

ARCHIVE, DOCUMENTS THEREIN AND HISTORY: MAKING SENSE OF THE PAST TODAY FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUTURE¹

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Introduction

The Salesians in the Philippines have reason to recourse to an archive. They have been here in the Philippines since 1951 when they first established works Don Bosco Academy (Tarlac City) and Don Bosco Technical Institute (Victorias, Negros Occidental).

With its 75th anniversary in view (1951-2026) comes the reminder of having its archives ready for the writing of its memories. It really should not just end up with a mere coffee table book to recall its past. The need of writing a real history, a true history of an institution: this can be obtained only through archives that have historical documents.

It is important to establish an archive, produce documents and conserve them within a safe place. This is in order to write and share the memory of what has been significant and can be remembered. The Society of Saint Francis of Sales in the Philippines does not wish to forget its past but desires, with the Lord's graciousness, to look forward to its future.²

¹ This paper was presented at the "NATIONAL SUMMIT OF CHURCH ARCHIVES AND HERITAGE WORKERS: A Capacity Building towards the Conservation of Church Archival Heritage" by the author on 8 May 2024, at the University of Santo Tomás in Manila.

² See Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, Circular Letter *The Pastoral Function of Church Archives* (2 February 1997): "An institution which forgets its own past, will hardly be able to design its function among men in any social, cultural, or religious context. In this sense, archives, while preserving the witnesses to religious traditions and pastoral practices, have their own intrinsic vitality and validity."

Saint John Bosco's Sense of History and Archives

Pope IX (1846-1878), in a meeting with Don Bosco, insisted on the latter to put into writing the memoirs of his first Oratory which the latter in fact did.³ Consequently, Don Bosco himself asked that historical documents be conserved in archives. He insisted on the writing of the chronicle of the house: it is a record that can help to learn from the past, to resolve future problems, to make confreres aware of what others have done.⁴ He saw the need to make known why and how they did certain things so that others might learn.⁵

Don Bosco specified the rector of the house who should write an account (chronicle) of the work. Doing so, this contributed to a history of the house, which in turn would result into a "true history of the congregation."⁶ And it is important

³ See John Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory* (Rome 1991), 3: "Now there has been added the command of a person of supreme authority, I am writing those confidential details that may somehow serve as a light of be of use to the work which Divine Providence has entrusted to the Society of St. Francis of Sales."

⁴ See *Ibid.*, 16: "Now, what purpose can this chronicle serve? It will be a record to help people overcome problems that may arise in the future, as well as to learn from the past. It will serve to make known how God himself has always been our guide. It will give my sons some entertainment to be able to read about their father's adventures." See also *Biographical Memoirs of Saint John Bosco*, XII (Turin, 1898-1993), 52.

⁵ See Bosco, *Memoirs*, 16: "We have now become aware that, with the definite approval of the Congregation, we must lay down some norms for those who will come after us. When they see that we did things in one way rather than in another and with successful results, it will be an indication for them as to how they themselves should proceed."

⁶ See *Ibid.*: "I think that this is more important than anything else: and so, I believe it to be necessary that the rector should think about and study the best way in which this can be done, and that each rector should write an account of the school or house, and that this be continued each year by whoever is the rector at the time ... When these individual accounts reach us in Turin we shall be able to study them and to draw up a brief description of the state of the Society as a whole, and thus produce little by little a true history of the Congregation ..."

that this document be sent to the Center, to Turin, to inform the Superiors and for the history of the Congregation.⁷

Don Bosco named other specific persons who were tasked in care of archives: the Secretary General and the Provincial Secretary. This was “Salesian Tradition:” care of historical documentation, both as regards its timely and well-ordered collection and its appropriate preservation.⁸

The *Biographical Memoirs* were written so that the Salesians may ever remember who Don Bosco was. They gave evidence both of the existence of archives and of the enthusiasm of the first Salesians for the preservation of documents related to Don Bosco and Salesian history.

The biographer of Don Bosco, Fr. Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, spoke of “documents of our archives,”⁹ and of how the Salesian archives held “more than a thousand cherished notes written in [Don Bosco’s] own hand.”¹⁰ He claimed that in writing the *Memoirs* “our own notes and our archive documents are the sources of the events so far described.” The existence of the archives shows the care shown by the early Salesians in preserving the memory of their Father and the vicissitudes of the beginning of the Salesians and the Salesian Family.¹¹

⁷ See *Biographical Memoirs* XII, 51-52: “Here and now, what is most urgent is that each rector write a summary history of his own school, from its opening to the present day, and then go on to chronicle all important happenings. (...) Each year, too, the director should have this report clearly transcribed into a large ledger which is to remain in the school archives, while the original or another copy should be sent to Turin as soon as each book is completed. In this way the Superiors will be thoroughly acquainted with the functioning of every school and have a good idea of our Congregation’s history”.

⁸ See *Acts of the General Council* 314, 52-53: “It is a very old Salesian tradition that we take particular care to preserve documents belonging to the Congregation’s patrimony”.

⁹ *Biographical Memoirs* VIII, 17. See also *ibid.*, VI, 283.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, VI, 378.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 396.

Don Bosco's successor, Fr. Michele Rua responded to a confrere who had asked permission to keep a souvenir a sheet hand-written by Don Bosco: "What are you asking? Don't you know that every scrap of Don Bosco's writing is carefully kept in the Congregation's archives?"¹²

There was a "historical spirit" which grew up in the Oratory of Valdocco and which was a personal interest of the first Salesians. Fr. Eugenio Ceria, early biographer of Don Bosco, spoke of this mentality: "Having taken its place in the world, the Congregation now felt that it had entered into history, a history that had to be not only made but also written."¹³

Don Bosco exhorted the Salesians not to risk improvisations or innovations without necessary basis, to create a culture of memory and remembering, to be sensitive to history and to have a passion for truth: all these to be faithful to the Salesian charism. The Salesians are not relics of the past but inheritors of a charism of a religious order. Don Bosco is not a museum piece. Thus, they must have a sense of affection for those who were before them.

A System

The Central Salesian Archive conserves a patrimonial wealth for the Congregation and the whole Salesian Family. It contains primarily the history of the Society (its origins and development) and the more important references to the Salesian presence and foundations in different countries, provinces and houses.

¹² Ibid., XII, 273.

¹³ Ibid., 42. "Don Bosco, who had kept even his childhood scribbles and never destroyed even the least document, eminently recognized the importance of history. We are not surprised therefore to see in the agenda a proposal that the Congregation appoint a historian to gather documentation and organize material to be used in the course of time."

The Society of St. Francis of Sales have established norms helpful to keep materials for the writing of its history.

- That every Salesian work should have an archive;
- That in the safeguard of a Salesian province's archive, the Superior or the Provincial assisted by the Secretary of the Province is the archivist;
- That every work should have a history of its beginnings;
- That the confrere in-charge of a work should ensure that his house has an archive.

Consequently, the archive follows a conventional arrangement followed in keeping documents.¹⁴

For access and consultation, it should be “functionally arranged according to a system which contains and expresses all the aspects of the life and activity” of a Salesian Province. Here is a system for an archive of the Salesians, in both the general and provincial levels. The archival documents are arranged related to categories relevant to the Salesian apostolate.¹⁵

Perhaps among the forms in use today for an archive of a religious order, the forms related to the exit or dismissal of Salesians can help write a true history of how Salesians have lived up to their vows. These archival documents can indicate

¹⁴ See *Archivistica Ecclesiastica*, Città del Vaticano, 1967.

¹⁵ The categories of documents conserved in the Salesian Central Archive are the following: Salesian Society (Rector Major and his Council), Apostolic See, Province, Provincial or Regional Conference, Inter-Province Relationships, Ordinaries of Area, Religious Institutes, Civic Authorities, History of the Province, Houses of the Province, Formation, (12) Pastoral Care of Youth, Parishes and Public Churches, Missions, (15) Salesian Family, Social Communications, Persons, Statistical Data, and Administrative Archives. See Society of Saint Francis of Sales [Salesians of Don Bosco], *Juridical Elements and Administrative Praxis in the Government of the Province, Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco* (Rome 2005), 178-180.

certain realities that reflect real knowledge of a religious order, for its evaluation and betterment.¹⁶

Certainly, the data they provide are small but significant. But the forms, accompanied by documents, reveal discernments and decisions, as well as their consequences for the religious order and its history: reasons why candidates applied for acceptance and are accepted to the novitiate and the profession; reasons why appointments for rectorship of a house or directorship of Novices are endorsed; reasons why members are asked not to proceed at the end of temporary profession and why members are dismissed. Even the *curriculum vitae* of a confrere who died provide important historical data.

A Salesian Parish's History

Knowledge of a parish broadens horizons, deepens perspectives, and helps one see the greater good for the benefit of all.¹⁷ It gives the possibility to sink deeper roots in the fertile soil and history of a place. For lying like a treasure to be discovered is the richness of history, planted, nurtured, and given to us as a gift by God.

In 1973, the Salesians of Don Bosco accepted the invitation to administer Mary Help of Christians Parish in Mayapa, Calamba, Laguna. More than fifty years have passed. But what documents can help to write its history? Does the parish have an archive where there are documents to write its story?

Let us attempt to give a look at some documents that can help reconstruct this Salesian parish's history and render an account

¹⁶ Among the forms relevant for a history of the religious life of Salesians are the following: Absence from the Religious House, Indult of Secularization, Dismissal of a Member [*"Ipsa facto"*], Examples of canonical warning, "Edict" for a Dismissal of a Confrere impossible to trace, Dispensation from a Priestly Celibacy. See *Ibid.*, 196-209.

¹⁷ See Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter on Fraternity and Social Friendship *Fratelli Tutti* (FT) (3 October 2020), no. 145: "We need to sink our roots deeper into the fertile soil and history of our native place, which is a gift of God."

of its work of evangelization. Through these documents, we can write a sort of memoirs that could help us know its beginnings how it developed. This can be a history definitive and revealed.

Sample Documents for a History of a Parish

For almost a quarter of a century, from 1973-1997, the parish priest, animating and administering the parish under his care, generated documents and records and conserved them in the parish archive. Initially, these documents became part of the parish's current archive. But to write the parish's history after almost half a century, these documents now belongs to a historical archive.

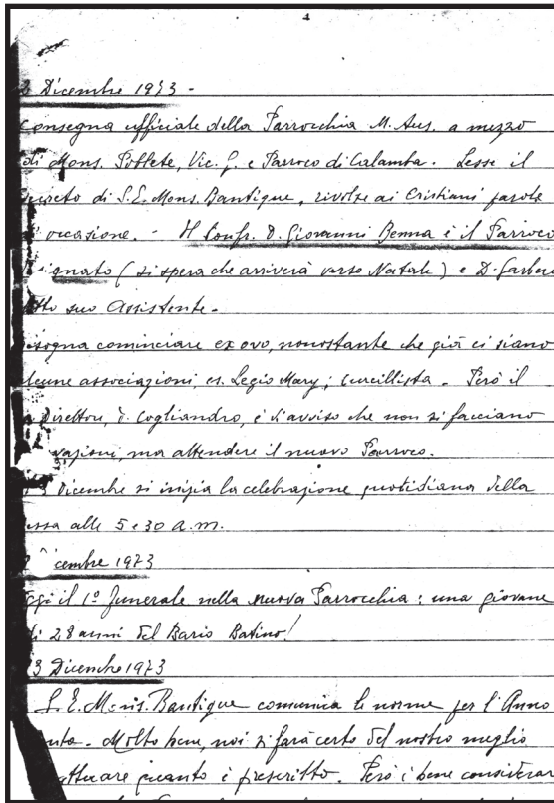
The creation of documents and an archive certainly depended on the initiative of the parish priest. In the case of Mary Help of Christians Parish in Mayapa, Calamba, Laguna, the parish priest¹⁸ possessed a keen sense of history. He certainly knew how to value the past for the use of the future. At the same time, he was conscious of the workings of Vatican Council II, which guided him in his pastoral care and administration of the newly established parish.

The documents below are parish chronicle, census, data card of a parishioner, Sunday attendance and announcements composed by the parish priest. These generally refer to the early years of the parish. When read and analyzed, one can write a history of the parish's beginnings. It can show the working contribution of a Salesian parish to a local church. From these document, what can we "glimpse" of Mary Help of Christians Parish?

¹⁸ Father Giovanni Benna (1933-2018) died at the age of 85 years. He was 67 years Salesian and 57 years priest. Fr. Benna was born in Chieri, Italy (1933) and died in the city of Turin, Italy (2018), both Don Bosco's native land. He came to the Philippines in 1962 and administered Don Bosco Mayapa Parish of Mary Help of Christians until 1997 when he returned to Turin only to work again for Filipino migrants.

Parish Chronicle (Documents 1-3)

The following three documents show that the assistant parish priest had written a chronicle of the parish as soon as it was established. Even the Salesian provincial superior had checked the existence of the chronicle when he first visited the parish. But the parish priest promptly took over the task of writing some significant events of his ministry.

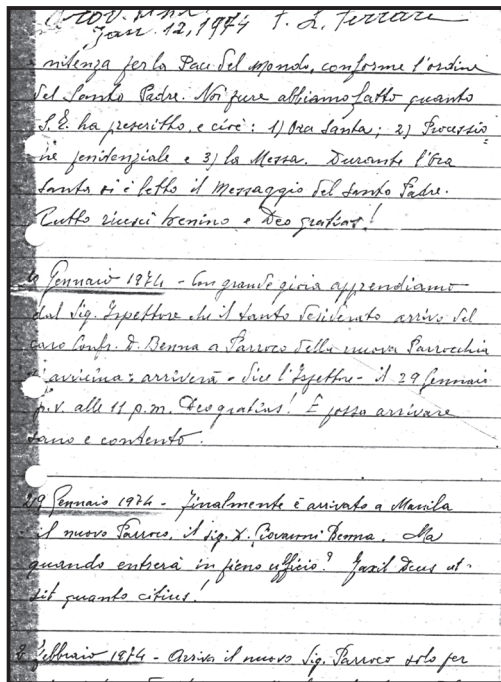


Document n. 1: Parish Chronicle (December 2, 1973)

On December 2, 1973, on behalf of Bishop Pedro Bantigue of the Diocese of San Pablo, Monsignor Elias Poblete, parish priest of the Parish of Calamba, Laguna and Vicar General of the Diocese of San Pablo, read the decree of erection of Mary Help of Christians Parish.

Moreover, the Bishop nominated the Salesian Fr. Giovanni Benna as parish priest, with Fr. Pietro Garbero as assistant. Father Benna was still in Italy and was expected to arrive by Christmas that year. Fr. Garbero wrote the chronicle in Italian, even suggesting to already start some parish associations. However, the rector of the Salesian community of Don Bosco Seminary-College, Father Alfred Cogliandro, had cautioned and had asked him to wait.

On December 3, 1973, the first mass in the new parish was celebrated at 5:30 am. Six days after, a funeral mass for a 28 year old man from Barrio Batino was celebrated. On 13 December 1973, the Bishop communicated the norms for the start of the Holy Year.¹⁹



Document n. 2: Parish Chronicle (January 10, 1974)

¹⁹ See Salesian Archives Filippine Nord (SAFIN) Don Bosco Mayapa, *Chronicle* (December 1973).

On January 10, 1974, the assistant parish priest was informed that Fr. Benna was arriving soon. The appointed parish priest had in fact arrived in fact on January 29, 1974 and had visited the parish on February 2, 1974. But he unfortunately stayed only for three days, since he had gone back to Manila to study Tagalog.²⁰

APRIL 1974

April 11: Holy Thursday - The Camillistas selected the 12 apples for the washing of the feet. Very well attended the adoration from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Especially many youth from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Only a problem: lacking of prayer material on Gospel. The candles stood in adoration up to the evening of Friday.

April 12: Good Friday - A very busy day not only for the priest but also for the people.

12:00 noon up to 3:30 p.m. = meditation of the SEVEN WORDS - The meditation was delivered by seven Camillistas - I coded the prayers - The records of Orson were used in comment of Orson.

3:00 p.m. = very nice WAY OF THE CROSS in the street of Bani - the stations were prepared by 14 families - by attendance

6:00 = Liturgical Celebration: Adoration of the Lamb and Holy Communion

7:30 = Procession of St. Entero - Was the biggest one - very nice to see all the enlightened candles.

April 13: Holy Saturday - The evening liturgy was not so well attended. The parish was filled up, but not crowded.

April 14, Easter Sunday - Very well attended the procession of the Holyday at 5:00 a.m. - but better to make it 5:30 so to start the Mass not before 6:30 a.m. After the Mass the burning of Judas for the delight of young and old.

Document n. 3: Parish Chronicle (April 11, 1974)

²⁰ See SAFIN Don Bosco Mayapa, *Parish Chronicle* (January-February 1974).

Fr. Benna was now writing the chronicle of the parish in English, dealing with the happenings in the parish during the Paschal Triduum.

On April 11, 1974 (Holy Thursday), the *Cursillistas* had chosen the twelve apostles for the washing of the feet, stating that the 7 to 11 pm adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the altar of repose was well attended. The parish youth were in fact in adoration from 10 to 11 pm. He noted a problem during the adoration: there was the lack of prayer guides in Tagalog!

On April 12, 1974 (Good Friday), from 12 noon to 2:30 pm, seven *Cursillistas* gave the *Siete Palabras* meditations. The Way of the Cross followed at 3 pm along the streets of the barrio, with a "big attendance." At 6 pm, there was the celebration of the Adoration of the Cross and Holy Communion. At 7:30 pm, there was the procession of *Santo Entierro* that "was the biggest one ... very nice to see all the lighted candles."

On April 13, 1974) (Holy Saturday), the evening liturgy (Easter Vigil) "was not well attended. The Parish was filled up, but not crowded."

On April 14 (Easter Sunday), the procession of the Salubong at 5 am was very well attended. But the chronicler thought that it would have been better if the Mass started before 6:30 am. Nonetheless, the burning of Judas after the mass was "the delight of young and old."²¹

Parish Census (Documents 4-5)

Reading through these two documents, one can compare a census (1979) related to the first six years of the parish and a comparative census (1990-1991) about ten years after.

²¹ See *Ibid.*, *Parish Chronicle* (April 1974).

PARISH OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS
DON BOSCO, MATI-PA, CALAMBA, LAGUNA

AUG 31 1979

+ PARISH CENSUS-1979

BARRIO	Families	Population	Non-Catholic Families
① Mayapa	786	3805	38 ^{113 Baptists}
② Paciano	756	3780	41 ^{20 Catholics}
③ Bunggo	400(?)	2000(?)	10 → ^{25 unites}
④ Palo Alto	229	1147	50 → ^{unites}
⑤ Majada	205	1114	1 - ^{unites}
⑥ Punta	182	961	3 → ^{unites}
⑦ Sirang-lupa	134	821	-
⑧ Bubuyan	120(?)	750(?)	115 - ^{unites}
⑨ La Guerra	126	745	52 - ^{unites}
⑩ Lawa	111	680	1 - ^{unites}
⑪ Mapagong	116	573	12 - ^{unites}
⑫ Prinza	90	547	-
⑬ Buroi	141	508	7 - ^{unites}
⑭ Ulango	104	500	-
⑮ Humalan	80	497	1 - ^{unites}
⑯ Kay-Anlog	103	492	-
⑰ Mabato	65	373	-
⑱ Batian	50	274	-
⑲ Bavandal	46	251	-
⑳ Pimison	31	186	-
㉑ Batino	20(?)	100(?)	3 - ^{unites}
TOTALS:			
21 Barrios	3,697	20,104	334 (= 1,670 families)

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Document n. 4: Parish Census (1979)

On August 31 1979, the parish priest of Mary Help of Christians Parish presented a "parish census." The parish was made up of twenty-one barrios plus *Campo* (Camp Vicente Lim of the National Police Region IV). There were 3,697 families, with a population of 20,104 ca. and 334 non-Catholic families with a total of 1,670 ca.

The parish priest identified three barrios (*Bunggo*, *Bubuyan*, *Batino*) whose number of families and population were merely approximated. Beside the barrios having non-

Catholic families, he wrote the possible non-Catholic religions present in the parish (Baptists, *Iglesia ni Kristo*, *Watawat (ng Lahi)*, *Mistica*, Protestant).²²

PARISH CENSUS 1990 1991

CENSUS 1991

4311-52-P

BARANGAY	FAMILIES		POPULATION		GOOD FAMILIES	NOT CATHOLIC 1990	PERSONS 1991
	1990	1991	1990	1991			
MAYAPA	2,099	2,646	9,141		925	135	
PACIANO	2,113	2,443	8,619		1,332	191	
EM'S BARRIO	1,002		5,420		702	58	
MAPAGONG	218	250	894	1,112	50	51	63
SI-SI	230	345	1,038	1,368	150	47	61
SI-KA	100	103	650	781	150	3 Families	2 Families
PROPER TIRAGAN	145	155	800	946	150	2 Families	1 Family
MAJADA	353	358	1,942	1,965	200	12	9 B. Again
PALO-ALTO	616	635	2,996	2,998	200	1,004	1,040 (Mistica)
LAGUERTA	145	148	657	816	75	58 Families	59 Families
HURNALAN	128	125	651	627	100	0	0
MARATO	86	82	450	436	80	5 Families	6 Families
VALENTINA		57		256			6 Families
FATIMA		39		174	590	70	2 Families
HALIGAYA		134		160			6 Families
ST. AUGUSTIN		38					
LAWA	456	462	2,346	2,380	200	12	19
PRINZA	132	150	671	710	70	1	0
BARANDAL	68	71	302	318	50	5 B. Again	5 B. Again
PUNTA	329	280	1,470	1,359	200	3 B. Again 1 Muslim	3 B. Again 1 Muslim
KAY-ANLOG	179	185	962	990	100	15 B. Again	15 B. Again
MILANGO	150	146	644	704	100	0	
BUROL	189	195	1,062	1,092	150	12 Mistika 3 Iglesia 6 Mormon	12 Mistika 3 Iglesia 3 Mormon
SU-SIL	157	170	628	680	200	7	
SU-GIT	66	75	357	379	60	2 B. Again	2 B. Again
SU-KAN	59	56	288	234	50	21 B. Again	22 B. Again
		8,917		11,338		5,114	

P.B. BENA

Document n. 5: Parish Census (1991)

The parish priest wrote the 1991 census comparing it with the previous year (1990). He updated information regarding the number of families, population, of good families and non-

²² See SAFIN Don Bosco Mayapa, *Parish Census* (August 31, 1979).

Catholic families when this was available. However, one could note an increase in numbers.

There were still twenty-two number of places that constituted the Mary Help of Christians Parish. But in comparison with that of 1979 parish census, there were less barrios (*Bubuyan* and *Latian*) and a new territory called *Fatima*. *Campo* was now called EM's (Enlisted Men's) Barrio. Moreover, *Barrio Sirang Lupa* was now divided into *Silangan* and *Kanluran*, and *Barrio Bunggo* into *Silangan*, *Gitna* and *Kanluran*. There were also other non-Catholic religions identified (Mormon, Born Again, and even Muslim) beside those of the census.²³

Data Card

APELYIDO: <u>JACO</u>		Pangalan: <u>JOSE</u>		Sex: <u>M</u>	Family Census
Kepanganakan-Petsa: <u>MARCH 19, 1909</u>		Lugar: <u>CANLUBANG</u>		Mga Kapatid:	
Ama: <u>ALFREDO</u>		Ina: <u>MYENA BATULIAS</u>		Kasal: <u>BARCELON</u>	
BINYAG-Petsa: <u>APRIL 6, 1949</u>		Parokya: <u>CANLUBANG</u>		Libro-No. <u>ph</u>	
KUMPIL-petsa: <u>MARCH 22, 1983</u>		Parokya: <u>MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS</u>		Libro-No. <u>ph</u>	
Unang Pakikinaabang-petsa:		Parokya:		Katekista	
KASAL (1) petsa: <u>SEPT. 13, 1993</u>		Parokya: <u>MARY HELP</u>		Libro-No. <u>2</u> ph/ <u>70-1</u>	
asawa: <u>MA. VIDA JAMISOLA</u>		Kamatayan ng asawa:			
(2) petsa:		Parokya:		Libro-No. <u>ph</u>	
asawa:		Kamatayan ng asawa:			
TIRAHAN (1) taon: <u>1978</u>		Baryo: <u>PACIANO</u>		Purok/St. <u>LUDEK</u>	
(2)					
(3)					
Samahan ng Simbahan (1) TAR. Sec. 1988 = 7 / 24 = 51 / 30 = 30 TAR. 1988 = 47					
(2) Pnl. 1987 = 21 / 49 = 20 / 49 = 13 / 40 = 12 / 41 = 24 / 38 = 24 TAR. 1992 = 46 / 192 = 51					
1994 = 30 / 100 = 115 = 57 / 196 = 35 / 100 = 30 / 100 = 31 (5)					
KAMATAYAN-petsa:		Libro-No.		ph	
KATESISMO SA PAARALAN:			KATESISMO SA ARAW NG LINGGO		
Paaralan	Taon	Grade Year	mga pagdalo	MGA PAGO DALO	MGA PAGO DALO
SIA	1976-77	Grade 1		1977 = 12	1978 = 8
"	78	2		1978 = 10	1979 = 5
"	79	3	EL	1979 = 10	1980 = 5
"	80	4		1980 = 11 = 0	1981 = 11
CHUSSA	81	5		1981 = 3	
"	82	6	(H)	1982 = 10 = 0	
CHUSSA	83	1st yr		1983 = 21	1984 = 17
"	84	2nd		1984 = 17	1985 = 17
"	85	3rd		1985 = 17	1986 = 17
"	86	4th		1986 = 17	1987 = 17
"	87	5th		1987 = 17	1988 = 17
"	88	6th		1988 = 17	1989 = 17
U.P. 1st yr	86-92	1st yr	CHUSSA / MARY HELP	1990 = 17	1991 = 17
				1992 = 17	1993 = 17
				1994 = 17	1995 = 17

Document n. 6: Data Card

²³ See Ibid., 1990-1991.

Mary Help of Christians Parish kept records of parishioners. The parish priest believed that as shepherd, he had to know every parishioner, and be like that good shepherd whose voice the sheep hear and who “one by one he calls” to lead them to safe pasture (see Jn 10:2-4).

Thus, he tried to procure available information: the parishioner’s name and those of his/her parents,’ date and place of birth, date and parish of baptism (as well as confirmation and matrimony if already available). No sheep should be foreign to him; nor should he be a stranger to them.

The parish priest also recorded the groups that the parishioner was a member of: (in the sample) the parishioner was a member of the Tarcisians (the so-called parish mass servers) when he was a high school student, a Legionary of Mary, and a volunteer catechist of the parish. As member of the Tarcisians and volunteer catechist, the task and the year he assumed this position was recorded, including the number of times he was present in meetings.

At the back of the data card, one could see the schools that the parishioner frequented, his grade levels and years. It also indicated the years he attended catechism and the number of times he frequented the Sunday catechism. The parishioner studied in Catholic schools for his elementary and high school studies, where religion was taught as a school subject. For one who studied in a public school, the number of school catechism attended was recorded too.²⁴

²⁴ See SAFIN Don Bosco Mayapa, *Data Card*.

Parish Sunday Attendance (Documents 7-9)

<u>SUNDAY ATTENDANCE</u> - September 15, 1974			
<u>Mass Attendance</u>	<u>Communion</u>	<u>Confessions</u>	<u>Collection</u>
PARISH: 7.00 am = 139	70	10	₱. 13.65
4.00 pm = 113	32	16	₱. 0.60
6.00 pm = 114	71	30	₱. 7.80
SIRANGLUPA = 119	26	12	₱. 6.55
PAJO ALTO = 134	15	3	₱. 7.70
PUNTA = 165	28	/	₱. 7.30
<u>764</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>₱. 43.60</u>

PARISH OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS
DON BOSCO, MAYAPA, CALAMBA

Sept 15, 74

Document n. 7: Parish Sunday Attendance (September 15, 1974)

Mary Help of Christians Parish, from its erection, recorded the participation of its parishioners in its Sunday life in the parish church and the barrios: the attendance in the Sunday Masses, the number of those who received Holy Communion, and the number of confessions that a priest heard. Moreover, the amount of money collected was recorded.

Barely a year since its foundation, on September 15, 1974, Mary Help of Christians Parish recorded the following: the attendance in six celebrations 764, the number who received Holy Communion 242, the number who went to make their Confession 71, and the total collection PhP 43.60.²⁵

²⁵ See SAFIN Don Bosco Mayapa, *Parish Sunday Attendance*, September 15, 1974.

AYAPA PARISH																				
30 AUL 1987					5 SEP. 1987					13 SEP. 1987					20 SEP. 1987					
SUNDAY	P	K	⊕	F	%	P	K	⊕	F	%	P	K	⊕	F	%	P	K	⊕	F	%
1. Maysapa	1737	714	686	1033	.60	1946	805	692	1056	.53	1619	808	628	992	.61	1805	766	703	912	.72
2. Paciano	601	128	220	1	1	553	128	256	1	1	525	116	186	1	1	899	486	380	89	
3. Campo	67	50	17	21	.31	66	53	19	39	.57	61	38	21	21	.34	Atwood	Calicut			
4. Mapagong	136	99	53	122	.34	165	70	57	270	.63	179	79	63	109	.61	155	88	45	14	
5. Si-Si	142	112	49	85	.70	144	87	38	52	.36	149	106	82	67	.45	152	121	58	11	
6. Si-Ka	250	157	76	74	.40	134	83	44	22	.16	205	159	72	23	.11	232	169	75	51	
7. Majada	266	120	74	183	.12	115	68	56	95	.83	181	106	89	125	.68	202	112	80	18	
8. Palo Alto	59	34	29	25	.25	?	?	?	?	?	62	42	33	32	.50	46	43	22	9	
9. Laguerta	132	79	59	64	.24	99	57	52	67	.68	145	93	76	228	1.57	133	90	88	10	
10. Bernalan	94	47	30	28	.18	37	19	?	15	.40	56	45	34	15	.27	Atwood	Calicut			
11. Mabato																				
12. KALIBARA																				
13. Lawa	148	43	29	20	.07	161	66	27	30	.19	182	72	37	15	.08	191	70	30	4	
14. Prinza	70	43	22	13	.18	77	47	20	7	.09	86	54	30	116	1.35	105	58	19	10	
15. Bagandul	44	32	no	no	no	64	38	29	65	1.01	62	59	14	.22	65	48	17	14		
16. Pianzon		67	no	no	no	40	32	35	18	.45	120	86	70	21	.15	Atwood	Calicut			
17. Punta																				
18. Kayanleg	155	113	43	29	.06	155	115	38	145	.93	167	119	50	51	.30	160	115	57	10	
19. Ulango	123	89	54	32	.17	165	149	75	113	.68	148	133	59	44	.29	207	93	60	6	
20. Bubuyan																				
21. Bural	96	87	39	52	.12	90	85	24	31	.34	99	96	26	39	.39	105	87	42	2	
22. Bunggo-s	87	62	18	36	.18	38	29	18	25	.66	86	47	20	108	1.26	Atwood	Calicut			
23. Bunggo-g	101	63	29	45	.16	60	36	27	25	.58	93	60	34	58	.60	124	71	45	7	
24. Bunggo-k	70	59	27	40	.34	35	33	14	35	1.00	52	49	20	37	.71	68	69	21	4	
T O T A L	5389	2845	1866	2386	0.46	4977	2484	1850	2574	0.52	5223	2818	1877	2599	0.49	4641	2480	1744	27	
8000																				
7700																				
7300																				
7000																				
6700																				
6300																				
6000																				
5700																				
5300																				
5000																				
4700																				

Document n. 8: Parish Sunday Attendance (September 13, 1987)

Looking at the Sunday dated September 13, 1987, the parish had twenty-four barangays under its care, in which 5,223 who participated in the Eucharistic celebrations. For the Sunday catechism, there were 2,818, and who received Holy Communion 1,877. Total Sunday collection was Php 2,539, which if divided among those present in the celebrations resulted to an average of Php 0.49 per participant. One should note that parishioners were mainly sugar cane farmers and factory workers.

From the data of this Sunday parish celebration, we find information related to the number of those who participated in the Sunday Catechism class as well. These were mostly elementary and high school children who frequented the public schools located within the various barangays. The parish, aware of its duty to evangelize, systematically organized the Sunday teaching of catechism. It had about 100 ca. volunteer

catechists, mostly youth and young adults, whom the parish priest prepared every Saturday to teach catechism the next day.²⁶

FEB 10 1997		FEB 23 1997										MAR 2 1997										MAR 9					
BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES (B.E.C.) NG MAYAPA PARISH																											
SUNDAY ATTENDANCE		MAYAPA PARISH - CALAKMA LAGUNA										MAR 2 1997										MAR 9					
	P	K	⊕	⊖	⊕	P	K	⊕	⊖	⊕	P	K	⊕	⊖	P	K	⊕										
1. Mayapa	3245	1348	176	648	1/2	3745	1223	1550	7421	958	3357	1233	1499	2773	231	3463	1256	14									
2. Paciano	2343	390	1038	414	1/2	1490	906	983	4056	711	1425	357	440	3840	1399	2025	382	9									
3. Estino	165	80	58	166	1/3	168	83	54	303	?	153	91	62	450	245	160	90	2									
4. Mapagong	249	177	102	665	1/2	211	166	97	548	53	248	143	107	504	203	225	172	11									
5. Si-Si	449	242	239	1433	1/2	530	253	261	1977	129	570	259	225	1528	200	515	286	2									
6. Si-Ka	324	202	146	1733	1/2	280	152	121	1087	85	334	192	150	1486	445	300	176	6									
7. Majada	570	430	242	2333	1/2	515	413	232	2338	235	493	346	227	2574	509	563	484	2									
8. Palo-Alto	537	435	242	2530	1/2	576	432	288	1833	227	528	418	230	2722	436	524	430	2									
9. Manggahan	171	116	94	485	1/2	189	126	113	504	64	164	130	104	740	457	176	127	3									
10. Laguerta	181	105	76	615	1/2	144	81	75	467	45	164	84	93	545	332	163	112	3									
11. Humalan	254	214	168	660	1/3	360	246	208	1330	113	318	223	215	762	234	330	245	20									
12. Buroc	301	166	143	1119	1/2	263	188	160	959	70	287	198	163	1080	376	243	206	14									
13. Bu-Sil	244	202	172	847	1/3	321	223	188	1213	103	289	201	153	1046	362	282	207	15									
14. Bu-Git	171	117	87	1215	1/2	155	108	83	411	62	150	101	79	414	276	147	97	7									
15. Bu-Kan	115	93	38	314	1/3	130	112	58	293	71	130	104	64	832	178	125	101	6									
16. Kabato	216	141	111	505	1/2	222	148	129	212	148	128	132	78	766	130	145	145	9									
17. Babayan																											
Kasal											146		26														
TOTAL	9625	4858	4732	23394	1/2	9854	4880	4624	25012	1371	9369	4762	4445	25342	276	9551	4956	44									
14,000-	227 - 41 - 233 - 115																		2297 - 12 - 118 - 281			-465 - 112 - 174 + 230			= 182 + 134 - 27		
13,000-	Hilagang Lungsod ng																										
12,000-	Valencia																										
11,000-																											
10,000-	FR. JOHN BENNE																		FR. JOHN BENNE			FR. JOHN BENNE			FR. JOHN		

Document n. 9: Parish Sunday Attendance (March 2, 1997)

For Sunday, March 2, 1997, in Parish Help of Christians Parish, 9,369 participated in the celebrations of the Eucharist; 4,762 went to Sunday catechism; 4,445 received Holy Communion; Php 26,003 Mass collection (an average of Php 2.76 per person).

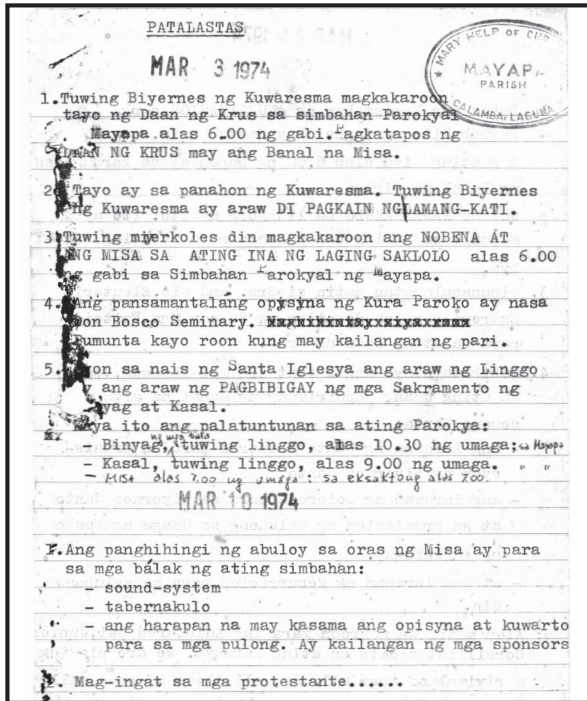
Data on Sundays showed variations of increase or decrease, as indicated by line at the bottom of the chart. This served as a “thermometer” to measure the “temperature” of the parish Sunday after Sunday, helping the parish priest see where he

²⁶ See Ibid., September 18, 1987.

could animate better the parishioners:²⁷ to call for more presences in the celebrations and reception of Holy Communion, and more generosity in the contributions to meet the parish needs.

Sunday Parish Announcement (Documents 10-11)

The parish priest, through the Sunday announcement, educated the people on the importance of the liturgical seasons and the centrality of the Paschal Mystery in the life of the believer.



Document n. 10: Parish Announcement (March 3 & 10, 1974)

This parish announcements (*patalastas*), prepared and read by the parish priest in Tagalog, were on the first Lenten season celebrated by the new parish.

On March 3, 1974, the parish priest informed the people on Lenten practices (Friday Way of the Cross before the mass and

²⁷ See Ibid., March 2, 1997.

abstinence from meat); Marian devotion (Wednesday novena Mass to the Perpetual Help); and his temporary residence (Don Bosco Seminary-College). Moreover, as the Church wanted, other Sacraments were to be celebrated on a Sunday: Baptism (10:30 morning) and Wedding (9 am). He insisted on the time of the celebration of Mass: “*alas 7:00 ng umaga ... sa eksaktong alas 7:00 ng umaga*” (7:00 in the morning... at exactly 7:00 am).

On March 10, 1974, the parish priest informed the parishioners why the *paghingi ng abuloy* (“asking of donations”) was made during the Mass: *para sa mga balak ng ating Simbahan* (“for the plans for our Parish”) e.g. sound-system, tabernacle, office and meeting hall that needed sponsors. Moreover, he warned the people of the protestants....²⁸

JUN 16 1974

PADRE JUAN BENNA, SDB
KURA PAROKO

JUN 16 1974

1. Nobena + processyon = Sacred Heart (June 21)
2. June 20 = 3.00 P.M.: meeting future members
 • Apostolado ng Analangin.
3. Gawa sa Simbahan:
 - Income this week: ₱.1069
 - Total Collection: ₱.12,178.60
 - Expenses this week: ₱.2270-
 - Total Expenses: ₱.9,313.25
 - Balance (still in): ₱.2,865.35
4. + Miss ng Kabataan → 6:00 u.h.
 + Susunod ng Luffr → 4:30 u.h.
 + Mis ng kabatang babae (Evan. + H.S.) (Duty)
 + Mis ng kabatang lalaki → 2:00 u.h. ng Pw. Bn.
5. After Miss → Nobena Sacred Heart of Jesus

Document n. 11: Parish Announcement (June 16, 1974)

²⁸ See SAFIN Don Bosco Mayapa, *Sunday Parish Announcement*, March 3/10, 1974.

The parish announcement, always brief and precise, was usually given at the end of the Mass, before the final blessing.

Being the month of the Sacred Heart to which Filipinos were devoted, on June 16, 1974, the parish priest announced a procession in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (June 21) and a meeting for future members of the parish organization *Apostolado ng Panalangin* ("Apostles of Prayer") (June 20).

Moreover, he presented the previous week's financial status: an income of PhP 1,069.00 that brought the parish's total collection at PhP 12,178.60. The parish had so far spent PhP 9,313.25 including the previous week's expenses of PhP 2,270. Since it started, the parish had a remaining balance ("still in") of PhP 2,865.35.²⁹

Though the parish priest was new and a non-Filipino, he was certainly knowledgeable of a Filipino parish: June as month of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and a parish organization that he quoted in Tagalog. And to think that his parish was only half a year old. Besides, he was transparent and precise regarding the financial state of his parish!

Some Notes

This presentation of parish documents can certainly contribute to a knowledge of a diocese. With a chronicle, one can write the beginnings of Mary Help of Christians Parish in Mayapa, an unknown and insignificant place.

Announcements on the celebration of the Easter Triduum, of parish activities related with the month of June, of groups usually involved in parish ministry: these can reveal how conscientious a parish priest can be of ministry and of animation.

The use of parish census, data on Sunday attendance and parishioners: these were novel in parish animation that reveal how a shepherd can keep watch over his flock. The parish priest,

²⁹ See *Ibid.*, June 16, 1974.

even if was new and a non-Filipino at that, had immediately expressed himself in the language that the people of the parish knew best: the local Tagalog language.

Pope Francis and the Five Hundredth Year Anniversary of the Philippine Church

We look back to the words beautifully offered to us by Pope Francis in commemoration of the Five Hundredth Year of Christianity in the Philippines. History is a reentering into the roots of our faith, while ushering in sentiments of deep gratitude and untold awe for all that the Lord has graciously gifted us.³⁰

Chronicling the history of one's parish is not just a matter of filling in details of a book or an encyclopedia. Rather it is to ensure that the community grows in the knowledge and appreciation of how it was to have lived the Catholic faith. Christianity is about the fulness of life in Christ, not about squabbling over where the first Mass was held.³¹ This sacred remembering is for every person, in order to come to an understanding of how through the years, the Lord has not just safeguarded our life in the faith, but has also brought us to flourish by it. Because he cares deeply for his people.³²

To recall what Pope Francis declared nine years ago on the morning of 18 January 2015 at the University of Santo Tomas

³⁰ See Pope Francis, *Homily to the Filipino Community*, St. Peter's Basilica, Rome (22 March 2021): "Going back in time, even centuries, as we are doing for the birth of the Church in the Philippines, is like returning in memory, retracing the footsteps of those who came before us, to the very origins of your faith, with a sense of gratitude...."

³¹ See *Ibid.*: "... to remember where we come from and the experiences of faith and the testimonies to the Gospel that have made us who we are today ... a 'Deuteronomic' Memory.' 'Remember, be mindful ... past times, the graces of God, do not forget.' A Christianity without memory is an encyclopedia, not a way of life."

³² See *Ibid.*: "Memory is important for an entire people, but also for every single person. Each of us should think back on the many beautiful and not so beautiful, the good and not so good memories we have, but always seeing in them God's providence...."

during his last day of visit: "Some truths in life will only be seen with eyes that have been washed by tears."³³

The Supreme Pontiff addressed the young in Lisbon for the 37th World Youth Day (5 August 2023): "The youth will remain the hope of a new humanity that is currently fragmented and divided ... if only he knows how to remember ... to listen to the drama and the dreams of the elderly."³⁴

But how shall the youth even learn to shed tears for the truths of the past, or how shall he remember it, if there is no history to speak those truths? If history has not been penned?

A Final Thought

"I fear history passing by ... undocumented and not archived." Records are valuable and carry untold wealth! Let us not throw them, let us not let go of the past! Records are far from being the garbage they are perceived to be. We must, in fact, allow these to "ferment" and to "fester." For when eventually drawn out, they will prove to be the very fragrance of our history.

Dare to enter archives! From there though, you must also emerge. Find it brimming with prophecies for the betterment of today and tomorrows to come. Knowledge about the history of your Parish will only empower you to become a true prophet!

³³ See Pope Francis, *Discourse to the Young*, University of Santo Tomas, Manila (18 January 2015): "*Algunas realidades de la vida podemos ver solamente con los ojos lavados de las lágrimas.*"

³⁴ See Pope Francis, *Discourse to the Young*, Lisbon, Portugal (5 August 2023): "*Los jóvenes son siempre la esperanza de una nueva unidad para la humanidad fragmentada y dividida. Pero sólo si tienen memoria, sólo si escuchan los dramas y los sueños de sus mayores.*"