

VISIT TO THE VICTIMS OF TYPHOON YOLANDA

A Paschal experience of death and life

In the name of the victims of typhoon Yolanda, we wish to express our gratitude for the donations received from the Company of May and from so many people associated with the Company.

Last month we visited Palo and Tacloban, the places most affected by the typhoon. The journey to get there was very long, one night and one full day by different modes of transportation: boat, bus, jeep and bicycle.

The first impression was seeing for ourselves how nature had truly been destructive. On a worldwide level, the Philippines is the number one producer of “copra”, a dry coconut from where cooking oil, shampoo and



other products are extracted. These coconut groves were totally devastated. The same thing happened to the banana fields and other crops. However, the resurgence of life is surprising; the trunks of the coconut trees sprout with new leaves. Six months have passed since the typhoon hit and, little by little, the vegetation beats with the rhythm of new life. The vast rice fields are green, and in a short time they will be ready for harvest.

We have also witnessed how the poor are building their small houses with small pieces of lumber and metal sheets. We were saddened to see the condition of Tacloban City. There was so much sorrow and

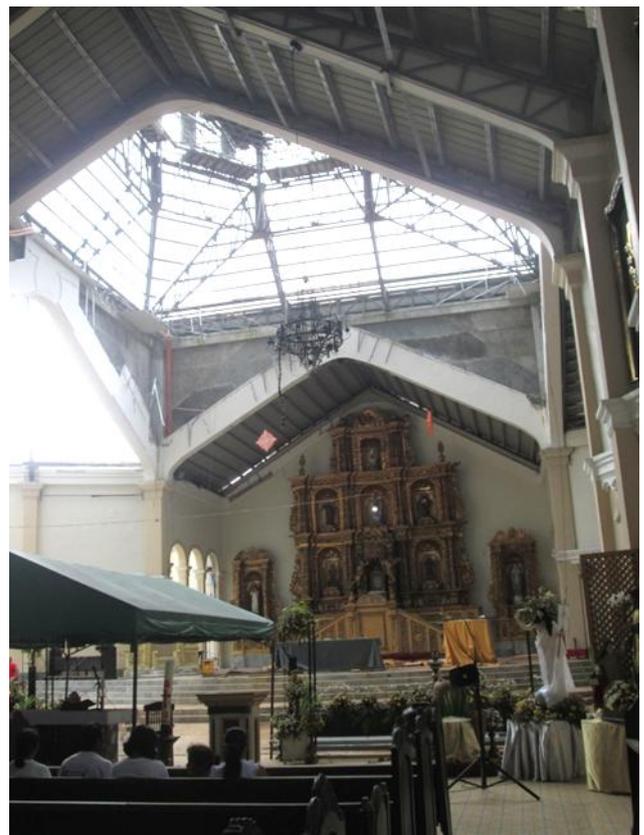


desperation. Almost everything had been destroyed: schools, churches, markets, government buildings, city infrastructure... On the road we could see houses and buildings with missing walls and roofs. Some were in the process of being rebuilt, but the majority of them were abandoned. On the ground we saw broken

electric wire lines that left the population without light.

In Palo, Archbishop Du, through the Administration of the Metropolitan Cathedral and the Calabrese Fathers is in charge of a house reconstruction program for the neediest. The donations received from the Company of Mary and friends were sent to this project. Together with other donations 40 houses were built.

Even though one can feel the sadness and pain, there are also many signs of solidarity that make the presence of the Risen Jesus visible. Life is stronger than death. And, once again, the people struggle to rebuild their lives and to face daily needs.





Trang, odn and Lucero Marquez, odn
Philippines Community, April 22, 2014