

# the Lily

The Official Student Publication of San Jose Academy –  
Grade School Department Division of Navotas, National Capital Region



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is a big  
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Ms. Tracey Cruz, a SPED advocate and primary education instructor, guides her students in the primary level. **Photo by Eliazar Luciano**

**School admin  
encourages parents:  
'Talk to your  
children's teachers'**

By Leanne  
Cassandra Magno

**S**an Jose Academy officials emphasize the importance of parents working with teachers to improve their children's learning in relation to the low number of attendees at the in-person parent-teacher conferences (PTCs).

During the distance learning setup, the teachers and parents' meeting style has been hybrid to see students' quarterly grades via an online portal.

"Parang nagiging option na lang sa parents ang pagpunta personally para makausap kaming advisers kasi nakikita naman nila online ang card. May pumupunta lang kapag may concern o gustong i-clarify tungkol sa nakuhang grades," Miss Deither Janella dela Cruz, Grade 5 adviser, told The Lily.

She added that only three parents had the opportunity to come and talk to her personally about their children's grades and learning.

According to Mr. Rafael Patrick Pecjo, principal, parents' tracking of their children's education should not be limited to the mere viewing of their grades online.

"Converse with your children's teachers and advisers. As we strive for quality Catholic education, we also have to get your continue on page 3

## SnJA detects 'red flag' in primary pupils' development Admin to intensify teachers' training for detection, intervention of children with special needs

By Ethan Jacob Agag

**T**he administration of San Jose Academy has ensured that it will enhance the training of teachers in order to improve its ability to identify students with special needs, particularly in the lower grades.

Mr. Rafael Patrick Pecjo, the school's principal, stated that cases of pupils with learning disabilities and special needs ranging from kindergarten to third grade had been reported.

"May mga reported cases tayo ng mga mag-aaral na within first two quarters nakikitaan ng red flags ng mga guro natin. Although, may mechanism tayo in place on how to handle these cases, important na may special eye ang teachers on how to identify it," he explains.

According to Miss Tracey Cruz, Early Childhood Education coordinator and a SPED advocate, it is important to pay attention to these school red flags immediately and have consultations with the child's parents and specialists as needed.

"Isa sa mga difficulties ay ang paghandle ng kanilang challenging behavior at kung paano mo sila matuturuan sa paraan na matututo sila at mamemeet ang needs nila," she said.

"Ayaw po natin na tumuntong sila sa next grade

level na hindi po natin naaddress yung special needs nila or hindi po natin identify na may special needs po ang bata kaya mahalaga po na ang mga guro ay may sapat na kaalaman sa pag-identify at paghandle ng mga ganitong cases," the SPED advocate added.

Pecjo also explained that the training to begin in-service training in July 2023 was in response to the school's long-standing principle of "no child left behind," as amended by RA 11650, or the Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act.

At the school's last meeting with parents in April, the establishment of a special education program as a class offering in the future years was also discussed.

Parents and alumni were delighted by this news.

Mr. Jonel Sison, Planning Officer III of SDO Navotas, reports that five public institutions in the city of Navotas offer SPED classes to approximately 512 students.

## SnJA, joins with 1M Children Praying The Rosary for global peace, unity

By Zymir Jam Balugay

**S**an Jose Academy participates in the annual 'One Million Children Praying the Rosary' event held on October 18 by the international Catholic pastoral charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) in response to the appeal to end the violence and wars affecting young people in Syria.

The school community, along with other young people from around the globe, prayed together and gave a brief presentation on virgin apologies to three children in Fatima.

"Participating was a significant and meaningful experience for me as a student and devotee. It is a commitment of time and prayer not only to the Blessed Virgin Mary but also to the Lord," said Kurt Medina, a student in the fourth grade.

Mr. Ernest Gatchalian, the school's campus minister, said, "Through our participation and sincere prayer, we also collectively live the mission for the Church of our school."

He further encouraged students to continue praying the rosary and participating in programs that would strengthen their devotion and faith.

"Mama Mary's assistance is invaluable for us to be holy, and that is the spirit of our Catholicism: to be holy. By Mama Mary's obedience, her fiat voluntas tua (thy will be done), we are also called to be inspired by our mother to do God's holy will," he concludes.

Mr. Jojie Juanerio, a Christian Living teacher, also expressed his solidarity.

"The ACN and the rest of the world join us in calling for global peace and unity. "May the wars that affect youth and our Christian counterparts in different parts of the world cease," he prayed.

From  
waves to  
victories  
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Students were reported as often tardy in terms of going to school and submitting their assignments. Photo by Jill Buencamino

### SnJA admin, dismayed at tardy students who continue to be tardy in attendance and submission SPG prexy to Josenians: 'Be considerate like they are to us'

By Yohanna Ysabel Bautista

**P**ushing back class hours, conversing with students who are often late in terms of coming to school and submitting their tasks, and giving extra consideration in the implementation of disciplinary sanctions.

These are just some of the steps taken by San Jose Academy to address the high number of students who show tardiness in their classes and in submitting their projects and assignments.

"We have done everything for them. We have adjusted the schedule, and we also give raise periods. We evaluate all policies based on visible trends, reports, and contexts regarding these cases. As much as possible, and if we could, we always made adjustments," said Mr. Rafael Patrick Pecjo, principal of the school, in an interview.

According to Mrs. Marife Fajota, Prefect of Students, they often talk to the students who they notice are usually late in coming to class to find out their reasons and give extra consideration if necessary.

This was seconded by Liam Julle Roldan, a Grade 4 student, who was also once late entering his class.

"Sometimes when it rains, they give consideration to those who are late because of the rain, and there are also times that even if it's five minutes late, they don't sign my pathways [student handbook]," he said.

Teachers also give extra consideration when it comes to late submissions.

"Our teachers are considerate, especially when it comes to passing major projects or performance tasks. If possible, we are also given extensions to work, especially when we request it, and all our tasks in different subjects must be finished at the same time," said Kathline Heart Chua, a Grade 6 pupil.

According to Ethan Jacob Agag, Supreme Pupil Government mayor and Grade 6 student, in relation to all the steps taken by the school to address the said incidents, given the school's consideration, it is only right that the dedication and corresponding efforts of the students should be reciprocated.

"Be responsible and disciplined. The administrators and teachers will not adjust all the time. We also must be considerate of them in the same way they give us due leniency," he said.

Despite this, the school also assured that they will intensify the measures taken to reduce the number of students who are late in coming to school and submitting their academic requirements.

## PWDs call for sign language interpreters, reserved areas in churches

By Princess Rishi Tarroza

**J**oshua Ero is accustomed to worshipping the church of San Jose de Navotas on Sundays. In addition to his long standing devotion, he also serves as a way of thanking him for the blessings he receives.

But despite that, one of his calls was for more inclusive facilities and measures for those with disabilities or belonging to the community of Persons with Disabilities (PWD).

"Sa medical condition ko, bilang diagnosed ng epilepsy, may mga triggers sa akin lalo na sa public places at kapag mainit. Napakaimportante sa akin ng ventilation. Para naman sa iba kong mga nakakasabay na PWD, wala rin talaga 'yung practicality at comfort. Lalo na kung sakali na pilay sila o naka-wheelchair," Ero said.

Such is the sentiment of Mignon Santos, 63, also a PWD and dialysis patient, who usually goes to church in San Roque.

"Kung maari sana ay maglaan ng ispesipikong upuan para sa mga PWD. Malapit sa pintuan, may maayos na ventilation para sa lahat. Bilang isang dialysis patient o tingin ko para sa kaninong may karamdaman at matatanda, importante na may basic facilities

tulad ng ramp, maayos na CR, at ventilation para sa amin upang maging mapayapa at mapanatiling banal ang pagdarasal at pagsisimba," she laments.

In addition, it is also helpful to have sign language interpreters for hearing impaired people.

"Isa rin sa mga napapansin naming maari ring isama para mas maging PWD-friendly at inclusive ang churches natin ay ang inclusion ng Sign Language Interpreters para sa mga deaf na parishioners. Kahit sa online mass lang, maisama iyon, malaking hakbang na," Christian Abelita, Youth Ministry member from San Jose de Navotas Parish, said to The Lily.

Meanwhile, according to Rev. Fr. Jeronimo Ma. J. Cruz, Vicar-General of the Kalookan diocese, the clergy and the parish are currently studying the extension of facilities, in addition to wheelchairs and inclined ramps, in all its constituencies.

"They are doing our best regarding that matter. Other churches are currently coping with this particular need, since this has also been mandated by Bishop Ambo. Maigi niyang bilin na alagaan at pagtuunan rin ng pansin ang ating mga kapatid na PWD," the church official said.

## SnJA slams impending removal of 'no permit, no exam policy'

By Kurt Mediana

**S**an Jose Academy (SnJA) defended the existing 'no permit, no exam policy' in private schools in the country despite the Senate's proposal that this policy should be removed.

According to Mr. Jojie Juanero, finance officer and human resources head, this will serve as a major challenge to the continued operation of SnJA and other private schools because they depend on the students' timely payment of tuition fees.

"As a private institution, we heavily rely on tuition fees to continue our operations. If they would continue the ban on the 'no permit, no exam policy', it would potentially result in the closure of our private schools," said Mr. Jojie Juanero, Finance Officer, in an interview with the Josenian Tribune.

The school principal, Mr. Rafael Patrick Pecjo, added that this is also their main source of funds in relation to the development of their

programs, facilities, and initiatives for student learning.

Mrs. Mary Anne Wenceslao, a parent of two students at the school, agrees to the policy.

"The policy is still considered reasonable, as we can also see how the quality of the school's services and teaching is provided for my children. Although sometimes we struggle to pay the tuition, we are grateful for the school's consideration and generosity in discounts, scholarships, and subsidies," she said.

The accounting office of the school also reminds students and their parents that they can inform them in case they cannot pay their tuition immediately and get their test permits.

"We are always open for arrangements in terms of settling their accounts. Proper communication is key," said Juanero.

According to the last report from the Department of Education, about 425 private schools closed from 2020 to 2022 due to low enrollment and financial problems.

## Josenians assail ten peso increase in school canteen

By Kathline Heart Chua

**T**he ten-peso increase of meals in the school canteen continues to strain the finances of San Jose Academy students and parents.

According to Princess Santos, a 6th grade student, her two hundred pesos school allowance per day is no longer sufficient.

"Noon, nakakapag-ipon pa ako kahit 100 pesos lang ang baon ko. Ngayon na 200 pesos ang dala ko sa isang araw, bilang mahal na rin pati pamasaha, suwerte na kapag nakakapagtabi pa ako ng sampung piso," Santos explained.

To help her save, she brings packed meals to school.

"Mas mainam na lang talaga na magbaon lalo na kung gustong makatipid. Sa 70 pesos mo, mayroon kang maliit na portion na corned beef at saka kanin na hindi naman rin nakakabusog. Kahit rin sa mga binibilhan ko sa labas ng school, ang 30 pesos na ulam at kanin, tumaas na rin ng sampung piso," she added.

The same practice is followed by Mr. Melvin Wenceslao, a parent of two children in school.

"Nasabi rin iyon ng anak ko na kulang na 'yung baon nilang 150 pesos sa isang araw dahil sa taas ng bilingin. Kung mayroon namang mga mabibili sa murang halaga, 'yun pa 'yung mga pagkain na masama para sa kalusugan nila. Kaya para masigurado ko na makakain pa rin sila ng masustansya bilang mga nag-aaral sila, pinapabaunan ko na lang ng pagkain," he explained.

Concessionaires in school canteen defended the price adjustment because they, too, are affected by inflation.

"Wala kaming magawa. Gustuhin man naming ibaba ang presyo para affordable pa rin sa mga estudyante, alanganin lalo na ang presyo ng bilingin sa palengke, lalo pang tumataas," according to Miss Juvy Villaruz, canteen staff.

They also noticed a significant decrease in the number of students buying in relation to price increases.



Rinoa Kate Dela Cruz, an Alumna of San Jose Academy, won first place in Rappler's #FactsFirstPH video contest together with her #ExplainedPH team. It presents different ways to properly fact-check the information you may receive on a daily basis. Photo from Rinoa Kate Dela Cruz

## SnJA alumna encourages fellow Josenians to participate in initiatives vs disinformation

By Princess Rishi Tarroza

**F**eatures and Lifestyle Editor of Explained PH, Rinoa Kate dela Cruz, urges the students of San Jose Academy (SnJA) to join initiatives that will address the growing problem related to disinformation.

"Every small engagement can count as a fact-checking initiative. They can share other postings that promote facts, they can double check immediately once they encounter a suspicious post, and of course they can also engage in discourse with their peers when it comes to checking information on the web," said dela Cruz, former Associate Editor of the Josenian Tribune and is currently studying for a Bachelor of Arts Major in Broadcasting at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Dela Cruz, along with her fellow young journalists of the youth-driven and community-oriented journalism outfit Explained PH, won first place in Rappler's nationwide #FactsFirstPH video contest where participants shared fact-checking tips and dangerous effects of disinformation.

She and her team highlighted various 'Marcos Myths' or false information about the family and the administration of the late father of current President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

"Aside from helping with the script and the research, what I did most in the team was that I prepared mentally. To be honest, the other members of my family are fans of Marcos and it so happened that our topic is Marcos Myths, I'm afraid that there would be a conflict at home. But I thought, 'Why should I be afraid when we are only presenting the truth?' From there, I have given a go signal to host for the output. So far, no one has been chatting me with unsolicited advice from some members of the fam," she said.

Their team will use the prize money to purchase equipment for their on-ground coverage, as well as expanding their initiative in the fact-checking division of their publication.

In conclusion, dela Cruz left a message to her fellow students, "Josenians, now is the time to utilize the teachings that the Academy has given us. Now is the time to join the fight against disinformation and guide the Filipinos towards the truth."

## Navotas LGU, City Library receives replica of 'first scientific map' of the Philippines

By Yuna Louise Reyes

**T**he local government and city library of Navotas received one of the framed replicas of the 1784 Murillo Velarde Map confirming that Panacot Island or Scarborough Shoal was covered by the territory of the Philippines.

Mayor John Rey Tiangco and City Librarian, along with several local government officials, has received the map from Mr. Mel Velarde, president and Chief Executive Officer of Velarde Incorporated and Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication.

The large version of it is located in the Mayor's Office while its smaller replica is ingressed on the first floor of the City Library.

The Murillo Velarde Map is described as the "Mother of all maps of the Philippines" and the country's first scientific map.

One of the Filipinos who played an important role in the development of images engraved here was 'Indio Tagalo' or Nicolas dela Cruz Object, a former resident of Tambobong or Navotas-Malabon.

"Siya ang nagsilbing pangunahing engraver ng mapa, na mula sa Tambobong,

kung saan bahagi ang Navotas noon. Hindi man tukoy saang partikular na lugar sa lumang bayan ng Tambobong nanahan si Dela Cruz Bagay, ang mahalaga, ay mayroong pagkilala at historikal na pag-alala (remembrance) ang isang kasalukuyang bayan sa mga natatanging tao na naging bahagi ng kanyang kasaysayan, at sa shared history nito sa kalapit na bayan ng Malabon," according to Prof. Kerby Alvarez, a historian from the University of the Philippines.

Some historians even refer to it as the 'Velarde-Pay-Suarez Map' in honor of Dela Cruz-Bay and his companion Francisco Suarez, who created the map's illustrations.

In this regard, the local government intended to construct a museum containing historical artifacts and documents related to the city's past.

## School admin cites increase in plagiarism due to remote learning

By Ethan Jacob Agag

**A**fter two years of remote learning, the number of cases of plagiarism or illegal copying of work, ideas, or words without the permission of the original author has increased in the outputs submitted by the students at San Jose Academy (SnJA).

Grade school faculty members noted that two out of ten submitted papers were reported as plagiarized.

"They forget to cite and paraphrase the ideas they get on the Internet. Students tend to think that if they copy-paste or replace a word with its synonym, it is already paraphrased," explained Mr. Dilson Robles, research teacher and Filipino coordinator.

According to Mr. Robles, analyzing the words used by students in their research papers enables them to detect plagiarism promptly.

"We know how they write and use words for their academic requirements. With that, we start to check their papers and see whether these are possibly plagiarized," he said.

Teachers tend to check the students' submissions individually and manually to confirm this.

Despite this, the teachers and the school's research committee want to intensify strengthening the students' research skills, particularly in finding online resources, paraphrasing, creating synthesis, and proper citation.

Meanwhile, the Guidance Office encourages students to consult their research advisers, teachers, or even the office if they need help.

## SDO Navotas establishes peer reading program for struggling readers

By Heaven Rain Mercado

**T**he Schools Division Office of Navotas established Project Amazing Virtual Teen Allies for Reading Success (AVATARS), a virtual peer reading program, which aims to help teach the basics of reading to students.

This initiative started at the peak of the global pandemic and online classes, with their English Program Supervisor, Dr. Marco Meduranda, as the main proponent.

Since the launch of Project AVATARS, the feedback from the students and viewers has been positive, citing that children as young as seven years of age are learning and benefiting from this initiative.

"Success siya kasi from the first year, nasundan siya ng AVATAR 3O," says Leovina Dela Torre, Project AVATARS coach.

According to Dela Torre, the school and the Division is also looking forward to tackling more topics that would strengthen students' reading comprehension skills.

"We hope to get the students and their parents' feedback to further improve the program," she said.

## school admin encourages... from page 1

input as to how we can establish initiatives to improve their learning," Mr. Pecjo stressed.

Miss Gemma Amante, a Grade 1 class adviser, has concurred with this statement of the school official.

"Napakahalaga na mamonitor ng mga parents ang academic at behavioral standing ng kanilang mga anak lalo na at nasa primary level sila. Critical ang role ng parents lalo na at these stages na binubuild ang foundation ng kanilang academic performance and skills," she said.

In connection with these calls, the leadership plans to restore the in-person Parent-Teacher Conferences where parents must personally go to see their children's grades.

# 1,000 Navotas baklad fishers lose livelihood due to reclamation project

By Antonelle Alvaran

**A**lmost 1,000 fishermen in Navotas City lost their main source of income when their fishing nets were taken from the river because of the Navotas Coastal Bay Reclamation Project, a project by the San Miguel Corporation and the local government.

Mr. Carlito Esmeriz said in an interview that he felt frustrated after the local government removed their mussel farm without informing them.

"We were only given ten days to remove our fish traps. We were not allowed to harvest even once. The mussels that we would have harvested would have helped with the expenses of my family and my staff," said Mr. Esmeriz.

They went ahead to ask the officials for an explanation of why they were not allowed to renew their permit to continue their fishing operation.

According to Mr. Glen de Guzman, they lost a lot of money that they should have earned because of the clearing operation.

"Our income reaches about 30,000 pesos a day when the harvest is good. Now that they have taken our livelihood, we have lost our source of income. 'The business that was supposed to help my family had burst like a bubble. We are back to square one,'" he said.

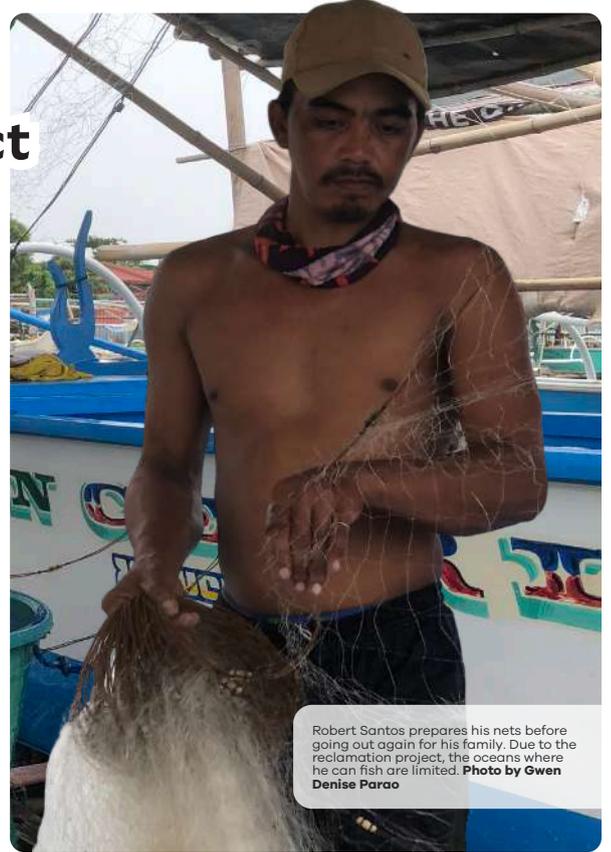
But the local government insists that fishing operations in the city's waters have been illegal for a long time.

"It has been a long time since the Supreme Court ordered the clearing of debris in Manila Bay, which includes the fish traps. But to give them the opportunity to make money, especially during the pandemic, we extended their operations," Mayor John Rey Tiangco explained in an interview with The Lily.

Despite this, Mayor Tiangco assured that the local government would provide aid and support to the affected fishermen.

"We have programs provided for them. I am currently getting a list of how many are affected so that they can be given financial assistance. We have already given jobs to those who were fired," he said.

The Navotas Coastal Bay Reclamation Project is just one of about 25 reclamation projects that are about to be implemented in Manila Bay.



Robert Santos prepares his nets before going out again for his family. Due to the reclamation project, the oceans where he can fish are limited. Photo by Gwen Denise Parao

## LGU proposes formation of Manila Bay council

By Erich Patrise Gatchalian

**A**s a result of the persistent rise in commodity prices, fishermen are compelled to dive deeper into the oceans and construct longer olfactory nests, and they may become extinct within their own family. Gerald Laderas is one of them, having spent twenty years fishing in the city.

"Naranasan kong mahuli noon at magmula ng 2,500 piso. Hindi ko rin kasi napansin na nakalampas na ako sa lugar na puwedeng mangisda at nakaabot na sa karagatan na sakop na ng Cavite," Laderas said.

He stated that it would be a significant aid for those without their own boat. Since the outbreak, he has earned approximately 500 pesos per month, excluding the cost of fuel and the boat owner's share.

"Kaya magmula noon iniwasan ko na lang rin pumalaot doon kasi hindi naman sa akin 'yung bangka. Pero kung tutuusin, malaking kabawasan 'yun sa huli at kita ko," he stressed.

This policy complies with Republic Act 10654, which imposes a penalty on fishermen who are caught fishing in areas not covered by the city.

"Matagal na talaga itong idinadaing ng mga maliliit nating mangingisda sa lungsod. Siyempre, hindi rin naman kasi talaga maiiwasan dahil as fishermen, susundan talaga nila kung saan 'yng huli. E diba, ang mga isda ay hindi naman stationary, it moves. So hindi namamalayan ng mga mangingisda na nakakalapas na pala sila doon sa designated fishing zone," Acting City Agriculturist Cheney Gabriel explains.

In response to the divergent policy ordinances, the Navotas City Agriculture Office proposes the formation of the Manila Bay Development Authority Council.

"Magsisilbi itong 'mother unit' ng Manila Bay. Kumbaga para matulungan na rin natin 'yung mga maliliit na mangingisda, sa iisang ahensya na lang sila tutungo para sa permits at pagpapatupad ng coastal laws, para itong MMDA pero sa konteksto ng ating karagatan," said Gabriel.

The local government communicates with cities such as Paranaque that may have fishing regulations. Navotas intends to collaborate with such a plan in order to facilitate coordination of two-way charges with coastal laws on other initiatives that will advance the fishing industry.

In Manila Bay, there are approximately 15,000 fishermen, according to estimates.

## Josenian fire volunteers call for strengthening of barangay emergency response trainings

By Govind Alvarez

**S**an Jose Academy (SnJA) alumnus and Grade 12 student Christian Felix and Zairrus Coprado stressed the importance of emergency response trainings in every barangay after five were killed and two were wounded in a fire that happened in Barangay Navotas West on November 15, 2022.

"It is important that every barangay knows how to respond with and act if a fire happens in their area, so we can minimize casualties," said Coprado.

According to Felix, some of the challenges they faced as fire volunteers were the lack of water supply, entering narrow alleys, and encounters with residents.

"We tried to prevent it from growing, but it's out of our control. We are against the weak water pressure from Maynilad, which is why extinguishing the fire took so long," said Felix.

As the alley was already crowded and the space was limited, Coprado and his companions decided to retreat only when they could not get any water to help put out the fire.

"As a team leader, while the fire happened, we decided to have our companions retreat because of the water interruption. It would take too long to wait for water than to fight extinguishing the flames," he explained.

Regarding this, they faced the questions of the residents, who noticed the slow operation of extinguishing

the fire and were confused about their decision.

"It even got to the point where they cursed us because they thought we did not want to put out the fire right away. Even though we explained that it was not that easy to respond, we also understood that it was difficult for them since their houses were being burned at the time," said Coprado.

According to Felix, even they were saddened when they found out that some residents had died and some were injured.

"It pains us as fire volunteers because we could not help but think that it was our fault we did not save them. But after all, we're not superheroes. We did our best to stop the fire despite the houses being close together," he said.

The fire was declared extinguished at 9:30 p.m., three hours after the alarm was raised to Task Force Alpha.

Among those affected were two alumni and two students of the school. Because of this, SnJA started a donation drive to help their families start over.

In addition, although fire volunteers do not receive incentives for their services, it would be of great help if they were given allowances for their expenses.

"We contribute out of our pockets for our expenses, maintenance, and diesel for our fire truck so that we can also respond in the event of a disaster. It will be a big help if the local government can provide the crude oil they have been promising for a long time," said Coprado.

# Journalists Today, Voices of Tomorrow

In a digital world, where information is easily accessible with a click, the role of student-journalists remains relevant. Thousands of information means a higher threat of being exposed to misinformation and disinformation. Student journalism has emerged as a powerful force to combat this.



“  
Student journalism empowers young individuals to become active participants in shaping their communities.”

Student journalists represent the interests and concerns of the younger generation, shedding light on issues that might otherwise be overlooked or underestimated. They are armed with passion, curiosity, and a desire to make a difference. They can play a vital role in shaping public discourse, holding institutions accountable, and championing the voices of their peers.

This was emphasized by Ms. Anne Nicole Tan, school paper adviser, when she said that “Young as they are,

they understand the issues faced by their generation intimately, and their reporting resonates with

authenticity and empathy. By amplifying the voices and experiences of their fellow students, they foster a sense of community and empower others to share their stories and perspectives.”

However, we must always remember that student journalism rests on two fundamental pillars – education and empowerment.

It is important that student journalists are well-trained and educated when it comes to gathering data, writing the article, and ensuring unbiased reporting and fact-checking.

Student journalism empowers young individuals to become active participants in shaping their communities. It gives them a voice and a platform to express their ideas, concerns, and aspirations. By engaging in writing articles, opinion pieces, and interviews, student journalists develop confidence, leadership qualities, and a sense of civic responsibility.

To fully harness the potential of student journalism, it is crucial to provide support and resources to young journalists. It is essential to safeguard the freedom of expression for student journalists, allowing them to explore diverse viewpoints, challenge established norms, and confidently pursue investigative reporting.

Honing student journalists today will ensure that the voices of tomorrow are protected.



PUNDIT

## Free Teachers

BY LEANNE CASSANDRA MAGNO

Due to its many benefits, free education, especially with the return of schools to in-person classes, is one of the greatest things for a student. Despite their significant contribution to learning, however, this is not the case for teachers.

Teaching is the most difficult

component of learning recovery. Teachers stated that their six-hour workdays are inhumane because they still have to perform their duties. During this recovery, teachers must supervise classes of 55 students due to a teacher shortage.

They have limited equipment and facilities. 13% of employees

lack laptops or desktop computers, and 49% lack internet access. Teachers in public schools must also provide their own workspace.

Since the return of online courses, teachers have not received many inquiries. A pay raise commensurate with their efforts and requirements was disregarded. There has been no response to requests for more teachers, improved working hours, facilities, or devices to alleviate their burdens.

Local governments and DepEd assist instructors. Teachers were given laptops in order to resume face-to-face instruction. There are bonuses such as 14th month

pay, chalk allowance, and research expenses, among others.

Nonetheless, it is evident that these efforts are insufficient, as the instructors desire more. The Department of Education should respond to their requests for adequate apparatus and facilities, enabling them to improve their work and better serve their students. In addition, their wages and benefits should be adjusted to meet not only their efforts but also their requirements. They should not be viewed as free educators trapped in low-paying employment; rather, they should be recognized for their efforts and significance.

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DUC IN ALTUM

## Of Titles and Entitlements

BY BISHOP PABLO VIRGILIO DAVID  
CBCP PRESIDENT AND CHAIRPERSON,  
SNJA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**I**wonder when it was in the history of Christianity that the ordained ministers of the Church began to be classified as a “clergy,” and distinguished from the laity among their fellow believers. The distinction was clear in Judaism, and it seems to be one of the things that Jesus himself criticized very often.

People often forget that Jesus himself was not a cleric but a lay person in Jewish society. He knew that in the secular world, there was a great tendency for people in authority TO LORD IT OVER and TO MAKE THEIR IMPORTANCE FELT. I think Jesus is actually exaggerating when he says “Call no one on earth Father,” because I am sure he called Joseph “father”. Early Christians called each other “brothers and sisters”, and seem to have addressed their pastors as “Father”.

Honestly, I squirm when I am addressed in Church by the title YOUR EXCELLENCY. In other countries, archbishops are still addressed as YOUR GRACE, or even YOUR LORDSHIP.

I would still understand it when it is secular authorities like mayors, governors and ambassadors who address us by such titles, because they are used to following civil protocols. Besides, that is how they themselves wish to be addressed anyway. But Jesus sternly reminded his disciples—“IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU.”

Once, in a diaconal ordination homily, I told the candidates that the elegant dalmatic vestment that they were going to be vested with was basically just a GLORIFIED APRON, no different from that of a waiter in a restaurant. And the stole which we bishops and presbyters put on our shoulders draws its inspiration from the yoke that is put on the backs of oxen and carabaos when they are made to pull a cart or a plow. All of that seems to be forgotten when the symbols turn into liturgical paraphernalia that get associated with specific hierarchical offices.

Not many Catholics know that “Monsignor” is not a ministerial role but a title that literally means “MY LORD.” There are actually only three ordained ministries in the Church—those of the deacon (meaning, servant), the presbyter (meaning, elder) and the bishop (meaning, overseer). They have been wrongly understood as gradations of dignity in the hierarchical office.

Being a deacon (servant) is not a mere stepping stone to becoming a presbyter (elder), just as being a presbyter is not a mere stepping stone to becoming a bishop (overseer). IT IS NOT SO. The diaconate is the very foundation, the very core of all the ordained ministries. When we bishops or presbyters stop doing our jobs in the spirit of diakonia (servanthood) and begin to lord it over, it is then that our office begins to lose its foundation. That is when it gets reduced to a clerical status. The claim to a “sacred power” of a special elite in the church seems to be the root cause of the disease of clericalism. It is also what reinforces all forms of authority abuse in the church.

All power in the Church is from the Holy Spirit. It is a gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit for the ministry or service. It is when we exalt ourselves, when we extol our own greatness and separate ourselves from the rest of humanity that we can expect to be humbled, or sometimes even publicly humiliated. That happens especially when our human frailties get the better of us.

They say “To err is human” and “to forgive is divine.” I beg to disagree. I would say, “To err is human,” and “to forgive is also human.” We should never equate humanity with frailty—thanks to Jesus, our new model of humanity. After all, human though we are, we bear the image and likeness of divinity in ourselves. We are such paradoxical creatures who can sometimes be the best of ourselves and at other times the worst of ourselves. We are weak and sinful but we are loved unconditionally and redeemed by Christ, the God who became human so that humans can become truly divine.



EAGLE'S EYE

## Accessible and Inclusive Education for All

BY MARRIA CELINNA MANAPAT-YU  
PARENT AND ALUMNA, BATCH 1999

**I**t is always said that education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable human development. For education to be an inclusive dimension of societal development, all people regardless of their status should have access to this fair and equal opportunity which will eventually prepare them to be productive citizens of the country.

As a parent of a child with disability/special needs, for them to be able to sustain themselves and achieve their fullest potential, much more to contribute to the society, it is important to provide them with necessary social services like special education.

From my own experience, the learning disability of my child was undetected until third grade until I saw symptoms and indicators that come with the disability. During that time, the teachers were not able to identify and my child struggled really hard in all academic areas. Also, she had difficulty socializing with her classmates.

In 2022, Republic Act 11650 or “Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act” was signed, mandating the DepEd in collaboration with local government units (LGUs) to initially establish and maintain at least one Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) of Learners with Disabilities in every city and municipality.

In reality, the success of this law is yet to be evaluated as long as its challenges are solved, and the future agenda provided by the law, permanent fund sources, and impending release of its Implementing Rules and Regulations more than a year after its signature are still lacking fundamental clarity and resolution.

The foregoing challenges and predicaments of families taking care of a child with learning disabilities becomes even more pronounced to disadvantage households and families who consequentially have limited access to the development services needed for their children.

In Navotas City, parents or guardians of children with special needs who can afford the services often look for other places to enroll their child in schools that cater special education classes, therapies and interventions. No private school in the city offers SPED classes. No therapies and interventions are available. Thus, students with undetected learning disabilities still struggle with academic workloads, and despite trying very hard, they still cannot master lessons as compared to their age-group. The students with learning disabilities remain in a regular school without accommodations.

As an alumna of San Jose Academy and a parent of a former Josenian diagnosed with learning disability, I hope that they shall provide specialized training and professional development programs for mainstream teachers to identify the age-appropriate developmental milestones in every child so that they can offer advice to parents for any early intervention.

I hope that in the near future, the school will offer special education classes along with the needed multidisciplinary team that assists children with learning disabilities.

And as a parent, my great conviction is that they too can have a chance of a bright future, be a productive citizen and eventually contribute to nation building despite the adversity. This is my hope for San Jose Academy. My hope for Navotas City.

66

**From my standpoint, the foregoing challenges and predicaments of families taking care of a child with learning disabilities becomes even more pronounced to disadvantage households and families who consequentially have limited access to the development services needed for their children.**



## FRAGILE FOUNDATION PHOTOPINION

**N**ine out of 10 Filipino children aged ten are experiencing difficulties in reading simple texts, according to a report by the World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the United Nations Children's Fund in 2022.

Remote learning is not the only one to blame. The learning poverty is a result of a decades-old struggle caused by the lack of classrooms, books, facilities, and insufficient support for teachers.

It takes a village to raise and educate a child. There should be a strong collaboration between the schools, the

teachers, parents, and the community in strengthening a learner's skills and knowledge. This is also resounding call to the leaders who promised to safeguard the future and the youth.

If these problems continue to be ignored, then we and the Filipino youth are holding on to a fragile foundation.



EXIGENT

## The Flooding (Em)Urgency: A Call for Comprehensive Action

BY THERESE JERMAINE BALDOIA

**Flooding has been part of the Navoteño life. Even the name Navotas is often associated with flood. However, we should not normalize such catastrophes. Even if Navoteños are known to be resilient, we should not accept toxic resilience.**

Flooding is a natural disaster that has plagued communities around the world for centuries. However, due to the worsening effects of climate change, the frequency and severity of flooding has intensified. Rise in global temperature contributes to the fast melting of glaciers and polar caps that led to the rise of sea levels, further heightening the risk of coastal flooding. It is crucial that we recognize the urgency of addressing the issue

of flooding.

Despite the availability of 69 Bombastik stations in the city, flooding remains a perennial problem. This means that the action in mitigating flooding should be more comprehensive. Everyone must ensure that they do their fair share.

Navotas City Mayor, John Rey Tiangco has seen waste segregation as one of the solutions in the flood problem.

"Make proper waste disposal a habit. Practice segregation and take out your trash only when our garbage trucks are already in your area. This will help prevent garbage from being scattered and from going into our canals. Our bombastik stations can only function effectively if our canals and drainages are free of trash or debris. Let us do our part in keeping our environment clean and making sure that Navotas is safe from flooding," Tiangco said.

It is imperative that we acknowledge that flooding is an urgent issue that needs to be solved, and everyone must prioritize efforts

to mitigate its impact. To effectively address flooding, a comprehensive action is necessary.

Governments should invest in resilient infrastructure systems, including improved drainage, flood barriers, and early warning systems. Long-term planning and sustainable land management strategies are vital to minimize the risk and impact of floods.

Engaging communities in flood risk management is vital. Educating the public about flood preparedness, evacuation procedures, and the importance of sustainable land use practices can save lives and minimize property damage.

Most importantly, protecting and restoring natural ecosystems, such as the Tanza Mangrove Area, can act as a natural barrier against flooding.

It is our collective responsibility to prioritize comprehensive action, ensuring the safety, well-being, and prosperity of current and future generations in the face of the rising tide of flooding. The issue of flooding is an emergency that calls us to act with urgency.



ENSUE

## Navotas Mangrove Area Lifeline: 50-50

BY MARTIN JEREMIAH SANTOS

**Mayroon pong 50-50 percent chance" The most common reactions of patients and families to hearing these words in hospitals are fear, despair, and grief. This means that there is a half chance that the patient won't regain their strength.**

This is what will happen if the first locally protected Mangrove area in Metro Manila that is located in Navotas is destroyed and eventually dies.

The Philippines is home to an estimated 39 different species of mangroves. Navotas is home to the remaining naturally grown stands in Metro Manila. It serves as a sanctuary for migratory birds such as the black faced spoonbill. It is also a breeding ground of crabs and fish. Additionally, it protects against flooding and storm surge throughout the rainy season.

Mangroves can significantly lessen the intensifying effects of climate change. However, due to the protected area's proximity to the Tanza Landfill and the intention to convert its surrounding area into a reclamation site, even the mangroves face the risk of extinction.

Although the Department of Natural Resources (DENR) ensures that the landfill does not affect the area of mangroves, strong winds could still blow these wastes into the mangrove area.

Additionally, it is apparent that the DENR's conservation efforts are lacking. The zonation mapping where the locations of the species should be carefully planned before planting in a place or area in a mangrove forest is not strictly implemented.

The Mangrove Area is the lifeline of Navotas. This is supposed to protect not only the water resources but also the lives of the Navoteños. This lifeline will eventually run out and die if the town's residents and the authorities do nothing.

The DENR should communicate with specialists regarding their tree-planting and conservation efforts to preserve it. Developmental projects should not be approved lightly, especially if it has the potential to affect mangroves.



ON POINT

## Bridging the Divide

BY ZYMIR JAM BALUGAY

**The COVID-19 pandemic has had an uneven impact on education systems, particularly affecting disadvantaged students, worsening existing inequalities, and potentially leading to significant and enduring consequences. As schools transitioned from distance learning to in-person classes, one concerning consequence emerged: learning gaps in reading. It is crucial to take prompt measures to bridge the learning disparities and ensure uninterrupted educational opportunities for all learners.**

Remote learning was the solution to make learning continue during the pandemic. However, it has presented significant obstacles for students, particularly in reading. The absence of face-to-face interaction with teachers and peers, limited access to libraries and physical books, and potential technological barriers have hindered the development of vital reading skills. The digital divide has further widened existing educational inequalities.

Now that schools are going back to in-person classes, it is essential to bridge the learning gap. Mr. Winifredo III Esquillo, an English teacher said that "The lack of in-person guidance and individualized instruction has resulted in missed opportunities for students to improve their reading comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. Therefore, there is a need to institutionalize a reading intervention program that will address this problem."

He further mentioned that reading

comprehension is the key to unlock other learning difficulties, especially in Mathematics and Science. Reading is not only a fundamental skill but also a gateway to acquiring knowledge and fostering lifelong learning. Proficient readers are better equipped to understand complex concepts, think critically, and engage with a wide range of academic disciplines. When reading learning gaps persist, it has far-reaching consequences, affecting not only language arts but also performance across other subjects.

To bridge the reading learning gaps and ensure educational equity, schools must implement targeted interventions to address individual students' reading needs. This may involve diagnostic assessments to identify specific areas of weakness. The results of this assessment will be the basis for teachers to personalized reading instruction and give extra support to students who need it the most.

As teachers play a critical role in fostering strong reading skills, it is important that they are provided with professional development opportunities focused on effective reading instruction in any learning setup. This will equip them with the necessary tools to support students effectively.

One of the most important steps in closing the gap is to have a strong home-school partnership. Schools should foster partnerships with parents and guardians. Reading intervention should not only be done in school, but it should be further amplified at home. Parents shall encourage having regular reading routines and involve other family members in literacy activities to help reinforce the love for reading outside the classroom.

As we strive for a post-pandemic world, it is imperative that we address the learning gaps that have emerged and work collectively to bridge the divide.

Dear Editor,

A wise teacher once remarked, "A teacher's greatness cannot be measured by the inherent greatness of his students; if his students become great through his guidance, that is the true measure of his greatness." In this society, the educator's function is significantly more difficult than one might anticipate. Occasionally, the level of expectation placed on us is excessively high. But the passion that led you to enter the teaching profession will lead you to a path of fulfillment. Who would have guessed I'd be in this field? I didn't, but I'm here now, proudly displaying my heritage. Whatever endeavor you are pursuing, remind yourself of your objective. Consider not what it can do for you, but rather what you can do for others. Accomplish greater heights, because the impossible is achievable if you make it so. Also, let us all be reminded that we are at a stage that requires conviction and honesty. In whatever we do, let our purpose, our passion, and our hearts guide us. Let us attain the grandeur for which we are destined.

Sincerely,

Miss Deither Janella Dela Cruz  
Grade 5 Class Adviser

*Letter to the Editor*

## He Dreamt, He Chased, He Gave Back

By Princess Rishi Tarroza

**L**iving in the urban areas could be expensive for most Filipinos because of the food, shelter, utility bills, and transportation that they have to pay everyday. But what if you only have a peso to spend for three days? Will you be able to survive?

Adam Alejo, a San Jose Academy alumnus and aspiring vlogger, tried his luck to live in Pasig City for three days with just one peso.

"The first strategy is to buy a candy. Kasi aside sa candy, I mean di na ako makaisip ng ibang bagay na mabibili ko ng piso nowadays, di ba? Kaya sabi ko, sige, bili tayo ng candy. The strategy is to buy low, sell high. So, yung candy, binili ko siya sa halagang piso and binenta ko siya 500%. So, five pesos," he said.

If you were to walk by him along the street, would you buy one of his candies worth five pesos?

"So, gano'n ko siya binenta ng kalaki kasi 'yung gusto [ko] kasing gawin no'n is not for that person to buy that candy because gusto niyang bilhin 'yon pero mas gusto ko[ng] kaya niya binili 'yung candy kasi gusto niya akong tulungan," he explained.

At first, it might look impossible to do the content but his team's optimistic outlook led them to achieve their goal.

"Yung iba bibili, parang 'yung iba ilag sila pero 'yun, ganoon talaga eh. Basta ang importante, inalok namin siya nang inalok kahit kanino tapos hanggang sa maubos siya. Ang goal din talaga namin noon is to enjoy the moment...kahit yung naghehelp sa aking magshoot sabi niya, maging kind [lang] tayo sa lahat kahit tanggihan nila tayo," He shared.

Creating the vlog itself was a risk for Adam considering that there is no assurance if he will find a place to sleep during the night or if he will reach his target income. Despite this, it was his passion for content creation and faith that motivated him to continue pursuing it.

"Siguro 'yung the fact na nagcommit ako doon sa video kasi kahit mahirap 'yung mga nangyayare, aalalahanin ko lang na committed ako rito. And then, siguro 'yung...pagtiwala ko kay Lord na gagabayan niya ako sa lahat ng gagawin ko that day tapos 'yung fact na I'll be able to tell a great story sa mga subscribers ko. Ayun yung nagbigay sa akin ng push to survive for that two days," Adam explained.

He also expressed his joy when he was given the opportunity to meet great people like Kuya Sunday, Ate Dors, the tricycle drivers, and traffic enforcers during his vlog journey, who did not think twice to extend their help to him during those days.

"Sobrang saya lalo na 'yung fact na nakatulong ako sa mga traffic enforcer sa office nila sa outpost. Best experience 'yon kasi kakaunti lang 'yung mga nakaka-experience no'n and at the same time, sobrang hospitable nung mga traffic enforcer dahil pinatuloy nila ako." He said.

To give back to the people who helped him survive for three days in Pasig, Adam promised to help them through a fund-raising activity where the proceeds will be used to purchase grocery packs.

"Kasi nung first day, wala pa naman 'yang fundraising eh. I mean, wala pa yung result ng fundraising kasi nung first day, umpisa pa lang siya. Di ko alam kung ano 'yung mangyayari sa video. Pero at the back of my mind, kung maganda 'yung mangyayari sa video na to, ayun. Babalikan ko ['yung bibili sa akin]." He said.

At first, his plan was to only aim for 5,000 to 10,000 pesos in-kind donations. But when he was about to upload the second day of his vlog, it reached 12,000 pesos until it skyrocketed to 20,000 pesos. That was the time that he thought of donating half of it to a children's foundation.

"Yung beneficiaries ay 'yung Tirahan ng Pagmamahal. Sila 'yung mga nag-aadopt sa mga batang tirahan. Mga maliliit pa lang talaga sila, as in. Kung di ako nagkakamali, five years old ata 'yung pinakamatanda or three. Nakakatuwa lang kasi 'yun yung goal na through the power of social media, makapagraise ng fund, makahelp," He shared.

Since he was young, it was his dream to be in the spotlight. This influenced him to pursue vlogging in 2016.

But with passion and dedication, he can now pursue his dreams while extending a helping hand to the needy. This type of mindset, he believes, stem from the academy's core values.

"Kasi as a Josenian, lagi namang tinuturo ng San Jose to be kind [and] yung faith talaga 'yung nangibabaw sa akin as an alumnus ng San Jose na magtiwala ka lang at everything will work. Papakinggan ni Lord kung ano 'yung mga prayers ko and siya talaga eh, siya 'yung gagawa ng plano," He shared.

Throughout his journey as an aspiring content creator, Adam conquered different obstacles just to continue.

"Kung pinangunahan ako ng takot, kung pinangunahan ako ng reasons, walang magiging result na ganto even yung 100,00 subscribers, hindi ko siya marereach. Hindi ko makukuha yung first million views. Sabi ko na lang, kahit ganito, I'm willing to take the risk. Whatever happen, whatever it takes, gagawin ko siya. Kaso ayun nga, nandoon pa rin yung fact na nakakatakot pero ayon, eto na eh," Adam answers.

Despite these, Adam encourages everyone to chase their dreams and create beyond it.

"Tayo, as the dreamer, tayo 'yung may hawak ng pangarap natin kaya sometimes, may mga taong hindi makagets ng pangarap natin. [Pero] to my fellow content creators [and] aspiring content creators, keep doing what you love. 'Wag niyong pakinggan 'yung mga nagsasabing hindi niyo kaya. Ikaw 'yung may hawak ng pangarap mo kaya ikaw yung kailangang magproove na kaya mong abutin 'yan. Kaya, keep reaching your goals and keep creating beyond your dreams," he ended.

## MEMORY OF OUR HEROES

By Martin Jeremiah Santos



**T**hroughout history, war has been one of the reasons for the beginning of development.

The Philippines has undeniably had its share of defending its nation from foreign countries who tried to take the land. Luckily, we had heroes who gave and sacrificed their lives to protect their country. They fought hard and their battles resulted in our freedom.

The Day of Valor is a national observance in the Philippines that commemorates Filipino and American officials who maintained the main resistance in the war against the Japanese. Such a day helps us remember the lives of our heroes.

However, national heroes aren't the only people who we should be celebrating on this day.

Our unsung heroes, people who

have provided for others and worked hard for those around them, those who sacrificed so much yet received little to no recognition.

They are people who we should be remembering and thanking on this day as well.

It may be your parents, teachers, traffic enforcers, health care workers, and volunteers.

These people have worked hard to provide you a world where you can grow and develop into a better person without having to worry about problems that a child shouldn't experience.

Today, remember these people, and once you have seen them remember to give your brightest smile and say, thank you.

## Navoteños continue to hope for a new home

By Ethan Jacob Agag

**N**avotas City is known to be surrounded by bodies of water which makes the city exposed to risks during typhoons and heavy monsoon rains. This also makes the city easily flooded because of a typhoon.

It has already been a decade since the families in Navotas that were crumpled by Bagyong Pedring had been waiting for the free housing that the local government and National Housing Authority (NHA) promised.

Among the families that were affected was the family of Princess Hawom. According to her folks, even though they have been waiting for years, they still hope that the program would continue to provide them with a home.

"Mabilis umapaw ang tubig sa lugar namin kaya lumilikas agad kami, minsan iniisip na lang namin kung may uuwian pa ba kami. Kaya malaking tulong talaga kung mabibigyan kami," her grandmother said.

Her family is just one out of 6,000 residents on the NHA waiting list from 2011 until 2016 for free housing.

"Last na paglipat ng mga informal settlements ay noon pang pre-pandemic. Pero rest assured na ang mga requirements na ipinasa nila ay for review na lang talaga ng NHA," said by

City Engr. Rufino Serrano.

He also added that one of the reasons why the housing project is delayed and the common suggested residence to stay at is far from Navotas City is because of the lack of open space to build housing projects on.

"Kinakailangan pang mag loan ng Local Government Unit upang makabili ng lupa ngunit ito ay subsidy pa rin ng National Government," he said.

Navotas City Mayor John Rey Tiango ensured that they are currently working with the local government to provide for the families affected.

"Sa ngayon, ang prayoridad rin talaga muna ay mga pamilyang malapit sa dagat. Pero nagtingin kami at nagpapalano rin kung paano pa mas mabibigyan na ng pabahay ang mga residente na ang lokasyon ay dito rin sa Navotas," Tiango explained.

With high hopes, Princess and thousands of Navotenos, continue to wait for a safe place for them to come home to.

# Alagang Jose: How a 9-year old found his fascination for saints

By Juliana Marie Sundiam

**T**oys, dolls, and video games are usually the objects of a kid's curiosity. However, the images of saints, especially those of the Holy Family, bring Jose Krisantho Velasco, 9, the greatest joy.

His mother, Mrs. Annie Velasco, gave a narration of how it all began when he was around two years old.

Jose can easily identify and recognize various religious figures and saints at a young age. "Noon pa man, naamaze na si Jose sa mga imahe sa mga prusisyon kaya kapag may prusisyon na malapit, pumupunta kami."

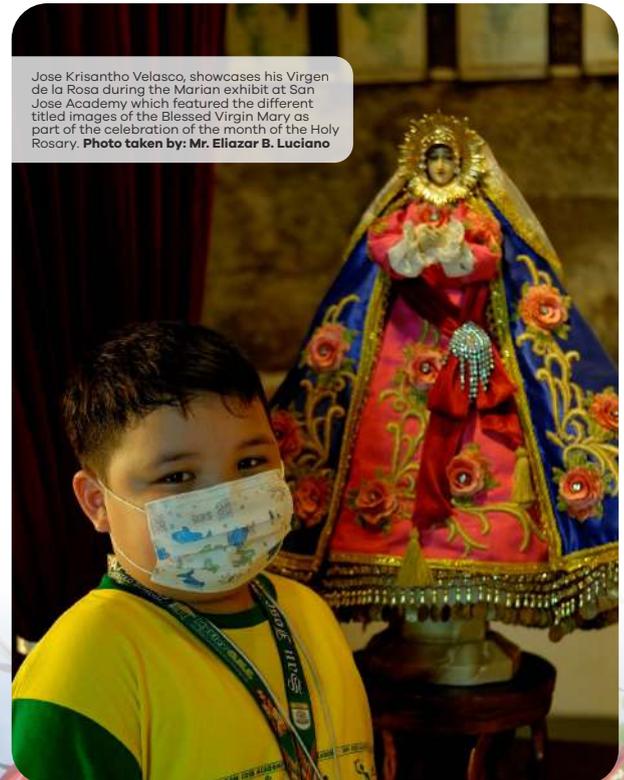
"Kapag may malapit na exhibit, gustong-gusto niya pumunta. 'Yung most recent na napuntahan namin at yung dito sa school. 'Yung pinaka noteworthy naman ay yung sa Malabon City Hall.'" As religious

exhibits were always Jose's preferred destinations.

Jose has consistently prayed and his Sundays will never be complete without attending the Holy Mass. "Mas gusto nga niya kapag nasa loob kami ng simbahan eh," his mother added.

Currently, Jose's collection includes multiple images of saints, Our Lady of Fatima, the Holy Family, Sto. Nino, Sto. Nino de Cebu, Sleeping Sto. Nino, Nazareno, Sleeping St. Joseph, Chibi St. Joseph and Padre Pio.

Jose takes his name from St. Joseph, who is the patron saint of the academy. He may have also taken on the saint's nurturing and caring hands. Although some may find Jose's collection odd, it only proves how Jose's inspiring faith in his role as God's servant will become stronger with time.



Jose Krisantho Velasco, showcases his Virgen de la Rosa during the Marian exhibit at San Jose Academy which featured the different titled images of the Blessed Virgin Mary as part of the celebration of the month of the Holy Rosary. Photo taken by: Mr. Eliazar B. Luciano

# BE THE SUN IN SANTO NIÑO:

Burn your Heart out in the Blazing Fiesta of Sto. Niño in Barangay Daanghari

By Therese Jermaine Baldovia

**T**he celebration of fiestas is deeply embedded in the radiant history and vivid religious culture of the Filipinos as a gesture of gratitude for the blessings that were bestowed upon the people and to pay tribute to the patrons of each town, and the Barangay Sto. Niño, Daanghari in the city of Navotas is no exception, because the warm and blissful fiesta celebration in the town crashes sensibly with the blazing golden summer days.

Last March 25 and 26, Brgy. Sto. Niño Daanghari celebrated their fiesta with so much warmth and excitement. After being unable to celebrate the tradition during the last few years due to the pandemic, the residents and devotees spent their energies to an extent. "Mas masaya ngayong taon kaysa noong mga nakaraan," one of the residents exclaimed.

Undoubtedly, every Filipino festival is thrilling and special in its own way, but this year, the barangay seemed to have channeled all of their past celebrations' enthusiasm into organizing an utterly spectacular fiesta this year due to the number of new festivities along with more gimmicks and parades.

The fiesta this year was indeed hotter than the summer due to the first-ever dance competitions in the fiesta of Sto. Niño that took place this year, such as "Karakol," which the residents anticipated due to its colorful and graceful theme. "First time din magkaroon ng Karakol Contest ng ganito sa Daanghari," said Aling Nene, one of the participants in the competition.

Another dance competition was the refreshing 'Sinulog Festival' themed dance contest. "Actually, first time lang magkaroon ng ganito sa Daanghari," according to the director of the event, Anthony Castillo. "Parang pasasalamat 'yun dahil sa poong Sto. Niño na binigay ang pag-asa sa lahat ng mga tao." "Dahil piyesta ngayon sa Daanghari, syempre ayun 'yung pasasalamat sa binuhos na biyaya ng Panginoon sa mga tao, 'yung Sinulog Festival," he added.

To commemorate the blessed patron saint of the barangay, the city annually held processions and parades across all the streets occupied by the barangay to celebrate. The traditional "Prusisyon" of the Poon (Saints) of the Santo Niño devotees is where festivals are most rooted, and Lola Lily Roque is a devotee who fulfills her panata; for the sake of her vow, she endured the scorching sun and went to every procession because of her unwavering devotion for decades.

"Matagal na akong sumusunod dito [sa prusisyon], mga 20 years na," Lola Lily started. She stated that she has been a devotee since she was a young child, and the poon that she was holding had done a remarkable miracle over two decades ago. "Noong nasunogan kami, nasunog lahat [ng gamit] pero siya hindi siya nasunog [referring to the Sto. Niño saint]", the devotee confessed.

A plenty of tales related to the tradition were also raised by the citizens of the Barangay. Mr. Hemer Balal, a devoted follower of the tradition and one of the church's pastors, didn't hold back when he reminisced about his childhood memories. "Maraming bersyon nyan [the Sto. Niño in the church]." He has been taking part in the procession since he was a high school student, every fiesta. "No'ng araw pa, maliliit pa kami; nagtutalak lang kami ng kariton n'yan sa prusisyon."

The decorations, items, merchants, and "tiangge" that tend to be a part of every festival custom will never disappear in the barangay. Various valuables such as accessories, street foods, and snacks like the famous kakanin, nuts, and panutsa. Since it's the Fiesta of Sto. Niño, the infamous vendors of clothes and accessories of Santo Niño will not be missing either from the fun day.

"Simula binata pa ako, nagtitinda na ako nito, namana ko na rin 'tong pagtitinda sa magulang ko," Kuya Jimmy, a vendor of the Saint's clothing and accessories, stated. "Panata ko na rin sa Santo Niño at Nazareno ang nagtulak sa'kin na magtinda ng mga ganito."

## BAHAY NG BULABOG: The Mysterious Century House

By Martin Jeremiah Santos

**I**t was built by Potenciano Gabriel, the family's patriarch, during the latter part of the 19th century. As Navotenos describe him, he was a humble man who is used to wearing camiso. He was also known for having several men whom he weaves fishpond nets with.

It has been an unusual belief that ancestral houses have secrets that boggle the curiosity of anyone who is brave enough to enter it. From having gigantic bats to a white lady lurking, the Navotas' Century House was called as the "Bahay ng Bulabog" or "House of Fright".

Aside from calling it as 'Bahay ng Bulabog', people also regarded it as a museum. Such claims were followed by a rumor that said there was a preserved crab with three sets of legs in the house.

But enough with the barber's tales.

Members of the family confirmed stories about preserved animals particularly birds, because Potenciano Gabriel was fond of animals back then. Grace Ignacio, 62, in an interview with the Philippine Star, explained that the house was called 'Bahay ng Bulabog' because her great grandfather, Gabriel, used to wake up his men from sleep to start the day by working in the fishpond.

At present, the preserved species were confirmed that it has long been divided among the family members and what's left with the house are creaking floor planes and capiz windows. The family also expressed their disagreement with the local government unit's plan of converting the house to a heritage site.

"But why would I give it to the government? Our ancestors worked hard to build the house. The house is our inspiration from him," Ignacio told Philippine Star.

The Century House, indeed, should not be labelled as The House of Fright. It is a silent witness towards the rich cultural heritage of the city. Hopefully, as years pass by, the baseless rumors will die and shall soon be replaced with utmost passion for the search of one's heritage and roots.



## From Waves to Victories: How Santos Breathes the Air of Success

By John Adrian Commendador

**“W**ala ka namang mapapaladyan sa pagsswimming, nagpapagod ka lang, mag-aral ka nalang.”

Most often, people advise athletes to concentrate on their education rather than taking part in various activities like sports. But for Renz Kenneth Santos, what matters most are his happiness and excitement while joining competitions—most especially the memories and lessons he'll cherish forever.

Living five blocks away from the sea, Santos witnessed the devastating strike of Typhoon Yolanda in 2013. This instilled a profound connection and he was allured by the waves of the water for the passion of swimming back in fourth grade.

"Maraming tao na syempre nag-eexpect, mataas expectations nila. An athlete should meet the expectations of the people so bilang student athlete, hindi lang basta umiikot ang mundo namin sa pagiging athlete syempre kailangan namin balansehin yung pagiging estudyante at pagiging atleta." said Santos.

Challenges are inevitable. Nonetheless, Santos remained determined to further his athletic career despite the difficulties, with the help and support of his family and friends.

For someone who's as eager and passionate as Renz, there's always a way to succeed. He emphasizes that athletes who genuinely love what they do find the strength to endure and push through difficulties with unwavering dedication.

"Kailangan goal-oriented ka, kailangan everytime mayroon ka laging nakaplano at kung magpapalano ka, hindi lang dapat isa o dalawa, kailangan A, B hanggang Z, ganon," he stated.

As Renz continues to pursue his passion, he remains down to earth despite his accomplishments and is looking forward to seeing fellow youths pursue their dreams.

"Focus on the objectives, focus on the goal," said Santos. He believes that the goal of engaging in sports is not solely about winning or collecting gold medals, but rather about personal growth and becoming the best versions of ourselves.

Objective, goal, and task: these were the three main things Santos highlighted to focus on as he step further one at a time from a series of steps toward success.

"Always keep your feet on the ground and your attitude will keep you on top," he ended.



## Stay Safe! Summer necessities

By Heaven Rain Mercado

**G**oing out is one of the most fun activities during summer. Dipping in the pool, splashing through waves, or simply hanging out by the beach, these are a must when a refresher is needed from the scorching heat of the country.

These activities might seem exciting but remember, there are still cautions to going out during a hot summer day.

Put on sunscreen. Nothing completes a good summer outing than having a tanned skin but remember too much sun can cause your skin to burn and be damaged

due to the UV rays. Remember to apply that SPF once you walk out that door.

Wear light-colored outfits. Who would want to go to the beach wearing a full-black outfit anyway? Explore various colored outfits that would match your skin and confidently stride.

Stay hydrated. Water isn't just made to be swam on this summer. Remember to get a refreshing sip every once in a while to avoid dehydration or heat stroke.

Following these precautions won't ruin your fun, it may be the sole reason why your summer would be worthwhile. Stay cool!

## FISH WHISPERERS

Take a look at Navoteno fisherfolks' Bulungan system

By Martin Jeremiah Santos

**M**arkets were often perceived noisy, with vendors screaming their product's prices. But in Navotas Fishport Complex, business entails silence and lots of whispering.

At the break of dawn, people line up as they wait for the arrangement of the banyeras in the wet, slippery cemented floor. They have to be early, for they will be participating in a unique auction.

The bulungan system is done through whispering the customer's quoted price to the seller. Buyers from different places need to outbid each other.

The trick was keeping the final price secret. Bidders also use vague hand signals during the transaction. After a few minutes, the

broker shall announce the winner.

The Navotas Fish Port Complex was regarded as the stronghold of the whisper bidding. Around 1,000 families were engaged in the fish trade. However, what they earn is only enough to sustain their family's needs.

Fishes that were sold include freshwater fish such as tilapia and hito, plus marine pelagics including scad, skipjack, and giant mahi-mahi. However, one must keep in mind that the sea does not have unlimited bounties.

Inasmuch as these consumers take part in the whisper bidding, others hope that they will not be as this silent when fighting for the ocean's sake, especially as it is continuously challenged by climate change.

# UN Director urges fellow Josenians: Combat global warming, choose ‘climate-friendly’ diet

By John Adrian Comendador

**C**limate change has been one of the pressing problems of the world today. With an increasing awareness about the impact of climate change, people are finding ways to lessen its negative effects. Metal or bamboo straw, reusable bags or utensil businesses boomed in the past months as people adopt a more sustainable lifestyle. They saw the use of plastics as a major contributor for carbon footprint.

Carbon footprint refers to the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions that a person, organization, event or product has produced. A person’s carbon footprint is a measure of how one’s lifestyle impacts the environment.

Thus, school alumni from Batch 1982 and United Nations Director of the Division of Mitigation Adaptation of the Green Climate Fund Dr. German Velasquez, encouraged Josenians to choose a ‘climate-friendly’ diet.

Director Velasquez said that meat, vegetables, poultry, seafood and dairy products add to carbon footprint.

"In a fact sheet compiled by the Center for Sustainable Systems at the University of Michigan, it recorded 170 million tons in carbon dioxide equivalent of methane from animals like cattle, sheep and goats. Dairy products emitted 19% of greenhouse gases, 14% from poultry, seafood and eggs, while 4.9% came from vegetables," he explained.

Director Velasquez suggested four ways to become a climate-friendly eater.

"We should eat with climate change in mind," he said. By this, he meant buying locally produced food reduces energy spent in transportation.

Further, he asked the consumers to choose food that has less or no packaging to reduce plastic waste.

"Prefer eating nutritious and organic food, too," he added. Buying food which has low preservatives and chemical additions will help in the cause.

Lastly, he challenged everyone to grow their own garden.

Mitigating the impacts of climate change entails a 180o shift in people’s lifestyle. In order to make a great impact, people should also make a great change in how they live and even what they eat.



UN Director of the Division of Mitigation Adaptation of the Green Climate Fund and school alumnus Dr. German Velasquez. Photo by Gwen Denise Parao



Grades 1-3 pupils of San Jose Academy participates in the 19th National Dental Health Month by learning how to brush their teeth properly. Photo taken by: Mr. Rhoylan Santiago

## SnJA celebrates national dental health month

By Jael Myel Fernandez

**O**n February 22, 2023 San Jose Academy celebrated the 19th National Dental Health Month with the theme, “Ngiping Protektado, Ngipin Panalo”.

As part of the celebration, the students in Grades 13 received a dental health education taught by Dr. Maria Rosita R. Fraxidio, the school dentist. The pupils learned how to correctly brush their teeth to maintain a clean and healthy mouth.

“As kids get older, encourage them to brush their teeth. Sa umpisa, hindi naman talaga sila magi-enjoy pero maiintindihan din naman nila na mahalaga ito for their health,” she said.

Pupils were tasked to bring their own toothbrush, toothpaste, and basin as part of the program was for them to practice brushing their teeth. They sang the steps together as they enjoyed the activity.

This was commented on by Nurse Sampaguita Pascual, school nurse, that brushing teeth at the pupil’s age should be made fun so they would not hate doing it every day.

“Dapat talaga make it fun para sa mga bata. Kung hindi through a song kahit panoorin na lang ng video ang mga bata na pwede nilang gayahin,” she said.

Making toothbrushing a daily routine not only helps prevent painful issues like tooth decay, but it also helps children develop good habits that can prepare them for a lifetime of smiles.

As the program ended, Dr. Fraxidio gave a reminder for the pupils to always have their regular dental check-up so that their teeth will always be sparkly clean.

# GUIL-TEA PLEASURE

By Gwen Deniese Parao

**W**hatever day of the week it is, people will always have that “milk tea craving”. There is a milk tea shop on every street in Navotas City, or perhaps in every city across the nation, ready to sate your sweet craving. Unbeknownst to many, however, the sweetness it possesses is a step closer to the health risk it poses.

To inform Josenians that milk tea must be drunk in moderation, The Lily has consulted Miss Reizelle Mae Ignacio, RDN, a licensed nutritionist-dietician.

Miss Ignacio mentioned that tea has anti-diabetic benefits and enhances cardiovascular health, but that these advantages are reduced when milk is added.

Additionally, according to some research, milk tea has three times the sugar of a can of soda.

“A child’s sugar intake should only be five teaspoons a day, and an increase can already pose a risk on their health,” Miss Ignacio, a school alumna from Batch 2010, said.

“Sugar and add-ons ang reason that makes the milk tea harmful to us,” she stressed.

She claims that although most of the components in add-ons are chemically produced, they are nevertheless manufactured using natural ingredients.

She also warned the milk tea lovers of the harmful effects.

**INSOMNIA.** Milk tea, like coffee, also contains caffeine. Four to five tea cups per day can cause sleeplessness.

**PIMPLES.** Miss Ignacio suggests students to consider avoiding sweet

cravings for milk tea. She explains that the excessive amount of tea intake causes imbalance in body chemicals especially to elementary pupils on the onset of adolescence.

**LOW-BONE DENSITY.** “Tea and milk are very high in phosphorus, what more if the two are combined?” Miss Ignacio said that excessive phosphorus intake can withdraw the calcium inside the bones. Such can increase the risk of having osteoporosis in the future.

**CONSTIPATION.** Some Josenians have the habit of drinking milk tea on an empty stomach. Teachers have noticed that some students skip lunch and save their baon for milk tea on their way home. However, doing so can increase acidity and a dysfunction on the body’s digestive system.

Ultimately, Miss Ignacio says that moderation is the key.

“If one cannot avoid drinking such, at least limit it to one milk tea per week,” she further recommended.

“There is a Filipino adage that goes, ‘masarap ang bawal’, but this does not excuse you from ignoring the risks that your sweet cravings bring,” her sweet ending.

# ISLA PULO

## The City's Bird Sanctuary

By Dylan Khyrie Manibo

**B**irds have been a very interesting topic for me in my Science Class. This is why it has been a pleasure and a wonderful experience for me when I was given a chance to visit Isla Pulo in Brgy. Tanza where rare species of migratory birds are spotted.

Isla Pulo has been a vacation spot for birds that escaped from the cold winters in the north. Many different species of migratory birds rest in this place before going to the south while some of them stay until the winter is over and they can go back up north again.

One bird that I have noticed during my visit here is the Great Egret.

Commonly known as the "Tagak", this long-legged bird species has an all-white feathers, yellow bill, and an S-shaped neck. Fishes, insects, crustaceans, and small rodents are the common food for this migratory bird.

As we walked in the wetlands, we also spotted large flocks of what our guide called the Red-necked Stints.

This species of bird is small in size and has feathers of combined brown, black, and white. It also has reddish brown feathers in its neck, that is why it is called "red-necked". Being a small bird, their foods are composed of tiny crustaceans and microscopic invertebrates.

After explaining to us the red-necked stints, our guide also shared to us that this place is where a Black-faced spoonbill was spotted. He stated that this is a rare species of bird and is globally threatened as they are

facing a possible extinction if they are not taken good care of.

This species of bird, he explained, has long legs and white feathers like the Great Egret but it has a shorter neck and a black bill that is shaped like a spoon. He also shared that it is noticeable that the part surrounding the eyes of the spoonbill is black compared to the yellowish eyes of the egret.

Going through the wetlands, there are still many different species of birds that can be spotted. Our guide explained that, being migratory, these birds do not locally breed in the country. They can only be spotted during their migration period, before they go further south or go back north.

Truly, Isla Pulo is a haven for these migratory birds, a safe place for them to rest and stay until the end of the winter season in the north. But despite this characteristic of this place, it is still undeniable that these birds are being affected by the reclamation being done in the city. Their migration patterns are being disrupted because of the man-made structures and the reclamation of the wetlands.

This issue in reclamation and its effects are the main reason why local organizations have started the call to save our mudflats.



## Limiting the Unlimited

By Antonelle Alvaran

**F**rom K Drama to K Pop Songs, the Hallyu wave has been known to bring the influence of Korean culture to the country. With this, samgyeopsal or Korean grilled meat have also made its way to the taste buds of Filipinos and even started a craze that continues until today.

According to Simone Fuentes, she is eating samgyeopsal once a week and it became a stress reliever for her.

"This one good meal serves as my source of happiness and it helps in reducing the stress that I feel," she said.

But on the other hand, Ms. Aracelli Ogalesco, a licensed Nutritionist-Dietitian, has warned that the public should not ignore the negative effects that samgyeop pose to our health.

"There are health benefits that we can get from it (samgyeopsal) like it being a source of protein. But if we consume too much, it will be bad for us," Ms. Ogalesco stated.

She also added that the benefits that

we get from samgyeop meat depends on the process of how it is made and how fresh the meat is before consumption.

"The protein and fat in the meat is good for the body, but because the meat is also marinated for a long time, it also has a high sodium content," she explained

In line with this, she has given alternative food choices for samyeop lovers.

"For those who really like Korean cuisine, bibimbap could be an alternative choice as it has a balance of meat and veggies. But a reminder also that having vegetables in a meal doesn't mean it is already healthy. It is nonsense if the meat is still in great amounts."

As a message, Ogalesco gives a reminder to everyone who likes Samgyeopsal and other unlimited meals.

"Always remember that our food intake always has its boundaries also, especially when it comes to our health. Eating these kinds of meals is not bad, we just need to know our limits," she reminded.





# CHATGPT: Working alongside Journalists

By Dylan Khyrie Manibo

**A** lot of people have been suffering physically from this pandemic but what about mental health? Do you know that because of this global health crisis, the mental health of people is greatly affected?

Students suffering from academic stress because of the demands of the new set-up in education, parents having breakdown because they cannot find new job opportunities for them, senior citizens getting anxiety attacks because of the worsening COVID-19 cases in the country, Filipinos experiencing depression because of the feeling of isolation this pandemic brings us – these are only some of the scenarios that affect our well-being, scenarios that affect the health of our mind.

Since the pandemic began, most of us feel stressed out because of the sudden and abrupt changes to the way we live. What can then be the effect of stress? The effect of stress can be anxiety, changes in appetite, mood swings and others that ruin the functions of our internal systems – our disposition towards life. So, what can we do to avoid stress during this pandemic? Take breaks from watching or reading news; if you feel anxiety stop and rest, there is no harm in taking breaks, do things you need or want to do during breaks. Connect with others and talk to others about what you're feeling and talk about something positive. Exercise, eat healthy meals, get enough sleep and avoid alcohol, smoking and other unhealthy

foods and habits.

How can you help someone who is undergoing stress? Avoid talks about the pandemic, it will increase their anxiety. As they say, "think before you speak or click". Say something encouraging and positive, share your reflections and lessons this pandemic taught you, talk to the person and reflect with him or her and finally, meditating and yoga can also reduce stress so you could also do this together.

In this present world where we are facing a lot of uncertainties, we cannot really avoid thinking of the things that might stress us out. But if we have someone we can talk to, someone we can divert our attention with, someone who can make us feel that we are not alone in facing life's struggles, we can beat the effects of stress that compromise the overall health and state of our mind.

We have to understand that in this global health crisis, it is not only the physical health that must be taken care of. As much as we take care of our body, we must also take care of our mind. Physical health is as important as mental health. A healthy body keeps us strong but a healthy mind keeps us directed.

## Breakfast is a big deal

By Yuna Louise Reyes

**I**magine waking up every morning hearing the same speech from your mother not to skip breakfast. You are tired, you were not able to get a complete sleep and you are late for school. Breakfast is a hassle, right? So you get to school without breakfast and at the middle of the day you feel dizzy with sweat all over and extremely exhausted. Why do you feel such? It's the skipping breakfast's fault. This may seem like a cliché but it has truth to it – breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Studies show that breakfast eaters tend to have a healthier body, sound mind and stable emotion that allows them function daily. This clearly explains the dizziness, sweat and lack of energy. If this becomes a habit, the negative effects will pile up and it will cause damage to our body as explained by Reizelle Mae Ignacio, a licensed nutritionist and dietician.

### HIGHER RISK OF OBESITY

When you skip your breakfast, you tend to crave for sugary or fatty foods. As the day goes, hunger will crawl in your system and you might end up consuming whatever food you come across. Greater hunger will lead to higher food consumption. This may lead you to the

path of gaining more weight.

### BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL DROPS

Without food intake, there could be a massive dip in sugar levels. This triggers your body to release hormones that could compensate for the low glucose levels. However, this may cause migraines and headaches.

### METABOLISM SLOWS DOWN

Breakfast is the body's fuel to jumpstart our metabolism. Skipping the morning meal can hamper the body's rhythm of fasting and eating.

### STRESS HORMONE LEVEL INCREASE

Avoiding breakfast can affect your mood and energy. Skipping your morning supply of calories may result in poor memory skills and higher fatigue levels.

These are just some of the many problems you may encounter if you continue skipping breakfast. So tomorrow, the first thing you want to do when you wake up is to tell your mom to save her speech because you will eat your breakfast. Your tummy is full, your mind is prepared, you have a big smile on your face and you are ready to ace that exam. A productive day is waving at you!

Wake up and eat your *breakfast*.



The Navotas Blue Sharks and SDO Navotas Teachers collide in a lock-buster exhibition match, March 25. The Blue Sharks outlasted the teachers via a 2-1 set win. Photo taken by Jil Buencamino.



## REIGNING OVER THE SEA

### Navotas Blue Sharks rules over SDO Navotas teachers at Exhibition Match

By Liam Julle Roldan

**A** fierce neck-and-neck battle was won by the young Navotas Blue Sharks after they trounced the SDO Navotas teachers in an exhibition match that was held at Bagumbayan Elementary School.

To gain more experience and enhance their skills for their upcoming match to represent the whole of Navotas City, the Blue Sharks displayed a great sense of offensive play and awespiring defense that gave them a final set score of 2-1 on March 25, 2023.

Precise and nail hitter spikes were done by the Blue Sharks to get off to a good start and focus on offense while SDO Navotas struggles with receiving the attacks.

Drachir Gailo, being the root of their offense, was then crowned as the team's MVP, ending the set with a final score of 25-17 and the Blue Sharks never leaving the lead.

With their vast knowledge and experience, SDO Navotas Teachers fought back by upping their game in both defense and offense.

The team of student-athletes totaled up to six service errors in one match, leaving them at a disadvantage and making the SDO Navotas the set takers for the second set.

Given a chance for an overtime set, the set ended with a final score of 21-25.

The last set determining the winner for the day's match, an overtime set, made everyone tense and fired-up and performed better even with the intense hot weather directly heating up the open court with both teams ready to win.

SDO Navotas received the first point, while Blue Sharks gained the last winning point after NNHS performed awe inspiring sets and combos that made SDO Navotas lose their last match with a final score of 15-13.

## SnJA reinstates in-person Siglakas 2023

### Primary students acquire life lessons, make new friends

By Julio Loayon

**“We had fun and made new friends in different sections.”**

When asked by The Lily about their experiences during the Fun Games conducted during the Siglakas 2023, November 28 to December 2, this is the response of Maceo Francisco from Grade 3 – St. Joachim.

During the week-long celebrations, primary pupils from Kinder to Grade 3 participated in a variety of enjoyable and traditional Philippine activities organized by their class advisers and the MAPEH department.

Other games include the ball relay challenge, tug of war, Chinese garter, and cup stacking.

Class advisers served as coaches for the competition.

Miss Gemma Amante, the school's MAPEH Coordinator, stated that the activity was implemented after meticulous planning and consultation with stakeholders.

“The COVID scare is still around us. But, we believe that with the right planning and protocols, ma-address natin ang goal natin na maipunawa sa mga bata at magulang ang kahalagahan ng physical activity to one's overall health,” said Miss Amante.



Liam Julle Roldan of St. Ildephonus drives the basketball to the final minute of their attempt to dethrone the defending champions from St. Padre Pio. Photo taken by Jil Buencamino.



## Compete against yourselves

BY DIVINO ROD KALAW

**W**inning is not everything. In the last edition of the Navotas Division Palaro Meet, this one quote struck athletes and coaches alike.

The words of wisdom were uttered by none other than the city mayor, Toby Tiangco. He said, "If competitors compete

against each other, they will end up losers themselves."

What did he mean at all? So, should not the athletes aim to win and not lose?

For Mayor Tiangco, competition has a deeper meaning. He explained that athletes should hurt other players for the sake of winning. More so, cheating will never be right.

Instead, he encouraged the athletes and the teacher-coaches to compete against

themselves "day by day, week by week, and year by year."

Let us all remember the logic behind the conduct of sports events like the Division Palaro. That is to promote character building and camaraderie among athletes, not just a pure display of bravado.

It will be a sweet victory to win when you know that you truly did your best and did not cause any harm.

## SnJA Jaguars kneel to Kapitbahayan Blue Guardians, 32-11

By Cassandra Denise Villaflores

**F**alling flat, the SnJA Jaguars get eliminated at the Navotas Sports Division Meet in their first game against Kapitbahayan Elementary School for the girl's division basketball elimination round in their homecourt, San Jose Academy, March 18.

Starting off with a loud start, SnJA supporters filled the venue with cheers and support for the playing team. The rush of adrenaline spiced up the jaguar's game, taking the lead only to be snatched away by the Kaulanarians minutes away from the end of the quarter, 8-12.

The Jaguars started to get agitated because of their gap, and their play started to crumble when the crowd went silent.

Seeing it as an opportunity, the Blue Guardians proceeded to widen their lead and not let the SnJA Jaguars score.

The second quarter of ended with a score of

9-20, Jaguars only receiving a point from a free throw

With insufficient training, and only having their second game as a team, the SnJA Jaguars struggled to keep their heads afloat when KES continued to keep and widen the lead gap more by 12-points while the Jaguars only got a 2-point shot in ending the third quarter with a score of 32-11.

Losing in their own territory, the Jaguars didn't want to end it without a fight.

Being more vicious, they managed to synchronize as a team, earning 12 points during the last quarter.

KES still ended the game with a whopping 18-point lead against the SnJA Jaguars.

"Gagawin namin 'to as a motivation and experience," head coach Kelvin Salmasan stated as he wanted to prepare for an upcoming game to be hosted by KADSA.



Josenian Jaguar Kyla Santos fell short in securing a lead versus the Kapitbahayan Blue Guardians in the Division Meet Girls Basketball elimination round. Photo taken by Jil Buencamino



The SnJA Racketeers bagged medals in the Badminton competition during the KADSA Competition game. Photo taken by Jil Buencamino

## Josenian racketeers smash wins

By Kurt Andrei Mediana

**A**fter games of speed, power, and technique, the San Jose Academy Badminton team brought home two gold, one silver, and one bronze medals in the 2023 Kalookan Diocese Schools Association (KADSA) Games held at the RS Badminton Center on March 23.

Cat-quick Julius Sebastian Guisinga, Grade 6 – St. Padre Pio, using superb footwork and his favorite drop shots, led the way after racking up wins over hapless opponents from St. Gabriel Academy and Immaculate Conception Academy of Malabon.

Prince Renso Prudente, Grade 6 – St. Padre Pio, emerged as the Boys Single A

champion of the tourney after trashing the LNA smasher in straight sets, 21-17, 21-8.

In Boys Singles B, compatriot Divino Rod Jobien Kalaw, Grade 6 – St. Teresa, took the silver medal after losing to the veteran smasher from De La Salle Araneta University.

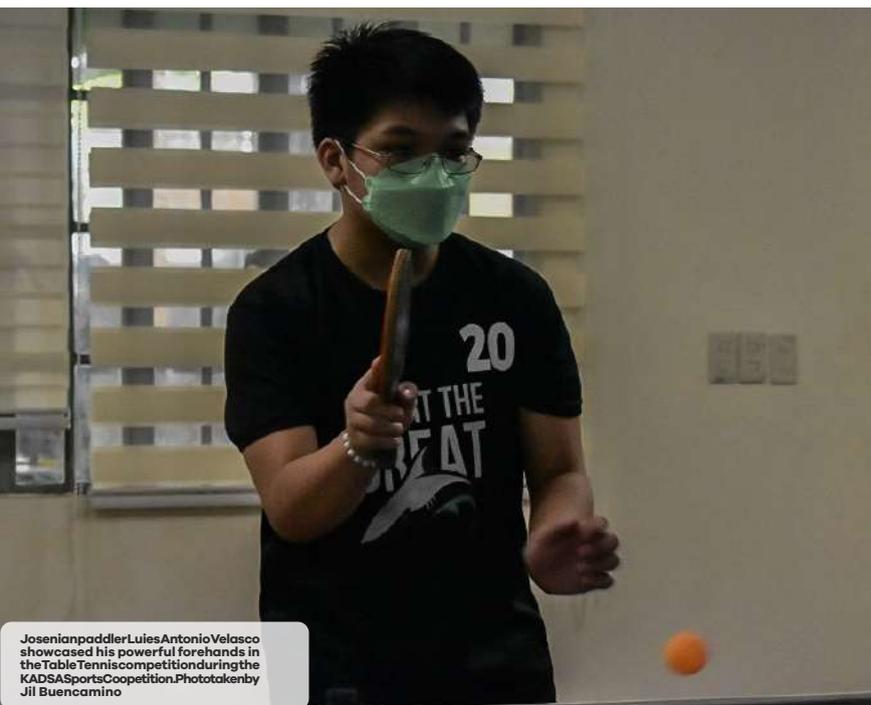
Meanwhile, defending KADSA gold medalist Simone Gwen Fuentes, Grade 5 – St. Lorenzo Ruiz, settled for bronze after bowing down to the young racketeer from neighboring St. James Academy.

"Ang galing niya. Tao sa tao, pinapahabol talaga ako ng shuttlecock side to side," Fuentes said.

The SnJA Badminton team is coached by champion coach and alumnus Jerome Serrano.

## SnJA paddlers garner wins in PRISAA table tennis tilt

By Liam Julle Roldan



Josenian paddler Lues Antonio Velasco showcased his powerful forehands in the Table Tennis competition during the KADSA Sports Competition. Photo taken by Jil Buencamino

**T**hrough teamwork and cooperation both boys duo of San Jose Academy table tennis tilt betted podium finishes in the KADSA Sports Competition Games held at De La Salle Araneta University, March 28.

Using powerful forehands, tricky top-spins and masterful fake shots, power spinners Renzo Leon Batas and Benefict Lopez, both from Grade 5 St. Lorenzo Ruiz, copped the gold medal after beating their witty opponents from St. James Academy, 11-7, 11-8.

The Batas-Lopez tandem bounced back from a deficit to beat St. Gabriel Academy 2-1 (3-11, 11-4, 11-9) and secure their place in the semifinal round.

They defeated the more agile and experienced duo from De La

Salle Araneta University in the semifinals, 2-1 (11-4, 5-11, 11-8).

The female duo of Erich Patrice Gatchalian and Jahzara Bonzon from the Green and Gold squad, whose specialties include chops, spins, and smashes, surrendered to their opponent from Immaculate Conception Academy of Malabon and accepted the silver medal.

Gatchalian and Bonzon advanced to the final with relative ease, defeating St. Gabriel Academy 2-0 (11-4, 11-6) in the eliminations and St. James Academy 2-0 (11-7, 11-8) in the semifinal.

"We remain hopeful sa debut performance ng mga bata. Next year's outlook is promising," said Coach Yvonne Diano, who was pleased with the outcome of the events.

# SPORTS *theLily*

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Grade School Department Division of Navotas, National Capital Region



Rovic Cupcupin, the prolific scorer of Junior Cagers, struggles to shoot the ball against the steady wall mounted by the Tanza Blue Squads. Photo taken by Jill Buencamino

## Division Palaro 2023: Tanza tames Junior Cagers in front of home crowd, 49-43

By Divino Rod Kalaw

**T**anza Elementary School (TES) took advantage of San Jose Academy Junior Cagers' collapse in the endgame to snatch the last semi-final spot via 49-43 in the elimination round of the Navotas Division Palaro Meet held at the Academy's covered court on March 28.

The mighty Tanza blue squads banked on their height to get the last semi-final seat from the seemingly exhausted Cagers squad, which ran out of gas after catching up with the eventual champs in the first three quarters.

Even the shooting prowess of prolific Cager duo Liam Julle Roldan and Johann Rovic Cupcupin went for naught after failing to carry the team to a win despite scoring a combined 24 points, dishing out five assists, and hauling two boards.

The game started with a tremendous shooting run from the towers of TES scoring 14 points, while the Cagers were plagued with

turnovers and a single beyond the arch goal, 143.

The Cagers turned to their trio in the third quarter to catch up with the big lead of the blue squad, 21-12.

In the last quarter, the green and gold team pushed hard to get close to the opponents' score but eventually ran out of gas.

"Sayang, napagod na rin siguro ang mga bata. Kinapos na sila sa hangin," said Coach Kelvin Salmasan.

The young team is hoping to bounce back as they prepare for their campaign next school year.

## Sole Josenian bet for Kyurogi gets silver medal

By Julio Loayon

**J**anella Bencion, the lone jin representing San Jose Academy in the taekwondo competition of the Navotas Palaro Meet 2023, won a silver medal in the Kyurogi match conducted at San Roque National High School on March 28.

Bencion finished in second place after failing to capture the gold medal against a much larger and taller opponent from Navotas Elementary School.

Grade 5 student represented the green and gold team in the match for the first time under the guidance of her coach, Mr. Allan Bhambie Longakit.

The young Josenian Jin injured her foot by accident, which negatively affected her performance.

The fight was halted after she fell multiple times as a result of her kicks missing their targets.

"I was really happy that I made it to the games this year. Magtrain pa po ako for the next games na ifi-field ako ni coach," said Bencion to The Lily.



Josenian racketeers smash wins page 15

## Josenian-lead basketball team takes IHS championship

By Jael Myel Fernandez

**Another feather in the cap!**

**T**he Dauntless J-Basketball team, led by its team captain Vanz Enrique Cruz of San Jose Academy Junior Cagers, was crowned champions during the International High School Basketball Championship held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia last December 16-22.

The team defeated SI Academy of Thailand, 84-59 in the semi-finals and prevailed over Team Jerantut of Malaysia, 84-59 in the finals.

In an interview with The Lily, Cruz

expressed gratitude that he does not anticipate winning the tournament's championship due to the number of teams competing.

Cruz stated, "Conditioning and additional

shooting are my preparations so that I won't feel exhausted when it's my turn to play."

Cruz attributed his success to the Lord as well as his passion and dedication to the game.

Cruz responded, "For the time being, we will prioritize our studies and train diligently so that we can represent our country and school in the upcoming international competitions."