

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS IN THE HISTORY OF THE AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Resumen

Los agustinos recoletos tienen una larga historia en Filipinas. Su ininterrumpida presencia en el archipiélago Asiático, que comenzó en 1606, ha dado origen a una serie de acontecimientos –llegada del Jesús Nazareno, ministerios boholanos–, monumentos –basílica de San Sebastián, catedral de Vigan–, imágenes icónicas –Virgen de la Salud– y celosos misioneros –san Ezequiel Moreno, beatos León Inchausti y José Rada–. Sin embargo, su historia sigue mezclada con errores de hecho, inocentes al parecer, y omisiones involuntarias. Estos errores se encuentran en libros de texto, en memes, en páginas web y, sobre todo, en placas conmemorativas. Tienen su origen en la inconsciente repetición de informaciones equivocadas. La composición de este artículo ha exigido un gran esfuerzo para localizarlos y rectificarlos con la vista puesta en las generaciones futuras. Se ha realizado con la esperanza de que los errores serán corregidos por las instituciones interesadas, de acuerdo con el dicho de Séneca y Cicerón: «Errar es humano, persistir en el error es de bobos»

Abstract

The Augustinian Recollects have a long history in the Philippines. Their uninterrupted presence in the Asian archipelago which commenced in 1606 has given rise to a wide array of historic events –arrival of the Black Nazarene, ministry in Bohol–, heritage sites–San Sebastian Basilica, Vigan Cathedral–, iconic images –like the Black Nazarene, Virgen de la Salud– and zealous missionaries –Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Blessed León Inchausti, Blessed José Rada. However, their history is sadly fraught with factual errors, apparently innocent blunders and unintentional omissions. The blunders may be found in textbooks, memes, websites and, above all, in commemorative markers. They originated from unconscious copying of inaccuracies or passing of inaccurate information. The article exerted much effort in locating them and rectifying them for the sake of future generations. It was done in the hope that the errata would be modified by concerned people and institutions because, as Seneca and Cicero once commented: «To err is human, but only fools persist in their error.»

«*Omnium hominum est errare sed stulti in errore perseverare.*»
SENECA (4 BC - 65 AD)

«*Cuiusvis hominis est errare,
nullius nisi insipientis in errore perseverare.*»
CICERO (106 - 43 BC)

«*Anyone can commit mistakes, but fools persist in their error.*»

Introduction

The history of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines is unfortunately awash with factual errors, seemingly innocent blunders and unintentional omissions. The historical blunders may stem from unconscious copying of repeated inaccuracies or passing of inaccurate information to succeeding generations with no apparent effort to double-check the sources, or blunders stemming from presumed authoritative sources. For utter lack of serious archival investigation, a writer may get hold of a factual error or even misinformation from an apparently authoritative source and therefore hand the same mistakes over to the next generations of readers, students or, yes, even historians or historiographers. Countless cases of unforeseeable omissions—whether unintended, blatantly intentional on account of the dearth of accurate information researched in or retrieved from reliable sources—are touted as gospel truths. Alas, the social media and the Wikipedia are overflowing with such omissions and they must be modified, when possible, corrected in comment walls.

Such inaccurate or baseless conclusions and generalizations especially those coming from historians, influencers, institutions or government entities in charge putting up historical landmarks in public places, like plazas, heritage sites, façades of churches, bell towers, forts and tourist spots which eventually and oftentimes —unfortunately— turn into authoritative super-spreaders of misinformation, half-truths, not unlike fake news, or worst disinformation. With some frequency, these institutions have been apparently helpless in rectifying the countless errors which stemmed from dearth of profound research, available archival sources, undiscovered sources and simply an utter dependence upon stock or public knowledge bereft of serious archival research. Unless they are modified or corrected appropriately at once, they shall continue to spread the errors. The blunders shall regrettably be handed down to the social media of this internet-loving generation and to generations to come. These should be rectified by those concerned people or institutions that must accept the corrections, otherwise as the Roman philosophers say: «To err is human, but only fools persist in their error.»

Such historical landmarks, like the *Simbahan at Kumbento ng Recoletos* marker in Intramuros, Manila and the *Simbahan at Kumbento ng San Juan de Bagumbayan* cost the government coffers each over ₱40,000 in 2006. The *San Ezekiel Moreno* marker in Puerto Princesa City in 2014 cost more than ₱60,000. They were fruits of the serious research and close collaboration of the National Historical Commission and the Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, then under Fr. Lauro V. Lalar, prior provincial, and Fr. Regino Z. Bangcaya, chair of the Executive Committee of the Recoletos 400 Celebration (1606-2006). For the *Saint Ezekiel Moreno landmark* in Palawan, Fr. Rene F. Paglinawan, head of the Com-

mission of History, Culture and Heritage – Recoletos (2012-2015) followed up the initiative of NHCP Commissioner Dr. Rene Escalante. This writer was the history consultant in those three commemorative marker projects.

Most of the time, these recommended rectifications were transmitted to them verbally, in conversation, hence no action was taken. No record of the suggested corrections was taken down. Apparently, there is no such office or department at the National Historical Commission that receives such well-researched recommendations to rectify their landmarks. The non-existence record of the verbal report eventually resulted to inaction, non-rectification. As the Latin saying goes: *Volant verba, manent scripta*.¹

I. Six categories of blunders and omissions, three special cases and an appendix

This paper deals with such seemingly harmless blunders, factual inaccuracies and omissions, pertinent to the history of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines. We attach to our enumerations evidentiary photographs, images, scanned pages or memes to illustrate graphically our contentions. In this paper, we enumerate them under six categories:

1. Historical landmarks or metal commemorative markers installed on pedestals at heritage sites or on church façades by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines or its predecessors, such as the National Historical Institute, Philippines Historical Committee and Historical Research and Markers Committee.
2. Omissions of the Recollect presence in Vigan City, the name of Bishop Juan García Ruiz de San Agustín in the list of archbishops/bishops in the Vigan Archdiocese website and the Recollect ministry unmentioned in the Antipolo cathedral marker.
3. Inaccuracies anent the Black Nazarene or *Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno* at the Basilica in Quiapo, Manila.
4. The presence of Spanish friars in Bohol at the outset of the Dagohoy Revolt.
5. Books or publications fraught with inaccuracies.
6. Websites spreading factual errors.

¹ Literally, the Latin phrase means “spoken words fly away, written words remain.” Explained in another way, spoken words are easily forgotten, but written documents can always be evidentiary proofs which are conclusive in public matters.

1. Historical landmarks installed by NRM/PHC/NHI/ NHCP

A. San Sebastian Church historical marker at Plaza del Carmen, Quiapo, Manila

Here are some additional valuable information and factual blunders on the iconic prefabricated all-steel San Sebastian Basilica, unfortunately perpetuated by the historical marker installed on its left façade by the Historical Research and Markers Committee in 1934:

- a. Indeed, Spanish Architect **Don Genaro Palacios** designed it. Blueprints of San Sebastian Church safely kept at the Fray Juan de la Concepción Archivo Recoleta in Bulwagang Recoletos in Mira-Nila Homes, Quezon City. Definitely, it was not Gustave Eiffel of the famed international landmark in Paris, France, as allegedly conjectured and propagated by *Philippine Daily Inquirer* columnist and former National Historical Institute Chair Ambeth Ocampo and GMA reporters.
- b. The English Supervising Engineer **Frederick H. Sawyer** was assisted by Belgian Engineers Peter Brakel and Desiderius Carpentier.
- c. The blessing was on **15 August 1891**, not on 16 August 1891.
- d. It was not in **1611** but in **1621** when Don Bernardino del Castillo Maldonado donated the land to the Recollects and built for them the convent and the **first church**. Foundation: **16 February 1621**. The Virgen del Carmen icon was brought by Fray Rodrigo de San Miguel in 1618 to Manila and enthroned on **5 May 1621** at San Sebastian Church.
- e. The lowly first church was set afire during the 1639 Sangley Revolt. Damaged and “rebuilt as new”; this was **the 2nd church**.
- f. The earthquake of 30 November 1645 ruined the 2nd church. The 3rd church was built; it survived two hundred years.
- g. No earthquake occurred in **1859**.
- h. The two-century-old church was rebuilt with three naves in 1861. Millions of pesos were spent for its reconstruction. This was the **4th church**.
- i. This 4th church was damaged beyond repair in the June 1863 quake, that is, only two years after its reconstruction.
- j. The **5th church** was built in 1867, but it was ruined in the July 1880 quake and had to be demolished.
- k. The all-steel church was assembled in 1888-1891 at Binche, Belgium and its steel parts were shipped to Manila in steamers and reassembled as the 6th church, declared as a Basilica.

1. The Basilica of San Sebastian –the quadricentenary Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel– is **130 years old on 15 August 2021.**

B. Blatant error at the Most Holy Trinity Church façade in Loay, Bohol

After his priestly ordination in Cebu City on 22 December 1885, Fray Leon Inchausti de la Virgen del Rosario from Ajanguiz, Vizcaya, Spain served the Most Holy Trinity Parish of Loay in Bohol until 27 March 1886 when he was named parish priest of Dimiao, also in Bohol. He was slain by Marxist revolutionaries at Motril, Granada, Spain on 25 July 1936 at the onset of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and was beatified by Pope John Paul II at Saint Peter's Basilica on 7 March 1999 together with seven other Martyrs of Motril (including Blessed José Rada de la Virgen de los Dolores, a native of Tarazona, Zaragoza, Spain and curate in several parishes of Bohol). He was not canonized as Saint, canonization being the next and last step to sainthood. It was a beatification process in 1999 that the Recollect priest underwent to be called thereafter Blessed León Inchausti, indeed, a glory of the Church of Bohol and the Order of Augustinian Recollects.



c. Factual blunders and their corrections at Saint Joseph Cathedral façade in Tagbilaran City

Here are the errors and ambiguities and our corresponding rectifications and improvements for the historical landmark installed at the right side of the façade of Saint Joseph Cathedral of Tagbilaran City, capital of Bohol, by the Philippines Historical Committee in 1953:

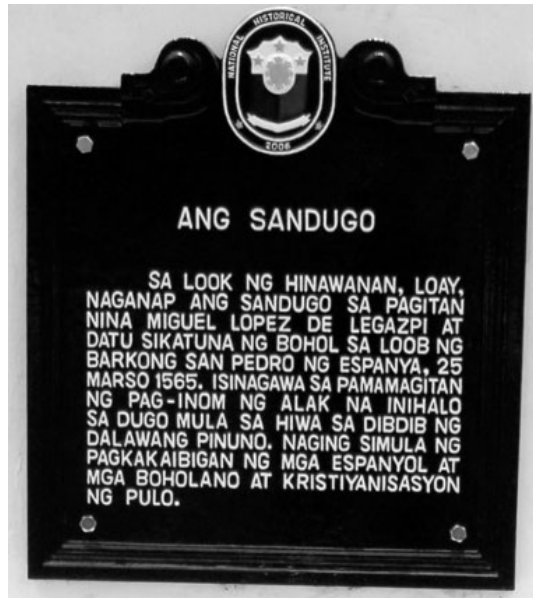
1. Tagbilaran was one of the **nine parishes**, not **six**, in Bohol founded by the Jesuits before they were expelled from the island. The nine parishes are: **Baclayon (1596), Loboc (1596), Dauis (1596), Jagna (1631), Inabanga (1726), Tagbilaran (1742), Dimiao ((1750), Loon (1753) and Maribojoc (1767).**
2. The year was **1596**, not 1595. The first Jesuits Gabriel Sánchez and Juan de Torres arrived in Baclayon on **17 November 1596**.
3. To erase the misimpression that no convent ever existed before 1872, we must add that **both convent and church were gutted by fire at 8:00 pm, 23 December 1798**.
4. Fr. **Valero de San Sebastián** was parish priest in 1839-1855; **not Fr. Valero de San Pascual**.
5. Fr. Valero de San Pascual never existed; no Recollect priest existed with that name. However, there was **Fr. Manuel de San Pascual, parish priest in 1835-1839** before Fr. Valero de San Sebastián.
6. The *Libro de cosas notables de Tagbilaran*, authored by Augustinian Recollect parish priests of Tagbilaran, declares that **the present church was the work of the first Recollect fathers.**» In the list of parish priests, there were five diocesan parish priests in the 1798-1855 period who might have helped in the church construction.
7. Likewise, **no record of the identity of the builder of the kumbento exists.** The same *Cosas notables* affirms: «The convent was the work of the first Recollects.»
8. The accurate surname of the parish priest of Tagbilaran in 1870-1875 is Fr. Lucas **Coromina**, not Corominas.
9. Fr. **Lucas Coromina did not build the convent**; he merely enlarged it notably in 1872 and roofed it with galvanized iron.
10. **Fr. José Sánchez**, not Fr. José Sancho, began the construction of the bell tower in early **1886**, not in 1884. In 1888, Fr. Sánchez left Bohol because he was elected superior of their San Nicolas priory in Intramuros, Manila, and was succeeded by Fr. Escolástico Enciso.

11. During Fr. Escolástico Enciso's term, the bell tower was finished and blest in April 1891 by the parish priest of Baclayon.
12. Fr. Enciso made the church embellishments in 1888-1894, not 1884-1894.

d. Blood Compact Marker at Loay, Bohol

The Blood Compact marker installed at Loay in 2006 by the National Historical Institute declares: «**Naging simula ng pagkakaibigan ng mga Espanyol at mga Boholano at Kristiyanisasyon ng pulo.**» Friendship, yes, existed thereafter, but that Christianization never took place. Here is what I wrote on pages 52-53 of my book *History of Bohol (1521-1937): Essays, Notes and Sources* (Manila 2022):

After the blood compact ceremony the Spaniards erected a small hut for the administration of the sacraments. Pastoral attention was focused on the spiritual needs of some four hundred members of the expedition.² On 27 March 1565, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass –doubtless the first ever to be celebrated on Bohol soil– was attended by Legazpi and his men. As it was the season of Lent, the Augustinians spent most of their time exhorting the soldiers and sailors to timely penitential practices and strengthening them for the great task that lay ahead. Augustinian chroniclers reported that the first Philippine missionaries took pains in learning the Visayan language for their future apostolic activity.



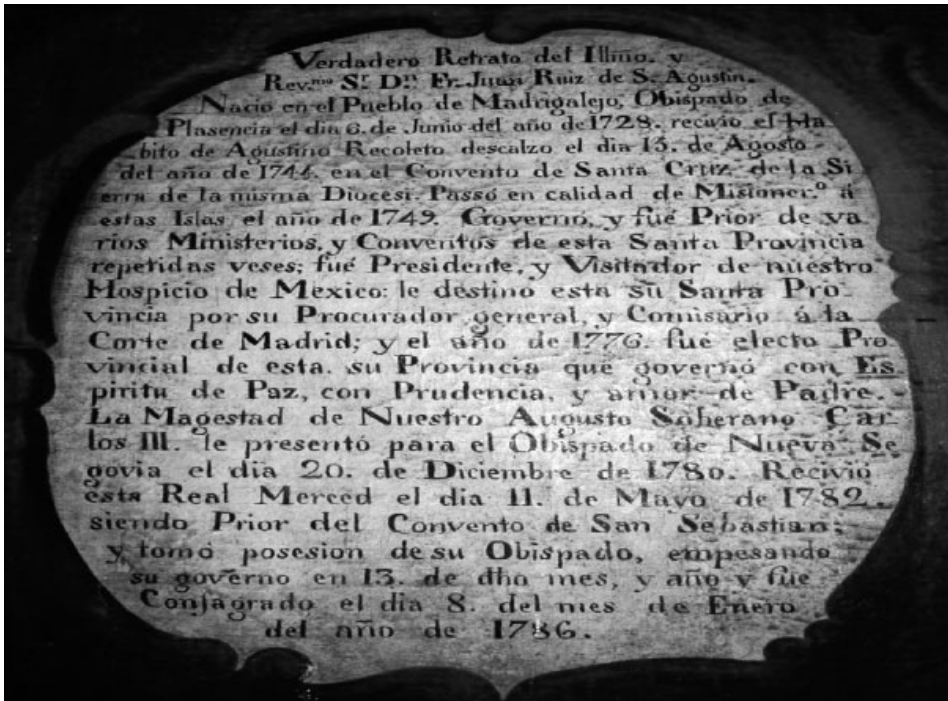
² Zaide fixes the number as 380 men who were mostly Mexican.



Because of the initial language stumbling block, the attempt to “bring the brilliant light of faith” to the people of Bohol was probably on a very limited scale, if ever there were any at all. At that time the captain general and his counselors had not yet firmed up their decision to set up a permanent colony in the Philippines. **Nor have they decided to establish a permanent base of operations with ample supplies for the huge expedition.** They awaited vital information from the reconnaissance trips of his explorers. **The food shortage in Bohol apparently discouraged the idea of a permanent settlement there.** Therefore, any serious attempt to evangelize the inhabitants could not have been made, if the missionaries were not even sure of staying there permanently. There was no one to maintain the growth and development of Christianity in the island. The

Augustinian friars feared for the natives' possible apostasy, *i.e.*, their repudiation of Christianity and subsequent return to the old pagan traditions during their prolonged absence.

d. The Augustinian Recollect Bishop Juan García Ruiz de San Agustín of the Diocese of Nueva Segovia in Vigan City



1. The historical landmark at the façade of the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia failed to mention Bishop Juan García Ruiz de San Agustín, Recollect builder of the cathedral.
2. Bishop Juan García Ruiz is not mentioned in the website: <http://www.gcatholic.org/dioceses/diocese/nseg0.htm>.

The website of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia now mentions [11 July 2021] the Augustinian Recollect Bishop in the list of Archbishops and Bishops of Nueva Segovia: [org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Nueva_Segovia](http://www.gcatholic.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Nueva_Segovia). But many blunders still remain.

3. The website [//www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bgarciaru.html](http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bgarciaru.html) says Bishop Juan García Ruiz belonged to **O.A.D., Order of Discalced Augustinians [Ordo Augustinianorum Discalceatorum]**, instead

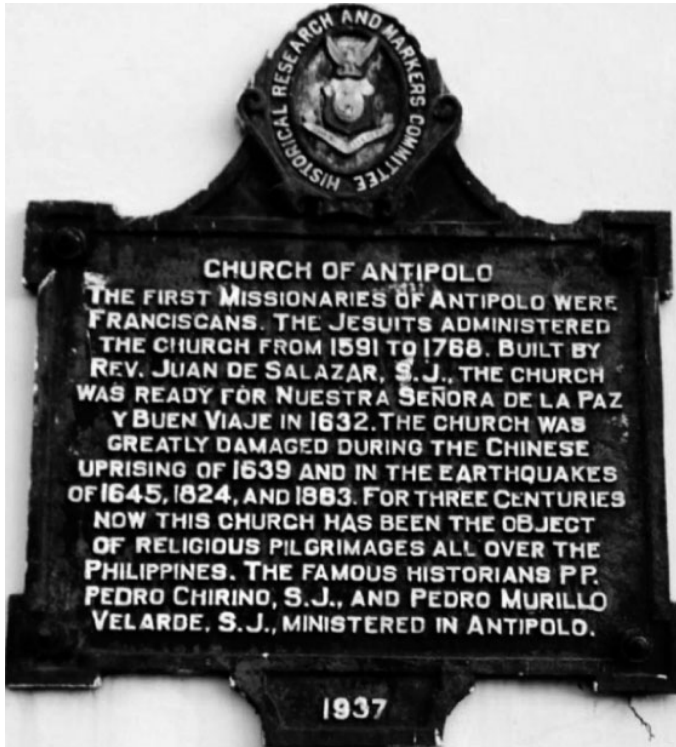
of **O.A.R., Order of Augustinian Recollects** [*Ordo Augustianorum Recollectorum*]. This website is the source of errors found in other related websites, like wikiwand.com/en/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Nueva_Segovia and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Nueva_Segovia.

4. Recollect Biographer Francisco Sádaba³ says the Holy See named him Bishop of Nueva Segovia on **20 December 1780** [like what the **contemporaneous portrait at Vigan confirms**], and, after being relieved of his post as prior of San Sebastian Convent on 12 May 1782, he started his administration of the episcopal see on **13 May 1782** even before his episcopal consecration on **8 January 1786** in Intramuros. The website [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Garc%C3%ADa_Ruiz] wrongly informs us that he was ordained as bishop on **12 March 1786**.
5. In that same website, his birthplace is **Madrideojos, Cebu**, instead of the correct town of **Madrigalejo**, Extremadura, Spain. In www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bgarcia_ru.html, **Madrideojo, Spain** is mistakenly indicated as birthplace.

e. Omission of the Augustinian Recollect pastoral ministry in a historical landmark at the façade of the Marian Cathedral and National Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo City.

The historical marker prominently installed by the Historical Research and Markers Committee in 1937 at the façade of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo City omits the pastoral ministry of the Augustinian Recollects in Antipolo from 1863 to 1898. In the wake of the expulsion of the Recollects from Mindanao that started in 1859 with the arrival of the Jesuits and the 10 September 1861 royal decree of Queen Isabel II indemnified the Recollects with vacant parishes in the Archdiocese of Manila. For the vacant curacy of Antipolo, on 26 January 1863, Governor General Rafael de Echagüe approved the appointment of Fray Francisco Villas from the list of three parish priest presented by the Prior Provincial Juan Félix. Villas took possession on 12 February 1863 with his appointment signed by Archbishop Melitón Martínez “under protest.”

³ Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas desde el año 1606, en que llegó la primera misión a Manila, hasta nuestros días*, Madrid 1906, 267-269.

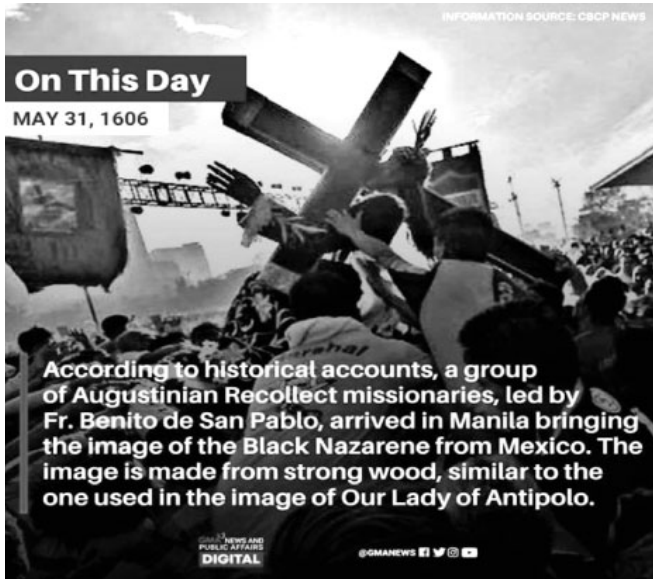


Biography of Recollect Bishop Juan Garcia Ruiz de San Agustin below his life-size authentic portrait in the Palacio del Arzobispado, Vigan City.

Nine Recollect parish priests, including future provincials Pablo Bienzobas and Santos Paredes, historian Patricio Marcellán, renowned musician Celestino Yoldi, were subsequently assigned to Antipolo until the last Augustinian Recollect parish priest Cipriano Benedicto who held its spiritual administration from October 1897 up to mid-1898.

3. Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno, Black Nazarene of Quiapo, Manila

The GMA News and Public Affairs meme says on 31 May 1606 a group of Augustinian Recollects headed by Fray Benito de San Pablo brought to Manila the image of the Black Nazarene from Mexico. The source of its flawed information: 2017 CBCP News Monitor. But the GMA News and Public Affairs meme and the CBCP News Monitor do not indicate the historical accounts. Facts: No definite date of arrival of the Black Nazarene image. Fray Benito de San Pablo OAR was born in 1685 in Jarandilla, Spain, and died in Manila in 1768. He arrived in 1711, not in 1606. Cf. SÁDABA, 170-173.



4. Spanish Friars in Bohol

Fact: The friars, *i.e.*, Augustinian Recollects, arrived in 1768 to replace the expelled Jesuit missionaries (1596-1768).

- a. The Francisco Dagohoy bust at the Luneta installed in 1998 together with our local heroes with a gold plaque that declares: “Enraged by the refusal of a Spanish friar to bury his brother, he led a rebellion against Spanish rule which lasted from 1744-1829. The rebellion which was also fueled by excesses of the Spanish authorities lasted for more than 80 years, the longest in Philippine history. **No friars in Bohol in 1744, but Jesuits.** The Spanish friars, *i.e.*, the Augustinian Recollects, arrived in 1768.
- b. In the musical play *Dagon sa Hoyohoy* [Amulet in the Gentle Breeze] written by Marianito Luspo and composed by Lutgardo Labad, **the priest and nemesis of the Boholano patriot Francisco Dagohoy is the Spanish friar named Padre Gaspar Morales who was a Jesuit.**

But like what Jesuit Historian José Arcilla declared at the National Conference of Recoletos Culture, Heritage and History at Diego Cera Auditorium, San Sebastian College Manila, in December 2004, before the audience over five hundred people: “**Thank God, no. We Jesuits are not friars!**”

5. Books Authored by Augustinian Recollects themselves

- a. Death of Mauricio Ferrero OAR, builder and founder of Bacolod. In the 1938 Catalogue by Miguel Avellaneda, the death of Mauricio Ferrero was on 29 January 1916, which in fact was the date when the information was received in Rome.⁴ This wrong date is perpetuated in the historical marker at Mauricio Ferrero Street, a stone's throw away from SM City Bacolod. The correct date of his demise is 8 December 2015, verified by Ángel Martínez Cuesta and it is found in the *Cosas notables de Bacolod*. The Avellaneda book has wider circulation than the 1916 *Boletín de la Provincia de San Nicolás* where the correct date of death was written, and solely one archival library keeps a single copy of this now-rare bulletin intended for Recollect houses only. [Cf. Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos, *Events in Bacolod, Negros Occidental in the Parish Chronicle (1871-1909)* of Fr. Mauricio Ferrero, OAR and other Essays (Quezon City 2016) 32, 51.]
- b. Jesuit arrival in Bohol. The arrival of the first Jesuit missionaries at Bohol was vague and speculative among Recollect sources: Aquilino Bon 1595. Other sources such as the *Cosas notables* of towns: 1592, 1593 or 1594. But my reliable Jesuit sources definitely declare it was **17 November 1596**. I had come upon the Jesuit letter, i.e., *Residencia de Bohol*, at the Jesuit general archive in Rome and at the Church History Faculty Library of the Pontifical Gregorian University.⁵ The books of Pedro Chirino (Rome 1604, Manila 1969) and Horacio de la Costa (Cambridge 1961) are easily accessible in Philippine libraries.⁶
- c. Augustinian Recollect arrival in Cuyo. The arrival of the first Augustinian Recollect missionaries in Cuyo, Palawan is the oft-repeated 1622: See Licinio Ruiz (1925), Patricio Marcellán (1879), Fidel de Blas (1910), Calvo (1959), Pornilos (1989), Romanillos (2001). They contend that Bishop Pedro de Arce of Cebu who handed over the spiritual administration of Cuyo and the Calamianes to the Recollects arrived at Cuyo Island on **27 August 1622**.

4 Miguel AVELLANEDA, *Continuación del Padre Sádaba o Segunda Parte del Catálogo de los religiosos de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos (1906-1936)*, Rome 1938, 389.

5 *Residencia de Bohol*, ARCHIVUM ROMANUM SOCIETATIS IESU, *Historiae* 9, 3v; Francisco COLÍN-Pablo PASTELLS, *Labor evangélica, ministerios apostólicos de los obreros de la Compañía de Jesús, fundación y progresos de su provincia en las Islas Filipinas*, Barcelona 1900, II, 152-153.

6 Pedro CHIRINO, *Relación de las Islas Filipinas i de lo que en ellas an trabajado los Padres de la Compañía de Jesús* (Rome 1604, Manila 1969) 325-326; Horacio DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768* (Cambridge 1961) 163-165.

José María Echeverría in his dissertation for his Doctorate in Missiology⁷ informs us that the episcopal decree of 27 August 1622 that ceded the spiritual administration vacated by the diocesan priest Juan de Santa Cruz to the Augustinian Recollects of the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino required the prior approval and permission from the royal viceroy and governor general in Manila who granted such permission on **23 January 1623**. Hence, bearing such royal decree of approval the first group of **missionaries arrived at Cuyo in the last week of January of that same year**. Fr. Echeverría further transcribed in his doctoral dissertation both Bishop Pedro de Arce's episcopal decree as well Royal Viceroy and Governor General Alonso Fajardo y Tenza's decree of approval and license issued to the Augustinian Recollects.

Ángel Martínez Cuesta in *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos I* (1995) affirms on page 388 the same 1622 episcopal decree and the arrival of the first missionaries headed by Juan de Santo Tomás on the **last week of January in the year 1623** and thereafter they spread to Agutaya, Dumarán, Linapacan and northern Palawan and evangelized those scattered islands of the Cuyo archipelago.

- d. Arrival of the Virgen del Carmen image in Manila. Ángel Martínez Cuesta in the first volume of his *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* (1995), page 327, has the photograph of the Virgen del Carmen icon which an erroneous caption says it **had been venerated since 1616** when the fact is that **the image arrived in Manila in 1618** with the mission headed by Fray Rodrigo de San Miguel.

Msgr. Sabino Vengco likewise committed the blunder in his book on Marian devotions: Arrival of Virgen del Carmen icon in 1617. This writer confronted him at a conference in Bulwagang Rizal and he said he could no longer pinpoint where he obtained his data but he accepted the date

7 José María Echeverría affirms thus: «Some historians point to the previous year, *that is*, 1622 [as the arrival of the first Augustinian Recollects in Cuyo], however, we believe this year 1623 to be more probable because the permission of the Royal Patronage was not granted until 23 January 1623 and that aforementioned governor general's permission was the prerequisite or condition provided for by the most Excellent Bishop in order to finalize the granting of the possession or spiritual administration: **In order for them to gain entry into this District and avail themselves of the jurisdiction they have first to ask the approval of the Governor General and Captain General of these Islands by virtue of the Royal Patronage of his Royal Majesty.**» Cf. *Orígenes de las misiones de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Agustinos Recoletos en el Extremo Oriente*, Madrid 1952, 118, footnote 257.

from Recollect sources. Cf. Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos, *The Spires of San Sebastian* (Manila 1991) 5.

- e. Arrival of the Virgen de la Salud icon in Manila. On page 362 of his first volume of *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* (1995), Ángel Martínez Cuesta inadvertently affirms that the Virgen de la Salud came to the Philippines with the first religious mission of **1606** and since then the icon has been venerated in Bagumbayan, Manila. The fact is the age-old and existed Marian image was brought to Manila in **1634** by Pedro de la Resurrección who headed the expedition of thirteen Recollects. In 1991, I already researched on the Virgen de la Salud. This date of arrival was deduced from the 1647 historical account of Fray Andrés del Espíritu Santo. Cf. Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *The Spires of San Sebastian* (Manila 1991) 9. Twenty-five years, this was repeated in Rommel RUBIA (compiler/researcher), *La Salud. The Black Virgin of Health* (Quezon City 2016) 6.

6. Inaccuracies in Official Websites

a. Danao City

The Danao City official website declares that Danao was founded by the Augustinian Recollects in **1609** (Cf. Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *The Augustinian Recollects in Cebu since 1621: Studies and Sources*, Cebu City 2021, page 152, footnote 6). The first Augustinian Recollect missionaries from Spain stepped ashore at Cebu City on 12 May 1606 and proceeded two weeks after to Manila. They returned to Cebu in order to take possession on **9 June 1621** of the Immaculate Conception Shrine which was earlier donated by the Augustinian Bishop Pedro de Arce to them on 4 March 1621 and officially approved by the Royal Viceroy and Governor General Alonso Fajardo de Tenza on 29 April. Thereafter, the Recollects established their future convent and church. Therefore, there were no Recollect missionaries to found the parish and town of Danao in Cebu in 1609. Cf. [//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danao,_Cebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danao,_Cebu). Another website avers that the town was founded in 1844.

b. Two websites of Jasaan, Misamis: parish and town.

A website identifies **the Augustinian Recollect Fr. Nemesio Llorente as the first Spanish Jesuit of Jasaan** [Jan 26, 1887 - June 25, 1887]! We do not know where the Jasaan researcher obtained such erroneous information. We conjecture that his source could be a parish canonical book, but it is evident

that the researcher did not consult such Recollect sources as Sádaba, Fidel de Blas or Avellaneda. See *Immaculate Conception Parish Church of Jasaan*, in // [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immaculate_Conception_Parish_Church_\(Jasaan\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immaculate_Conception_Parish_Church_(Jasaan)). The website of the local government of Jasaan which contained the same blunder on September 2017 fortunately has been taken down: // jasaan.gov.ph/public/index.php?submenu=5&home=Tourist%20Spots. This error, discovered in both parish and town websites, was retrieved on 26 September 2017. Only the parish website has it, as of 11 July 2021.

c. Isabela City (Basilan Province): Brazen Mistake in Wikipedia

The Wikipedia article of Isabela, Basilan, in // en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabela,_Basilan provides this erroneous information on the Recollect takeover of Isabela in the wake of the expulsion of the Jesuits: “**The Recoletos de San Jose (Recollects) took over territories previously assigned to the Jesuits.**” This phrase **Recoletos de San Jose** evidently refers to the **Augustinian Recollects of the famed University of San Jose-Recoletos** in Cebu, founded in 1947. Furthermore, the bracketed link, i.e., **Recollects**, provides one more blunder—additionally confounding the issue—with the following entry: “The **Recollects** (French: *Récollets*) were a French reform branch of the Friars Minor, a Franciscan order. Denoted by their gray habits and pointed hoods, the Recollects took vows of poverty and devoted their lives to prayer, penance, and spiritual reflection. Today, they are best known for their presence as missionaries in various parts of the world, most notably in early Canada.” Doubtless, the Augustinian Recollects of the Philippines originated from the Spanish reform movement of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, which commenced in the Augustinian provincial chapter of 1588 in Toledo, Spain. Definitely not a reform branch of the Franciscan Order, the members donned the “gray habits with pointed hoods” with missionary presence “most notably in early Canada.”

7. Blunders in books authored by historians

a. Isagani MEDINA, Cavite Before the Revolution (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press 2002).

My complete review of Medina’s magnum opus is published as «Cavite Before the Revolution»: *The Augustinian Recollects* in the Philippines. History and Hagiography (Quezon City 2001) pp. 369-382. It was published earlier in *Recollectio* 17 (1994) 349-356.

Among the blatant untruths and errors in this book are the ff:

“**Seventeen friars ran there for cover during the siege,**” writes Medina on page 135. This refers to the thrilling events of the Philippine Revolution in Cavite Province: the siege by the revolutionists of the Imus *casa-hacienda* (estate-house) that commenced on 31 August 1896. Licinio Ruiz on pp. 347-348 quoted the eyewitness account of Recollect Brother Ángel Morrás, the religious friar who was at San Nicolas casa-hacienda in Bacoor and fortunately escaped to Manila. He mentioned **only seven**, namely, **José María Learte, Juan Herrero, Bernardo Angós, Jorge Zueco, Román Caballero, Dámaso Goñi, Victoriano López**. Moreover, they did not run for safety to the Imus estate house, as Medina and living Katipunero Román Abad repeated the error, simply because **the Recollects lived and worked there at the estate-house**.

According to Medina, **Román Caballero was a lay administrator** of the hacienda de Imus. In fact, **Fray Román was a religious or non-cleric brother** who professed the religious vows of the Augustinian Recollect Congregation. He built the Prinza Dam in San Nicolas Bacoor City still in use today and the Imus cemetery.

Fray **Nicolás Becerra**, builder of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Pillar of Imus, died of **poisoning**, a conjecture based on a woman’s testimony. The *Libro de Difuntos* in the provincial historical archives and Historian General Manuel Carceller both declare that **Fray Nicolás died from a massive heart attack**. We do not know Medina’s motive to disregard the official source which was quoted by Sádaba and favor a hearsay.

The casa-hacienda set ablaze during the siege flushed out the Recollect friars, as conjectured Medina in his book page 137, quoting Teodoro Agoncillos’ *The Revolt of the Masses* (1956) page 176: “The unfortunate refugees, **unable to stand the smoke of the raging fire, dashed out of the warehouse and so to captivity.**” However, both Medina himself and the Recollect sources did not mention any conflagration nor subsequent captivity of the resident friars. The massacre of the Recollects of the casa-hacienda took place elsewhere: five friars were slaughtered in Bacoor [Learte, Herrero, Zueco, López, Angós] and their corpses were dumped into the river. Two friars remained in Imus: Goñi was discovered ensconced in a sewer and was butchered instantly. The sexagenarian Caballero rushed forth to meet the incoming patriots who at first did not bother him but he was slain later on.

b. John N. SCHUMACHER. Father Jose Burgos. A Documentary History (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University 1999)

The Jesuit historian erroneously claims that the Recollect Bishop Andrés Ferrero (1846-1909) stayed only for a **few nine months** as parish priest of

Pontevedra in Negros Island before he was appointed bishop of Jaro, Iloilo. In fact, he was parish priest of Pontevedra in 1875-1882; 1888-1894 for **a total of thirteen years**. (Cf. SÁDABA, 574-578) There he built the church, *kumbento* and cemetery during his first term. He was vicar provincial of Negros and, concurrently, vicar forane of southern Negros in 1885. Ordained as priest in 1869 in Spain, he was an educator and formator: philosophy in Monteagudo, Navarra and theology in Marcilla. A month after arrival in Manila, he was named *prior presidente* of San Sebastian Convent in Manila in July 1873 and in October 1874 as *compañero* [companion] of Panglao Bohol parish priest for his pastoral experience and in order to learn the Bisayan language. Thus for fourteen years he exercised his pastoral ministry in the Visayas as well as occupied various administrative positions (prior provincial, prior of San Nicolas Convent, provincial councilor of the Province of Saint Nicholas), making him very qualified for episcopal see in 1897.

c. Milagros C. GUERRERO, John N. SCHUMACHER, Kasaysayan. The Story of the Filipino People, vol. 5: Reform and Revolution (Manila 1998) 12

The royal decree that dispossessed the Congregation of Augustinian Recollects of all its parishes and *misiones vivas* in Mindanao was enacted on **30 July 1859, eve of the feast of the Jesuit founder Ignatius of Loyola**, from both the old *doctrinas* founded by the Jesuits [six parishes and two mission stations with 10,000 Christians] and those created after their expulsion thus: "...not only the new missions [founded by Recollects after 1768; nineteen parishes with over 88,000 Christians in all] would be under their [Jesuits'] supervision, but also the older towns along the coast held by the Recoletos, which would serve as bases from which the missions into the interior of the island would work." Here lies the Jesuit John Schumacher's flawed assertion when he affirms that the royal **decree expelling the Recollects from Mindanao was issued in 1861**. In fact, this was the year when the pro-Recollect royal decree was issued in Spain (**10 September 1861**) indemnifying the Recollects with vacant parishes in Manila to compensate their loss of curacies in Mindanao stemming from the pro-Jesuit 1859 decree.

We now bring to light special cases in detail: two are textbooks used in history and religious education subjects. The college textbooks are awash with errors, omissions and ambiguity. The third case is the NHI historical landmark at the San Francisco de Asis Parish Church facade in Siquijor in need of thorough rectifications based on very reliable Augustinian Recollect historians and published archival sources.

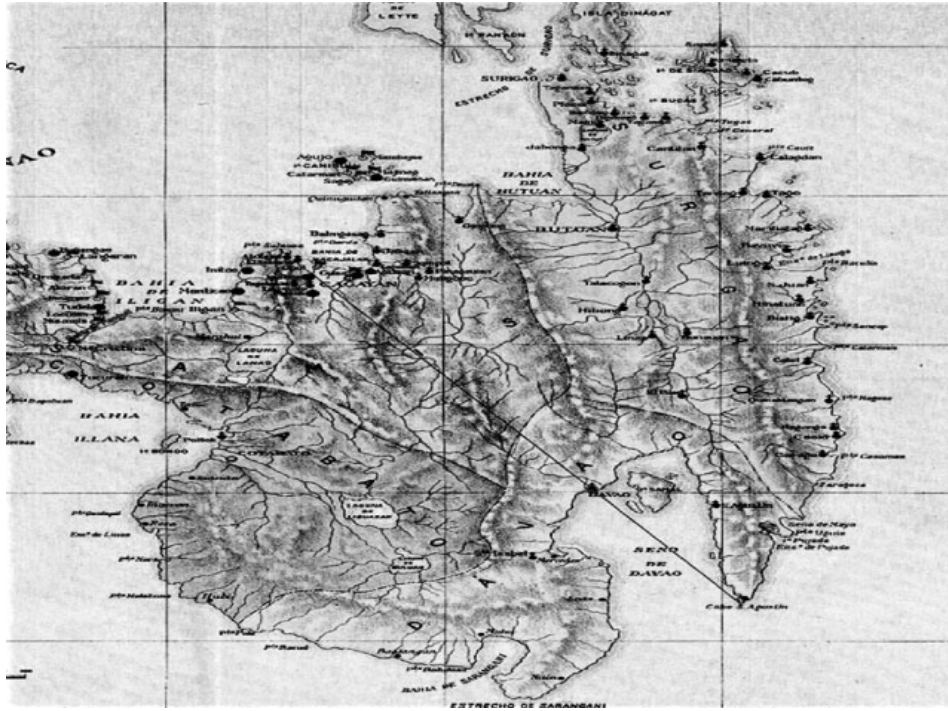
Special Case # 1

The Antipolo-Isabela (Basilan) Controversy in O. D. CORPUZ's *The Roots of the Filipino Nation*, vol. I (Quezon City 1995), Chapter 11: Fighting for the Parishes, the Filipino Clergy

National Scientist Onofre D. Corpuz in his two volumes of *The Roots of the Filipino Nation* has omissions, conjectures or one-sided assertions that must be rebutted with facts either hitherto untranslated or unknown to historians who did not bother to consult works of Recollect authors (Licinio Ruiz, Manuel Carceller) and sources (*Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas* II; *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos*; *Quærens. Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life*) but favored Jesuit historians (John N. Schumacher, Nicholas Cushner) and the scholar journal as sources (*Philippine Studies*) and a Spanish source *Historia general de Filipinas desde el descubrimiento de dichas Islas hasta nuestros días* 3 (Madrid 1895) of José Montero y Vidal.

Erroneous: «Ten Jesuits arrived in 1859. [...] The next year a royal decree assigned the curacies in the newly created province of Mindanao to the Jesuits, to be taken over by them as each curacy was vacated by the Recollects; it was the latter to whom these curacies had been assigned since 1768.» [O.D. CORPUZ, *The Roots of the Filipino Nation*, vol. I, page 591].

Rectifications: The Augustinian Recollects had arrived in Mindanao in 1622 and later were given the eastern half of the huge island [see map below]. They evangelized Caraga District comprising Linao, Surigao, Agusan, Siargao, Cagayan, Bacuag and Higaquit. In 1768, the Recollects had eight religious who ministered to 14,000 Christians in eight parishes: Camiguin, Cagayan, Butuan, Surigao, Tandag, Bislig, Catarman and Lanao. The Jesuits had six ministers in Zamboanga, Dapitan, Iligan and Misamis with their two mission stations with a total population of 10,000 Christians. Six Jesuit ministries were handed over to the Recollects in 1768. Following Corpuz's logic, only those six parishes should be returned to them. Yet, when the Jesuits returned to Mindanao, the Recollects were mandated to cede to the restored Society of Jesus the parishes they themselves evangelized since 1622 as well as those by the Jesuits, in accordance with the **30 July 1959** royal decree of Queen Isabel II, **not 1860 as Corpuz wrongly implies**. Thus **nineteen parishes** were gradually handed over to the Jesuits whose number was insufficient to manage them. Hence, transfer was delayed for decades until the Recollects requested to keep some parishes as token of their evangelization of the big island where scores of their confreres suffered deprivations, harsh living conditions, risky travels and death. Nineteen Recollects ministries were ceded from 1862 through 1883.



Map of Mindanao shows the imaginary line traversing the Island from Punta Sulawan in the north to Cabo San Agustín in the south. The Jesuits evangelized the western Mindanao, while the Recollects its eastern part. Source: FIDEL DE BLAS, *Labor evangélica de los padres agustinos recoletos en las Islas Filipinas* (Zaragoza 1910).

Towns ceded to Jesuits by Recollects with Cession Years & Population

Town	Year of Cession	Population
1. Tetuan	1862	2,715
2. Isabela	1862	378
3. Zamboanga	1865	11,477
4. Polloc	1865	282
5. Davao	1868	1,064
6. Dapitan	1870	5,860
7. Lubungan	1870	2,040

Town	Year of Cession	Population
8. Surigao	1871	5,480
9. Gigaquit	1872	4,643
10. Bislig	1873	7,606
11. Mainit	1875	3,341
12. Butuan	1875	5,569
13. Bunawan	1875	1,807
14. Balingasag	1877	8,762
15. Dinagat	1878	3,618
16. Cantilan	1879	9,676
17. Salvador	1879	4,989
18. Jasaan	1882	5,849
19. Numancia	1883	3,365
TOTAL	88,163	

- Vague assertion:** «Although they [the Recollects] had **merely succeeded to the Jesuit curacies when these were expelled**, they filed a vigorous protest against the decree, claiming that they were being dispossessed.» Cf. CORPUZ, *The Roots I*, 591.

The crystal-clear facts: That the Recollects «merely succeeded to the Jesuit curacies,» yes, to solely six Jesuit curacies, is vague. The Recollects possessed eight curacies in Mindanao and their *visitas* before 1768. Again these curacies were not Jesuit –had never been Jesuit– since the beginning. The Jesuits had nothing to do with them. And rightly so, the Recollects filed a protest against the decree because they were unjustly dispossessed of their own curacies –not unlike a lightning bolt from nowhere that struck them– including those fourteen curacies they themselves had set up since the Jesuit expulsion in 1768 and handed over to them on account of the 30 July 1859 decree. The Recollects claimed they were despoiled without due process. They were not consulted beforehand about their expulsion from Mindanao where they had shed blood, sweat and tears and lost some lives since 1622, especially during the Caraga Revolt and unexpected Moro incursions. According to the provisions of the Laws of the Indies, such action required prior consultation with the contending parties, yes, with the involved parties in the dispossession. Furthermore, Bishop Romualdo Jimeno, the

Dominican bishop of the Most Holy Name of Jesus of Cebu that included the Visayas, Mindanao, Palawan, and the Marianas, asked only for the former Jesuit curacies to be returned to them. To his surprise, the whole Mindanao was to be ceded to Jesuits. To their dismay, the superiors retorted that their 27 friars were to be expelled from the land they evangelized since 1622. Without due process, it was a breach of the Laws of the Indies, completely against the traditional legal practice in Spanish colonies.

- 2. Blatant untruth and, at most, ambiguous assertion:** After all, they had held the curacies **for almost a century by now. Cf. CORPUZ, *The Roots I*, 591.**

The full crystal-clear facts: True enough, it was ninety-one years since the **Recollets received Zamboanga, Dapitan, Iligan and Misamis with their two mission stations.** But the **Recollets had eight parishes** evangelized by more than 250 missionaries since 1622, eight parishes which the Jesuits who had no part at all in their evangelization, namely, **Camiguin, Cagayan, Butuan, Surigao, Tandag, Bislig, Catarman and Lanao.**⁸ And what about the fourteen parishes [Sagay, Davao, Balingasag, Higaquit, Iponan, Mambajao, Jimenez, Mainit, Dinagat, Talacogon, Linao, Polloc and Isabela] established by the Recollets after 1768, obviously after the Jesuit expulsion? All these fourteen non-Jesuit parishes were ceded to them, and the **total population of all nineteen parishes was 88,163.** It was **78,000** more Christians than the **10,000** the Recollets had received in 1768. The phrase “almost a century” refers to 1768, as it was the Recollets to whom the curacies had been assigned since 1768. But Corpuz adds: “The Jesuits and the Recollets had been rivals in Mindanao **since the 17th century.**” Corpuz implies that the Recollets had indeed evangelized Mindanao since the 17th century [exactly since 1622], not only “almost a century,” but for 237 long years!

- 3. Conjecture:** The Jesuits and the Recollets had been **rivals in Mindanao** since the seventeenth century. **Cf. CORPUZ, *The Roots I*, 591.**

Clarificatory Remarks: If they were considered rivals in the evangelization of Mindanao by O.D. Corpuz, why would a Jesuit beg for the “rival” Recollect’s help and why would a Recollect rush to succor the “rival” besieged Jesuit? It was

⁸ Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Fr. Pedro Peláez’s Unpublished Letters on the Secularization Controversy*, in *Quærens. Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life*, vol. 11, no. 2 (December 2016) 23.

1662 when famed **Padre Capitán, Fray Agustín de San Pedro**, rushed to Lake Lanao and liberate the embattled Jesuit **Fr. Gregorio Belín** and his Christian flock. In March 1662, the Jesuit wrote him a letter begging for his help. Sultan Kudarat's 4,000 Moro warriors and other local chiefs had seized three boatloads of Christians and food supplies the night before and slaughtered numerous Spanish troops and Boholano warriors. Then they proceeded to lay siege against Fort Santo Tomas where the Jesuit and his group had sought refuge. The beleaguered flock stored rice stocks that could last a month, even if they consumed one meal a day. A courier slipped through the Moro siege with a letter to Padre Capitán. Belin besought him not to delay his forces as his flock was in imminent danger of decimation if he would arrive too late. The Jesuit's heart-rending letter goes thus:

It is impossible that the heart of your Reverence would allow us who are here in the lake area to perish. For the love of God, for whom you had suffered so much to resettle and subjugate them, please come to our aid with greatest force. [...] I beg your Reverence for the sake of God and His Mother to succor us in everything. If you have two boats with you, then that would be a good thing. At the shore of Bayug there is a fort and Balooy [present-day Balo-i] is fortified. Do what your Reverence [Fray Agustín] may decide and believe me you will have here a most affectionate friend and son and that your holy prayers may not fail us.⁹

Padre Capitán killed scores of the Moro warriors and drove away the survivors down south. Belín and his Christian flock were liberated. The Jesuit historian Francisco Combés in his 1667 *Historia de las Islas de Mindanao, Joló, y sus adyacentes* had only praises for Padre Capitán: «Without owing to anything to what a religious is, he fitted what a soldier is in many occasions with so much gallantry, so that his valor had won him fame and thus he is known in the Philippines as *El Padre Capitán*.»

Indeed, up to these days the two religious orders both worship the same Triune God, propagate the same Faith, disseminate the same Gospel, are sons of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Above all, their common goal was, and still is the salvation of souls for the greater glory of God, especially from the clutches of their common enemy, from the invading Moros and oppressive Spanish officials. The **Jesuits and Recollects indeed helped each other, especially in times of dire need**, thus discarding what Corpuz conjectures as “rivalry” in Mindanao.

⁹ Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica I* (Manila 1925), quoted in Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Amor Diffusivus. Augustinian Recollect Icons and Biographies I* (Quezon City 2021) 363.

- 4. Conjecture stemming from ignorance of the facts.** «It is no wonder that the archbishop of Manila called Antipolo the pearl of the curacies, being one of the most lucrative parishes in the entire archipelago. [...] It was in this context that the Antipolo case [vacant Antipolo parish] was resolved. The archdiocesan authority nominated Francisco Campinas, a native priest, for the curacy. **Recollects predictably contested the vacancy** under the new decree. The prize was one they could ill afford to lose by default: the pearl of the curacies in return for the small, poor, godforsaken doctrina of Isabela on the island of Basilan off Mindanao that they now had to turn over to the Jesuits.» Cf. **CORPUZ**, *The Roots I*, 590, 592.

Hitherto unknown facts: Corpuz ignored the Recollect source as Licinio Ruiz' *Sinopsis histórica I* containing a letter written by Provincial Juan Félix de la Encarnación in Manila to Vicar Provincial Guillermo Agudo in Madrid on 12 February 1862:

I have ceaselessly given example of submissive obedience to the royal decree [of 30 July 1859]. A parish in Mindanao (Mainit) has just been declared vacant and naturally I have prevented myself so that the Jesuit fathers may avail themselves of the right and privilege stemming from said royal order. There are many vacant doctrinas in all the dioceses and in the archdiocese of Manila, but up to now I have not made any move, nor do I plan a move at all.¹⁰

Definitely, the Augustinian Recollect provincial made no move to immediately “grab” the rich Antipolo parish from the secular clergy, as Corpuz would make us believe. On the contrary, the exchange of letters between the Vicar Capitular Pedro Peláez and Prior Provincial Juan Félix revealed an open line of communication between the friar superior and the archdiocesan administrator who was previously the secretary of the deceased archbishop Fray José Aranguren, an Augustinian Recollect friar. Peláez wrote to Félix:

From now on, I shall disallow that rumors [of “parish-grabbing”] be spread about you. If upon answering the recent official letter of the Government, I say something

¹⁰ Carta del P. Prior Provincial Juan Félix de la Encarnación al P. Guillermo Agudo, comisario y vicario provincial de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino en España, 12 febrero 1862, quoted in Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica I*, 279-280.

in favor of the clergy, it shall not be without mentioning you or any Order in the least. In return, I wish you would not avail yourself of said royal order [10 September 1861] in this period of *sede vacante* [of Manila Archdiocese], nor would sanction any changes in order to give time for animosities to subside. I am confident that you are of the same opinion, and it is only for this reason I write this letter and I ask that favor from you.¹¹

The vicar capitular wanted to know more from the provincial himself about the Recollect plans and moves to thresh out common problems and find immediate solutions that would please all sectors. He said he would pay the provincial a visit one afternoon at his office in the Recoletos priory in Intramuros, Manila. This clearly showed some tact and diplomacy, close relationship, mutual respect and common effort to solve the raging controversy between the two high officials and representatives of the colonial Church. Juan Félix, fully aware of the fragile situation, wrote the Cebu Bishop on 18 May 1863:

These towns of Cavite, especially Antipolo, have to be fatal and its grave outcome shall have repercussions of immeasurable transcendence. Antipolo is the start of a series of animosities; there is a link that your Excellency knows very well shall precipitate the events that by themselves take place, driven once more by revolutionary spirit.¹²

Indubitably, Corpuz had not consulted Augustinian Recollect sources at all, as evidenced by their absence in the detailed endnotes and bibliography of his two-volume book now widely used as textbook in Philippine History courses in universities and colleges. The Peláez-Félix interaction could have most probably modified his view that the Recollects superiors “predictably” contested the vacancy, when the fact revealed the opposite.

This controversy involving the 30 July 1859 and 10 September 1961 decrees exposed the conflict between Filipino priests and Spanish friars which, according to Manila Archbishop Gregorio Melitón Martínez’s letter to Regent Francisco Serrano in Madrid «would develop an anti-Spanish character because the former [Filipino clergy] saw the government as an ally of the friars.»

The archbishop then deemed the controversy as a “little fire” that «should an accident happen, could turn into a great conflagration in which the very same

11 Manuel CARCELLER, *Historia general de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos XI* (1837-1866), Madrid 1967, 571-572.

12 Juan Félix DE LA ENCARNACIÓN, *Carta al Ilustrísimo Sr. Dn. Romualdo Jimeno, Obispo de Cebú*, 18 mayo 1863, quoted in L. RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica* I, 278.

people who occupy themselves with spreading baseless fears would be the first to be consumed.» Eventually, that little fire was the Gom-Bur-Za execution that inspired Jose Rizal's novels which was followed by the author's public execution and the Philippine Revolution of 1896 that wrought havoc on the last bastion of the Spanish Empire in the Far East.

Corpuz gives us the impression that the Augustinian Recollects "grabbed" Manila parishes but he ignores the root cause of the polemic: their expulsion from twenty-seven parishes and mission stations in Mindanao on account of the 1859 royal decree as well as the 1861 royal decree compensating them with those in Manila.

All told, the Augustinian Recollects were not the protagonists; they were victims of the intense dispute which was definitely not of their own making. We now conclude this episode of Philippine history and Augustinian Recollect history in the Philippines with what Licinio Ruiz had to say in 1925:

Doubtless it was one of the greatest miscalculations of the Spanish government, and it was one that had the most disastrous consequences. We should only make it evident and leave it very clear that the Recollect Order, with the prior provincial at the helm, even if it was the most concerned, was the one that intervened the least in the turmoil and that had observed the highest degree of prudence in all those polemics. The Recollects were calmly working in their curacies and missions in Mindanao when the scruples of Msgr. Jimeno made him ask her Majesty for the replacement of the Recollects with missionaries of the Society. In this cause are rooted all those tumultuous events.¹³

Special Case # 2

The NHI Landmark in Siquijor in Siquijor Island

The landmark installed by the National Historical Institute at the San Francisco de Asis Parish Church façade in 1984 contains three factual errors, a typo and an ambiguous term. Our chief sources for their corrections are Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I (Madrid 1995) and II (Madrid 2015); Francisco SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos* (Madrid 1906); Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos I* (Manila 1925); Manuel CARCELLER, *Historia general de la Orden de los Recoletos de San Agustín X: 1808-1836* (Madrid 1962).

13 Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica* I, 278-279.

I. Factual Errors

The NHI marker declares that San Francisco de Asis Parish in Siquijor was made a **parish on 1 February 1783**. However, Ángel Martínez Cuesta writes that it became an independent parish separated from Dumaguete in **1781**. Cf. MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* II, 718. At that time, there were only 650 families who lived scattered throughout the entire island of Siquijor. Cf. MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 622.

The curacy of San Francisco de Asis in **Siquijor was entrusted to the Recollects on 12 April 1794, not in 1793**, in exchange for those of Mambusao and Batan in Panay Island. Cf. MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 621-622; II, 718.

The marker blunder: **Alonso de los Dolores was parish priest in 1795-1831**. His full name was **Fray Alonso Pérez de Gonzalo de los Dolores** (23 January 1768-5 July 1845), cf. Manuel CARCELLER, *Historia general de la Orden de los Recoletos de San Agustín X* (1808-1836) 647. SÁDABA's *Catálogo* lists Fray Alonso de los Dolores as a member of the 26th Recollect mission that left Puerto de Santa María, Cádiz, Spain for Mexico on 16 December 1792. There he spent two years before boarding at Acapulco the frigate *San Fernando* that reached Cavite on **15 June 1795**. After the statutory study of Visayan Cebuano and proficiency exam, the provincial council appointed Fray Alonso as **parish priest of Siquijor on 18 June 1796**. He served the curacy **for almost 36 uninterrupted years: 1796-1831**. Cf. SÁDABA, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos*, 368-369; MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 621-622. Elected prior provincial by the provincial chapter in Manila on 23 April 1831 and informed about it, Fray Alonso continued working in his Siquijor parish till September 1831 and began his visits to ministries before arriving in Manila in April 1832 to continue his office as prior provincial at the Recoletos friary in Intramuros, see CARCELLER, *Historia general de la Orden de los Recoletos de San Agustín X*, 647-648.

II. Typographical errors

The correct name of the parish priest of Dumaguete in 1754-1776 was **Fr. José Fernández de Septián**, not **Fr. Setten** as indicated by the marker. The peninsular Spanish diocesan priest began the stone church edifice of Siquijor, which Fray Alonso finished. See MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* II, 719. Even the Augustinian Recollect Historian Licinio Ruiz errs in calling him **Padre Setián**, cf. Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de las Islas Filipinas de la Orden de Agustinos Recoletos* I (Manila

1925) 769. Of Fray Alonso, here is what Licinio Ruiz additionally says: «He likewise finished the kumbento made of solid *cota* just like a bulwark in order to resist attacks perpetrated by the Moros.»

III. Ambiguous phrase

Martínez Cuesta affirms that **marauding Moro pirates** from the south were the traditional adversaries of missionaries and parishioners alike. Constant Moro incursions constrained the Recollect ministers to construct solid churches and kumbentos elsewhere in the country. Hence, the church and kumbento of the coastal parish of Siquijor were practically fortress-like structures. The NHI marker refers simply to the generic *tulisang-dagat* or maritime pirates, apparently in order not to offend those Filipinos affected by the term **Moro pirates**. See MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* I, 622; II, 719; Licinio RUIZ, *Sinopsis histórica* I, 769. In 1818, the Moro pirates captured twenty inhabitants of Siquijor during the Recollect administration of this Visayan curacy. Cf. MARTÍNEZ CUESTA, *Historia de los Agustinos Recoletos* II, 719.

Special Case # 3

Conjectures, Factual Errors and Corrections in Religious Education 1 *Revelation and Faith* (2011)

Prepared by SEAP-REED TEXTBOOK COMMITTEE

Chronology of St. Ezekiel Moreno's life (pp. 53-54)

1. **Conjecture**, 1863, at the age of 15 he entered the Augustinian Recollect convent in Monteagudo, Spain
Rationale: Biographers Ángel Martínez Cuesta and Toribio Minguella have no record whatsoever of Saint Ezekiel's stay as a postulant in Monteagudo, Navarra, in 1863. But we know for a fact that he entered the Augustinian Recollect novitiate there at age 16 and took the habit on **21 September 1864**.
2. **Erroneous: 1865**, September 22, he professed his final vows.
Correct: The **22nd of September 1865** was the date when he professed his simple [temporal] vows after the mandatory one-year of novitiate at Monteagudo. He made his profession of his solemn [final] vows on September 22, **1868 in Marcilla, Navarra**.
3. **Erroneous: 1865**, October, he left Cadiz, Spain, along with 17 missionaries for Philippine mission.

Correct: He left Cadiz in **October 1869, after four years of theology at Marcilla** and arrived in Manila on 10 February 1870.

4. **Erroneous: 1871, June 3,** Archbishop Melitón Martínez ordained him as a priest.

Correct: 2 June 1871 is the accurate date of his ordination to the priesthood by the Manila archbishop. See Ángel MARTÍNEZ CUESTA's *El Camino del deber* (1975). As evidentiary proof, there is a photocopy of the rare manuscript [in front of page 41, Emmanuel Luis A. ROMANILLOS, *Bishop Ezekiel Moreno, Augustinian Recollect Moreno, an Augustinian Recollect Saint Among Filipinos*, Quezon City 1993] issued by the Archdiocese for his beatification process in Manila. The proof is from the Archdiocesan Archives of Manila in Intramuros. The date **3 June 1871** is taken from Toribio Minguella's biography of Bishop Ezekiel Moreno.

5. **Erroneous: 1873, May 3,** he was **recalled** to Calapan, Mindoro;

Correct: His canonical appointment as parish priest of Calapan, Mindoro, was on **10 May 1873**. Father Ezekiel was **assigned, not recalled,** to Calapan. His first pastoral assignment was Calapan but he was coadjutor or curate of his elder brother Father Eustaquio Moreno, the parish priest.

6. **Erroneous: 1879,** he **continued** his pastoral ministry in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

CORRECT: In 1879, he **began** his pastoral ministry in Santo Tomas, Batangas.

7. **Erroneous: 1881, February,** he became assistant parish priest of his brother Father Eustaquio in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Correct: It was on **February 24, 1881,** when Father Ezekiel was appointed parish priest of Sta. Cruz; his brother was still in Calapan, Mindoro. When Father Eustaquio arrived at Sta Cruz, that was the time when he became his assistant parish priest. The period was **19 September 1881 -18 September 1882.**

8. **Erroneous: 1881, June,** he was appointed prior in Imus, Cavite.

Correct: Father Ezekiel was designated prior the Recollect community of the Hacienda de Imus, Cavite on **19 September 1882.**

9. **Vague: 1885, April,** he became **a superior** in Monteagudo, Spain.

Correct: To be precise, it was on **27 April 1885** when the provincial chapter elected him as **the** [not "a"] superior of the community in Monteagudo, Spain.

10. **Erroneous: 1906, February,** he **contracted a malignant cancer of the palate and throat.**

Correct: On 14 February 1906, Bishop Ezekiel Moreno had his first surgical operation of the nasopharynx in Madrid. He was diagnosed to have cancer of the nasopharynx on 5 October 1905 in Pasto, Colombia. The initial symptoms appeared in August 1905 while still in his Colombian diocese. He arrived at Cadiz, Spain, on 8 February 1906 and took the train to Madrid for the surgery.

Recommendations for the textbook

The errors were reported to the Recollect Educational Apostolate of the Philippines in 2012. I had recommended the necessary rectifications of the textbook for the next edition if ever one was published. Any future textbook on Augustinian Recollect theme or lessons must undergo rigorous evaluation by a qualified team of evaluators or experts in the subject matter before sending it to the printing press. We cannot risk teaching through textbooks either untruths or erroneous conjectures or baseless historical accounts or vague assertions or grave omissions to our teachers who would pass them on to our students,

Recommendations

1. Equipped with a sufficient knowledge of the History of the Augustinian Recollects in the Philippines, a SARF or RAY chapter, student organization, parishioner or any member of the **Augustinian Recollect Family should be encouraged and advised to report to the Commission on History, Culture and Heritage-Recoletos [CoHCH-R] or to inform directly the appropriate government agency** such as the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, National Museum or National Commission for Culture and Arts or the concerned local government units on blunders or omissions in markers, in publications or in the internet. And it must be done in writing –for the record purposes– and it should be followed up. The agency concerned, indeed, recommends a written official letter addressed to it, especially with attachments, documents or proofs rectifying the error or errors and omission by their memorial markers.
2. The **Division on Conservation and Preservation of CoHCH-R** may have an added task: to handle any concern with respect to omissions and blunders –inadvertent or intentional- and to provide well-researched recommendations or suggestions to proper government agencies, textbook authors and committees or private entities in order to rectify and thus to set the record straight as well as to end such errors which unluckily may

be handed down to the reading public or tourists of the present and future generations.

3. The Augustinian Recollect community should be reminded of the task to visit, or to send someone to visit, on a regular basis the historical landmark, monument or site pertinent to the Order of Augustinian Recollects in their vicinity, monitor its upkeep and make the necessary reports with regards to their condition. Thus it strengthens and sustains the efforts in the preservation of the Recollect legacy, as mandated by the CoHCH-R By-laws.
4. The **CoHCH-R** is enjoined to assign a committee of writers from various schools, seminaries and parishes to **publish a handy colored directory or manual of OAR historical sites, monuments and landmarks in the Philippines**—complete with their documentation, geographical locations, accessibility, bibliographical sources, photographs and texts of their history or historical background that led to their installation. After a book launch duly disseminated in the print and broadcast media or social media, this **Directory of OAR Heritage in the Philippines** should be available in our colleges, libraries, seminaries, universities, parishes and quasi-parishes in order to foster love for Recollect heritage among our constituents as well as to promote knowledge and promotion of our rich cultural heritage among history enthusiasts, cultural stakeholders, tour guides and the general public.
5. Aimed to assiduously promote research and knowledge as well as to instill pride and esteem of the rich Augustinian Recollect culture, heritage and history among members of the Augustinian Family and the Roman Catholic laity and clergy in general, a day is to be determined for the institutional celebration of the Augustinian Recollect Cultural Legacy Day. The occasion shall be called known as **AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECT CULTURAL HERITAGE DAY, whose acronym is ARCH DAY on the Twelfth Day of May**, to commemorate the arrival of the first Augustinian Recollect missionaries in our country, or other appropriate dates as may be fixed by the Provincial Chapter or by the Prior Provincial and his Council upon the CoHCH-R's recommendation.

It is a working day for the faculty, academic and non-academic personnel but classes may be suspended so students can join the religious, academic and cultural activities of the day. The Augustinian Recollect Family, *i.e.*, AR Sisters, SARF, RAY, OAR universities, seminaries, schools, *cofradías*, are enjoined to participate in any activities. A committee may suggest such activities as Thanksgiving Mass, academic symposium on such legacy as Recollect icons, landmark,


monument, contribution to any field of knowledge, historical research, parade, religious procession, cultural program highlighting Recollect heritage, sports, and contests propagating cultural studies.

Appendix: Saint Ezekiel Moreno

Errors on the Life and Ministry of Saint Ezekiel Moreno on Video Presentations, Live Streaming and Tarpaulin


I. PowerPoint Presentation of Saint Ezekiel's Life on 19 August 2018:

On the Solemn Feast of Saint Ezekiel at the Saint Nicholas de Tolentino Parish Church in Quezon City on 19 August 2018, a PowerPoint Presentation on the life and ministry of the first Recollect Saint was shown. Some captions are corrected below:



**Young Ezekiel
with mother
Josefa.**

**He was born on
April 9, 1848 in
Alfaro, La Rioja, Spain.**

 augustinian
recollects

1. Saint Ezekiel as young boy with his mother; the young boy in the photo was his elder brother Eustaquio who became a Recollect.
2. Blessed Julian Moreno was not Saint Ezekiel's older brother; Julian Moreno was his nephew, the son of his younger sister Valentina.
3. Saint Ezekiel transferred from the Philippines **not to Colombia but to Spain in 1885**. He transferred from Marcilla, Navarra, Spain where he had been elected by the provincial chapter as confessor after his triennium as prior of Monteagudo ended in 1888 and travelled to Bogotá, Colombia as prior provincial of Candelaria Province.



**From the
Philippines he
was transferred
in 1894 to
Colombia.**



4. Saint Ezekiel did not transfer from the Philippines in 1894 to Colombia. He left Spain for Colombia in November 1888.
5. Saint Ezekiel was Bishop of Pasto in 1896-1906.



**Ezekiel as a
young priest.**

**He and his older brother
Julian were Recollect
priests. His brother, now a
Blessed, was one of the
martyrs of Motril.**



II. A Video Presentation, 14 August 2021 [FB Province of Saint Ezekiel Moreno]

Topic: Saint Ezekiel's Marian devotion: **“After he had his cancer and treatment he returned to Spain and spent his last days in Monteagudo.”** *The facts:* In a letter, in August 1905 Bishop Moreno revealed his cancer symptoms and was diagnosed to have cancer on 5 October 1905. On 8 February 1906, he arrived at Cádiz, Spain to undergo two surgeries in February and March 1906 in Madrid. In May, resigned to his fate, he withdrew to the Convent of the *Virgen del Camino* in Monteagudo, Navarra.

III. FB REAP Novena Mass Live Streaming

“Saint Ezekiel spent the whole day praying.” THE FACT: He devoted almost seven hours to prayer in Colombia from his daily schedule of 4:00 AM to 10:15 PM. according to his biographer Bishop Toribio Minguela. He spent many hours of prayer and the rest of the day fulfilling his pastoral tasks in the Philippines.

IV. FB RAY DE FILIPINAS Novena Live Streaming

Saint Ezekiel became bishop of Pasto in 1899. *The fact: 1896-1906.* That was the identical error spread and shared by five FB accounts.

The Augustinians. Province of St. Thomas of Villanova (augustinians.org/ saints-1/august-19)): August 19 – Saint Ezekiel Moreno: “ Today’s feast honors the memory of an **Augustinian friar** who labored for many years in the Philippines and in Colombia, South America as a religious, a priest and later as bishop. [...] He was a leader in the restoration of the Recollect Province of La Candelaria in Colombia, Vicar Apostolic of Casanare and in 1899 became the bishop of Pasto.”

* **The SVD [Societas Verbi Divini] Mission Philippines, Inc.** (13K members), shared the post of Myrna Villarosa with the ff. lines from the Augustinian website: [...] «He was a leader in the restoration of the Recollect Province of La Candelaria; in 1899 he became the bishop of Pasto.» Posted on 19 August, it quotes verbatim the source: The Augustinians. Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.AMRSP [Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines]: «Happy Feast Day! We are celebrating the Feast of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Titular of the OAR Philippine Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. [...] in 1899 became the bishop of Pasto.» Posted on 19 August. It quotes the source: The Augustinians. Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.

* **AMRSP** [Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines]: “Happy Feast Day! We are celebrating the Feast of Saint Ezekiel Moreno, Titular of the OAR Philippine Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno. [...] in 1899 became the bishop of Pasto.” Posted on 19 August. It quotes the source: **The Augustinians. Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.**

* **OSA Province of Santo Niño de Cebu.** This post of 19 August 2021 quotes verbatim the oft-repeated source: **The Augustinians. Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.**

* **Devotees of st. Ezekiel Moreno and Catholicism.** This FB account shared the AMRSP post.

V. Blunder in a TIMELINE TARPULIN at Saint Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center at Brgy. San Jose, Puerto Princesa City at the lobby



Tarpaulin at the Saint Ezekiel Moreno Spirituality and Development Center [SEMSDEC], Barangay San Jose, Puerto Princesa City. [As of March 2019].

Saint Ezekiel Moreno «volunteered in the Order of the Augustinian Recollect [sic]»; he expressed «his intention as a young friar to work in the missions entrusted to the Order.» *The fact:* All young friars of Monteagudo and Marcilla joined the Order in order to work in the Philippine missions –there were no other missions in the wake of Minister Mendizábal’s despoliation decrees in 1835 and thereafter.

VI. HUGOT SEMINARISTA (27K FaceBook followers)

Q Ilo-ilo (Mid-1870s)

ST. EZEKIEL MORENO IN THE PHILIPPINES



Did you know that St. Ezekiel Moreno stayed in the Philippines throughout a span of 15 years?

- 📍

MANILA (1870)

 - On 10 February 1870, he arrived in Manila & lived in the now-extinct convent and formation house of San Nicolás in Intramuros (Recoletos) where he finished his theological formation.
- 📍

PALAWAN (1872)

 - In February 1872, he was appointed chief missionary, penal colony and military chaplain of a missionary expedition whose objective was to set up a military stronghold and penal colony at Puerto Princesa in Palawan.
- 📍

MINDORO (1873)

 - The Augustinian Recollect prior provincial then sent him to his first parochial assignment in Calapan, Mindoro.
- 📍

ILO-ILO (MID-1870s)

 - He sailed to Jaro in the mid 1870s to receive tonsure and minor orders from the Dominican Bishop.
- 📍

LAS PIÑAS (1876)

 - In 1876, he was assigned in Las Piñas and assisted the people during the drought season.
- 📍

BATANGAS (1879)

 - Saint Ezekiel, it goes without saying, obeyed the superiors' wishes and travelled to his new ministry at Santo Tomás in Batangas.
- 📍

NEGROS

 - St. Ezekiel travelled to Talisay to undergo treatment of his anemia under Fr. Fernando Cuenca.
- 📍

CAVITE (1882–1885)

 - In 1882-1885, Saint Ezekiel administered the Recollect haciendas of Bacoor and Imus in Cavite. During the horrifying cholera plague, he took charge of the barrios of Mambog and Salinas in Bacoor where 3,200 perished in the bacterial epidemic.



HugotSeminarista






@HugotSem

orders from the Dominican Bishop.” Loved by 929; liked by 814 (as of 29 August 2021).

Facts: Fray Ezekiel received the tonsure and minor orders in **June 1870** [not in the mid-1870s] in Jaro, Iloilo, from Bishop Mariano Cuartero OP. I commented there in the website: «He spent a few days in Jaro in June 1870 for his minor orders and at once he returned to Intramuros, Manila to finish his theological formation.»

This *HugotSeminarista* post had introductory lines which declared, among others, that he served Iloilo, a blunder rebutted by researched facts. In the mid-1870s, he was parish priest of Calapan (since June 1873), later appointed Recollect vicar provincial and vicar forane of Mindoro until his transfer to the parish of Las Piñas in June 1876.

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