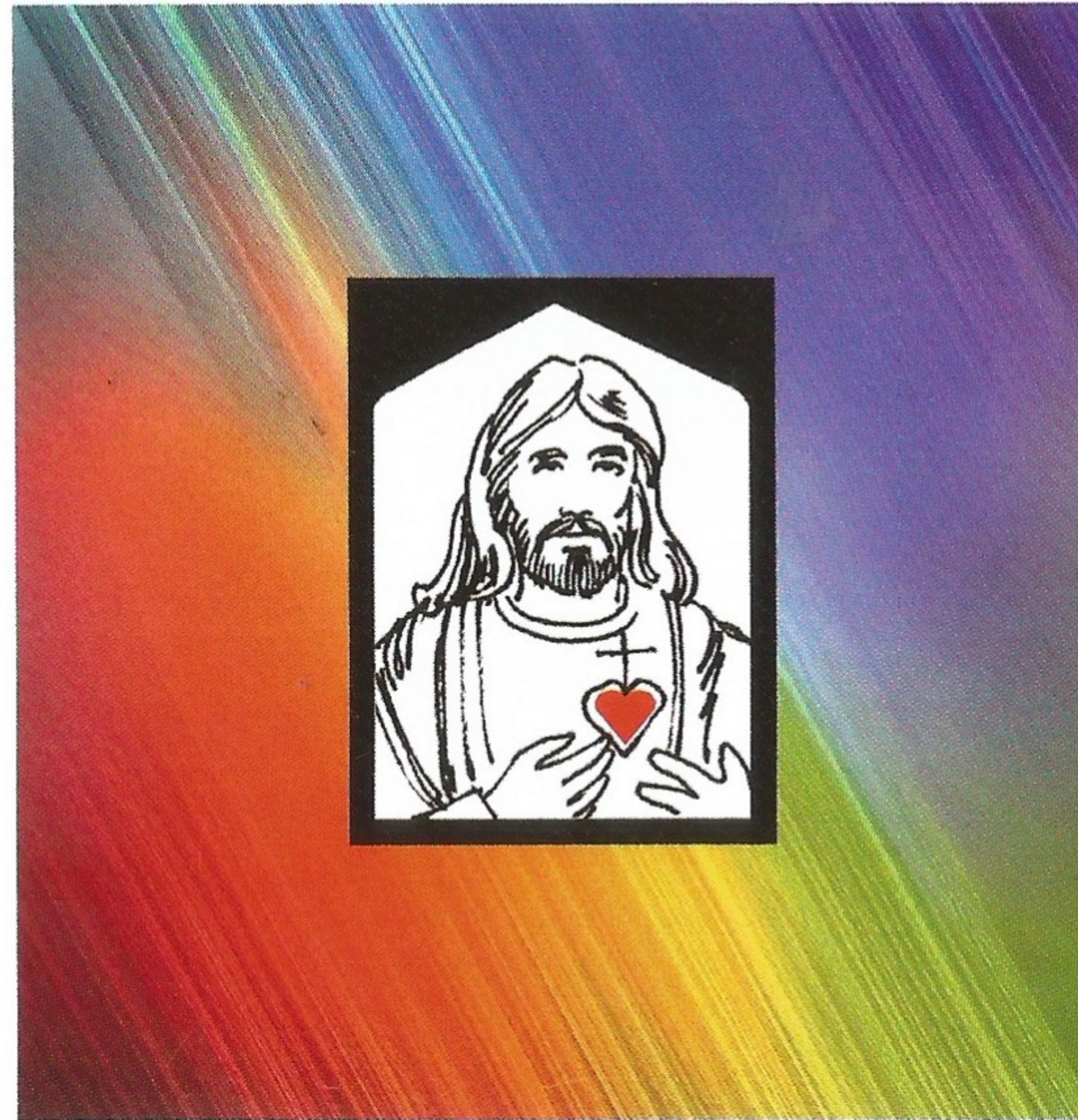


## OUR MISSION

We are a Roman Catholic parish-based ministry in Central New Jersey that welcomes and supports gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) persons, their family and friends. We share our faith through prayer, scripture and dialogue. We seek to engage the larger community in recognizing that we are all members of God's family and we each have a place at the Table of the Lord.



*You have made us for Yourself,  
Oh God, and our hearts are  
restless until they rest in You.*



### SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

200 Randolph Avenue  
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080  
908-756-0633 FAX: 908-757-5655  
[www.ChurchoftheSacredHeart.net](http://www.ChurchoftheSacredHeart.net)

#### STAINED-GLASS ART —

*(inside panel)* Stained-glass window from the Sanctuary of Sacred Heart Church, South Plainfield, NJ representing one of a grouping of the Latin Doctors of the Church —  
“St. Augustine of Hippo”

09-2014



**SERVING  
THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS  
OF THE MEMBERS OF  
THE GLBT COMMUNITY  
OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY,  
THEIR FAMILIES  
AND FRIENDS**



## WHO WE ARE

Rooted in peace & justice, we are a parish-based group, sharing faith and support with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adults, 18 and over, their families and friends, with outreach to the Metuchen Diocese and our sisters and brothers across our local community. We acknowledge and respect the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and strive to create an environment where people may honestly and faithfully share their stories. Though we are a Catholic group in origin, our invitation and welcome is open to people of all faith traditions.

## WHEN WE MEET

The 2nd Wednesday of the month,  
7:30PM to 9:00PM, September - June.

## WHERE WE MEET

Sacred Heart Parish Annex  
*Situated off Leonard Avenue and behind  
the Parish Center which is located at  
200 Randolph Avenue  
South Plainfield, NJ 07080*

## CONTACTS

**Rev. John P. Alvarado, Pastor**  
908-756-0633, ext.125

**Sr. Kathleen Rooney, SSJ**  
*Pastoral Associate*  
908-756-0633, ext.142

## OUR BEGINNING

This faith sharing group was born out of a response to needs and issues raised by men and women from across the Diocese of Metuchen during its Synod, which concluded in 2007.

“The Department of Pastoral Life, in collaboration with the Office of Communication and Public Relations, is to help raise awareness about existing support groups for men and women with same sex attraction and their families ...”

( SYNOD - SOCIAL JUSTICE, §45 )

We take as a guide the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' 1997 pastoral, ***Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers.***

“All in all, it is essential to recall one basic truth. God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique persons we are. One component of our sexual identity is sexual orientation. Thus, our total personhood is more encompassing than sexual orientation.

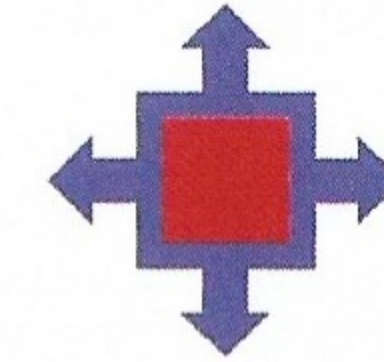
*Human beings see the appearance,  
but the Lord looks into the heart.*

1 SAMUEL 16:7

God does not love someone less simply because he or she is homosexual.

God's love is always and everywhere offered to those who are open to receiving it.”

“The Christian community should offer its homosexual sisters and brothers understanding and pastoral care.”



*For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

GALATIANS 3:28



# Liturgy programs specially designed for 'special people'

By Jo Lynn Krempecki

SOUTH PLAINFIELD — Seven is a special number in Scripture, signifying completion, perfection and God-likeness. Seven years is a long time. For a long time, for seven years, volunteers in Sacred Heart Parish, here, have been in pursuit of more complete and more perfect community for a very special group of people, whom they call "God's Special People" - persons disabled with mental retardation, blindness, and/or deafness.

Angela Mercurio's son, John's, multiple handicaps seemed to put him outside of the parish community with regard to liturgical and sacramental experiences. "It was a dream of mine to have my son participate in church. I felt he was denied the right to experience the sacraments and community because of his handicaps, and I envisioned a Mass where he would be allowed to participate in the life of the Church. His needs alerted me to the needs of others," said Ms. Mercurio.

The former pastor of Sacred Heart, Father Peter Romeo, who was previously associated with the Holy Innocents help group for retarded in Trenton, joined his experience in the field to Angela's experience of need for Christian community for John and for others like him. Together they began a program of monthly liturgical celebrations and social gather-

ings that have made a difference in the lives of many of "God's Special People."

Seven years ago, 20 retarded people gathered in Sacred Heart Church for Mass and then enjoyed milk and cookies in the cafeteria. Now, from October through May, the second Saturday of the month finds over 80 persons with diverse disabilities assembled.

This growing congregation consists of residents of Keystone Community Residence, here; St. Joseph Residence, Jersey City; and individuals who live at home in South Plainfield, Perth Amboy, Edison, Metuchen and other towns in the area.

The Mass that is offered is uniquely geared to this special community. They feel comfortable in the celebration and take an active part in all aspects of it; they are readers, altar servers, singers, and participants in the entrance and offertory processions. Each priest in the parish takes a turn as principal celebrant.

The final service this year was visible evidence of the interest the clergy takes in this ministry: As Father Michael McGuire, pastor, looked on, Father Robert Medley joined the folk group, and Father William Leonard led the congregation in prayer and delivered the homily.

Father Leonard's homily involved the congregation in a discussion of God as light and God as love. Speaking to them

and about them, he gently lead them to realize that with Jesus as their light, they will not stumble, and need not be afraid. "You have God in you," he said. "If you don't forget that, you won't feel scared; you won't feel threatened. His power will help us to do anything."

The response of the participants was joyful and spontaneous participation, enthusiastic singing, handclapping, and even dancing.

A social gathering with a specific theme follows each monthly liturgy. The "milk and cookies treat" of the early days has become a complete luncheon of hamburgers, hot dogs or sandwiches, and dessert, served by one of the many active Sacred Heart Parish organizations, by civic groups (such as UNICO), or by individuals who volunteer funds or services.

"The first year we started this program, we asked for groups to participate and to help us with the social end of our celebration," said Ms. Mercurio. "We have never had to ask again. No one has ever 'dropped out'! We have been very blessed. I am so filled with joy when I think of all these people and all they do. People like Nick Risoli, Louis DeFillipo and John Mocharski, who have never missed one of our Masses, are truly special."

Besides Mass and socializing, the "Special People" ministry has also included instruction in the faith. Over the

years a group of dedicated teachers: Maureen Vanorden, Anna Conlon, Dot Mercier, Ellen Parker, Jack Curran and Rita Banachek, has prepared many retarded persons and persons with special needs for the sacraments. Last year, Bishop Hughes confirmed an entire class that had been prepared at Sacred Heart.

The respect, dedication and sharing shown by the volunteers is evident in their faithfulness to this program and in their faces as they pray and play with this special community. The response of "God's Special People" is enthusiasm and joy. The response of their families is gratitude.

"During the social part of the day, the families often sit together. Many have become good friends through our program. It is so important that people with similar problems realize that they are not alone — that others have similar, if not exactly the same, situations and are surviving. This support community is a great by-product of our monthly meetings," said Ms. Mercurio.

Father McGuire applauded the entire program, especially the work of Ms. Mercurio over the years. "The people that organize and work in this program are tops," he said. "Their dedication and competence have made this not only a successful program, but one that answers a genuine need."

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS  
THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF THE  
SACRED HEART  
OF  
SOUTH PLAINFIELD, NJ

ARTICLE 1

- Section 1. The name of the Association is "The Filipino-American Association of the Sacred Heart of South Plainfield, NJ". It is an organization of Filipino-American Catholics living in the Diocese of Metuchen. It is approved by His Excellency, Most Reverend Edward Hughes, D.D. of Metuchen, State of New Jersey. It is a federated organization of Filipino-American Roman Catholics living in the parishes in the State of New Jersey.
- Section 2. The Association is for the Filipino-American Roman Catholics men and women in the State of New Jersey.
- Section 3. The Association is dedicated to the devotion of "The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus", for the spiritual upliftment of the members of the Association.

ARTICLE 11

PURPOSES

- Section 1. The primary aim of the Association is to establish closer relationship among its members, to impart greater knowledge of our Catholic religion, to work for the social and professional development of the Filipino-American(s) and to the Filipino-American descent in the area and to make them practicing Catholics and, consequently law-abiding citizens.
- Section 2. The secondary aim is to cooperate with Catholic Action, to be loyal to the FAITH, spread the Kingdom of Christ, for the religious, moral, and social benefits of our neighbor and country.

ARTICLE 111

SLOGANS, INSIGNIA, AND BANNER

- Section 1. The slogan of the Association is "FOR GOD AND COUNTRY".
- Section 2. The insignia is a special medal bearing the image of the "Sacred Heart" and on the other side is the Filipino-American flag and the

Sacred Heart Church flag of South Plainfield. The special medal insignia should be identified conspicuously most especially during meeting(s) of the members, officer(s) or of the Board of Directors, or in church and religious activities.

Section 3. The banner consist of the Church flag as the basis for the image of the "Most Sacred Heart"; on top of the banner is the "Filipino-American flag" and at the bottom is the name of the parish and the "FIL-AM Association of the Sacred Heart".

#### ARTICLE IV

##### MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

To become a member of the Association, it is required, ..

- a. That one is a practicing Catholic,
- b. That one promises sincerely to fulfill faithfully the Constitution,
- c. Age: 18 years or older.

#### ARTICLE V

##### PROCEDURE OF ACQUIRING MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Anyone desirous to be a member of the Association must fill an application and must be sponsored by any member of the Association. The application shall be submitted to the Secretary for the approval of the Board of Directors, and in consultation with the Spiritual Adviser.

Section 2. The applicant must be instructed in and conversant with the rules and regulations of the Association.

Section 3. A Certificate of Membership shall be signed by the President, the Secretary, and the Spiritual Adviser.

Section 4. The candidates for membership of the Association may be solemnly initiated by the Spiritual Adviser in the presence of the officers and members of the Association.

#### ARTICLE VI

##### DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

Section 1. Members who grievously neglect, by their own fault, to fulfill the Constitution or who lead a life contrary to Catholic teaching

and morals, thereby bringing disgrace upon the Association, must be admonished by an officer, or the Board of Directors in session, and if possible by the Spiritual Adviser.

#### ARTICLE VII.

##### OBLIGATIONS

- Section 1. All members are encouraged to say the daily prayers of one "Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be to the Father, etc., for one anothers' intentions.
- Section 2. All members of the Association shall assist in Parish Activities as possible at any religious manifestation upon request of the Spiritual Adviser.
- Section 3. All regular members of the Association should pay a lifetime TWENTY FIVE (\$25.00) dollars membership fee. Regular/active senior citizen members, age 65 or over, shall be exempt from the membership dues. In the future, any changes in fees for new members shall be set by the Board of Directors in session ratified and approved by the members in the regular meeting.

#### ARTICLE VIII

##### OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- Section 1. The officers of the Association shall be the Spiritual Adviser, the President, the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary, the Treasurer, the Auditor, the Press Relation Officer, and the Directors.
- Section 2. All officers of the Association, except for the Spiritual Adviser are to be elected by the members. The Spiritual Adviser shall be the Pastor or one of the priest(s) of the parish designated by the Pastor.
- Section 3. The term of office of the President, the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary, the Treasurer, the Auditor, the Press Relation Officer, shall be for one year. The officers may be reelected, but only for one succeeding term.
- Section 4. The members of the Board of Directors shall be 13; the President, the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary, the Treasurer, the Auditor, and the Press Relation Officer are automatic members of the board. The other five (5) Directors shall be elected directly by the members.

- Section 5. The Chairman of the Board of Directors, shall be selected from the five (5) elected Directors by the members of the Board of Directors.
- Section 6. To provide continuity for the term of office of the members of the Board of Directors, two (2) of the members shall be elected for one year, and the other three (3) members shall be elected for two years.

## ARTICLE 1X

### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS

- Section 1. The Spiritual Adviser shall act as the spiritual guide and shall supervise all the activities and encourage the members to a conscientious and persevering fulfillment of their duties.
- Section 2. The Board of Directors is the policy making body of the Association, it sets Rules and Regulations according to its Constitution and By-Laws.
- Section 3. The President shall preside at all meetings and shall carry out the regulations and rules contained in the Constitution and Resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors, and or the Spiritual Adviser. Appoint committee(s) of this Association and cooperate with the Chairmen thereof to effect regular functioning and reporting of such committee(s).
- Section 4. The First Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of his or her duties as well as assume those duties in the President's absence or inability to perform the duties of his or her office for any reason.
- Section 5. The Second Vice President shall perform such duties as may be assigned him or her by the Board or by the President.
- Section 6. The Recording Secretary shall record all official deliberations of the Association; maintain records of important events and activities, and assume other duties required by his or her office.
- Section 7. The Corresponding Secretary shall carry on all correspondence of the Association and shall notify the members of all meetings.
- Section 8. The Treasurer shall keep accounts of all income(s) and expense(s) of the Association and shall render at each meeting an account of the financial condition. Furthermore, the Treasurer shall sign with the President all checks issued by the Association. He or she shall deposit monies and other valuables, papers, and documents of the Association in its name and to its credit in such bank as the Association so designates. He or she shall disburse the funds of the Association in accordance with sound procedures of financial transactions and shall render to the Association and its President at the regular meeting all accounting of his or her transactions as well as the financial condition of the Association.

Section 9. The Auditor shall audit all disbursements of the Treasurer and shall examine and audit all books of accounts of the Association and shall render a report thereof to the President, and or the Board at the annual meeting.

Section 10. The Press Relation Officer (PRO) shall be responsible for the publication of the activities of the Association and shall be the official librarian. He is in charge of all publicity.

ARTICLE X

MEETINGS

Section 1. The meeting shall open with a prayer or invocation and close with a prayer led by the Spiritual Adviser, or his designated member, or by the President, in the absence of the Spiritual Adviser.

Section 2. In each meeting there shall be spiritual conference or instruction by the Spiritual Adviser as the need arises. Practical religious questions shall be discussed in this meeting as well as business matters.

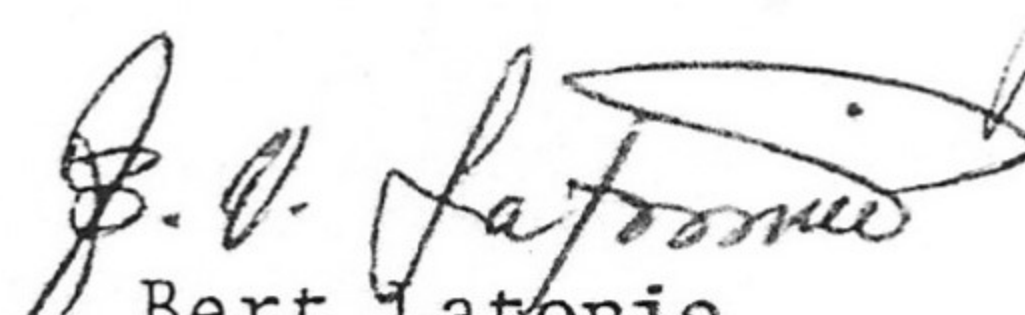
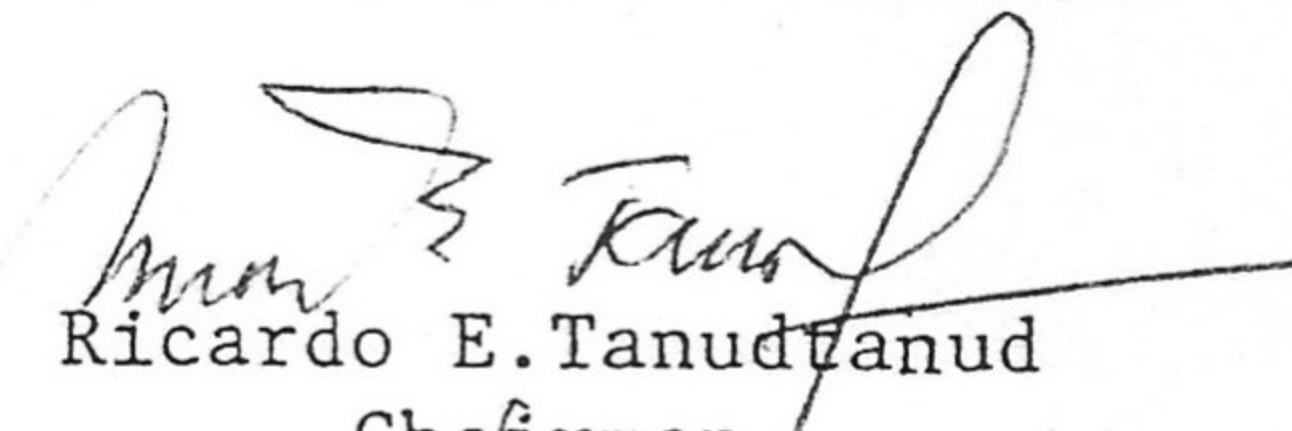
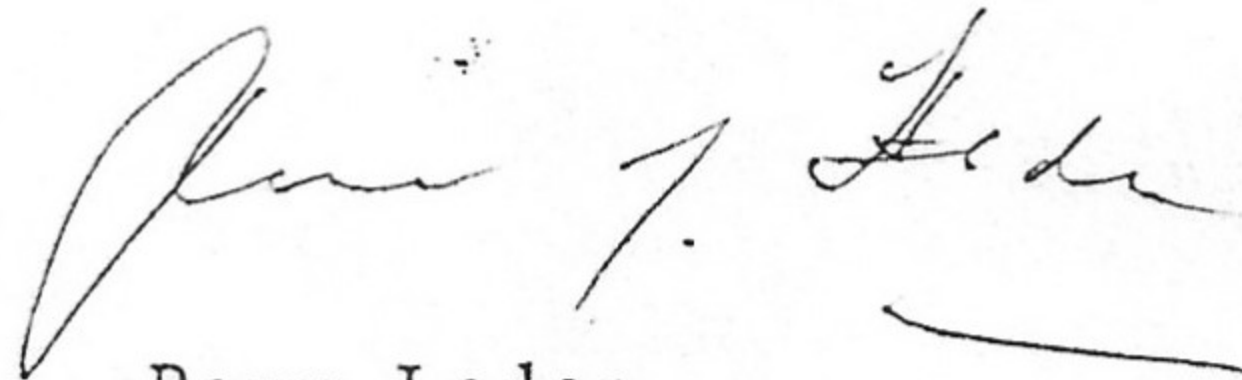
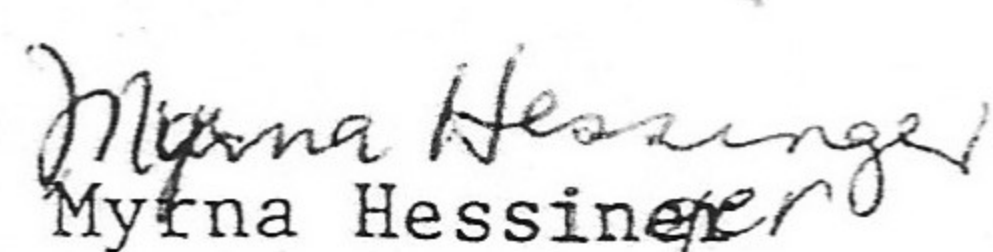
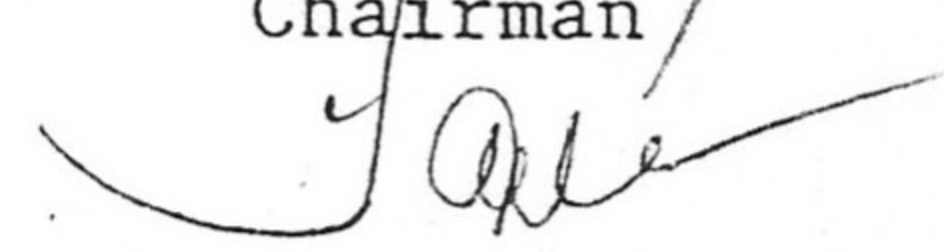
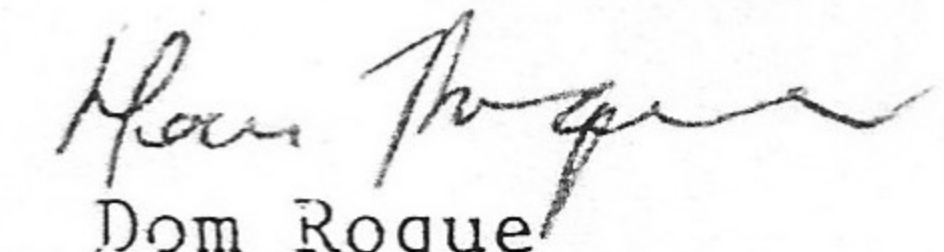
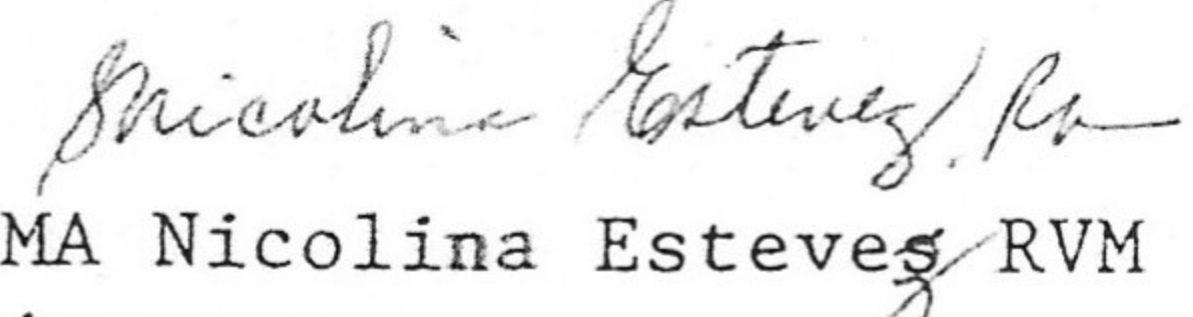

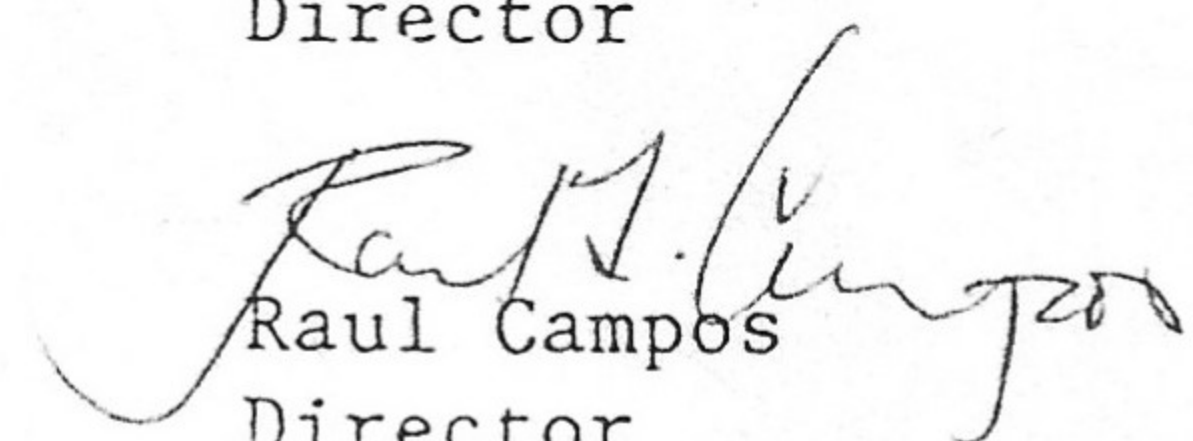
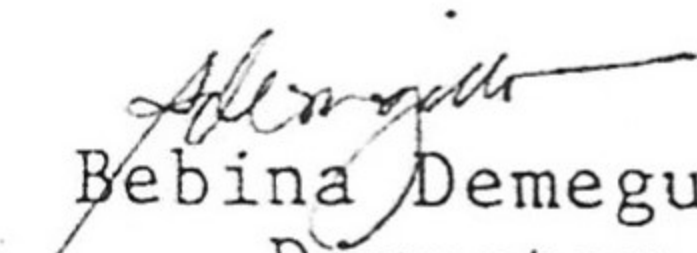
Section 3. The Association will meet every Third Sunday once a month at 1:00 PM with a time limit of one hour, unless approve by the members to extend on grounds of "time of the essence" to deliberate further important business matters.

ooOoo

COMMITTEE

ON

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <br>Bert Latonio<br>President            | <br>Ricardo E. Tanudtanud<br>Chairman | <br>Romy Ladao<br>Director  |
| <br>Myrna Hessinger<br>Director          | <br>Cecille Jacalan<br>Director       | <br>Dom Roque<br>Director   |
| <br>SMA Nicolina Esteves RVM<br>Director | <br>Amy Ramos<br>Director            | <br>Raul Campos<br>Director |
|   | <br>Bebina Demeguillo<br>Director     |  |