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# Communication | N F O

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## **PHILIPPINES: CBCP HONORS FR. REUTER FOR SERVICES TO THE PHILIPPINE-CATHOLIC CHURCH**

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) presented the "Jorge Barlin Golden Cross Award" to Jesuit Fr James B. Reuter on January 27 at the occasion of CBCP's bi-annual plenary assembly. Fr Reuter, 92, was honored for his outstanding service to the Church. The priest came to the country in 1938 as a young seminarian. He taught at Jesuit schools in Manila and in Naga, southern Luzon. He was a basketball coach, drama and glee club director and retreat master. While imprisoned by the Japanese during World War II, he wrote songs and produced plays with other Jesuits. He is executive secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Social Communication and Mass Media (ECSCMM), as well as director of the National Office of Mass Media since 1964. Fr Reuter was instrumental in organizing UNDA/ASIA (the international Catholic association for radio and TV in Asia). He is one of the founders of the Philippine Federation of Catholic Broadcasters, a union of Catholic radio and TV stations in the country. For almost seven decades, he already received over 20 prestigious awards citing his invaluable services to the Church and to the country in various fields especially in education, mass media, literature and performing arts. (CBCP NEWS)



## **SINGAPORE: CATHOLIC COMEDY TACKLES THE PARABLES OF JESUS**

The Singapore Catholic theater group, "Walk On Water Productions," staged Dec 7-9, 2007 "This, That & The Other: The Parables of Jesus in 90 minutes," an interactive re-telling of the parables of Jesus that is both light-hearted and serious at the same time. To reach out to a new generation of Catholics, the group updated the parables and set them in modern times. Thus, the parable of the Treasure in the Field is now about a child - drawing the parallel with his/her parents who would give up everything for the child. The group hopes that the play prompts people to reflect on their own lives, leading them to a more proactive Christian life. (CN)

## **PHILIPPINES: OFFICIAL LAUNCHING OF TV MARIA, WITH ITS OWN CABLE CHANNEL**

Manila Archbishop, Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, announced on Dec 8, 2007 that "TV Maria" satellite channel is now accessible to viewers also via cable TV. The TV channel has the support of the Bishops of the Philippines and its programs cover the whole country using 300 local TV stations. TV Maria was inspired by Sr Angelica's Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) in the United States. (FIDES)

## **RADIO VERITAS ASIA IS NOW ON DIGITAL RECORDING**

Radio Veritas Asia (RVA), the continental short-wave radio station owned by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), has adopted a digital recording and production system for 13 of its 15 language services starting Dec 15, 2007. The new system called "Digital Audio Delivery System" or DADS extracts audio signals from voice, cassette, turn table and like sources, and converts them into digital format. The signals are then edited, enhanced and placed into full radio programs. The move towards digitalization aims to improve the quality of sound delivered to target areas covering South, Southeast and East Asia as well as parts of Russia. With DADS, producers are able to maintain the same audio quality throughout the recording session from start to finish. The transmission of programs to RVA listeners, however, still depends on short-wave technology. Alternatively, the station streams its programs via the online facility <[www.rveritas-asia.org](http://www.rveritas-asia.org)> to curb the negative effects of transmission time, audio adjustment prior to transmission, and atmospheric interference. (OSC)

## **PHILIPPINES: NUNCIO TELLS MEDIA TO REPORT TRUTH, NOT TRASH**

Papal Nuncio Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams addressed members of the Philippine Federation of Catholic Broadcasters on Jan 30, calling on the media to use its position in promoting nothing but the truth. The Nuncio stressed the need for bravery to report facts and rejecting the dissemination of "pseudo truth." To be a Catholic media man is simply being a person with "integrity" whose personal life reflects the Gospel, Adams said. In his message for World Communications Day '08, Pope Benedict XVI has urged the media to establish "info-ethics" as a way of maintaining ethical accountability in the industry. The Pope also rebuked the media industry for often using vulgarity and violence, but also praised it for helping to spread democracy and promote dialogue. (CBCP NEWS)

## **PHILIPPINES: SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN COMICS FORM**

The Jaro Archdiocesan Social Action center (JASAC) in Iloilo City has published a full-color comic magazine titled "Ang Pinakatatagong Lihim ng Simbahan" (Church's best kept secret) based on the "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church." The magazine has 105 pages of illustrations by popular local artist Ding Logibis and some text in Filipino. Monsignor Meliton Oso, JASAC director, said the project, done in cooperation with the CBCP Media Office, aims to "bring to the grassroots" the Church's teachings on human rights, the rights of the poor, politics and other social concerns. Logibis, 29, himself publishes the popular "Barangay RP" (Republic of the Philippines village) comics which tackle social, political, health and other issues. (UCANEWS)

## **HONG KONG: FAITH ON THE AIRWAVES**

The "Renewal in the Spirit" Community produces a weekly 30-minute radio program titled "Real Life Story" on issues like extramarital affairs, gambling, financial problems, love affairs, sickness, death of spouses and substance abuse. The program is aired on Commercial Radio One (FM 881) every Thursday from 10:30 to 11:00pm since mid-Nov 2007 till Feb 2008. The program is financed through donations from Catholics in the diocese. The Chinese Catholic community is present online at <www.ris.org.hk> (SE)

## **INDIA: CHURCH RETAKES CATHOLIC DAILY FROM MUSLIM BUSINESSMAN**

M.A. Pharis handed over to the Church on Dec 30, 2007 his stake in the company that publishes "Deepika" (little lamp), Kerala's oldest daily in the state's Malayalam language. The transfer of ownership followed an agreement between a sub-committee of the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council and Pharis' representatives. In 2007, Bishop Mathew Arackal of Kanjirappally invited the Muslim businessman to invest in the company to help it get over a financial crisis. After the return, Catholics in the southern Indian state say they are happy the Church has regained control of the 120-year-old local newspaper. (UCANEWS)

## **PHILIPPINES: CARDINAL ENDORSES USE OF FILM IN EVANGELIZATION**

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal stressed the importance of film as a tool for evangelization, and he called on parish educators and formators to learn its basics to enable them to use it in their work. "Film has become a major disseminator of culture in our time and we need to equip our people with categories and tools to be critical about the movies they watch," Vidal said, adding that understanding the potential of film in evangelization would improve pastoral works. (CNUA)

## **INDIA: SANDESHA AWARDS 2008 ANNOUNCED**

Sandesha Foundation for Culture and Education, the Regional Center for Social Communications under the Karnataka Regional Catholic Bishops' Council, announced the winners of its Sandesha Awards 2008 in Mangalore Jan 22, 2008. The Awards, in their 17th year, are presented to people and institutions contributing to the fostering of a better and value-based society through their creative excellence in various fields and service to society. The Awards presentation will be held on Feb 2, with Bishop Aloysius D'Souza of Mangalore and Chairman of the Sandesha Foundation presiding over the function. (SAR NEWS)

## **HONG KONG: MARRIAGE FESTIVAL PROMOTES FAMILY VALUES, CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE**

More than 2,200 people came to the "Marriage Festival" organized by the diocese on Dec 30, 2007 to promote the Christian message and family values in the light of Pope Benedict XVI's second Encyclical "Spe Salvi." The event, coinciding with the Feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth, also encouraged reflection on chastity in marriage, the theme of the Year of the Family called by the diocese of Hong Kong. (FIDES)

## **THAILAND: CATHOLIC MEDIA AWARDS**

Thirteen media outfits and professionals were honored for promoting human values, dignity and family at the 28th annual Catholic Media Awards at Oriental Hotel, Bangkok Nov 29, 2007. The function was organized by the bishops' Catholic Social Communications of Thailand (CSCT), St. John's University and Assumption University. Guests included the participants of the FABC-OSC's 12th annual "Bishops' Meet." (UDOMSARN)

## **MALAYSIA: CATHOLIC WEEKLY DENOUNCES GOV'T FOR BANNING CHRISTIANS FROM USING THE WORD "ALLAH"**

The Catholic weekly, "Herald," has denounced the Kuala Lumpur government for banning the use of the word "Allah" in its publication. According to the government, the word can only be used by Muslims and for "security reasons," the "Herald" must cancel the word or risk closure. The government ordinance has led to police requisitioning many imported Christian books. "Herald" editor, Jesuit Fr Lawrence Andrew, has been forced to accept the imposition but has denounced the government for depriving him of a right. Herald has a circulation of 12,000 and a readership of 50,000. It has sections in English, Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and Tamil to cater to the more than 850,000 multi-racial, multi-lingual Catholics in the country. (ASIANEWS)

## **CHINA: FAITH-BASED QUIZ, SEASONAL CARDS FOR FUJIAN CATHOLICS**

A religious-knowledge contest and special greeting cards made Christmas memorable for people attending the celebrations at the "open" Church community in Ningde, Fujian province, eastern China. The cathedral, where government-recognized Bishop Vincent Zhan Silu is based, usually attracts only 200 Massgoers on Sundays. But on Christmas evening Mass, about 1,000 Catholics and non-Catholics were present. The diocese's open Church community comprises less than 10 percent of the 73,000 Catholics in the diocese, the rest of whom belong to the "underground" community, which rejects government-approved administrative structures for the Church. Participants at this year's celebration praised the parish in Ningde, a city 1,530 kilometers southeast of Beijing, in particular for the religious-knowledge contest, held prior to the Christmas celebration. (UCANEWS)

## **KOREA: PUBLISHER WHO PROMOTED JUSTICE WINS KOREAN BISHOPS' TOP MEDIA AWARD**

The Korean Catholic Bishops have given their top media award to Francis Lee Gun-bok, president of Dongnyok Publishers, at the 17th Catholic Mass Communication Awards Dec 11, 2007 in Seoul. Lee was selected for his pioneering role in the country's development through books. He was instrumental in establishing "Paju Book City," the center of the country's publishing industry in Paju, northwest of Seoul. Other awards were given for radio and TV broadcasting, film, print journalism, publishing and the Internet to individuals and groups. The awards started as Catholic Awards for Press Freedom in 1987. No award ceremonies were held in 1991, 1994, 1998 and 1999. In 2000, the awards were revived as a way to raise values of justice, peace and love through mass media. (SIGNIS)

## **INDIA: BOSCOM-INDIA DISCUSS CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND EDUCOMMUNICATION**

The annual assembly of BOSCOM, the national body of Salesian Communicators in India, was held in Hyderabad Dec 1-2, 2007. Twenty seven Salesians from ten provinces and one lay collaborator participated in the meeting, which followed two recent international BOSCOM meetings in Sao Paulo, Brazil and Cebu, Philippines. Among the highlights of the conference were discussions on "citizen journalism" and "educommunication." The participants decided to use a common brand name and logo for all media products distributed in India, to promote Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), to take up more training of Salesian correspondents, and to create a Salesian website for young people. (SIGNIS)