

# **The Prelate in Manila (Philippines), July 26 to August 3, 2023**

Highlights of the Prelate's  
activities in Manila

07/29/2023

## **August 3, Thursday**

After heartfelt farewells, Msgr. Ocariz departed for the airport at 9:30 in the morning, concluding his stay in Manila. "We are all united! Even when I am already in Australia,

we are always united," he said to a group in the house. His parting words were in English: "Please pray for me as I also pray for you."

His next destination is Cebu, where more exciting events and gatherings await him.

## **August 2, Wednesday**

In the morning, Msgr. Ocariz visited some sick faithful of the Prelature in their centers. Shortly before noon, he made a visit to the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary (La Naval) in Quezon City to pray.

Msgr. Fernando Ocariz arrived at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) at 4:30pm. Students and faculty members welcomed him at the main entrance with cheers, drums, banners, and a dragon mascot. University faculty, staff, alumni, former officers and families lined the way to the meeting halls.

He engaged the many who requested for a selfie photo, a blessing, or an “abrazo.”

He first met with the officers of Educhild, who narrated stories of their programs aimed at promoting strong marriages and families, and guiding single young professionals. They also shared the challenges faced by Filipino families today. “We should teach persons how to love, in order to help married couples deal with the difficulties they are encountering,” he said. He emphasized the importance of fostering love, understanding, and forgiveness within families. The Father advised them to seek to be genuine friends with those going through difficult situations.

He moved to the adjacent hall to meet with the UA&P Board of Trustees, Management Committee, unit heads, and some alumni.

University President Winston Padojinog had warm formal greetings for Msgr. Ocariz, the Honorary Grand Chancellor of the University. The Prelate outlined key characteristics of governance in the University. The Christian spirit imbues it, with sanctification of work as the first condition. It is carried out with a sense of service, giving primacy to the human person. It requires justice and charity, which are requisites of sanctified work.

He then talked about unity. The university is not an aggregate of separate and independent units. He commented on the value of collegiality, that we need one another, and that we count on the opinion of others. Lastly, he acknowledged the faculty members serving in governance posts, that they are doing so with a spirit of service and sacrifice.

UA&P gave him a replica of the President's chain with medallions of various UA&P seals. He received books published by UA&P. The Alumni Association gifted him with the new version of the *becas* of all the Schools, made of handwoven cloth.

## August 1, Tuesday

Msgr. Ocariz was at the University of Asia and the Pacific for a 10 am meeting with Bishop Oscar Florencio, the Military Ordinary of the Philippines. Bishop Florencio, a former student of Msgr. Ocariz in Rome, expressed his gratitude for Opus Dei's spiritual help to the priests of the military ordinariate.

They proceeded to a get-together with diocesan clergy. Present were Bishop Stephen Lee from Macau, several monsignori, and around 50 priests. The Prelate encouraged them to be men of prayer and to make the

celebration of the Eucharist the center of each day. He told them to be very happy with and thankful for their vocation to the priesthood, which is a gift not only for themselves but for everyone around them.

After meeting the clergy, the Prelate met with officers and directors of the various schools under the Parents for Education Foundation (PAREF) system. They shared stories of their schools and the efforts to spread among parents, teachers, and children his message about the centrality of Jesus Christ. Msgr. Ocariz encouraged them to continue their valuable work, stressing the significance of reaching out to parents, who play a crucial role in their children's lives at home.

In the afternoon, the Father met with several families. Each shared their stories of evangelization. They all

showed him their family pictures and presented him gifts. He thanked them for helping Opus Dei in the Philippines and asked for their prayers.

## **July 31, Monday**

In the morning, Msgr. Ocariz met with those doing their seminar at the Tagaytay Conference Center and received guests there.

At 4:00 pm he visited the Dualtech Training Center, a technical vocational school in Canlubang. He blessed the ongoing construction of the Excellence Activity Center in the campus, a facility for human and professional formation of students and industrial workers in the vicinity.

He toured the facilities and met some students. One of them presented him with a sorting machine that he had invented. He gave a short address to

the management and staff of the school and spoke to them about sanctifying their work.

Back in Manila, in the early evening, the Father paid his respects at the wake of a faithful of the Prelature, a lady architect who had designed several centers in the country.

## July 30, Sunday

At 10:30 in the morning, Msgr. Ocariz had a gathering with families, members of Opus Dei and their friends at the Mall of Asia Arena. This was the highlight event of the Prelate's trip, with 7,000 in attendance.

Read more. <https://opusdei.org/en-ph/arti...>

In the afternoon, the Prelate visited the Tagaytay Conference Center, a retreat house and seminar facility in Mendez, Cavite.

## July 29, Saturday

Msgr. Ocariz met with some of the older members of Opus Dei and visited those who are ill in some of the centers.

In the afternoon, he visited Punlaan School, a pioneer in Dual Training for women in the fields of Cookery, Baking, and Food and Beverage Services. The management welcomed the Father in their newly-inaugurated 7-storey building in San Juan. Punlaan is the flagship school of the Foundation for Professional Training, Inc. (FPTI), which has other technical training schools in Laguna and Cebu.

Present during the visit were the officers and management of FPTI as well as those of other women-empowerment NGOs established by members of Opus Dei and their colleagues in different parts of the country.

The Father told them that effectiveness will come from taking care of the quality of the work they do. Then, as St. Josemaria taught, to always have supernatural outlook in everything. It is God who helps us. Further, he told them that success lies in living fraternity well, with spirit of service.

During the short program at the auditorium, some Punlaan students presented the Father with a tiny seedbed, explaining that “*punlaan*” is the Tagalog word for “seedbed.” They let the Father plant some seeds of *banaba*, a medicinal plant, and told him that they hope to become sowers of peace and joy in their work of service to the hotel and restaurant industry.

## July 28, Friday

In the morning, Msgr. Ocáriz visited some of the sick and elderly faithful of the Prelature in the centers.

Earlier he celebrated Mass at the Stella Orientis Oratory of the University of Asia and the Pacific, a corporate undertaking of Opus Dei in the Philippines.

## July 27, Thursday

In the morning, Msgr. Ocáriz received some families in his residence in New Manila. The families shared their family stories and showed him pictures, which he blessed. He gave rosaries to the adults and candies to the children.

He met with 40 delegates from PAREF Southridge school who were about to leave for Lisbon for the World Youth Day from August 1 to 6. They came in their official jackets and gave him a jacket labelled “The Father.”

He told them to live fraternity and charity among themselves and with those from other countries. He

reminded them that they would certainly encounter difficulties along the way and that they should offer those up for the Pope. He then gave them the blessing for the trip.

In the afternoon, the Prelate was back at the University of Asia and the Pacific for an audience with the men students and young professionals who attend activities of formation in the centers of Opus Dei. He told them that in their activities, they must seek Christ. And if one is friends with Christ, it will be easy to make friends.

They asked him advice about how to love people who don't share the same beliefs, how to be resilient amid trials, and how to discern God's will. A string chamber orchestra of three young men provided musical numbers.

"What struck me the most during our get-together with the Father was that in these times, we must not let our

emotions control us, but instead use the means - to strive and to persevere - in mastering ourselves, upholding virtues, and being gracious to others," said one student. He recalled that "the Father emphasized that the world needs young people who know how to listen and to communicate with love and care; to avoid arguing to impose one's views on others, and instead to pray for them."

## **July 26, Wednesday**

First on the Prelate's agenda for the start of this apostolic trip to the Philippines was a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in New Manila. Bishop Alvaro del Portillo did the same thing in 1987, as did Bishop Javier Echevarria in 1998.

The Superior of the Carmelite Fathers welcomed him at the Shrine. Msgr. Ocáriz prayed the Rosary with

Fr. Julio Dieguez, the Regional Vicar of Opus Dei in the Philippines, at his side. A small group of faithful who were already at the church that morning accompanied them, petitioning for the apostolic fruits of this trip.

In the afternoon, Msgr. Ocáriz had an audience with 300 women students and professionals who attend activities of formation regularly in centers of Opus Dei in Metro Manila, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Iloilo and Bacolod. It was held at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P). They received him with enthusiasm and energy.

Rocio, a graduating student, asked the Prelate how to combat the spread of liberal ideologies and trends such as the cancel culture. Another asked about how to give priority to one's prayer life in the face of her hectic academic life. A young lady asked in

Tagalog how to be resilient in the face of painful family situations.

The common thread in the Father's replies was: learning to love. He advised them to reactivate their love for God, to be an instrument of unity, and to be forgiving.

Responding to the concern of one on how to do things as best as one can without giving in to a perfectionist mindset, Msgr. Ocariz advised her to change the mindset, but that this does not mean that one will not strive to do things the best way he/she can. "What perfects things is love."

The Prelate told them to take seriously the formation they receive in the centers. In a world that sometimes seems hostile to the things of God. "*Adelante, sin miedo*," (Forward, without fear), he challenged them.

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