

Hello dear friends of Maasin,

We are happy to send you this "*Journal of Brittany*" through which we wish to be in closer contact with you.

Members of the *Pakigangay* board of directors, we would like you to know who we are and share with you information concerning our region, our way of life, the functioning of the association ...

In this first issue, we will give you some information on our region, *Brittany*. In the next issues, we will continue to present you its activities, its culture, its economy, and perhaps other subjects if you have questions.

We will send you testimonials and share with you some information about what is important to us in our lives and our relationship with you in the *Philippines*.

It will be our pleasure to send you other news regularly in order to maintain links with you, before perhaps coming to meet you at *Maasin*.

François Barbot - President of Pakigangay

The Pakigangay association

All of you know Father Armand, who has been visiting you for several years, spending time with you, sharing goods and exchanging news between you and us.

When he was a priest in our parish of *Bénodet* in Brittany, Father Armand spoke of his stays with you and the various needs depending on different places. Some parishioners have proposed to create an association in order to raise funds and participate in its solidarity support.

Some people organized a meeting to present this project. A dozen participants formed the association and decided to call it *Pakigangay* to evoke *solidarity* and *sharing* in the language of your region. It was in 2014.

Since then, nearly 250 people in Brittany and elsewhere in France have participated in the operation of the association, provided funds and followed developments in the situation of the care homes of life visited by Father Armand in Maasin.



*Extract from an article by the local newspaper Ouest-France
Wednesday 04 December 2013*

"Creation of an association to help the Philippines

Father Armand Guézingar has forged very strong ties in the
Philippines in underprivileged"

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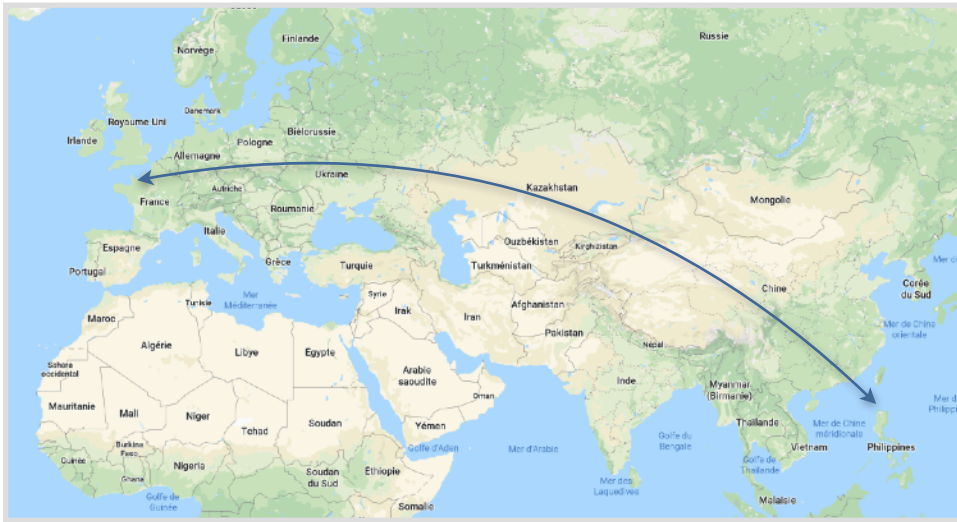
Holiday at home... 🍷🍷🍷

During these holidays I did a lot of things to not get bored because we couldn't leave the house. For example I started to embroider and sew for a friend (it was her birthday 🎂). I also did physical activities like walking with my dog (at the beach) and doing sports at home. I also set up a greenhouse in my garden to make a vegetable garden. I had to clean my room (because I'm messy). Finally I finished my book and repainted a wall.

Nolwen

Where are we from?

Our country, France, is located west of the European continent about 11,000 away km from the Philippines, has about 66 million inhabitants and is part of the European Community.



Our region, **Brittany**, is at the western tip of our country. This region is divided into four departments and among them, **Finistère**, is the furthest to the west. The word "**Finistère**" means "where the earth ends". In the local language, **Breton**, we say "**Penn-ar-Bed**" which means "head/tip of the world".

It is a very beautiful region entirely bordered by the sea, with important agricultural activities, fishing, breeding and their related industries and others. Tourism is also very developed here.

It is a region strongly marked by its cultural, linguistic, artistic, architectural traditions and its values, praising in particular family ties, generosity, pride, hard work and ecology.



Who are we?

Pakigangay in France ,

brings together volunteers who support the sharing and solidarity actions of Father Armand Guézingar with families and young people of Maasin in the Philippines.

A Board of Directors composed of a dozen people meets every two months to hear needs, organize means to meet them and take news of the young people and families helped.

Many people intervene to allow these actions, through donations - **donors** - and sponsorship of young people - **sponsors**.

Among them are **individuals, schools, parishes, and even other**

The annual dinner
of the association



associations. All, joined by the objective of solidarity and sharing, act within their means and seek to know the people helped in the Philippines.

This is why we organize various events to present Father Armand's journeys and to communicate on the help provided.

We do this during conferences, meetings, presentations in schools and "**Letters**". We will tell more about in another "Journal of Brittany".

Each year, we invite the sponsors, donors and **friends of Pakigangay** to an evening meal to share with them information on all Pakigangay events of the year, in the Philippines and in France.

Unfortunately, this year, this meal could not take place because it was scheduled for Saturday, March 14 and our country went in lockdown precisely at that time because of Covid-19. We anticipated this situation and warned everyone that this evening was postpone. We look forward to being able to plan this meeting again, as it is a highlight much

awaited by all.

We will soon tell you the story of these evenings that we organize, of course, on the theme of the Philippines: menus, decorations, entertainment.

People from the Philippines living in Finistere help us in this organization and the participants very much appreciate this highlight of the year.

Chronique of confined college students (more)

My Special Holidays 🍷👍👍

During my Special Holidays, I felt so bad because the weather was so beautiful during the lockdown but I could go out because I've a big garden. For me lockdown is not a problem. During this time, I did everything: I took care of my little brother because my parents works; I did my homework; I did household chores and I could play with my little brother on the computer and with his toys. I helped my father to make a greenhouse for seedlings because we have a big vegetable garden. For me, the lockdown is a good moment but I miss the sea even if I see it from my house.

Timothy

My holiday at home 🎵👍👍👍

During the holidays, I didn't do anything extraordinary... I slept until very late in the morning... and I spent my days drawing, eating, reading mangas and watching cartoons. But for me a day like that is perfect! At night, I listened to music while writing poems... I really loved that chill ambiance...

I like it when it's raining outside because i'm so much better inside my house. I like this feeling of loneliness... and watching the outside at the window at night when you see the stars, with the fresh air in my room... this is perfect.

And then usually, at 3 am, I went to bed without thinking about tomorrow.

Ninon

Father Armand's Prayer

**I was born naked, says God
so that you could divest of yourself.**

I was born poor,
so that you could consider me the only Wealth.

I was born in a stable,
so that you would learn to sanctify all places of life.

I was born weak,
so that you would never be afraid of Me.

I was born out of love,
so that you would never doubt my own Love.

I was born at night,
so that you would believe that I can illuminate all reality.

I was born to someone like you,
so you would never complain about being yourself.

I was born a man,
so that you could be "God".

I was born in simplicity,
so that you would avoid being complicated.

I was born to give Life, says God,
to take everyone to the Father's House.

I was born at your house ...

So be it.



The church of Gouesnac'h



Souvenir of a visit to Maasin

by Jean-René Blaise

In October 2015, following a professional travel to Manilla, I continued my trip to Maasin, in order to meet our Philippine friends in Maasin.

The first day, with *Mario*, I went to the *Libog school to meet the children and their teachers*. Although they were on holidays, 80 kids welcomed me, smiling, singing and dancing. Despite limited resources, the school is very well maintained. During my visit, a few youngsters and parents were working on the access to the classrooms. These works have been done with the help of Pakigangay, but also of the city of Maasin and of the parents. What a good example of cooperation. That should be developed.

After a lunch with the teachers, we continued our trip to *Ibarra*, to meet people living there. *More than 50 were waiting for me near the house of Ms. Casimillo*. I have seen in their eyes, that for these peoples who need everything, Pakigangay is very important. They have difficulties, but they are not beggar. They are proud, although the children smile less than elsewhere. I appreciated their hospitality. We must continue to help people from Ibarra, in particular the children. We will continue to provide them food, but we must help the children to fully develop.

At the end of the day, with *Jetzel and her husband*, I visited the city of Maasin, the cathedral, the outskirts of the city along the coast, and I discovered the local food with fishes and seafood.

I spent the following day, Sunday, with *the children of St Joseph Boys Home*. At their place I was welcomed by *Father Harlem, Chona, Ann and a few parents*. There the children introduced themselves, with their project for the future.

And always with songs and dances. Despite the fact that the parents are not fluent in English, some of them thanked Pakigangay for the help it gives to the children.

After breakfast, we went to the prison of Maasin where the mass was celebrated by *Mgr Cantillas*, bishop of Maasin and *Father Harlem*. After the mass, I met Mgr Cantillas, and presented him the association and our actions in Maasin.

In the afternoon, with Chona, I visited the *sanctuaries dedicated to the Virgin Mary* in the heights of Maasin. We met one kid that Pakigangay helps, with his mother and eight siblings. I have seen their living conditions, and without the help of Pakigangay, school would never a priority for them.

The two days that I spent in Maasin were too short. I would have wished to visit the families, the teachers of St Joseph Boys Home children, the villages in the mountain, and eventually civil authorities in Maasin in order to discuss with them how we could improve our cooperation. From this short visit, *I will keep in mind people looking toward the future, in particular the youngsters for whom education, environment, global warming are more than words*. They want to act. All of them are very grateful to Pakigangay, and particularly to Father Armand.

Thanks for these two days that I spent with you in Maasin.



Soon ... in the next "Journal of Brittany" we will introduce you;

- the actions carried out by the association
- the school time of our young people
- our region - its main cities, its culture, its festivals
- articles according to your requests ... ?

You can find these "Journal of Brittany",

as well as other news, on the Pakigangay website at <https://www.pakigangay.fr>