

Participation in the 18-Day Campaign for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children

Advocacy in the schools and communities in the new area of women and children ministry

November 27, 2019

Anti-VAWC (Violence Against Women and Children) Training with Anti-VAWC Officers and Women Leaders in Bato, Catanduanes.

It was a whole day session which started first with women orientation and gender sensitivity before discussing the details of the Republic Act 9262 or the Anti-VAWC Law in the Philippines. The workshop and discussion proved the many cases of abuse that have not been handled well even by the village Anti-VAWC officers. The participants were led to look into their own experience of abuse at home and taught how to handle disclosure of abuse. A multi-disciplinary approach of referral system was introduced to them.



The session ended with pledge of commitment to protect the rights of women and children.

November 28, 2019

We had Basic Child Protection Orientation at Cavinitan Elementary School, one public school in the island of Virac, Catanduanes. It is our new area for women and children ministry. The students from Kindergarten to Grade Six level were facilitated by Sr. Mela Alvarez, RGS with Personal Safety Lesson as topic while the staff of Good Shepherd Home-legazpi, Armarie Barrameda and Novelita Barallas took all the teachers for Basic Child Protection Orientation.

Surprisingly, the students were very responsive and attentive during the session which composed of film showing on what to do when there is abuse. The children also found the topic on safe touch and unsafe touch interesting. About Five (5) girls shared about a man in their village whom they fear because he always teases them and even offers candies provided the children would go with him in the farm. Two of them tried to report the man to their parents but their parents just told them that he is just friendly to them. After the session, we talked to the principal to report it to the village officials and to the police for the safety of the children who pass by that village.

Session with the teachers was quite long because it was their first time to have an orientation on child protection. They were very honest in admitting that they lack knowledge in reporting and in handling disclosure.

The session with the teachers ended with a pledge of commitment to protect the rights of children and make their school healthy and safe for children.



Some children with Anti-VAWC caps



Mothers of some students made anti-VAWC caps for their children



Session with teachers

November 29, 2019

Other sessions were held at two more elementary schools. The topic given was Basic Child Protection Orientation.

December 12, 2019

On December 12, 2019, in partnership with the Local Government Unit of Virac, Catanduanes and with the Diocese of Virac, we ended the 18-day campaign with a Eucharistic Celebration at 5:30 AM concelebrated by four diocesan priests. It was attended by our own contemplative sisters, religious groups in the island, our own gender advocates, and the different women groups in the island.

After the Mass, there was a parade in the capital followed by a short program where the local executive chief gave a powerful message to come up with more programs for the women and children. All the women and men participants made a commitment not to participate in any abuse and to be vigilant and more creative in developing life-giving structures to protect the rights of women and children. During the commitment, the men present asked forgiveness if ever they have committed or tolerated abuses in the family and community.

