

Editor's Note

Since its very foundation fifty-five years ago, *Philippiniana Sacra* has been widely recognized for its scholarly articles on the history of the Church in the Philippines. Prestigious historians from the Philippines and abroad, like Luciano Santiago, Regalado Trota José, John N. Schumacher, SJ, William Henry Scott, Lucio Gutiérrez, OP, and Fidel Villarroel, OP, have published in the pages of this journal essential contributions that have become classics of this research area. Likewise, the “Philippiniana Records” section have been crucial in the recovery of key sources, essential to understand the role of the missionary orders in the archipelago. Therefore, it is no surprise that the board of this journal, being an acknowledged reference in the area of Church History in the Philippines, has decided to dedicate the three issues of the present year to the study of the religious orders and other members of the Church during the Spanish period. And it seems that the occasion is more than justified: 500 years ago the first recorded mass took place in the tiny island of Limasawa, meaning the arrival of Christianity to the archipelago. Even if the Catholic faith did not still take root after the first hasty conversions in Cebu during the visit of Magellan's expedition, it seems clear that the natives quickly understood the sacredness of the Church images, as forty-four years later an image of the Santo Niño was found in Cebu by a soldier of Legazpi's expedition.

During the elaboration of the three special issues, it has been my aim as the editor to include articles regarding all the religious orders, by authors from the Philippines but also from abroad, and also to give the chance to new promising scholars that might set the path of the field in the upcoming years. Likewise, even though there is an obvious limitation of space, these three issues shall tackle with a very diverse array of topics; namely, conventual life, devotions, historiography, art, music, education, printing press, outstanding friars, idolatries, conflicts, conversions, and many more. The articles provide countless proofs of the undeniable role of the religious orders in the configuration of the nation during more than three centuries.

The articles have been ordered by chronological order: Fr. Borre's contribution deals with the little researched area of conventual life. The routinary life of the Augustinians comes to light, thanks to his careful reading of manuscript sources from the Augustinian library at Valladolid. Fr. Martínez Cuesta, OAR, presents the most updated biography of Fr. Rodrigo de San Miguel, one of the first Augustinian Recollect friars who arrived in the Philippines: a man of faith, action, and knowledge. Coello de la Rosa's article deals with one of the most extraordinary Jesuit intellectuals in the middle of 17th century Philippines: Fr. Francisco Combés, and his still unpublished manuscript *Relación de la Islas Filipinas* (1654) [Account of the Philippine Islands], an original treatise that attempted to influence the decisions of the governor-general for the benefit of the Jesuit missions in Mindanao. Sy's contribution covers the unacknowledged native agency of the Zambales when Dominican friars tried to gather information regarding what they called "idolatries". Sánchez Fuertes' article discusses Franciscan missions in Bicol, especially the activities of Fr. Duárez that led to the foundation of the town of Daraga, providing abundant transcriptions of documents from the Franciscan archives in Madrid. Chua and Renier's contributions deal with the important role of the friars in the development of music in colonial Philippines. While the first one deals with the conditions that made possible the appearance of a distinctive Spanish-Filipino –or *Hispanofilipina*- music, the latter studies the outstanding influence of Diego de Cera in the construction of organs during 19th century Philippines. Lastly, Lao's research deals with the Philippine years of one the most outstanding Spanish philosophers at the end of 19th century: Fr. Zeferino González, OP. The "Philippiniana Records" sections comes, as always, with two important textual recoveries: a donation of land in Tagalog and signed in baybayin from the archives of the University of Santo Tomas (edited by Regalado Trota José) and the first printed document dealing with the Batanes islands from the copy extant at the Lilly Library (edited by Jorge Mojarro).

I want to express my gratitude to the contributors and also to the very generous reviewers, without whose participation this first special issue would have not been possible. Special thanks to Regalado Trota José for his help and suggestions, and to Fr. Jesus Jay M. Miranda Jr., OP, for his support. **PS**

Jorge Mojarro
Guest Editor