



P5 Stop Asian Hate



P7 Ordination of a Priest

Filipino Fiesta returns



The honored guests and the Grand Marshall of the parade: UC Davis Bayanihan Clinic

Photos by Dale Esperante

BY MURRAY NAVARRO

As we commemorate the 124th anniversary of our Independence Day, the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento (FFS) has its own identity of celebration. The past two years of trying times remind us of the footprint of the dreaded COVID19 pandemic that took millions of lives in every corner of the world. For us who were fortunate enough to combat the unseen enemy continued the traditional festivities for a day which start with a colorful parade of organizations.

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Filipino Fiesta banner bearers

Marcos' economic message leaves businesses wanting for more

BY NICOLAS CIGARAL

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. repeated his calls for “unity” as he promised in his inaugural address to rebuild the economy with his “all-inclusive plan” that, up to this point, remains obscure.

In a speech on Thursday that lasted for almost 25 minutes, Marcos vowed to “find a way” to solve the country’s energy crisis; give food security a “preferential treatment”; and present a “comprehensive infrastructure plan” that will make sure projects that have already

started will finish on schedule.

“The pandemic ravaged bigger economies than ours. The virus is not the only thing to blame. What had been well built was torn down. We will build it back better,” Marcos said.

But even after completing his economic team, the newly-inaugurated leader’s economic vision is still unclear, leaving businesses looking for guidance on what the government intends to do to ensure that the economy can sustain its recovery.

“From the business side, still a lot of concrete steps that needs to be done for



Government employees wave their national flags as they await the arrival of their new Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. at the Malacañang presidential palace, following his inauguration ceremony in Manila.

us to pick up,” George Barcelon, president of Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the largest business group in the country, said in a phone interview.

Specifically, Barcelon said businesses wanted to hear the new administration’s clear-cut plans to at-

tract more foreign direct investments and improve the country’s broadband infrastructure, which are both crucial to pandemic recovery.

To be fair, Marcos himself acknowledged that “the immediate months will be rough.”

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It’s official: Bongbong Marcos sworn in as PH’s 17th President



Ferdinand “BongBong” Marcos Jr (L) succeeded outgoing president Rodrigo Duterte (R)

BY GABRIEL PABICO LALU

MANILA, Philippines — Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos is now officially the 17th President of the Republic of the Philippines after he took his oath of office on Thursday noon at the National Museum grounds in the nation’s capital.

Marcos took his oath before Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, marking the return of the Marcos family to power — 36 years since the administration of his late father and namesake, former president Ferdinand Marcos.

Marcos wore a barong tagalog designed by Pepito Albert. The design of the barong tagalog is said to be inspired by the military uniform worn during the Spanish colonial period.

Among the personalities present at the inauguration were members of the Marcos family including First Lady Liza Araneta, their children including representative-elect Sandro Marcos, and the President’s sisters Senator Imee Marcos and Irene Araneta.

The President’s mother — the Marcos family

matriarch — former first lady Imelda Marcos, was also present at the inauguration.

Marcos’ running mate Vice President Sara Duterte also attended the event.

Prior to his inauguration, Marcos first went to the Malacañang Palace to meet former president Rodrigo Duterte, who was given departure honors.

During the inaugural, the Philippine national anthem was sung by Marcos election campaign supporter and actress Toni Gonzaga.

After an interfaith prayer, a civil-military parade displaying the assets and capabilities of the country’s law enforcement and defense agencies was held.

Marcos will return to the Malacañang Palace for arrival honors. After which, he is expected to lead the mass oath-taking of his Cabinet members.

The inaugural dinner will also be held inside the Malacañang, while a “People’s Concert” will take place at around 9:00 p.m. at Mendiola in Manila.

Thousands Protest End of Constitutional Right to Abortion

The Supreme Court decision on Friday was immediately met with celebration and anger. Crowds gathered in cities like Washington, New York, Atlanta and Los Angeles as many states enacted abortion bans and clinics stopped offering the procedure.

As the Supreme Court's reversal of abortion rights sank in among Americans on Friday, protests swelled in Washington, D.C., and in city centers, town plazas and parks across the United States.

Some were coordinated, some less so. Outside the Supreme Court, a divided crowd that had begun gathering early in the day had swelled to thousands of mostly outraged abortion rights demonstrators by evening, clashing with small groups of joyful anti-abortion activists who blew bubbles and celebrated the end of the federal guarantee of access to a safe and legal means of ending a pregnancy.

"All these males out here who are chanting against abortion and are enthused and happy — smiling, singing songs and laughing — it's just really disgusting," Victoria Larsen, a protester, said, trying to contain her emotions as an anti-abortion group chanted around her.

"We won, they lost, you win some you lose some, it happens," a young man in a suit, tie and aviator sunglasses cried out, brandishing a sign that said "I am a Pro-Life Feminist."

Roughly eight Americans in 10 support abortion rights and opposed the reversal of Roe v. Wade before the Friday ruling, a sentiment that intensified after a draft of the opinion leaked in May. Still, many who took to the streets said the ruling had left them initially stunned as they realized the sweeping change that is about to overtake much of the nation.

Victoria Varga, a 28-year-old logistics worker, drove to downtown Chicago, joining a crowd of some 3,000 marchers



Abortion rights protesters voice their anger in cities across the country.

with her fiancé, Rob Fishman, a 30-year-old sales professional. Carrying a sign that read "Seriously, My Mom Already Marched For This," Ms. Varga said her first response to the news of the ruling was to call her mother.

"We were both devastated," she added. "I immediately went to Walgreens to make a sign about this."

In Massachusetts, crowds denouncing the court marched in a Boston heat wave, drawing applause from outdoor diners at Boylston Street restaurants. In Tennessee, couples with babies, college students, mothers and daughters headed to Nashville's public square with signs after the electricity was disconnected at the site of their planned protest, an organizer, Julie Edwards, said.

In Florida, a 5 p.m. rally outside Tallahassee's Historic Capitol swelled in a half-hour to several hundred people expressing their outrage at the ruling. In Philadelphia, a throng outside City Hall spilled into a nearby plaza of municipal buildings, then grew to a river of thousands flowing onto John F. Kennedy Boulevard.

In Washington State, some 500 abortion rights demonstrators occupied a city block in Seattle, disrupting traffic, and in Oregon, another 1,500 converged on

downtown Portland. In New York City, crowds flooded Union Square and Washington Square Park.

In Los Angeles, a crowd outside the downtown federal courthouse gathered at noon and grew by rush hour into a sea of hundreds, weaving past high-rises and stopping traffic. A rainbow convertible brought up the rear of the march. A man standing on a seat of the slow-moving vehicle held a bright green sign: "Overturn Roe? Hell no."

Rally leaders read the names of women who had died from illegal abortions and lifted black-and-white photographs of them into the air. Commuters honked at the placards: "End the Patriarchy." "Abort the Court." "Abortion Is Healthcare."

The famed women's rights attorney Gloria Allred addressed the crowd, standing in front of a display of metallic hangers. She said she had an illegal abortion in Los Angeles in the 1960s that landed her in the hospital where a nurse told her she hoped she had learned her lesson, pre-

sumably about not seeking abortions.

"It did teach me a lesson: Abortion must be safe and legal and affordable," Ms. Allred said, her last few words drowned out by cheers from the crowd.

In Little Rock, Ark., crowds chanting "my body, my choice" shouted down men who were loudly reading Bible verses at the edge of a peaceful protest. Natalie Huckabay, 19, a Little Rock native who attends college in Tennessee, said she had registered to vote in response to the decision, which she called "terrifying."

"This is only the beginning," she said. "These are more than baby steps to something. These are strides."

In Kentucky, where a "trigger law" abruptly ended abortion access with the release of Friday's ruling, a sidewalk rally in the 92-degree Louisville heat drew hundreds of people who sweated through more than an hour of speeches. One carried a white wire hanger with a sign reading, "We Will Not Go Back."

Speakers exhorted them to remember their fury in the November elections.

"This is only the first thing they're coming for," Keturah Herron, a Democratic state representative, told the crowd, reminding that reproductive rights would be on the fall ballot in the form of a state constitutional amendment to enshrine a sweeping ban.

"No one is coming to save us," added Nima Kulkarni, a Democratic legislator whose district includes part of the city.

"Kentucky has got to save itself."

Reporting was contributed by Robert Chiarito, Alexandra Glorioso, Austyn Gaffney, and Catherine McGloin.

Marcos' economic message

From page 1

While the economy already returned to pre-pandemic level in the first quarter, red-hot inflation is threatening to derail the nascent recovery by crimping consumption, a major growth driver.

At the same time, Marcos would have to tackle a huge debt pile that was left by his predecessor and bridge a large budget deficit that could cripple his administration's ability to spend on new reforms and social programs. Incoming Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno on Wednesday said fixing the state's balance sheet and reducing poverty are the new government's priorities, although he has yet to reveal a comprehensive plan to achieve these goals.

"Of course, the inaugural rhetoric is brimming with messages of hope for the future, but the reality on the ground will show serious difficulties in government spending in the short-term," Terry Ridon, convenor of Infracatch PH, an infrastructure-oriented think tank, said in an e-mailed commentary.

But apart from his repeated calls for unity, Marcos' inaugural address was also meant to assure the public that he has the ability to right the country's economic ship. This, as his massive support base are likely to feel the sting of inflation and other economic problems more than anyone else.

And while Marcos' inaugural speech left businesses wanting for more, Anthony Lawrence Borja, political science professor at De La Salle University in Manila, believes the president's supporters were likely satisfied with his economic message "because of their leader-centric tendencies."

"For his supporters, it was reassuring enough because he pinned down the most crucial problems, pandemic recovery, energy crisis, and food security, thus, showing that he can grasp pertinent problems," Borja said in an interview.

"His repeated appeals to a better future and promises of a more active government also adds a measure of reassurance," Borja added. —



Editor's Note

Summer is here and we're almost back to the full swing of things! International travels, as of this month, no longer require COVID testing back to the states. We are beyond blessed in making it around this time, to fully enjoy life, together with our families and friends.

Golden State Warriors won the basketball championship, Ferdinand "Bong-bong" Marcos is now the Philippine president, and locally in our community, we were able to celebrate an in-person and very successful Filipino Fiesta event. Sponsors, volunteers, and organizers of the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento, as spearheaded by FFS president Murray Navarro, proudly joined together to make this year's fiesta celebration memorable for everyone.

This year, is Philippine Fiesta News, 20th year in our Filipino community in Sacramento. As always, we are beyond grateful to all our contributors, especially to all our contributing writers, in continuing to make this publication possible for our Filipino community.

We are hopeful that we can join forces again to highlight the many celebrations and continue to help promote our missions and visions for our Filipino community. Throughout this year, we will focus on making everyone safe, and become instrumental, along with other organizations in our community, to inform everyone about the "Stop Asian Hate" initiative.

Till our next issue on August, we wish everyone a Happy and Safe 4th of July celebration!

With love always,
Dinnah San Pedro

Lorenzana to China: You can't stop us from repairing BRP Sierra Madre

BY JOHN ERIC MENDOZA

The BRP Sierra Madre serves as a military outpost in the West Philippine Sea.

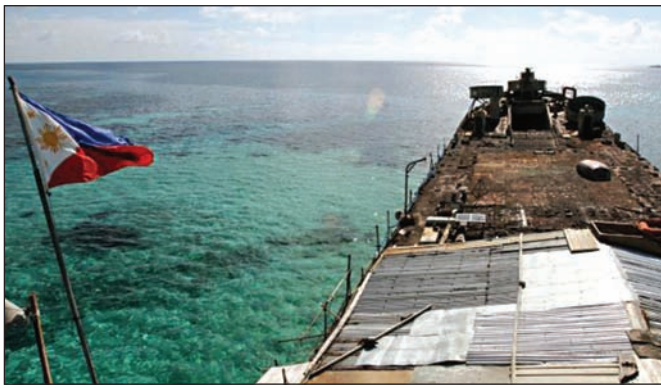
Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday said China could not stop the country from repairing the BRP Sierra Madre, a commissioned ship that serves as a military station in Ayungin Shoal in Kalayaan Group of Islands.

This, after the repeated warnings from the Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) to the Philippine side not to bring construction materials for the decrepit World War II-vintage landing ship tank.

Lorenzana said he has talked with Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian about the matter.

"Sabi ko, [I told him] your people cannot do that," Lorenzana said in a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City, referring to the Chinese Ambassador.

"We have supplied that detachment for the past, 1998 pa yan eh, more than 20 years na (already)... So you cannot prevent us from repairing that," Lorenzana added, saying the country will continue



BRP Sierra Madre in West Philippine Sea

to bring supplies to the ship.

The defense chief also pointed out that the BRP Sierra Madre has not been decommissioned or pulled out of service yet.

"We have to maintain, in a way, the ship kasi di pa nadecomission yan (it has not been decommissioned yet). It is still part of the Philippine Navy," the Defense chief said.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer reported that the CCG made a call to two Filipino boats not to bring construction materials for BRP Sierra Madre during the Philippine military's rotation and resupply (RORE) mission last week.

The CCG has also deployed at least two ships that sail around and guard Ayungin Shoal, warning Filipino supply boats against carrying construction materials to repair BRP Sierra Madre.

Duterte has drawn high ratings from 2016 to 2022 – Pulse Asia

BY ZACARIAN SARAO

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte has been getting high approval ratings from September 2016 to March 2022, according to a report released by Pulse Asia on Tuesday.

As of March 2022, Duterte had a 73 percent approval rating, which as Pulse Asia was lower than earlier ratings he got.

Throughout his term, Duterte's approval rating has coasted above 70 percent, except in September 2021, when it dipped to 64 percent, according to the report.

Not long after that, Duterte's rating jumped back up to 72 percent in December 2021.

His rating, however, stayed in the low 70s from September 2021 to March 2022.

Before this, Duterte enjoyed ratings ranging from the high-70s to the 90s. He got his highest rating of 91 percent in September 2020 and November 2020.

By region, Duterte in March 2022 scored his highest rating in Mindanao at 89 percent, Metro Manila at 74 percent, Balance Luzon at 70 percent, and the Visayas at 61 percent.



President Rodrigo Duterte

He also gained a rating of 73 percent from both rural and urban areas.

In terms of income class, Duterte fared the highest among those belonging to Class ABC at 77 percent, then Class D at 73 percent, and 72 percent in Class E.

By age group, Duterte scored the highest among the 25 to 34-year-olds at 80 percent, followed by the 18 to 24-year-olds at 75 percent, the 35 to 44-year-olds at 74 percent; the 45 to 64-year-olds at 73 percent, and senior citizens aged 65 and above at 70 percent.

He scored the lowest, 65 percent, among the 55 to 64 age group.

Diplomatic corps wishes Marcos presidency well

BY ALEXIS ROMERO

Members of the diplomatic community yesterday vowed to cooperate with the administration of President Marcos and expressed hope that his government would achieve its aspirations.

Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines Archbishop Charles John Brown said Filipinos have placed their trust and their hopes for a prosperous, safe, equitable, and just future in Marcos.

"I know that I speak for all the diplomats gathered here with you this afternoon when I say that we, too, in the international community harbor the same hopes for your presidency and for your nation. And that we pledge our cooperation and collaboration with your administration in achieving the success of your mandate," Brown said during the *vin d' honneur*, a formal reception for diplomats, held after presidential inauguration at the National Museum in Manila.

"There will certainly be challenges as there are for every administration. But, Mr. President, you bring to the Office of the Presidency an extensive experience of many years in governmental service and your call for unity



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr takes his oath as the 17th president of the Philippines at The National Museum of Fine Arts on June 30, 2022.

has resonated deeply and widely with the Filipino people," he added.

The papal nuncio, the dean of the diplomatic corps, said Marcos began his term as president with "a strong note of hope and confidence in the future."

"May God bless that future and make it fruitful for the good of the nation," Brown said.

Marcos thanked members of the diplomatic corps for their kind wishes and

for their offer to support the Philippines in the future.

The President said the transformation of the world economy and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic would be dependent on the Philippines' partners and allies. Such partnerships would strengthen recovery and would make a more balanced and stable new global environment, he added.

"And I cannot think of a most – of a better beginning to a new administra-

tion than to be able to have determined the partnerships and strengthen the relationships between our countries. And that is something that we will work with very, very clearly," Marcos said.

"We have seen and it has been proven to us very clearly in the past weeks and months, how interconnected the world is now, how interconnected the economies are, how interconnected the political systems are, how interconnected even our cultural and educational relationships are," he added.

Marcos said he was struck by the importance that other countries have given on climate change, noting that all the envoys he has met with have offered help in terms of mitigation and adaptation to the phenomenon.

"It is something that is terribly important simply because for the Philippines, we are very much in the most vulnerable position... compared to many other countries. So I thank you all for that," the President said.

Marcos, his wife Liza Araneta-Marcos and their children Ferdinand Alexander, Joseph Simon and William Vincent greeted the guests from the diplomatic community who attended the inaugural ceremony.

Only 3% of reported attacks on Asian Americans led to hate crime convictions, new report says

BY TAT BELLAMY-WALKER

Just 7 out of the 233 anti-Asian attacks during 2021 resulted in a guilty plea to a hate crime, the Asian American Bar Association of New York report showed.

Only 3 percent of anti-Asian attacks in New York City resulted in a hate crime conviction, according to a report released this week by the Asian American Bar Association of New York.

The report, “Endless Tide: The continuing struggle to overcome anti-Asian hate in New York,” shows that only seven out of 233 anti-Asian attacks reported last year led to a guilty plea to a hate crime.

The report also found that Asian American women were victims in more than half of the attacks, which most commonly included assault, and affected individuals between the ages of 20 and 49.

In light of the findings, the association is calling for officials to improve the collection of public hate crime data, remove barriers to reporting hate incidents, education, bail reform, develop anti-bias programming and make changes to hate crime legislation.

“It was difficult for them to have their alleged hate crimes be recognized,” Chris Kwok, an association board member and the co-executive editor of the report, told NBC News. “We think that it’s because people find it hard to think of Asian Americans as victims of hate crimes.”

Experts attribute this issue to a lack of trust between law enforcement and immigrant populations, linguistic barriers and anti-Asian bias, such as the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the scapegoating of Asian Americans.

“All of these are harmful stereotypes that lead some individuals to see Asian Americans as easy targets of race-based violence, but they also are built into the fabric of how government structures work,” said Meera E. Deo, a law professor at the Southwestern Law School in California. “So that what we report or what we perceive isn’t taken seriously or might be downplayed or dismissed.”

Following the report, advocates and lawyers also stressed that bias-related incidents targeting the Asian American community are severely undercounted.

“It’s not only beatings, or acid attacks, which some of us have heard about, but also things like verbal abuse or spitting, pushing, threats of violence,” Deo said. “All of these are things that are within the formal definition of what could be considered a hate crime if accompanied by racist language.”

Some advocates and experts criticized the Asian American Bar Association of New York’s earlier comments about



People rally calling for action and awareness on rising incidents of hate crime against Asian Americans in Times Square, New York City, on March 16, 2022. Timothy A. Clary / AFP via Getty Images file

bail reform, which said bail should be determined based on public safety and whether an individual is a danger to the community.

“It’s important to think carefully about the ways in which any solutions that we have don’t pit communities of color against one another,” Deo said. “I don’t think harsher, more punitive punishments are always the best solution.”

Kwok said that bail should be used in some cases but not in others, particularly in cases that cause community fear.

“We’re not saying every single one should be, because a lot of them maybe won’t be good candidates for bail,” he said.

Kwok said that judges should have some discretion over this issue.

“Cash money bail has hit Black and Latino populations disproportionately hard and we don’t want to make that worse,” he said. “But we want to balance that with public safety, particularly in this era, and that’s the conversation we want to have.”

Some advocates and legal experts decried some of the proposals and stressed long-term solutions. This includes culturally competent legal services and investment in communities of color.

Jason Wu, an attorney at The Legal Aid Society, said it’s necessary to move away from criminalization.

“We need to ask better questions about public safety, and demand solutions that address the root causes of violence,” he said. “We’ve seen time and again that the police and prisons do not keep us safe.”

Stanley Mark, senior staff attorney at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, called for legal groups to work with more community-based organizations.

“That type of work needs to be funded and encouraged,” he said. “Beyond law enforcement, as a way to try to prevent

more hate crimes from occurring.” The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, or CACF, supported some of the solutions outlined in the report, but condemned the association’s

proposal on bail reform. The report also said the Asian American community has “unfairly paid the price of ‘equitable justice.’”

“We are disturbed by the AABANY report’s suggestion that some offenses should be made ineligible for bail as well as the report’s overall implication that rolling back bail reform would solve deep-seated, systemic issues like the lack of access to mental health care, housing and other core needs,” Anita Gundanna and Vanessa Leung, co-executive directors of CACF, said in a statement. “If you focus on the wrong problems, you come up with the wrong solutions.”

Kwok said that the organization is aware of the disparities of bail reform but said that the report is focused on more immediate responses to anti-Asian hate.

“We acknowledge where they’re coming from,” he said of the advocates’ concerns. “They are basically only pointing to long-term solutions, which we agree needs to be done. ... Instead of talking long term, big picture, we’re talking nitty-gritty, difficult on the ground now. We think that’s the hard thing to do and that can no longer be avoided.”

A California inflation-relief check is headed your way. When will you get it?

BY ANDREW SHEELER

Most Californians should expect a few hundred dollars from the state of California in time for holiday shopping late this fall. Gov. Gavin Newsom and top Democrats in the Legislature last weekend struck a deal to send inflation relief checks of up to \$1,050 to most California households.

The Legislature must vote on the agreement this week. California Department of Finance spokesman H.D. Palmer said in an email to The Sacramento Bee that payments would go out as direct deposits and as debit cards.

All payments are expected to be issued by early next year, according to estimates from the Franchise Tax Board. The deal sets aside \$9.5 billion to benefit an estimated 23 million Californians. Newsom and Democratic leaders have characterized the payments as help for residents who are struggling with inflation and high gas prices.

Here’s how they will work, according to Palmer: ■ Single filers making less than \$75,000 a year will receive \$350, while joint filers making less than



Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders have reached an agreement on refund checks. Here’s when to expect yours. mascarenas@sacbee.com

\$150,000, will receive \$700. If they have at least one dependent, they will receive an additional \$350. ■ Single filers making between \$75,001 and \$125,000 will receive \$250, while joint filers making

between \$150,001 and \$250,000 will make \$500. If they have at least one dependent, they will receive an additional \$250. ■ Single filers making between \$125,001 and \$250,000 will receive \$200, while joint filers making between \$250,001 and \$500,000 will receive \$400. If they have at least one dependent, they will receive an additional \$200.

An estimated 82% of beneficiaries are in the first category, according to Palmer, with 12% in the second category and 6% in the third.

Under this system, a single filer will receive between \$200 and \$350, while a single filer with at least one dependent will receive between \$400 and \$700. A joint filer with at least one dependent will receive between \$600 and \$1,050.



BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

In my conversation with my father about current issues, especially on the topic of people's degree of civility, he told me that when he was young in his birthplace, enjoying life with his loving and caring parents together with his eight siblings, he thought that there were only four foreign nationalities based in his country and all of them engaged in their own respective business endeavors. The four aliens that he came to know were, the Chinese, Indians, Spanish and Americans. My father further told me that he was able to befriend several of their children in school and in the riverbank of the longest navigable river in the Philippines, the Cagayan River.

Accordingly on weekends, most of his classmates foreign and local alike converged at the shallow section of the crystal clear and pristine water of the great river and just frolic around. Reminiscing those seemingly endless years of his life with all the foreigners that he played found them to be friendly and without any sign of being superior or even rude to talk, play and joke with their Filipino friends or classmates.

Indeed, revisiting the memory lane of the place where my father spent his early formal education, I can observe that he still feels the melancholy yet happy memories that seem to have imbibed in his being to become a continuing episode of his life. However, this perception of the number of foreigners in his country abruptly changed when he entered college in Manila. He found out through his

readings and references that the world is divided into many countries big and small located in continents and oceans with different religious beliefs, languages and racial identities. The people have their own cultures, customs and degree of civility.

Unfortunately, some of those countries have experienced political upheavals, war, racial discrimination and endemic poverty which resulted into violent struggle for survival. Furthermore, my father also told me, he also found that the people of the world are divided into racial groups such as Black, White, Brown and Yellow Mongoloid. Sadly, there is no peaceful co-existence among all the races but a deeply rooted hate and discrimination that often time resulted into violent deaths among the protagonists.

The term Yellow Mongoloid is also referred to as Yellow Peril, Yellow Terror and Yellow Specter used against people from the East and Southeast Asian decent during the 19th and early 20th century in the United States. It is a racist ideology that reinforces cultural stereotypes, allowing people from the Western world to discriminate against Asian-Americans. They believe Asian people are a threat to the values of the Western world. Yellow Peril is a form of xenophobia, which means the Western world had an existential fear of people from Asia.

Although we do not see the term Yellow Peril in modern high-tech conversation, the concept still lingers in people's values and beliefs. In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, crimes targeting Asian-Americans have risen in unprecedented levels within the United States. Some argue this was set in motion due to former President Donald Trump's racist rhetoric towards the people of China, labeling the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus," which led to a hostile and terrifying environment for people of Asian descent.

STOP ASIAN HATE:

Nothing Can Be Changed Until It Is Faced



Photo by Dave San Pedro

Filipino community and other Asian organizations in a rally at the Florin and 65th Street, Sacramento, CA.

The slogan Stop Asian Hate has gained momentum in social media and advocacy groups, due to the increase violence against Asian-Americans. The slogan was created soon after the mass shooting of six Asian women at Two Gold Massage Spa establishment in Atlanta, Georgia. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported an increase in hate crimes against Asian-Americans from 2019 to 2020. Most recently, published by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, hate crimes increased in 2021 compared to the year before.

One of the incidents happened in New York City, March of 2021, where a 65-year-old woman was kicked and stomped near Times Square. Vilma Kari, who immigrated from the Philippines, was seen on the security camera video being attacked by a man. The attack gained national attention because security guards failed

to intervene. Kari was later discharged from the hospital after being treated for serious injuries. Weeks after the attack on Kari, a 40-year-old Filipina healthcare worker was shoved onto the sidewalk in Los Gatos, California. She was still in her scrubs, when a man allegedly yelled, "go back to [expletive] China!" as she fell to the ground. She was not seriously injured but was shaken by the incident. Furthermore, in February of 2021, 74-year-old Juanito Falcon was killed in Phoenix, Arizona. Police said the suspect did it for "no apparent reason."

As these attacks worsen, the advocacy for Stop Asian Hate has also increasingly garnered attention, especially among young people. Just like the civil unrest and the advocacy for Black Lives Matter in the summer of 2020, social media has propelled the Stop Asian Hate slogan and allowed people to

acknowledge and listen to the concerns of the Asian-American community. In solidarity, rallies were held across Sacramento, California in March of 2021. Hundreds of people raised awareness and demand change.

To find optimism or hope in today's world is scarce. The past three years has forced many Americans to reflect, not only their values, but what they believe is righteous. Stop Asian Hate is just one example of how people worldwide are changing for the good. Just like social movements that came before, there is a reckoning in America's institutions and idealism. The American people want change. The late great prominent writer James Baldwin once wrote from his 1962 essay, No Name in the Street, "Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed until it is faced." We as a community need to reevaluate what we want as a society. How can we help our fellow human being? What can we face to make the change by listening and educating ourselves about marginalized groups, it will create an open dialogue, that will allow us to empathize with each other? The issues that Black lives, Queer lives, Trans lives, Muslim lives, Immigrant lives, Undocumented immigrant lives, and Unhoused lives endure in America, are the same issues Asian lives are experiencing today.

To show solidarity to anti-Asian racism, we must also align ourselves with the anti-Black racism. We must be against homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, and any fear that creates a hatred towards another marginalized group. We all have our own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression in this world. By understanding our intersectionality, we can triumph over the abomination of this world, because peace and compassion should always prevail over hate and violence.

Filipino Fiesta Returns

From page 1

The success of the enthusiastic parade of civic, religious, and military clubs was spearheaded by Dave and Dinnah San Pedro. There were selected clubs that garnered special awards such as for most entertaining and most participants went to Sinagtala, most unique/creative and youthful group was Filipino Women's Club grandkids, best in native costume was awarded to Ilocano Foundation of California and lastly, American Legion was announced most colorful group. Aklan's pride, the Ati-Atihan Band provided the renditions of marching music through the parade.

The opening ceremony followed and was led by Sarah Enloe and Cleo Sabarner as mistresses of ceremonies. Yours truly welcomed all the participants and advocated that each one would patronize our rich traditional Filipino cuisine. And asked them to bring some for those at home for they can relate to who we are through our abundant and sumptuous Filipino delicacies. SMUD Director Dave Tamayo introduced the Sacramento Board Supervisor Patrick Kennedy as the guest speaker of the event followed by a greeting from West Sacramento Councilmember Quirina Orozco.

This year's celebration was a tribute to the UC Davis Bayanihan Clinic volunteers. These are medical students who recognized the need for a free clinic catering to the Filipino community, particularly to the Filipino World War II veterans who have been denied regular benefits by the US federal government. This impressive act of kindness qualified them to be recognized for their selfless, untiring, and unique culturally centered health care of our veterans. A tribute to them was provided by Commander Julie Bucsit of US Filipino War Veterans and Descendants Legion. A plaque of recognition, a legislative resolution from the office of Sen. Richard Pan, and a cash award of two thousand dollars were given to the group of young men and women. Dr. Charles Panadero gave a response on behalf of these volunteers.

A part of the ceremony was honoring another set of volunteers who worked hard to oversee that we celebrate our fiesta every year. These are community volunteers who served for more than 10 years organizing, facilitating, and ensuring that the essence of our independence is remembered. The following awardees are Josie Patria, Lilia Rivera, Aida Azurin, Dick Mazon, Mercedes Guerrero, Jinky Dolar, Mena Domondon, Sarah Enloe, Dave San Pedro, and Ling & Alex Avera. A Posthumous Award was given to Joe Gonzales who devoted his time to managing the logistics and vendor activities during his years as a volunteer.

Soon after the program, both Vaccinate



FFS Pres. Murray Navarro



The Sinagtala Touring Ensemble



FAVA Photos by Dale Esperante



FAVA Colors Guards



The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604



The Filipino Women's Club's Kids



The Tau Gamma Phi/Sigma of Central CA



FWC of Sacramento & Vicinity



Philippine Nurses Association



Ilocano Foundation of California



Recognition of Bayanihan Clinic



Cash Award given to the medical student volunteers

All 58 Main stage and Vision in Education Indoor stage started the festivities with dances, singing of old-time favorites songs, and showcasing the rich cultural musicale by different invited local talents. The main stage was graced by DJ Squintz of KSFM 102.5 as the emcee of the show. The backdrop of the main stage was decorated by the United Federations of Fil-Am Educators of Sacramento Chapter and Vicinity (UNIFFIED) headed by Mafe Aguilar and Tin-tin Legaspi.

The fiesta was a success because of the generosity of our corporate sponsors, Vaccinate ALL 58, Vision in Education, SMUD, UC Davis Health, AARP, Kaiser Permanente, East Lawn Mortuary

and Memorial Park, Supervisor Patrick Kennedy, City of Sacramento, Cache Creek Casino likewise with our patrons of fiesta for their monetary and in-kind donations. Also, the different business, food, and non-profit vendors who participated in the event added attraction to our festivities.

Before the fiesta celebration, pre-event video presentations were aired on different social media platforms covering the community health leaders, the community center, and the Bayanihan Clinic. We appreciate the effort of Vince A. Sales and Sean Hidalgo in the production of the said videos.

From the planning stage of the event

to the full down, the fiesta was managed by FFS officers. Led by President Murray Navarro, 1st Vice President Junky Dolar, 2nd Vice President Rosie Daus, Secretary Melissa Javinar, Treasurer Mena Domondon, Asst. Treasurer Dinnah San Pedro, Auditor Edna Delos Reyes, Historian Frank Zabal, Ex-officio Members Josie Patria and Lilia Rivera. The Board of Directors is composed of the different presidents of the core group organizations.

As we return this year after skipping the celebration for the past two years due to the pandemic, we hope that the group of volunteers of the fiesta gave justice to the essence of the celebration of our Independence Day here in Sacramento.

ORDINATION OF A PRIEST

BY DALE ESPERANTE

On June 4, 2022, Erik Amando Pereira entered the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento, California, as Deacon Erik. Words to describe the beauty and sacredness of the ordination ritual are beyond the capability of this writer. For the rituals, I will have to respectfully refer you to the information available in the archives of the catholic faith.

The Most Reverend Jaime Soto, Bishop of Sacramento, concelebrated the mass with over 40 priests from all over the Diocese of Sacramento including Bishop Emeritus William Weigand, classmates and, newly ordained priests from St Patrick Seminary. The Priests who vested Father Erik with his first chasuble, the outermost garment worn by Roman Catholic priests and bishops at mass: Reverends Jovito Rata and Benjamin Rosado. Father Jovito introduced young Erik to a vocation dinner with Bishop Cotta. He also became Erik's Vocation Director. Father Benjamin is a close friend and mentor who attended St. Patrick Seminary with Father Erik. He is now assigned to the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Lectors: John Mamola & Rollie Mamauag. When Father Erik attended middle school at St. Patrick's School from K – 8, John Mamola was his middle school religion teacher. Rollie Mamauag is Father Erik's mentor and part of Recollections in Christianity, a retreat group where Father Erik was also a part of since 1994.

Family and friends filled the pews of the enormous Cathedral to pray and see every part of the ceremony for one ordinand, Erik. Family members: Amando Pereira (Father), Leila Eleccion Pereira (Mother). Siblings: Melanie (John), Natalie (Daniel), and Cynthia. Nieces and Nephews: Cyrus, Joshua, Emma, Xander, and Daniel. Visiting relatives from Vienna, Austria: Auntie Violeta Lores and Cousin Ramon Lores III. Bay Area relatives: Uncles Clarence & Joe Eleccion. Godparents: Patria Sta Romana, Jose Meris, Sandra Estacio, Elizabeth Lopez, Susan Sapaden, Frida Tan, Jane Vergara, Julie Vergara, Senny Vergara. San Esteban relatives from Arizona, Las Vegas, Southern California, Bay Area, Stockton, and the Sacramento/Elk Grove area also attended. Local attendees: Family friends, Community friends, Supportive friends and parishioners from the Sacramento Diocese, Lake Tahoe, and Yuba City. All



Ordination ceremony



Blessing



With Bishop Jaime Soto and Bishop Emeritus William Weigand



Concluding the mass with The Most Reverend Jaime Soto, Bishop of Sacramento.



Father Erik with his mom.



And his dad



Mom with daughters carrying the chalice to deliver to the altar.



The immediate family of Fr. Erik.



Family and friends

Photos by Dale Esperante

witnessed the Rite of Ordination. The newly ordained will carry these words forever, "Today and always the newly ordained lives out the words of the scriptures. You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." (Reference: syracuse-diocese.org). Father Erik recognizes Monsignor Kavanaugh from St. Rose as a major influence on his answering the call to serve as a priest. At the conclusion of the mass, the weather outside cooperated when Erik Amando Pereira exited the Cathedral as Father Erik. The forecasted rainy weather produced only a

minimum drizzle. The Cathedral reception was prepared and served by the Sacramento Diocesan Council of Catholic Women coordinated by Sr. Maria Campos and Marisela Smith of the Sacramento Diocese Office of Vocations. At the reception, Fr. Erik gave blessings to the long line of attendees. The next day, on June 5, 2022, at 5pm, Reverend Father Erik celebrated his first mass at St. Charles Borromeo in South Sacramento. The Reverend Fathers who concelebrated the mass with Father Erik: Pastor Oscar

Gomez-Medina, Vicar Manuel Rodriguez, Director of Vocations Guillermo Hernandez of the Sacramento Diocese, and Andrew O' Leary from the Diocese of Spokane. Again, family and friends filled the pews of the church. The family wishes to express their gratitude to all who supported Father Erik's journey to priesthood. Special thanks to the Pastor and Vicar of St. Charles Borromeo, the choir led by Remy Solomon, and Rogeniv Mamauag for the beautiful "Ave Maria" during the offering to Mother Mary.

Continued on page 12

Magellan Hall's Installation of Officers

Comprised of mostly Filipino Americans, the American Legion Post and Unit 604 newly elected officers were sworn in on 12 Jun 2022:



BY DALE ESPERANTE

Post 604 Officer

Outgoing

Thomas B. Amaba
Gualberto Aglubat
Alberto Garcia Sr.
Walter Nolasco
Rey Ado
Fred Amper
Robert Samaniego
Dale Esperante
Dale Esperante
Fortunato Delacruz
Richard Weitzenberg

Commander
1st Vice Com`
2nd Vice Com
Finance
Director
Director
Director
Adjutant
Chaplain
Asst Finance
Judge Advocate

Incoming

Alberto Garcia Sr.
Fred Amper
Richard Weitzenberg
Lionel "Will" Williams
Fortunato Delacruz
Joe Beitia
Dale Esperante
Dale Esperante
Fortunato Delacruz
Gualberto Aglubat

Auxiliary Unit 604 Officers

Outgoing

Frenie Williams
Lilia Rivera
Aida Azurin
Rose Basos
Florentina Abad
Linda Cordero
Jocelyn Banag

President
1st Vice Pres
2nd Vice Pres
Secretary
Historian
Sgt-at-Arms
Treasurer
Marshal
Chaplain
Parliamentarian

Incoming

Priscilla Ramos
Frenie Williams
Aida Azurin
Mercedes Guerrero
Bella Anderson
Carol Munar
Jocelyn Banag
Remedios Mangosing
Florentina Abad
Rose Basos

Board Members: Naty Fontillas, Emeliana Mariano, Linda Cordero, Victoria Peluso

The Department of California Representing Area 1 (Northern California), Vice Commander Lionel "Will" Williams, as the Post Installation Officer swore in the newly elected Post 604 Officers. District 6 President Susan Winters installed the newly elected officers of the Auxiliary Unit 604 Officers.



The newly elected Post 604 officers.

Photos by Dale Esperante



Commander Alberto Garcia Jr. Next to him is Northern California Commander Lionel "Will" Williams.



Unit 604 President Priscilla Ramos on her acceptance speech.



Lerma Amaba, the number one supporter of retiring Commander Tom Amaba

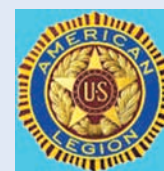
Congratulations to both outgoing and incoming officers! Gratitude goes to the Outgoing Officers for your dedicated service, and Appreciation to the Incoming Officers for stepping up and accepting the responsibility to continue our history!

Passing the Command

By Dale Esperante

The property of The American Legion Magellan Post 604 at 8831 Gerber Road in Sacramento has been the responsibility of the elected commander and its members since the 1940s. No other commander has served longer than the retiring Commander Thomas B. Amaba. Thank you for your indefatigable years as the Commander.

The American Legion



Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate of appreciation is gratefully presented to

Thomas B. Amaba



In recognition and sincere appreciation of outstanding service as Post Commander during the following years: Jul 2007-Jun 2008, Jul 2008-Jun 2009, Jul 2009-Jun 2010, Jul 2014-Jun 2015, Jul 2016-Jun 2017, Feb 2018 -Jun 2018, Jul 2018-Jun 2019, Jan 2019-May 2019, Jul 2019- Jun 2020, Jul 2020- Jun 2021, Jul 2021-Jun 2022.

Maraming Salamat Commander Tom Amaba

Presented by Magellan Post 604
Department of California
This 12th Day of June 2022

ATTEST

Signed
Dale Esperante
Adjutant

Signed
Al Garcia
Commander

Commander Emeritus Thomas B. Amaba is proud and confident to pass on the Gavel of Command to new Commander Alberto Garcia, Sr. Commander Al Garcia served as the 2nd Vice Commander from January 2020 through June 2022. The legacy must continue; to honor the past, preserve the present, and to pass on our tradition to the future generations of veterans.



PerryScope

BY PERRY DIAZ

Multiple challenges facing Bongbong's presidency



Bongbong Marcos

WHY DOES BONGBONG MARCOS want to be president of the Philippines? There are several answers to this question. First and foremost, Bongbong wants to vindicate the name of his father and namesake, the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr., whose bloody reign during the martial law has left thousands of tortured Filipinos who languished in jail for years. Second, he wants to rewrite the history of the “conjugal dictatorship” of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos. Third, he wants to clear the graft and corruption cases against the Marcoses that are still pending in the Philippine courts. Fourth, he wants to eliminate the P203-billion estate tax due. Fifth, he wants to jumpstart the economy, which is on the brink of collapse. Sixth, he wants to restructure the national debt, which now stands at \$13 trillion or more than 60% of 2021 GDP.

First let's talk about his father's bloody reign during the martial law era. Sen. Imee Marcos, daughter of the late dictator, said last October that the public should focus their attention on helping the country recover from the COVID-19 pandemic instead of reviving the issues on her father's dictatorship, which she said was “one million years ago.”

Generation gap

While it's true that the post-martial law generations of young Filipinos cannot relate to the brutalities that older Filipinos suffered during the martial law, there is still a large—albeit diminishing—number of older Filipinos who lived and experienced the dark era of Marcos dictatorship. They may not forget but they can forgive because it's in our national character to forgive but not necessarily forget.

But Bongbong could overcome memories of martial law if he proves to be a capable president. Having yet to assume the presidency, we have to set this aside for now. The question is: Does he believe that he's destined to be a great leader? At this point in time, destiny has been kind to Bongbong. It allowed him to overcome his fam-

ily's bad reputation during the presidency of Marcos Sr. That alone speaks volume of “destiny.” After reaching the apex of leadership with such ease, one can surmise that destiny played a major role in his victorious campaign that garnered him 31 million votes—about 60%. Evidently, his youthful looks—albeit his 64 years of age—must have played effectively in pushing him to the top.

But recent analyses by political pundits have attributed the use of social media trolls who put down his opponent Leni Robredo while extolling Bongbong as a key factor in the campaign. Leni never had a chance to overcome the edge Bongbong had with his trolls. Indeed, Bongbong may have used the playbook of Hitler's Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels who once said, “A lie told once remains a lie but a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth.” And this played a key part in his attempt to rewrite the history of the “conjugal dictatorship” of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos.

It was noted that the disinformation propaganda, which used positive and negative messaging or telling lies about a candidate to boost an opponent's image intensified in the lead-up to the May 2022 elections. It added that many of the related posts benefitted Bongbong Marcos.

Rewriting history books

Back in January 2020—long before he won the presidential election—Bongbong renewed call to rewrite history textbooks, which is tantamount to historical revisionism.

“This is a clear move at historical revisionism and another desperate attempt by the Marcoses to erase the memory of the horrors of Martial Law and absolve the sins of their father,” said human rights lawyer and Liberal Party (LP) official Erin Tañada, who is the opposition party's vice president for external affairs. “The Marcoses wish to fade into oblivion the abuses committed during the dictatorial regime where thousands of Filipinos were killed and tortured, and billions of pesos from the national treasury were stolen,” he added.

Third, he wants to clear the graft and corruption cases against the Marcoses that are

still pending in the Philippine courts.

In 1986, the Philippine Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was created by then President Corazon Aquino to recover the ill-gotten wealth accumulated by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, his family, relatives, subordinates, and close associates. In 2019, PCGG said it recovered P172 billion in ill-gotten wealth from the Marcos family.

Recently, the Anti-graft court Sandiganbayan said it would proceed with the trial of a wealth forfeiture case involving shares of stocks worth billions of pesos in Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (ETPI), which is said to be held in trust by alleged cronies of the late dictator and former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

P203 billion estate tax

In regard to the P203 billion estate tax due on the Marcos estate, in which Bongbong is the administrator, Senator Imee Marcos has conceded in an interview that her family should pay any taxes that they owe. However, she also questioned the timing of the recent controversy surrounding the Marcoses' unpaid estate tax and blamed it on “rotten politics.”

Rotten politics or not, taxes are owed, which should have been paid already.

“We are a bit dizzy with that tax issue, but all I can say is, if we owe the government, we should pay [our debt]. Our family faced all the cases against us. We are still facing these because there are a lot and this issue on estate

tax has been here for a while, Imee said.

Bongbong's bullheadedness about not paying his taxes is bound to haunt him later during his presidency. Already, rallies are being held in various cities in the country protesting Bongbong's refusal to pay his taxes.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) said last month that it had sent a written demand to the Marcos family in December 2021 to pay their estate taxes liability.

The Marcos family, however, said that they had not settled their taxes owed because they were contesting the full amount and the matter was still under litigation.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government refuted that the taxes owed were in doubt, saying that the BIR had made its final assessment on the involved properties and that the judgment on the tax case had become final and executory as early as 1997.

For one thing, the tax assessment will never go away, unless Marcos will do something stupid when he assumes the presidency. If that happens expect the people to rise in protest, which could lead to civil disturbances. For the sake of national interest, Bongbong needs to clear what he owes the government. As it was said in the Bible, “Render unto Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.”

Economic recovery

On engineering a broad-based economic recovery, the usual public policy response worldwide is for governments to spend extra on infrastructures

and various societal needs in order to stimulate their economy and breathe life to stagnant economic sectors.

But where would he get the extra funding for infrastructure? By borrowing more money? But who would lend him the funds for massive infrastructure projects without showing how he would recoup the funds to pay back the loans? It's a nasty catch-22 isn't it? Bongbong may have to do some fiscal hocus pocus to come up with the right calculus to achieve all these.

Financial institutions—such as JP Morgan—are wary about Marcos' ability to jumpstart the economy. Until now, Marcos hasn't formed his economic team yet with barely three weeks to go before his presidency begins.

With the country's debt-to-GDP ratio—which is slightly above 60%—the country needs to grow between 6% and 7% on a sustainable basis. For the country to outgrow its debt, Duterte's finance chief, Carlos Dominguez III, proposed that Bongbong and his economic team implement new taxes, defer scheduled tax reductions, and repeal certain tax exemptions.

Let's look at the dire economic situation. To service the national debt, the national government paid nearly P430 billion in interest and almost P330 billion in principal obligation. Interest alone stands at 2.2% of GDP. The fiscal deficit ballooned from P660 billion or 3.4% of GDP before the pandemic to P1.7 trillion, more than 2.5 times, or 8.6% of GDP.

Bongbong has six years to achieve these goals. But many believe that he faces insurmountable obstacles in overcoming them.

With Bongbong soon to take his presidential oath of office on June 30, 2022, his effort to revise history to be kinder to the Marcoses would accelerate. And once in office, he could succeed merely by using his presidential influence. Heck, the late dictator might even be declared a “national hero.” (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

15th Anniversary of Priesthood

BY DALE ESPERANTE

On 29 Jun 2022, at 6pm, Reverend Fathers Jovito Rata and Giovanni Gamas concelebrated a special mass at St. Peters – All Hallows Church in Sacramento. Fr. Jovito is the Pastor of St. Peters – All Hallows Parish, and Fr. Giovanni is the Pastor of St. John Vianney Parish in Rancho Cordova. Visiting priests from the Sacramento Diocese and beyond joined the celebration. Most notable is Retired Monsignor James Murphy who recruited Father Jovito Rata and Father Giovanni from the Philippines. One of MSgr. Murphy's duties back in the day was to visit the Philippines every year for about 12 years to recruit Filipino priests. MSgr. Murphy added that the Filipino priests have become the backbone of the Sacramento Diocese. He followed, "just look around me," where almost half of the visiting priests are Filipinos.

Before the mass ended, Fr. Jovito approached the ambo asking everyone, to "please sit down for two hours." Everyone laughed appreciating his sense of humor. Fr. Jovito proudly introduced all his brothers in the priesthood, each one helped him in his priestly journey. Recalling the day he was ordained when someone teasingly said to him, "I will give you just five years and you'll give up being



Father Jovito Rata posing with the guests.



Let Us Pray

Photos by Dale Esperante



Cutting the Cake



Josie Ryder & Paula Bonifacio



Melita Esperante and Fr. Jovito Rata

a priest," Fr. Jovito smiled radiantly for all the congregation to see as he announced, "Well here I am still a priest on my 15th year!" The applause of approval by the congregation reflected their appreciation of Fr. Jovito

Rata. Again, with his sense of humor, he invited everyone "to eat all you can eat following the mass" then with a smile, he said, "in your own home."

After the mass, parishioners



La Bamba wa their first song followed by a CCR classic.

from St. Peters – All Hallows and other parishes filled the reception held at Msgr. Patrick Corkell Memorial Hall. Father Jovito gave the invocation before dinner. The countless parishioners lined up patiently and cheerfully to self-serve themselves at the buffet table.

The band played as the people finally seated themselves to enjoy dinner. A few minutes later, Fr. Jovito and Fr. Giovanni surprised everyone by joining the band. They sang a few songs

starting with La Bamba, CCR's Have You Ever Seen the rain, and the Beatles Obladi Oblada. During their concert, mobile phones held high, low, and in between illuminated the grand hall indicating either the recording or photographing of the moment.

Later when it was time to go, Fr. Jovito stood by the door to shake hands and say thank you to each one who came to say goodnight. As I said goodbye, I know that I will see him again, as a priest, forever.

SMG Parish Community

BY DALE ESPERANTE

SMG is short for St. Maria Goretti Parish Community. On 26 Jun 2022, the Filipino American parishioners celebrated the 70th birthday of Fr. Stephen Borlang.

Fr. Stephen declared after tasting the Philippine cuisine that he loves so much, "I am a Filipino trapped in a Caucasian body, and my favorite food is no longer dinuguan, it is now papaitan!" And then he added, "maraming salamat po," sweet music to the ears of the pinoy around him.

The party was held at the St. Gabriel Room after the 12pm mass. The program included: Welcome Remarks - Josie Ryder Invocation - MariaTonton Salgado DJ - Jude Salgado Songs - Raj and Matthew Mamaug Somewhere Over the Rainbow SMG Dancers: MariaTonton Salgado, Maria Marquez, Paula Bonifacio, Rachel Salgado, Velinda Cruz, Cynthia Manongdo Elmido, Edith Rundle, Presely Sarette. Birthday Greetings - Cynthia Manongdo Elmido Birthday Song - VOOM Choir Hallelujah Song Number - VOOM Choir

Footloose - SMG Dancers Line Dancing Open to All Emceed by This Writer

There are so many energetic and talented volunteers in the SMG community, friendly and welcoming as well. The contributions, such as, work, monetary donations, food, beverage, set up, decorations, planning, and organizing led to the jubilant success of the Birthday Party.

Most importantly, the Reverend Pastor Sylvester Kwiatkowski and visiting priests like Father Stephen Borlang are greatly appreciated for their service and support by the parish community. SMG is a young parish that started from a mobile church (setting up in different houses) in 2007. When the Sheldon High School cafeteria became available, SMG rented it for Sundays to celebrate mass. In 2013, SMG finally relocated to the new church at 8700 Bradshaw Road in Elk Grove. This church will be transformed to a parish community center, once a bigger permanent church is built on the same property. Through faith and unity amongst the parishioners, the church will be built on solid grounds for the benefit of the present and future generations. Amen.



SMG Dancers - Somewhere Over the Rainbow



Happy Birthday!



With Fr. Stephen are the SMG Dancers: Josie Ryder, Edith Rundle, Presely Sarette, Rachel Salgado, MariaTonton Salgado, Velinda Cruz, Paula Bonifacio. Holding the cake is Cynthia Manongdo Elmido.

The amazing Voice On One Mission (VOOM) Choir. Their rendition of Hallelujah drew us all in...WOW!!! Dan Malabuyo, Sr. & Ging Ubalde, Leo & Dada Labao, Rey Alba & Jocie Denoga, Magin Chavez, Sarrie Peralta, Myra Tor & Maria Marquez, Irene Perea, Taylor Thai.



BTS speaks about anti-Asian hate, inclusivity at White House

BY SAKSHI VENKATRAMAN

BTS made their appearance at the White House Tuesday, with nearly 300,000 fans streaming on YouTube, hundreds gathered outside the building and a packed briefing room.

The megapopular South Korean boy band had a private meeting with President Joe Biden before joining press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre to deliver their messages to the cameras. Each of the seven members gave a brief comment, with group leader Kim Nam-joon, known as RM, kicking things off.

“It is a great honor to be invited to the White House today to discuss the important issues of anti-Asian hate crimes, Asian inclusion and diversity,” RM said.

On the last day of AANHPI Heritage Month, BTS members said they were there to promote inclusion and talk with Biden about solutions to rising anti-Asian hate incidents. Aside from RM, who spoke in English, each group members’ message was translated from Korean.



The seven members of the K-pop boy band each delivered remarks after meeting privately with President Biden.

“We join the White House to stand with the AANHPI community and to celebrate,” said Kim Seok-jin, known by stage name Jin.

“We were devastated by the recent surge of hate crimes, including Asian American hate crimes,” said Park Jimin, who goes by Jimin. “To put a stop on this and support the cause, we’d like to take this opportunity to voice ourselves once again.”

The band nodded to their supporters, known as the BTS Army, who span countries and have been described as one of the most powerful fandoms in music.

“We still feel surprised that music created by South Korean artists reaches so many people around the world, transcending languages and cultural barriers,” group member Jeon Jung-kook,

known mononymously as Jungkook, said. “We believe music is always an amazing and wonderful unifier of all things.”

BTS members have weighed in on anti-Asian hate in the past, even talking about their own experiences encountering racism during their global tours in a Twitter statement last year.

“We recall moments when we faced discrimination as Asians,” the statement said. “We have endured expletives without reason and were mocked for the way we look. We were even asked why Asians spoke in English.”

Fans posted their favorite moments on social media after the brief appearance.

“BTS delivering a speech at the White House in their native language and witnessing the world still listened to them is a historic moment for all of us,” one fan tweeted.

‘Elvis’ takes top spot in US box office, surpasses ‘Top Gun: Maverick’

BY DANA CRUZ

Baz Luhrmann’s “Elvis” has taken the top spot in the US box office yesterday, June 27 (US time), officially dethroning Tom Cruise starrer “Top Gun: Maverick” after a close tie over the weekend.

“Elvis” generated \$31.1 million (about P1.70 billion) from 3,906 theaters in its domestic box-office debut, while “Top Gun: Maverick” garnered \$29.6 million (about P1.62 billion) from 3,948 theaters for its fifth weekend, as per final results obtained by Deadline yesterday.

“Elvis” and “Top Gun: Maverick” have been battling over the top spot since Friday, June 24, as the biopic took the No. 1 spot on Friday then dropped to second place by Saturday. The two films then tied for first place in North America on Sunday, June 26, with each earning around \$30.5 million (about P1.67 billion).

While “Elvis” claimed the highest spot in the box office, the film is yet to turn a profit as Warner Bros. spent \$85 million (about P4.65 billion) to produce it,



Austin Butler attends the Canadian screening of Warner Bros.’ “Elvis” at TIFF Bell Lightbox on June 17, 2022, in Toronto, Ontario.

as reported by Variety also yesterday.

Meanwhile, “Top Gun: Maverick” grossed \$502.8 million (around P27.50 billion) at the domestic box office since it premiered last month. Given this, it is currently the highest-grossing film of the year in North America.

Before the weekend, “Elvis” star Austin Butler expressed his appreciation to

fans via his Instagram page last Friday.

“It’s been a crazy couple months and really crazy couple of years... and I just want to take a second and thank you all for supporting me out there, supporting this film, and just cheering me and my cast mates on through this whole process,” he said. “You guys have made it all so much fun. I just want to send you some love and say how much I appreci-

ate you.”

“Elvis” is a musical biopic starring Butler as the “King of Rock and Roll,” Elvis Presley. It follows the performer’s rise to fame through the eyes of his manager Colonel Tom Parker, played by Tom Hanks.

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ORDINATION OF A PRIEST

From page 7

Special thanks also to Dr. Tony Solomon and crew for setting up; and to a very close family friend, Mildred Mabitad Go, for the beautiful table-decorations.

And for those who contributed delicious food and desserts as well as those who helped served, thank you so much from Fr. Erik's mom, Leila Eleccion Pereira, and family.

Congratulations to the Pereira and Eleccion Families! Congratulations as well to the Filipino American Community, we are extremely proud and blessed to be a part of Father Erik's journey to priesthood.



Left to right: Fr. Guillermo Hernandez, Fr. Oscar Gomez-Medina, Fr. Erik Amando Pereira, Fr. Manuel Rodriguez, and Fr. Andrew O'Leary.



With the author and his wife Melita



With the Mamaug Family



Mom Leila Pereira



Friends and volunteers from the community.

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