



New Apostolic Church

Philippines



Happy and blessed 50th anniversary!

It is a special joy for me to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the New Apostolic Church in the Philippines. It gives me the opportunity to express my gratitude toward the triune God for He has established His work of salvation throughout the Philippines. Thank you for all the blessing and the help we could experience in the past 50 years.

My sincere thanks to the District Apostles, Apostles and Ministers, as well as brothers and sisters whom God has used to serve His children out of love for many years. Thank you so much for all: The trip done; the gospel of Jesus Christ preached; the prayer offered; the sacraments, grace and blessing dispensed; great effort fought for; various sacrifices brought; pastoral work performed; and the tears that have flown, to support the unity of God's people.

God and His Work are holy. But those who are numbered in His work and His church are and remain sinners. During this period of time of course here and there we have also seen things and experienced events that we did not like or did not expect. We don't have to be irritated or angry about it. Apostle Paul once said: *"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know just as I also am known"* (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12). Today we can only see a part of God's work, also His blessing and help. But never forget that His work and His deeds are always bigger and greater than what we can see or imagine. We have the guarantee that God will carry out His work to perfection. One day we will see the whole image. We will experience the fulfilment of the word: *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ"* (Philippians 1:6). Therefore, let us be humble and faithful to actively work out our own salvation and contribute to church life and to its well-being. Then we will be able to rejoice and be grateful even forever.



Edy Isnugroho
District Apostle South-East Asia

Congratulations on celebrating 50 years of God's work in the Philippines.

It is a great honor and joy to be a part of this historic celebration. It also gives a great sense of gratitude to the Almighty Triune God, for His love and mercy are so evident in His work of salvation in the Philippines.

My gratitude also goes to our predecessors, Apostles, ministers and brothers and sisters both from the Canadian district and from the Philippines itself, for the commitments, willingness and love which are expressed in all forms of service and sacrifice for God and God's children in the Philippines.

Many experiences were lived through during this 50-year period, both good and bad, but in the end, as the Apostle Paul said: *"...by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain."* (1 Corinthians 15:10a). Let's make sure to keep reaching for this grace and be in it. His grace will not change even though many things have changed. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."* (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Thus, what God has started in us 50 years ago in the Philippines, that is also what He will complete and all of us may experience His perfect grace, which is to be part of the Lord's bride when the Lord Jesus comes.



Samuel Tansahtikno
Apostle, District Rector
Philippines

THE START UP

The beginning of the New Apostolic Church in the Philippines dates back to the world-wide missionary movement of the **New Apostolic Church Canada**, launched by **District-Apostle Michael Kraus**.

1972, **Herbert Pache**, a Canadian who lived in Japan arrived in the Philippines with a mission. To find interested souls he thought he has to attract people by an unusual behavior, so he sat in a black suit in Luneta Park. Indeed, very unusual considering the tropical heat. The attraction worked and he got attention by curious people, resulting in a first contact with **Carlos Gayon**, whose family were the first to join and sealed on **12th October 1972** at the occasion of the visit of then **Apostle Erwin Wagner** and Carlos Gayon ordained Priest. The first step was made. A year later the **Eguia family** joined and a first congregation in Sampaloc (Metro Manila) was founded.

Recognizing the potential in this Christian country Herbert Pache was commissioned to move with his wife to the Philippines. They started to expand the work and eventually, meanwhile a District-Elder, he becomes the first District-Rector in Asia (except Indonesia).

A few years later a Swiss tourist met **Virgil Fuentes**, on a ship from Tagbilaran to Cebu und thus the testimony reached the Visayas. First Missions could be established in Bohol with Brothers **Francisco Caderao**, **Jessie Bernido** and **Perfecto Mumar**. Japan based Priest **Urs Hebeisen** (initially ordained for Taiwan and Hong Kong) was sent for the promotion of the Bohol Mission but also to start priestly pastoral care.

The term “**District-Rector**” was used for the registration of the Church as a corporation sole, a unique legal construct patterned from the Catholic and other Churches in the country. A status which various lawyers in Switzerland and Canada examined but maintained until today. 2018 the National Council with the Apostles in the Philippines was to be added.





With the visit of **Ap. Erwin Wagner** in December 1979 the movement gained enormous momentum. Over 100 souls were sealed, numerous Deacons and Priests ordained and a first structure of a network of congregations was established in Bohol. Needless to mention a very intensive missionary and pastoral activity started.

The visions and zeal of **DA. Michael Kraus** and **Ap. Erwin Wagner** motivated and energized all, leading to a fast growth. Every year the visit of the Apostle brought rich harvest. In the meantime, faith spread to the island of Negros and later to Mindanao.

The membership in the Philippines grew rapidly and more souls were eager to join and follow. Early 1982 the Apostles **Ernest Vovak** and **Bert Woll** from the USA respectively Canada were sent on an extensive sealing trip leading to the decision to move **Urs Hebeisen** (meanwhile District Evangelist in Hong Kong) to the Philippines, made the church grow. Later in the year, on 12th December 1982 he was ordained an Apostle and thus the Apostolate had its first resident in the Philippines.

This was preceded by another visit of **Ap. Erwin Wagner**. Unforgotten remains the stormy night in Santa Cruz Laguna. In a divine service dozens of clergy men of the **Philippine Church for Christ** under the leadership of **Rev. Rana** converted to the new apostolic faith, were sealed, and became Priests.

This rather unusual development resulted in even greater membership however the church embarked also on a rocky path, facing internal controversy, but it was worthwhile. The first Apostles came out of this group, as well as today's third generation members among them **Ap. Leonilo Desoloc**.

God's ways are indeed unusual at times



THE YEARS OF GROWTH

The establishment of the Church was embedded in a strategy to introduce the Apostle's doctrine to the Christian communities and has proven very successful. All church leaders in the country were addressed a MANIFESTO written by **DA. Michael Kraus**

Already at the very early stage the need for local Apostles became evident and over the years **14 Apostles** with Philippine nationality were called to serve, to establish new congregations and to care for them.



Armando Ang

Born: October 25, 1952

Died: 1999

Apostle from: December 04, 1983 to November 20, 1989

Area: Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao



Domingo Lameyra

Born: August 04, 1940

Apostle from: May 14, 1985 to March 23, 1997

Area: Luzon



Virgil Fuentes

Born: May 25, 1942

Died: June 01, 2014

Apostle since: June 08, 1986

Retired: February 12, 2006

Area: Bohol, Leyte (Visayas)



Domingo Diagbel

Born: January 20, 1952

Apostle since: June 08, 1986

Retired: May 14, 2017

Area: Negros Occidental (Visayas)



Francisco Nuyad

Born: October 10, 1946

Died: May 31, 2010

Apostle since: May 03, 1987

Retired: February 06, 2006

Area: South Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat, Davao Region (Mindanao)



Apolinario Aleman

Born: January 05, 1937

Died: October 05, 2005

Apostle since: May 03, 1987

Retired: March 23, 2002

Area: Caraga Region (Mindanao)



Mercurio Nuyad

Born: September 22, 1948

Apostle since: March 08, 1995

Retired: December 14, 2014

Area: South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Davao Region (Mindanao)



Cleofas Bual

Born: September 25, 1956

Apostle since: August 30, 1997

Retired: October 16, 2022

Area: Bohol, Cebu, Leyte (Visayas)



Timmy Richard Gabriel

Born: July 14, 1966

Apostle from: March 05, 1997 to January 07, 2009

Area: Luzon



Siegfred Catan

Born: January 24, 1960

Apostle since: March 05, 1997

Area: Negros Oriental (Visayas)



Levi Barles

Born: August 27, 1971

Apostle from: March 23, 2002 to January 26, 2007

Area: Caraga Region, Zamboanga (Mindanao)



Leonilo Desoloc

Born: March 15, 1963

Apostle since: July 05, 2010

Area: Caraga Region (Mindanao)



Alfredo Pascual Jr.

Born: April 30, 1956

Apostle since: December 14, 2014

Retired: October 16, 2022

Area: South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Davao Region (Mindanao)



Joe An Beli-ot

Born: July 22, 1978

Apostle since: May 14, 2017

Area: Negros Occidental (Visayas)



There was no limit to growth. This was also due to the prevailing social and political situation. People were full of hope for a better future. The political leadership, dictatorial in nature, granted almost unlimited freedom to religious organization. Churches were the place of hope and very attractive until the so-called People's Power Revolution (22 to 25 February 1986) a non-violent civil resistance and beginning of democracy.

Due to enormous growth not just in members but congregations spreading all over the nation, leadership was needed, and newly ordained Deacons and Priests were to be cared for. A massive program of seminars and teaching was launched. Numerous brothers at times up to eight were sent to the Philippines from Canada to consolidate and support the work, mainly to bring up ministers.

Among them the **Bishop Peter Esser** who dedicated over two decades to the missions in the Philippines. **Ev. Fred Altvater, Ron Sigmund, Carl Scheid, Yorck Lindner, Bh. Alex Klein**, to mention just some.

Then there was **William Scott** a US based retired Deacon who was ordained Evangelist just for the Philippines. **DE Rainer Helbig** a German businessman residing with his family in the Philippines. Hongkong based Swiss **Ev. Mario Keller** and for a short while **Pr. Steve Pathman** (USA) and **DEv. James Eyermann** (USA) and **DEv Nelson Kraus** later Apostle in Canada were part of the Mission support team.



"Teaching them to observe all thing..." (Matthew 28:20)

Over the years, Brothers from overseas sacrificed much personal time to travel to the Philippines to conduct seminars.



D. Elder Herbert and Sr. Joan Pache, the first NAC Missionaries in the Philippines



Bishop Peter Esser, Priest Brand, Evangelists Werner Seelisch and George Hendel, District Evangelist Carl Scheid



Bishop Peter Esser



Bishop Alex Klein



Evangelist William Scott



D. Evangelist Yorck Lindner



Evangelist Fred Alvater



Evangelist Ron Sigmund



Evangelist Ralf Gramenz



D. Elder James Griesbaum



Evangelist Mario Keller



CONSOLIDATION

The District of Canada, as called in those days, through its subsidiary “NAK-Foreign Extension” invested considerable funds into a Church Building program. The famous “1000-Dollar-Chapel” initiative was successfully implemented also in the Philippines. The scope was to build small presentable chapels, not much exceeding the standard of its neighborhood. Risks had to be taken when landownership could not be secured or were in question. Land for this program was donated yet legally not really. It was also a perfect way to be able to adjust to the changing size or even existence of congregations. Everything was so fluid in certain regions. Over time Central Churches were built and became hubs for a certain region, often such facilities serve also as residence for Apostles or Bishops.

Administration especially finances are up to this day handled by **Mr. Ramil Santos**, a mandate dating back to the days of **DA. Michael Kraus**, who in 1984 also initiated the startup of a company (STAMM International Inc.) another unusual and unprecedented step which prompted **CA. Hans Urwyler** to make mention of it in the weekly Telex-circular to all Apostles. The idea to use a commercial entity to handle church affairs in the missionary countries worked well but had as such no sustainable future. The company however still operates successfully until this day.

Then another big step. After 2 years of planning the DA Kraus approved the purchase of prime land in Bangkal/Makati and construction of today's prestigious Makati Church, dedicated in 1994. Simultaneously the church also established its own administration office which in later years assumed district responsibility for the newly established District-Apostle area South-East-Asia, short-named NACSEAsia. 2008 the Office got a new 3 story building.

Since administrative independence with own staff came somehow late, membership records developed increasingly into a challenge but after a time of consolidation and corrections of statistical errors there were some 50'000 souls registered.

The Philippine society developed further and in urbanized areas a re-markable economic growth became evident causing a massive migration from the rural areas to the cities where especially young people found better education and jobs.

This caused some drain to many congregations however at the same time also promoted the development of congregations in the cities. Job opportunities abroad also contributed to migration and overall, the church was shrinking yet became more solid which could be observed especially during covid time where all districts had to operate and maintain themselves.

Mission induced growth slowed but the high birth rate continued. Expansion flattened due to urbanization, demographic developments, and general liberalization of society.





NEW ERA

After retirement of **DA Kraus**, the **DA Erwin Wagner** then **Leslie Latorcai** assumed leadership until another historic date the **18. January 2009**. A new era was launched. **Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber** founded the new District-Apostle Area Southeast Asia associating the Regional Church Indonesia (GKBI) and all Churches in ASEAN countries with each other.

DAH. Urs Hebeisen became District-Apostle for DAA 11 as the NAKI record names it. He took care of the Philippines and many other Asian countries. The work continued.



TODAY AND ONWARD...

Bishop Samuel Tansahtikno moved to the Philippines early 2018 and prepared for succession to assume national rectorship.

On 18 November 2018, **DA. Urs Hebeisen** entered retirement and **CA. Jean Luc Schneider** entrusted **Ap. Edy Isnugroho** with District Apostle's responsibility and **Samuel Tansahtikno** was ordained Apostle.

At the occasion of the CA. Jean Luc Schneider's visit this 15th October 2022, the church celebrates **50 years** in the Philippines.



WITH LOVE AT WORK



The first humanitarian action on record at NAC Philippines dates back to 2006. After a natural disaster the **DA. Michael Kraus** initiated the distribution of food packs to affected congregations.

When the deadliest Tsunami ever, hit Thailand on 26th December 2004 a wave of solidarity went all over the world and there were funds at disposal as never before. We realized that relief activities have to be organized properly and are not just occasional actions. NACSEARelief as an initiative of the NAC Philippines came into being and on 11th April 2011 an organization was registered which is independent from the New Apostolic Church yet patterned after other similar set ups worldwide. The close connection with NAC Philippines was maintained because the pastoral network of the church (and other churches, too) is used to reach out to the population in need. The registered name **NACSEARelief** stands for New Apostolic Church Southeast Asia however outreach is now limited to the Philippines.

Today, **NACSEARelief** understands its mandate as the social responsibility service provider of the **New Apostolic Church in the Philippines** in particular and as a community service provider in general. Activities focus on Education in remote rural areas where school infrastructure is lacking and Scholarships for deserving students, outreach to humans in need as well assisting in relief, rehab and reconstruction after natural disasters without racial, religious, social or political biases.

Management is the responsibility of a Board of Trustee consisting presently of following members: **Urs Hebeisen** (President), **Freddy Nuyad** (Mindanao), **Siegfred Catan** (Visayas), **Kurt Brenner** (Switzerland), and **Mabelle Bagtas** (Corporate Secretary) who also serves as the Manager of Operations and supervises the projects in the various provinces of the Philippines.

Volunteer collaboration of **NAC Admin Staff** as well as the pastoral network is of great value in all undertakings. **Ruth Moring** handling accounting and **Genalyn Mosura Rueger** serving as Executive Secretary.

With the help of **UNFRIED STIFTUNG** in Germany presently 100 students are supported in their education. Infrastructure projects have been realized by **NAK-Humanitas** of Switzerland. Natural disaster response and relief is made possible by **nak-karitativ** and **Humanaktiv** from Germany yet even smaller contribution from private donors go a long way and have already often made a difference in the life of people in difficult situations.

Accomplished projects are published regularly on the NACSEARelief website as a way of public accountability.





NACSEA Relief In ACTION

WITH LOVE AT WORK



NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH MAKATI, PHILIPPINES

CONCLUSION

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2:42)

As we continue together in Christ, we follow the advice by Apostle Paul.

"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love"
(1st Corinthians 16:13-14)

May God give Grace until the return of Christ!

