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## **New International Scholasticate in India**

### **Unity in Diversity**

BANGALORE, India- This year, the Indian Vice-Province indeed feels very happy that the scholasticate in Bangalore has been made into an International Scholasticate. Of the twenty three scholastics and four formators, five are Filipino brothers who are starting theology this year and a Filipino priest, Fr. Rene Bustillo, who is part of the Formation Team. The house of the community is dedicated to our Blessed Mother, hence the name 'Maria Bhavan' and is situated in one of India's fastest growing cities, Bangalore. It was a good timing for the Filipino brothers to arrive in Maria Bhavan, at the right time to begin the year when the Indian confreres and brothers were having their annual retreat led by Fr. Hugh Gillespie, SMM, from the United States province. Together, as one community, they all joined the retreat and at the end of the retreat there was a renewal of the vows. One of the Filipino brothers (Bro. Joel) renewed his vows with the Indian brothers on May 31, in the presence of the provincial superior Fr. Cletus, SMM who presided at the Mass. The Indian confreres officially welcomed the Filipino brothers and on the same celebration the new International Scholasticate community was formally inaugurated, headed by Fr Michael Sahayaraj, SMM, the Rector. Later, different activities and schedules of the community were communicated to everyone. Filipinos and Indians though vary in their cultures and traditions, are happy to relate to each other and make their experience truly enjoyable.

- *Bro. Joel Padua*

## **Life with the Filipinos**

God has created everyone with a unique culture, language and talents. I'm very happy to experience this diversity with the arrival of our Filipino father and brothers here. Maria Bhavan, the Scholasticate House is growing in joyful community life with the entry of our Filipino confreres. My first impression of them is that they are spiritual, talented, humorous and above all joyful. I have personally experienced a loving and brotherly relationship with each of them. They take initiatives, possess academic abilities and are ever ready to help us in our needs in different areas. They have motivated us in our spiritual growth and have shared their goods. Their presence here makes us lively and joyful and so we are able to do anything with confidence and optimism. They prepare delicious meals for us, and thus new tastes have entered our community; when opportune they present their way of life and culture through various activities. I'm happy that this year we have received these brothers and with them we are growing differently. Thanks for the international team of formators: Fr. Michael Sahayaraj, Fr. Peter Mascarenhas, Fr. Richard Das, and Fr. Rene Bustillo.

*-Bro. Nashwin*