

LAITY OF ST. ANNE FAMILY

10th ANNUAL GATHERING

"Inspired by Blessed Mother Maria Rafols and Father John Bonal living with Faith, serving with Love, and sharing with Humility."

May 1 to 3, 2026

Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines



The 10th Annual Family Gathering of the Laity of St. Anne Family (LSAF), under the Province of St. Francis Xavier, was hosted by Puerto Galera Group and held on May 1 to 3, 2026. It was led by Sr. Eugene Mary Pathrose in collaboration with the Sister Coordinators. LSAF participants from Puerto Galera, Talipanan, Alabang, East Rembo, Iloilo and Rodriguez joined the gathering onsite, while LSAF members from Gerahu, Papua New Guinea, joined the event online.

This year's celebration began with a Eucharistic Celebration presided by Reverend Father Nestor Adalia, Parish Priest of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Puerto Galera. It was thereafter followed by the registration of participants and a meaningful prayer and Bible enthronement led by the LSAF Puerto Galera/Talipanan group.



A warm welcome address was delivered by Mrs. Myrna Osorio, after which Sr. Eugene Mary Pathrose gave an orientation for the gathering.

DAY 1 (May 1, 2026)



1st Talk entitled **“LSAF: One Family Rooted in Christ, Journeying Together in Hope,”** was given by **Ms. Rose Escasinas Borra**, from the Alabang group. The talk emphasized that a family rooted in Christ is a source of love, unity, and support, where faith strengthens relationships and guides our lives. Despite challenges like misunderstandings and struggles, we are called to journey together with compassion, understanding, and trust in God.

It reminded us that being part of a Christ-centered family means being present, kind, and hopeful, not only for ourselves but also for others. In living these values, we truly grow together as one family, grounded in faith and hope.

The **2nd Talk** was lovingly shared by **Sister Eugene Mary Pathrose**, entitled **“Inspired by Mother Maria Rafols and Father. John Bonal, Living with FAITH, Serving with LOVE and Sharing with HUMILITY.”**

The theme inspired by Mother Maria Rafols and Fr. John Bonal, *“Living with Faith, Serving with Love, and Sharing with Humility,”* offers a meaningful guide for everyone. It highlights key values of living in Christ and serves as a call for everyone to live them in daily actions and relationships.



Living with Faith reminds us to place our complete trust in God, especially in times of uncertainty and difficulty. Faith is not only about belief but about allowing God to guide our decisions and giving us the strength to persevere through challenges. Like Mother Rafols and Fr. Bonal, who remained steadfast in their mission despite hardships, we are encouraged to deepen our relationship with God and remain hopeful in His plan.

Serving with Love emphasizes that true service comes from the heart. It goes beyond performing duties; it involves compassion, kindness, and selflessness toward others. Inspired by the lives of our founders, we are reminded that love should be the driving force behind every act of service, especially toward those who are most in need. Through loving service, we reflect Christ's own example of care and sacrifice.

Sharing with Humility teaches us to recognize that all blessings come from God. It calls us to share our time, talents, and resources without seeking recognition or reward. Humility allows us to serve quietly and sincerely, valuing others and fostering unity within the community. It reminds us that even small acts, when done with humility, can make a meaningful difference.



Sister Eugene, through this talk, challenged LSAF to live with greater intention: to deepen faith, express love through service, and practice humility in everything that we do. She encouraged everyone to become better members of the family and community, embodying Christ-like values in everyday life. We were all reminded that true fulfillment comes not from personal gain but from faithfully serving others with love and humility.

DAY 2 (May 2, 2026)

Day 2 began on an energetic note with a lively Zumba session before breakfast, setting a positive, enthusiastic tone for the day ahead. The gathering then proceeded and officially opened with a prayer led by the East Rembo group.

The **1st Talk** was entitled ***“Anchored in CHRIST: A Jubilee Invitation to Hope, Healing, and Renewal.”*** The speaker, **Reverend Father Nestor J. Adalia**, delivered this insightful and uplifting talk. He started with an invitation to come and be refreshed in God's presence as we celebrate His goodness and the new life God brings for everyone.



Rev. Fr. Nestor emphasized three key spiritual values:

Hope – Faith in God provides assurance and encouragement for both present struggles and the future. It reminds believers that no matter the situation, God remains a constant source of strength.

Healing – God’s presence brings restoration, not only physically but also emotionally and spiritually. It highlights the importance of surrendering burdens, pain, and difficulties to God for inner peace.

Renewal – Through faith, individuals are invited to begin anew. Renewal means transformation of the heart, mind, and spirit, leading to a closer relationship with God and a more meaningful life.

In closing, Fr. Nestor shared his own life experience; his humble beginnings made the message of being “anchored in Christ” more real and inspiring. Father talked about his struggles, especially in achieving a good education, and how life was not easy at the start. Despite these challenges, Father remained faithful and trusted God’s plan. Father’s journey shows that being anchored in Christ does not mean a life without hardship. Instead, it means holding on to faith while going through difficulties. His story is a clear example that God provides a way, even when situations seem impossible.



This reflection encourages everyone into a deeper trust in God, especially during times of uncertainty. Fr. Nestor’s story reminds us that struggles are part of growth, but with Christ as our anchor, it is possible to overcome obstacles and achieve meaningful success.

LSAF, together with the Sisters, was very grateful for the heartfelt topic shared by Fr. Nestor.

The afternoon activity started with a Marian devotion and a solemn prayer led by the Miag-ao, Iloilo group.

Thereafter, **Ms. Maria Teresa Villanueva** from the Rodriguez group gave the **2nd Talk** for Day 2. Tess lovingly shared her experiences from the 2025 General Chapter held in Zaragoza, Spain.

She shared that this trip meant a lot to her. The trip may be long and tiring, but it was an honor to be given this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be in the General House in Zaragoza, Spain. The duration of her stay was from July 20 to 30, 2025, centered on visiting the General House of the Sisters of Charity of St. Anne and other



significant religious sites. She wonderfully highlights the lives and contributions of our founders, Mother Maria Rafols and Fr. John Bonal, since the beginning in 1804, who were recognized for their heroic charity, especially during the Siege of Zaragoza. Important sites she visited included the General House, where she stayed, the Hospital of Our Lady of Grace (the birthplace of the congregation), the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Salz, and the

Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar. She also showed religious artifacts, personal belongings of our founders, and historical relics that reflect the mission of serving the sick and the poor. She shared that this experience had deepened her faith, nurtured humility, and inspired a spirit of sacrifice and service. She likewise encouraged participants to live out and share the congregation's charism of charity and compassion in our everyday lives.

Sis Tess also shared the birth, updates and the current status of the Statutes of the LSAF. In 2007, the Congregation formally welcomed lay collaborators, and by 2010 recognized that its charism is shared with them, leading to the formation of the Familia Santa Anna. From 2013 to 2022, extensive work was done to draft, review, and unify the Statutes, including collaboration across provinces and adjustments despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2023 and 2025, the process advanced through international consultations, legal reviews, and engagement with Church authorities,



including the Dicastery, which recommended the establishment of a central governing body, canonical review, and diocesan approval. Currently, the Statutes are undergoing final evaluation, requiring approval from the Diocese—specifically Zaragoza—and eventual recognition by higher Church authorities after a multi-year review process. The Statutes themselves define the association's identity, structure, governance, and operations. As of 2026, the revised document has been approved internally and submitted to diocesan officials, and the organization is now awaiting final feedback and official approval, marking the last stage of a long and collaborative process.

Lastly, Tess shared the consolidated reports of each representative of LSAF who attended the 2025 General Chapter, wherein they presented several challenges

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experienced by the different LSAF groups across the globe, including language barriers, political interference, lack of leadership, discrimination, inactive members, and the struggle to balance time, work, and spirituality. Despite these obstacles, the LSAF representatives expressed strong hopes and proposals, such as encouraging youth involvement, strengthening spiritual formation through prayer and God's Word, deepening understanding of their founders, fostering unity and inclusivity, and expanding their mission through digital media. They also aimed to improve everyone's participation

and commitment within the organization. Ultimately, the report emphasizes a firm commitment to remain faithful to their mission, to serve others with humility and love, to stay strong in faith despite difficulties, and to continue growing in their identity and sense of belonging within the Sisters of Charity of St. Anne, guided by spirituality and respect.



The 2nd day concluded with a joyful celebration, wherein each group showcased its unique talents through lively singing and energetic dancing. The presentations highlighted not only creativity and teamwork but also the participants' enthusiasm and camaraderie, making the evening both memorable and uplifting for everyone involved. Also, each group had a prepared representative to compete for the title of Ms. LSAF 2026. The winner was the delegate from Alabang. The crown was ceremoniously passed on by Ms. Rodriguez, Ms. LSAF 2025, to the newly crowned Ms. LSAF 2026, East Rembo.

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On the **3rd and final day** of the gathering, the activities began with a solemn prayer led by the Rodriguez group. This meaningful opening set a reflective and spiritual tone for the day, allowing participants to express gratitude for the experiences shared throughout the event and to prepare their hearts for the closing activities.

Thereafter, each group presented the year-round activities, highlighting their accomplishments, the challenges they encountered, and their plans and goals for the coming year. The financial report for the Provincial coordinating team was also presented by the treasurer, Marvinea Fernandez.

The evaluation of the three-day family gathering also took place. Members from the different groups openly expressed their insights, as well as the joy and comfort they experienced throughout the gathering. Participants highlighted the strong sense of unity, camaraderie, and meaningful connections formed during the gathering. Everyone expressed their heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to this year's host, the Mindoro group, for their warm hospitality and excellent organization. Special thanks were also extended to the resort owner, Dra. Juliet A. Mendoza and family, who graciously ensured that all participants were well taken care of and contributed greatly to the success and enjoyable atmosphere of the entire gathering.

Following this, plans for the next family gathering were discussed and collectively agreed upon. The Rodriguez group graciously accepted the hosting of the 2027 LSAF Gathering. The event was scheduled on April 30 and May 1 to 2, 2027.

On the Vote of Thanks, Sister Eugene announced that next year may be her last attendance as the Provincial Councilor and In-Charge of the Laity of St. Anne Family – Province of St. Francis Xavier. She expressed her love and gratitude to everyone. She also thanked this year's host, led by their Sister Coordinator Yavnika Yakub and President



The gathering concluded with the meaningful turnover of hosting responsibilities from the Puerto Galera/Talipanan Chapter, represented by Sis. Myrna Osorio, LSAF President – Puerto Galera, to the Rodriguez Chapter, led by Sis. Riza Quilla, President of LSAF Rodriguez. The LSAF emblem and the Key of Hospitality were entrusted to the new host, symbolizing their sincere commitment to lead, serve, and uphold the spirit of unity.

The 2026 LSAF Annual Family Gathering ended with a Thanksgiving Mass presided by Rev. Fr. Nestor J. Adalia, parish priest of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Puerto Galera, which deepened the atmosphere of gratitude, faith, and renewed dedication.