

# Scholasticans mark century of prayer, work

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WHAT DO THESE PERSONS have in common – Cory Aquino, Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, Lucrecia Kasilag, Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Rosalinda Orosa, Naty Crame-Rogers, Tina Monzon-Palma, Doreen Gamboa-Fernandez, Sr. Christine Tan, Sr. Mary John Mananzan, Preciosa Silverio-Soliven, Lily Monteverde, Carmen Barredo, Ceres P. Doyo, Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz, Paulynn Sican, Maan Hontiveros, Clarissa Grey-Ocampo, Mitch Valdez, Bong Co, Kitchie Nadal, Fr. Victor Badillo, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, Jr., Ed Olaguer, businessmen Golden Ocampo and Rico Ocampo, Sabino Padilla IV, restaurateur David de Padua, insurance executive Celso Villegas, La Salle Br. Bernie Oca?

They are all Scholasticans.

The boys were enrolled in kindergarten and prep at St. Scholastica's before, as one of them once put it, "We discovered we were boys and moved to La Salle over on Taft."

The boys then, in the '50s and '60s, were under the tutelage of Sister Gratia OSB, a tall imposing German nun who brooked no non-sense but who had a heart of gold underneath all the layers

of her habit. And as you can see most of them didn't turn out half bad.

## Brief History

"Ora Et Labora" – Pray and Work – is the Benedictine way and this was inculcated in every Scholastican.

The turn of the century from 1896 to 1906 was a dark time for the Catholic Church in the Philippines. The shift from Spanish to American rule brought about changes in the political, sociocultural and religious orders.

It was at this time the missionary sisters of Tutzing, Germany, under Mother Brigitta Korff OSB, responded to the plea for help from the Papal Legate to the Philippines, Dom Ambrosius Agius, OSB. Five sisters were sent to bring God's Word to the Philippines, arriving on Sept. 14, 1906, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

The first school opened on Dec. 3, 1906, in Tondo, Manila, with an enrollment of 82 boys and six girls in Grades 1 to 3. There was also a free school with an enrollment of 50 boys and girls held in a nearby shed.



PRESIDENT Ramon Magsaysay (right) with his only son Ramon Jr., one of Sister Gratia's boys.

This year's Centennial is a twin celebration of the Priory and the School, with the priory commemorating Sept. 14 and the school Dec. 3 as their respective foundation dates.

## Benedictine Culture

During World War II, parts of the school were converted into a hospital and the campus was sealed off as a "property of the Japanese Imperial Forces." The sisters lived among the ruins.

After the war ended, SSC reopened its doors in 1947. Undaunted, it pursued with greater vigor its mission to achieve “the education of a true and finished woman of character.”

True to Benedictine tradition, St. Scholastica’s has never tooted its own horn although its graduates have reaped countless honors with their achievements both in this country and abroad.

This is because instilled in every Scholastican is the realization that everything is from God and one cannot claim honor and glory for what one not does own. Rather, a Scholastican gives thanks for being used in God’s service and quietly commits herself to glorifying God further through discipline and hard work – Ora et Labora.

### **Grand Homecoming**

This year, St. Scholastica’s Alumnae Foundation Inc. president Ma. Angela “Gigi” Prats and its directors have left no stone unturned for the Grand Centennial Homecoming on Dec. 3.

In the morning, a Mass will be celebrated at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. At 4 p.m., the Grand Centennial Awards ceremony will be held at St. Cecilia’s Hall in a program

commemorating “A Century of Purpose” directed by Freddie Santos.

The following will receive Recognition Awards: Past Prioresses, past SSC presidents, third- and fourth-generation alumnae, the boys of Sister Gratia and past SSAFI presidents.

Highlight of the program will be the 100 Outstanding Scholasticans Award to alumnae who exemplify the “true and finished woman of character” in their chosen fields of endeavor.

It will be “a year of looking back and thanking God for all the blessings of the past, as well as a time to assess our present missionary service and look forward to the future,” said Sr. Angelica Leviste, OSB, St. Scholastica’s president and honorary chair of the centennial committee.

Dinner, dancing, fireworks and entertainment by Scholasticans led by the inimitable Mitch Valdes will cap the affairs.

***Opat Labrador-Hermano and Elsa Lava-Mapua, Contributors***