

Balitang Nagbibigay Buhay

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Archdiocese of Vancouver



The first graduates of Come and See, with the service team - launched in Zoom and completed in person

COME AND SEE:

How the Filipino Ministry plants seeds to nurture vocations in the community

by: Marie Pacheco

The Filipino Ministry recently concluded its "Come and See" program, where 6 young individuals recently graduated at the OLGC after a year of faith accompaniment. This covered a series of monthly meetings that allowed them to deepen their encounter with Jesus and translate their relationship with Him into concrete life activities. We spoke with Sr. Cora Beboso FMA of the Vocations Committee who gave us a glimpse of what transpired during their meetings.

With the pandemic, "Come and See" was mostly a "Zoom and See" for its participants with in-person meetings only happening early this year. But this did not hinder deep and meaningful growth for its young participants.

"Spiritual accompaniment—meeting young people, meeting them where they are. Listening to their stories, analyze it and what it is they're looking for," explained Sr. Cora.

The meetings covered different talks not just on the word of God but also about current issues, discernment and different aspects on growing the faith. Sr. Cora covered a talk on prayer and spirituality.

"We don't really stress about going to priesthood. This is more about the basics of Christian living, that they will be formed into young people capable of listening to a higher call. Our basic call is Christian vocation and our duty in the Filipino ministry is to help nurture whatever call God has in store for us."

Sr. Cora emphasized on making spirituality easier to understand for younger people, saying it is one's pathway to holiness. Discovering one's spirituality or one's pathway towards God can be found in a variety of things like sports, youth activities, healing, social justice, adoration etc.

"We all go to God in different ways. By giving those examples, it's like opening the door of possible deepening on what can be my pathway towards God. All of us must go to God but through different pathway. Turn all of this into prayer, and whatever you do, bring people closer to God."

Sr. Cora adds, "Come and See" is about giving young people tools to be closer to God but with practical applications to life.

"Spiritual life is not just sacraments and the word of God, it will become hallow without practicality. These things are important. You have to prepare and give them tools in order to respond to the different onslaughts of society today. If they cannot manage problems with crushes, at home, on bullying, etc., how can they listen to the word of God?"

Sr. Cora adds there is also a component of spiritual direction in the future. Young people can't just be taught with talks, there will be one-on-one meetings for follow-up. Without spiritual direction, this program is nothing.

"We don't give them answers, we ask them what do you think God is telling you? This is discernment."

She likens it to being cheerleaders, who are also formators at the same time. From this year's group, two individuals have expressed their desire to continue with the priesthood.

Chito Goco, who heads the Vocations Committee, earlier shared that the Filipino ministry has a vision to pray and work for the ordinations of 40 Filipino priests in the Archdiocese in the next 20 years.

But Goco said that while the community is a ripe field and the numbers are there, there are challenges because vocations are hardly a priority even for many Catholic lay organizations. Yet he sees a step forward in helping the youth know more about Jesus and how they can develop a relationship with him.

It's also something Sr. Cora echoed as she shared why "Come and See" was important.

"If we don't start from little things, this word vocation will just be in the dictionary. We need to make it real, attractive."

The Filipino Ministry's "Come Follow Me", which is a priestly vocation accompaniment program, started last April 23.



Sister Cora Beboso, FMA with Vocations Team member, Rosalie Cerezo, preparing the materials for one of the Come and See sessions.