

PRECIOUS BLOOD PARISH – STEPHENSON, MICHIGAN, YOU ARE BLEST!

With you we too are blest!

October 16, 2018 - Tuesday.

That was the day Sr. Maria Diem Nguyen and I, Sr. Norma Vicentillo moved into the Sisters' Convent in the Precious Blood Parish at Stephenson, Michigan. It is 45 minute drive from Escanaba, where our four other sisters are ministering at Bishop Noa Home.

After what was seemingly a long wait- finally we are here! We were all set, packed and ready to move second week of September when Fr. Ronald Timock, the Pastor – Administrator of the Parish informed us that they still have to do some finishing touches to the renovation of the sisters' convent. The period of waiting increased the excitement from our end, and we learned later that those who were working so hard on the renovations, mostly volunteers and parishioners with Father Timock were all excited to welcome us too.

Earlier, the second week of June this year, after our District Assembly, the District Superior Sr. Estela Garcia and council members Sr. Gloria Schultz, Sr. Dorothea Jang and Sr. Mary Ann Laurine who is an Assistant to the Mother General in Rome came to see the place and had a preliminary talk with Father Ronald Timock regarding his desire to have a sister assigned in his parish. We saw the sisters' convent needed some fixing as it had not been occupied for more than ten years since the last sister retired and went back to her mother house.

We can just marvel and be truly grateful for what was before our eyes! We were so touched with what these dedicated parishioners with Fr. Timock did to renovate the convent. They transformed and decently beautify the house! And when we finally met them; Vicky the President, and the members of the Legion of Mary, the members of the Parish Council, all the Parish Staff and other Religious Associations and Women prayer group in the parish, we just felt their warm welcome and realized all the hard work and the love they have put into all the details of the preparations of receiving and welcoming us- Sisters. We are so grateful to God for this lavish love and care we experienced from the community here. Fr. Timock himself met us when we arrived and he helped us in unloading our suitcases and baggage from the car and bring them up to our convent. He brought us to the grocery store to shop food and immediate needs and took time to introduce us to all members of the Parish Council and religious organization of the Parish. Then he scheduled a formal Welcome for the sisters with the Parishioners; that is coffee and light meal after Saturday Evening mass of October 27<sup>th</sup> and breakfast after 9:00am Sunday mass of October 28<sup>th</sup>.

Gradually, Fr. Timock showed us around places, restaurants, and pointed to us the Holy Redeemer Church in Menominee, where we can attend Mass when he goes off on Thursdays. He also oriented us to the Parish activities where we get involved. He bought us a sack, seriously a sack of candies and chocolates to be given away to the kids who will come for the Trick or Treat on October 31<sup>st</sup> as the culture of the place.

We are now getting involved in the Parish, attending Legion of Mary's weekly prayer on Wednesday morning, prayer group for women Monday evening, CCD class on Wednesday evening, visitation for parishioners that are home bound and visiting residents at the Nursing Home, assisting Father as altar server at Mass and as Eucharistic Ministers, and journeying with families that are grieving, attending Parish Council Meeting once a month, and helping out in the Music ministry.

Thank you Lord for sending us here. You have manifested your love and care through the people we meet everywhere in this lovely, peaceful place; kindhearted, generous, and spirit- filled people. We felt honored to be here and we pray that you give us the courage and strength to give of ourselves selflessly as you did; and that our prayer and our way of life may witness to your own love and care for them, that we become a credible proclamation of your good news. Amen.