

Life in the Wartime Parish: Accounts from the Parish Archives of Tagbilaran and Corella Before the Japanese Occupation of Bohol

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Abstract

There are many lacunae in the historical scholarship of the Philippines during the Spanish and American colonial eras. Among the most conspicuous is the relative lack of information, data, materials, and resources related to the history and activities of the Catholic Church in the country, especially outside of Manila. While this is a lamentable state of affairs, the solution—or part of the solution—is rather simple. There are hundreds and thousands of parish and cathedral churches, colleges and universities, convents and monasteries, museums and private collections, most or all of which contain pertinent and illuminating archival materials that can shed light on this unknown history of the Church. The most numerous, and most important, source for these materials is the humble local parish church archive.

To illustrate the importance of parish archives in contributing to our better understanding of the history of the Philippines and of the Church, the author has chosen two parishes in Bohol—Tagbilaran and Corella—and using their canonical and sacramental records, tells the story of the Second World War. This story includes data on births, marriages, and deaths, epidemics and diseases, parish financial operations and record keeping, and communications between the parishes and diocesan administration before, during, and after the conflict. What we discover is a surprisingly rich, and surprisingly human,

story of life in parish communities during a time of terrible disruption and loss.

Keywords: Parish archives, Colonial history, World War II, Bohol, Tagbilaran, Corella

■ racing the life of a parish community in the archives is a fascinating experience—interesting, captivating, and rewarding. But admittedly it can seem a bit intimidating too. Permission from the diocesan bishop is necessary to access archives and records, there are diocesan officials in charge church cultural heritage materials who should be consulted, and coordination with the local parish priest is essential. The records are almost exclusively written in Spanish, and the potential researcher must be very patient, as it can take hours, days, or weeks of work before patterns and insights begin to emerge, and the records themselves and the places they are stored may be inhabited by any number of various insects and rodents—living and dead—and their excreta. However, these seeming barriers to entry are by no means insurmountable. Though your knowledge of Spanish may be limited or non-existent, it only takes a working vocabulary of a few hundred words to get started in research, especially when dealing with parish financial or sacramental records. Patience is indeed required, but is often rewarded when a sudden flash of insight or a vital piece of information falls into place that changes or clarifies the whole picture. You may even make brand-new discoveries that will be of great use to the parish and the community, which can bring to light entirely new aspects of Filipino history, to say nothing of the wonderfully kind and hospitable people you meet in the course of research. Given that much of colonial-era Filipino history is largely unknown, this work is essential for gaining both a deeper and a broader perspective on life during the colonial eras, especially at the local level. Ultimately, this article can be read as an appeal for more research, and especially for more researchers to become involved in this essential field.

I have chosen to focus on the two parishes of Tagbilaran and Corella for a number of reasons. First, both have similar wartime sacramental and financial records, which provide at least partial sets of equivalent data for comparison. Second, the parishes are contiguous, sharing a common physical boundary, and somewhat comparable through their proximity. Third, and very

importantly, they are also distinctly different in character, largely as a result of local geography. Wartime Tagbilaran was (and continues to be) a coastal cabecera, a political and administrative center, made up largely of flatter lowlands, and serving as a hub for transport and shipping activities. Landlocked Corella is a mixture of hilly terrain rising from the coast and relatively flat upland plateau, where it sits at the gateway of the much more rugged mountainous areas of Balilihan and Batuan towards the center of the province. These differences in location and terrain are relevant because they can help explain the different experiences of people living in these parishes before, during, and after the war.

The Sources

In order to make as complete a picture as possible of wartime parish history, several components are needed. Municipal records are vital, as are chronicles of the various military units involved in the fighting, oral histories of combatants and local residents, local parish records, and topography and local infrastructure. By focusing almost solely on parish records, I admit that the scope of this study is artificially limited. However, given that local parish records are nearly never a part of the stories that currently exist, this study is an attempt to amplify this important resource, which can serve to paint a more complete and accurate picture. Indeed, we can paint a surprisingly detailed picture using only parish records, as they possess certain strengths. Among the purely sacramental records, baptismal registers give us a general idea of birth rates¹ in a parish, and major changes in those rates during the conflict can suggest certain patterns of wartime life. A significant dip in baptisms might point to the removal of a portion of the local population due to unrest, such as violence, occupation by enemy soldiers, or lack of access to sources of food. Similar conclusions can be drawn from marriage registers. Burial records, however, provide significant further sources of information. In addition to providing the name, age, and residence of the deceased, these records also list the cause of death. This can be quite revealing during wartime, as causes of death point to patterns of violence and chronic disease instigated by the conflict. Gaps in burial records are also important indicators. When performing baptisms and marriages, all that is required is the presence of the child or the contracting parties, together with someone competent to assist in the sacramental celebration (typically a deacon, priest, or bishop). The actual location where the sacraments are celebrated is relatively immaterial, especially in urgent cases, but the same is not true of burials. Consecrated ground is required for a canonical burial, and a lack of burials

during a period of time may suggest that a parish church and its cemetery are unavailable, perhaps having been occupied by invading troops.²

Other canonical books shed light on everyday parish life, though they are encountered more infrequently than sacramental records. Financial registers, known generally as Libros de Cuentas, 3 trace parish income and expenditures, usually in regular bimonthly entries. Income largely consists of fees collected for performing baptisms, marriages, and different classes of burials, while common expenditures include salaries for parish employees, costs of celebrating fiestas, and purchases of mass wine, wheat for hosts, and other liturgical essentials. We also find extraordinary expenses here, such as repairing or replacing damaged items and buildings, and other war-related items. Libros de Ordenes are volumes of copied circular letters from the bishop or archbishop to the local parish churches. The subject and tone of these letters speak to the reality of approaching war, and later its aftermath. 4 Each of these sources also have weaknesses. Financial records are notoriously dry and impersonal, but they do show important flows of resources into and out of the parish church, which is one way of measuring the health of the parish as an institution. Circular letters are somewhat "topdown" and not particularly concerned with unique, local, parish-level matters, but nonetheless provide an essential big-picture overview of the attitudes and direction the Church is taking at the archdiocesan or even the national level, which will naturally filter down to the individual parish. With such qualifications and caveats in place, let us see what parish records tell us about Tagbilaran and Corella on the eve of the Second World War.

Parish Life on the Eve of War

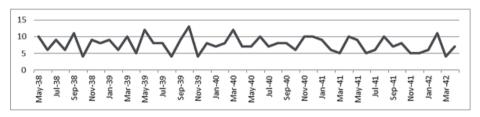
Looking at the data from the two parishes in the years just before the Japanese invasion allows us to establish a baseline for each community, a baseline that illustrates the "stable" disposition of the particular municipality in the prewar period. However, it will become evident in the data analysis that this stability also includes a significant amount of *instability* as far as threats to health and life are concerned.

Parish burial records provide a trove of information about local conditions that may be lost in larger provincial, regional, or national studies. One can learn about outbreaks of disease at a very granular level, with the ability to plot the incidence and spread of epidemics and pandemics in the *población*, and even in individual *barrios*. We can then see if certain diseases

or disorders—whether contagious, environmental, or nutritional—are prevalent in certain sub-communities or age groups. Importantly, it also pulls into focus individual tragedies. For instance, in Corella in March of 1940, a 58-year-old woman died after being gored by a carabao; in February of 1942, a 39-year-old woman died after falling from a coconut tree; and in June of 1947, a married couple, aged 35 and 28 years, drowned together. I mention these cases because, when looking at data trends, even at the local level, it can be easy to overlook the fact that each death was a tragic event that forever altered the lives of family, friends, and the community. This becomes even more pronounced during the war years, where we know that so many of the deaths occurring then were both senseless and preventable.

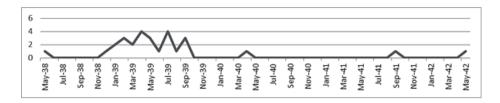
Continuing with Corella, we see in Figure 1 below the raw mortality numbers for the parish between May of 1938 and April of 1942 (just before the Japanese landings in Bohol in May 1942).

Figure 1. Mortality Rates in Corella. Monthly rates for all causes of death between May 1938 and April 1942.



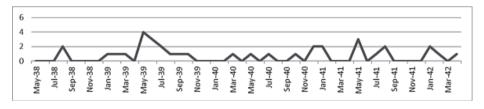
While there is some month-by-month variation in the mortality numbers, these years indicate a remarkable stability in local death rates, with rarely more than ten or fewer than five residents passing away during any given month. However, this regularity conceals some specific aspects of local mortality that may be of interest. Figure 2 spans the same timeframe, and reveals a significant spike in deaths caused by febrile seizure in the middle half of 1939 (Archives of the Corella Parish, *Libro de Entierros* 1938-1945, fols. 1v-97r).

Figure 2. Mortality Rates in Corella. Monthly rates of death caused by febrile seizure between May 1938 and April 1942.



Febrile seizure typically affects young children experiencing a fever triggered by a viral or bacterial infection. Looking at common causes of death in other parishes in the Visayas and northern Mindanao, influenza is a potential culprit as the cause of the infection, as increased rates of the flu are seen in many places in 1939. However, it was not particularly fatal to residents of Corella, with only two deaths listed as caused by influenza during the period in question.⁵

Figure 3. Mortality Rates in Corella. Monthly rates of death caused by tuberculosis.



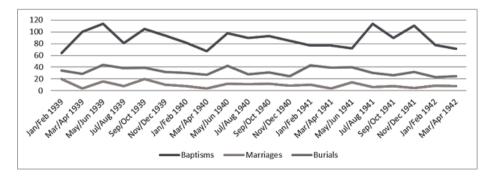
Another potential possibility for the seizure-inducing infection is tuberculosis, always endemic to the Philippines, which was causing a minor spike in mortality in Corella in mid-1939, as per Figure 3 above. While the root cause of the spike in febrile seizure may never be known, we have a slightly clearer picture of prewar Corella, where severe complications from infectious disease were a consistent risk, but where mass-casualty outbreaks were not occurring. Additionally, diseases caused by malnutrition were also common, particularly beriberi. Beriberi is caused by a severe deficiency of vitamin B1 (Thiamine). It is often seen among nursing mothers and nursing children, and in all ages when reliable sources of Thiamine are not readily available. In the Philippines and elsewhere where rice is a staple of the diet, the process of highly polishing rice strips away much of the vitamin content, including B1. If other Thiamine-rich foods are not added or substituted, beriberi can become widespread in the general population. Despite the introduction of an effective

vitamin supplement (Tiki-tiki), beriberi remained a leading cause of death among Filipinos before, during, and after the war. However, this also contributes to our pre-war picture of Corella, were death due to malnutrition was also a risk for all ages.

In many places, parish sacramental records are incomplete, damaged, or illegible. This is particularly true of records kept during stressful or tumultuous times, such as the change of colonial administration from Spain to the United States, and during the Second World War. In both events, there was often a lack of available priests, general social disorder due to armed conflict, and deficient or non-functioning administrative structures at the diocesan level, making the procurement of essential parish items, such as canonical books, impossible. Alternatively, secondary sources of birth, marriage, and death data may be gleaned from the parish books of accounts, if they exist. Fortunately, such is the case for both Tagbilaran and Corella.

In Tagbilaran, the *Libro de Cuentas* lists the total bimonthly fees collected for baptisms, marriages, and burials in various categories. For instance, during the January/February bimester of 1939, the parish church performed 64 ordinary baptisms (for a total of 3.20 pesos), 20 ordinary marriages (10 pesos), six solemn adult burials (36 pesos), nine sung adult burials (45 pesos), three spoken adult burials (10.50 pesos), 13 sung child burials (39 pesos), and three spoken child burials (6 pesos). Taken together in Figure 4 below, we can create an extrapolated baseline of births, marriages, and deaths for the period prior to the Japanese occupation.

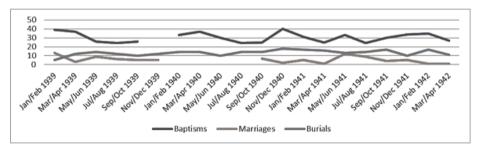
Figure 4. Tagbilaran Sacramental Data. Numbers of baptisms, marriages, and burials between January/February 1939 and March/April 1942.



Here in Tagbilaran, we note a state of relative regularity, with bimonthly baptism rates hovering between 60 and 110, marriages between five and 20,9 and burials between 20 and 40 (Archives of the Tagbilaran Cathedral, *Libro de Cuentas* 1913-1956, fols. 89r-113v).

The Corella *Libro de Cuentas* shows a regularity similar to that of Tagbilaran, as we see in Figure 5 below. Total baptisms for each bimonthly entry hover between 20 and 40, burials between ten and 20, and marriages below ten (Archives of the Corella Parish, *Libro de Cuentas* 1884-1946, fols. 175v-198v). As a brief aside, the gaps in the graphs for baptisms and marriages in Figure 5 illustrate one of the difficulties in performing archival research. These gaps are places where the entries in the Corella *Libro de Cuentas* have been obliterated by water damage. Such damage is common, as are entries damaged or destroyed by termites, or where the ink has eaten away the paper.

Figure 5. Corella Sacramental Data. Numbers of baptisms, marriages, and burials between January/February 1939 and March/April 1942.



In this case, the missing data points are not likely to have deviated significantly from the visible patterns. If this were to happen, we would expect to see a noticeable increase or decrease in the cash balances carried over by the parish between the bimonthly periods, and we do not see this in Corella. Though we cannot use the financial data to determine causes of death, it is nonetheless important, valuable, and fairly accurate information, and can be used to track general trends when other records are damaged or incomplete.

Financial registers not only provide data regarding income in a parish church, they are also important for recording expenditures for various things like salaries for parish employees, purchases of items needed for liturgical functions, and larger projects such as construction and repairs. Parish salaries tell us a few things, such as the relative size of the parish, as the salaries may

vary based on the amount of work to be done an individual church. For instance, the parish secretary of Tagbilaran earned eight pesos per month, while the secretary in Corella made four pesos per month. This suggests that there was approximately twice as much work for the parish secretary in Tagbilaran than in Corella, an estimate that is reasonable given the populations of the two municipalities in the 1939 census: 15,617 in Tagbilaran and 5,676 in Corella (Censuses of Population (1903-2007)," National Statistics Office).¹¹ Other salaried positions were similar. The parish organist in Tagbilaran made six pesos monthly, while the organist in Corella made two pesos. The labandera made four pesos, compared with one peso; and the Tagbilaran bellringer (campanario) made three pesos monthly, while his counterpart in Corella earned one peso. There were also people who were employed for work that was specific or unique to a particular parish church. Tagbilaran retained a relojero, assumedly a person in charge of maintaining a clock that was placed in or near the church, and compensated at four pesos a month. Corella employed a cemetery porter at one peso a month, while Tagbilaran did not have one on the payroll.¹²

Salaries paid to parish employees help to put other expenses in perspective. In each of the parishes, a bottle of mass wine cost three pesos, ¹³ two kilos of incense cost four pesos, while a *lata* (tin container) of flour to make communion hosts consistently cost two pesos in Tagbilaran, but 1.80 in Corella. The Corella church typically spent between 15 and 20 pesos per bimester on candles, while Tagbilaran spent around 7.50 for raw wax for the same period. Some parishes purchased wax and manufactured their own candles, and in many cases offered them for sale in order to provide an additional income stream for the church. However, it is not likely that Tagbilaran was doing this, as there are no entries showing income from candles. Other important semi-regular expenses included three outlays of 25 pesos each for the major fiestas of the year: Holy Week, Corpus Christi, and the fiesta of the patron saint of the parish. A new canonical book cost around 13 pesos, which included the cost of purchasing the book from the archdiocesan chancery, writing the instructional rubrics, and binding the book in a soft leather cover. The electrification of parish churches and kumbentos took place during the first half of the 20th century, and pre-war Tagbilaran was paying approximately five pesos bimonthly for electricity, purchased from the local government utility. Corella owned a generator and produced its own electricity.15

While the above examples give us an idea of the regular financial disposition of the church, some of the more interesting things to see are the

special projects undertaken by the parishes. These included major purchases of liturgical items (such as *santos*, vestments, or frontals), physical expansions of the church or *kumbento*, and major repairs of damage. Between May and August of 1941, Corella spent more than 140 pesos on materials and labor for the *kumbento* (Archives of the Corella Parish, *Libro de Cuentas* 1884-1946, fol. 182r). For Tagbilaran, I will describe their pre-war expenses in somewhat of a narrative style to more easily see how financial information can help us tell the story of a parish.

Throughout the first half of 1939, we see Tagbilaran purchasing and stockpiling building materials for the parish church and the *kumbento*. Then in mid-July, the following request, written by parish priest Fr. Hermenegildo Hangad to Archbishop of Cebu Gabriel M. Reyes, is attached to the *Libro de Cuentas*:

Your Excellency,

I the undersigned, most humble parish priest of Tagbilaran, do beseech and request of His Excellency, in accordance with the Synodal ordinances, the necessary permission to disperse and expend the entire amount of the funds pertaining to the Church of Tagbilaran, in order to proceed with the work already begun in the said church.

According the *Libro de Cuentas*, there exists in the parish funds a balance of more than 300 pesos.

Accept my humble thanks for the kind favor and consideration of this request of your servant in Christ, whose blessings be upon His Excellency.

Hermenegildo Hangad (Archives of the Tagbilaran Cathedral, *Libro de Cuentas*, 91v)

While this seems a simple enough request, there is additional background that will be helpful in understanding the financial situation of the Catholic Church in the Philippines during the first half of the 20th century. As mentioned in an earlier note, the change from a Spanish to an American colonial administration caused significant financial hardships for the parish churches, due to the elimination of official tax support as the primary source of income. For instance, a parish church that received a bimonthly subsidy of 100 pesos (in addition to regular fees collected for sacramental services, etc.)

during the Spanish era, now found itself subsisting on only ten pesos per bimester. This very often left the church unable to pay their parish employees, to properly celebrate the three major yearly fiestas, or to maintain the parish infrastructure and make necessary additions and repairs. However, this is only part of the story. It appears that the Philippine Revolution and Spanish-American War took the church hierarchy somewhat by surprise, at least in the (then) Diocese of Cebu. Though it was not uncommon for bishops to order an individual parish church to remit portions of their parish treasury to the diocesan chancery, 17 individual parishes generally kept their cash, quite literally, "on hand." It is only in the very late part of 1898 that we see entries in the Libros de Cuentas showing parish priests sending their funds to Cebu (and in some cases, Manila) by order of the bishop, to be placed in an international bank for safekeeping. However, it appears that those instructions did not make it in time to the more distant reaches of diocesan territory. Several parishes on the island of Leyte, which was then part of the Diocese of Cebu, retain notes and sworn statements from former Spanish-era local municipal officials, stating that officers and soldiers under orders from General Vicente Lukban 18 arrived and forcibly removed all of the funds from the parish. Though there is much, much more to this story, it is sufficient to illustrate why Fr. Hangad is in a position where he must request Archbishop Reves to disperse the parish funds, as they are obviously not at his immediate physical disposal in the parish, despite being recorded in his Libro de Cuentas. Archbishop Reyes makes the following reply:

In view of the aforementioned request, we hereby give our authorization to the Most Reverend Father Hermenegildo Hangad, Parish Priest of Tagbilaran, to use the funds of the parish, both those existing at present as well as those which may be received hereafter, in accordance with the above request, with the express instruction that the parish not incur any debts for these works, but that only existing funds be spent, together with any contributions that may be received from the parishioners.

File this letter in the *Libro de Cuentas*, together with the reports of expenses for this work. Dictated in Cebu on July 14, 1939.

Gabriel M. Reyes

Archbishop of Cebu (Archives of the Tagbilaran Cathedral, *Libro de Cuentas* 1913- 1956, fol. 91v)

Having received approval from the Archbishop, Fr. Hangad begins the work in earnest. Each subsequent two-month period sees expenses of between 55 and 60 pesos for materials, with a further 35 to 40 pesos to pay carpenters and day laborers. At the same time, he is paying around ten pesos bimonthly for clearing and cleaning the general church grounds. This continues until the December 21, 1940 entry, when Fr. Hangad hands over the administration of Tagbilaran to his successor, Fr. Ireneo Castro. Regular income and expenses in Tagbilaran continue after the departure of Fr. Hangad, with the exception of the purchase of materials and labor costs, so the building/repair projects appear to have been completed. In 1941, Fr. Castro purchases some misals, and several books for the parish musicians, including two copies of the Liber Usualis at six pesos each, and three copies of the Canticos Sagrados of Fr. Domingo Carceller, OAR, at 3.50 each. ¹⁹He also spends 6.95 to repair one of the parishes' musical instruments. Fr. Castro also begins to expand the capacity of the cemetery, overseeing the construction of several new burial niches. He also spends 49.30 to repair "various parts" of the belltower (Archives of the Tagbilaran Cathedral, Libro de Cuentas, 96v-98v). Such is the regular financial life of the parish up until the outbreak of war in December 1941, and the parish registers reveal little to nothing that indicate the approach of the storm that is about to break over the Philippines. But there are other canonical books that give us insight into what was in the minds of the diocesan leadership at this time, and what they then communicated to the local parish priests.

The Clouds of War Gather

Reading the decrees, circulars, and pastoral letters from Archbishop Reyes provides a valuable look into the spiritual, social, and practical priorities of the Archdiocese of Cebu. Throughout the 1930s, these episcopal letters reflect what had been the primary concerns of the Philippine Church since the beginning of the American period. Much of these revolved around the religious, moral, and social issues confronting the Church as it tried to find its way in a fast-changing, modern, twentieth-century world. The ecclesiastical hierarchy communicated extensively with the parishes on issues of public morality, such as the prevalence of immoral forms of entertainment like dancing, the theater, the cinema, and magazines; the necessity of opposing the legalization of divorce in the Philippines; reacting to challenges from competing religious organizations, such as the Aglipayan movement and the various Protestant denominations and societies (such as the YMCA); opposing secularizing influences in government and society; and especially

The following letter from Archbishop Reyes is dated September 12, 1941, and addresses the general fear of potential armed conflict that must have been widespread among the people. I have chosen to share the entire body of each of the translated letters, so that the threat of war can be placed in the context of other issues and concerns of the Church, and also so that the overall balance and tone of the letter is clear.²⁰ This is what Archbishop Reyes had to say to the clergy in Cebu and Bohol less than three months before the opening of hostilities:

"Stet et Pascat" Arzobispado de Cebu

To our Most Reverend Parish Curates, Priests, and Rectors in Cebu and Bohol.

Grace and Health in Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

For the upcoming month of October we remind you of the order contained in No. 156 of the decrees of the Diocesan Synod, referring firstly to the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary, not only individually for personal devotion, but also together in family and community according to ancient and laudable custom. With every effort you should promote this practice. Secondly, concerning special devotions to the Most Holy Virgin Mary to which the month is dedicated. Regarding these devotions, we again direct that in every church the Holy Rosary be recited daily at the simple exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament, or at the solemn exposition if there are a large number of faithful attending, and the means are available. It should be recited immediately after the litanies, the prayers for peace, and the ordinary of St. Joseph, according to the rubrics.

In order to impress upon the faithful the great benefit, importance, and necessity of appealing to the Virgin, necessary as this is during these calamitous times in which we live, it is essential that parish priests and rectors give a short, but fervent, reminder in their sermons and Sunday homilies, that great blessings derive from such a spiritual resource and ordination in the Christian life. If we require grace, divine favor, and fortitude to sustain us in the present hour, we must do what righteousness demands of our obedience as Christians, to take refuge in Mary, Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, seeking Her powerful intercession, grace, and divine favor, which

hrough Her hands flow to us; it is She, in all times, who is the refuge of sinners and the help of Christians.

Will there be war or not? Will we find ourselves embroiled in it? These are the questions of the day, the answers of which no one can foresee. There are arguments for the possibility of conflict as well as for the contrary. In this latter alternative we think of our national defense and the protection provided to us by the people of the United States. We are confident that we will not be abandoned by the United States, as their defense is also ours. However, Venerable Fathers, our own national defense, and that which is extended to us, can never be so strong and firm as the spirit of those who are called to arms to defend us. We can clearly see that, regardless of the strength of the material weapons, the defense will crumble if the people from whom the elements of defense come lack the religious foundation on which the strength and fortitude of the spirit is derived. Spiritual and moral discipline, sobriety, strength of will; these are as important and necessary to the national defense as military and naval might. It cannot be imagined that the hearts of the people will be sound if God does not occupy the chief place-this concerns individuals as well as society at large. Juvenile delinquency, attacks on the unity and sanctity of marriage, the crime of birth control, the poison of the obscene press and of degrading films, lack of respect for parents and the constituted authorities, and the loss of virtues that shape character. A strong and disciplined life is the stoutest enemy of such evil enticements, against which we must most urgently defend ourselves, as they gradually work their way into the institutions of our country. If we do not work to check the spread of these evils, our people will suffer the same fate as the nations, seemingly strong though they be, who have abandoned and forgotten their God. Observe, Venerable Fathers, how our enemies do not cease for a moment in their determination to cloud with error the understanding and corrupt with vices the hearts of the people!

Venerable Fathers, in light of these ravages, let us be united in our work and cooperation for the common good, and for the restoration of those Christian habits to the benefit and health of the souls in our care.

To this purpose, we cannot but give you this exhortation in the name of your priestly ministry:

If it is said that if Christians are soldiers, the priest is their captain; and what will happen if the captain deserts his troops? What must the captain do in the midst of the battle? He must place himself at the front, and with his own heart instill courage and perseverance in all.

Jesus Christ called the Apostles to be fishers of men and of souls. You are the inheritors of this mission, and having participated in it, you have the same ministry and the same authority. What is the work of a fisherman? Not to sail from the shore, but to brave the high seas. You are the workers of the Lord; you are the laborers who must cultivate the fields of the faithful. And in the time of labor and harvest, we can neither rest nor abandon our work.

You are Fathers. Keep watch over the children to whom you feed the bread of doctrine, a gift for their spiritual life. Will you allow them to perish?

Ah, Venerable Fathers, you must work, you must fight with urgency. You must be zealous, studious, and active.

We must all work as one, dedicating ourselves boldly and with ardor in cultivating the fields in order to bring in an abundant harvest while fighting a determined battle against error and vice, giving life to souls, convinced that our defense, our security, is in the vigor and fortitude of the spiritual and moral life, and in the practice of Christian virtues. We labor under the protection of Mary, through the apostolate of Her Rosary, that will be for us as at all times, the most efficacious and powerful medium—as it is likewise for Mary a most pleasant gift—being rewarded by Her mercy as the Mother of divine grace, and of all mankind.

We take this opportunity to remind you that the penultimate Sunday of October, which this year falls on the 19th, is "World Mission Day," a day intended to instill and intensify in the faithful the idea of missions, and excite in them a desire to cooperate in the work of salvation among the pagans and infidels, through the gift of prayer and good works. Continue with what has been done in previous years in this matter.

With heartfelt blessings,

Gabriel M. Reyes

Archbishop of Cebu (Archives of the Loon Parish, *Libro de Ordenes* 1904-1950, fols. 128r-130v)

Though the potential for war is one of the central emphases of the letter, it is ultimately at its heart a pastoral letter, urging the priests of the Archdiocese to behave as spiritual soldiers (as well as fishermen and laborers), combating the evils of the day—specifically the social issues that have been a focus of the Church throughout the twentieth century. The words of Archbishop Reyes tell us that armed conflict is indeed possible, but there is little sense of urgency in the tone of his writing, at least urgency in a temporal, physical sense. The resolve and determination he is encouraging is entirely spiritual. Of course, this is entirely expected of a prelate of Archbishop Reyes' position and stature. It is noteworthy that he encourages devotion to the Virgin Mary, specifically by means of the Holy Rosary. This will become significant after the war.

We next hear from the Archbishop a few weeks later, on October 2nd, when he shares the substance of a telegram received by the Philippines Church hierarchy from Cardinal Secretary of State Luigi Maglione, which gives specific instructions in support of the general appeals of Pope Pius XII:

"Stet et Pascat"

To our Most Reverend Parish Curates, Priests, and Rectors in Cebu and Bohol.

Grace and Health in the name of Jesus Christ Our Lord.

In a recent cable dispatch, his Eminence the Cardinal Secretary of State communicated the wish of the Holy Father that the Philippine Episcopate promote special public prayers for the Church and for Peace during this month of October.

This is the hope and fervent longing of an anguished father's heart, in view of the tragic involvement of his children among the nations in this present war.

The Holy Father directs that, we his children in the Philippines, in common with all Christians and in order to be united in the spirit of prayer and sacrifice, lift our supplications to God and make an offering of our communion and good works for the safety of the Church—who is our beloved Mother—for the cessation of the destructive war between our brothers, and for peace among them and the entire world.

It is our duty to make this fatherly appeal, given in the name of God and of humanity.

To this effect, we implement what was earlier prescribed in the circular of September 15 [sic], regarding the Holy Rosary and prayers for peace: (a) announce in each church, and in public and semi-public chapels, this petition of the Holy Father for all of the faithful to offer individual prayers, and (b) that there be a general communion *pro Ecclesia et Pace* [for the Church and Peace], on a suitable day during the month of October.

Produced at the Archdiocesan Curia of Cebu, on the Feast of the Guardian Angels, October 2, 1941.

Gabriel M. Reyes

Arz. de Cebu (Archives of the Loon Parish, *Libro de Ordenes* 1904-1950, fol. 130r)

This message, though concerned with war, is nonetheless general in scope and tone, referring to the conflict which had already been raging in Europe for more than two years, and not specifically to the Philippines. However, this changes drastically when we next hear from Archbishop Reyes. The following circular was written on December 10, 1941, two days after the initial Japanese bombings and landings in the Philippines. The tone of this letter is much more terse, and instead of a generally spiritual and pastoral message, the exhortations and instructions are conspicuously physical and practical. It is difficult not to feel the disquiet and apprehension that radiates from this circular, even at a distance of more than 80 years:

"Stet et Pascat" Arzobispado de Cebú To Our Most Reverend Parish Priests, Church Managers, and Priests of the Secular and Regular Clergy.

We are now in a time of national emergency. The Lord in His unfathomable purposes has permitted this to occur, doubtless for His greater glory and for the spiritual good of humankind. So with trust in His infinite mercy, we should bless His sweet will because, as the Apostle teaches us, in all things favorable and unfavorable, we should give thanks to the Lord in omnibus gratias agite [in all things give thanks], with the comfort that in labor and adversity, we may recognize the beneficial hand of the Lord that comforts us, corrects us, and tests us for our own benefit. In humility and complete submission, we acknowledge God Our Lord as our Maker and Master, not only through material things and the visible benefits that we continually receive, nor through the good works we have accomplished, but because without the aid of His grace we are unable to achieve anything of worth. Because the Lord has permitted these times of emergency to come upon us, let us understand that in it is manifested His will; this alone is sufficient for us to have confidence in accepting that what He provides is for the common good, where He desires us to serve according to our ministry, gaining the reward He has prepared for us.

The gravity of these times demands of us, in addition to service in ministry for the good of the faithful entrusted to our pastoral care, our obligations and duties as citizens in cooperation with the authorities that have been established to promote morality and the public good. Therefore, let us not spare ourselves in cooperation and sacrifice that will result in the common good. Let us put our confidence in the Lord and face these days of trial with calmness and serenity, and the Lord likewise will console us and help us endure these trials with patience and courage.

While the present state of emergency endures, the following resolutions will apply:

First, at the place where the prayer *pro pace* [for peace] is offered, from today until further order is given, offer the prayer *tempore belli* [in time of war], as well as *pro re gravi* [for grave intention], in order to realize the grace and peace of God.

Second, that Parish Curates and Coadjutors must remain in the places they currently occupy, unless a superior order is given to the contrary.

Third, that churches be well guarded, particularly where the Most Holy Sacrament is kept, in order to avoid all danger of desecration and theft.

Fourth, that the sacred vessels, goods, and canonical books of the parish must be deposited in a secure place and not handed over to anyone without authorization.

Fifth, as the government has prohibited gatherings of large crowds of people because of the danger to which they would be exposed, we order the cancellation of the Misas de Aguinaldo, the Misa de Nochebuena and religious processions, as well as the regular daily celebrations of Holy Mass in the parishes, in order to avoid danger and public disorder.

Finally, we direct our Most Reverend Fathers to recall the words of the Apostle to the Thessalonians: *orate pro nobis* [pray for us]. I ask you with all my heart to pray for me, for only with the help of the Lord can I carry the weight of my duties; offer prayers for me, because in the midst of all these duties I am in greatest need of them. I also pray for you, Most Reverend Fathers, so that the Lord will attend to you with His most holy grace which directs and governs us, so that in everything we will seek only the wellbeing of souls and the greater honor and glory of God, on whose behalf I give my warm pastoral benediction.

Produced at the Archdiocesan Curia of Cebu on December 10, 1941

Gabriel M. Reyes

Archbishop of Cebu (Archives of the Loon Parish, *Libro de Ordenes*, fol. 131v-131r)

This is the last we hear from Archbishop Reyes until the end of the war. Of the five resolutions he dictates in his circular, the second (priests must remain where assigned), fourth (securing the records and valuables of the church), and fifth (elimination of daily masses and feast celebrations)

are most relevant to this discussion. The cancellation of the quicklyapproaching festivities of the Advent and Christmas season would have been a great blow to clergy and parishioners alike, even more so the daily celebration of the Holy Mass. During the five months between the shocking revelation that war has indeed broken out in the Philippines and the landing of Japanese troops in Bohol, there is a sense in the financial records that Boholano parish churches are preparing for a major disruption in their operations. In both Tagbilaran and Corella, spending on projects and building materials gradually slows, until expenditures include salaries for parish employees and little else. Both parishes purchase five bottles of mass wine just before the Japanese arrival—much more than normal for a two-month period—likely in anticipation of wartime scarcity. As per the Archbishop's fourth directive, Corella spends five pesos to have the important parish documents and valuables evacuated and transported to a safe area. This did not seem to have happened in Tagbilaran, and it is possible that the invasion caught them by surprise.21

The war in Bohol would begin in earnest when Japanese forces landed in Tagbilaran on May 17, 1942. This article gives us a snapshot of pre-war conditions in the parishes of Corella and Tagbilaran, following the different disease outbreaks and causes of death, the regular and extraordinary parish expenses, building and repair projects, and the place of the parishes as part of the larger archdiocesan community. This has helped us establish a baseline for life in these parish communities before the local outbreak of war. The second half of this study, to be published in the next issue, will continue this tracing of life and death, parish operation and interruption, and communication, both during the war and afterwards.

Notes

¹ It is important to make a distinction between *baptismal* rates and *birth* rates, which are not the same. Not every resident of a given municipality would have been Roman Catholic (though the vast majority were), so non-Catholic births do not appear in the parish baptismal register. Also, measuring birth rates through the registers may not be completely accurate when looking for month-by-month changes, even during peacetime. In many parishes, children were baptized within a few days of birth, while parishes with remote or inaccessible *barrios* experienced delays of several weeks or months. This is why a local-level analysis is important, because what was commonplace in one parish may have been out of the ordinary in another.

- ² The parish church and the cemetery were not always adjacent to one another. Throughout the twentieth century, parishes could be seen purchasing, and receiving donations of, various pieces of land in order to expand or relocate the cemetery. So it is possible that the parish church was itself available, but the cemetery was not. Gaps in records may also point to the lack of an available priest, or the lack of available canonical books for keeping records. I should also note that such dangers to spiritual infrastructure were not always the sole result of the presence of occupying forces. Local guerilla groups also committed acts of violence against members of the community, including the Church.
- ³ They are also variously identified as *Libros de Recibo y Gasto* and *Libros de Cargo y Data*.
- ⁴ Before the war, Bohol was a part of the Archdiocese of Cebu under the administration of Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes. Bohol was separated and established as the Diocese of Tagbilaran in late 1941, but the war intervened before the separation could be implemented and a bishop assigned to the new diocese. Archbishop Reyes served as Apostolic Administrator of Tagbilaran until late 1946, when Julio Rosales was installed as first bishop.
- ⁵ While influenza may have not been directly fatal to those in Corella who contracted it, it may have triggered fatal febrile seizures in children who were exposed to the virus. However, the instigating factor(s) must ultimately remain the subject of conjecture.
- ⁶ Damage by water, insects, or commonly-used and highly acidic iron gall inks are the primary culprits. Often these are caused or exacerbated by improper storage in damp or infested environments.
- ⁷ Though the effects on parishes were somewhat similar between the periods 1899-1902 and 1942-1945, the causes were rather different. At the turn of the twentieth century with the departure of nearly all Spanish priests and bishops, it took some time for many churches to be assigned a new parish priest, with many not taking possession of the canonical books until 1902 or later. In 1942, there were sufficient clergy to administer the various parishes (at least in the central and eastern Visayas where I have done much of my research), but the nature of the conflict often made for a very inhospitable environment for the parish priest, the local population, or both. At the dawn of the American era, while the status of the Spanish bishops was in question, there was at least a functioning diocesan administration through the appointed

diocesan administrators. Not so during the Japanese occupation.

- ⁸ In the years before, during, and after the war, the most commonly-collected fees were the following: Baptism-Ordinary, 5 centavos; Baptism-Extraordinary, 2.50 pesos; Marriage-Ordinary, 50 centavos; Marriage-Extraordinary, 1 peso; Adult Burial-Solemn, 6 pesos; Adult Burial-Sung, 5 pesos; Adult Burial-Spoken, 3.50 pesos; Child Burial-Sung, 3 pesos; Child Burial-Spoken, 2 pesos.
- 9 Marriage data differ somewhat from that of burials and baptisms. With the latter two sacraments, time was usually of the essence. Parents generally wanted to have a newborn baby baptized as soon as possible, and for obvious health and sanitation reasons it was important to bury a deceased parishioner quickly in those days when modern embalming techniques were not available (or affordable). Marriage is much more of an elective event, and the variations in marriage rates are due to preference as well as the vagaries of the liturgical year. A close look at the lowest graph in Figure 4 illustrates that there was usually an uptick in weddings in January and February, followed by a sharp drop during the March/April bimester (dominated by the Lenten season), and subsequent increases between May and October.
- ¹⁰ Regarding the accuracy of the documents, I have found the sacramental records and other canonical books to be written and recorded with great care. with corrections made if needed. However, the occasional mistake does exist. But more difficult from a research standpoint is when a parish priest (or his secretary) deviates from standard rules of record-keeping, or introduces his own innovations. For instance, each individual sub-category of baptism, marriage, and burial is separated in the Libro de Cuentas of Tagbilaran during the administration of Fr. Hermenegildo Hangad, who served as parish priest during the late 1930s and for most of 1940. Fr. Hangad was then assigned to Baclayon and replaced by Fr. Ireneo Castro on December 21, 1940. Fr. Castro did not separate the fees into sub-categories, but placed each of the general categories of baptism, marriage, and burial together in single entries. Fr. Castro was replaced as parish priest of Tagbilaran by Fr. Arturo Tecson on July 1, 1945. This makes it difficult to determine exactly which rites were performed under Fr. Castro, and how many of them. Ultimately, I have had to resort to some guesswork based on prior (and subsequent) patterns in the data, especially for baptisms and burials. Given that these patterns have been largely confirmed in parishes throughout the wartime Visayas, I am relatively confident as to their general accuracy.

¹¹ "Censuses of Population (1903-2007)," National Statistics Office. Accessed on April 15, 2023 at https://archive.org/download/PhilippinesCensusof PopulationLGUs19032007. It was also not uncommon for larger parishes to have more than one secretary at a time.

¹² This is not to say that Tagbilaran did not have a cemetery. Indeed they did, and they consistently improved it both before and after the war. Why they did not employ a porter is unknown to me. It is possible that this was part of the work of another parish employee, a volunteer, the municipality, or was a position paid from other funds (such as stipends given to parish priests, as these and other household expenses in the *kumbento* were recorded in a separate *Libro de Cuentas*, unfortunately not often encountered in the archives).

¹³ Tagbilaran and Corella both purchased one or two bottles every bimonthly period, which shows an average use of about one and a half bottles per month.

¹⁴This 25-peso expenditure was a stipend given to the parish priest for his work during the festivities. It was paid in every parish church I have encountered from at least the 19th century. However, with the departure of Spain from the Philippines and the loss of the *sanctorum* (a portion of yearly tax revenue earmarked for church support), parishes during the American era could not afford to make these thrice-yearly payments. Only in the late 1930s had churches regained the financial stability required to resume this practice (at least in the Archdiocese of Cebu), which was endorsed in a decree by the archbishop. Traditionally, the parish priest received a portion of this stipend, with the rest being divided among the sacristans and the members of the choir for their extra work during the fiestas.

¹⁵ Some parish churches operated their own electrical utilities as a source of income.

¹⁶Repairs were made due to the effect of time and wear, damage by insects, or in the aftermath of natural disasters. It was common to see major expenses for replacing the galvanized iron sheets of the roof after a typhoon or large storm, or repairs to the walls and other stonework after an earthquake.

¹⁷ This usually happened when the parish in question had a large amount of available cash on hand, and the diocese needed to assist another parish church with a major purchase, or with the construction of a new church, *kumbento*, or school building. At other times, especially if a new parish was being formed

from the territory of an existing parish, the bishop would direct the established parish to remit funds (as well as other needed liturgical items) directly to the daughter parish.

¹⁸Lukban was appointed political and military governor of Samar and Leyte under the First Philippine Republic during the Philippine-American War.

¹⁹ The *Canticos Sagrados* were a collection of liturgical music composed by Fr. Carceller and published concurrently with the XXXIII Eucharistic Congress that took place in Manila in February of 1937. The book was very popular in parish churches, with many of them having records of its purchase. It is also not uncommon to come across an old copy in the archives.

²⁰In the interest of full disclosure, the letters I am using are not translations from the *Libro de Ordenes* of either Tagbilaran or Corella, as neither of those books have survived. However, each parish had such a book, which would have held copies of the same circular letters (with the exception of letters written specifically to a single parish church or limited number of parishes). There are several copies of *Libros de Ordenes* in various Boholano parish archives, and due to their excellent state of preservation and clarity of penmanship, I have used the *Ordenes* of Cortes and Loon to reconstruct the missing books of Corella and Tagbilaran. Regarding the circulars, all are written in Spanish with the occasional example in Latin, and all translations (with their defects and inaccuracies) are mine.

²¹I have seen expenses related to the transport of parish valuables in several other Boholano parishes (as well as costs for returning them after the war), so this was an order that was taken seriously. It is possible that Tagbilaran was able to secure their records and valuables, perhaps locally, which may not have incurred fees that would be found in the financial register.

Photos of the Original Spanish Letters of Archbishop Gabriel Martelino Reyes, Archbishop of Cebu $Title: \quad \quad Correspondence \ between \ Rev. \ Fr. \ Hermenegildo \ Hangad \ and$

Abp. Gabriel Reyes, July 1939

Source: Archives of the Tagbilaran Cathedral, Libro de Cuentas, fol. 91v

Tagbilaram, Behel, I.F., Julie 14, 1939.

Exeme. y Rdme. Dr. Gabriel M. Reyes, Dignisimo Arzebiapo de Cebu, Biudad de Cebu.

Recelentisino Sener:

El que suscribe, indigno Cura Párroce de Tagbilaran, Behel, suplica a S.E.y selicita, de acuerde cen la disposicion del Sinede, PERMISO necesario de disponer y gastar todo el fonde perteneciente a la Iglesia de Tagbilaran, para proceder el trabajo ya empezado en la mencionada Iglesia.

Segun el Libre de Cuentas, existe en la caja a favor de la Iglesia mas de trescientes peses (P500.cc)

Gracias per el favor y dispenga siempre S.E. a este su

Hernenegilde Hangad

Atento a la precedente solicitud, damos nuestra autorizacion al M.R.P.Hermenegildo Hangad, Parroco de Pagbilaran, para que pueda gastar los fondos de la Parroquia, al presente existentes y los que en adelante entraren, en las obras de la iglesia parroquial, al tenor de la mencionada solicitud, con expreso encargo de que la parroquia no contraiga deudas por razon de estas obras, sino que se gasten solamente sus propios

fondos y las constribuciones que la gente deseare Conservese la presente aunida al Libro de Cuenta justificante de la inversion en tales gastos. Dada en Cebu a 14 de Julio de 1939. ol que ensorice, indiged dura Parteco obranes of catalities at M. E. a. M. a selicita, de senerco lorais es atronocem Collisson, tobante feb materiorals et m of sizely at a sinelicenstren office for the union view endicina, para proceder of trabaje to expende and tension copus of libro de Guentus, exists on la cala a favor te la lelenta can de trescientes pesca (1500.00) es der el faver y disponse siespie S.S. a site su

Title: Letter from Abp. Gabriel Reyes dated September 12, 1941

Source: Archives of the Loon Parish, Libro de Ordenes 1904-1950, fols. 128r-130v

"Stet et Pascat"

Thyobispado de Cebú

Cebú, Filipinas

a 12 de Sept., 1941

A Muestros M. RR. Curas Párrocos y Sacerdotes y Rectores de Iglesias de Cebú y Bohol

Salved y gracia en Jesucristo, Nuestro Señor

Próximo el més de Octubre os recordamos las disposiciones contenidas en el 110.156 del 1/2 del

Tora imponer a los fieles acerca de las excelencias, importancia y necessadad del recurso a María, tan necessario en utos calamitosos tiempos que atravesamos, preciso es que los parrocos y Rectores de Iglesias hagan una breve explicación, un fervouso recordatorio, en sun sermones y pláticas de domingos, para que todos deriven de tal recurso todo provecho espiritual y ordenación dela vida cristiana. Ji necesitamos la gracia, los divinos favores y la fortaleja para sostenernos en la hora presente, hagamos lo que de justícia debemos cumplir como cristianos y acojámonos al amparo de María, Maire de Muestro y esucristo, buscando en su podevosa intercessión esa gracia, esos divinos favores, que por sus manos nos han de venir,

siendo Ella, en todo tiempo, relugio de los pecadores y el auxilio de los cristianos.

Ion las preguntas del día Madie lo podrá valicinar. Hay buenas rajones para la posibilidad como las hay para lo contravio. En esta alternativa pensamos en nuestra defensa nacional, en la protección que dispensa el pueblo de los Estados Unidos al nuestro. Confiamos en que no nos abandonarán los Estados Unidos. Ju de. fensa es la nuestra. Pero, Venerables Parrocos y Jacerdotes, esa defensa nacional nuestra y la que se nos extiende, no pueden ser más fuertes y sólidas que el espíritu de los que son llamados a las armai para defendernos. Demos de ordinario, que no obstante la fuerja de las armas materiales, se desmorona la defensa, si al pueblo de donde provienen los elementos de defensa, le falta el fundamento religioso, sobre el que estriba la solide, y la fortaleja del espiritu La disciplina moral y espiritual, la sobriedad, la fuerza de voluntad tan importantes y necesarias para la defensa nactional como las fuersas militares y navales, no se conciben si el corazón del pueblo no está sano, si Dios no ocupa el lugar_ el primero - que le corresponde en el individuo y en la vida social. La criminalidad injuntil, el atentado a la unidad y santidad del matrimonio, el crimen de la restricción de la natalidad, el veneno de la prensa obserna y de las películas degradantes, la falta de respeto a los padres de familia y a las autoridades constituidas, y la desaparición de las virtudes que forjan el caráe. ter. la vida fuerte y disciplinada son los enemigos más temibles los incentivos del mal, contra los cuales más urgentemente debemos defendernos, porque van penetrando en los organismos de nuestro país. y si no trabajamos para atajarlos, si no logramos contrarestar estes males, le cabria a nuestro pueblo la missina suerte que la de las naciones. más potentes, que se han aleja. do . se han olvidado de Dios . Mirad, Venerables Parrocos y sacerdotes, como esos enemigos no cejan un instante en su

empeño. Observeciendo con el error las inteligencias y corrom.

piendo con el vicio los corajones!

Denerables Parrolos y Sacerdotes, a vista de estos estragos, aportemos nuestro trabajo, nuestra ecoperación, al bién común, al restablecimiento de las costumbres cristianas para la salud de las almas.

hortaros y haceros este recordatorio en nombre del ministerio sa.

sacerdotal:
Si se ha dicho que los cristianos son soldados, el sacerdote es su capitán; yéqué sucederá si el capitán deserta?
¿ Qué ha de hacer el capitán en plena guerra? Ha de ponerse al frente. ha de ser el alma que a todos infunda valor y cons.

tancia.

Jesucristo llamó a los lipóstoles y les dijo que los haría pescadores de hombres, de almas; y vosotros sois los continuadores de esa misión, porque habéis participado de ella recibiendo el mismo ministerio, la misma potestad. ¿ Que hace el pescador? No ha de navigar en la orilla, sino entrar en alta mar.

Vosotros sois operarios del Jeñor, sois labradores, que tenéis que cultivar el campo de los fieles. Y estamos en tiempo de trabajo y de cultivo, no de ocio ni abandono.

el pan de la doctiona, una limosna, para su vida Espiritual.

inos dejaréis perecer?

Oth. Denerables Párrocos y Jacendotes, hay que trabajar hay que luchar con premura. Hace falta celo, estudio y

actividad.

Fodos a una hemos de trabajar, consagrándonos con denuedo y ardor a cultivar el campo, a lograr abundante pesea de almas, a librar decidida batalla contra el error y vicio, a dar vida a las almas, convencidos de que nuestra

defensa nuestra seguridad, está en el vigor y fortaleza de la vida espiritual y moral, en la practica de las virtudes cristianas. Erabajemos bajo de amparo de Maria, mediante el apostolado, de su Rosario, que será para nosotros, como lo ha sido en todo tiempo, el medio más eficaz y poderoso, así como para Maria es el obseguio más grato, más recompensado por su mesericordial de Madre de la clivina gracia y de todos los tambres.

bien que el penultimo domingo de Octubre. que este año cae en el dia 19 — es el dia de las Missiones, dia designado para ra inculcar e intensificar en los fieles la idea de las Misiones, y excitarles a cooperar a la obra de la salvación de los paganos e infieles, por nuedio de la oración, limosna y las obras buenas. Alteneos a lo que sobre este a sunto hemos dispuesto en años anteriores

Os bendice de todo corazón vuestro amo. Prelado

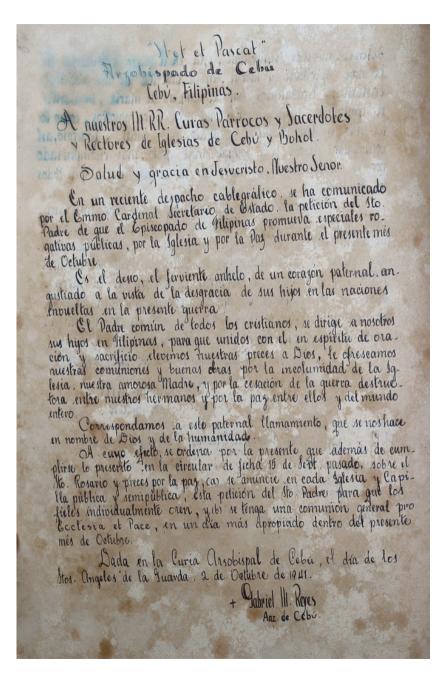
+ Jahriel III. Reyes Org. de Cebú

N.D. - Cópiese en el Libro de Ordenes Viocesanas.

/tm

Title: Letter from Abp. Gabriel Reyes dated October 7, 1941

Source: Archives of the Loon Parish, Libro de Ordenes 1904-1950, fols. 130r



Title: Letter from Abp. Gabriel Reyes dated December 10, 1941

Source: Archives of the Loon Parish, Libro de Ordenes, fol. 131v-131r

Het et Pascat " AZOBISPADO DE CEBÚ Cebú. Filipinas A Nuestros R. R. Curas Párrocos, Encargados de Iglesias y Sacerdoles del Clero Secular y Regular Estancs en tiempo de emergencia nacional. El Señor en sus inescrutables de signios, lo ha permitido asi, sin duda para su mayor gloria y bien esperitual de los hombres, por lo que confiados en su infinita misericordia detemos bende. our su adorable voluntad, porque, como nos enseña el após. tol en todas las cosas farorables y adversas. debemos das gra-cias al berror in omnibus gratus ogite, pues, ya sua en los consuc-los, ya en los trabajos y adversidades, homos de reconocer la benéfica mano del Señor que nos consuela, nos castiga, nos sontele a pueba seguir escrience para nuestro combin gma sontele a pueba seguir escrience para nuestro combin. yor aprovechamiento. Para nuestra humillación y completo, acatamiento, reconozcamos a Dios Muestro Siñor, por nuestro acatamiento, reconozcamos a Dios Muestro Siñor, por nuestro acatamiento, reconozcamos a Dios Muestro Siñor, por nuestro acatamiento, y Dueño, no solo de las visibles que estamos continuamente recibiendo, sino de las visibles que estamos continuamente recibiendo, sino de las chas buenas que hiciéramos, porque sin auxilio de su gracia, no somos suficientes para cosa alguna de provecho of puedo que pirmile el señor que nos vengan estos días de emergencia, lengamos entendido que en ello se nos manifecta su voluntad. y solo eso basta paraque debamos conformamos pusuadidos intimamente de que el dispone lo que conviene al bien común, por donde quiere que le suvamos regun nuestro ministerio y consigamos el galardon que nos hine preparado. mas de los servieros ministeriales en favor de los fieles enco-mendados a nuestro enidado padoral, el eumplimiento de nuestros deberes de ciudadanos, cooperando con las autoridades constituidas para la moralidad y el bien público. No regatermos, por fanto, esa ecoperación, ese sacrificio que re. donda en el biero común. Pongamos nuestra confiança en el Señor y apontenos estos dias de prueba con esperidad y calna, de esta manera el señor mismo nes consolará y nos aquidará a sobrellevarlos con valor y paciencia. Abuentras perdura este estado de emergencia, se dispone 1º Que en vez de la oración pro pare se diga desde hoy

hasta nueva disposición la oración lempore belli como mandada pro re gravi, para aleanzar la misericordia de Dres y la pay los Curas Pársocos y Coadjulores gueden en los destinos que at presente ocupan, a ménos que haya orden superior ade disponaa lo contrario de hay reserva del Imo Sacramento para evilar todo peligio de profanación y robo. Los bienes y los libros canó. nicos de la parroquia, sean depositados en lugar seguro y no los entreguen a nadie sin autorización del Ordinario. 5º Sue estando prohibida por el gobierno la aglome. ración más o menos duradera de gente por el peligro a que se expone, se supriman las Misas de Aquinaldo. la Misa de Nochebuena y las procesiones religiosas; y con toda regularidad se celebren de día las funciones sagra das patroquiales, - para evitar todo peligro y desorden publico Finalmente, dirijo a VV R.R. Las palabras del mismo Apostot a los fieles de Tesatónica crate pro vobis Les pido de todo corazón que ruequen por mí para que con el au. silio del Señor , queda llevar la amplitud de mis obliga

ciones ruegun por mi porque entre todos soy el más ne cestado. Yo también rogaré por W.R. para que el se nos dirija y gobierne, para que en todo busquemos sólo la salua de bas almas y la mayor homra y gloria de Lios en euro nombre les doy muy afectuosamente mi paternal bendición.

Cépiese la presente en el Libro de Ordenes. Dada en la Curia Arzobispal de Cébú a 10 de Diciembre de 1941.

+ Jabriel M. Reyes

/tm