

the examiner

A story by U.P. Journalism students

THINK. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.



THREE EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN PUT NOBLE IDEAS INTO ACTION

“Do. Empower. Inspire.” This was the message three women shared on February 6 at the Women Inspiring Change forum in Tanglaw University Center, Quezon City,

Speakers supermom Annabelle Veloso, Angel Brigade founder Tisha Cruz Bautista and award-winning screen writer Vanessa Valdez faced an audience of women – mothers, professionals and students – to talk about how they were able to use their jobs to help others.

Notably, all three are graduates of PAREF Woodrose School for Girls in Muntinlupa; Valdez also graduated from the University of Asia and the Pacific. Both schools offer instruction in the Catholic faith under the auspices of Opus Dei, a Personal Prelature founded by St. Josemaria Escriva in 1928.

“We wanted to highlight how women who received formation from Opus Dei have achieved much in their lives,” [former] Tanglaw director Shyrelle Pizaña said.

Pizaña said Opus Dei believes that ordinary work is one way of serving God, and this service is a means to holiness.

For one speaker, however, service also brought healing.

Veloso, once an entrepreneur and banker and now a full-time volunteer, lost her daughter to a congenital disease in 2006. Instead of becoming depressed though, Veloso said she decided to “keep following the light,” as sunflowers do, and founded the Sunshine Club.

Through the club, Veloso gave food to “60 of the neediest

children” from Kalayaan Elementary School in Pasay every school day until they finished grade school. She also held arts and crafts and values formation classes for the children and sewing and livelihood classes for their mothers.

“Giving joy to children has given me joy,” Veloso said, adding that the children have also given her hope after her daughter’s death.

Veloso’s efforts since the start of Sunshine Club in 2006 landed her a spot on Lifestyle Network’s Ten Inspiring Women and Working Mom’s People Choice Award: Self for Others in 2009.

Bautista on her part said she also found joy in her work, though it was not the light that gave her joy, but angels.

President of the Center for Aesthetic Studies, Bautista was already teaching women hairstyling, makeup and Christian values to help them start their own businesses. She was also training domestic helpers through the Center for Livelihood Studies. Both institutions are recognized by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

But when Typhoon Ondoy struck Metro Manila in September last year, Bautista felt she had to do something to help. With her husband, she immediately created Angel Brigade, a group of volunteers giving aid to victims.

“Why [the ‘Angel Brigade’]?” she asked. “Because of the way angels come into our lives. They’re faceless, they’re nameless.”

IT'S THE CLIMB

by Mari Begonia Cinco

After getting seriously lost in D. Tuazon, I finally stumbled upon Iraya Study Center, messy-haired and relieved. I checked the time while waiting for someone to answer the door. 5:45 am. Talk about close call. The van I was going to be riding in was set to leave at 6:00 for Latag Study Center in Lipa City to bring us to The Climb, a four-day seminar for college girls. The topic was the formation of life. The bonus was we got to climb before the seminar ended.

Everything was pretty new for me. I've only been going to Tanglaw University Center for scarcely a year and I haven't gone to a lot of out-of-the-center events. I'm only sixteen and I get nervous when it comes to going somewhere I'm not familiar with for too long a time. My mother said it'd be great, though. So did my friends at Tanglaw. Plus, I needed a break after summer training. I had to pray really hard about this before I decided I needed daring and responsibility - daring to reach out to new things—good things, responsibility to shape myself and my interior life. I packed my things the night before the big day.

Latag is beautiful and peaceful. It has the feel of a retreat house and a center. I got to meet wonderful girls in college as myself, but from a variety of centers and fields. I also met the organizers of the event: Meldy, Janice and Brenda. The theme of the seminar revolved around Jesus' encounter with the rich young man (Mark 10: 17-31). "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" This is also taken from the late Pope John Paul II's letter *Dilecti Amici*, which was addressed to the youth. As young as we are, not a lot of us care to think much of interior life. A lot of people save that for adulthood, and even later. We have to remember though that there is never too young a soul to follow God. Jesus specifically say to the young man, "Come and follow me." And he did said this with love. That was the foundation of everything we gained at the seminar. To try and follow Jesus. To come to Him.

We did the usual things we'd do at the center, only more focused this time. We had lovely meditations, get-togethers, morning Mass, and classes. The classes were a real treat. Father Millian, the priest for the seminar, taught us about Nature and Grace. Tanglaw's very own Professor

Liza Ocampo taught us about Philosophical Anthropology. Brenda Quismorio talked about Spiritual Direction.

During the get-togethers, we learned about each other, ourselves, and even about the beginning of the activities with women in Opus Dei. It was one mental roller coaster. If those were all about the mind, this was balanced with the physical challenges we took when we climbed Mount Manabu, which wasn't too far away from Latag. We all went on an early Saturday morning. The day before we left, I won't lie to you, it was hard and long. It took two hours to get to the top. It also took empty water bottles, increased heart rates, and all the strength we could find in ourselves. The view showed, to me, all of Batangas and the beautiful forestry that surrounded us. Actually, I was too exhausted to feel the triumph immediately, but it came to me once my mind cleared up. We all had a weird blaze in our heart that made us feel we had accomplished something we never dreamed of. It was a sweet, earned victory.

On Sunday morning, after a wonderful Mass celebrating the feast day of the Holy Trinity, we said our goodbyes, made a group hug and promised to keep in touch and see each other again someday. Up to now, I'm still thinking of the whole thing. I'm also thinking about how I forgot and the triumph of climbing a mountain, I had gained something

spiritually, intellectually. Something of the soul. I believe that more than ever, I'm closer to God. I can do anything for Him. Climbing a mountain proved it. I also realized there's nothing we can't do for Him. Like O. Henry had once said, "When one loves, no service seems too hard."





Voluntourism
Rural service project in Palawan



Optional Religious Instruction
at Philippine Science High School



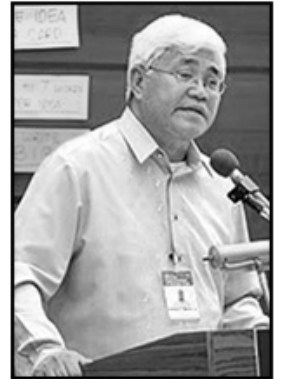
Catechism Classes
for Paltok Elementary School



Women Inspiring Change
Forum in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the women's section of the Prelature of Opus Dei



Make History
with Youth Vote Philippines
A forum on presidentials and automated elections



UNIV Final Paper Presentation 2010
Tony Meloto was keynote speaker on the theme "Can Christianity inspire a global culture?"

TANGLAW University Center

is a project of the Philippine Foundation for Cultural and Educational Development (PFCED), a non-stock, non-profit NGO. It aims to provide young women with a venue to widen their horizons, realize the spiritual dimension of their existence, develop their character to the full and be persons more sensitive to the concerns of others. Activities in the Center include rural service projects, catechism classes, study seminars, tutorial programs, professional development talks, concerts, cultural get-togethers and outings.

Activities of a spiritual and doctrinal nature are entrusted to Opus Dei, a Personal Prelature of the Catholic Church.



CLUBS and WORK GROUPS

ORI – Optional Religious Instruction
Pitch in to teach highschool students in Philippine Science, the basics of Catholic teaching
Contact: Sabel Diaz

WYD – World Youth Day
Join thousands of young people the world over in a weeklong learning and celebration of the faith capped by a meeting with the Vicar of Christ, Pope Benedict XVI in Madrid, Spain July 2011
Contact: Pia Garcia

UNIV – Research congress
Take part in a significant intellectual awakening: a meeting of students from different universities to study the chosen theme, with a view to influencing national and international policies.
Contact: Daphne Ong



Catechism
Few things there are that can compare to the joy of teaching young children the path to Faith. Volunteers needed!
Contact: Ivie Buitre

Cultural-Media
Craft and enjoy creative activities that can transform you and give a real appreciation of the important things in life. Saturdays, 4:30 pm
Contact: Mimi Diola

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Located at Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, the Angel Brigade has reached people from Benguet to Laguna, and after starting with only 20 members, Bautista said it now has more than a thousand. The group has now partnered with World Vision, an international Christian relief organization to lead “livelihood programs and microfinance projects” for the victims.

“People say I founded Angel Brigade, but in truth, it found me,” Bautista said. “I think it found the best part of all of us – not just the people who joined the Angel Brigade, but everybody.”

After hearing Veloso’s and Bautista’s stories, Valdez, the forum’s last speaker, felt out of place: “They’re very inspiring women,” she said. “They’re women I’d like to write about, but I’m nowhere near their league.”

Once a full-time teacher at UA&P, Valdez said she saw screenwriting as “an extension of teaching,” and like Veloso, she wanted to work toward the “light”. But this time the light meant “the truth”: the writer said she wanted to teach movie audiences the difference between real life and on screen fantasies.

Valdez, a creative manager at media giant ABS-CBN, whose romantic screenplays have won her awards from the Film Academy of the Philippines and the Metro Manila Film Festival, said she was “not a feeling person” and preferred to “intellect.” This quality has rubbed onto her characters.

“Personally, I don’t like characters—I really hate those

characters—who just go with their emotion simply because—wala lang (no reason),” she said. “The person has this other faculty called the intellect, the mind, and it’s actually above the heart.”

Valdez said she wanted to write characters who did the right thing whether it was a husband choosing wife over his mistress in *A Love Story* or a couple taking time off from each other to grow up in *One More Chance*. Giving people the right ending over the happy ending was her way of bringing change.

“We want to teach people that they are the subject of development,” she said.

All three women mentioned “paying it forward,” telling the audience they can use their own knowledge and talents to help other people. The three also believed that always doing their best is what allowed them to achieve their ideas and bring change.

“For me, inspiration’s a thought. It’s what you do with that thought that can change your life and the lives of the people around you,” Bautista said. “And I think as women we’re great – anything is possible, and there’s nothing more inspiring than that.”

The Tanglaw University Center, under the Philippine Foundation for Cultural and Educational Development and the support of Opus Dei, offers classes on Catholic Catechism and the humanities for young women. It planned the forum to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the women’s section of Opus Dei, which fell on February 14. #

IN JUST ONE CLICK

The Center unveiled its new website “Life’s Lite” at TanglawCenter.org in visitor-friendly blog format with updates on latest activities and occasional feature stories.

Information about clubs and Tanglaw’s history and mission can be found in the site. It also has a Flickr photo gallery of events and excursions.

An attractive pictorial slider below the menu gives visitors an overview of site updates.

The Examiner issues can also be downloaded from the sidebar in PDF form to make it easier to attach to e-mails for friends and family.

TanglawCenter.org also provides links to other projects of the Philippine Foundation for Cultural and Educational Development (PFCED) and Kalinangan Youth Foundation (KALFI) as well as to sites on its inspiration, St. Josemaria Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei.



VISIT
TANGLAWCENTER.ORG