

... in Jesus and Mary,

J.M.J.A.

Manila

Oct. 21, 2009

My Dearest Fr. Herbie,

Thank you very much for the answers to my requests about our postulants there in Poland. I would like to express my best congratulations for your progress in Polish language. I am very happy to know that you have presided two masses with the homily in Polish language. Very Well!!!! I hope that very soon you will be able to preach without reading.

My best wishes also for that purpose. But what joy to see the Holy Father: Pope Benedict XVI in Slovakia and to concelebrate the Holy Mass with him!!! Let us thank God! I received also your card from Berlin; so you practically have visited the whole Europe. Let us pray for this old continent so that it can be a true Christian Continent again as well as be a source of vocations to the priestly and religious life for the greatest glory of God and for the salvation of all the souls.

My best regards to Fr. Milak and to the other confreres. May God bless all of you always!!

With fraternal affection in Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Joseph Aveni, R.C.J.

PRAYER TO OBTAIN GRACES THROUGH FR. AVENI

God our Father, we give you thanks for the gifts you granted to your priest, Joseph Aveni, configuring him to Jesus, the Master who is gentle and humble of heart. With trusting humility he found in your merciful love the joy of his life, the zeal for the salvation of souls, and the light for his service of spiritual guidance. He loved You in his neighbor and his neighbor in You, and dedicated his life to obtain holy workers particularly to the Asian continent.

Glorify, O Father, this zealous priest, for the praise of your Name so that he may be for the Church an effective sign of your Kingdom.

Through his intercession, grant light to the young people, health to the sick who turn to him, and to us, grant the grace we long for (*mention your personal intention here*), so that we may also find our joy in fulfilling your Will. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Copies of Fr. Aveni's prayer cards are available upon request.

LET US PRAY
FOR...



Elpidio Javellana, Jr.
Sr. Cristetamaria Javellana
Ismael Bernard Kho
Rolando Martirizar
Rose Alberca
Aris Malabanan
Shirley P. Sison
Rudolfo Diamante
Angelita Hautea Lucero
Mariano Rondael, Sr.
Pilar Solosa Barandino
Justin Richmond Indonila
Alvin De Guzman
Fr. Cesare Bettoni
Jerick Marc Ollesca
Luigi Aveni Limina
Gisella



* for prayer requests
* for copies of Fr.
Aveni's prayer cards...

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Friends of Father Joseph Aveni

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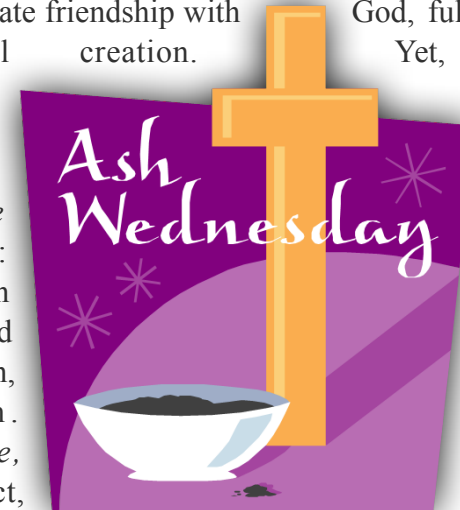


Supplementary Flyer for those who do not have access to
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"Remember that we are dust..." but to God we shall return.

We begin the Season of Lent with Ash Wednesday, during which we receive the blessed ashes, either by being sprinkled over the head or by being marked on the forehead as a visible cross. This simple rite wants to remind us of the most profound reality of life: its beginning and its end: *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return"* (Genesis 3:19). Therefore, we call to mind that in the beginning when *"everything that God had made... was very good"*, man enjoyed intimate friendship with God, full control of himself, and harmony with all creation. Yet, unfortunately, when sin entered the scene

relationship was enmity, distance. *from the presence* searched for him: Indeed, even when His friendship, God the power of death, and find Him. *acceptable time, salvation.* In fact, is a call to be



with oneself and with other. Through the Lenten liturgy we are invited to walk along three pathways towards reconciliation: with God through **prayer**, with oneself through **fasting**, and with others through **almsgiving**. And the goodnews is that we are not alone in this journey, because our compassionate and merciful God meets us halfway. It is He himself who is appealing to us: *"Come back to me with all your heart... long I have waited for your coming home"* (Cf. Hosea 14). So today if we hear His voice, let us not harden our hearts" but with humility let us reply: *"Be merciful to me O Lord, for I have sinned"*.

this harmonious changed with malice, And man *"hid himself of God"*, but God *"Where are you?"* he disobeyed and lost did not abandon man to but helped him to seek When? *Now is the most now is the time of* over anything else, Lent reconciled with God,

A Biographical Sketch...

Missionary in the Philippines



At the Luneta Park, 1980

After finishing his mandate as Vicar General, he was invited to go to the recently opened mission in the Philippines. In fact, he once confided in an interview, "Since the very first moment, [I have resolved that] when I finished my duties in Rome and if the Superiors would send me to the Philippines, I would go willingly." Notwithstanding his advanced age and the lack of knowledge of the English language, he willingly left with the Fr. General's reassuring words: "Do not worry about the language; your 'elderly' presence will be useful for the formation of our young seminarians. Just go, at least for a year." So on November 5, 1980, at the age of 62, he arrived in the Philippines where he remained not only for a year but for 30 years!

Here, he resumed the office of Novice Master for another 10 years. He tried his best to know the English language but he rather showed his expertise in the language of the heart. Once he shared to a fellow Italian formator: "You know, when I started my work here as Novice Master, I had this concern: 'What will these poor youngsters understand from me? Certainly they will go away disillusioned.' And yet they stayed and persevered. Then, when I already knew English pretty well, I began to think: 'Now I will convince them better and they will remain.' And instead just then, when I trusted more in my talent than in the grace of God, many candidates left." Thus, he concluded, "We are useful, but not indispensable! "

His Superiors immediately saw in Father Joseph the charisma of a formator so much so that, in 1947, though not even thirty years old, he was appointed as Novice Master in Trani. After nine years he was called to Rome to be the Director of the Theology Students; in 1959, he resumed the office of Novice Master in Florence and then in Zagarolo, until 1972, when he was assigned as Spiritual Father in "Christ the King" Seminarv in Messina.



On the site of on-going seminary construction, with Fr. Antonio Barbangelo, 1980

While faithfully carrying out this assignment, he dedicated himself also to teaching Italian and Latin classes, giving conferences and preaching in spiritual recollections and retreats, hearing Confession, and spiritual direction to seminarians and numerous aspirants and religious of different male and female congregations in the area. He became the common point of reference as source of guidance and spiritual support to several Italian missionaries particularly those who just arrived in the Philippines to start their Congregation. One of them attested: "All who knew him especially religious men and women, had a great respect of him for his fatherly kindness, for his wisdom in counseling, for his rich inner life and spirit of prayer, for his simplicity and exemplary life as religious and missionary priest."



With Filipino Religious Brothers - Manila, 1982

From 1991, when he left the office of Novice Master, he totally devoted himself to hearing confessions and spiritual direction, nourishing his spirit with constant prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, in the chapel adjacent to his room. (*To be continued...*)