THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DAVAO

The dawning of the age of faith in Davao took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Three missionary groups shaped that glorious age. First, the Recollect Fathers in 1848; they stayed until 1858. The following years saw the Jesuits step into the lush forests of Davao. Then, in 1937, upon the request of the Bishop of Zamboanga, the Priests of the Foreign Mission Society of Quebec (PME Fathers) came to Davao.

The PME Fathers were entrusted with the spiritual care of the faithful in the areas included within the limits of Davao City and the present three provinces of Davao del Norte, Davao de Sur and Davao Oriental.

On December 7, 1949 the Holy See raised the Davao Mission to the rank of Prelature "Nullius" of Davao. Subsequently the Most Reverend Clovis Thibault, PME, JCL, DD was elected its first Prelate Ordinary and was installed on June 24, 1950.

In 1958, Davao Oriental and Davao del Norte were given to the pastoral care of the Maryknoll Fathers. The city of Davao del Sur and two municipalities of Davao del Norte composed the present Archdiocese of Davao.

On November 19, 1966 the Prelature of Davao was elevated into a Diocese, and the Most Rev. Clovis Thibault, PME, JCL, DD took canonical possession of the Diocese of Davao on January 15, 1967 as its first bishop.

On March 24, 1967 the Most Rev. Juan Nilmar, DD took office as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Davao. However on May 22, 1970 he was appointed Bishop of Tagbilaran.

On August 1, 1970, the Diocese of Davao was erected into an Archdiocese with the Most Reverend Clovis Thibault, PME, JCL, DD as its first Archbishop and the Most Rev. Antonio LI. Mabutas, JCD as its First Coadiutor Bishop.

Upon the retirement of Archbishop Clovis Thibault, PME on December 9,1972, Archbishop Antonio Ll. Mabutas took over as resident Archbishop of Davao.

Archbishop Fernando R. Capalla was appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Davao on June 28, 1994 and, upon the retirement of Archbishop Antonio Ll. Mabutas, and was installed as the third Archbishop of Davao on November 28, 1996.

ARCHDIOCESE OF DAVAO

ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE 247 F. TORRES STREET, 8000 DAVAO CITY P.O. Box 80418 Tel._no. (082) 221-1234; 227-5992; 227-1163 Fax (082) 227-9771 e-mail add: bishopdayao71@hotmail.com

bishopdavao68@yahoo.com

ARCHBISHOP FERNANDO R. CAPALLA, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE 247 F. TORRES STREET, 8000 DAVAO CITY P.O. Box 80418 Tel._no. (082) 221-1234; 227-5992; 227-1163 Fax (082) 227-9771

AUXILIARY BISHOP BISHOP GEORGE B. RIMANDO, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE 247 F. TORRES STREET, 8000 DAVAO CITY P.O. Box 80418 Tel._no. (082) 221-1234; 227-5992; 227-1163 Fax (082) 227-9771

VICARS GENERAL

BISHOP GEORGE B. RIMANDO, D.D.

San Pedro Cathedral Parish San Pedro Street, Davao City P.O. Box 80418 Tel. #: 227-2398; 227-2317

MSGR. JULIUS TONEL, V.G.

San Pablo Parish Juna Subd., 8021 Matina, Davao City Tel. #: 296-2824

EPISCOPAL VICARS

MSGR. PAUL CUISON, JCD

Episcopal Vicar for the Laity Sta. Ana Shrine Parish Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City Tel. #: 227-3842

MSGR. MARTINIANO GORGONIO

Episcopal Vicar for the Clergy ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE 247 F. TORRES STREET, 8000 DAVAO CITY P.O. Box 80418 Tel._no. (082) 221-1234; 227-5992; 227-1163 Fax (082) 227-9771

FR. PATRICE PICARD, PME

Episcopal Vicar for the Religious
PME Fathers Regional House
C. De Guzman Street, Davao City
P.O. Box 80137
Tel. #: 227-6705 Fax : 226-2336

CHANCERY

ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE
247 F. TORRES STREET, 8000 DAVAO CITY
P.O. Box 80418
Tel._no. (082) 221-1234; 227-5992; 227-1163
Fax (082) 227-9771
Chancellor: Msgr. Paul A. Cuison, JCD
Office Staff: Sr. Ma. Nelsa P. Guevarra, TDM

ARCHDIOCESAN SECRETARIAT

Secretary: Mr. Julieto Belocura
Private Secretary to the Archbishop: Fr. Jaime Gamboa
Personal Secretary to the Archbishop: Mr. Arnel Legitimas
Archbishop's Residence Receptionist: Sr. Norma Magdoboy, OP

JUDICIARY SECTION

Metropolitan Matrimonial Tribunal Judicial Vicar: Fr. Nelson Lucas Defender of the Bond: Fr. Patrice Picard, PME Notary: Miss Jocelyn Rodriguez

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Finance Officer: Fr. Jose Junar dela Victoria Cashier: Susan Remotigue Disbursing Officer: Rosita Cal Bookkeeper: Teresita Lee

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Pastoral Director: Bishop George B. Rimando, D.D.
Office Staff: Vicky Anghag
Dove Clarin