



MATER DEI

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER COMMUNITY

UNIT 502 FIFTH FLOOR, ELCO BUILDING

202 E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE., Q, C.

Tel. No. 723-0071 loc. 114

www.materdeime.com

Community Primer

Name of Couple

ME Class No.

Foreword

Welcome to the Mater Dei Marriage Encounter Community!

Through this Primer, we endeavor to give you a glimpse of what our Community is all about—how we started, what we are, what we do, and what we intend to achieve.

We invite you to accompany us in our journey—a journey which starts with the Marriage Encounter Weekend. As we go along, we will nurture your spiritual growth and prepare you and your spouse to become workers in the Lord’s vineyard. Our path will surely be strewn with trials and difficulties. But, we will always hold your hands as we walk to the Father. Together with your spouse, we shall build a Christ-centered community. And as we do so, both of you will experience personal fulfillment, your marriage will be strengthened and your family life will be enriched. Hopefully, you and your spouse will become witnesses of our Lord and be a “couple for others”.

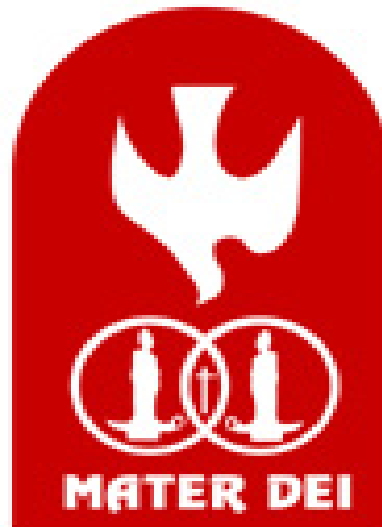
Let us spread the Good News of our Lord!

I. MATER DEI

(Mother of God)



II. Our Logo



A. The Candles

The two candles represent the husband and the wife. And, although they have been joined by marriage, the ME believes in and recognizes the uniqueness and worth of each person—that God created two distinct and separate individuals in His image and likeness.

The candles are lit because candles were created primarily for the purpose of giving off light. As a consequence of being lit, the candles will be consumed. So it is with the husband and wife. If they will fulfill their true mission and purpose in life, they must die unto themselves—they must endure suffering.

The lighting of the candles is the spouses' decision to love each other and represents the "I" stage of the ME Weekend. This is the encounter with self, recognizing and being aware of life's purpose which is to be the image and likeness of God—with their own dignity and worth.

B. The Circles or Rings

Each circle represents the aura of light or the ring of fire generated by each candle. When first lighted, the candle flame just flickers. But as the wax melts, the flame becomes stronger and a larger aura of light is produced. This aura reaches out to and joins the aura of light shed by the other burning candle. In like manner is the relationship between husband and wife. There is a need to die unto one's self in order to reach out to the other.

Where the circles of the light intersect, is where the light is brightest. At this area, the source of the light can no longer be identified—the lights have become one. It no longer matters who gave greater light, both had reached out to the other in mutual acceptance, mutual understanding, and mutual confidence.

There is closeness and oneness. This is the point where there is no longer a "You" and an "I," but a "We." This is the second stage of the ME Weekend.

C. The *Cross*

When spouses give unselfishly of themselves to each other, when they regularly make a decision to love and be loved, to heal and be healed, to die to self for the other, they experience happiness through oneness and unity— in accordance with the plan of God. And as sacrament to each other, they live their marriage spirituality aware of the continuous tracings of God present in their lives. This is the WE and GOD stage (third stage) of the encounter. For where there is love, there is God.

As their candles continue to burn and give more radiance, the aura of light reaches to their children. And as their flame grows stronger and brighter, it reaches out to others. They become an open and apostolic couple—a couple-for-others. This is the fourth stage of the ME Weekend – WE, GOD and COMMUNITY.

D. The *Holy Spirit*

Lighting the candles—dying to self each day—is not an easy task but can be a very painful and frustrating experience. Spouses need the Holy Spirit to enable them to develop a good and enriching relationship and to continue to enliven and lift up their lives to God.

E. *White* signifies clarity and purity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our model and intercessor.

F. *Red* is the color of the heart and the color of love. It is the color of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—our beacon and our light.

III. Community Prayer

O Blessed Virgin Mary,
our beloved Mater Dei,
we know that you are always mindful
of the many dangers and evils
which threaten our daily existence.
Look upon us with favor, our Mother,
and shield all of us with your protective mantle.
Guide and sustain us, dear Mater Dei,
so that we may always live
as true sons and daughters of the Father.

O Virgin Mother, pray for us
that we may be transformed into
loving, caring and responsible
couples and families for others.
Help our Mater Dei Marriage
Encounter Community to enrich
and strengthen marriages
and family relationships,
for the greater glory of God.

Amen.

IV. Vision and Mission

VISION

A community witnessing to Christ's gospel of reconciliation in individual, conjugal, family and community life.

MISSION

To build a Christ-centered community whose members are loving, caring and responsible couples and families for others through programs and activities that will -

- Enrich, deepen & strengthen marriage and family relationships
- Nurture spiritual growth
- Render outreach services

V. Ancestry and Heritage

Our Community has a lineage uniquely our own. Our ancestry has a bloodline and a birthright befitting that of children of God. Our heritage is our pride and our inspiration towards building a Christ-centered community.

Our heritage is rooted back to when the Apostolic Directorate of the Good Shepherd M. E. Community (GSMEC), four of whom were Lony Rhodora Bohol (Bukas Loob sa Diyos Metro Manila Class No. 4), Romy Remy Lagman (GSMEC Class No. 16), Bill Ding Zamora (GSMEC Class No. 29), and Fr. Pablo Encinas, OP (Servants of the Holy Spirit), passed a board resolution on March 8, 1991 that would be the basis of our origin. The resolution, in part, states:

After a series of meetings of the present Apostolic Directorate, the last of which was held at the PSME Bldg. on March 1, 1991, it was unanimously decided that it is to the best interest of the community that two independent and autonomous groups be created to undertake apostolate work of the community as mandated by its corporate charter.

. . . for purposes of identification, the groups shall be known as Good Shepherd M.E. Community, Inc. A or GSMEC A and Good Shepherd M.E. Community, Inc. B or GSMEC B.

Those who immediately joined GSMEC B became the founders and the first Apostolic Elders of our community. They were Lony Rhodora Bohol, Romy Remy Lagman, Vigie Nelly Ventura, and Ray Sonia Zolina.

In the same month of March 1991, the Apostolic Directorate, together with other members, conducted the first Planning Session which was held at the Doña Pilar Elementary School. Those who attended were: Ben Elsa Palomo (Class No. 12), Vigie Nelly Ventura (Class No. 27), Lony Rhodora Bohol (BLD-MM Class No. 4), Alex Melly Ado (Class No. 26), Romy Remy Lagman (Class No. 16), Amang Lolit Mendiola (Class No. 49), Domeng Dulce Baetiong (Class No. 26), Hope Ochie Galang (Class No. 42), Bill Ding Zamora (Class No. 29), Ray Sonia Zolina (Class No. 26), Ding Susan Mayor (Class No. 41), Willie Rose Montales (Class No. 28) and Nes Chit Cruz (Class No. 36).

The most important matter taken up during the first Planning Session was the organization of GSMEC B's four (4) apostolates, namely: Marriage Encounter Apostolate, Family Encounter Apostolate, Spiritual Growth Apostolate and Outreach Apostolate. These apostolates were entrusted to Lony Rhodora Bohol, Vigie Nelly Ventura, Ray Sonia Zolina and Romy Remy Lagman, respectively.

Thereafter, forty-seven (47) couples from the Good Shepherd M. E. Community joined GSMEC B. Other couples followed after some time.

During the early days when the group was discerning God's reason for allowing this event to happen, Fr. Alex Hubilla, SVD acted as spiritual adviser. Afterwards, Fr. Pablo Encinas, OP joined GSMEC B to become its Spiritual Director.

The leadership of the Community immediately proceeded to establish its goals and define its vision and mission.

On April 5-7, 1991, the Community conducted its first ME Weekend (Class No. 66B) at Las Brisas, Antipolo, Rizal. Two weeks later, on April 26-28, 1991, the first Family Encounter Weekend (Class No. 16B) was held at the SVD Retreat House, Tagaytay City. Not long after, the Sons and Daughters Encounter (SADE) Weekend (Class No. 4B) was held on May 24-26, 1991. The Ugnayan – a one (1) day marriage enrichment seminar for the underprivileged was conducted on a monthly basis.

In July 1991, Auxiliary Services was added to the Apostolic Directorate.

With the continuing growth of the Community, Fr. Domie Guzman, SSP, who had been providing pastoral guidance and spiritual deepening talks to our members, was invited to be the Community's second Spiritual Director in 1992.

On March 10, 1993, the Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines (MEFP) passed a Board Resolution based on the decision of its founder and National Spiritual Director, Fr. Ruben M. Tanseco SJ, and a portion of said resolution states:

After prayerful discernment . . . I am convinced that a change of name by the Good Shepherd M.E. Community B will be more liberating for them, and more promising towards developing their own identity as a group. A change of name by Good Shepherd B brings a conviction of hope for a more promising future for them . . .

Thus, a dramatic process of name selection was pursued.

On May 3, 1993, the issue of name selection was presented to the general membership for ratification. The name **MATER DEI MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER COMMUNITY** became the overwhelming choice and this is what our Community is called to this day.

In 1995, Worship Ministry and Community Life Apostolate were added to the Apostolic Directorate.

On July 30, 1996, the Mater Dei Marriage Encounter Community, Incorporated was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Under its By-Laws, the governance of the Community which was reposed upon its Board of Directors composed of fifteen (15) couples was delegated to a body called "Director Couples" who then handled each of the seven (7) apostolates and ministries of the Community. All class shepherds, acting as a representative assembly, elected the Director Couples every two (2) years. Also in 1996, to honor the Blessed Mother, the Board of Directors agreed to commemorate the founding of the Community every March 25—the Feast of the Annunciation.

On July 10, 1997, as a result of the restructuring and realignment of the programs, the Director Couples relinquished their responsibility as heads of the Apostolates and Ministries in favor of "Head Couples".

On January 5, 2001, the members ratified the Amended Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws wherein the number of Board of Directors was reduced from fifteen (15) to nine (9) couples and the functions and responsibilities of the Director Couples were merged with the Board of Directors. The nine (9) couples who were elected by the members were: Lony Rhodora Bohol, Romy Remy Lagman, Yoyong Cora Mangalindan, Ding Susan Mayor, Barry Chriss Ortiz, Stan Bimbo Santos, Jun Adel Tamasacan, Rudy Remy Valentin and Bill Ding Zamora.

With the ever growing number of its graduates coming from various parishes in and outside of Metro Manila and so that said members may provide apostolic action in or nearer their respective parishes, the Community launched a program dubbed “Balik-Community”. The program was mainly intended to encourage the holding of prayer meetings in such parishes and get member-parishioners to attend the same. Through this program, old members of the community were re-activated and from the same program later arose prayer groups that operated in various parishes such as the Sto. Niño Parish (Meycauayan, Bulacan), Mater Divinae Gratiae (Caloocan City), Parish of the Holy Cross (Gen. T. de Leon, Valenzuela), Christ the King (Llano, Caloocan City), Immaculate Conception (Dasmariñas, Cavite) and Sto. Rosario Parish (San Pedro, Laguna), among others.

Our Community also helped Parish Priests organize their own parish-based M.E. groups. Examples of these parish-based M. E groups are the Christ the King Parish at Vista Verde, Caloocan City known as the Mater Dei Christ the King Llano Chapter, the Banal na Sacramento Parish M.E. Community in Talipapa, Novaliches and the Holy Mother of God M.E. Community of San Bartolome Parish also in Novaliches.

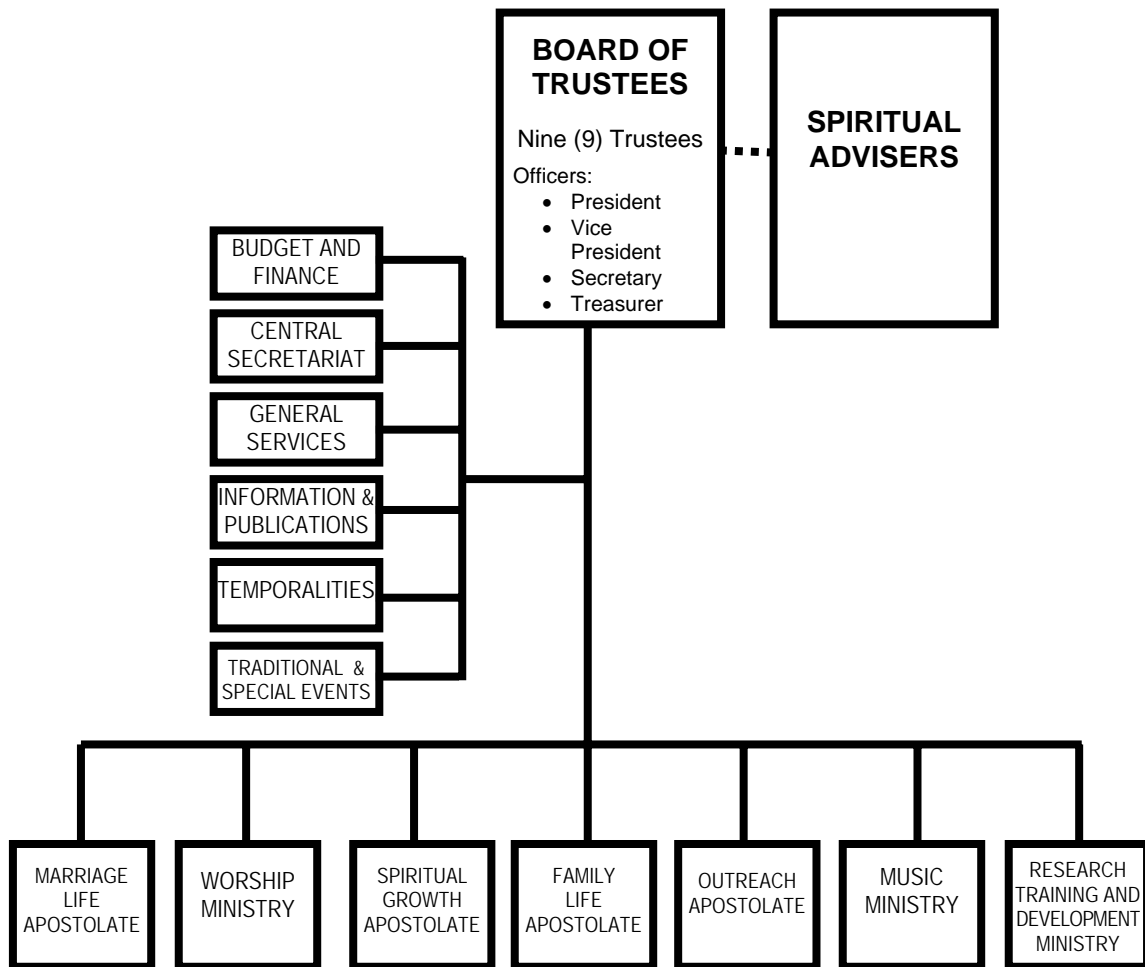
On the other hand, a number of Mater Dei members from Pasig, Cainta, Marikina and Antipolo areas also formed the Ina ng Diyos M.E. Community after seeking the blessing of the leadership of the Community. They now operate in these areas independently of our Community but in cooperation with other M.E. groups.

On March 2004, a new set of Board of Trustees was installed to serve for the period from 2004 – 2007. They were: Sam Lulou Asia, Lony Rhodora Bohol, Pris Vicky Contreras, Neil Letty Gepilano, Boy Linda Gloria, Willie Rose Montales, Boy Nonie Quiambao, Jun Adel Tamasacan and Bill Ding Zamora.

As time goes on . . .

Mater Dei Marriage Encounter Community – Our inspiration, our refuge, our second home.

VI. Organizational Structure



VII. General Policies and Guidelines

1. Members are encouraged to dress modestly during community activities.
2. The rule of one-solid-one-liquid is encouraged in all class deepenings and other community gatherings.
3. Drinking of liquor or any intoxicating beverage during fellowships is strongly discouraged.
4. Smoking and/or drinking of liquor or any intoxicating beverage is not allowed within the seminar or community activity area.
5. The community anniversary shall be celebrated during the month of March to coincide with the Feast of the Annunciation.
6. The format of directories to be given to participants of activities conducted by the Marriage Life Apostolate, Family Life Apostolate, Spiritual Growth Apostolate, Outreach Apostolate and other apostolates shall be as follows:
 - a. Page 1 -- Community Name, Logo, Vision/Mission, and Community Prayer
 - b. Page 2 -- Spiritual Advisers (with address and date of ordination) and Trustees (in alphabetical order with address, contact nos., wedding anniversary)
 - c. Page 3 -- Apostolate which conducted the seminar, title of the seminar, date and venue of the seminar, and directory of the apostolate
 - d. Page 4 -- Directory of the participants (in alphabetical order with address, contact nos., wedding anniversary)
 - e. Page 5 -- Resource persons/speakers
7. Marriage Encounter and Family Encounter classes that have finished their class deepening sessions are encouraged to sponsor an outreach activity or apostolic work with pre-identified beneficiaries in coordination with the Outreach Apostolate (OrA).
8. Only one major community activity should be held at any one time. If two or more major activities are to be held simultaneously, prior approval of the Board of Trustees should be obtained.
9. Requests for supplies and materials should be coursed through the Central Secretariat.
10. The annual election of officers of the Community, by the Board of Trustees, shall be during the regular meeting of the Board for the month of April, or immediately thereafter.
11. After their installation, the servant leaders and workers shall be informed by the Board of Trustees as regards the various programs and activities of the community.
12. There shall be a quarterly meeting between Board of Trustees and the Head Couples.
13. The planning session for yearly community activities shall be held in the month of October and the Head Couples should submit their Pre-Planning Report Forms on or before the 1st Friday of September to the Secretary.
14. Any change in existing programs, policies, and organizational structure of apostolates and ministries should be with the prior approval of the Board of Trustees.
15. Solicitation of funds from non-members for and in the name of the community should be with the prior approval of the Board of Trustees;
16. Cash donations/pledges in all community activities shall be reflected in the Financial Report.

17. All love offerings received during a particular activity, except those received during Friday Prayer Meetings, must be turned over to the Treasurer or their duly authorized representative during the Prayer Meeting immediately after the activity.
18. The Financial Report of an MEWeekend should be signed by the class treasurer, duly noted by the class shepherd, and approved by the head couple of the Marriage Life Apostolate. Liquidation Reports of apostolates/ministries must bear the signature chair couple and duly approved by the head couple of the apostolate/ministry.
19. The family of a deceased member of the community shall be entitled to burial assistance.
20. A copy of the community primer shall be given to all graduates of the MEWeekend Seminar soon after the seminar.
21. A workers handbook shall be issued to members after their attendance of the ME Maturing in the Spirit Seminar.

VIII. Spiritual Development Path

(Approved on May 6, 2006)

I. ASPIRANCY PROGRAM (1st – 4th month)

1. Point of Entry – Marriage Encounter Weekend Seminar
2. Prayer Gathering after MEWS – Welcome of new members
3. 1st Class Deepening Session – “Our Couple Love”
4. Orientation Workshop:
 - *General Information: (Trustee)
 - Vision/Mission
 - Organizational Structure & Programs
 - SDP (I-V)
 - Other BOT-related activities
 - *Sponsorship of ME Weekend: (MLA CC-MEW)
5. 2nd Class Deepening Session – “Focus on Feelings”
6. Class Business Meeting: (MLA CC-Shepherding/Deepening)
 - *Recruitment update, material and financial preparations
7. ME Catholic Life in the Spirit Seminar (with talk on the Blessed Virgin Mary as model disciple) *(April, July, Oct. & Jan.)*
8. Sponsorship of an ME Weekend

II. MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM [5th to 12th Month]

9. ME Deepening Series (8 remaining monthly deepening sessions)
10. Basic Talk on Gospel Christology *(April & October)*
11. Basic Talk on Gospel Mariology *(May & November)*
12. ME-Maturing in the Spirit Seminar *(June & December)*
 - *Commissioning Rites as full-fledged member

III. WORKERS’ FORMATION PROGRAM [1st year and onward]

13. Talk on Basic Attitudes for Congregational Work on Ministry and Community *(WPG: April - June)*
14. Enrollment into Apostolates/Ministries *(July)*
15. Orientation & Equipping Seminars – Ministry Level/BOT
16. Basic Seminar on Prayer *(March & September)*
17. Basic Seminar on Sacred Scripture *(February & August)*
18. Workers’ Retreat – Theme: “Washing of the Feet”

IV. SHEPHERDS FORMATION PROGRAM [1st year and onward]

19. Shepherd’s Equipping Seminar *(June - July)*
20. Fullness of Life Seminar (open) *(January)*

V. BASIC ON-GOING FORMATION PROGRAM (Regular/Continuing)

21. Weekly Prayer Gathering
22. Bible Study

IX. Spiritual Advisers

FR. PABLO M. ENCINAS, O.P.
Colegio de San Juan de Letran
Calamba, Laguna
Ordination: April 03, 1982

FR. DOMIE GUZMAN, SSP
St. Paul Seminary
St. Paul Road., Makati City
Ordination: April 03, 1988

X. Servant Leaders

(Appointed or Elected Servant Leaders)

March 1991-1992 – Apostolic Elders

- Lony Rhodora Bohol – Director Couple for Marriage Encounter Apostolate
- Ed Cora Depano – Director Couple for Auxiliary Services (appointed by the Apostolic Elders on July 1991)
- Romy Remy Lagman – Director Couple for Outreach Apostolate
- Vigie Nelly Ventura – Director Couple for Family Encounter Apostolate
- Ray Sonia Zolina – Director Couple for Spiritual Growth Apostolate

1993-1995 – Director Couples/Spiritual Director

- Lony Rhodora Bohol – Director Couple for Marriage Life Apostolate
- Ed Cora Depano – Director Couple for Auxiliary Services
- Fr. Pablo Encinas – Spiritual Director for Spiritual Growth Apostolate
- Romy Remy Lagman – Director Couple for Outreach Apostolate
- Jun Adel Tambasacan – Director Couple for Worship Ministry
- Vigie Nelly Ventura – Director Couple for Family Life Apostolate
- Bill Ding Zamora – Director Couple for Community Apostolate ('95)
- Ray Sonia Zolina – Director Couple for Spiritual Growth Apostolate

1995-1998 – Director Couples

- Lony Rhodora Bohol – Secretary Couple '98; Vice-Pres. Couple Dec. '98
- Ed Cora Depano – Presiding Couple '98
- Romy Remy Lagman – Presiding Couple '96-'97
- Ding Susan Mayor (1998)
- Jun Adel Tambasacan – Secretary Couple '97
- Vigie Nelly Ventura
- Gonio Remy Yorobe – Treasurer Couple '98 (appointed)
- Bill Ding Zamora
- Ray Sonia Zolina – Secretary Couple '95

1999 – 2001 – Board of Directors

- Lony Rhodora Bohol – Secretary Couple '99; Presiding Couple '00
- Romy Remy Lagman
- Ding Susan Mayor
- Jun Adel Tambasacan
- Vigie Nelly Ventura
- Gonio Remy Yorobe – Presiding Couple '99
- Bill Ding Zamora

2001 (January) – Corporate Board of Directors

- Ben Bernardo
- Lony Bohol – President
- Roc Bulacan
- Pel Ciriaco
- Jojie Guballa
- Yoyong Mangalindan – Corporate Secretary
- Ding Mayor
- Stan Santos
- Jun Tambasacan
- Rudy Valentin
- Bill Zamora – Vice-President

2001 -2004 – Board of Directors

- Lony Rhodora Bohol – Secretary Couple '02-'03; President Couple '03-'04
- Romy Remy Lagman** – President Couple '01-'02
- Yoyong Cora Mangalindan – Secretary Couple '01-'02
- Ding Susan Mayor – Vice-Pres. Couple '02-'03; Sec. Couple '03-'04
- Barry Chriss Ortiz*
- Stan Bimbo Santos*
- Jun Adel Tambasacan – Treasurer Couple '01-'04
- Rudy Remy Valentin
- Bill Ding Zamora – Vice-Pres. Couple '01-'02; President Couple '02-'03

**Resigned on March 07, 2003*

***Resigned on March 10, 2003*

Neil Letty Gepilano (Vice-President Couple '04), Oggie Thelma Mercado, and Freddie Miriam Santos were elected by the Board to fill up the vacancies.

2004 – 2007 – Board of Trustees

- Sam Lulou Asia – Secretary '04-'06; President '06-'07
- Lony Rhodora Bohol – President '05-'06; Secretary '06-'07
- Pris Vicky Contreras – Treasurer '05-'07
- Neil Letty Gepilano – Vice President '04-'07
- Boy Linda Gloria
- Willie Rose Montales*
- Boy Nonie Quiambao
- Jun Adel Tambasacan – Treasurer '04-'05
- Bill Ding Zamora – President '04-'05

**Resigned on February 08, 2006 for health reasons and were replaced by Oggie Thelma Mercado.*

2007 – 2010 – Board of Trustees

- Demet Rose Araniego
- Sam Lulou Asia – President '07-'08
- Tom Marian Co
- Pris Vicky Contreras – Treasurer '07-'08
- Ljay Emma Garcia – Asst. Secretary '07-'08
- Rene Cherry Manuel – Secretary '07-'08
- Oggie Thelma Mercado – Vice-President '07-'08
- Stan Bimbo Santos
- Lorenz Weng Tabilog

XI. Location of MDMEC Office and Violago Chapel

