



Chapter Chronicle

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Information-Discussion Phase Ends

CEBU CITY—The first phase—information and discussion—of the 9th Provincial Chapter concluded in the morning of May 24, Saturday.

The day began with a holy mass presided over by Fray Raul Buhay, OAR, who, in his homily, shared profound insights with the capitulars. He emphasized that “our dignity and self-worth come from the fact that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us out of love.” Fray Buhay also noted that John the Baptist, like Moses, “only glimpsed the promise of salvation, while we now live in the fullness of that promise,” thus, encouraging everyone to live fearlessly, even without the world’s recognition. He concluded by urging the capitulars to “cherish this divine love, which surpasses all worldly possessions, and respond by offering our whole selves to God.”

Following the invocation of God’s guidance, the session continued with presentations from the two remaining Commissions—that of Communications and Online Evangelization-Recoletos (CCOE-R) and Resource Mobilization-Recoletos (CRM-R). Fray Francisco Antonio, OAR, presented updates on CCOE and Recoletos Communications, Inc., the Province’s office for publications and media communications. After him, Fray Bernabe Dosdos, OAR, the Provincial Procurator, provided a report on the financial and economic status of the Province, joined by Mr. Melvin Esteban, financial consultant of the Provincial Procurator’s Office, who offered valuable insights on the Commission’s concerns.

With these reports, the capitulars are now prepared to proceed to the next stage—the Commission Phase.



● **Homily**

CONVICTION OF LOVE BEGETS SELF-GIVING



On the sixth day of the Provincial Chapter, the capitulars once again gathered to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice, with Fray Raul Buhay, OAR, as the main celebrant. In his homily, Fray Buhay shared a powerful reflection, drawing from a poignant quotation: “You are nobody until somebody loves you.”

Fray Buhay elaborated, “When we look at ourselves, we know that someone has already died for us—none other than the Lord Himself. As He said, ‘There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends’ (John 15:13). This truth elevates our dignity to the highest level.”

He emphasized that this divine love is something to be treasured. It affirms our self-worth so profoundly that we need not seek validation elsewhere. “We should not be looking for more,” he continued. “Nor should we fear anything, even when the world rejects us, because we understand that we are truly loved.”

Reflecting on the Gospel, Fray Buhay noted how Jesus declared, “There is no person born of a woman greater than John” (Mt. 11:11). John the Baptist pointed to Jesus, embodying all the promises made by God to the patriarchs, judges, and prophets—promises now fulfilled. Yet Jesus also said, “The least in the kingdom is greater than John,” for John did not witness the fullness of salvation.

“Like Moses, who saw but did not enter the promised land, John did not live to see how the Lord would accomplish our salvation,” Fray Buhay explained. “But for us, the least in the kingdom, we know the Lord has already fulfilled this promise. This conviction that we are loved by the One who gave everything for us should free us from fear—even when we feel overlooked or underappreciated.”

He concluded by inviting the capitulars to a deep trust and self-giving: “Let us pray to the Lord that with this conviction of love, we may be able to give all of ourselves—because, after all, the Lord kept nothing for Himself, but gave everything for each one of us.”



LIST OF MESSAGES RECEIVED FOR THE 9TH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

- Theologate of St. Ezekiel Moreno, Province of La Candelaria (Madrid)
- Augustinian Recollect Nuns (Bacolod City)
- AR Sisters of Talavera House of Prayer-Recoletos (Cebu City)
- Mr. Richard Burgos, FORSOAR President
- University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos (Bacolod City)
- Secular Augustinian Recollect Fraternity (Brooke's Point, Palawan)