

Mangrove Planting in Mindanao, Philippines

Mindanao, Philippines

Tuesday, 17-Sep-19



March 30, 2019, [Earth Day!](#) This was the day chosen by the FCJs in the Philippines for the planting of mangroves as part of the celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the Foundation of the FCJ Society. Like coral reefs, [mangrove forests are extremely productive ecosystems](#) that provide numerous goods and services both to the marine environment and people.

Sister Rowena, fcJ, and Niña, a [Companion in Mission](#), went to Mindanao at the end of March to give a series of days of recollection to young people and then to plant mangroves with a team of other people. Here is an account of their experience.

Sister Rowena writes:

Planting mangroves is not easy especially when the water is high. The mud comes up to your knees so it is hard to move, plus its very smelly! However, because of my desire to help to protect mother earth as part of the FCJ Society Bicentenary Celebration I managed it! It was a wonderful team effort, bringing together many people. The Delos Santos family played a very important part. Manong (brother of Sr. Bing fcJ) led the planting and his wife Manang Esther organized the delicious food. The Parish Priest, Fr. Francisco Baguio D.D. and members of the Parish Council, young people, former FCJ scholars, and, friends of the FCJ Sisters all joined in the planting. The Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as well as the coastguards offered us great support and ensured our safety.

For the second part of planting we travelled by pump boat for 15 minutes. The scenery was amazing! We really enjoyed planting the mangroves and in all we planted 256.

The wonderful food provided by Manang Esther and her team was very welcome, especially the seafood! I think everybody had a great, and unforgettable day. You could see the joy on every face in spite of the tiredness. People felt blessed to share in an experience of caring for mother earth. Thank you so much to all the people who took part and who made our first celebration the FCJ Bicentenary so memorable. May our loving God continue to bless them in a special way.



Niña CiM writes:

My experience planting mangroves with other people and knowing the purpose behind this project was very fulfilling. In the morning while we were on our way to the mangrove site, I was so excited knowing that I will be able to help our mother earth even in a little way. It was high tide so in the area where we originally planned to plant the 100 mangrove seedlings the sea was still

deep but it didn't stop us carrying out our mission!



Sr. Rowena fcJ and Manong Peping led the planting. They were joined by some young people from Naga Parish who were brave enough to go in the water and get very muddy! Other volunteers took care of bringing the seedlings to the planting area. Later on, I joined Sr. Rowena and the young people in planting the mangroves. People who were not able to go in the water to plant cheered from the shore! We initially planted around 50 mangroves.

Next we enjoyed the delicious food prepared for us by the cooks organized by the family of Sister Bing. Then we resumed planting in a different place by pump boat. This time, everyone in the group joined in the planting. We planted 256 Mangroves in

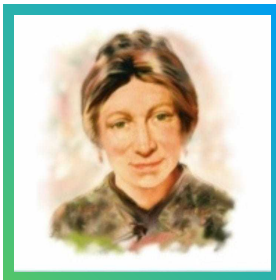
total.

It was really a meaningful and fruitful day for us. Meeting new people and working together for the betterment of our planet was a rewarding experience. I was never tired. I just enjoyed the moment, having short but sincere conversations with my companions, experiencing the laughter, the raging heat of the sun, the fresh air, everything. It was just wonderful!



A warmest thank you to the people who were generous to give their time and efforts to help our planet and to the FCJ Sisters who gave me the opportunity to participate in this historical event of the FCJ Society.

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“ When Peace and Union reign among us, God is with us. ”

Marie Madeleine d'Houët

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