

Bishop dedicates the altar and oratory of new Conference Center in Baguio City

The bishop of Baguio presided over the ceremonies for the blessing of the Panagmula Conference Center and the dedication of the Oratory of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

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Most Rev. Bishop Victor B. Bendico, the bishop of Baguio, dedicated the

altar and oratory of the Panagmula Conference Center on April 23, 2022. The Conference Center is located at 54 Lower Balacbac, Baguio City.

Msgr. Carlos V. G. Estrada, regional vicar of Opus Dei, concelebrated the Mass with the bishop. Patrons and sponsors of the new facility witnessed the blessing of the facilities and the dedication of the Oratory of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The event gave the finishing touches to the conference center, which was the dream of the late Fr. Jose “Joe” Cremades, former regional vicar of Opus Dei in the Philippines (1966-1992). He knew that people wished to do spiritual retreats and seminars in Baguio. The property was acquired in the 1990s but it was only on May 6, 2018 — the day before Fr. Cremades died — that the

foundation stone was laid, marking the start of construction.

Bishop Bendico said in his homily that with the dedication “the mercy of God is expressed in this oratory.” He added that God “can use this oratory, this altar, and indeed all of us as tools to further spread his kingdom.”

“This oratory and this altar become agents of sanctification,” Bishop Bendico explained. “Through our offering of the Eucharist here, we sanctify ourselves and we sanctify others, especially the souls we pray for in the Eucharist. Here we console others who are grieving and suffering. We plead for the salvation of souls,” he said.

In his remarks after the Mass, Msgr. Estrada asked for “prayers for all of those who will participate in the activities that are held here.”

“It is not only for Opus Dei but for all those who want to attend the retreats, seminars, and means of formation that we will organize,” he explained.

Msgr. Estrada expressed the hope that people would come “not just to say ‘how beautiful this place is!’ God wants that all of this beauty be somehow imprinted on our souls whenever we attend some activities of renewal in this place.”

Opus Dei holds retreats and conferences in similar venues like the Tagaytay Conference Center (Mendez, Cavite) and Makiling Conference Center (Calamba, Laguna). Makiling started in 1972 and is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Those interested in activities organized by Opus Dei may send an e-mail to info.ph@opusdei.org.

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