling the first words of Pope Leo XIV following his election: "Peace be with you all." He emphasized that this greeting reflects the peace of the Risen Christ—a peace that is unarmed, humble, and enduring. It is not rooted in human effort alone but also in the unconditional love of God, who desires reconciliation and healing for all.

Turning to the life of St. Rita of Cascia, Fray Samson described her as a true peacemaker. Though she desired to enter the monastery at a young age, she chose marriage out of obedience to her parents. Her husband, Paolo di Ferdinando di Mancino, was a wealthy nobleman with a violent and immoral character. Despite enduring years of abuse, infidelity, and hostility, Rita remained a model of Christian patience and charity, ultimately leading to her husband's conversion.

Tragedy, however, struck with Paolo's assassination. Rita's public forgiveness of his murderers sparked disapproval from her husband's family. As her sons grew older, they developed a desire for revenge. Fearing for their salvation, Rita prayed that God would take them before they could commit such an act. Within a year, both sons died, and Rita, now alone, sought again to enter the convent.



Fray Samson recounted how Rita was initially denied entry to the monastery of St. Mary Magdalene in Cascia. She was told she must first reconcile her family with her husband's killers. Through persistent prayer and mediation, she succeeded in restoring peace, and was finally admitted at the age of thirty-six. Years later, during meditation on Christ's Passion, she received the stigmata—a wound on her forehead from a thorn of the crucified Christ—which she bore until her death in 1457.

In conclusion, Fray Samson invited the brothers to take St. Rita's example as a model for communal living. Her life exemplifies St. Paul's exhortation to bless rather than curse, to live in harmony, and not to repay evil with evil. Fray Samson stressed that in following Christ, the Church is called to be a builder of peace through forgiveness, dialogue, and unity. From peaceful communities, he said, can emerge true instruments of peace for the wider world.



LIST OF MESSAGES RECEIVED FOR THE 9TH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

- Oficina de Comunicación y Evangelización Digital (Rome)
- Evelyn G. Ruiz
- Asia Pacific Augustinian Conference (APAC)
- ARCORES Brasil