

# Chinoy

celadon

an official publication of the ateneo celadon

Volume 1 Issue no. 2

## Braving Heaven and Hell

By Johnny Go, S.J. and  
La Colascan City volunteer fireman

### Inside:

Right Next Door...page 2

The Torchbearers of

Francis Xavier...page 4

Centennial of Chinoy...page 6

In The Line of Fire...page 10





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# Editor's Letter

CELADON is wrapping up its awareness campaign against the atrocities committed in Indonesia several months ago. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the members of the Ateneo community who lent their invaluable support to the campaign.

And so Ateneo experienced a small outburst of student activism from an unlikely source, CELADON. A grand time was had by all. Now what?

Now, the next step is to get on with our lives.

When Blue Aldridge, Central Board EVP, was lending his thoughts on our campaign, he gave a striking insight: The issue of the atrocities is different because it is not an issue that calls for a definite stand; it is an issue that calls for long-term awareness.

By getting on with our lives, I do not mean living in apathetic awareness.

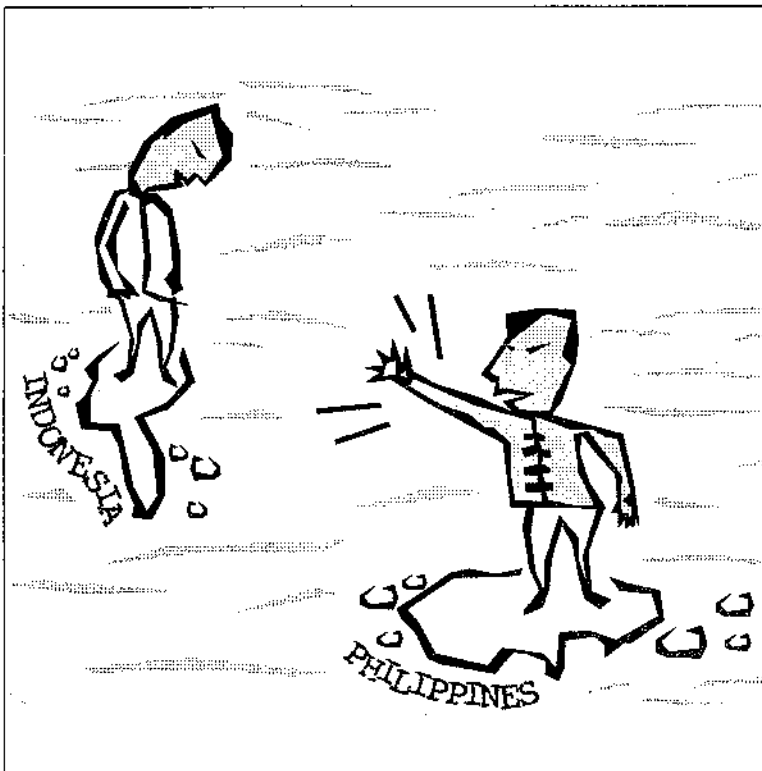
I, for one, was so shocked when I came across pictures of the atrocities while researching the issue that I actually told a classmate that I was glad she was nowhere near Jakarta. Yet, Mr. Johnny Chang, during CELADON's forum, brought up something that had to be said: We take notice because the victims were Chinese. We have few Timorese here in the Philippines, but we have a lot of Chinese, thus we can sympathize more readily. The ugly truth is that violence against minorities and women is an old, old issue. We have heard of the Holocaust. We have heard of the countless rapes in the countless wars that dot human history. The uglier truth is that this old evil will not go away overnight.

So we get on with our lives. But, we do so aware that what happened in Indonesia happened. In the era of modern democracy where public opinion is a powerful force, one must first have an opinion before he can have force. Only then can he translate his awareness into concrete action, and only then will man be able to transcend this old evil.

*Oscar Tan*



THE ALLIANCE of Filipino-Chinese Students held its Acquaintance Party at 9:00 PM last August 22, 1998 at the Horizons Condominium in Pasig. CELADON EVP and AFICS VP Gary Quiec and the EVP Core were in charge of food for the mostly Atenean and LaSallian crowd. Gary wants to say, "Thanks for coming, guys!"



## CELADON Holds First Talk

By KATHRYN YAP

DOUGH WAS found in bread July 22, Wednesday, from 4:30 to 6:00 PM at SS Conference Rooms 3 & 4.

Johnlu Koa: *The French Baker (There's Dough in Bread...)* featured the gregarious and highly successful bakery entrepreneur. During the hour-and-a-half talk, Mr. Koa touched on the beginnings of his business, what you learn and don't learn at business school, and how the Chinese-Filipinos can contribute the country's economy.

The most interesting question was posed by SecGen Core member Jed Bugayong (III MEco): How does one prevent one's employees from eating the products? Mr. Koa gamely shared that he used hidden cameras. He added that his employees received a 50% off discount on French Baker products anyway.

The talk was attended by over 70 people, including CELADON Adviser Mr. Glenn Garfield Ang, COA President Denni Jayme, and ICE Cluster Head VJ Genato.

### CELADON CHINOY STAFF.....

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Oscar Tan (II MEcoH)

MARKETING MANAGER Jasper So (IV ME)

WRITERS Candy Bata (II MEco), Elinore Lim (II MEco), Aileesa Lim (II LM), Travis Chua (II ME), Sarah Ortega (I MEco), Joan Ang Chua (I PoS), Johannes Sia (I AB Psy), Tina Khoe (I MgtH),

PHOTOGRAPHERS Jamie Ferrer (IV AB Psy), Kimberly Pabilona (I AB Psy)

ARTIST Charles Uy (I MCT)

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Faye Reyes (I MIS), Dexter Ang (I ME)

CELADON EVP Gary Quiec

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# Right Next Door

*"We, the ATENEEO STUDENTS, join the Chinese-Filipino community and the entire Filipino nation in expressing our solidarity with our Indonesian brothers and sisters who suffered dearly as their nation struggled for its democracy in a struggle whose price was made all too clear by the bloody riots last May 13 to 15. No God-fearing soul can remain unmoved by the senseless carnage, over a thousand dead, thousands of shops burned and looted and up to 468 women even children, raped and mutilated."*

*—CELADON Manifesto signed by hundreds of Ateneans.*

BY CANDY BATA, AILEESA LIM, ELINORE LIM, JASPER SO AND OSCAR TAN

GRAPHICS AND PHOTOS BY OSCAR TAN

People said that the Filipino people had been too busy with their own elections last May to take note of the news slowly trickling out of Indonesia. The violence mainly against the Chinese-Indonesians took place last May, but the first word of the rapes was heard perhaps only a month later, and Asiaweek published its detailed expose still another month afterwards. CELADON President Christine Ong initiated the org's awareness campaign only in the middle of midterms last August and Chinese-Filipino groups staged public shows of outrage only last August 17, the Indonesian Independence Day. Despite the news' delay in reaching the Philippines, it still provoked a good deal of outrage.

## The Story

Asiaweek traced the events back to May 12 this year. Three students were shot dead as policemen and soldiers dispersed demonstrating students of the prestigious Trisakti University. The bullet lodged in the back of student Hery Hartanto's exhumed body had been fired from a Steyr AUG—military issue.

The crowd that attended the funeral service the following day turned into a mob, and violence spread throughout west Jakarta and then beyond. Mr. Peter Chua, an MA Comm student and the guiding force behind the CELADON campaign, opines that elements in the Suharto government intervened at this point to sow confusion amidst the pro-democracy rallies. He notes that these rioting students were not the ones behind the rape and violence against the

Chinese: "They would demonstrate in public places, not in Chinese neighborhoods. Who would listen to them there?"

Asiaweek reported what one student saw that day, May 13: "Susi saw a car burned with passengers inside. She heard shouts of 'Banish the Chinese.' Across the highway, she saw a huddled group of girls who had been stripped naked." Another witness reported men inciting a crowd to loot a warehouse, and another, a young gangster, said he was ordered to put on a school uniform, travel with a group to another area, and start a fight there. Calls to the military and police went unanswered.

The following day, May 14, gangsters allegedly recruited by Prabowo's Kopassus (Special Forces) were brought into Jakarta. Patterns began to emerge from the eyewitness

accounts. Most uniforms but dropped off by of Jakarta. 7 shopping mall ablaze. Inside hundred people, police and fire and do nothing.

The worst Dr. Rosita No the day, up to by groups of were attacked cars. Sometimes and watch. On women were (been mistake Chinese families died after themselves. examinations homes: "[The of 14 to 20; for seven men. from vagina to

Asiaweek armed forces Army Strategic Reserve (Kostrad) commander Suharto's son-in-law Lt. Gen. Prabowo Subianto. On the afternoon May 13, when the riots broke out, Wiranto ordered the Jakarta military commander to control the violence. Prabowo supported and did not intervene. "Prabowo was that his rival restore order impress Suharto proving he could

Whatever the violence, was undisputed. returned from of his Vice President student den planned. Prabowo persuaded Hal post, was transferred staff college and the kidnapping earlier this year the exodus



accounts. Men wearing high school uniforms but obviously not students were dropped off by minibuses in different areas of Jakarta. They incited crowds to loot shopping malls and then they set these ablaze. Inside the Yogya Plaza, about a hundred people were burned. Military, police and fire units were told to stay put and do nothing.

The worst, however, was described by Dr. Rosita Noer in *Asiaweek*: "Throughout the day, up to 468 women were attacked by groups of men in over 15 places. They were attacked in their shops, homes and cars. Sometimes men were made to undress and watch. Or rape their neighbors. Most women were Chinese, the others may have been mistaken for Chinese or working for Chinese families. At least 20 were killed or died after being raped; others killed themselves." *Asiaweek* related her examinations of girls attacked in their homes: "[They] were all between the ages of 14 to 20; four of them had been raped by seven men. Their entire genital areas, from vagina to anus, had been torn open."

*Asiaweek* discussed the rivalry between armed forces chief Gen. Wiranto and elite

Army Strategic Reserves (Kostrad) commander and Suharto son-in-law Lt. Gen. Prabowo Subianto. On the afternoon of May 13, when the riots broke out, Wiranto ordered the Jakarta military commander to

control the violence. The commander, a Prabowo supporter, issued vague orders and did not deploy troops to where they were really needed. A senior officer opined: "Prabowo wanted to create such chaos that his rival Wiranto would be unable to restore order... Others say he wanted to impress Suharto by sowing chaos—then proving he could control it."

Whatever the true motivations behind the violence, what happened afterwards is undisputed. Suharto, who had just returned from Cairo, stepped down in favor of his Vice President, BJ Habibie, as new student demonstrations were being planned. Prabowo, who had tried to persuade Habibie to give him Wiranto's post, was transferred to head an army staff college and is facing a probe regarding the kidnapping of pro-democracy activists earlier this year. The *Jakarta Post* reported the exodus of thousands of Chinese-

Indonesians, to which Habibie commented to *The Washington Post*, "Their place will be taken by others."

### Systematic Terror

Taiwan's foreign minister filed a formal complaint and China's issued a statement of "deep concern." Public outrage was demonstrated in the more liberal Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Diaoyu islands in Japan. Despite the mounting international outrage, the Indonesian government has yet to show the world that it is taking concrete steps to bring justice to the victims. Habibie did not issue any statement on the violence until July 15. He formed a committee to probe the riots; however, it included generals but not a single Chinese-Indonesian. The government even initially denied that women were raped. The *Jakarta Post* quoted a member of a women's group: "I am disappointed that the minister [Habibie's Minister of Women's Affairs] has not shown a sense of crisis in these

rape cases and other forms of violence against women during the riot."

A Jakarta sociologist explained in the *Post* that "mass rapes and sexual torture of women in times of crisis

**A Jakarta sociologist explained in the *Post* that "mass rapes and sexual torture of women in times of crisis were nothing new."**

were nothing new. Women and children are the most vulnerable group in a society." A human rights group, The Volunteers Team for Humanity, was able to document the patterns of the violence despite threats against them. Their data showed that while riots erupted all over Jakarta, the rapes occurred exclusively in areas where Chinese-Indonesians lived or worked. The incidents, though they occurred in different parts of Jakarta, bore many similarities and were perpetrated by strangers who did not live in the area. In many cases, it was the victims' neighbors who saved them from these strangers.

There were fears of a new round of rioting before August 17, Indonesian Independence Day. Columnist Herman Tiu Laurel printed a message from Chinese-Filipino leader Teresita Ang See last July 5: "Apparently, all the homes of the Chinese

*continued on page 8*

17TH CENTURY CARINDERIA: A Chinese serving an open-air meal to some indios, from J.A. Karuth, Album der Philipinischen Inseln



## Mirror, Mirror

Indonesia was once a colony of the Dutch, and since the early days of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC), the Chinese served as the imperialists' middlemen. Despite this status, the Chinese were oppressed by their masters; the first Chinese massacre in Indonesia took place in Batavia in 1790 and was perpetrated by Dutchmen. Anti-Chinese sentiment became institutionalized in the country's policies and has outlasted the Dutch rule.

The history of the Chinese in the Philippines during the Spanish colonization was similarly written in blood and tears. An estimated six massacres of Chinese took place in the years 1603, 1639, 1662, 1686 and 1762. These were carried out by the Spaniards in retaliation for Chinese uprisings. The most notable was the 1639 massacre, which was performed to quell a revolt due to harsh Spanish treatment and persecution of Chinese laborers. These atrocities claimed over a hundred thousand lives, and the subsequent series of mass expulsions and legal discrimination brought untold humiliation and suffering to Chinese immigrants.

Though the *Parian* of the Philippines has long been forgotten, the Indonesian ghetto system restricting Chinese was abolished only in 1905. Chinese-Indonesians, a Christian minority in Asia's largest Muslim nation, also face discrimination in taxation, identity cards, and religion. Chinese plays, public festivities, characters, and even Chinese schools are illegal in Indonesia. And, as the Spaniards did to Filipinos, Chinese-Indonesians were encouraged to adopt local names. In his paper *The Chinese Indonesians: Some Notes From the Past and the Present for the Future*, Chinese-Indonesian Fr. Ferry Wijaya says: "However hard we are trying to identify ourselves as Indonesians, many native Indonesians continuously treat us as 'foreigners' and 'settlers'."

Compare the accounts of the Jakarta violence to the following account from the book *Historical Records of Big Events Outside China* describing the suppression of a revolt: "The Cebu ethnic Chinese suffered a great tragedy. The Spanish Governor-General ordered the soldiers to torch all the native houses. All the other merchants of the other nationalities were protected by their consuls with the exception of the Chinese who had no protection at all. They ran hither and dither, each trying his own escape. Some died in the fire, some died from the enemies' firepower and some were killed outright by the soldiers. The whole town's Chinese residents numbering almost 900 people perished, with only two able to escape. (translated from Chinese)" ■

# The Torchbearers of Francis Xavier

By OSCAR TAN

The Jesuit Francis Xavier died in a small island off the coast of China, his strength sapped by the long wait to enter the great empire. The well-traveled missionary had made conversions in India and in Japan, but at the time of his death, China remained an elusive dream.

Perhaps in his final moments, he dreamed of Jesuits one day taking up his mission and entering China. Perhaps he also dreamt that among these priests would be Jesuits with chinky eyes and Fookien accents. Fathers Danny Huang and Johnny Go are Jesuits, and as their names imply, are very much Chinese.

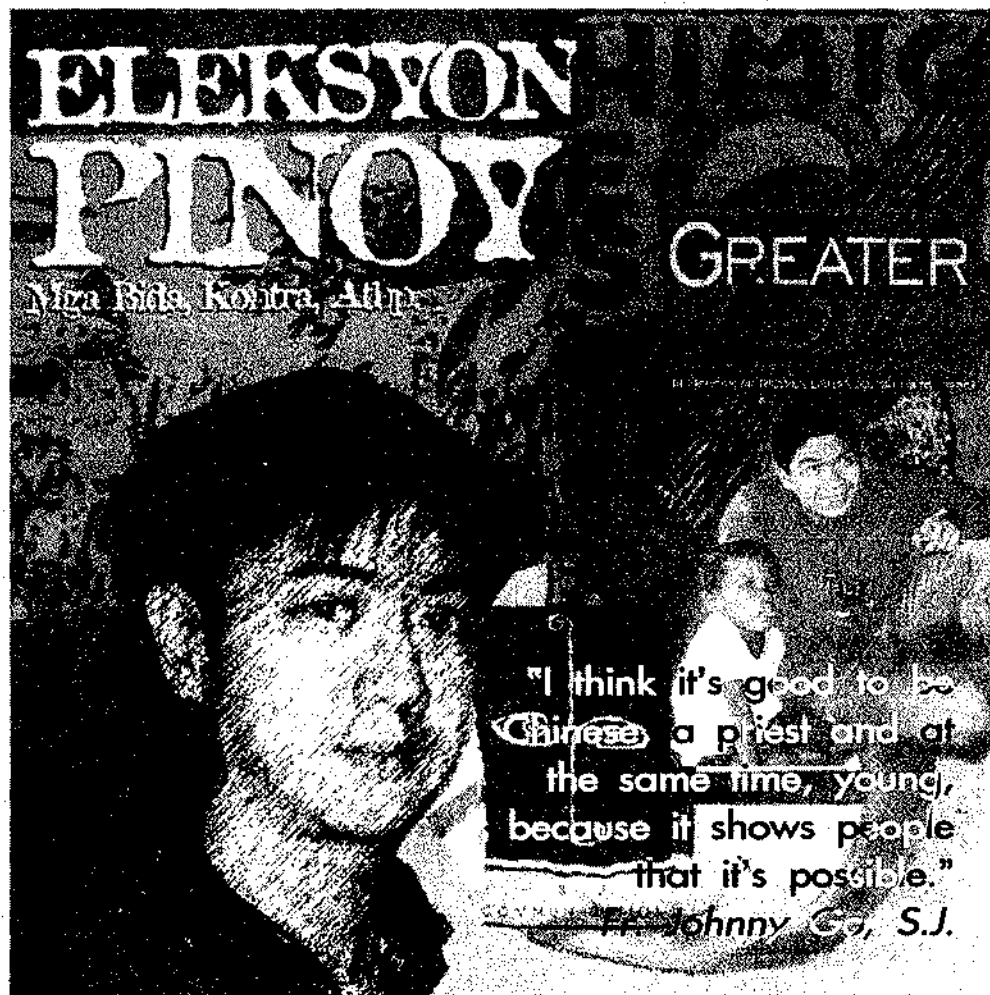
## The Call

Both men have lived with Jesuits all their lives, having graduated from Xavier School and then from the Ateneo de Manila. Both remember entering the vocation as the culmination of a long process that began since their childhoods.

"It was less a choice and more a response to what God was asking me to do," says Fr. Danny (IS '80) about his own call to serve. He cites his own "experience of feeling very loved by God" and, through SOA orgs, his experience of people suffering as the two things that inspired his vocation. "I was a member of AtSCA and the Sanggunian," he relates. "Various exposure programs made me aware of the situation of the country and the people. It was martial law at the time."

He had wanted to become a priest when he was a kid, but this idea got lost in high school. A retreat in the summer before his junior year of college, though, clarified his feelings. His parents were initially wary, but became very supportive when they realized that he was serious. His family was a very religious Catholic one: an aunt was one of the first Chinese nuns in the Philippines and his father, at one time, had also wanted to become a Jesuit.

"You know, you might make a good priest," people used to say to Fr. Johnny as a child. After getting his Psychology degree, he taught in Xavier for two years and then became a brand manager for San Miguel. He liked the work, but felt that something was missing from his life. "The option that I did not want to even explore was the priesthood," he remembers. "I forced myself to explore the possibility even if I didn't think I wanted to find out. After I opened myself to the possibility, *parang* it started happening



very fast." He was 26 when he entered the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches.

His father had already passed away when he made his decision, but his mother was very much opposed to it. "It's not an everyday thing among the Chinese to have a son become a priest, even if he isn't the eldest or the only son," Fr. Johnny explains. The decision was painful for both of them, but by the time Fr. Johnny took his vows, they had come to terms.

## Breaking the Mold

"I think it's good to be Chinese, a priest and at the same time, young, because it shows people that it's possible," says Fr. Johnny. He considers his heritage "a source of good things," such as the Confucian work ethic he grew up with at Xavier. "I have a lot of Chinese students," says the Th141 teacher. "They seem to enjoy a good standing on campus in terms of being good students, good workers, *ganoon*. Not to say that Filipinos do not."

Fr. Danny also praises the industriousness of the Chinese-Filipino diocesan priests (and

even one Chinese-Indonesian) he has worked with at the Loyola School of Theology and thinks it comes with their heritage. However, he has another thing to say about his own heritage: "I know *kung saan masarap kumain*. It's a Chinese thing. I know where the good Chinese food is, especially the good, cheap Chinese food. Any kind of food, *kahit mga karinderya*."

Fr. Johnny's proficiency in Mandarin and Fookien allowed him to train at the Jesuit production house in Taiwan, training which eventually led him to head the Jesuit Communications Foundation here at the Ateneo de Manila campus. "People can confess to me in Chinese," he says proudly, though he can still express himself better in English.

Language has also made some people feel closer to Fr. Danny, though he considers it a serious drawback that he cannot speak Fookien. "An influential businessman wanted to talk to me about religion," he recounts. "We had a good lunch but I think he was expecting me to speak Amoy, so I had to recommend Johnny Go *na lang*. Opportunity lost *talaga*. If you can

influence so workers..." was almost of discussing "At least Mandarin is than [that] Xavier gave Fr. Danny his own defense: other C Filipinos do their la heritage. Mandarin is bad. *Nakaka* almost a joke China poi become the superpower part of the w Danny Mandarin advantage! not be lost.

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More so: that people know about Johnny, "but a phase w Chinese, like Danny adds, *ngiba makip* except ICA]. ashamed of adds that hi phase where befriended i Filipino," at time, I consi that I'm also

## Ministry

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influence someone like that to be fairer to his workers..." He did not know that Fr. Johnny was almost as nervous as he was at the prospect of discussing theological doctrine in Fookien.

"At least my Mandarin is better than [that of] most Xavier graduates," Fr. Danny adds in his own defense. "Sana other Chinese-Filipinos don't lose their language heritage. Xavier Mandarin is really bad. *Nakakahiya!* It's almost a joke." With China poised to become the next superpower in this part of the world, Fr. Danny sees Mandarin as an advantage that must not be lost.

In general, however, Fr. Johnny feels that people do

not generally notice his being Chinese, perhaps because he is not that fair. Fr. Danny, though, has had very different experiences. "When I come out of the pier, all the tricycle drivers mistake me for a tourist," he jokes. "In the States, I was always mistaken by Filipinos as a Singaporean or Korean. People are surprised I can say Mass in Cebuano and Tagalog."

More seriously, though, Fr. Danny opines that people are more sensitive now. "I don't know about your generation," narrates Fr. Johnny, "but in my generation, we went through a phase where we kind of disowned being Chinese, like it was *baduy* and all that." Fr. Danny adds, "Even in parties [in the 70s], *ayaw ng iba makipag-party sa mga Intsik* [ng Xavier, except ICA]. It made young Chinese-Filipinos ashamed of who they were." However, Fr. Johnny adds that his generation also went through a phase where they "re-owned" their heritage and befriended it. "Now, in my mind and heart, I'm Filipino," sums up Fr. Danny. "At the same time, I consider myself part of a distinct group that I'm also very proud of."

#### Ministry

Their heritage aside, these two men are no different from their peers. Fr. Johnny oversees the JCF's production of videos and the Jesuit Music Ministry. His most memorable production to date is the documentary *Eleksyon Pinoy* which was hosted by Danny Javier, aired four times before the last elections over Sarimanok News Network, and had over 400 copies distributed all over the country. JCF also produced *Greater Love*, the heartwarming tribute to Bro. Richie Fernando, S.J., who died in Cambodia after shielding his handicapped students from a

grenade blast. While Fr. Danny notes that the economic slump makes productions harder to fund, he still makes time to get away from his administrative work. "I go to Payatas, the dumpsite," he shares. "That's where I say Mass twice every Sunday morning. I look at myself as a priest, so that's what I should do. And I like what I do."

Fr. Danny teaches Theology at the LST and is the Prefect of Studies and Director of Deacons at the San Jose Seminary. He describes being a priest as "being a pastor and shepherd," and its joys as "being aware you were chosen despite your unworthiness." He

recalls his pastoral or first year of priesthood, which he spent in the town of Ipil in Mindanao:

"I was coming home from a Mass in the barrio. I was adjusting. I was feeling lonely in the middle of nowhere. I felt I wasn't being as good a priest as I could've been. On that ride home, this simple barrio woman came up to me and thanked me for my homilies. She was formerly very active in church but she had two little children who died. She couldn't understand why God did that to her. She told me I had helped her accept and see the meaning of things."

"At that very moment, I felt very small. I didn't know what I said. I had no idea she was going through those problems. You don't know but somehow God uses you to heal his people."

#### Takes One To Know One

Fr. Danny admits that he never really thought of himself as a Chinese-Filipino until he read about the kidnappings last year. "Reading about these made me aware of the distinct Chinese community in the Philippines," he says. This insight led him to realize that the Chinese-Filipino community needs special care and that different

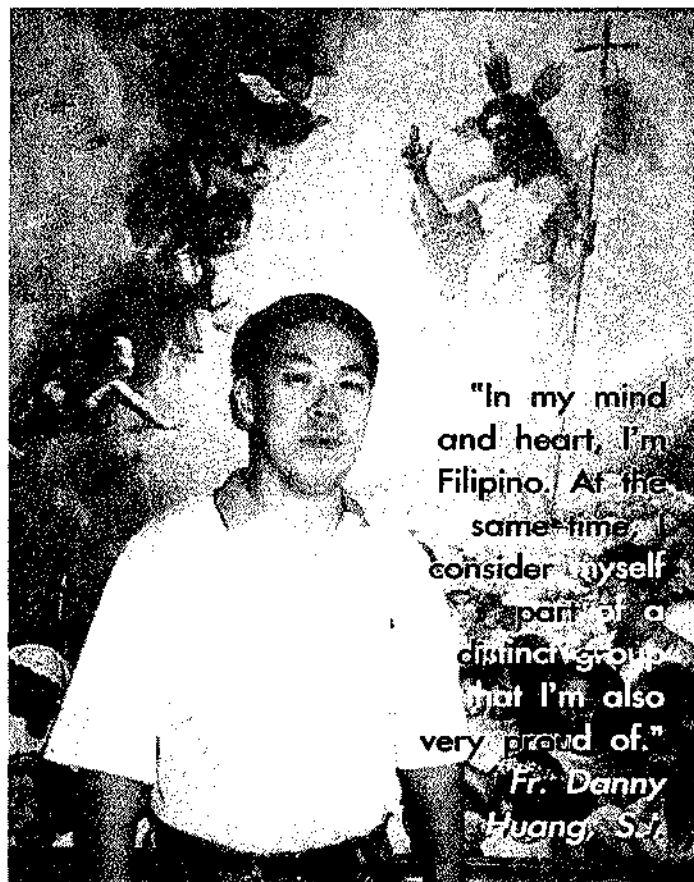
things must be emphasized to them. "There are a lot of specific characteristics we want to help retain," he states. "I think the Chinese-Filipino community can teach the larger Filipino community a certain discipline and industriousness. That's just one." However, differences in terms of evangelization go both ways. "The faith hasn't entered very deeply," he adds. "It doesn't affect their (Chinese-Filipinos) whole lives, their businesses and their attitudes to the poor. I personally feel that Filipino Catholics have a better sense of social responsibility than Chinese-Filipino Catholics."

"In a Chinese wedding, you have people outside talking on their cell phones during the mass. Maybe this is being harsh, but [when Chinese-Filipinos think of religion,] there's a commercial transaction at the back of their minds." While Fr. Danny says this is changing and that this generation has many deeply committed Chinese-Filipino Catholics, he thinks "there is still a lot of work to be done."

Fr. Johnny thinks Chinese-Filipinos also have an eclectic approach to religion. "My Mom used to go to Baclaran every Wednesday and then would go to the Taoist or Buddhist temples also," he recalls. "A lot of it is also superstition, for example Feng Shui. So they mix things up." He does add that it's the same with Filipinos, though with them, superstition and mixing of religions is less obvious because it is part of folk Catholicism. However, he adds, "But, I think more and more, among young people, there's a greater seriousness about the Catholic faith. There's less mixing of religions."

The Jesuit provincial is coordinating with  
*continued on page 7*

.....  
"She had two little children who died. She told me I had helped her accept and see the meaning of things. I felt very small. You don't know but somehow God uses you to heal his people."  
.....



"In my mind and heart, I'm Filipino. At the same time, I consider myself part of a distinct group that I'm also very proud of."  
Fr. Danny Huang, S.J.





## Doctor Jose Rizal

The greatest Filipino genius of all time was a Chinese mestizo (and an Atenean as well). He used writing as his tool to make the Filipino nation aware of its colonizers' abuses and is famous for his two famous novels, *Noli Me Tangere* (Touch Me Not) and *El Filibusterismo* (The Filibuster). He was executed on December 30, 1896 in Bagumbayan (now Luneta).

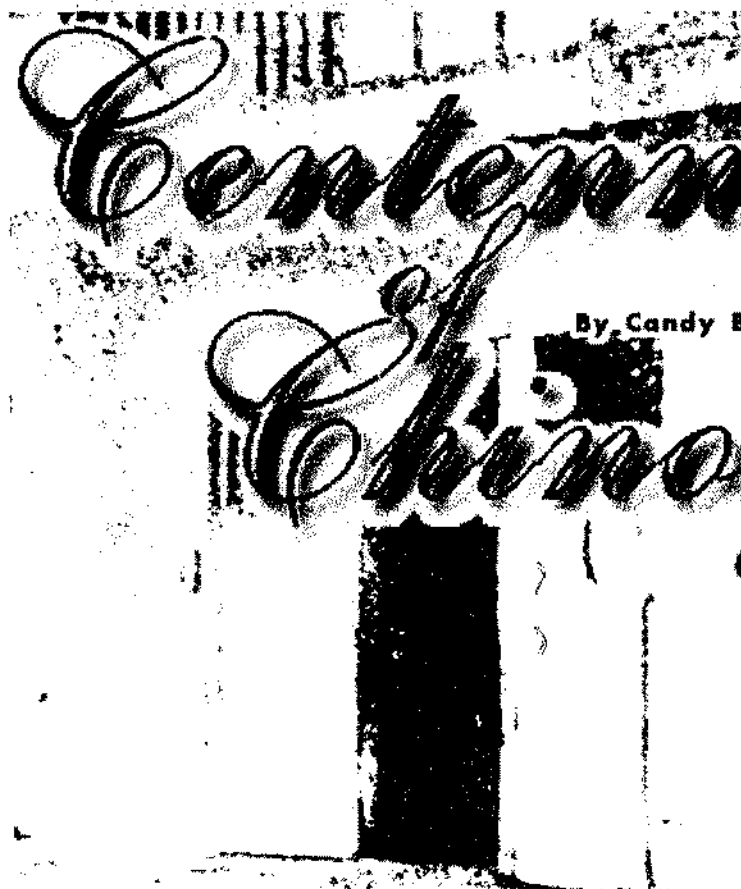
## Chinese Merchants

Many Chinese merchants helped bankroll the Katipunan. They provided money that was used to obtain firearms, as well as food, clothing and medicine on the field.



## Julian Felipe

This Chinese mestizo was tasked by General Aguinaldo to compose what later became the Philippine National Anthem. On June 12, 1898, Felipe's *Marcha Nacional Filipina* was played for the first time to mark the Philippine's independence from Spain.



Milking the last traces of Centennial, more than honoring the great name really honoring the spirit of the ordinary forever nameless, faceless and lost in the tide hero of the revolution died on the field of battle for money and support to guerillas. He tended the Filipino soldiers. What many do not know is that names and faces were Chinese. (Illustrations from Kaunlaran archives)

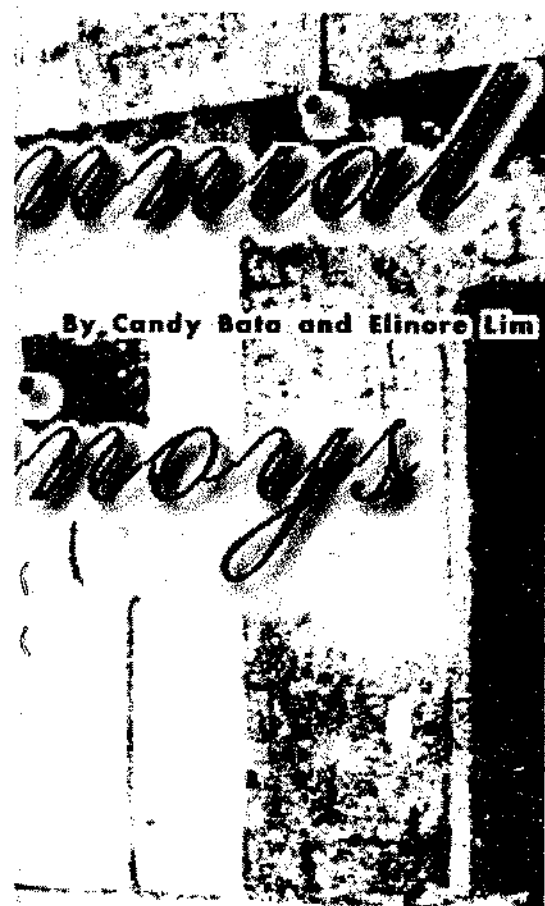
## Early Revolts

The first Chinese massacre under Spanish rule occurred in the death of 23,000 Chinese. Many other revolt Filipinos followed, including the famous 1639 in Laguna which resulted in the death of more than



Fr. Johnny, Fr. who joined the clarify the dire presently cate time to reassess direction the Fr. Johnny 'assimilation' Chinese heritage we preserve it should be asked Important objectives of the





By Candy Bata and Elinoro Lim

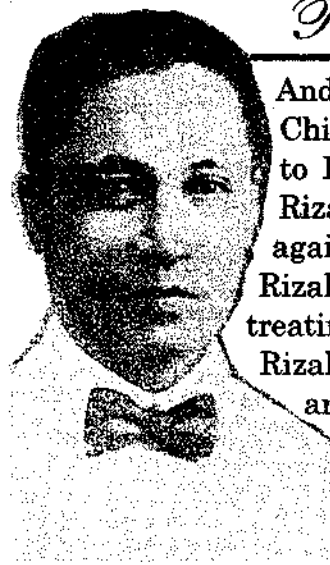
## General Jose Ignacio Pawa

He was the only pure-blooded Chinese to sign the Biak-na-Bato Constitution of 1897 and was the only ethnic Chinese general in the Katipunan. A blacksmith by profession, he ably supervised the production of ammunition in Imus, Cavite. He also personally risked his life leading troops in the front lines.

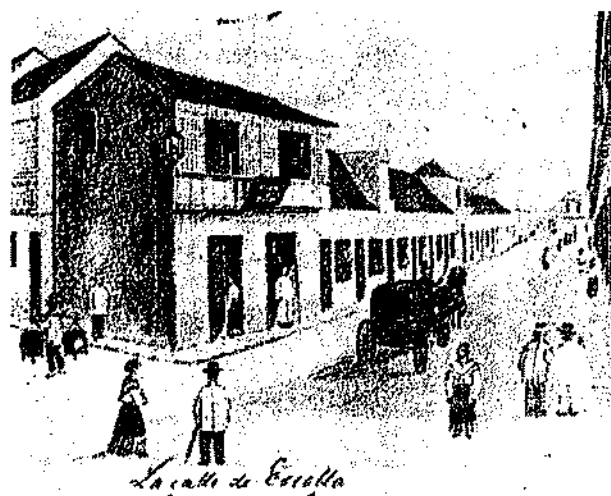


## Pio Valenzuela

Andres Bonifacio sent this Chinese mestizo physician to Dapitan to obtain Jose Rizal's support for the revolt against Spain. He met with Rizal under the pretense of treating him and then reported Rizal's disapproval against armed revolt. A few days later, however, the Katipuneros began the Philippine Revolution.



Centennial fever, we realize that the great names and faces, we are the ordinary Filipino who remains lost in the tide of history. The true field of battle. He secretly lent. He tended and sheltered wounded. He not know is that many of these lost. (Illustrations courtesy of the KAISA Para Sa



## Old Escolta

Revolutionary activity hummed behind innocent facades. The Katipuneros printed *Kalayaan*, the revolutionary newspaper of the Katipunan in 1896, at # 35 Lavezares Street, San Nicolas, Manila, the house of Pio Valenzuela.

(continued from page 5)

Fr. Johnny, Fr. Danny and other Xavier alumni who joined the Jesuits to hold a dialogue to clarify the direction of Jesuit schools and parishes presently catering to the Chinese-Filipinos. "It's time to reassess the situation and find out what direction these institutions should take," opines Fr. Johnny. "For example, what does 'assimilation' mean now? How much of the Chinese heritage should we preserve, or should we preserve it at all? I think these questions should be asked."

Important to him is clarifying the present objectives of the schools' Chinese curriculums.

He gives the example of his alma mater's Chinese curriculum, which he thinks "leaves much to be desired." While the faculty members are good, he thinks the objectives should be made clear and that it needs more help from the alumni. The present generation of Xaverians might agree; the August 1996 Xavier *Stallion* editorial read: "Most Xaverians... think that the Chinese curriculum hasn't changed since Mao Tse Tung."

One touching scene from the JCF's *Greater Love* showed missionaries and Cambodian students holding a service for Bro. Richie. It was a Christian service, but it was a blend of the

Christian spirit and the Cambodian culture, right down to the urn Richie's blood was placed in and the handwoven decoration that marked the site of the grenade blast. Perhaps this beautiful inculturation is what China is headed for as well.

China, however, can no longer be defined in terms of geography. As the Jesuits who eventually reached Greenhills after being booted from mainland China found out, there is a part of China alive in this country. With China's own sons among those who minister to her children, it seems that Francis Xavier's torch is burning bright and will do so for the years to come. ■

were marked with either blue paint or red paint. According to the locals, the blue marking means that the looters will rob the house. Red means the looters will rob it and then burn it down. My friend's family has just come back to Singapore because their home was marked red."

#### Filipino Response

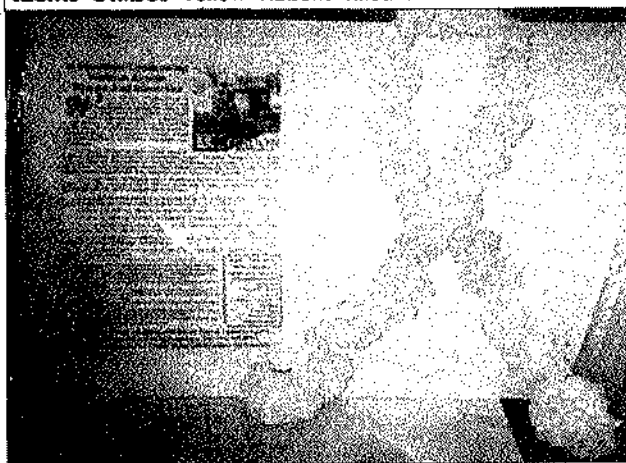
Chinese-Filipino community leaders organized a peaceful protest outside the Indonesian embassy in Makati last August 17. About a thousand participated, including students of Chinese schools and members of religious groups.

The embassy was closed in celebration of Indonesian Independence Day. Security officers unsuccessfully tried to stop the demonstrators, who were burning pictures of Indonesian president Habibie and former president Suharto, whom they dubbed "The Hitler of Asia." Protest organizers issued a statement demanding justice for the victims and the perpetrators and the abolition of discriminatory structures in Indonesia.

The issue was seemingly ignored in the media, though it was discussed by a number of columnists. However, several prominent figures expressed condemnation of the violence. Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin appealed for an end to the "racist bigotry and senseless neglect of...rights." Senator Nikki Coseteng attacked the acts of racism and "ethnic cleansing." Senator Juan Flavio went so far as to file a resolution that "condemned [the atrocities] in the strongest possible terms."

Here in the Ateneo, perhaps the first to react to the issue were the few Indonesian Ateneans themselves. These included Fr. Ferry Wijaya, an Indonesian diocesan priest who recently finished his MA in Pastoral Studies at the EAPI. Fr. Ferry compiled reports on the violence and

RIGHTS SYMBOL Yellow ribbons filled the Ateneo.



**CELADON believes that students must be made aware of the real issue: government-sponsored violence against women and minorities**

wrote down his insights, which were discussed by Today's Herman Tiu Laurel in his column.

CELADON President Christine Ong held dialogues with resource persons ranging from Indonesian activists to Chinese-Filipino leaders and contacted other Alliance of Filipino-Chinese Students org presidents. As she and some *Chinoy* members painstakingly compiled e-mail messages, newspaper clippings, testimonies and shocking photographs (see accompanying article) regarding the events in Jakarta, the awareness campaign "Right Next Door" took form.

The information phase of the campaign began with the distribution of 1,000 primers last August 10 in cooperation with Blue Aldridge and the Central Board's Department of External Affairs. Also that week, Adviser Mr. Chua discussed the issue length

with the CELADON core group of managers.

Copies of CELADON's manifesto with attached signature sheets were distributed the following week to the officers and to the various departments of the college. The initial response to the signature campaign was very encouraging. Management Engineering Chair Mr. Darwin Yu, for example, added a brief but emphatic commentary after the CELADON manifesto was read in front of one of his classes.

Yellow ribbons, the adopted symbol of human rights activists, were distributed by CELADON members as signatures were being collected. The Promotions Department filled the campus with yellow ribbons, which they put up with red and white Indonesian flags last August 17, Indonesian Independence Day. A giant yellow ribbon and an enlarged copy of the manifesto were also placed on a mini-exhibit put up in the Quad.

The campaign culminated in the forum "What's Happening Next Door?" last August 21 held at the SEC Lecture Room 2. The room was packed, thanks in no small part to the SecGen Core communications network. Operations Department members who set up the venue noted that the audience included Indonesians and Filipino students who had been studying in Indonesia when the violence broke out and are now enrolled in the Ateneo.

The speakers each added a personal touch to the discussion: Fr. Ferry brought his pride in his *batik*, Mr. Mugiyanto shared his imprisonment by the Suharto administration,

INTERPRETATION The CELADON mini-exhibit at the Quad.



racial and class hatred... Our task now is to help this nation bind its wounds and recover from its troubles. Only then can we protect and give security to the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia." - Teresita Ang See, representative of Chinese-Filipino umbrella organization KAISA Para sa Kaunlaran:

"We are not against the Indonesian people. We are against the military fascist government... Two hundred thousand Timorese were killed. You don't care. But the government kills over 400 plus women and girls. Suddenly you care. Suddenly you realize you have to talk about human rights. That's a reality." - Johnny Chang, spokesperson of The Philippine Coalition Against Atrocities in Indonesia ■

## What's Happening Next Door?

"Yes, there is also an element of racism in Indonesia. But [there is] something bigger." - Fr. Ferry Wijaya, Indonesian diocesan priest who recently completed his MA in Pastoral Studies at the EAPI

"The government is really anti-democracy and authoritarian, so they scapegoated the other forces, radical democratic forces like my party, the People's Democratic Party (PRD)." - Mr. Mugiyanto, member of Kontras, commission for the missing persons and victims of violence, and International Officer of PRD

"The resentment against the Chinese stems from the colonial legacy." - Prof. Aurora Roxas-Lim, UP Asian Center

"Yes, some of Indonesia's policies and structures institutionalize racism. That is why one of the basic steps we can take is to help the government in the elimination of these public policies aimed at provoking

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and Prof. Roxas-Lim made a warning in jest that protest did not mean going to Indonesia and taking up arms. (see excerpts) Teresita Ang-See had come from a meeting at Malacanang and arrived at 6:00 PM. After she spoke, Mr. Johnny Chang asked to give an impromptu speech. During the open forum that followed, members of the audience added their own remarks, some quite emphatic and emotional, and the forum lasted until 7:00 PM. Despite the extension, individual students approached the speakers after the forum ended.

Immediately after the forum, Christine Ong, accompanied by Pol Alcazar and Oscar Tan proceeded to a meeting of the Central Board. They, sponsored by Blue Aldridge, presented a resolution condemning the violations of human rights. OSA Director Mr. Leland de la Cruz commended the CELADON delegation, noting

that their resolution was the first authored by a party outside the CB.

#### Aftermath

With the CB resolution, the issue officially became an issue of the Ateneo studentry and not just an issue of CELADON. However, CELADON believes that students must be made aware of the real issue: government-sponsored violence against women and minorities and the international apathy that condones it. As a message from KAISA Para Sa Kaunlaran put it: "They [elements of Indonesian military] are making a calculated ploy to sow racial unrest...with the uninformed, emotional and irrational form the public outrage is taking, what the military has failed to do may unwittingly happen."

The awareness campaign has not yet ended.

As of press time, CELADON was still collating and counting the hundreds of signatures and preparing these for mailing to the UN and the major dailies. Christine Ong, in a post-activity interview with COA, encouraged follow-up activities in coordination with other orgs.

The events in Indonesia have yet to be fully resolved. Mrs. Ang-See remarked during the forum that it took the Philippines twenty years to bring down Marcos, and one does not expect Indonesia's struggle for reform to be a brief one.

The final clause of the CELADON stand presented to the CB did not talk of Indonesia, but asked each Atenean to look at himself. Though the violence took place a sea away, it holds lessons for young people who were still babies during Martial Law and who are fortunate to have the luxury of being able to take basic rights for granted. ■

## Same Blood. Same Continent.

**A**round 9.15 AM the apartment had already surrounded by hundreds of angry crowds. They yelled as if possessed, "Kill Chinese", "Let's eat pigs", "Let's party". We lived on 7th floor. We were called by a relative on 3rd floor that mobs had entered 2nd floor, there's even [residence] being chased to upper floors. We progressed up to 15th floor and stayed in an acquaintance apartment.

We were surprised because from the elevator some men emerged right when we were going in. Quickly we entered and locked the door. Then we heard other doors banged upon and many screams of women and girls. Faintly from the other room we heard girls perhaps aged 10 to 12 scream, "Mami (mother)... mami... it hurts..." I didn't know what had happened.

After almost half an hour waiting, things were a bit calmer, no sound heard, we dare ourselves to see. And outside, what we saw was unspeakable. We saw many bodies lying around the hall, many children and girls were lying around. Oh my God, what had happened... my sister Veny screamed hysterically when she saw that, and embraced our father. I was crying too.

Finally, with our acquaintance, a newlywed couple, we went downstairs. On the 10th floor, we heard someone screaming for help. Because the screams were very near, we went inside. But turning in an intersection, we were surprised, because there's so many men there. And I saw with my own eyes, a girl around 20 were gang-raped by four men, she struggled but were held down. Seeing that, we ran like hell.

But alas... Veny were caught by them. I and my family tried to saved her, but we were outnumbered, there were around 60 of them. Then all of us were tied up using bedsheet

strips. They brought us to a room. Uncle Dodi had asked them what they really wanted, without any answers, their faces were evil and ghoulis. One of them pulled Veny and dragged her to a sofa, by that time I knew she was in grave danger. I shouted on top of my lungs, and another men slapped me, then papa, who was also screaming, was hit unconscious by a wooden club, mama had already fainted.

That time I only prayed to God, God don't let this disaster fell upon us. Uncle Dodi was unsuccessfully offering money for them to leave us alone. And Veny was raped there. I couldn't watch, hearing Veny's shrieks, I cried and closed my eyes tightly. Around 5 men raped her, and each always started by yelling, "Allah Akbar!! (God is great)"... They were sadistic... they were evil... with vicious faces... Slightly afterward, another 9 men entered the room, and dragged me, and I had also saw aunt Vera dragged as well. That time I passed out, not knowing what happened.

The next morning I was in Pluit hospital, beside me was Mama and Papa, with pain all over my body. After about 4 days in hospital, I was getting better. And Papa told me what had happened with sorrow eyes. When I was unconscious, I was raped by around 7 men, that time Papa couldn't see well, he still dizzy from the wooden club hit. They raped me and tossed my body around, even banged me to walls. And after that, Papa said, "Vin, Veny had left us..." I was confused and I didn't know why I cried so loud it probably heard outside. "What happened, Pa???" Papa didn't answer. I was crying as if



INTERNET REVELATIONS Shocking photos and reports that the Indonesian government initially denied were revealed to the world by websites such as [www.huaren.org](http://www.huaren.org) and [www.geocities.com/Pentagon/6806](http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/6806).

my whole life had no longer have any meanings.

After it all ended and a week ago I got out of the hospital to a relative's home, I was told what had happened to Veny. When she was raped, Veny kept struggling, so she was slapped again and again by those bastards, and the last time Veny fought, she spat one of them. Annoyed, he took out a knife and swing it to Veny's stomach, and viciously like an animal he swung the knife repeatedly, until Veny died with blood pooled around her body.

Hearing that I was shocked, and papa continued, that uncle Dodi had the same fate, died before his wife who was also raped.

God... why it all must happen??? This time aunt Vera was accompanied by her sister in their parent's home, and according to her sister, until today she is still in shock, daydreaming a lot, sometimes refused to have a meal. Mama also gave up. I and mama almost cried every hour upon what had happened, and I will not forget that day. They are vicious men which had lost their humanity. ■

This account was documented by The Volunteers Team for Humanity, Jl. Arus Dalam No.1, Rt.001/Rw.012 Cawang, Dewi Sartika Jakarta 13630, INDONESIA Email: [galih@indo.net.id](mailto:galih@indo.net.id)



By Jean Ang Chua and Valentina Khoo  
Photos By Kimberly Pabilona

The first time I heard about volunteer fire brigades was about six years ago. Remembering my initial curiosity and my girlhood fantasies of being rescued by a dashing fireman from the top of a burning building, I was disappointed as I stood in front of the large off-white building. It looked rather normal except for the rails that dominated the entrance and the two gigantic red trucks that beckoned from within. Upon entering, though, I was greeted with a scene seemingly out of a busy ship hangar from *Star Wars*, complete right down to the dashing, spirited young heroes.

### The Timba Brigade

The volunteer fire brigade was born in the early 1960s, after a huge fire in Chinatown caused huge losses for many Chinese businessmen. The government fire service's response was lacking. "Just the same as the problem now," remarks Chief Wellie E. Eglorianin, Fire Marshall of the Chinese Volunteer Fire Brigade-Binondo, "in be tho ji muna [they ask for money first]." This situation encouraged the merchants to help themselves.

There were no fire trucks or complex gadgets back then. The original firemen were called the "Bucket Brigade" as they put out fires using *timbas* [small buckets] of water passed from person to person. This method was not particularly efficient, so with a little money, they bought portable pumps and hoses that they used with fire hydrants. There was, however, a shortcoming to this technique: What if the fire was three blocks away from the nearest hydrant?

This led to the improvisation of the first fire truck: a large water tank, pumps and hoses carried in a jeep. However, the jeep was too small. Eventually, larger trucks called tankers were used, and several other specialized fire

trucks were developed, each with a specific purpose.

### Sunday School

One can apply to join the service at the age of 18, though the rules were less strict back in the time of Chief Wellie, who joined in 1979 when he was only 15. However he advises that one must start at the right age

feared: "Once you enter the firefighting business, half of your life is already at stake. Once you go out on a call, half [of what is left] is committed again. The fourth [left to you], you want to preserve so that you can get back safely to your wife and children."

New recruits first undergo basic firemanship, which usually lasts six months. They spend Sundays learning how to use hoses, nozzles, the pipe pole, axes, ladders and several other tools. Only when they master all these are they

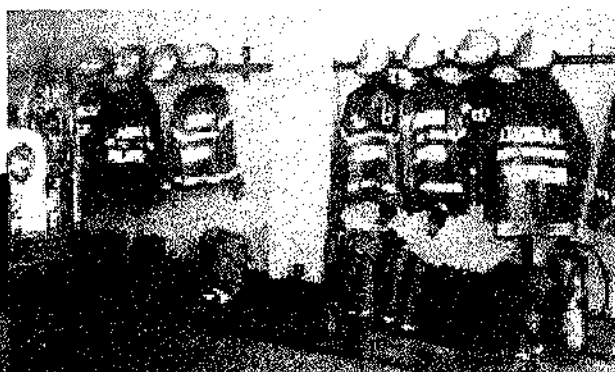
allowed to respond to calls as there is no room for mistakes or slow movements in a fire emergency. The training is a continuous learning process: After basic training come the specific specialization courses.

So if firefighting is such hard work, why do people still volunteer for it? "I started when I was still a sophomore in high school," shares Chief Wellie. "You have so much time [in high school]. Iba ryan, barkada o lakwatsa o 'yung worse case panga 'yung drugs o mga fraternity." He was impressed by the volunteers who not only helped put out fires, but were

also involved in relief efforts after typhoons, the earthquake in Central Luzon and the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. "Imbis na sinasayang mo 'yung oras mo sa mga mall [o] sa mga arcade, nakakatulong pa kami," he proudly sums up.

Are there Filipino volunteers? The brigades were formed by the Chinese, but Chief Wellie emphasizes that they call themselves "Filipino-Chinese volunteers." He adds, "Chinese, Filipino-Chinese, Filipino: okay." Are there female firefighters? Chief Wellie's brigade began recruiting women in 1990, but there have only been less than ten to date. Women, Wellie opines, are more likely to leave the service by the time they get married.

OUT OF STAR WARS The Kalookan Volunteer Station even has a 7-story observation tower from which firemen confirm reports of fires.



HOT DATE CELADO training dummy a a KAISA Para sa



## The Science of Fire

"You have to understand fire," says Chief Wellie. "Meron kaming tinatawag na 'Science of Fire.'" There are three sides that make up what they call the fire triangle: fuel, oxygen and heat. The concept is simple: Remove one and the triangle collapses. For example, when you cover a house wastebasket that caught fire, you eliminate oxygen. In the case of a burning house, the house is fuel, the surrounding air is oxygen and the fire itself is heat. It is the heat that is eliminated by thoroughly drenching the house with water.

Although fires look alike, no two are identical, even if they strike the same place but at different times. Each

brings its own set of problems. The main concern is water, which is usually pumped from fire hydrants. As Chief Wellie puts it, "Unfortunately, hindi naman lahat may water, lalo na ngayon na El Nino." People themselves can be problems, especially in dense residential areas. They crowd the area

and the appliances that they take out of their houses block the firefighter's paths. Small alleys or eskinitas are also obstacles as these are very inaccessible, particularly to the larger tankers. Traffic and road conditions are also a factor: Many drivers refuse to give way to firefighters. "Lalo kang binabara sa harap kaya minsan, nagka-counterflow na lang kami sa kabilang lane," comments Chief Wellie.

In addition to these problems, there are also extreme circumstances. During this year's New Year celebrations, fires broke out in Manila at almost the same time. All available fire trucks and manpower were spread out to cover different fires. The firemen were unable to control one fire because water ran out. Ordinarily, another tanker would have come to supply additional water, but the expected backup had already been dispatched to another fire scene. "El Nino tayo, di ba? The fire died down by itself kasi naubusan na ng susunugin," sighs Chief Wellie.

**"Hindi mo mala-lagyan ng words mo 'yung pag-ligtas ng buhay, lalo na kung malaman mo na bread-winner 'yung naligtas mo. Malaking-malaking bagay'".**

Firemen define tragedies in two ways: in terms of property lost and in terms of lives lost. The worst cases of property loss occur when entire buildings or residential blocks are razed, especially the fires that struck Virra Mall and Harrison Plaza. The Ozone Disco fire, where over a hundred perished, was the worst recent incident in terms of lives lost.

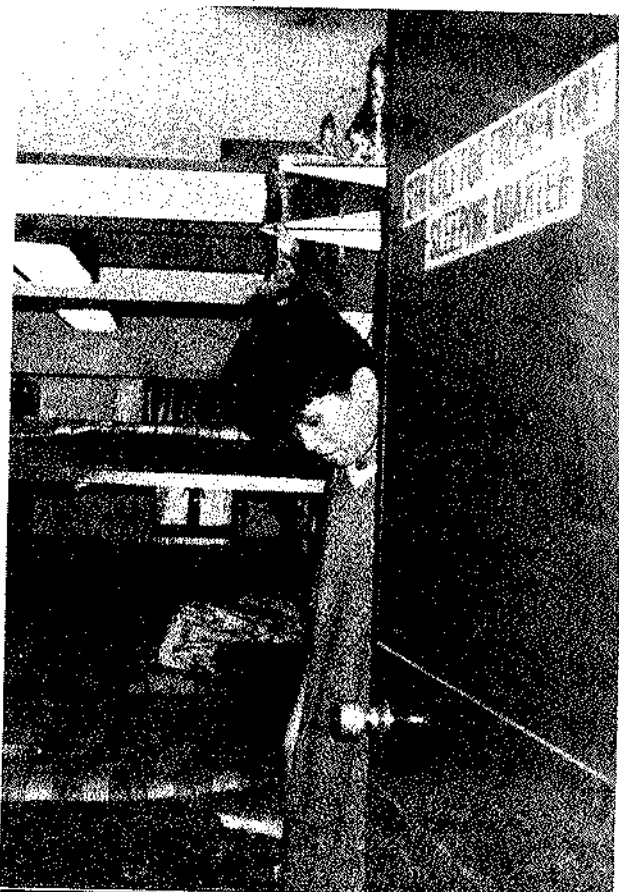
Despite all the obstacles, people's reactions, at least, are never a problem. "Wala pa [ungratefulness] sa case ng volunteer," says Chief Wellie. "Puro salamat. Pero

sa government, marami na akong na-witness na binasag 'yung salamin [ng trak] nila [at] pinagbabato 'yung mga bumbero dahil feel [ng mga tao] na hindi [nila] ginagawa ang mga trabaho nila." This, fortunately, has never happened to volunteers.

"In fairness sa [government] Bureau [of Fire]," clarifies Chief Wellie. "Yes, more efficient [kami], pero we cannot blame them totally for being inefficient. May mga factors kasi na hindi nila kasalanan. Let's say 50% is their fault and the other 50% is not."

Government-operated brigades are less flexible than volunteer groups. For one, they are limited to an area of responsibility. Government fire trucks only leave their assigned areas when the fire in another area is deemed too large and requires additional units. Volunteer brigades, however, are not limited by such a policy. "Walang pinipili, basta't may tumawag, alis kami," says Chief Wellie. "Kung in terms of that, mas efficient kami kaysa sa government."

Volunteers may also be better-equipped. Their equipment, except for their palakols, is mostly imported from the US. Each brigade has its own board of directors to



**HOME AWAY FROM HOME** The sliding pole at the Kalookan station may look dramatic, but it is no longer used. The firemen's sleeping quarters are actually closer to the fire trucks than the pole.

oversee its funding, which come from contributions and from the directors themselves. Chief Wellie notes that some "good-hearted fellows" simply walk in and contribute. These may include, for example, a businessman who lived across the street from where a fire struck and saw how efficiently volunteers put it out.

## Deserved Rewards

But with the hard work and tragedies also come rewards. Recognition is definitely one, and Chief Wellie admits that some apply only to them only to be able to say that they are volunteers. More tangible benefits include 50% discounts at the Metro and the Chinese General Hospitals. They also have their own scholarship funds and access to free schooling. For example, the P9,000 per semester EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) training now offered by the UP PGH is free for firefighters. Specific benefits differ depending on the organization that supports the specific brigade, but some receive, for example, discounts at Binondo restaurants.

The most priceless benefits are emotional. "One of the best source of true friends ay nasa volunteer fire brigade," observes Chief Wellie. "Buddy-buddy kami rito. Pumasok kami ng bahay na nasusunog, walang iwanan." The knowledge that one has helped someone in need and contributed to the community is the best satisfaction of all. "Pag nakakarinig ka lang ng 'thank you' sa mga nasusunogan, okay na iyon. Nakakaalis na ng pagod," smiles the fire chief.

So how does it feel to save a life? "Mahirap i-describe pero it feels good," relates Chief Wellie.



**OT DATE CELADON** and AFICS members pose with a CPR training dummy after a demonstration by Chief Wellie at KAISA Para sa Kaunlaran camp last summer.



"Ang sarap-sarap ng feeling dahil nakatulong ka. Hindi mo malalagyan ng words mo 'yung pagligtas mo ng isang buhay, lalo nang kung nalaman mo na breadwinner 'yung naligtas mo o kaya siya yung haligi ng pamilya. Malaking-malaking bagay."

He relates a fire in 1988 that struck a house that had been converted into a bag-making factory. All the windows had been covered with grills. "Mga bahay sa Maynila," cautions CM Wellie. "Naka-grill para sa magnanakaw, pero hindi natin naisip na pag nagkaroon ng sunog, iyon din pala 'yung papataysa atin." The fire started in the second floor of the house. The occupants could not escape down the stairs since the ground floor was already in flames. They were all huddled by a window, screaming in hysteria.

Then Officer-in-Charge Wellie and another fireman set up an extension ladder, climbed up, searched for the fire escape, and sliced the lock with a bolt cutter. "Buti hindi kami nahulog," he remembers, as the hysterical victim he carried down the ladder was kicking and screaming. Bystanders clapped as the rescue went on, and Wellie remembers that he only felt the fatigue after it was all over. However, unlike in Rescue 911, that victim never did get to meet her rescuer again.

Not all rescues are as dramatic, though. Once, in Tondo, Wellie tried to break down a door to enter a burning house. "Ang lakas ng sipa ko, ayaw pang bumukas," he remembers. "All the while pala, 'yung pinto pahila hindi palapapasok. Noong malaman ko, tiningnan ko 'yung likod ko. Buti walang tao."

#### Alter Egos

Volunteers are required to spend one night a week at the station. They arrive after office hours and work by shifts. On a typical evening, some polish the truck while others clean the apparatus and man the radio and the telephone. Someone is also assigned to cook dinner. Curfew is at 11:00 PM. At this time, everyone has to go to sleep except for the person assigned to stand guard beside the radio and phone. When a call breaks the silence of the night, says Chief Wellie, "Bine-bell na lang namin, alam na ng mga tao everybody has to come down."

However, this routine is not a fireman's entire life. "We work too, you know," laughs Chief Wellie. He does not consider his being a volunteer as his job,

volunteers. As Chief Wellie says, "It's not the winning or the losing, it's how you play, diba?"

#### The Future

The next generation of firefighters will go beyond aluminum-lined coats, sliding poles and compressed air tanks. The international magazines that Chief Wellie subscribes to feature innovations such as remote-controlled fire trucks. With these, firemen would just have to drive the truck to the fire and then operate the hose with a joystick. Another wonder is the piercing nozzle. Instead of having firemen rush into buildings, the piercing nozzle can punch through, and operators can then locate the source of the fire through an attached camera. With the press of another button, they can spray it with water.

Whether volunteers use timbas or remote-controlled trucks, one thing will never change.

"Kailangang may heart kang tumulong sa kapwa mong tao lalo na sa mga less fortunate kasi mahirap ang trabaho na ito," says Chief Wellie. He describes men like him as "the few, the proud and the insane."

"Bakit insane?" he explains. "Ano kaya itong sira-ulo, nag-aaksaya ng pagod, ng oras - minsan nga, pera - tapos walang kapalit? Pag-uwi, pagod. Pag-uwi, ang dumi ng damit. Pag-uwi, gutom. Ba't hindi nalang mag-standby sa malls o kaya manood ng sine?"

The answer is simple, and it lies within the heart of each fulfilled and dedicated volunteer fireman out there.

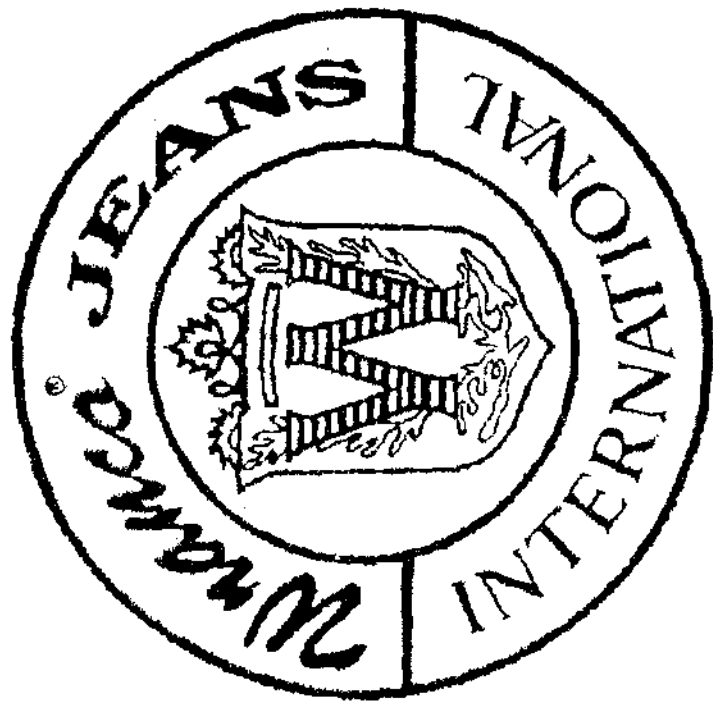


since they are not paid. He works as a plant manager for a videotape manufacturing corporation, and only in extreme emergencies can he be excused from the office. Aside from this regular job, Wellie is part of a group that go to offices and schools to teach fire safety and basic firefighting and lifesaving techniques. He has long since retired from entering burning houses, saying this is now "for those [with] younger blood."

The fire brigades also have their own "Fire Olympics." Firemen from as far as Bacolod City come to play the in the games, all of which are related to firefighting. Events have contestants racing each other to rush up and down ladders, connect and throw hoses and pump water. Not only do these sharpen the skills of the firemen, but it also gives non-firemen the feel of firefighting. The real purpose, however, is to develop sportsmanship and closer ties between

**ROAD WARRIORS** (center) CELADON members get the feel of Chief Wellie's mini fire truck. (above and below) The vehicles, though, see more serious daily use.





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23rd Floor, Philippine Stock Exchange Centre, East Tower, Exchange Road,  
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Tel. No. (632) 635-3671 (80) • Fax No. (632) 632-1876 • Ortigas P.O. Box 13014

E-mail address: etamlaw@pworld.net.ph

EDMUNDO L. TAN  
SABINO E. ACUT, JR.  
RAINIER L. MADRID  
BERNARD B. LOPEZ

AGNES P. SERINA-GARCIA  
MARITONI Z. LIWANAG  
MARTIN ISRAEL L. PISON

JUDE ERWIN U. ALABA  
PAUL MAR C. ARIAS  
JACOB MILTON C. DIVINO  
MA. OLIVIA T. YABUT-MISA  
ROBERTO V. SICANGCO

YSIDRO J. PEREZ  
Of Counsel