



Caritas Myanmar staff evacuating villagers from Thabaung Township, Patheingyi. Photo: KARUNA MISSION SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

CHARIS doing its part to help Myanmar, further aid needed

Caritas Humanitarian Aid & Relief Initiatives Singapore (CHARIS), the overseas humanitarian arm of the Church in Singapore, has pledged an initial \$100,000 in grant aid and disaster relief supplies for those affected by monsoon floods in Myanmar.

Working through its partners, Caritas Myanmar and other Catholic relief agencies on the ground, CHARIS is disbursing \$30,000 in cash and shipping \$20,000 worth of water purification bottles to aid ground relief efforts. CHARIS says another \$50,000 will be used during the recovery phase.

It added that it will continue to monitor the situation.

Cyclone Komen ploughed through the western parts of Myanmar on July 30.

Many have lost their lives and the death toll continues to rise in the wake of one of the worst floods in the country's history.

Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS), also known as Caritas Myanmar, has launched an emergency appeal through Caritas' international network requesting for resources to support their outreach to remote areas in six dioceses to provide basic necessities to people in 239 villages.

For a more detailed report on the disaster, visit www.charis-singapore.org.

To donate towards these relief efforts and other humanitarian situations, please call 6337-4119 or email info@charis-singapore.org for further information.

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Discerning one's vocation, listening to God's call

By Br Shaun Lim

More than 50 young men – students, NSmen and young working adults – spent the National Day weekend discerning their vocation in life, particularly the priesthood.

Apart from contemplating their relationship with God, they also took stock of how far Singapore has come as a nation during the Diocesan Vocation Discernment Retreat, held at the St Francis Xavier Major Seminary from Aug 7-9.

The retreat had the theme, *A Life or Alive?*

To assist the retreatants, Fr Benedict Chng, Fr John Bosco Pereira, Fr Jovita Ho, archdiocesan vocation director Fr Alex Chua and Fr Valerian Cheong from the seminary shared their experiences as priests as well as the joy of the priesthood.

The retreatants also took part in a paraliturgy in which they had to “nail” their sins, written on pieces of paper, onto a wooden cross during Saturday night's Holy Hour.

They were then invited to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The seminarians were also on hand to pray for those who needed spiritual support.



Retreatants listening to Fr John Bosco Pereira at the vocation discernment retreat.

Many retreatants said they found the Holy Hour, the paraliturgy and the Sacrament of Reconciliation a moving experience.

Retreat highlights included vocation videos in which both local priests and priests from all over the world shared how their love for Christ and for the people helped to sustain their priesthood.

Other highlights of the retreat included vocation videos in which local priests and priests from all over the world shared how their love for Christ and for the people helped to sustain their priesthood, which besides being a road less travelled, would also not be an easy one.

The retreat's climax was the Mass on Sunday celebrated by Archbishop William Goh.

In his homily, he emphasised the importance having joy as a priest and being able to emanate joy to others. □

Br Shaun Lim is a seminarian.