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# Welcome to Balay Euphrasie

RNDM International Formation Center  
Davao City, Philippines



The center is a gift of God to the congregation through many people with generous hearts who believe that education and formation of young RNDM missionary women is essential to the quality of our missionary presence and effectiveness in our world today.

*"Balay" is a Visayan term for "home." It is the local dialect of the area.*



## Our vision

We invite you, RNDM woman,  
preparing for life vows  
and other RNDM women,  
Into this sacred space,  
To stir afresh Euphrasie's dream and daring  
in our world today,  
To ponder on, marvel at and cherish your journey  
in the Divine Missions,  
To companion new friends in story and stillness,  
In light and shadow,  
In longings and design,  
To celebrate the richness of our giftedness,  
Our internationality and our diversity,  
And to create a harmony that inspires and transforms,  
To delight and participate  
in God's work and play in creation,  
To kindle anew your passion for the Reign of God  
And your consecration to mission,  
And other friends are welcome.





Balay Euphrasie gives hospitality to young RNDM missionary sisters from all over the world who are preparing for their perpetual profession. They attend a six-month program on theology, scripture, spirituality and charism.

In this space of prayer, they get refreshed and renewed for mission, deepen their understanding and appreciation of RNDM spirituality and relationship with God, self, others and the whole of creation.

During the rest of the months, regular congregational program is offered to respond to the on-formation and continuing education needs of the sisters. It has also become a venue for congregational gatherings.



## The Context where we live...

Balay Euphrasie is located in Davao, one of the biggest cities in the world. Although some parts have been touched by development, a large area is still lush and green. Davao is a place of diversity and Mindanao culture. Majority of the residents are Christians who migrated from the other main islands of the Philippines, Luzon and Visayas.



One can experience Davao's cultural pride in the yearly festival called Kadayawan held in August. This is a celebration that highlights the indigenous peoples' culture. One of the universities here houses *Pamulaan*, a center for indigenous people's education, the first in the country, which shows the city's commitment to nurture the Filipino culture. Conservation places like

Philippine Eagle park and Eden park, a renewed private-owned nature park, can also be found in the vicinity of Davao. Non-Government Organizations working in peace advocacy, indigenous peoples' affairs and ecology also find their home here.

Davao is one of the safest cities in Mindanao and the people are welcoming and friendly. They would have a ready smile for you and you will not fear getting lost because somehow people would volunteer to help you or keep an eye on you especially if you are a foreigner!





Mindanao is a special part of the Philippines because of the presence of the tri-people: the Christian settlers, the Muslims and the Lumads (indigenous peoples). These groups are composed of different tribes and cultures. It is a place hungering for peace and unity among the different groups yet it is also a place full of possibilities. Here, RNDMs can truly feel at home because we can resonate with the people in their longing to be one.

# A History of Balay Euphrasie

The congregation of Notre Dame of the Missions has created an RNDM International Formation Center in Catalunan Grande, Davao which has been in existence since October 2006.

This initiative was in response to the desire of the Congregational Leadership Team, at that time: Maureen McBride, Kim Phung Pham, Maureen Dwan, Elizabeth Hartigan, and Probha Karmokar to meet the needs of all RNDM sisters in Temporary Vows to have an international missionary experience during temporary vows and to have time of combined preparation before taking their Life Vows.



Together, Congregational, Provincial and Regional Leaders, agreed to create such a program for all the sisters in the Congregation during their last year before Final Vows. This program would provide for every Sister of temporary vow, both the experience of international living and a unified preparation before Perpetual Profession.

In 2005, land was bought in Catalunan Grande in Davao City. A building project to accommodate 30 participants was soon begun under the supervision of Sr. Lissy Sebastian RNDM. The purchase of the land and the expenses of the buildings were financed largely by donors outside of the Congregation, by various groups of associates and by contributions from our Provinces.



Sisters Lissy Sebastian (India/Philippines), Rose Mary Harbinson (British Isles), Mary Matthew (India), and Madalena Pham thi Uyen Trang (Vietnam) were to form the first Team that would animate the Balay Euphrasie program.

The current team of is composed of Sisters Marie Vianney Hoang thi Diep (Vietnam), Hong Doan (Vietnam), Lilly Matthew (India) and Clare Murphy (New Zealand).

Current Team: Hong, Vianney, Lilly, Clare

# Feel at home...



Life in an international community is both a rewarding and challenging experience. In this context, one learns mutual respect, tolerance, compassion, a deeper meaning of love, peace and joy. When one truly feels belongingness and hospitality in the community, she cannot help but exclaim, "Truly, God was in this place and I did not know it." (Gen. 28:16)

The sisters who form the Balay Euphrasie community for six months come from different parts of the world. So, every year, there is an interesting mix of personalities and cultures which makes the community diverse, dynamic and unique. It is a beautiful sight to behold!



One's creativity is harnessed here in Balay Euphrasie in various aspects of life, most of all, in prayer and liturgy. One can try different expressions, symbols and rituals to make the liturgy more participative and meaningful.

Cultural ways of praying are also shared in the group. It is an opportunity for enrichment and broadening of the mind and heart and one's relationship with God of Many Names.

The beautiful green and colorful surrounding invites wonder, silence, contemplation and reverence. It is truly a sacred space. The whole place is indeed a place of worship!





The rhythm of life here is holistic and balanced. There is time for prayer, studies, and reflection, sharing of culture, care of *Balay*, self-care, recreation and Sunday ministry. This we hope becomes a habit for the missionary sisters who attend the program that they can bring home with them in their places of ministry.



The spirituality we are invited to live out is a balanced life of giving and receiving, of activity and rest, of proclamation and silence, of contemplation and apostolic activity.



There are different relevant topics offered every week and experienced resource persons are invited to facilitate the sisters in their learning, reflection and prayer.

It is an education of the mind and heart.



Spiritual direction every two weeks is also offered to the participants of the program.

The program ends with a 30-day retreat facilitated by RNDM sisters.

# Missionaries

## we have welcomed...



# 2006

## Preparation for Life Vows

# 2007







2009

## Preparation for Life Vows



2009





## Preparation for Life Vows







PLT-Gathering 2008



EGC Leaders and Bursars Gathering 2008



EGC Leaders 2008



Formators' Gathering 2008







The Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions is a mission-sending international congregation of women. In order to prepare them to go beyond their own culture, they undergo a missiology program to gain a missionary orientation that is respectful of the people and culture they are entering. Taking into consideration the global and ecological issues that the world is facing today, they reflect on ways to creatively response to them as RNDM missionary women.



Come and make Balay Euphrasie your home.