

## When 'YES' Means Real 'YES'

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Last June 15, 2019, all roads led to the Our Lady of the Assumption Novitiate for the Reception of our four new Novices, who took on their religious names: Maria Thao (Thao), Therese Trang (Trang), Francisca Demetria (Apple), and Anne Emmanuel (Angenelle Anne).

The celebration was marked with warm simplicity and calming joy as it was very much linked to that day's Gospel (*Mt 5:33-37*) when Jesus said, "let your word be 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no.'" The incoming novices, assured of the love and support of their Novitiate Community and God's

generous fidelity to their journey, were able to utter their real 'YES'. The solemn rite began with the Midday Hours where the four were formally received. Sr. Paula Victoria, the Mistress of Formation welcomed everyone and briefly shared, from the Rule of Life 117. Within the Hours also, the in-coming novices uttered their desire to learn the way of life in the Assumption. They made their request to the Congregation present to teach them to follow Christ, to live the Evangelical Counsels, to learn perseverance in prayer and penance and, to *"teach me your Rule and help me to love our Sisters as Christ commanded us."* Following the request, the four received their religious names, their crosses as an Assumption Novice and their rosaries. In turn they responded through the song, *"You are All We Have."*

In her words of exhortation, Sr. Lerma Victoria, the Asia Pacific Provincial Superior, highlighted the importance of the Novitiate in the formation of the young Sisters. She reiterated that it is the stage of formation where the novice will come into full realization that indeed, *"God Alone Suffices."* She also made the remark that the Sisters' Novitiate years can be considered as one of the happiest and growth-exposed stage of every Sister. Sr. Lerma then advised the new novices to *"make the most of their years in the Novitiate."*



The Rite of Reception to the Novitiate was witnessed by several Luzon communities who gave their well wishes to the four after the Midday Liturgy. The much-loved families, the parents of Anne and Francisca, the incoming Filipina novices, were also there to witness the opening of a new door for their daughters.

A simple lunch, lovingly prepared by the rest of the Novices then followed.

Indeed, as what their song of response expresses, the life of a Novice has wholly been turned over to the Father's loving hands – we can only assure them of our constant prayers and unchanging love.

