

Mother Butler Guild – Reflection by Nona Sablan

A. Personal Encounter with Jesus.

The Eucharist is '*culmens et fons*' (fountain and source) of all graces. As an MBG member, I draw strength and inspiration from the Eucharist. As an MBG member, preparing linens, arranging flowers, and setting up the altar become routinary. So above all preparations, I prepare myself before the Holy Eucharist. Embracing stillness and silence before the Real Presence at the Tabernacle.

Personally, I learned about two important preparations as an MBG member: **external preparation** (preparing the altar) and **internal preparation** (preparing the heart). And the most beautiful altar is the heart, the heart that yearns and longs to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist.

In my own reflection, it is the Eucharist that sustains me. It is the Eucharist that inspires me to continue loving and serving. The more I come nearer to the altar, the more it deepens my faith and trust to the One Being offered on the altar.

B. Community: Move to help others encounter Jesus.

Love is not a word, but it is an action. The love and the grace I received in the Holy Eucharist must be shared with other people. Love has a hand, feet and a heart. Thus, as an MBG member, I serve not only for my personal salvation, but also I care, and I help others to encounter Jesus.

Personally, I learned that as an MBG member, eyes must be clearer and sharper. Not just able to see what is lacking on the altar and sanctuary, but also to see with a compassionate heart the miseries and pains of others. **Visible eyes** (physical eyes) I can see what is lacking and missing. **Invisible eyes** (spiritual eyes) I can see the agony and suffering of my fellow members, and I find ways how to help and support to the best that I can.

In my own reflection, the more we get closer to Jesus in the Eucharist, the more He pushes and drives us to be with others. Serving God is not an isolation, but it promote communion, to be with and being for others.

C. Mission: Going beyond altar service.

To serve in the altar is a sacred duty. I am privileged to serve the most sacred thing in the Church which is the altar. The altar is the place of sacrifice and at the same time the beginning of a mission. As an MBG member, after I prepared the altar, it is not the end of my service, but rather the beginning of mission. Mission starts after the sacrifice.

Personally, I learned that there are three altars that need to be prepared and organized: **God's altar** (church) Sunday service and Sunday obligation; **family's altar** (home altar) home evangelization and catechesis and bringing the family to the Church; and **mission's altar** (community) apostolate and reaching out and bringing Jesus to them.

As part of our mission, we conducted series of orientations, recruitments and establishment of the MBG in different parishes in the Diocese of Bacolod. We don't wait for them, but rather we go to them and help them to create MBG ministry. Going beyond altar service, MBG is not just an organization or guild, it is a mission. We reach out and we go out. From maintenance service to mission.

Finally, three important aspects that every MBG member must develop and deepen: personal encounter with Jesus, community involvement, and mission in bringing Jesus to the world. As our MBG's mission says: **"To know Jesus and make him known. To love Jesus and make him loved."**