New beginnings

By Julia Ornedo

Whether 2014 is a year you can’t wait to forget or one you will have to cherish all the days of your life, most of us agree that it was a year full of life lessons and memories, good and bad alike. Another year has just rolled in - yet another clean slate waiting to be filled with better memories and more exciting experiences. Before we relish all the new beginnings and “firsts” of 2015, allow me to go back to the pages of our high school life in 2014.

SSAM spent the last quarter of 2014 extending a helping hand to the needy and connecting with Christ through its numerous Community and Social Involvement Programs, including the meaningful spiritual activities initiated by the CLE teachers and, of course, our Benedictine Sisters. A Kasalang Bayan was sponsored by the school for the couples of the Tuason Center Community Foundation Incorporated (page 5). The Scholasticans and the children from the adopted communities of SSAM were reunited in the annual Club Christmas Sharing celebrated on December 18 (page 11). The students also brought the Holy Rosary to life through the Living Rosary in October (page 13).

2014 was definitely a fruitful year for all the student representatives of SSAM in the different fields. The High School Varsity Teams achieved numerous awards and recognitions. Certainly, their hardwork paid off (page 32). The Glee Club (page 22) and memory whiz kid Jamlya Lambunao (page 30) brought pride and honor again after winning in major competitions. Blue Heights members also bagged medals in their ventures last year (page 22).

Who could forget all the fun times Scholasticans shared during their days where stress was less felt? Popular local band Silent Sanctuary and award-winning dance troupe FMDxreme graced the biannual high school dance entitled “Iovious: A Soiree for a Cause” last December 6 (page 10). The Sophomores and Seniors also enjoyed their hands-on experience during their educational trips (page 12).

After looking back at all the events that shaped the past year, it’s time to set them aside to make room for new memories. 2015 is already proving to be a good year in the making after it was kicked off by the much-awaited arrival of Pope Francis for his 5-day visit to the country (page 4).

The Pope was in the country from January 15 to 19 to spread his message of mercy and compassion especially in the aftermath of Supertyphoon Yolanda, and to show his solidarity with the suffering families in the province of Tacloban, Yolanda’s worst-hit victim.

Eighty percent of the Filipino population are Catholics, so it was no surprise that his visit was treated as a very important and historic event. From the moment his plane landed on January 15 at the Villamor Airbase, Pope Francis was met with throngs of devotees waiting to get even just a glimpse of the Vicar of Christ.

Some Scholasticans were able to see the Pope in the flesh, after hours of waiting with their families. The lucky students who saw him said that even though they only got to see the Holy Father for a few seconds after hours upon hours of waiting, simply being in his presence made them feel very blessed.

In his celebration of the Holy Eucharist attended by millions of people in the Quirino Grandstand in Luneta last January 18, Pope Francis, being called as “Papa Francisco” urged the Filipino Catholics to “be missionaries of the Catholic faith.” He said that being the foremost Catholic country in Asia is not only a special blessing, but also in reinvigorating and strengthening the faith of the people. As Scholasticans and members of the youth, we are compelled to respond to his challenge of being missionaries of the Catholic faith.

As we take on this new mission and prepare to face whatever the new year has in store for us, may we never forget to stick to the Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education and use it as both our shield and our guiding light in all our endeavors.

That in all things God may be glorified.
Scholasticans live out spirit of mercy and compassion
The Kulasas nurtured their spiritual life through involving themselves in various acts of mercy and compassion. Sister Ida promotes mercy and compassion
High School Principal Sr. Ida announced the result of the survey conducted in preparation for the coming of the Pope. Papal Visit 2015: SSAM's preparations
SSAM put many different preparations into place in anticipation of the Holy Father's visit. It is not about me...
Sr. Angelica shares the true essence of Pope Francis' visit. The Pope Francis list
Pope Francis listed ten reminders to the Catholics as he teaches us how to live the Year of the Poor. Iovious: A Soiree for a Cause
The HS Dance featuring FMD Xtreme and Silent Sanctuary was truly a night to remember! Year of the Poor: Stand up and rise, Filipinos
SSAM joins the Church in celebrating Year of the Poor. SSAM quadrangle turns into a Jolly Town
Kulasas and children from our adopted communities celebrated the Club Christmas Sharing with Jollibee. Sophomores go to Nuvali and EK
The grade 8 students' field trip served as a thrilling conclusion to their holidays. Seniors appreciate their culture and nation
The Seniors visited various museums around the metro during their last educational trip in high school.

Glee Club reigns in major song competitions
The angelic voices of the Glee Club's competing group earned numerous awards in various competitions. BH bags 9 medals in interschool press con
SSAM journalists reaped several medals in an interschool press conference. EDITORIAL: A royal treatment for convicts
The DOJ recently discovered the luxurious lifestyles of convicts in the New Bilibid Prison. SCIENCE&TECHNOLOGY: A cure for Ebola?
Many lives were lost to the threatening and deadly disease. Is it possible to cure ourselves of it? COLUM: The facade of the Filipino People
Managing Editor Alexia Manuel asked: did we really just wear a mask to impress Pope Francis? COLUM: For Better or for Worse
Angela Tausug tackled issues on LRT and MRT. Pinoy whiz kid earns new title in 2014 WMC
Jamyla Lambunao yet again reaped international awards in different Memory Sport competitions. Wushu players battle in 6th ASEAN Games
SSAM proudly played host to the Wushu event of the 6th ASEAN Games. Varsity Teams reap major awards
The HS Varsity Teams brought pride and honor to the SSAM community through their various awards. Humans of St. Scho
Meet the humans behind “Humans of St, Scho.” Passion of Christ retold in the Living Rosary
The SSAM community observed October as the Rosary Month, and held the traditional Living Rosary. Bridging gaps through language
Cosplay, digital storytelling, one-act play, music video and gazette making heightened students' creativity. Philippine libraries for future possibilities
The High School Library prepared exciting activities for the celebration of the 80th National Book Week. Arte Etra's two stage plays applauded
The AE Club once again wowed their audiences with their heartwarming performances. Parent-Daughter career symposium held
The Student Development Center sponsored a series of career talks to guide both parents and their children. SDC invites alumnae for a career talk
SSAM alumnae shared how Benedictine education helped them in their careers. Juniors go on career exposure trips
Selected grade 9 went out and experienced a day in the life of different workers. Sophomores celebrate ASEAN Fest in style
The grade 8 showcased their creative and thespian skills during the ASEAN Fest. Rhea Santos conducts a talk on leadership
GMA 7 broadcast journalist Rhea Santos inspired student leaders to continue doing their duties.

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Scholasticans live out spirit of mercy and compassion
A Scholastican is beauty and grace composed of one part servant leadership, one part social awareness, and two parts Christ-centeredness. Thus, the holistic spiritual formation that is the pride and trademark of Benedictine education is the foolproof formula behind the success of Scholasticans in their chosen professions or vocations. Nurtured by the rules of St. Benedict, Kulasas remain humble, people-oriented and, most of all, God-fearing.

St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina concretizes its mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and of producing active and responsible citizens through its values-laden programs and projects. Apparently, Scholasticans, as they mature, have become socially aware of their environment. They begin to see the harsh reality of life and wonder why such unfortunate events happen. They find their way to reach out through offering their prayers, rendering their services, and giving donations.

For more than 50 years of Benedictine education, SSAM has been known for its constant quest for nurturing spiritual life, solidifying good relationships, and inspiring others to become advocates of change.

As the Philippines prepared for the arrival of Father Jorge Mario Bergoglio, known as Pope Francis, SSAM being the school of the Lord’s service embarks on its mission to improve the lives of the people and create an impact on the society. Pope Francis’ message on mercy and compassion has been practiced by the Kulasas in several occasions.

In the high school department, activities that fall under the Social Involvement Program or Community Involvement Program are streamlined to focus the students on responding to people’s needs. One example of SIP and CIP activities in action is the annual visit of the grade 10 students to Bahay Kanlungan where they interact with the ‘lolas’ who were left in foster homes. Likewise, different clubs and organizations review the details before carrying out the plan to ensure the effectiveness of the activities.

For the younger Kulasas, Pope Francis’ visit in the Philippines was already a grand celebration of love, mercy, peace and compassion. It would encourage more Filipinos to be sensitive to the needs of others and to become mature and caring individuals.

Scholasticans also take part in Mass celebrations and wedding ceremonies. Late last year, the high school department hosted and sponsored Kasalang Bayan for the Tuason Community Center Foundation Incorporated employees. A simple wedding reception, which was attended by their immediate families and close friends, followed suit in the school canteen.

Since its foundation, SSAM has been initiating community-based...
activities to express solidarity with those who are struggling, and to lend a helping hand in the spirit of community life. In fact, all these activities were anchored on the theme, “Mercy and Compassion,” during the Papal Visit. High school principal Sister Ida Morin, OSB encouraged everyone to resolve to make an act of mercy and compassion everyday.

“Giving food to a hungry child, donating some of your things for the victims of calamities, learning to forgive... these are some ways in which we can show our mercy and compassion,” Sister Ida said.

As early as November, the high school department took initial efforts to introduce the coming of Pope Francis in the country. The high school library formally launched the Pope Francis Mini Exhibit to raise awareness about the life and journey of the Pope.

Pope Memorabilia such as pendants, posters, planners, tumblers were also sold in the school canteen and at the TCCFI office.

CLE teachers showed videos and taught lessons about Pope Francis to deepen the faith of the students and to spiritually prepare them for the visitation. The theme song of the Papal Visit, “We are All God's Children,” was also taught to the Scholasticans.

Message and countdown boards were put up in front of the high school office, where both visitors and students were invited to write their messages for the Pope.

“Hello Pope Francis. Thank you for proclaiming God’s love to the world. It helps people hold on to hope and inspires them to act upon when social evils come. Thank you for visiting the Philippines,” a student named Rachelle posted on the Message Board.

“I hope to see you in Luneta. May you continue inspiring people to love and have more faith in God,” a student named Gabb wrote in.

“Keep inspiring people. That in all things, God may glorified,” Aya said.

“Thank you for not marrying the girl you sent a letter to when you were young,” Allyn scribbled in her post-it.

Pope Francis medals were handed out to the students to inspire them to remain loyal to the Vicar of Christ. A novena was also recited to prepare all members of the school community for the Papal Visit, and to offer prayers for the safety of the Pope in his travels.

In solidarity with the millions of Filipinos whose lives were devastated by the tragedy brought about by super typhoon Yolanda and as part of the Church’s declaration of 2015 as the “Year of the Poor,” His Holiness Pope Francis visited at least 11 different venues in the provinces of Leyte and Metro Manila during his Apostolic Visit to the Philippines from January 15-19, 2015.

Student Organization for Social Action (SOSA) spent a day reaching out to the students of Pintong Bukawe National High School in San Mateo, Rizal. SOSA president Andrea Rodenas said that her club has been actively involved in community-based projects and programs.

The Guitar Club members went to Pintong Bukawe National High School to teach the students basic guitar lessons. This is a wonderful opportunity to the public school students to enjoy strumming the guitar and humming their favorite songs. Our Kulasas and their newfound friends jammed with the music of yesteryears and today.

The essence of compassion was strongly felt as the Math Academe members shared their knowledge about equations and problem solving through peer tutoring. As it has always been, Mathematics is one of the weaknesses of the children in terms of academic performance. In this activity moderated by Mrs. Renalyn Nectario, the Math Academe helped the 20 students of Pintong Bukawe National High School in learning techniques and strategies in solving math problems. The kids were also provided school supplies.
Security measures had been strictly implemented for the Papal Visit in the Philippines to ensure the safety of Pope Francis. The Catholic Church had likewise done its part to maintain the solemnity of the major activities with the Pope. CBCP President Archbishop Socrates Villegas encouraged Catholics to become "a people rich in mercy" to show their support for the Pontiff.

Coming from Sri Lanka, the Pontiff arrived in Manila early evening of January 15. People who had a glimpse of Pope Francis being carried by the white, open-topped popemobile could not contain their excitement and happiness as the benevolent Vicar of Christ waved upon the devotees who patiently waited for hours at the roadside.

Flashes of cameras and attempts to take selfies seemed to be endless as the Pope made his way to the Nunciature, where he stayed. All of the people who saw the Pope up close and personal felt the overwhelming emotion of blessedness. On Friday morning, the Pope made a courtesy call to President Benigno Aquino III at the Malacañan Palace.

From the Presidential residence, Pope Francis went straight to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception otherwise known as the Manila Cathedral to celebrate a Holy Mass with members of the religious community, among others.

On January 17, the Pope pushed through with his plans to visit Leyte despite the storm warnings brought about by typhoon "Amang". The Pontiff celebrates another mass at the Tacloban Airport before heading to Palo to have a private lunch with some survivors of the 2013 supertyphoon Yolanda and the earthquake in Bohol.

He also blessed the Pope Francis Center fo the Poor but has to cut short his trip in Leyte because of the worsening weather conditions.

Pope Francis allotted Sunday morning to interact with the youth at the University of Santo Tomas. Here, former street children voiced out their sentiments and shared their experiences with the Pope.

Twelve-year-old Glyzelle Iris Palomar stole the Pontiff's attention when she said: "Marami na po ang batang pinabayaan ng kanilang mga magulang. Marami sa kanila ang naging biktima at masama ang nangyari, tulad ng droga o prostitusyon.

She, then asked these question before breaking into tears: "Bakit po pumapayag ang Diyos na may ganitong nangyayari? At bakit konti lang ang tmutulong sa amin?"

Moved by Palomar's words, the Pope answered: "I invite each one of you here to ask yourselves, have I learned how to weep, how to cry? Have I learned to weep for somebody who has left to one side? Have I learned to weep for someone who has a drug problem? Have I learned to weep for someone who suffered abuse?"

"This is the first thing I'd like to say: Let's learn how to weep...Let us learn, really learn how to weep, how to cry. If you don't learn how to cry, you can't be good Christians. This is a challenge," The "People's Pope said.

A Leave Taking Ceremony took place at the Presidential Pavilion of Villamor Air Base in Manila on January 19 and the Pope flew back to Rome. To note, Pope Francis has been named as the "The People's Pope" for his servant leadership, for his mercy and compassion to the poor, and for his great love to the world. As Catholics prepare for the celebration of the Year of the Poor, SSAM still intensifies its mission of spreading the Lord's gospel and of living out the ten hallmarks of Benedictine education.

To keep the spirit of Christmas alive in the hearts of the poor people of Pintong Bukawe, the high school faculty pooled their resources and prepared a bucket of goodies for their adopted families.

Selected members of Arte Etra and Z-Club went to Pintong Bukawe National High School to experience the joy of sharing their knowledge about performing arts and discussing the highlights on leadership skill last November 28.

CLE’s community involvement program has made an impact on the lives of both the benefactors and the recipients. This activity was held last January 10. There were about 40 kids who enjoyed eating hamburgers and biscuits.

The TCCFI has been mobilizing its programs and projects to help improve lives of the people. Through the help of the SSAM community, the teachers and the students are invited to support Pintong Bukawe’s Cottage Shoe Making Project.
The Philippines is truly blessed this year. From January 15 to 19, Pope Francis visited our beloved country and Filipinos from all walks of life showed him the warmth of our love and gratitude.

Here at St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina, we did our share of welcoming the Holy See, including a novena for the success of his visit and for his safety.

The messages you had written for Pope Francis will be sent to his office in Rome through snail mail.

Let me share with you the results of the survey conducted by the high school office from the 1,137 respondents:

- 80% feels blessed with the coming of the Pope.
- 73% believes that his visit will strengthen the Catholic Faith of the Filipinos.
- 68% also believes that the Filipino Church and the World Church will have a meaningful connection through the active involvement of the youth in the Church.
- 74% wishes that the Pope will focus on catechism and issues about family.
- 80% will show their participation during his visit by saying a prayer for the success and safety of his visit.
- 74% will watch and/or listen to live broadcast of the Pope’s visit at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila and in Tacloban.

I think the best way to show Pope Francis our appreciation for his historic visit is for all of us to practice religiously MERCY and COMPASSION in our daily lives.

In relation to the people we meet and who come to our lives, here are some suggestions:

- Reach out to a lonely stranger.
- Forgive someone who has wronged you.
- Give food to a beggar.
- Go to confession and participate fervently in the Holy Mass.
- Revive personal and family prayer and devotion in your homes.
- Pray to Mary, Our Mother of Mercy, to prepare us to meet Jesus in Pope Francis.

May you and your family manifest the blessings and teachings of Pope Francis.

Sister Ida Morin, OSB Principal
The daily newspapers of January 15, 2015 featured life-size pictures of Pope Francis. They featured a day to day, hour by hour, minute by minute schedule of the Pope's visit -- from his arrival at Villamor Air Base at 5:45 p.m. -- to his departure five days later on Monday, 9:45 a.m. There were speculations that an estimated crowd of six million Filipinos would converge at the Luneta and elsewhere to welcome him. “Welcome Pope Francis with all our hearts, minds and wide open hands!”

Stories about Pope Francis have been appearing for months in magazines, TV screens, radio and the internet. In an interview, a prelate remarked, "Of course he is very popular, very attractive, joyful, "a star." But deep down Pope Francis is saying, "IT IS NOT ABOUT ME! - IT IS ABOUT JESUS - TURN TO THE LORD, AND THEN TURN TO THE PEOPLE!"

In one of his letters appointing a new cardinal he wrote, "Your new position is not a promotion, it is not an honor, it is not a decoration. It is a call to widen your spirit. It is a call to serve. It is a call to look at realities in the world, to see people where they are. It is a call to turn to the people, where they are at, then turn to the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. It is a call to help people, to look at their reality especially the poor, and help them grow."

The editorial cartoon of the day of the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Thursday, January 15, 2015) describes it well.

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Mother Angelica's message to the Scholasticans

Do you listen to the Word of God in Scriptures and in the unfolding of your daily life?

- Do you listen to those who approach you with the ear of your heart?
- Do you listen to each other and learn to feel with them, with a tender, merciful and compassionate heart?
- Do you listen to the silent sufferings and the spoken cries of the sick and the weak, and embrace them in your heart?
- Do you listen to muted voice of the oppressed and unjustly treated and ask God for the courage to stand by their side?
- After you have listened, do you pray to the Father for guidance and advice?
- After you have prayed, do you stand up and speak the truth by words and examples humbly, prudently, wisely, and kindly?

SPEAK FROM YOUR HEART.

Sister M. Angelica Leviste, OSB

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1. Do not spread gossip.
2. Finish your meals.
3. Make time for others.
4. Choose the 'more humble' purchase.
5. Meet the poor ‘in the flesh’.
6. Stop judging others.
7. Befriend others, even if they disagree with you.
8. Make commitments.
10. Be happy.
Year of the Poor

Rise and stand up Filipinos

By Raeven Davis & Bianca Blanco

With every year that comes upon us, a new chapter begins and a new story is about to be written. This year, we don't just pay attention to the fact that it's the Year of the Rabbit, but rather to a more meaningful and significant detail worth keeping in mind as Catholics: It is the Year of the Poor.

This year, the Filipino Catholic Church, led by Luis Antonio G. Cardinal Tagle welcomed 2015 with a new theme especially by the poor and for the poor. In relation to Pope Francis’ visit to the Philippines, the Church invites the people to be with the oppressed and the poor and bring them peace and love as a response to the papal message of mercy and compassion.

Themed “Rise and Stand Up” (Bumangon at Manindigan), the Year of the Poor officially made its mark last November 29, 2014 on the eve of the first Sunday of Advent. According to Father Luke Moortgat, the Year of the Poor Committee’s head, we are all called to adopt the apostles’ deed and to live the lives of the poor and the faithful as Christians in our society. For the preparation of the 500th jubilee year of Christianity in the Philippines in 2021, he said that this year, we would commemorate the life of Jesus who did good and cared for the outcasts while living poorly without asking for anything back. We are called to be like Christ who lowered himself and became one with the poor out of love for us, His people. We are called to continue His mission on defending the poor from all the injustices and persecution in the world. Knowing that completely eradicating the causes of being marginalized is not an easy task for the Church alone, we, Christians can contribute little things to help in lessening these origins.

CBCP President Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Socrates Villegas encouraged all Catholics to participate in this celebration of being with the poor by “helping the community in helping yourselves” and also urged us to “strive for conditions of work that are humane and just.” Also, the faithful are invited to “reflect and act” on the lives of the poor and to continue on contributing for the general welfare of others. He also expressed his desire to call on those who are heavily burdened for they are either the poor in spirit or the ones oppressed by stress and other concerns to come to Jesus, seek His help and guidance for besides Pope Francis who was dubbed as the “champion of the poor,” Jesus is the champion of the champions who is and will always be looking into our eyes with love, ready to die for us, His poor people.

Also giving us the gist on the real meaning behind the Year of the Poor is the song, “We are all God’s Children,” the theme song for the Papal Visit. The song contains powerful lyrics that convey God's calling to help the poor and the lame, for we are united by His love. Showing our love, mercy, kindness and humility to others is what this year’s theme is asking for. As committed Catholics, we are called to serve the Lord by serving our neighbors as well, especially the weak, and helping them get back on their feet, so that we can fully understand what life is really for.

Last year, typhoons brought us some tragedies that left many Filipinos to their knees. Natural calamities that took many lives and destroyed hopes and dreams of our fellow countrymen, thousands of leaving them poor and weak. This year, it’s our chance to make the tables turn and to change things around. With the start of the Year of the Poor, is the mark of a new beginning- a year full of giving and compassion to one another, of being united despite of social classes, and of being one as children of God. It is everyone's year. Let us make each day count.

SCO and SOSA take the Kulasas to the dancefloor

By Jasmine Muyco and Maria Isabel Cruz

On normal days, one wouldn't see these Kulasas wearing fashionable clothes. On normal days, one wouldn't see guys entering the school to meet the Kulasas. But last December 6, 2014, Kulasas changed into their fabulous clothes and hit the SICC for one big night of dance-concert dubbed as “Lovious.”

Organized and sponsored by the Student Organization for Social Action and the Student Council Organization, the annual dance-concert for a cause was a big success as the SICC was brimmed with teenagers all waiting for a grand showdown of invited guests such as the famous dance group FMD Xtreme and rock band Silent Santuary.

SCO moderator Ms. Anunciacion Gabor, and SOSA moderators Mrs. Rowena Dela Peña and Mr. Mar Evan Morales expressed their gratitude for the support of the students and those who participated in the event. Part of the sales of the tickets will be given to help in the construction of Study Hall located in the new building. This new building is designed for the grades 11 and 12 under the K+12 Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum.

In an exclusive interview with Blue Heights at the backstage, they found out that these guys from FMD Xtreme and Silent Santuary were not only cool and talented, but down-to-earth and friendly.

Blue Heights: What message do you have for the Scholasticans?

FMD Xtreme: Kapag ginagawa namin yung dance, dapat alam namin kung saan pwedeng mag-rehearse yung mga tao. Kailangan maentertain sila. Kaya sa routine namin dapat may points na mag-interact ka doon sa audience para maappreciate nala lalo yung ginagawa ninyo.

Blue Heights: What message do you have for the Scholasticans?

FMD Xtreme: Nakapunta kami sa Australia na hindi kami financially

Turn to next page
If Michael Jackson has his own Neverland Ranch where children can freely enjoy the amusement park and zoo, SSAM has the quadrangle where more than 500 poor children can run around, roll over the spacious grassy area and dance with their ever favorite Jollibee mascot. This beautiful scenario is one to be missed by the Scholasticians during the Club Christmas Sharing last December 18.

Student Activities Coordinator Mrs. Josephine Atlas had been preparing for the annual celebration of sharing of fun and blessings with the poor children of the school’s adopted communities. As early as November she spent her time coordinating with the recipients’ families and mapping out enriching activities for the kids on the day of the big event.

Each club in the high school department was assigned a group of children with whom they spent the entire day.

The two-hour get-together had made the guest children feel comfortable with the Kulasas. The kids were treated to an afternoon Jollibee meal and were given special gifts courtesy of the Kulasas. The quadrangle was brimmed with students and children, all expecting to have a dance with Jollibee.

“Yes, Jollibee was the crowd’s favorite. To complete the Club Christmas Sharing, Jollibee made a special dance number for everyone to feel happy. Most children had the chance for a photo opportunity with Jollibee. “What I enjoyed the most about the activity was the heart-warming interaction with the children. We were able to see the different behaviors of the children towards certain things or objects,” Rennbelle Jocson of St. Cecilia said.

St. Scholastica’s quadrangle turns into a Jolly Town

By Janica Ano

Ever wonder what it would be like if the SSAM quadrangle had turned into a big Jolly town? More than 500 children from the adopted communities in Pintong Bukawe enjoy interacting with Jollibee mascot during the Club Christmas Sharing.

If Michael Jackson has his own Neverland Ranch where children can freely enjoy the amusement park and zoo, SSAM has the quadrangle where more than 500 poor children can run around, roll over the spacious grassy area and dance with their ever favorite Jollibee mascot. This beautiful scenario is one to be missed by the Scholasticians during the Club Christmas Sharing last December 18.

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Students experience the thrills and frills of being swayed by the exhilarating rides at the Enchanted Kingdom. They won’t stop until they can’t get enough.
museum showcased items which were used for trade, from shells, rocks, gems, accessories, and other ornaments, to the Mickey Mouse money, and then to the bills used at present time. The Philippine Peso has truly evolved through the years. Not only, did the museum display the past faces of the Philippine bills, but also predicted how money would look like in the future.

NATIONAL MUSEUM

The museum displayed artifacts from the early ages of the Philippines which showcased their traditions and one-of-a-kind culture. There’s a gallery showing various artifacts from the beginning of planet Earth. Another exhibit was The Origin or Pinagmulan gallery where ancient tools from Pre-historic to Ceramic Age were displayed.

The exhibit Kabanang Lahi included archaeological treasures like pots and burial jars that explains different practices of early Filipinos. Kinahinatnan was the last exhibit and it displayed items which showed that the Philippines is truly an island of cultural diversity.

THE MYTH OF THE HUMAN BODY

A new and exciting but quite disturbing experience awaited the seniors as they entered the Myth of the Human Body Exhibit, which came to the Philippines from Korea.

The museum featured the human anatomy using real human body specimens. Introduced and developed by Dr. Gunther von Hagens, a process called plastination was used to preserve the bodies featured in the exhibits. The cadavers were positioned in an artistic way to display and accent body parts and organs to further explain anatomy to the visitors. Tour guides were assigned to each part of the museum to discuss about the muscular, skeletal, respiratory, digestive, circulatory, reproductive, and nervous systems.

PHILIPPINE ARMY MUSEUM AND
LIBRARY FOUNDATION, INC.

The Museum showed the history of the Philippine Army from 1898 up to the present. To note, the old building of the Philippine Army Museum was used by the Americans as headquarters.

Outside the building were armored fighting vehicles and replica of cannons. The students also got a chance to see a battalion of soldiers doing some drills in the prime real estate lot of the PAMLFI.

Students also got a chance to hold antiquated weapons and equipment used by the ancestors many centuries ago.

**Passion of Jesus Christ in the Living Rosary**

*By Jaijeca Cabang*

Armed with rosary beads and flowers for the Blessed Virgin Mary, the middle administrators, the high school faculty and their students went to the SICC to commemorate the Living Rosary and reenact the passion of Christ.

The spotlight was on the Blessed Virgin Mary as the members of the SSAM community celebrated the Rosary Month last October.

The monthlong celebration was culminated through a solemn Living Rosary last October 21, 2014 at the SICC.

Between decades were enigmatic scenes narrating Jesus Christ’s sacrifices for mankind’s salvation. Selected members of Arte Etra, Sining at Tanghalang Pilipino, Benedictine Circle, Sodality of Mary, and Obra Club collaborated for the success of the production.

Short passages from the Bible were also read and every grade level offered its hymn of praise to the Virgin Mary. The freshmen sang “Still,” the sophomores sang “God of Silence,” the juniors sang “Mariang Ina Ko” and the seniors sang “Lead Me to the Cross.”

It is believed that with each Hail Mary prayed is a rose given to Mary by the person praying.

Students said that praying the rosary strengthens our faith in God and keeps us from all kinds of anxieties and troubles in life.
The universal English language has been bridging gaps between people since time immemorial. Thus, the annual English Month is celebrated to show appreciation for the language.

The English Area, headed by Subject Area Coordinator Mrs. Grace Abdon and composed of Mrs. Myra Tingson, Ms. Janina Iglesias, Ms. Cecil de Leon, Ms. Sherlyn Caluma, Ms. Charity Faminialagao, Mrs. Anita Ramos, and Mrs. Menere Nasiad, prepared exciting and value-laden activities anchored on the theme "English Language for Spreading the Truth and Bridging the Gap between Real and Unreal."

The activities prepared by the English Area were designed to enhance the students' creativity and resourcefulness, to utilize communication competencies, and maximize the students' macro and multimedia skills.

The Grade 7 students were tasked to come up with creative costumes for their Cosplay of Philippine Literature Characters last November 17-25, 2014. Each class was divided into four groups to stand for the four periods in Philippine history: pre-colonial period, Spanish colonization, American colonization, and contemporary period. The students chose stories from their assigned periods and created a program that would showcase their chosen characters.

Marian Soriano of 7 – St. Therese, who portrayed Kenkoy, won first place in Cosplay by Arte Etra. The Grade 8 students also showcased their skills in Digital Storytelling.
for her costume. In second place was Sophia Reganit, the Awiyao of St. Joan from the story “The Wedding Dance”, followed by Kiersten Ponce of St. Rose who portrayed Caburayan from “Gods and Goddesses.”

The Grade 8 students produced digital storybooks for their Digital Storytelling project. The students were tasked to tell their chosen stories in the span of ten to fifteen minutes using original pictures and audio.

The final outputs were presented on November 24 and 25, 2014. Grade 8 English teacher Ms. Janina Iglesias said that the digital storybooks created by the students were commendable. “It was a hard task to produce a digital storybook, but the students were able to produce good outputs,” she said.

The Grade 8 students gave fairytales a contemporary twist in their One Act Play. A One Act Play makes use of only one setting, short dialogues, minimal characters, and has no narrators. The activity aimed to hone the students’ speaking, acting, and singing skills and to familiarize them with the different stage elements as preparation for the musical play.

In the end, the class of St. Milburga won first place for their play entitled “Beauty in the Beast,” followed by St. Hilda with “If the Mask Fits” in second place, and St. Ottilia’s “Tridescent” in third place. Grade 9 English teacher Ms. Charity Faminialagao said that the performance of the Juniors was a good start for their musical play in the future. “It was unexpected that they turned out to be very good,” she said.

The Grade 10 students came up with a music video for the school hymn, and created their own gazettes. Each class was divided into two groups- one group was tasked to shoot a music video for the school hymn and the other group was assigned to create a gazette that would capture the activities held for the English Month celebration.

The Viewer’s Choice award for the Music Video category was given to St. Veronica for receiving the highest number of votes. The class of 10 – St. Angela won first place for their music video entitled “Beats,” St. Veronica in second place and St. Teresa in third place. The winners in the Gazette Making Contest were St. Catherine in first place, St. Cecilia in second place, and St. Angela in third place.

A Spelling Bee was also held at the SICC last November 26 as part of the English Month celebration. In third place was Team 5 composed of Carmela Serrano and Mika de Leon. Team 1 bagged second place and was composed of Sofia Montes, Lauryn Sagun, and Rachelle Siapno. The Spelling Bee champions were Team 2, composed of Allyssa Esmedia, Alessandria Teruel, Elyss Tomas, and Kyanna Bulan.

The 80th National Book Week with the theme “Philippine Libraries: Future Possibilities” was also celebrated as part of the English Month. The librarians, headed by Mrs. Evangeline Orga, prepared many activities which aimed to recognize frequent library users, encourage more students to visit the library, and re-orient the students on the services offered by the library and the Audio Visual Center.

A library exhibit on Pope Francis was put up in anticipation of his visit to the country, along with the annual Book Exhibit. Film viewing sessions of movies popular with young adults such as The Fault in Our Stars and Divergent were also held during lunch breaks from November 18 to 27. The library also sponsored the “Bookay-Bookay,” in which books and magazines were sold to students and teachers for very low prices. The best writers in each section also competed in the annual Essay Writing Contest held last November 21.

The culminating activity, along with the grand play of the Arte Etra club entitled “Priva”, was held at the SICC last November 26. Directed by Misha Segarra and Jana Semilla, the play was a story of triumph over struggles in life. The protagonist Kate, portrayed by Kelly Cruz, tries her best to help her friends Amanda (Seleen Simora), Sandra (Kristina Balazuela), Louisse (Sarina Carino), Chiara (Rei Mendoza), and Lola (Ricci Gencia) face their personal problems while trying to overcome her own.

Grade 8 student Naia Soriano said she enjoyed all the activities that were laid out for the students during the English Month. “The English Month celebration was filled with fun and learning,” she said.
High school librarians take the lead in promoting Philippine libraries for future possibilities  By Isabelle Mallillin

The high school librarians once again proved that e-books and tablets are no match for the charm of books when they showcased newly acquired reading materials and sponsored enriching activities for the library users during the celebration of the 80th National Book Week last November 17-28, 2014 anchoring on the theme, “Philippine Libraries: Future Possibilities.”

The simple celebration of the National Book Week at SSAM aimed to strengthen relationships among librarians in the country, to show appreciation and recognition to frequent library users, and to extend its services especially on the use of the library and the audio visual center.

The formal opening of the National Book Week coincided with the launch of Pope Francis Mini Exhibit last November 12.

According to head librarian Mrs. Evangelina Orga, the said exhibit would raise awareness about Pope’s Francis life and his planned visit to the Philippines to express sympathy to the victims of typhoon ‘Yolanda’ in Tacloban.

Students also anticipated the annual Book Exhibit at the Sister Clemens’ Room wherein numerous new books - fiction and non-fiction - were made available to the young and old readers. For those who wished to sit back and relax during lunch breaks, the students could watch from classic to contemporary movies inside the library. Film viewing sessions ran from November 18 to 27.

Last November 18 and 19, teachers and students dug themselves into books and magazines as they were sold at a very low price. The librarians opened its “Bookay-Bookay,” adapted from the word ‘ukay-ukay’, a fundraising activity for the adopted communities of St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina.

Other activities sponsored by the librarians were “Starbook” that catered only to the high school teachers. While enjoying their cup of coffee or chocolate drink and munching some biscuits, the teachers found themselves in a comfortable spot poring over the pages of newly acquired professional books. The “Starbook,” borrowed from the popular coffee shop ‘Starbucks’, ran from November 17 - 18. The librarians also tied up with the English teachers in the On-the-Spot Essay Writing Contest last November 21. Assisting Mrs. Orga in the raffle draw and library trick or treat were Ms. Mary Ann Sarengo, Mrs. Cynthia Valenton, Mrs. Mila Cruz and Mrs. Cecilia Sanchez. Mrs. Orga wished that the Scholasticans would continue to love books and to develop their passion for reading amid modern technology. “Books and reading will bring you to a world of curiosity, fantasy, and knowledge,” she said.

Coffee and chocolate drinks are free in the library. The campaign to appreciate professional books turns out to be a massive success as the high school teachers grab some books while sipping a hot coffee or chocolate drink in a two-day activity dubbed as “Starbook.”

Bookay-Bookay. Scholasticans and teachers get to enjoy books and magazines sold at a very low price. Purchases made from the two-day book selling will be a big help for the recipients of the adopted communities of SSAM.
Arte Etra’s two stage plays applauded

By Chelsea Macahilas, Josephine Esparrago, Kly Macaraeg, and Rain Javinez,

It may seem to be the busiest year of the members of Arte Etra, a performing arts club in the high school department, since they have been invited to stage a play on several occasions. The performers, guided by their moderator Ms. Cecilia De Leon, received not only warm applause but also recognition from both the students and the faculty members for their outstanding presentations.

MINI PLAY FOR THE GRADE SCHOOL PUPILS

In line with the celebration of Ecology Month last September 2014, the performing arts club Arte Etra prepared a short play entitled “The Legend of the Winds” presented in the afternoon of October 10 at the classrooms of 10- St. Irene and St. Frances for selected grade school pupils.

The play sought to teach its young viewers about air pollution through the different wind directions embodied by the characters: North (Mikaella Miller), East (Ashley de Guzman), West (Daniella Dayag), and South (Gillian Eslera).

Central, the story’s protagonist played by Chloe Cruz, is the black sheep in her family who decides to run away. Her siblings North and South go on a quest to search for her. However, another string of unfortunate events caused by North’s death plague the family after their reunion, but in the end, they learn to reconcile their differences and come together as one.

Acting Chairman Misha Segarra said the lesson of the play was symbolically presented through North’s death and the illness that plagued all the siblings. She shared that it symbolized the poor condition of the air around us.

“The play delivered an urgent message in a unique manner, which makes it a cut above the rest,” she said.

Their family was finally reunited when North became sick, and eventually died. North’s death caused another string of fights in the family, but in the end, they decided to reconcile their differences.

Arte Etra yet again left a mark in the minds and hearts of their audience. The grade school students left the venue with something they could remember for the rest of their life: Start helping the community clean and green by doing some volunteer work or participating in some worthwhile activities.

STARS SHINE IN “PRIVA”

Performing arts club Arte Etra once again brought their audience to tears with their heartwarming portrayals of ordinary high school students struggling to find their purpose in life in their grand play entitled “Priva.” The two-hour play was presented in the SICC on November 26, 2014 as part of the English Month Culminating Activity.

Directed by Misha Segarra and Jana Semilla, the play is a story of triumph over struggles in life. The protagonist Kate, portrayed by Kelly Cruz, tries her best to help her friends Amanda (Seleen Simora), Sandra (Kristina Balazuela), Louise (Sarina Carino), Chiara (Rei Mendoza), and Lola (Ricci Gentica) face their personal problems while trying to overcome her own demons. As life gets better for her friends, Kate finds herself falling deeper into her own depression.

Kate finds comfort and happiness in her newfound friend, Zeke, a cheerful young man battling Leukemia. Things begin to get even worse for Kate when she finds out that her friend Zeke lost his battle against Cancer. The story ends with a listless Kate staring at the stars while surrounded by the same people who sought help from her in their own times of need.

Priva is a heartwarming story of love, hope, friendship, and courage in the face of trials. Many students were brought to tears by the relatable situations of the characters and the believable portrayal of the Arte Etra members.

Kristina Balazuela, who portrayed Kate’s best friend Sandra in the play, said that she was very nervous before the performance but lifted her anxieties to God for her to be guided. She said that she enjoyed all the practices as these allowed her to form stronger bonds with her club mates. “I proved to myself that I could do things better than I what imagine,” she added. Arte Etra members offered all their successes to their moderator Ms. Cecilia de Leon.

This is just one of the many highlights in Arte Etra’s grand play. It is a romantic and moving story of Zeke and Kate, who after all the cherished memories together have to end their relationships in a mind-boggling state. The characters’ portrayal of their roles have caused the audience to cry, laugh, cry and be nostalgic in the end.
LESS gold makes the world and more mercy makes a little bit of mercy...
Parent-Daughter Career Symposium

Helping parents recognize their children’s priorities

It may seem difficult for both parents to assert their dreams for their children’s career, but they do end up being pushy when they see big opportunities the global business can provide to the young generation. Problem sets in when their children feel the pressure of meeting demands and expectations of their parents. This kind of situation is one of the several concerns that teenagers have to deal with.

In an effort to help reconcile the differences of opinions on career choices between parents and daughters, the SSAM’s Student Development Center sponsored an activity titled “Parent-Daughter Career Symposium” last December 20, 2014 at the Sister Irmburg Covered Court.

Resource speaker Mr. Junn Geronimo Jr., director for Communications of the Growth and Understanding through Information Dissemination and Career Education or Guidance NGO and editor-in-chief of Paths Magazine, shared his knowledge and experiences about parental support when it comes to their children’s career choices.

Mr. Geronimo took the opportunity to introduce the career tracks for grades 11 and 12 under the Enhanced K12 Basic Education Curriculum. He also asked the opinions and views of the parents in terms of their expectations and future goals for their children.

“Help your daughter recognize her priorities. Parents’ constant reminder can be very helpful for their children to identify their interests. this way, they won’t feel the pressure,” Mr. Geronimo stated.

Grade 9 student Evian Rabena said that the talk helped her become more decided on what she wants to pursue after high school. “I realized how beautiful it is to have a bright future and the other ways my profession would benefit me aside from the salary I will receive,” she added.

Grade 9 students hold career exposure trips

Established companies in the country such as National Bookstore, St. Luke’s Hospital and Solar News Channel opened its doors to the grade 9 students of St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina last November 12 and 14.

Selected students were divided into two batches with the supervision of their guidance counselors. In the latest survey made by the Student Development Center, the students’ top 3 career choices fall under business management, medicine and mass media.

The first batch went to St. Luke’s Hospital first and got a chance to have an exclusive interview with the speakers from different departments. Then, they set out to the main branch of National Bookstore, where they were able to meet and talk to the 91-year-old founder of the establishment, Mrs. Socorro “Nanay Coring” Ramos.

In an interview, Mrs. Ramos explained how she was unable to finish her education at 19, and went to work for her brother who owned a bookstore business back in those years.

The second batch of students were scheduled to visit the Philippine Mental Health Association and the Solar News Channel studio. Here they observed the plight of the patients at the PMHA, and how they had been assisted by the medical staff. The students weren’t able to proceed to Solar News Channel because of conflict of schedule.

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Sophomores celebrate ASEAN festival with a style

By Jan Cuyco, Julia Ortega and Trishia Sarmiento

As the country gears towards globalization, people from all walks of life are trying to find ways to enhance their skills and enrich their knowledge in order to achieve their big dreams. In the age of technology and innovation, everyone is compelled to adapt to changes. Today, schools both private and public have come up with skill-based activities to challenge the inquisitive minds of today’s generation. At SSAM, students’ skills are practiced and honed through interdisciplinary activity.

The grade 8 students accepted the challenge of showing their creativity, talents and wits during the interdisciplinary activity dubbed as “ASEAN Fest” last October 9, 2014.

Garbed in their authentic costumes representing countries such as Singapore, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Myanmar, the sophomores conquered the centerstage and captivated the audience with their graces.

Throughout the week, the students put up a mini exhibit showcasing the trivia and photos of their respective countries. Using recyclable materials, they were able to come up with sample costumes, which they paraded at the SICC where a pageant, “The Search for Miss ASEAN 2014” was held.

Miss ASEAN 2014 showcased the Sophomores’ efforts to further promote social awareness about the ASEAN countries through a celebration of the diverse cultures of Southeast Asia. The pageant showed national dances and cultural backgrounds.

Chloe Cruz (St. Anne) portrayed Miss Malaysia, Alyanna Vicencio (St. Elizabeth) portrayed Miss Singapore, Melissa Apliado (St. Lucy) portrayed Miss Myanmar, Galian Madrid of (St. Margaret Mary) played Miss Cambodia, Ella Pamintuan of (St. Martha) played Miss Thailand, Chloe del Rosario (St. Monica) portrayed Miss Indonesia and Merdilene Umieten (St. Rita) played Miss Vietnam.

Miss Vietnam Merdilene Umieten was crowned Miss ASEAN 2014 and received the Miss Peace award. The titles of Ms. Charity, Ms. Unity, Ms. Hope, Ms. Faith, Ms. Humility and Ms. Ecofriendly were bestowed upon the sections of St. Monica, St. Martha, St. Margaret Mary, St. Lucy, St. Elizabeth and St. Anne respectively. Along with this, every section was awarded with a certificate of recognition for their active participation during the interdisciplinary activity.

The event was hosted by Leonisse Susa and Ayannah Abo-abo, and was judged by Mrs. Josephine Atlas, Ms. Annunciacion Gabor, and Mrs. Maria Concepcion De Dios.

Rhea Santos conducts a talk on leadership

By Julia Ornedo

Scholastican student leaders flocked to the classrooms of 10 – St. Irene and Frances on the morning of November 15, 2014 to attend the second part of the leadership training, this time headlined by GMA Network broadcast journalist, host, newscaster, and former Scholastican, Ms. Rhea Santos.

In her talk, Ms. Santos highlighted the importance of being a leader to oneself. “I’d like to explore the perspective of being a leader first to oneself before being able to inspire others to follow you,” she said. She stressed that people must first be in control of themselves and of their own lives before they can truly be considered leaders.

She shared that being a silent worker and obedient follower during group activities in her high school days helped her realize that one can be a leader in her own ways. “You don’t need the mandate of a group to become a leader. Every day, we are leaders of our own lives,” she said. “We can be leaders in our own way. It doesn’t have to be a big act – just a small act will do.”

Ms. Santos added that her formation at St. Scholastica’s Academy has helped her surpassed the trials of being a journalist, a wife, and a mother. “I have held on to the motto of Ora et Labora,” she replied when asked about balancing leadership responsibilities and academic requirements.

Currently, Rhea Santos co-anchors GMA 7’s morning show “UnangHirit” and also hosts her own biographical documentary program called “Tunay na Buhay” which features inspiring and true-to-life stories of real people. She created a name for herself in the field of journalism through hardwork after finishing her elementary and secondary education in SSAM and graduating magna cum laude in AB Mass Communication from St. Paul College Quezon City. The talk was a part of the second leg of the leadership training sponsored by the Student Council Organization and their moderator Ms. Annunciacion Gabor, who is the Student Formation Coordinator. The first session of the leadership training was facilitated by Student Council officers. Former Student Council officers Darla Baltazar and Ysabela Flores were among the speakers who also administered talks to the student leaders.
Glee Club reigns in major song competitions

By Julia Ornedo

More than just pretty faces and angelic voices, the SSAM High School Glee Club is a group composed of talented singers dedicated to their craft and focused on their goals. Other than performing during school events and leading the singing in ceremonies, the Glee Club also takes part in competitions against other school choirs.

They once again proved their vocal prowess when they competed in various competitions and achieved numerous awards last year. The Glee Club is led by their choirmaster Mr. Danilo Monte. The Glee Club bagged first runner-up and best interpretation award when they competed against nine other choirs in the 16th Children’s Museum and Library Incorporated (CMLI) Voices in Harmony held at the Meralco Theater last November 30, 2014. They competed as the defending champions after bringing home the Aria, the championship title, in 2013.

They also competed in the Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC) National Choral Competitions held at Aliw Theater from December 9 to 13, 2014. After making it past two rounds against various other school choirs, the SSAM Glee Club landed third place in the children’s category and won P30,000 thousand cash prize.

Glee Club moderator Mrs. Janice Derilo said, "Continue to bring pride and honor to our school by creating beautiful music. This is your way of sharing your God-given talents with others."

The Glee Club also had the privilege of competing in what is known as the most prestigious competition in Music, the National Music Competitions for Young Artists (NAMCYA), supported primarily by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). The three-fold program of the NAMCYA is to discover outstanding musicians all over the country, develop their talents, and enhance and expand appreciation for and performance of Filipino music.

Blue Heights bags 9 medals in interschool press conference

By Angela Tiausas

Ten campus journalists were chosen to represent St. Scholastica’s Academy of Marikina in the 2nd Horizon Interschool Press Conference at the Our Lady of Perpetual Succor (OLOPS) College last November 21, 2014. Organized by the English department, the said contest was anchored on the theme “Teaching Responsible Journalism for Today’s Generation.”

Besides SSAM, eight other schools in Marikina participated in the competition, namely, Marist School, Sta. Elena High School, Irvinghall School, St. Matthew’s College, Gentle Angels School, Blessed Hope Christian Academy, Victoria School Foundation, and Concepcion Integrated School.

The contest was preceded by a seminar on newswriting in which Bandera Associate Editor Mr. Frederick Nasiad was invited as the resource speaker. The participants were then designated to rooms corresponding to each of the ten categories in the writing competition.

In the awarding ceremony which took place last December 11, 2014, Blue Heights received nine medals in various categories. The winners were: Julia Ornedo, ranking first in Feature Writing; Angela Tiausas, ranking third in Editorial Writing; Sofia Montes, ranking first in Copyreading and Headlining; Angela de Guzman, ranking third in Cartooning; Alexia Manuel, ranking second in Pagsulat ng Balita; Camielle Lapid, ranking second in Pagsulat ng Lathalain; Bianca Blanco, ranking third in Pagsulat ng Editoryal; Mia Quisumbing, ranking first.
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Is there a cure for Ebola?

By Chelsea Macahilas

As of this year, there has already been a total of 20,381 cases of Ebola with a report of 7,989 deaths in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia alone making the outbreak the greatest yet since HIV. Given a very large number of fatalities from a simple disease that struck developing regions in West Africa, it is important to get updated on Ebola.

The outbreak can still become widespread. A New York Times Documentary featured Ebola patients left to die at the streets near hospital doors due to the lack of hospital beds. Although the financial assistance of different health institutes and foreign agencies sum up to a large amount, it has only been allocated for vaccines and therapeutics.

Much of its biology is not yet known. Although the first outbreak of the disease traces back to 1976, its basic details remains undiscovered, much more of its origin. From gorillas and chimpanzees to fruit bats, the subjects of scientists as the cause of the outbreak all test negative. However, aside from the fact that Ebola can be transmitted through fluids like blood and saliva, a recent study shows that the virus attacks the white blood cells of the body which comprise of our liver, airways and adrenal glands. This information has led to several studies about the path taken by the virus inside the body which may be useful in the future.

There’s no Ebola treatment yet. No official vaccine or medicine has been proven effective to cure Ebola yet. Even Zmapp, the experimental drug made with the help of tobacco leaves and mice’s antibodies which was administered to two American patients is only 100% effective for animals and does just little to help human patients. The problem is that only a few are willing to research for the cure - especially that they’re working for the benefit of a developing country who could only afford giving little revenues. That is why, as of today, even Zmapp has already run out of supply. However, as long as there are funds to support the formation of Ebola cure, creating more than just a regular antibiotic is still possible.

Blue Heights... from page 22

in Pagwawasto at Pag-ulo, and Charlotte Berbon, ranking first in Pag-kakartun.

On the other hand, grade 8 student Jan Felicia Cuyco made it to the top ten as she ranked eighth in the news writing category in the recently concluded Regional Press Conference and Contest held held at the Aurora A. Quezon Elementary School in Malate, Manila.

Thirteen Blue Heights members went against 2200 other contestants in the said contest. The press conference was themed “Empowering Resilient Communities through Campus Journalism” as both a reminder to budding journalists of the struggles that come with the job, and a salute to journalists who risk their lives to deliver balanced and objective news.

Among the throng of campus journalists present at the Aurora A. Quezon Elementary School on November 8 were Blue Heights writers Julia Ornedo (Feature Writing), Jan Cuyco (News Writing), Angela Tiausas (Editorial Writing), Trishia Sarmiento (Science and Technology), Raxene Martizano (Pagwawasto at Pag-ulo), Raevon Davis (Copyreading and Headlining), Mia Quisumbing (Pagsulat ng Lathalain), Blanca Blanco (Pagsulat ng Editoryal), and Charlotte Berbon (Cartooning).

Naia Soriano and Camielle Lapid (Photo Journalism) competed in the Rizal Park and Eunice Miña and Ella Baduria (Sports Writing) were assigned to the Philippine Cultural Center last October 9.

A royal treatment for convicts

A 48-inch television set. A jacuzzi. A state-of-the-art sauna. A PlayStation 4 with an impressive sound system. Sophisticated musical instruments, internet connection, Rolex watches. Imported rubber shoes. All these and more are some of the fascinating, if not disturbing, items one can see in a place where typical convicts would describe as a “living hell” for the alive.

Welcome to the New Bilibid Hotel, open exclusively to VIPs or “very important prisoners.”

Department of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, along with National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Virgilio Mendez and New Bilibid Prison (NBP) head Supt. Franklin Bucayu, walked into what has been dubbed as the “New Bilibid Hotel” on the dawn of December 15, 2014 in search of evidence that would link 19 high-profile inmates to the illegal drug trade in the NBP compound.

What they found was more than just evidence that the convicts were indeed operating a drug syndicate from their detention cells. They uncovered bags and sachets of white powder believed to be drugs, nearly P2 million in cash, bottles of expensive wine, and even imported skin whitening creams. The first question one would ask upon seeing the unbelievable scenario is: how did all these luxurious items make it past NBP authorities and into the convicts’ cells?

As usual, the persons in authority who should have known about the illegal activities going on behind bars claimed that they had no idea about the issue. Secretary de Lima came to his defense by crediting him for the success of the raids and stating that he must not be faulted for the shocking discoveries unearthed at the NBP.

It is imperative that a thorough investigation of the incident be done to find out what truly happened and to serve justice to the people involved. As Presidential Spokesperson Edwin Lacierda lamented, the problem is both systemic and personnel. “These things don’t happen without cooperation from those penitentiary officials,” he said.

Incidents like these only prove how deeply rooted corruption is in the minds of Filipino officials. It is frustrating to think that the people who were jailed for disobeying the law still continue to defy the rules even while they’re jailed.

One can only hope that the discovery of the shenanigans going on at the NBP will be the last discovery to be made by officials. Nonetheless, the government should continue conducting investigations like this. For all the people know, the New Bilibid Hotel could have different branches all over the country.
Another illness is sweeping through the streets of the Philippines and its target point: our faith.

The Pope Fever was an epidemic that got the masses flocking by the thousands to the different itineraries of the Pope during his 5-day visit to the country, and now millions of Filipino Catholics are suffering Post-Papal Visit Depression. Many believe that the Pontiff’s visit was a symbol of hope, and will inspire change in the nation.

It is without a doubt that the months before the Pope’s arrival were busy and frantic, yet jubilant. The sewing of robes, the closing of public roads, the teaching of religious songs in Christian schools, and the declaration of holidays in honor of the Papal Visit were only some of the preparations put in place in anticipation of the Pope’s coming.

All the television networks, radio stations, and social media accounts were filled with updates on the Pope’s visit, from his arrival at the Villamor Airbase to his departure. Several pictures and videos were put up and one cannot help but notice the changes, especially along the roads of Manila. When the days of the Papal Visit came, not even a single litter was seen on the roads of the usually chaotic city. Will we only ever see the country that clean and orderly when a Pope comes to visit?

It may not be as it seems, but our country looked like it was masked for a couple of days in order to impress someone regal. The efficiency of the Philippine government suddenly and magically kicked into action when the Pope arrived.

The façade that the country put up to accommodate the Pope was a picture of the country we want to become, but are always short of becoming. The temporary joy and pride that we brought to the Philippines dissipated with the departure of Pope Francis.

However, I have faith the Pope’s visit to the country could be just what we need to inspire the government to serve the best interests of its citizens, and to encourage the Filipinos to do their part in pushing the country forward.

Hopefully, the Papal Visit not only supplied the lack in the faith of the Filipino people, but also nourished the people’s consciences. The façade will become a reality someday, and through hard work and cooperation, we will be able to achieve it.

Façade of the Filipino People

By Alexia Manuel

The Pontiff’s visit was a symbol of hope, and will inspire change in the nation.

For better or for worse

By Angela Tiausas

If only our government functioned properly, the public wouldn’t have complained over an increase in the prices of commodities.
**Sisa at Gabriela, kinilala ng mga Kulasa**

Mainit ang naging pagtanggap ng mga estudyante at guro ng SSAM sa pelikulang Gabriela na ukol sa buhay ng bayaning si Gabriela Silang, at Sisa na ukol naman sa buhay ng karakter na Sisa mula sa sikat na nobelang “Noli Me Tangere” ni Dr. Jose Rizal. Ang dalawang pelikula ay ipinalabas sa Audio Visual Center noong buwan ng Setyembre 2014.

Ang “Gabriela” ay ipinalabas sa mga estudyante mula sa ikapitong baitang. Ito ay pinagbidahan ng dating Pinoy Big Brother housemate na si Christine Patrimonio na gumanap bilang si Gabriela Silang at Carlo Aquino na gumanap bilang kanyang asawa. Ang pelikula ay isinulat ni Frank G. Rivera at isinagawa sa ilalim ng Social Entrepreneurship.

Ang “Sisa” naman ay ipinalabas sa mga estudyante mula sa ikasampung baitang. Si Jodi Sta. Maria ang gumanap bilang ang ulirang kanta ng ika-250 na anibersaryo ng pagkamatay ni Gabriela Silang. Ang pelikula ay ipinalabas sa ng direktor na si CJ Andaluz at producer na si Carlo Maceda. Ang pelikula ay nagbigay ng panibagong pananaw sa buhay ni Sisa at sa mga pangyayaring naging dahilan ng kanyang pagkabawil.

Sinundan ito ng  St. Frances na nakamit ang ikalawang gantimpala at ng  St. Teresa na nakuha ang ikatlong puwesto. Napanalunan naman ng  St. Monica ang unang gantimpala, at parehong nakuha ng  St. Anne at St. Lucy ang ikalawang gantimpala. Ang ikatlong gantimpala ay napanalunan ng  St. Rita.

**Mga estudyante nagpamalas ng galing sa pagnenegosyo**

Inpinamalas ng mga estudyante ang kanilang mga natutunan mula sa mga asignatural Technology at Livelihood Education (TLE) at Computer nang ipagdiwang ang TLE Week mula Disyembre 15 hanggang 17, 2014.

Nagdaos ng iba’t ibang paligsahan ang TLE area kung saan nakilahok ang mga napili na mga mag-aaral mula sa bawat sa buwan ng Setyembre 2014.

Para sa kapit lang, nagkaroon ng Digital Poster-Making Contest na may temang “Like mo Christmas, I-share ang saya. ” Nakupit ng mga nasa ikapitong sa ilalim ng TLE sa mga asignaturang Technology at Livelihood Education (TLE) at Computer.

**Blue Heights:**

**Bakit sa lahat ng mga estudyante ay si Sisa ang napili niyong pagtanggap nang puntud?**

Ang “Sisa” naman ay ipinalabas sa mga estudyante mula sa ikasampung baitang. Ito ay pinagbidahan ng dating Pinoy Big Brother housemate na si Christine Patrimonio na gumanap bilang si Gabriela Silang. Ang pelikula ay isinulat ni Frank G. Rivera at isinagawa sa ilalim ng Social Entrepreneurship.

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**Isa pang paligsahan na sinalihan ng mga nasa ikawalang bai- tang ang patimpalak sa pagtataghi. Nakukuha ng mga unang gantimpala at sinundan ng St. Margaret Mary sa ikatlong gantimpala. Ang ikatlong gantimpala ay napanalunan ng  St. Monica.**

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**Simbahan ng mga estudyante na manonood. Ang halagang P8000 na kinita mula sa pagbebenta ay inilalain para sa mga proyektong ilulunsad at ilalim ng Social Involvement Programs. Bukod pa rito, nagbenta rin ang mga mag-aaral sa ikasampung baitang bilang sari-saring pagkain sa kanilang mga kapwa estudyante bilang proyekto sa kanilang klase na Social Entrepreneurship.**

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**Blue Heights:**

Bakit sa lahat ng tauhan sa “Noli” ay si Sisa ang napili niyong pagtanggap nang puntud? **

Si Sisa kasi ang tauhan na nabigyan ng maling interpretasyon. Ang amal lang ng mga tao sa kanya ay nabaliw siya. As a teacher, I want to explain to the students how important the character of Sisa is.

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**St. Monica:**

Ang “Sisa” naman ay ipinalabas sa mga estudyante mula sa ikasampung baitang. Ito ay pinagbidahan ng dating Pinoy Big Brother housemate na si Christine Patrimonio na gumanap bilang si Gabriela Silang. Ang pelikula ay isinulat ni Frank G. Rivera at isinagawa sa ilalim ng Social Entrepreneurship.
**Mga guro sa hayskul nagbigay ng tulong sa Pintong Bukawe**

**Ni Lani Adigue**


Ang nasabing komunidad na kung saan nakatuto ang high school faculty sa pagbibigay ng tulong na nasa ilalim ng kanilang Social Involvement Program. Ang gawaing ito ay pinamunuan ni Gng. Myra Tingson.

Layunin ng gawaing ito ang mapaigting ang samahan sa panig ng mga piling komunidad at komunidad mula sa departamento ng hayskul, mabigyan ng pagkakataon ang mga miyembro ng High School Faculty Association na mas lalo pang maging aktibo sa pagpapalaganap ng mga gawaing ito may kinalaman sa pakikisalamuha at pakikisama sa kapwa, at mapagtibay ang samahan sa pamamagitan ng pagkakaroong ng pananagutan at maayos na panunungkulan ng bawat miyembro.

Bawat grupo ay may nakaraang na gawaing. Kalakip ng araw na ito ang pagbibigay ng simpleng pagtalakay tungkol sa tunay na diwa ng pasko. Naghandog din ng mga awiting pamasko ang mga guro at namahagi ng mga gawaing ito para sa pagbubukas ng programa. Ilan sa mga nakaaaliw na gawain ay ang paggawa ng yell o jingle, nagkakaroon ng Awit ng Kulasa, awit ng tagumpay

**Awit ng Kulasa, awit ng tagumpay**

**Nina Raeven Davis, Rexanie Martizano, at Bianca Blanco**

Sari-saring emosyon at musika ang mga pinaghalong sangkap ng mga nasa ikasampung baitang sa pagbuo ng kanilang Graduation Song na nakatuon sa pagbuo ng kanilang Graduation Song na kanilang pinalakas sa SICC.

Layunin ng bawat klase sa ikaapat na taon ang gawaing ito sa pagkomposisyon ng awitin. Ang mga piling batay hangganan sa pagpapalaganap ng mga gawain ay nagbigyang kahulugan ng Pasko.

Antipolo City Band at ang choirmaster ng Rabboni Junior Choir, at si G. Van Lawrence Virto na isang miyembro ng Manila Vocal Ensemble, ang choir director ng SLK Marikina Science High School Choir, at ang music director ng Immaculate Conception Parish Choir Organization.

Pagsakay sa eroplanong mapangangib nga ba?

“Ayaw ko nang sumakay sa eroplanon.”
Nakakatatad siyag kan ikasing kung anuman ang maaaring mangyari sa akin habang nasa ere.

Ito ang mga posibleng maging pananaw ng mga taong nakaalam ukol sa mga balita ng pagbagsak ng Indonesia AirAsia Flight QZ8501.

Ayon sa balita, ang nasabing eroplanong galak Surabaya, Indonesia patungo Scotland at ito’y naglalaman ng 155 na pasahero at 7 tauhan. Ito ay bumagsak sa Java Sea noong ika-28 ng Disyembre, 2014 at walang nakaligitas sa malalim na aksidenteng ito.


Hindi mo maaaliis ang kaba ng mga susunod pang pasahero sa eroplanong dahil sa kasukdulan ng mga trahedyong ito. Ang isay’ay hindi pa nahahanap at ang isa nama’y walang nakaligitas. Tunay na nakababahala at nakagugulantang. Pero sino ba ang dapat sisihin sa trahedyong ito?

Mayroon nga ba talagang dapat sisihin?


Ang Malaysia bilang isang bansa ay maaapektuhan din sapagkat kaugnay sa iba’t ibang parte ng Asya, gaya ng Indonesia AirAsia at ng Thai Airways, at tinaaktibong karamihan nito dahil sa mga pasahero nito. Sa mga nakakaraang taon ay malinis na aksidenteng ito. Maaaring tumawag sa mga mga biktima dahil sa kasamaan ng mga pasahero na ito.


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Opinyon

Miserando... Miserando...

Miserando... Miserando... Kahabagan naa nga mahal na Panginoon ang sambayanong Pilipino.Patagin nga ang pananampalataya sa kabila ng maraming unos sa nananasa sa buhay.
Paulita Gomez

MENSAHE

Nakahiga habang nakatulala sa kahit na tita may galit sa muhi si Rina. Wala siyang maintindihan sa mga sinaasabi ng kanyang ina. Mag kaibigan na may dahilan ang lahat ng bagay o na may plano ang Diwos para sa atin?

“Ano namang plano ng Diwos sa akin at hinahayaan niyang maging gunito ka-miserable ang buhay ko?” bulong niya sa sarili.


Blue Heights
Ang Kawawang Manunulat

Mayroong isang makatang mahilig magsulat
Araw gabing humahabi ng tula miski tanghaling tapat
Ngunit minabuti niyang magpaturo sa isang maestro
Sa pag-aakalang matalino’t mabait itong husto

Ngunit nagbago ang kanya ng akala nang masaklishan
Ang ugal ni guro nang isabak siya nito sa paglalahan
Noong una’y kay bait at mapag-alaga ang guro
Ngunit noong awr ng pagsabak siya ay naglalabas ng kuro

“Ikaw ay hindi handa muntuk magsulat
Pero sige, hahayaan kita ng magpatuloy
sa patimpalak pa sa sagot na
Kawawong Manunulat, kawawong makata
Iyan ang nasabi sa sarili ng makatang napahiya

Ngunit lalong nadismaya ang makata
Nang may sabinhin pa sa maestro sa kanya
Alalahanin mo ang pyesang isusulat mo
at matapos ng patimpalak ay sabinhin ito sa akin
Para naman malaman natin
kung may laban o wala ang gawa mo

Matapos ng pangyayari, hindi na sila nakakita muli
Dahil sa hinanakit ng dalagang
nagsisimula pa lang ng mumunti
Hanggang sa dumating ang guro ng parangal
Na magisibbing higanti ng makatang umaaasaang
may parangal na itatanghal

Lahat yata ng pangalan sa listahan ay natawag na noon
Kaya napagtanto na rin ng manunulat
na ang karangalan niya’y hindi pa ngayon
Bagamat balita sa natangalan na balita,
Patuloy siyang nagsumikap
kahit na ang gawa’y hindi nakikilala

Heto namang maestro, tita binalikan ng ginawa,
Lumapit muli sa tinuruan na ngayon dolaga,
nagmamakaawang kanya muling maging makata
Pero ano ang gagawin ko kung hindi pa yata sapat,
Ang panahon na patuloy na sa mga kuro ninyo sadyang tapat?

Ako na kawawong manunulat at kawawong makata,
Magpapakumbaba na naman ba at kalilimutan ang ginawa niya?
Sapagkat kabahay ako’y isang simple lamang sa manunulat
Matitikyak ninyong, lahat ng aking gawa
ay may puso at laging tapat

Minsan


Kahit mariam tayong pinagdaraan sa ating buhay, kailangan natin ng daan na makabulok at makapagamba. Minsan, kailangan natin maaaring mahibangan dahil sa gayong paraan lamang ito matututong makaburos at malakas ang panibagong pag-asa.
Lambunao earns International Master of Memory title

By Jan Cuyco

At 13, Grade 8 student Jamyla Lambunao is the youngest member of the Philippine Team that competed in the 23rd World Memory Championships held at the Baohoa Harborview Hotel in Haikou, Hainan, China on December 11-13, 2014.

Nonetheless, the young Kulasa proved her prowess in memory sports anew as she bagged the only gold medal for the Philippine contingent in the prestigious annual tournament and at the same time securing for herself the title of being the world's youngest International Master of Memory (IMM).

After shining in the Kids division and setting three world records along the way, Lambunao competed in the juniors division for the first time last December. Despite the very tough and challenging competition, Jamyla managed to win a gold medal in the Random Words event after she successfully recalled 207 words in 15 minutes.

The rigorous and extensive training for one and a half months truly paid off.

The Philippine team, however, ranked fifth overall with 14,484 points behind champion Sweden, Mongolia, Germany and host China.

Lambunao also completed the three norms to become an IMM by memorizing in perfect order 1,048 digits in one hour, 10 shuffled decks of playing cards in one hour and a deck of playing cards in 59 seconds.

She, likewise, owns three world marks in the Kids Division by memorizing 151 words in 15 minutes, 206 digits in five minutes and 280 digits in 15 minutes.

Blue Heights asked Jamyla if she would see herself pursuing memory sports.

“Yes, I think I will remain active in memory sports if I keep on competing every year,” she replied.

It all started in summer before fifth grade when her father enrolled her in a memory sport camp to help in her academics. The following summer, the Philippine Memory Team coach Robert Racasa saw potential in Jamyla and asked her to compete in different memory sport competitions. She has participated in many local and international championships and has bagged various medals and titles.

Lambunao said that gaining new friends even from the other side of the world makes her really happy and excited to compete, other than having the honor of representing the Philippines.

She has indeed achieved and proven a lot at an early age, and there is no doubt that going by her day-to-day routine will she be able to reach her lifelong dream of becoming a Memory Sports Grandmaster.

Grade 8 student Jamyla Lambunao wins a gold medal in the recently held World Memory Championships in China.

Playing time

Basketball player Elizabeth Rivas shared her behind the scene happenings during the MARIPRISAA Meet.

On September 6, the SSAM basketball team played against Marikina Catholic School for a best of three encounter.

Before the game, SSAM coach Alfred Recede, refreshed us and told us a few reminders on what to do if certain situations happen in court. We had our warm ups and energy drinks few minutes before it started and that was around 9 o’clock in the morning.

“Ladies, kaya niyo to,” coach Recede said.

To open the game, coach Recede brought me in along with my fellow starters Gae Sumugat, Francesca Yason Alysson Parreno, and Drew Rabadon.

On the bench were Nicole Buenaventura, Raine Lacza, Alita Tupaz, Alyssa Zabala, Francesca Matienzo, Toni Ocampo, Patricia Gajitos.

At first we were all nervous but after we scored a couple of baskets we started to be confident as we executed our plays.

The game’s final score was 40 – 2 in favor of SSAM.

The second game, however, was delayed for a month because of many reasons such as storms and holidays.

Unfortunately, the SSAM team was two players short. Still, the team continued to play with the same aggressiveness and intensity it displayed in the first game.

After the final buzzer has sounded, SSAM was on top, 46-22, thereby giving the team the championship of the MARIPRISAA girls basketball competition. This is the third straight title for the Scholasticans in the MARIPRISAA.

In the end, we offered all of this success to the One who gave us these talents and be forever grateful for them. May the Lord grant us more blessings for the coming years.
Wushu players battle it out in the 6th ASEAN School Youth Games

By Mia Quisumbing, Alexia Manuel and Jasmine Muyco

The Shoe Capital of the Philippines proudly played host to the 6th Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) School Games from November 29 to December 7.

The 9-day event was held in different venues in Marikina.

St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina was chosen to host the Wushu event of the activity.

SSAM prepared for the activity by temporarily prohibiting the use of Gates 5 and 6 as points of entrance and exit from the duration of the games. The gates were used exclusively by the sports officials, players, and media. The Sister Irmburg Covered Court, in which the wushu event took place, was also reserved only for the wushu athletes and spectators.

Dave Degala, a wushu silver medallist representing the Philippines from Puerto Princesa, said he appreciated the preparations undertaken by SSAM in hosting the event. "The venue was good and was suitable for the event," he said. The Philippine Wushu team bagged 1 silver and 3 gold medals.

It was a daily dawn-to-dusk competition which accommodated all of the Wushu student players under the different categories from the ASEAN member countries such as Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

Athletics, tennis, volleyball, and swimming were conducted at the Marikina Sports Center. Trevi Gymnasium was the location for the badminton event, Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College for sepak takraw, and the Marikina Convention Center for the table tennis. The Marist School Gymnasium was the venue for the basketball games, the Rizal Memorial Gymnastics Hall hosted the gymnastics event, and the Valley and Golf Country Club was the location for the golf competition.

Wushu is a traditional Chinese martial art which is composed of two subcategories: Taolu, which involves different martial arts patterns and maneuvers, and Sanshou, which makes use of modern fighting methods influenced by Chinese boxing. 

St. Scholastica’s Academy Marikina played a major role in the 6th Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) School Games as it played host to the wushu event from November 29 to December 7.
Varsity Teams reap major awards

The year 2014 was indeed a busy yet successful year for the different varsity teams of SSAM. All the hard work they channelled into training for their competitions, while juggling these extra-curricular activities with their schoolwork, paid off when they brought home awards from different competitions.

**BASKETBALL TEAM**

2014 was indeed a busy year for the SSAM Basketball Team as they competed in two leagues, namely the Marikina Private Schools Athletic Association (MARIPRISAA) Competition and the League of Southern Manila Schools (LSMS) in Brent International School, Mamplasan, Biñan, Laguna.

The team was hailed champion in the MARIPRISAA held last November, in which they competed against the Marikina Catholic School Girls Basketball Team for the final round. They also won 3 out of 7 games in the LSMS. They won against Collegio San Agustin Biñan, Our Lady of Caysasay School of Taal Batangas, and Immaculate Heart Mary College of Parañaque.

Basketball Team coach Mr. Alfred Recede shared that every competition was a great learning experience both for him and for the team.

“I saw how the team improved after every game that we played,” Mr. Recede said. “They grew and developed in character and are slowly attaining the level of maturity I wanted them to have.”

Assistant coach Mr. Armand Odevilas also revealed that in the history of the SSAM Basketball team, 2014 was the only year in which the team had a lot of exposures to different events such as official games and tune-up games with teams from other schools.

The SSAM Basketball Varsity Team is composed of student-athletes who are just as focused on their sport as they are on their studies. Pictured above are the victorious players after a game, along with their coach Mr. Alfred Recede.

**CHESS TEAM**

The SSAM Chess Team again proved that Scholasticans are both beauty and brains when they bagged the Championship title in the First Division of the 2014 MARIPRISAA Games held at Marist School Auditorium and landed 2nd place overall.

The Chess Team is headed by Mr. Armand Odevilas and is composed of Clarize Ann Dela Paz of 10 – St. Veronica and Ama-bellelncay of 9 – St. Walburga.

They scored a total of 5 points, ranking second place next to the overall first placer, the Kostka School Chess Team, with only a 1.5-point difference.

**VOLLEYBALL TEAM**

The High School Volleyball Team once again brought pride to SSAM when they achieved awards in the Marikina Private Schools Athletic Association (MARIPRISAA) Tournament and the Sister
Marie Eugenie (SME) Cup held at Assumption College, Antipolo.

Headed by their coach Adrian Aguilon, the team is composed of Trixie Lusanta, Charlize Valencia, Janelle Runes, Trisha Sapiter, Aleeza Escalona, Samantha Castillo, Jill Topacio, Peachy Alcasid, Gabrielle Delos Santos, Jillian Pulido, Eunice Magdua, and Jurielle Villarosa.

The team ranked first place overall and bagged first runner-up in the championships of the SME Cup. The game ran from October 25 to December 21, 2014. Peachy Alcasid of 9 – St. Hildegarde was awarded Best Blocker and Jillian Pulido of 10 – St. Catherine won Best Libero at the SME Cup. The team also ranked fourth place overall in the annual MARIPRISAA Tournament.

Alcasid shared that although they only landed fourth place in the MARIPRISAA, the team knew they did their best and that they had nothing else left to prove.

“The competitions made our team much more united, and we’re more challenged to show our improvement,” Alcasid shared.

**BADMINTON TEAM**

2014 was truly a successful year for the SSAM Badminton Team as they made a clean sweep of gold medals in the MARIPRISAA Tournament and Division Meet.

Krizia Bondad of 10 – St. Catherine and Abby Santos of 9 – St. Hildegarde won the championship title in Singles A, Singles B, and Doubles in the MARIPRISAA Meet held last September 27 and October 4, 2014 at the San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila School in Marikina City.

Santos ranked first overall in the division of Marikina in the Singles A category in the Division Meet held in the National Christian Life College last November 10-11.

Bondad shared that all the hours spent training after school were worth it. “Like what they say, hard work truly pays off,” she said.

Bondad likewise revealed that she learned the value of sportsmanship through competing. “Win or lose, we must continue fighting and never stop chasing our dreams.”

The Badminton Club is moderated by Mrs. Catherine Patrocinio assisted by seasoned coaches Mr. Arthur Santos and Mr. Abe Patocinio.

**SWIMMING TEAM**

The SSAM Swim Team once again made the Scholastican community proud with their numerous achievements in various competitions.

Coached by Ms. Marlyn Paghubasan, the team is composed of Kyla Cruz, Elle Amaya, Patricia Casaclang, Gianina Gaspar, Doreen Doria, Celine Nacianceno, Lora Hernandez, Sydney Lagos, and Patricia Sison.

The Swimming Team was hailed overall champion in the MARIPRISAA last August 2014. They also brought home silver medals for the 4x50m Medley Relay event in the Sister Marie Eugenie (SME) Cup last November 2014. They bagged bronze medals for the 200m Freestyle and 200m Backstroke events in the Division Meet, and won gold in the 4x50m Freestyle Relay.

Team Captain Gianina Gaspar said that competing in different tournaments allowed their team to develop the value of sportsmanship, as they learned how to accept defeat and celebrate their victories.

“We became more bonded as a team and promised ourselves that we would perform better in the next competitions,” Gaspar said.
Humans of St. Scho, fondly referred to by many Scholasticans as Humans, was inspired by a famous photography project that started in New York, but is now mimicked in many parts of the world. The simple objective of the project is to photograph and interview random strangers and feature them in social media in an effort to prove the adage, "Everyone has a story to tell."

Brandon Stanton, the mind behind "Humans of New York," which was the inspiration for Humans, started his project in the summer of 2010 with the aim of photographing ten thousand New Yorkers and plotting their pictures on a map. He then began posting these photographs, along with snippets of the conversations he had with the subjects, on different social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. It was warmly received by netizens, as proven by its eight-million-strong following on its Facebook page alone. HONY also became a New York Times bestselling book.

Countless netizens have shared that the inspiring and touching true-to-life stories of the New Yorkers featured on HONY restore their faith in humanity and remind them that good things and people still exist, no matter how hopeless and dismal today’s world seems. People have gone as far as putting up charities and fundraisers for strangers whose stories they only heard about on the internet. Simple posts on social media such as those found in the pages of HONY have such an amazing impact on the audiences.

The idea of recreating the project in SSAM came to the creators of Humans, Danish Fernandez of 10 – St. Veronica and Chiara Cabildo of 10 – St. Cecilia, when they were touched by the heartwarming stories of the people featured in Humans of New York.

Excited by the idea, the duo armed with a camera and a notebook and pen set out to photograph and interview random members of the SSAM community - students, teachers, employees, security guards and alike.

“I love listening to the stories of our subjects,” said Chiara. “I love learning new things about other people, especially strangers.”

Since its inception in August 2014, the Humans of St. Scho Facebook page has garnered over a thousand likes, with its fanbase growing bigger and stronger every day. It has gotten Scholasticans of all ages hooked with its posts anchored on different themes, such as “Friendzone,” which features different circles of friends in SSAM, and “May tanong ka ba sa buhay?” which shines light on the questions that trouble both students and employees.

Danish and Chiara said they were both overwhelmed by and grateful for the positive response of the Scholasticans to Humans. “I did not expect the build-up of audience,” said Danish. Chiara shared that she was touched by the thought of many Scholasticans supporting their project, and added that the audience could gain new insights and find inspiration from the stories of their subjects.

The page has become popular that some Scholasticans have even approached Chiara and Danish and asked to be featured. “For those who asked to be featured… just wait for it,” Danish said jokingly.

The duo was asked about their plans for Humans once they officially step out of high school in March. They said they hadn’t given much thought to it yet, but shared that they have been eyeing some lower classwomen to whom they want to pass on the responsibility of keeping the page updated.

The humans behind Humans of St. Scho achieved their goal and even exceeded their own expectations. The reception of the Scholasticans to their humble project shows that the Benedictine community is truly a family of love and support. So the next time they come up to you to take your photo, try giving them a chance before running away in a panic. You never know who you might inspire with your own life story! 💫
May tanong ka ba sa buhay?

A Humans of St. Scho special feature

“anong gusto ko maging paglaki ko?”

“Bakit hindi ko nakukuha yung deserve ko kahit sobrang pinaghirapan ko naman?”

“magiging professional ba ang anak ko?”

“Bakit ako pinanganak sa mundo?”

“why do people keep on judging?”

“bakin hindi mabuo-buo ang pamilya namin?”
We are all God's Children

Do you see these children on the streets
Have you walked the pavements where they sleep?
Do you feel their hands
When you give them alms?
Did you ever give them bread to eat?

Have you seen their homes washed by the floods?
While a mother tightly holds her child
Do you hear the wind
Of the raging storm?
Can you tell them where it's coming from?

Let us show our love and mercy
With true kindness and humility
For God loves the weak and the needy
Just like you and me

We are all God's children
We are all the same
He is calling us by name to help the poor and lame
And learn what life is really for
It's to know and love and serve the Lord

Stand together and let's do our part
Hear their voices mend their broken hearts
Choose to be brave fight for their rights
Give them back their honor and their pride

Please do not be blind and just leave them behind
To struggle in darkness or give them empty promises

It's to know and love and serve the Lord
It's to know and love and serve the Lord