

Sunday has come and gone and these lines will let you know what went on...

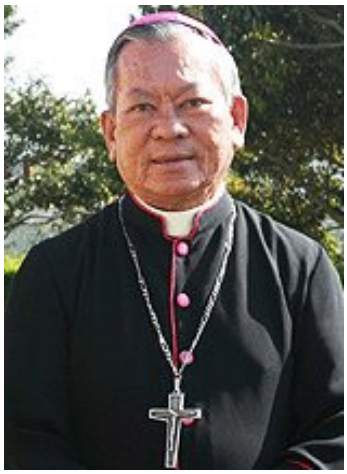
I went to bed very late; actually it was very early in the morning after what I described in my last diary entry concerning the very special tour of my SWEET HOME here at the seminary. It took place in the darkness of the tropical night. The tour in which I was the tourist guide and the only one who registered for the tour. It began a few hours after a conversation we had during a late supper and ended before just before dawn. I woke up “very early in the morning of the same day” and realized that my eyes had been closed for only an hour and 23 minutes.

The big day began with a greeting from my neighbor, one of the Seminary Rector’s assistants whose room was located across from mine from May 30, 1990 to September 6, 1991. Instead of greeting me with a “hello”, he said: “you did not sleep, did you?” No answer from me, but he answered his own question: “It has been a long time and I understand.” We laughed and he went back to his room. It was 4:52 a.m. on Sunday November 27, 2010.

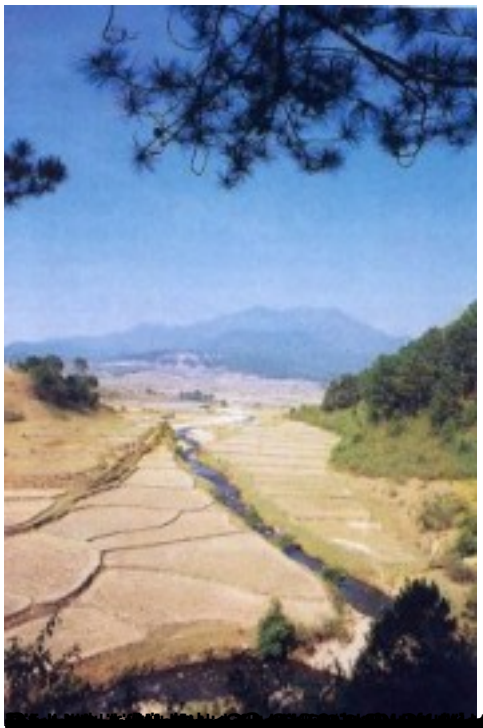
A quick shower with cold water from the well left me fully awake. I wanted to say hello to the sun through the willow tree as it was my habit innumerable times when I was here, for long or short periods of time. It was a wonderful feeling to meet the sun, my friend who touched my face softly with his rays through the willow leaves. I stood there about 30 minutes and then left because “my friend” had to go to give some heat to people who were beginning to feel the “cold of the tropical winter.”

Dennis was still in bed, not feeling well. After Morning Prayer, I joined the rest of the “new seminarians” - the ninth class after 1975 (fall of Saigon) for breakfast (we eat three meals a day together). I was introduced by the director of studies as a “member of this house” – not as a visitor. When we finished our breakfast, the director of studies prepared a cup of coffee for Dennis. We both entered Dennis’ room but Dennis did not fill his stomach with anything except water. A first time I asked Dennis if he was able to attend the early mass. He said that he would

try to make it when the noise from motor scooters got louder and louder.



I went out and began chatting with everyone I met on the way to the Pastoral Center. Many of them were surprised by my appearance. At 8:00 a.m., the bishop came and I had a 20 minutes conversation with him before he headed to the Pastoral Center to greet people. I walked another way, slowly made a circle of the Pastoral Center to find my class mates who had come to the celebration. Three of them could not come because of emergency calls from their parishes. Then, I tried to meet every single priest from my diocese, at least to say hello. I did so. I said hello to 160 priests of my diocese who were my professors, my mentors, my pastors, my friends, my brothers. It was 9:05 a.m. I returned to Dennis' room to ask a second time about how he was feeling. It was clear that he could not come. I wish he could have witnessed this celebration; but God had other plans.



[redacted]