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Philippines social media summit sparks idea for Asian gathering

N.J. Viehland | Aug. 1, 2012 NCR Today

MANILA, Philippines -- Msgr. Pedro Quitorio III, director of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines media office, has accepted [1] an invitation to report to a Asian bishops' institute in September about the recent Catholic Social Media Summit that trained hundreds of participants to use social media for building Christian communion.

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http://ncronline.org/sites/default/files/stories/images/oldimgs/Tagle%20Quitorio%20media%20summit%20iphoto.img_assist_custom-251x168.jpg

YouthPinoy, co-organizer of the Philippines summit [2], reported Tuesday that the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Office of Social Communications [3] executive secretary invited Quitorio to report on the activity at the 8th Bishops' Institute for Social Communication, to be held Sept. 3-9 in Bangkok.

The invitation from the communications office executive secretary, Fr. Raymond Ambroise of India, said a report on the first social media summit ties in with the bishop's institute's theme, "Social Media: Surfing, Networking, Blogging, Gaming, Addiction -- Challenges and Opportunities for Communication Ministry in Asia."

Ambroise also asked Quitorio to report on social media and evangelization in the Philippines and how the technology is used in faith formation and development. YouthPinoy said Quitorio was open to hosting a first Asian Catholic social media summit.

Nielsen, a global information and measurement company, states in its 2012 report, "The Asian Media Landscape is Turning Digital," [4] that Asia (excluding Japan), Brazil and Russia surpass Europe and Western markets on television viewing and video consumption via the Internet or mobile devices.

Increasing ownership of Internet-enabled devices has also reportedly resulted in media multi-tasking. In Southeast Asia, accessing the Internet while watching television is the most common media multi-tasking activity.

The report found [5] that even in the United States, most active social network users were women 18-34 years old of Asia-Pacific ethnicity.

The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences [6] is an association of episcopal conferences in Asia established with the approval of the Holy See. It was intended to foster among its members solidarity and co-responsibility

for the welfare of the church and society in Asia. Its members represent 19 Asian bishops' conferences, and associate members represent nine other countries or territories that do not belong to a bishops' conference.

About 450 people from various cities gathered July 14-15 at Riverbanks Convention Center in Marikina City, east of Manila, for the first Catholic Social Media Summit. Under the direction of blogger and website developer Fr. Stephen Cuyos [7] of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, summit-goers examined the advantages of and problems with various types of social media and explored ways to make full use of the tools for forming vibrant Christian communities online and in real life.

Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila discussed ethical concerns about the Internet and social media and their link to a person's spirituality.

The event, which was streamed live online, stirred trending posts on Facebook and Twitter, YouthPinoy reported. Organizers resolved after seeing its success to turn the event into an annual one that meets every July 14 or the weekend following the the Philippines bishops' conference's midyear plenary assembly.

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