

From Visita to Fiesta: A Historical and Cultural Study of the Celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar

Ma. Vecka Gorgonia A. Talagtag

Master of Arts in Education, Major in History, University of Saint Anthony

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THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The fiesta celebration in the Philippines is very common in the provinces, where towns or villages hold them. This is an example of how people come with a common goal. The fiesta is a mix of spirituality and history that makes people feel proud and united. Most fiestas started during the colonization of the Philippines. Then Spanish missionaries built churches or small chapels to hold mass and teach people about Christianity. These churches were originally built to spread Christianity. Now they represent faith and are at the heart of every community.

The Fiesta celebrating Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar shows this connection to history. The tradition started over 400 years ago when a Jesuit mission was set up to spread Catholicism in Northern Samar. It began as a wooden chapel called a visita but it grew into a large Cathedral. The Cathedral is still the center of the fiesta reminding people of Catarmans history. The fiesta in Catarman is about Our Lady of the Annunciation and its history. Our Lady of the Annunciation is still celebrated with a fiesta, in Catarman, Northern Samar. The people of Catarman, Northern Samar come together to celebrate the fiesta of Our Lady of the Annunciation.

The Spanish missionaries really changed things for Filipinos. They moved people from villages into bigger towns. They built churches called visitas in these villages. These visitas were connected to a main church. The visitas were not just for praying. Filipinos also learned ways to farm and got basic education there. They learned rules for their community too. Over time these little churches became a part of daily life for Filipinos. They helped bring people in one place. The Spanish missionaries and their churches played a role in this. Filipinos started to live and work together in these towns. The visitas and main churches were, at the center of everything.

The population had increased and the local economy had flourished, the people got even more attached to the figure of a patron saints the Our Lady of the Annunciation. In fact, the devotees would turn to their saints in times of hardship for solace and protection. The annual fiesta which is a mixture of vibrant folk music, dancing, and sharing of food along with the Catholic liturgical rites, has turned out to be the most myocardial infarction main event of the year.

the history of a "small town" in Northern Samar called Catarman clearly reflects the depiction. Faith in Our Lady of the Annunciation was the most significant factor that enabled the conversion of Catarman from a little, far away village into a flourishing regional center not only in physical growth, but also in faith and culture in the life of the community. Sharing the story of a village that flourished through faith is a great way to show how local history is preserved through old traditions. In order to get the real feel of Catarman today, one only has to go back to the old stories, customs and lifestyle that still have an impact on the locals.

The story of Our Lady of the Annunciation, the unveiling of the angel to Mary about her giving birth to Jesus, held a distinctive significance to the first Filipinos. Amidst the turmoil of the Spanish colonization, the local people could see in Mary, a tender and maternal figure, who was always ready to come to one's rescue. Entrusting the town to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the Annunciation title, the church at that time served

as both a beacon of hope and a lasting symbol for the community, enduring through periods of change and hardship.

Studying these local town celebrations is incredibly important for understanding the bigger picture of Philippine history. National history books usually miss out on provinces but local customs show how ordinary people kept their culture and identity alive. The yearly celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation, in Catarman is a part of history that still happens today. Studying it closely helps us preserve the unique identity and cultural heritage of Northern Samar.

Exploring our local traditions and protecting them is not only a wonderful idea but legislative-supported local culture preservation is part of the mandate of the state. According to the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the government is duty-bound to safeguard, nurture and develop the Filipino culture. It further obliges the nation to maintain its monuments, arts and indigenous practices. The supreme law of the land delegates researchers a clear role of recording and analyzing local occurrences such as the Catarman fiesta that are on the verge of extinction.

Also, there is a separate statute known as Republic Act No. 10066 or the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009. This act declares it a national policy to protect and preserve Filipino heritage, including "intangible" cultural elements such as oral literature, rituals, and festive events. The legislation acknowledges that these cultural practices are the genuine records of a community's memory and they are the most susceptible to loss in the rapidly changing world of today. This research is a direct contribution to the law by documenting the history of Catarman's veneration of its patron saint.

On top of that, the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) tells local town leaders to support and grow their local culture. Town mayors and councils are expected to care for their community's heritage because local pride helps towns grow in a healthy way. Research papers such as this provide town officials with the information required for setting up excellent cultural programs, conserving local heritage sites, and advertising quality tourism. Catarman, Northern Samar, located on the northern shore of Samar Island, has been a pivotal player in the history of the region. The residents here experienced several dangers including raids coming from the sea, occasional destructions caused by typhoons, and changes in political districts.

The parish church was more than a place of refuge during the numerous difficulties; it was a symbol of stability. In fact, apart from the church, the annual feast was the main occasion to gather people from various locations, such as farmlands and fishing areas, hence a united community came into existence. Presently, Catarman fiesta faces different challenges caused by social media, corporate sponsorships, and modern entertainment.

Therefore, inhabitants are sincerely worried about finding a way to harmonize the contemporary pleasure and preservation of the historical and spiritual nature of the celebration. Moreover, one of the main concerns is the widening generation gap. Older folks and community historians who understand the value of old songs, dances, and ceremonies are dying and passing away. They are not writing down what they know about the songs and dances and ceremonies. The community is losing the people who understand the songs and dances and ceremonies.

If we do not deliberately make an effort to record these things, vast amounts of valuable local knowledge may soon vanish. Still people in Catarman, Northern Samar are very devoted, to Our Lady of the Annunciation. When Catarman Northern Samar faces economic times or gets hit by strong typhoons the people turn to Our Lady of the Annunciation for comfort, courage and hope to rebuild their lives. This shows that the celebration is not a party; it brings the town together. The festival is a thing to study because it shows how the people of Catarman, Northern Samar are connected to Our Lady of the Annunciation.

The primary motivation behind this research is the pressing necessity for additional written accounts of Northern Samar and the town of Catarman. Numerous history books majorly highlight metropolitan areas like Manila or Cebu, thus excluding smaller towns from the narrative. This research, by narrating the transformation of a humble colonial visita into a vibrant fiesta town, aims to empower Samar in the broader context of Philippine history. Local schools can benefit greatly from this research on a very real level as well.

The research remedy this issue by giving teachers with a teacher friendly record of history that can also serve as a source of motivation for students. Furthermore, it equips church and town authorities with sound historical data which is essential for them to organize heritage-oriented projects and festival guides.

This research is basically an effort to preserve the heart and soul of Catarman, Northern Samar before they become extinct due to the passage of time. The recording the oral history from the elders, customs, and the like that surround the festivity in honor of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman Northern Samar is a way of safeguarding the future of the locality by paying homage to the past. Collecting these oral history and cultural and traditional practices nowadays guarantees that the people of Catarman, Northern Samar will immediately understand their origin and what makes them one, even if the town develops and becomes more up-to-date.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on three interrelated theories that explain the historical continuity, cultural preservation, and identity formation embedded in the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. These frameworks help to trace the transformation of the devotion from a Jesuit visita to becoming one of the main sources of community identity.

Cultural Memory Theory – Jan Assmann, this theory is about community memories their past through common practices, rituals, and cultural traditions. Assmann said that memory is not only in books or written records, but it is also in a repeated actions for example the celebrations of festivals and prayers. These practices can help new generation to remember where they have come from and where they came from.

The theory is linked to the study's problem that younger people are losing touch with history. The study sees the fiesta as a way to remember culture and stresses the need to record and understand it so the towns past isn't lost.

Social Identity Theory – Henri Tajfel and John Turner, this theory said that people get through three steps to see ourselves and others in a setting.

First is Social Categorization. This helps people to understand the world. Putting people, including ourselves, into groups based on things we have in common.

Second is the Social Identification, people are starting to think of ourselves as part of a group, people act like what people think in that group should act. We also start to care about how the group's doing. Last is the Social Comparison, comparing the group to other groups.

The Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar fiesta was selected as the basis for this theory because it is a primary influence in shaping the Catarmanon people. We all know that every fiesta can **bring people together in salo-salo, prayers and music**. The role helps explain why the celebration should be preserved, not only for religious reasons but also for the sake of social cohesion and pride among the people.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Theory – UNESCO (2003 Convention Framework, strengthened in 2023). Intangible Cultural Heritage Theory It is based on 2003 Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted by UNESCO. The Convention recognises that traditions, rituals, festivals and community practices are important forms of heritage which deserve to be preserved and passed on to future generations. Intangible heritage is not like physical structures such as churches or monuments; it is experienced through the actions, skills, beliefs and common experiences of people. Heritage is only 'living' if it continues to be meaningful in contemporary society.

The reason why this theory was chosen is that the feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar is evidently a representation of intangible cultural heritage. The fiesta is a celebration of religious rituals, oral traditions, communal participation and time-honoured practices that have been handed down from the early visita period to the present-day fiesta. Its evolution through the years shows how traditions can change yet remain true to faith and history.

The study documents the historical root of the fiesta of Our Lady of the Annunciation and contributes to the preservation and relevance of the cultural heritage of Catarman in line with the national policy and the intensified heritage safeguarding principles of 2023.

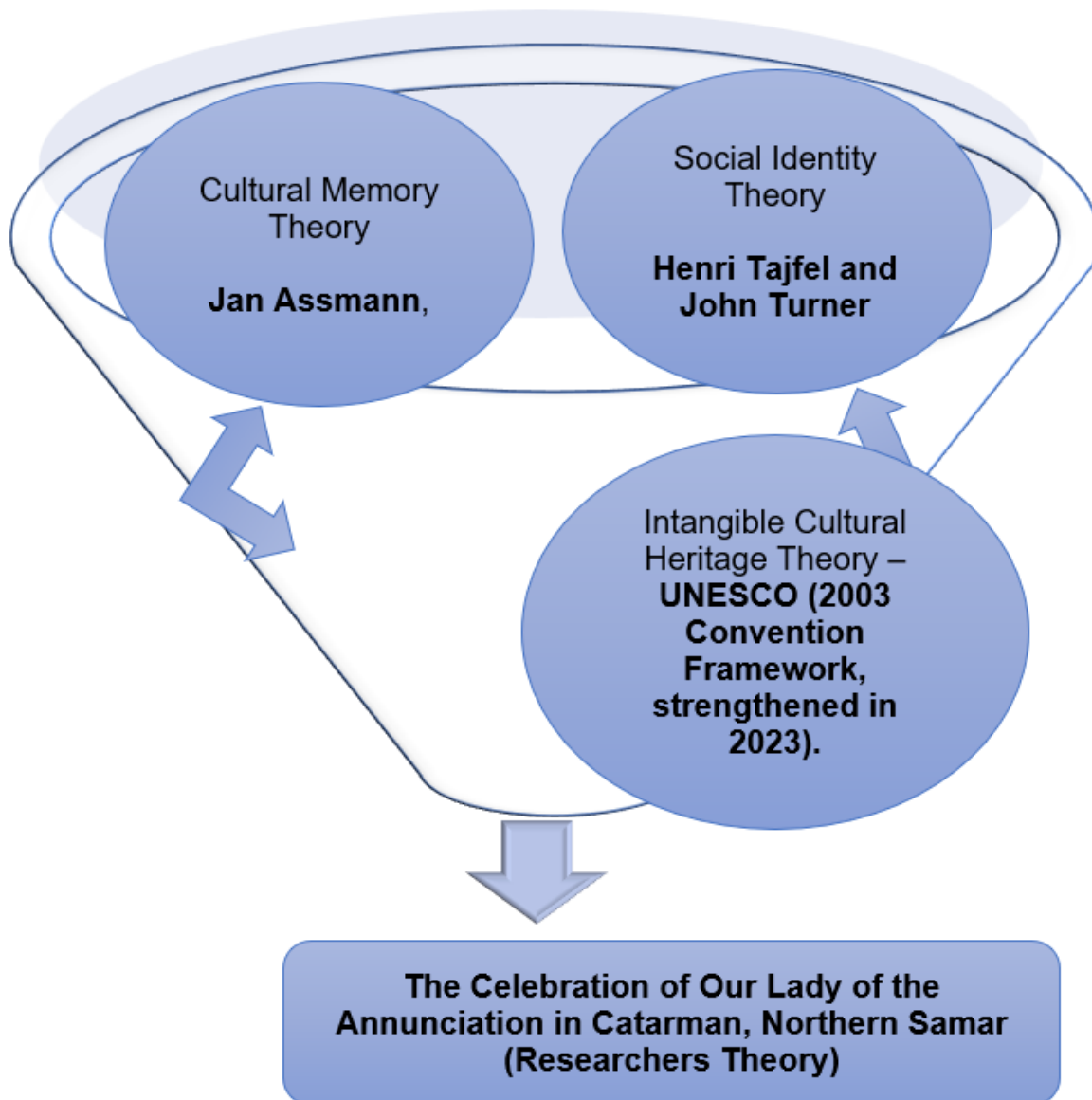


Figure 1.

Theoretical Paradigm

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of the present study was based on the system's view approach. This framework provides a systematic for understanding the dynamics of the research which shows the interplay of the important elements; the input, process and output.

Inputs. The inputs for this study include historical accounts from key informants and documents to be used for the historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar.

Process. The process shows a qualitative historical approach, interpretation, and analysis. The study shall employ interview analysis to gather the data accounts necessary for the study. These historical roots shall be recorded and transcribed to have a viable source of information.

Output. The study's product is an educational coffee table magazine that will help the community with recordkeeping and contextualization, as well as the general public with awareness. It also acts as a teaching tool that promotes community and historical awareness of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar.

Feedback. The feedback is important to observe the effectiveness of the proposed interventions. This requires ongoing evaluation of the impacts of these actions on community identity and resilience through participant observation, community feedback and follow-up surveys.

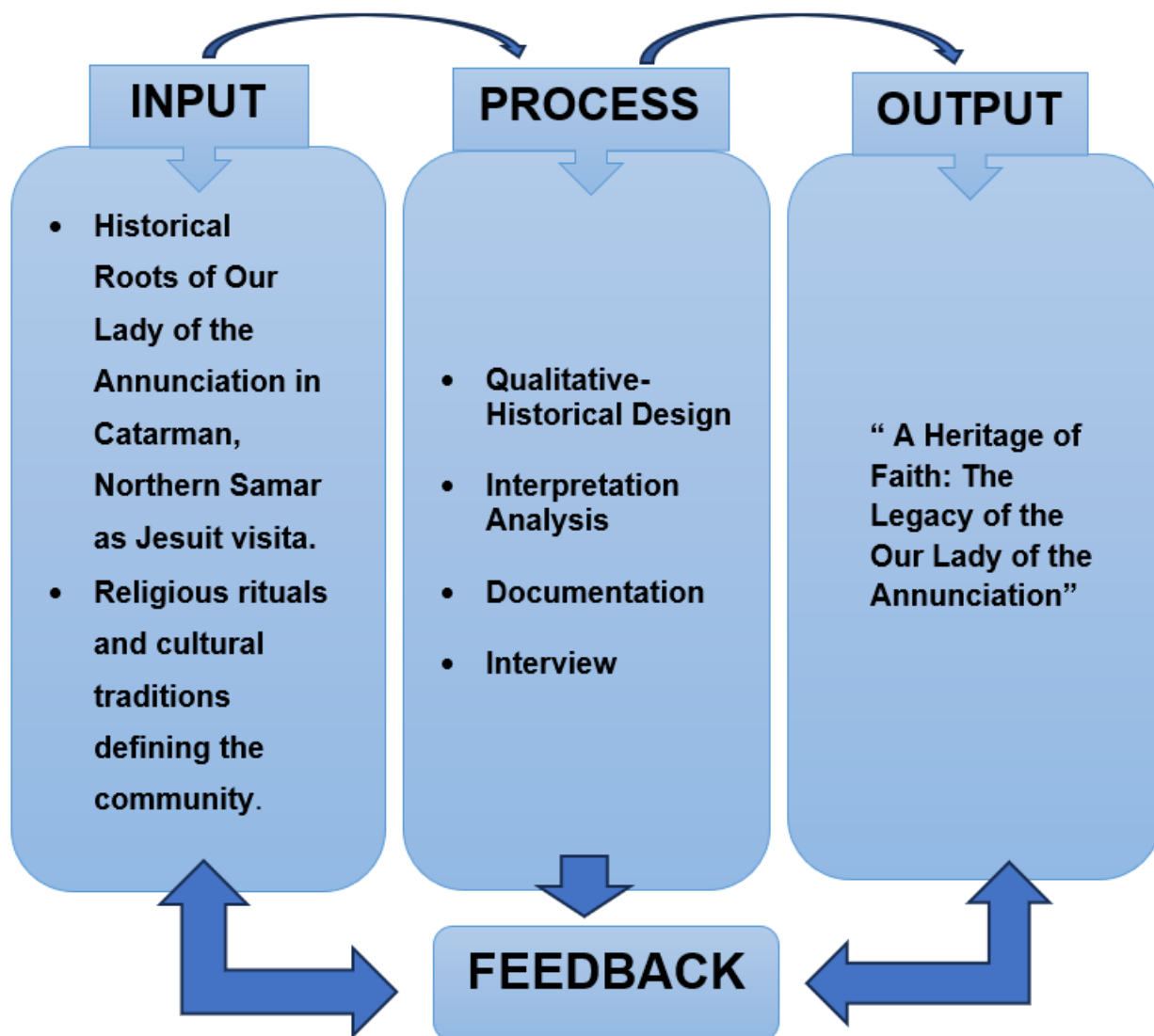


Figure 2.

Conceptual Paradigm

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to trace the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar, by documenting their contributions through the historical narratives of the selected key informants.

Specifically, it seeks answer to the following questions:

1. What are the historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman Northern Samar?
2. What are the religious cultural practices associated in the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation?
3. What material can be developed based on the findings of the study?

Assumptions of the Study

This study is premised on the following assumptions:

1. The historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar are rich and diverse.
2. The religious cultural practices associated with the Celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation are deeply culturally ingrained.
3. A meaningful documentary material can be made.

Scope and Delimitation

The study aimed to uncover the narratives surrounding of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. The scope is delimited to "From Visita to Fiesta: A Historical and Cultural Study of the Celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar." Key informants included long-time church servants and devotees, their testimonies served as a crucial connection to the past, providing personal insights that enhanced the historical account. This study was conducted in the Municipality of Catarman during the Spanish era, specifically during the Jesuit visita period.

Significance of the Study

The study is deemed beneficial to the following:

Catarmanon. Is the owner of the heritage in Catarman, Northern Samar, they are the ones who primarily are affected by the study, thus they benefit most from it by means of a better understanding of their historical roots and cultural identity. The study is intended to help Catarmanon feel more proud of themselves, be united and keep alive a faith that has been handed down from generation to generation.

Catarman Community. The study documents formal cultural records so that the town's living traditions can be preserved. It used collective action by reminding the community of their heritage preservation responsibilities and making them willing to carry out further cultural initiatives locally in the future.

Learners. The students can take a great advantage from raising their knowledge about who they really are and understanding the importance of cultural preservation.

Administration (DepEd, Northern Samar District). The study offers institutional support as a reference for the inclusion of local history and culture into the curriculum. This allows for contextualized learning and assists in the development of heritage education programs and community-based projects.

Researchers. This sector gets an advantage from the research as a scholarly resource. The paper can be considered as a reference for the future researchers who are focusing on the study of local history, culture, and heritage preservation in Northern Samar or other similar areas.

Definition of Terms

To ensure clarity and a deeper understanding of key concepts used throughout this study, the following terms are conceptually and operationally defined:

Catarmanon. The people who permanently live in Catarman, Northern Samar, share the same faith, culture, and community life. Their participation in the annual celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation shows their unity and pride in their local heritage.

Cultural Heritage. The total of traditions, customs, practices and expressions handed down from the past which a community identifies as part of its culture. It comprises both tangible (monuments, relics) and intangible elements.

Devotion. It is a type of religious practice wherein one shows a profound love, reverence, trust and faith in a deity. Devotion to Our Lady of the Annunciation manifests the people's spiritual communion and confidence in the Virgin Mary's intercession.

Fiesta. A religious and cultural event or ritual to celebrate a patron saint that integrates Catholic devotion with Philippine culture. It also has elements of novenas, processions, social feasting, and cultural presentations that contribute to community building.

Intangible Cultural Heritage. These are the traditions, expressions, skills, knowledge that communities recognize as part of their cultural identity, for example, the rites and oral histories related to the festive occasion of Our Lady of the Annunciation.

Jesuit Mission. The religious mission, set up by the Society of Jesus during the era of Spanish colonization, was to evangelize the Philippines. Jesuits also significantly contributed to the establishment of Catarman's first religious community.

Franciscan. Belongs to a religious order within the Catholic Church that traces its ideals and mode of life back to Saint Francis of Assisi.

Novena. A type of prayer sustained for nine continuous days that may be done openly or privately. It is generally associated with the preparation of a major feast day. It also symbolizes the town's spiritual readiness for the annual fiesta.

Oral History. Gathering and researching historical records using the interviews, recollections, and autobiographical accounts reveals the transmission of Catarman, Northern Samar customs from one generation to another.

Our Lady of the Annunciation. Mary is venerated under this name in relation to the Annunciation. She is the heavenly defender of Catarman, Northern Samar, and the whole town is centered around her feast day both religiously and culturally.

Procession. It is a religious or cultural parade in which the participants, whilst praying or celebrating, walk together, carrying sacred images, representing the faith, unity, and communal thanksgiving while praying the holy rosary.

Rituals. A set or sequence of sacred or traditional acts performed as an expression of faith and worship, including novena prayers, solemn processions, and the celebration of the Holy Mass.

Visita. A mission chapel or a small settlement that had been set up during the Spanish colonial era.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

A thorough review of the relevant literature was conducted. Previous studies and literary reviews were directly compared with the current research.

In Hui Jiang's (2025) research *From Tradition to Modernity: Digital Transformation of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Gelao People's Rice Festival*. The paper studies the use of digital technologies like animation digital archives, etc. by the ethnic minority (Gelao) of China, with a small population, to preserve and transform their traditional festivals against the pressure of modernization. It highlights the use of ritual, origin stories changing practices, and how digital tools help to maintain relevance. Similarly, the adaptation of Catarman's festival to modernization is like the Gelao festival's balancing of tradition and digital innovation.

On the other hand, Yatim, H., Jayadi, K., Jamilah, J., (2025) The study looks at how schools, local government, and cultural institutions in West Sulawesi partner to embed festival culture into education using experiential

learning, ritual participation, costume, song to strengthen cultural literacy and social cohesion. Very applicable: one of your “outputs” or “feedbacks” might be the role of education in Catarman in preserving the fiesta, passing traditions to younger generations. You may consider how schools, church, community are engaged or could be engaged in your context.

Furthermore Fernández-Mostaza conducted a study in 2024. This study focuses on the Lord of Miracles procession in Barcelona. The event happens every year in Barcelona. People from other countries come to Barcelona for this event. The study finds that people from countries keep their customs and traditions alive in Barcelona. They do this by dancing and showing devotion to the Lord of Miracles. The Lord of Miracles procession is an event for the Barcelona people. It helps them feel connected, to their culture. They celebrate with music, dance and prayer. The study also shows that these events help people remember true identity and where they come from. It helps them feel connected to their community. The events are also a way for younger people to learn about their culture. The fiesta helps them remember who they are and where they come from. It helps them feel connected to the people of Catarman, Northern Samar.

Besides, Oren Golan and Nurit Stadler (2024) They investigated the ways in which people demonstrate their love for Mary, the mother of Jesus, via the internet. Their focus was on the content individuals post on Instagram after visiting European sites significant to devotees of Mary. They concluded that sharing pictures and phrases about Mary online is a powerful way of making people feel more united with her. It is like a virtual halo around Mary that people can feel through the internet. The caretakers of these places apply strategies to present Mary on the internet as a figure one can identify with and be inspired by.

This research can provide insight into the ways in which people express their love for Mary on the internet and how this may change the way people think about their community, their love for Mary, and their preservation of heritage.

Similarly, the study on Mary can be employed to understand how the people of Catarman express their devotion to Mary online and how this can have an impact on the residents of the area.

In addition, Rieger I.A. Wrote a study in 2023 called Popular Religion or Lived Religion? Exploring Indigenous Religious Festival Practice in Mexico. This study looks at two Mexican communities and how they celebrate their religious festivals. It wants to know how things like objects and places and the way people perform rituals and take part in them help people feel like they belong. The study also looks at how certain actions can connect people and other things in a way that shows their identity. The concept of lived religion is very handy as it goes beyond the mere observation of the festival and focuses on people's experience, the role it plays in the community etc. Rieger I.A. Clearly study about the people living their religion, and that is the aspect that makes it so fascinating. The fact that the manner of festival celebration is an element of religious identity, and that, to us, Rieger I.A. study provides an understanding of that, is basically what we're saying.

In the study of Alaknanda Munshi (2022) Religious festivals are an integral part of cultural heritage and can have a huge impact on tourism. Our study, based on interviews with locals and participants, focused on the experiences of two religious festivals in Turkey and India that highlight the role of religious festivals in the preservation of cultural heritage, strengthening spiritual beliefs, promoting local economy, and improving tourism. Similar to the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation, where a religious plays role beyond liturgy identity, community cohesion, cultural continuity, and possibly economic or social gathering. This study can help how religious celebrations can contribute to heritage and identity in the Philippine context.

The study by Catalá-Pérez D. And Ponce-Herrero G. In 2021 Music for the Moors and Christians Festivities as Intangible Cultural Heritage: A Specific Genre for Wind Bands in Spanish Regions is really interesting. This study looks at how music for wind bands became a part of the Moors and Christians festivals in Spain. It talks about the history of this music how people play it and what it means to the people in these regions. Music for the Moors and Christians festivals is a specific music genre that has become a part of the identity of these regions in Spain. My own study is similar to the study by Catalá-Pérez D. And Ponce-Herrero G. Because it also looks at music and cultural practices. I want to see how music and rituals are connected to the identity of a place. For

example in Catarman, Northern Samar, music and dance are a part of who they are. I want to see how the people in Catarman, Northern Samar keep their practices alive and how they change over time.

The study of Catalá-Pérez D. And Ponce-Herrero G. Can help me understand how music and rituals work together to create a sense of identity. It can also give me a way to analyze the music and rituals that're part of a festival like the music and rituals in the Moors and Christians festivals in Spain and the music and rituals in the festivals, in Catarman, Northern Samar.

According to Eduardo Montero and Dean Yang (2021) Religious Festivals and Economic Development. This working paper tries to find out how religious festivals affect economies and development. It finds out that these festivals can change how people spend money, work and trade in markets. Sometimes these festivals have effects on the economy. The study also offers a way to look at the economy and culture. The festival in Catarman, Northern Samar people spend money on food and from vendors. Some people even come home for the festival and send money back to their families. All these activities are part of how the festival affects the community today.

Meanwhile Martínez L. And Rojas P. Did a study in 2021 about the role of festivals in Latin America. This research examined the connection between Catholic festivals, especially those honoring the Virgin Mary, and the preservation of cultural heritage in Latin America. The writers decided to visit Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. They discovered that, alongside religion, these festivals also serve the purpose of music, local crafts, and community leadership. It is so much, like the case of the Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar fiesta, where people have a good time and it contributes a lot to the keeping of their culture.

In addition to that, the research work carried out by Navarro and Delgado in 2020 focused on locations in Spain. These localities continue to have celebrations of their patron saints, in spite of all the sudden modern changes.

The research discovered that these festivals are not only about religion. They are like the systems, they unite people and strengthen the community.

People hold parades, eat together and dance, etc. These actions show that they care about each other and remember their past. This is similar to what happens in Catarman with the festival for Our Lady of the Annunciation. The fiesta brings together people who live there and those who have come back after moving. It helps make their relationships stronger. Reminds them of who they are as a community and what they believe in. These festivals are important, for keeping their towns culture and spirit alive.

In the study of Damayon et. Al (2025) Preserving Cultural Traditions among Ifugao Migrants: A Path to Sustainable Local Eco-Cultural Tourism in the Philippines located at Nueva Vizcaya. This qualitative study examined how Ifugao migrants in Diadi, Nueva Vizcaya, maintain cultural practices like dance, music, handicrafts, costumes, during special occasions like weddings, fiestas, school/cultural competitions. The study identifies both hindrances of migration, modernization, and elder deaths and enablers like fiestas, cultural competition, and school programs, that help sustain their traditions. Very similar to the study in that it examines how fiestas and communal events can enable transmission of culture, including among younger generations. It provides a comparative example of how traditions are preserved and change over time.

In addition, De Jesus and Rabago (2025) The Socio-Economic, Educational, And Cultural Relevance of the Pamulinawen Festival of Laoag City, Philippine. This research is all about Laoag City's Pamulinawen Festival. How the festival affects the economy, culture, and education, among others. One of the findings is that the festival helps keep local history and values alive; teachers act as cultural missionaries; and the festival is a part of the local identity and tourism. This study is closely related to the research, which aims to explore the cultural value, identity, and religious traditions. It can be a great guide to frame questions on the economic, educational, and cultural benefits that the fiesta in Catarman brings.

Meanwhile, Manuel Victor Sapitula (2024) Marian Piety and Modernity: The Perpetual Help Devotion as Popular Religion in the Philippines. This paper looks at how the Perpetual Help devotion is able to accommodate the urban changing conditions in Metro Manila, how the different devotees and authorities work

out the traditions and practices, and how modernity does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of tradition but can in fact be a source of reawakening of it. It is very much in line with your writing on how a particular devotional practice changed over a period. It will help you to a certain extent to highlight the ways in which Catarman's devotion might have also been impacted by the forces of modernity while still maintaining its essential elements.

Meanwhile Chan R.R.T. (2025) *Artes: A festival celebrating culture and creativity*. Multidisciplinary Science Journal. A qualitative and exploratory study of the changes of the Artes Festival in Vigan, its history, music, dance, literary arts, theater, and the use of the festival as a cultural learning platform. It will help you understand how festivals beyond religious rites can combine cultural learning and artistic expression. May give you comparative perspective on the non-liturgical parts of your fiesta in Catarman.

According to Arnulfo Valderama Fortunado (2023) states that Flores de Mayo and Santacruzán bring Filipino youth to Marian devotion. This paper reveals that Flores de Mayo and Santacruzán are the ways for bringing young people, catechizing, singing, communal praying, and transferring Marian devotion through youth engagement. Very much in line with your interest on the participation and perception of devotion by younger generations. Could be of help for you in finding out about youth participation in Catarman's fiesta.

In the study of Bautista G. (2023) *Local Devotion, Global Faith: Understanding Marian Celebrations in the Philippines*. The research probes the persistent significance of Virgin Mary devotions in the Philippines through an investigation on how local communities blend age-old religious practices with worldwide Catholic influences. It examines the role of Filipino Marian festivities like the Peñafrancia, Our Lady of Manaoa, and Our Lady of the Rosary as expressions of faith at the local level and as manifestations of the Church the world over's love for Mary. Relates Catarman's celebration of the Annunciation to the broader narrative of Philippine Marian devotion and identity.

Further, David L. (2021) *Preserving Local Faith Traditions: The case of the San Isidro Festival in Lucban, Quezon* talks about how the research looked at the constant link between faith, culture, and local governance through the example of the San Isidro Festival or more famously known as the Pahiyas Festival in Lucban, Quezon. This study offers significant reference points the current work on the Our Lady of the Annunciation celebration in Catarman, Northern Samar. Similar to Lucban's Pahiyas Festival, the feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation represents a blend of faith, culture, and community identity. According to Ramos M. (2022) *Intangible Cultural Heritage Awareness Among Filipino Youth*. This is a study on the consciousness and knowledge of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of Filipino college students. Through the research, the young Filipinos' level of recognition and appreciation of the traditional practices, rituals, festivities, and oral histories as integral parts of the nation's cultural identity were assessed. Through the use of questionnaires and interviews, Ramos found out that although a lot of students show their cultural pride. This study is very much in line with the current research on the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar, as it stresses the need to increase the awareness of youth on their cultural heritage. Presenting and highlighting the historical and cultural meaning of Catarman's fiesta, this study can also be a medium of communication between different generations and will ensure that the younger Catarmanons will be knowledgeable of their local identity and traditions.

In the study of Lanuza P. (2021) *Arts Festival in Vigan: Heritage Through Creativity*. In this paper, the authors investigated to what extent arts and cultural festivals of Vigan function as avenues for artistic expression, tools of tourism development, and means of safeguarding local culture and heritage. It highlights the fact that festivals should not be perceived simply as forms of entertainment but rather as living environments for the creative artist, teacher, and traditional person. Based mainly on qualitative data collection and face-to-face conversations with some artists, organizers, and other local stakeholders, Lanuza's result shows that the festivals are a very effective vehicle for the preservation of the culture by blending old crafts, music, and community involvement with modern-day celebrations. This work is very timely and gives insight for the present research focusing on the religious festivity of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. Just as the art festivals of Vigan, the Catarman festival is a manifestation of the people's religious faith and at the same time a display of their cultural creativity which reveals the community's resourcefulness and spiritual values.

In the study to Villanueva A. (2020) *Historical Continuity in Philippine Fiestas: From Spanish Missions to Modern Town Celebrations*. Looked into how Philippine fiestas changed throughout history, starting with their origins in the Spanish colonial period and leading up to their present-day forms in modern Filipino communities. By doing historical research and fieldwork, Villanueva showed that these religious celebrations have gradually changed from being just missionary tools to becoming important markers of local identity, collective memory, and social solidarity. This article very much speaks to our study on the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. Just like the towns that Villanueva researched, Catarman as a Jesuit visita is a source of long historical continuity that has influenced the faith and cultural life of its inhabitants.

Furthermore, Widyawati F. and Jewadut, J.L. (2025) *Marian Devotion in the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) in The Diocese of Ruteng*. This paper investigates the changes in Marian devotion and practices over time. Using qualitative methods (interviews, observation), the authors analyze different types of devotion (Rosary, Marian celebrations), how these are communally lived, and how the devotion shapes personal and collective identity among members of these small communities. Relation to your study: Like in Catarman, local community engagement (e.g. elders, church groups, families) helps to sustain the celebration. Apart from the formal parish structures, it can give you a glimpse into how devotion operates in smaller, community-based settings, which may be similar to local practices in Catarman.

Moreover Yatim H. et. al (2025) *Integrating Cultural Heritage into Education: The Supportive Role of Schools in Traditional Festivals in West Sulawesi*. This new article explores how schools in West Sulawesi, Indonesia, are playing a part in preserving traditional festivals by incorporating them into education. Its main subject is the Sayyong Pattudu festival and how schools engage with cultural artisans, incorporate festival education in classroom teaching, and what effect such combination has on students' consciousness, heritage appreciation, and tradition loyalty. Link with your study: Completely appropriate as a demonstration of the role of education in tradition preservation. In Catarman's fiesta, you may also find similar school oriented engagement opportunities, thus providing heritage education to new generations and making them understand the festival's meaning besides just participating in its celebration.

Additionally, Dima et. Al (2024) *Mixed Reality Heritage Performance as a Decolonising Tool for Heritage Sites*. This paper introduces the concept of Mixed Reality Heritage Performances (MRHP) combining augmented reality/smart glasses with live theatre, which take place in heritage sites to uncover hidden, difficult histories like colonialism, slavery. It looks into the audience's experience, emotional impact, and the role of physical, immersive interaction in raising awareness about heritage. Relevant in contemplating how Our Lady of the Annunciation can be documented or presented through the use of new technologies to bring out the root history and make heritage a more living experience for the youth and tourists.

Meanwhile Estrada and Levy (2024) *Can Massive Religious Festival Celebrations Encourage a Faster Spread of a Pandemic? The Case of COVID-19 in Israel*. This paper is a study of how the mass religious events in Israel contributed to the increase of COVID-19 cases. It considers the balance between safe public health, religious freedom, and community bonding. It also discusses which festivals were changed, delayed, or toned down to lessen the risk. Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar must have had some parallel interruptions and adjustments, so this would be a part of your historical evolution.

According to Liu et. al (2024) *Promoting the Culture of Qinhuai River Lantern Shadow Puppetry with a Digital Archive and Immersive Experience*. In the paper, special sensory, emotional, cultural, and even communicative elements are highlighted, which are the ones that contribute to the uniqueness of a cultural tradition and distinguish it from its essence by the mere experience of the audience. It is also shown that, even at a local level, the kind of preservation that culturally and emotionally resonates with people can be achieved through festivals that are part of their heritage and traditions. Similarly, you may archive the digital means of Catarman's Annunciation fiesta the rituals, oral history, music, procession which includes the documentation of the cultural and traditional activities, festivals, and events of a town or community through the use of modern technology and digital media.

According to Lee Y.G (2023) *An Exploration of Marian Spiritual Practices: Meaning a daily life of transcendental spirituality with Mother Mary*. It focusses on Virgin Mary spiritual practices on a daily basis other

than just feast days. Therefore, it examines how devotees incorporate Marian devotion into their daily life, ritual, prayer, and mindset not only during festivals or processions. It makes a connection with your research in terms of understanding how devotion in Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar may not be limited to the annual fiesta but there may be everyday practices, novenas, personal devotions, etc. that give shape to how the community lives their faith.

As well as Ma Zhao et. al (2023) Embodied Cognition Guides Virtual-Real Interaction Design to Help Yicheng Flower Drum Intangible Cultural Heritage Dissemination. This is an application of embodied cognition theory for creating interactive, virtual-real experiences to communicate the heritage of the Yicheng Flower Drum. They explore the use of digital & immersive formats VR/gesture recognition to enhance the appeal of intangible culture. This is connected to the research of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar because it offers ideas on how to conserve the intangible elements of the fiesta songs, rituals, symbols not only by documenting them but also by making them interactive and available, particularly to those who are far from Catarman, Northern Samar or the younger generations.

While Lonardi and Unterperntinger (2022) The Relevance of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Traditional Languages for the Tourism Experience: The Case of Ladin in South Tyrol. This research report investigates basically how visitors' engagement is deeply impacted by their encounters with intangible heritage such as traditional language and customs in the Ladin-speaking areas of South Tyrol, Italy. The paper investigates the effect of tradition on tourist satisfaction and the role of intangible heritage preservation in the cultural continuity of remote areas. It can help you speculate ways in which Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar might not only be a religious/cultural event but could also be a tool for cultural tourism and promoting local identity. It's also very helpful when reflecting on how a visitor/outsider perception of the fiesta also influences the preservation of the fiesta and the formation of community pride.

The Roszak P. and Tanco Lerga J. (2022) Devotion to Mary on the Camino de Santiago in the Middle Ages is a historical study of Virgin Mary devotion along pilgrimage routes in Europe. It is a book that deals with the idea of how ritual, movement, sacred geography, and religious memory have been intertwined to keep devotion and faith alive throughout centuries. At the same time, the book provides a broader historical comparison: it shows that, although the context is different, pilgrimage and devotion have been a means of preserving faith through time and across geographical boundaries. One can even compare it to Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar devotion which, on the one hand, has roots that go back, and, on the other hand, continue to develop locally.

Moreover, Siuda-Ambroziak R. and Mariano F. P. (2021) Contemporary Transformations in the Brazilian Popular Catholic Festivals: the Case of the Holy Divine Spirit Festival. Explores how a well-known Catholic festival in Brazil changes through social developments, market challenges, tourism, and changing expectations by keeping it's original meaning. In the changing world, Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarma, Northern Samar fiesta is a good example to think of transformation: what has changed in the last few decades and how external factors like modernity, tourism, and mobility influence the way the fiesta is celebrated.

In the article Damayon S.B et al (2025) published an excellent article entitled Marian Spirituality: Its Bases and Life Expressions in the Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae (CICM) and its Missionaries. Through this study, the authors inquire into what "Marian spirituality" signifies in the life of a specific missionary congregation (CICM) by identifying how convictions, devotions, rituals, festivities, and the very life of the believer are molded by Marian faith. It reflects on how the congregation's history and identity connect with their devotion. This helps in your study by contributing understanding of how devotion is lived (rituals, prayer life, celebrations) in local communities.

Meanwhile, Richard G. Castor (2025) Whispers to Spotlight: Unveiling Agriculture and Arts Through Staging Bulungan as Calabanga's Intangible Cultural Heritage. Focuses on how agriculture and arts are staged as part of an intangible cultural heritage component in Calabanga (Bicol). It documents community arts, agricultural practices, rituals or expressions that are becoming heritage in daily life. Useful for comparing how non-religious but cultural parts of a fiesta (arts, agricultural symbolism, communal creation) contribute to heritage. You may find similar patterns in Catarman's fiesta (food, farming cycles, arts) to document.

According to Dencio D. and Abigail M. C. (2024) Socio-cultural Perspective of Fiesta Celebration. It traces the fiesta's historical origins, including its growth under Spanish colonial influence and pirate attacks. It documents rituals and practices devoted to San Pascual Baylon, the community's religious beliefs and how the fiesta serves as economic opportunity, but also notes financial challenges connected to the fiesta. Very relevant: This provides a direct comparison for how a Samar town (geographically close to Catarman) preserves its fiesta tradition, including the religious rituals, historical narratives, and how community identity is expressed and preserved. It offers useful methodological and thematic insights you might use.

Moreover, Abad, J. P. (2023) Reimagining faith: The role of local festivals in sustaining Filipino Catholic identity. This shows the role of local fiestas as vibrant venues where faith, culture, and social life converge. Abad maintains that on one hand these religiously-motivated festivities are manifestations of the Filipino people's collective memory, identity, and resilience on the other hand. The article additionally tackles how faith communities modify their age-old religious practices such as processions, prayers, and feast days as a means of catering to their current issues, thus making Catholicism inherently Filipino. Like the fiestas in his studies, Catarman's yearly festivity is a tangible representation of unity and faith with religious commitment serving as a binding force for the community.

Furthermore, Aguilar C. N. (2023) Rituals of belonging: Faith, politics, and identity in Samar fiestas. The article discusses the way religious rituals such as processions, novenas, and communal feasts act as symbolic performances that both reinforce common beliefs and, at the same time, indirectly reveal local dynamics of power and social hierarchies. Aguilar points out that these festivities, apart from being spiritual occasions, are also cultural battlegrounds where traditions, politics, and local pride meet. This is a very helpful piece of information for comprehending of feast of the Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar since it is within the same regional and cultural setting. Aguilar's research on the way rituals become the instruments of remembrance, solidarity, and identity is a direct mirror of the function of the Annunciation fiesta in Catarman. According to Bautista G. (2023) Local devotion, global faith: Understanding Marian celebrations in the Philippines. The article discussed various Marian celebrations in the different parts of the Philippines to show how local rituals expressions are a way of method of transforming Catholic global practices into locally meaningful forms. The articles make use of ethnography and interviews to demonstrate the resilience and adaptation of Marian piety. Relation: It help the Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman Northern Samar fiesta to be set in the bigger Philippine pattern of localizing Marian devotion; further backs your argument that local faith is at the same time particular and connected to global Catholicism. citation please

The article Cruz M. D. (2022) Faith and fellowship: Religious celebrations as social integration in rural communities. discusses how religious celebrations in small towns in the Philippines are powerful instruments for social integration and community building. The study points out that fiestas and other religious gatherings are not only means of collective participation but also serve as spaces where social differences such as class, age, or occupation are briefly ignored. The example of Catarman's celebration of the Our Lady of the Annunciation the author demonstrates how religious festivals promote community cooperation and inclusiveness. Similar to the rural communities examined by Cruz, the fiesta in Catarman, Northern Samar serves as an important occasion for expressing a shared identity, making social connections, and preserving the traditions which represent the local culture and unity.

Meanwhile, Balerite G. (1996) Located to the north of Samar Island 400 years of Christianization.offers a vital historical framework for your study on the devotion to Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. His research carefully chronicles the landing of the Good News in 1596. This historical chronology offers the General Background and Local Scenario necessary for your introduction, continuing the development of the location from a remote missionary station to the cathedral of the Diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar. The study corresponds to Balerite's claim that religious festivals are the very essence of the identity and cultural life of the Catarmanon people. Taking his study as a fundamental historical source, you will be able to demonstrate the uninterrupted existence of the devotion, your liturgical celebration of the Annunciation and cultural fiesta of the present day.

The article by Diocesan Heritage Team (2023) *Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral Parish, Identifying, Salvaging, and Inventory of church cultural heritage properties*, is an initiative of the local parish to protect its rich history. The paper presents a detailed methodology for preserving the heritage lying within the walls of Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish. It is a three-step approach that first identifies the historical pieces, then rescues the endangered items, and finally lists everything in an official inventory. The fruits of this research have been a plan for preserving church history, with the focus on Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral Parish in Catarman Northern Samar. They offer the concrete proof of the historical account that you are established.

Synthesis of the State-of-the-Art

Research work of the Diocesan Heritage Team (2023) notes that the recording and enactment of rituals generates a digital presence or a virtual-real interaction that helps retain the interest of the younger, technologically inclined generations of Golan & Stadler, 2024; Ma et al., 2023. Continued research in the Philippines and other countries have shown that these celebrations are one of the most important ways that culture can be passed down to the next generation, especially the migrant and young people, as the traditional symbols are turned into new indicators of the sense of belonging and social cohesion of Fernández-Mostaza, 2024; Ramos, 2022. Models of successful preservation, for example the Sayyang Pattudu festival in Indonesia or the Pahiyas Festival in Quezon, demonstrate that by including the festival culture in school programs and involving various sectors through partnerships, the intangible cultural heritage is protected by Yatim et al., 2025; David, 2025.

De Jesus & Rabago, 2025; Estrada & Levy, 2024 highlight the festivals' adaptive capabilities. They're not only major economic contributors but also robust social entities which, for example, managed to adjust and survive the COVID-19 crisis. Such a change indicates that the current celebration is a medium for artistic freedom that offers a compromise between the past cultural authenticity and the present socio-economic requirements.

At the same time, the region's history also implies a very strong ongoing connection that Catarman, Northern and the literature point to the 16th-century mission as the source of modern identity. The main work of Balerite (1996) and Villanueva (2020) follows the community's changes from Jesuit visitas to the development of town centers, highlighting the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation as a historical continuous thread over the centuries. Studies of several Samar towns nearby show that these ceremonies serve as places of cultural negotiation where the faith, local politics and regional pride are combined to give rise to a distinct Samareño identity as stated by Aguilar, 2023; Delmonte & Cabaguing, 2024. Therefore, the combination of present studies sees Catarman's fiesta as a religious celebration on the one hand; on the other hand, as a heritage site where history is constantly reclaimed and reproduced so that culture can be preserved in the globalized world.

Research Gap

Reviewing the studies, in spite of the fact that a major component of research has been done on major Marian (Virgin Mary devotion) festivals in the Philippines, relative few academics have focused on celebrations which are local, such as Catarman's devotion to Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. Most of the existing literature revolves around major fiestas which results in small communities' historical and cultural development remaining undocumented. This paper aims to fill this discovery by looking at how the celebration of Catarman, which traces its history to the Jesuit visita, still shapes the local community identity, belief, and the conservation of cultural heritage.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the researcher expounds on the methodology, sources of data, and the series of systematic steps employed to solve the research problem. Research design, criteria for participants selection, data gathering instruments, procedures, and strategies for validity and ethical compliance are discussed here.

Research Design

The researcher used a qualitative historical research method to trace the Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar at the time of the Jesuits visita. Historical research, according to Dua (n.d.), is the

systematic study of past events, processes, and institutions to understand their impact on present social realities. The study used oral history as a major one. Oral history is the recording of someone's account of events through interviewing. It is an important instrument in capturing knowledge and stories that are locally based and undocumented.

In this way the researcher connected deep historical origins of the ceremony of Our Lady of the Annunciation celebration relying on primary sources like testimonies, photographs, and archival records. Such a technique was able to keep the memory both personal and collective as well as shedding light on those points of view which are normally not heard in the official history.

The focus of this research is on Our Lady of the Annunciation's history as a Jesuit visita, launched in 1697. In so doing, the author has decided to make Catarman, Northern Samar, from the late 17th century to present times, the only place and time of study. This particular timeframe made the most in-depth study of community identity and ways of life possible, thereby showing how local histories are a necessary element of the big picture on the national level.

Key Informants

There were seven (15) informants who gave valuable information for the study. They were chosen deliberately according to the following criteria: The informants are the one (1) Parish Priest and one (1) Religious Historian who can be the sources of historical and cultural background of the Our Lady of the Annunciation, four (4) Elderly Devotees will be the sources of personal narratives and recollections, one (1) Tourism Officer will comment on the role of the fiesta in preserving culture, community participation, local development and tree (4) Youth Representatives will provide contemporary views on how younger generations are engaging, three (4) educators, to evaluate how local history and culture are integrated into education and passed down structurally. These qualifications support their participation since their personal experiences as well as inherited stories will enhance the data's richness and genuineness.

Besides, because of their direct relation to the theme, their connection on a personal level made the whole situation more emotionally relatable and gave the storytelling process more depth, thus, enabling the researcher to draw out some subtle points. The researcher made sure to get the informed consent from all the main people interviewed. The purposes of the research were presented in a clear manner, also, they were reminded that they could have chosen to discontinue whenever they wanted. The secrecy and confidentiality of the interviewees were maintained by means of thorough anonymization, and all the gathered data were kept in a secure place.

Moreover, permission to conduct the research was obtained from the relevant review authority through an ethical clearance process before the collection of data. The research team acknowledged the participants as worthy human beings and demonstrated their respect towards them. Similarly, they always upheld the principle of cultural sensitivity to ensure that they made a meaningful tribute to the people and communities linked with the research in a lasting manner.

Research Instruments

In order to achieve a thorough data collection, the study combined the use of different instruments Semi-structured and Unstructured Interviews: These methods of data collection were utilized to get descriptive and contextual narratives. Participants were asked the questions, which were open-ended, at the same time the participants were free to talk about their personal and inherited stories in great, emotional detail. Questionnaires: Those informants who have a tendency to a more ordered method were given close-ended questions. These questionnaires have been a source of data on community awareness, collective memory, and commemorative practices in connection with the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation, thus providing qualitative insights.

Preparation and Validation. This part of the paper explains how the researchers got their instruments ready and validated them. To get hold of reliable and sensible data, the tool was constructed through a very thorough and methodical process.

Formulation of the Questionnaire. The main investigator developed the questionnaire according to the purposes of the research. Then, Social Studies authorities checked the questions to ensure their validity and clarity. The questions were oriented to get in-depth information about the historical foundations of the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar.

Administration and Retrieval. The researcher personally interviewed the participants and handed out the questionnaires at the same time in the town of Catarman, Northern Samar, where the respondents live. The researcher recorded the interview sessions upon informants' permission for the exactness of transcription and analysis. The gathered data were classified according to their themes for interpretation.

Scheduling of the Interview. Considering the schedules and convenience of the key informants, the researchers prearranged the interview sessions. The researcher also worked with Church and Municipality officials in order to create a space comfortable and suitable for an honest sharing.

Observation. Through direct observation, the researcher was able to experience firsthand the fiesta and its associated religious and cultural activities. This gained them a better understanding about the community's practices, symbols, and participation. Besides, it also helped to balance the data collected from the interviews.

Validation of historical data. The method we called triangulation helped us to confirm the accuracy and truthfulness of our findings. Research involves talking to local people and listening to their stories. We use triangulation as a way to check whether we have got it right or not. We did not rely on one person or one source. Instead, for every piece of information, we made sure to verify it with several historical documents before including it in our final study. It was our main goal to make sure that the data we collected is highly credible and reliable. This is why we utilized triangulation in this research to obtain the most accurate information possible and to make our historical research trustworthy.

The presence of any inconsistencies or gaps was dealt with by conducting further interviews or revisiting sources. The merging of different forms of data ensured the genuineness and trustworthiness of the historical stories.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher observed ethical research practices scrupulously during the entire study. At every single time ahead of an interview, informed consent had to be obtained. Participants were essentially told that their rights included privacy, anonymity, and voluntary participation. The researcher guaranteed that no informants were coerced, and the data collection methods employed were such as to respect the dignity and independence of each participant.

Oral testimonies and documents collected during the study have been properly cited whereas the use of personal photographs and records is only possible after getting permission. Besides following the guidelines for ethical fieldwork provided by the institution, the research also ensured that the findings are presented in an honest and respectful way. The informants were made aware of the study's purpose, their consent was gotten, not only for the protection of their rights and privacy but also for the establishment of a relationship based on trust, transparency, and ethical accountability.

From Visita To Fiesta: A Historical And Cultural Study Of The Celebration Of Our Lady Of Annunciation In Catarman, Northern Samar

This chapter provides a detailed synthesis of the historical data and oral testimonies gathered, tracing the Catarmanon's devotion From Visita To Fiesta: A Historical And Cultural Study of The Celebration of Our Lady of Annunciation Catarman, Northern Samar.

Historical Roots of Our Lady of Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar

Our Lady of Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar is the famous of Catholic church in Northern Samar. Before the coming of the Jesuit missionaries, Catarman, Northern Samar was already a settlement named

Calatman or Catadman which later renamed to Catarman. It was said that the founders of this settlement were Malay travelers who came from Borneo now in Malaysia/Indonesia and Makassar Island in Indonesia. The Malay travelers are the legendary sailors and pioneer in the island of the Southeast Asia.

In a book written by Rev. Msgr. Gaspar Balerite, a pioneering priest in Roman Catholic Diocese of Catarman North of Samar Island (400 years of Christianization) published in 1996. He said that the area of Catarman, Northern Samar was positioned geographically because of the Pacific Ocean. The Pacific Ocean in Catarman, Northern Samar is like a natural sea highway for the voyagers to travel using the monsoon wind.

In 1596, the Jesuits finally arrived in Tinago, Samar which is now known as Barangay Dapdap in municipality of Tarangan, Samar. The initial mission of the Jesuits missionary in Tinago, Samar was to make a central based and to start the reducción. A reducción is a gathering of the scattered settlements of the family lived in the river and near the sea to organize town or pueblo and make sure that the people will hear the sounds of the bell from the church. When the base in Tinago, Samar was already active, the Jesuits missionary discover places in the island Samar.

In 1597, The Jesuits missionary Father Miguel Gomez received a task to explore and discover more hidden places in Northeastern territory of Samar Island. He immediately planned their expedition; they discover that the pathway in the forest is hard to pass by and there's no exact highway. Father Gomez decided to pass by using the large river of Gandara for their safety, using only a banka or balsa going to the center of Samar Island. After their hard work in the expedition, they reached the Catubig Valley in Northern Samar, before they called it the Ibabao. Father Gomez established the first mission of Christianity in the Ibabao of the northeastern side of the Samar sland.

In 1605, Catarman, Northern Samar was founded and was included among of the 13 mission stations under Catubig, Northern Samar Mission centers. In 1612, Catarman, Northern Samar was placed under the newly transferred Residencia de Palapag, Northern Samar and paid 330 tributes or taxes. By 1650's, the Jesuits missionary started the concept of quasi-parishes. Quasi-parish is a town with catholic faith that the Jesuit missionary is preparing to become a Parish. Catarman, Northern Samar and Bobon, Northern Samar shared a priest who only visit or visita the chapel to conduct a mass. It was in 1696 when Catarman, Northern Samar and Bobon, Northern Samar had its first permanent missionary priest assigned.

One of the Jesuit missionary and historian, Fr. Francisco Ignacio Alcina on his work titled *Historia de las Islas e Indios de Bisayas*, shared a brief history and information on the pueblo of Catarman, Northern Samar and its neighboring towns. He wrote that the areas along Balikpapan and sandbars near the rivers were said to be dangerous places for docking boats particularly in Pambujan. Northern Samar. Chalices (holy cup), missals (liturgical books), sacred vessels (holy container) and vestments (garments of priest) of the Jesuit missionaries were being swallowed by the strong currents of the river and dangerous waters brought by strong Easterly winds.

. There was a brief source from years 1715-1716 about an epidemic or disease in Catarman, Northern Samar that had killed so many children. With the intercession of San Francisco Javier, they made novenas and petitions to the saint and the result of the epidemic was totally restrained. "En Catarman, por intercesion de San Francisco Xavier, novena que hicieron al Santo se libraron dias pasados de una Epidemia de que morian muchos niños: de suerte que despues no murio ninguno de aquella enfermedad." This means that in Catarman, through prayers and novena to San Francisco Xavier they save the children who suffered from disease or epidemic that happened.

The following Jesuits Missionaries assigned in Catarman, Northern Samar and Bobon, Northern Samar from 1696 to 1768: In 1696 the Jesuits missionary assigned was Fr. Pedro Raymundo Clarumont, followed by Fr. Francisco Diaz in 1701, next is Fr. Pedro Vello in 1703, Fr. Juan de Eguia in 1712, Fr. Martin Gil in 1715, Fr. Pedro de Estrada in 1718, Fr. Bernardino Ortiz in 1722, followed by Fr. Antonio Javier Mir and Fr. Cayetano Martin in 1724. In 1727 is Fr. Florencio Consbruc, next is Fr. Matias Guerrero in 1731 and Fr. Pedro de Baeza 1735 after two year it change to Fr. Pedro de Baeza in 1737 and after a year it changes to Fr. Giovanni Battista Lena in 1738, he served for almost eight years. After eight years it was replaced by Fr. Ildefonso Ximenez in 1746, and followed by Fr. Joseph Maurer in 1751 and being replaced by Pedro Nicolas Garcia in 1754. In 1766 was Fr. Jose Anda, and the last Jesuits missionaries in Catarman, Northern Samar and Bobon Northern Samar

was Fr. Jose Bremont in 1768. (Roman Catholic Diocese of Catarman, North of Samar Island. 400 years of Christianization, 1996 published in 1996.)

There's a massive turning point in the history of Northern Samar when King Charles III of Spain issued a Royal Decree expelling the Jesuits from all territories of the Spanish Empire in year 1768. According to Lewis Twiby his Past and Present article Spanish crown was committed in Bourbon Reforms, it is a series of removing the political and economic changes that will centralize absolute power under the King of Spain. After the expulsion of the Jesuits missionary, the church of Catarman, Northern Samar together with its patroness Nuestra Señora de la Anunciacion, Nuestra Señora de la Anunciación or Our Lady of the Annunciation is a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is from the biblical event of the Annunciation, where the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26–38). The church was ceded by Fr. Jose Bremont to Fray Nicolas Antonio de Herrera, he is the first Franciscan parish priest. The succeeding Franciscans have done great efforts to renovate the church, improved and strengthened the religiosity of the people and to develop the entire town both economic and political aspects.

These are the Franciscan Missionaries who devotedly served the Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar from 1768 to 1898. In 1768 to 1772 Fray Nicolas Antonio de Herrera, In 1774 to 1775 is Fray Antonio Husano de San Francisco next is Fray Francisco Suarez in 1777, followed by Joaquin Jose Martinez de las Rosas in 1778, in 1780 to 1781 was Fray Francisco Suarez followed by Fray Antonio Husano de San Francisco 1783 to 1808 after 25 years of service he died here on December 31, 1808. In 1810 to 1820 Fray Geronimo de Hervas . In 1825 to 1832 the church has no preceding priest for seven years . In 1834 to 1841 Fray Pascual Gomez was the officiating priest he died on April 25, 1843. Consequently in 1843 to 1852 is Fray Jose Diaz, 1853 to 1867 is Fray Sebastian Moraleda o de Almonacid, 1868 was Fray Salustiano Bus. In 1870 was Fray Mariano Casanova. In 1873 to 1880 was Fray Sebastian Moraleda o de Almonacid. In 1882 was Fray Braulio Jambrina. In 1885 to 1886 was Fray Francisco Mendez and in 1888 to 1898 was Fray Jorge Fernandez Trujillo.

From then on the Franciscan missionaries were allowed to decide for their own discretion. So they decided to build the first church of Catarman, Northern Samar. It was built of woods and Nipa because of the major storms and flooding of the river the church repeatedly destroyed houses and buildings, that's why Franciscan missionaries decided to build a new church that was constructed in 1843.

On December 8, 1851, the church and the casa parroquial of Catarman, Northern Samar were destroyed by a strong typhoon which also devastated half of the town. Thus, the people petitioned to the Spanish Government of the Philippines through Fray Romualdo Ximeno Ballesteros, then Bishop of Cebu for permission to construct a new church and parish house. The petition was approved in July 1852.

In 1894, Don Quintin Mendiola of Catarman, Northern Samar was awarded by the Cruz Sencilla de Caballero de la Real Orden Americana of the Catholic Queen Isabel. He was probably the only gobernadorcillo in Northern Samar that was given the prestigious award. The award thanked Mendiola for being "the most dedicated agent in the collection of tribute and, especially, in the new municipal taxes, matters which everywhere are a source of annoyance but which in Catarman, Northern Samar have been imposed without the least complaint.

On August 4, 1863, Bobon, Northern Samar was decided to separate from its matriz Catarman, Northern Samar by virtue of the decree of Superior Gobierno but remained as a visita of Catarman from 1866 to 1867 until it had its first resident priest. La Granja, a former parochial territory of Catarman, Northern Samar and Calbayog, Eastern Samar was became a parish on December 1, 1863. In the year 1882, Mondragon, Northern Samar was the last visita that separated from Catarman, Northern Samar and was also became a parish in 1894.

In 1890, Catarman, Northern Samar has eighty-five settlements under its jurisdiction and by 1895, a new church was constructed that was made of stone. In 1898, after a long stayed and devotion of the Franciscan missionaries, Fr. Jorge Fernandez Trujillo, was the last Franciscan as parish priest that served Catarman, Northern Samar, left the parish church without any attending priest. This was period of transition and the second advent of the Franciscans. The church of Catarman was left without an assigned parish priest until in 1900 when Fr. Pablo

Cui, a Secular priest from Catbalogan became its cura parroco. The Franciscans returned in 1902 and departed in 1941.

The following were the Franciscan parish priests assigned in Catarman, Northern Samar from 1902 to 1941: 1902 to 1904 was Fray Agustin Delgado. From 1904 to 1906 was Fray Francisco Merida, 1906 to 1907 Fray Felipe Mata, 1907 to 1929 Fray Paulino Camba (In 1907, Fray Angel Ranera was his assistant pastor and in 1913 was Fray Felix Pinto both are now Blessed). In 1929-1935 Fray Jose Solana followed by Fray Pedro Hierro in 1935 to 1939, and the last Franciscan priest is Fray Manuel Mora in 1939 to 1941.

Before the Franciscans left Northern Samar in 1898, Catarman has produced sons who entered to the Sacred of Priesthood. Foremost Catarmanons who became priests were: Fr. Jose Diasnes was ordained on September 22, 1877, Fr. Wenceslao Singzon ordained on September 2, 1894, Fr. Claro Balite ordained on August 13, 1899. More Catarmanons were ordained to the Sacred of Priesthood: Fr. Sofronio Balite 1912, Fr. Jose Singzon 1920, Fr. Francisco Unay 1935, Fr. Juan Franzuela 1938 and Fr. Anastacio Balite 1959.

The Province of Northern Samar was created by virtue of Republic Act no. 4221 on June 19, 1965 which provided for the division of Samar Island into three provinces the Northern Samar, Eastern Samar and Western Samar and now called Samar and the municipality of Catarman, Northern Samar was made as the capital. In 1971, the provincial board of the Province of Northern Samar sent a resolution to His Holiness, Pope Paul VI through the Papal Nuncio which seeks for the creation of Northern Samar.

In the article written by Ann-Jill T. Dineros, Heritage Team in Catarman Northern Samar In 1996, she points out that the center of the celebration of the 400 years of Christianization in Samar Island happened here in Catarman, Northern Samar attended by the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Moreni, Bishops and the faithful of the Diocese of Catarman. She also pointed out that the Pentecost Vigil and Family Day Celebrations started here in the seat of the Diocese on 1997 attended by the different parishes and Mission Centers of the entire diocese. During the time of Rev. Msgr. Sosing the former Vicar General restored the Retablo that was made during the Franciscan Missionaries commissione the Heritage Festival headed by Ar. Manolo Noche.

In 2015 the 40th Canonical Erection of the Diocese of Catarman also celebrated here together with the CBCP President Archbishop Socrates Villegas, Visiting Bishops and the priest in Samar and Leyte. The First Bishop Catarman Most Rev. Angel T. Hobayan, JCD, DD his remains rested in the right wing of the Altar, He died last March 11, 2023. The Funeral Mass was presided by the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Brown. The present Administration of the Team Ministry headed by Rev. Fr. Potenciano E. Dulay the Rector of the Cathedral and Rev. Fr. Jimel Varela together with Rev. Fr. Wendel A. Rotamula.

Bishop Nolly Buco was appointed as the new Local Ordinary of the Diocese of Catarman by His Holiness Pope Francis. Bishop Buco is a seasoned and esteemed canon law expert, entrusted with the pastoral care of our diocese. His wealth of experience and steadfast commitment to serving the Church will undoubtedly steer the Diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar towards continued growth and spiritual nourishment for the faithful in Our Lady of the Annunciation. The MIO Catarman, Northern Samar wrote the article about the The Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman Northern Samar and was being presented celebration of the 50th Golden Founding Anniversary on March 11, 2025. The Golden Jubilee grand thanksgiving Mass was held at the Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish Cathedral in Catarman, Northern Samar It was presided over by His Excellency Most Rev. Charles John Brown, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, and concelebrated by Catarman's third bishop, Most Rev. Nolly Buco, along with several bishops and priests from all around the Northern Samar.

The celebration has a theme: "Journeying Together: Communion, Participation, Mission with the broader goals of the local Church of Northern Samar". A ribbon cutting ceremony for the official Jubilee Exhibit venue was in the Sacred Heart Plaza, lot of devotees attended together with the local government officials. The Jubilee spirit continued to resonate together with the other activities, such as the 26th Diocesan Pentecost Vigil Family Day was held on June 7 and 8, 2025 that participated by the Vicariates, parishes, delegates, volunteers in the province of Northern Samar.

Their faith was deeply renewed through this event. Hearts renewed in Pentecost, the members of the community were able to celebrate Family Day which spiritually connected each one to their family. Through shared sessions, open dialogues, and deeply moving spiritual activities, families were given a sacred space to reconnect, heal, and pray together. This grand feast of love and unity filled the "domestic church" inside each individual home, and at the same time, it was a major landmark for the Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar, and a legacy of the renewed spirit, and stronger neighborhood tie that will be passed on to future generations.



Plate 1 Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar

Photo Source: Taken by the Researcher

The Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish Church is not just an architectural stone and mortar monument, but the living heart and soul of Catarman, Northern Samar. Its doors have been opened for four hundred years and inside its walls, the imprints of the Catarmanon struggle and the testimonies of their sufferings and their steadfastness have been conveyed without words. As a firm historical account, the church has been a silent witness to not only the changing of times but also the changing of the people. It has been like the people of the parish who are very strong, even after a lot of challenges they encounter. As of now, it is not only a historical relic but an everlasting representation of strong faith and survival, as well as the unbreakable spirit of the people of Catarman, Northern Samar.



Plate 2 Historical marker for the "Simbahan ng Catarman"

Photo Source: Taken by the Researcher

The “Simbahan ng Catarman” is a site of a historical endurance in Northern Samar. Its journey began in 1596 as a Jesuit mission made of wood and nipa, acting as a visita of Palapag, Northern Samar. Over the centuries, it became a focal point of colonial struggle; it was burned down in 1649 during the Agustin Sumuroy rebellion and later transformed into a stone kuta (fortress) by Franciscan Father Vicente Lopez to defend the town against Moro pirate raids.

Key Informant Rev. Msgr. Gaspar D. Balerite, H.P., S.Th.D.

Northern Samar Historian

Based on the interview conducted with Rev. Msgr. Gaspar D. Balerite, the researcher, gathered the historical root of the Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish in Catarman, Northern Samar. A pivotal shift occurred in 1768 when King Charles III expelled the Jesuits from Spanish territories. The researcher noted that Fr. Joseph Bremont was the last Jesuit to serve in Catarman, Northern Samar before the Franciscans took over administration. This era was characterized Msgr. Balerite, a profound theologian and the former Vicar General of the Diocese of Catarman, considered the development of the parish through the later changes of Spanish colonial geography and the switching of Church authorities.

The main source of information was Msgr. Balerite who stated that the rising of Catarman, Northern Samar from an insignificant area of the whole Provincia de Ibabao to the present-day status of a provincial capital is quite a contrast. It was found out that the Jesuit missionaries started to spread Christianity in the area about 1649. In fact, during long periods of time the parish did not have a priest who lived there and was only functioning as a kind of outpost or visit. Msgr. Balerite cited the historical documents supporting this that even in the year 1697 Fr. Raymundus Claramont would still take a trip from Bobon in order to minister the locals spiritually. by extreme instability and danger due to frequent Moro raids.

Msgr. Balerite cited the bravery of Fr. Vicente Lopez, who wore two hats as the spiritual guide and even military protector of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. After the kidnapping of his predecessor by the pirates, Fr. Lopez learned how to handle firearms and led the construction of defensive forts. Aside from weapons conflict, the parish had to endure the fury of nature; a catastrophic typhoon in December 1851 wiped out half the municipality and the church building. The church was only totally restored in 1890 and a new church building was finished in 1895 which was a symbol of the end of the Spanish period.

The researcher has identified two milestone dates in the development. The first was January 1, 1968 when Catarman, Northern Samar was officially declared as the capital of Northern Samar. The second major event happened on March 11, 1975 with the canonical erection of the Diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar which meant that Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation was raised to the status of the See (Cathedral) of the diocese. Concerning the cultural life of the parish, Msgr. Balerite remarked that the enthusiasm for the annual fiesta is still as strong as ever. The whole event consists of a traditional nine-day novena culminating in the feast day mass. On top of that, the researcher wondered why the feast is held on August 29th rather than the liturgical Solemnity of the Annunciation on March 25th. Msgr. Balerite indicated that the date was a tactical move in order to have a "fiesta system" one after the other among the different municipalities of Northern Samar for example, Bobon, Northern Samar on the 10th, Palapag, Northern Samar on the 15th, and Lavezares, Northern Samar on the 22nd.

There are no officially recognized miracles in the strict definition of the term, Msgr. Balerite pointed out; nonetheless, the church's continued existence was like a story of divine intervention. He indicated that the church's survival through centuries of raids and the miraculous fact that it remained a center of attraction even after the 1851 typhoon are a reflection of the devotion of the clergy and the faithful.

The writer recognized Msgr. Balerite's zeal in safeguarding this record for the ones yet to come. Although he retired in January 2026, he still pens and revises catechisms and historical documents, frequently handing them

out at a very low price or even gratis. He wants that the 300-year-old heritage of the Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish should always be an abiding inspiration of the young people and of Northern Samar.

Key Informant Rev. Father Julius Agustus R. Balanquit

Parish Priest of Our Lady of the Annunciation

During an interview with Rev. Fr. Julius Augustus R. Balanquit, the researcher unravelled a story that cultural heritage and spiritual devotion were intertwined and it all started with the Jesuit mission at Lumbang in 1596. Fr. Balanquit depicted the parish's history as a symbol of great resistance, telling how the first building was destroyed during the Sumuroy Rebellion of 1649 and how the church was afterwards transformed into a stronghold against Moro piracy, with the use of the bells as an important cultural means for the community's survival. According to Fr. Balanquit the annual celebration of Our Lady of Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar will be celebrated every August 29. It combines solemn Roman Catholic traditions with lively cultural practices to encourage the community to be one, share identity, and spiritual reflection. The celebration starts with Nine-days of novena masses. The Nine-day novena mass or Siyam na-aldaw in waray, all of the devotees of Our Lady of the Annunciation would pray the Holy Rosary, the specific Novena to Our Lady of the Annunciation, asking for her intercession and guidance. Each day has a sponsored parishioners from the different local organizations, barangays, and institutions, local schools and community because of their faith and service. The parish priest shared reflections about the Blessed Mother, particularly her fiat or her "yes" to God's will, that inspired the community. The novena mass include in the events is the living rosary, flower offerings to Our Lady of the Annunciation, and the community processions together with the devotees. Fr. Balanquit illustrated how the devotion remains a living legacy, sustained by intentional outreach to the youth to ensure that the ancient veneration of Our Lady of the Annunciation continues to flourish amidst modern distractions.

One of the best ways through which the church can maintain their faith is through the involvement of young people in the sacraments, the online ministries, and other parish activities. There is no better way to continue the faith than by anchoring the youth in Mary's Fiat. That way, we guarantee that the historical veneration of Our Lady of the Annunciation will be a source of truth that will be able to stand strong even in the midst of all the distractions of the modern world, " says Fr. Balanquit.

Key Informant Mr. Randy C. Tobiaso, ENP Municipality Tourism Officer

Mr. Randy C. Tabiaso, the Municipal Tourism Officer of Catarman, the historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation, Catarman Northern Samar is one of reclaiming identity through a blend of oral tradition and ecclesiastical records. As an Environmental Planner with a background in provincial administration, Mr. Tabiaso highlights the unique challenges faced by a municipality whose official founding documents remain scarce. For a long time, Catarman, Northern Samar did not have a clear founding date in the civil registry. Mr. Tabiaso explains that simply because documents officially recording the conversion of the town from a visita, small settlement with a chapel to a whole municipality are hardly found, the local government had to rely mostly on oral history. Last year, another method of data gathering was conducted so as to write the town's history officially.

The declaration of October 17 as the official Founding Anniversary of Catarman was a clever legislative act carried out by Mr. Tabiaso's predecessor. The logic behind this date is rooted in the "Pueblo-Parroquia" system of the Spanish colonial era. He said that according to historian Rev. Msgr. Gaspar Balerite, a town and its church were traditionally founded as a single entity. Church records cite the founding of the parish on October 18. By decree, the town's foundation is celebrated on the preceding day, October 17. Mr. Tabiaso views the new founding anniversary as a secular anchor that balances Catarman Northern Samar primary religious celebration, the Feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation.

Mr. Tabiaso added that aside from the fiesta the celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation, Catarman, Northern Samar also celebrating the Tarum festival it is story of an old man sharpening his "sundang" or bolo, when a group of foreign travelers asked a question he didn't understand. Thinking they were asking about his blade, he

replied “Kataruman”, he said the sharpness of his bolo. From that simple exchange, a name emerged, Catarman. But Tarum is more than just a word, it is became the town’s identity. It stands for sharpness, not because of the blades, but of mind, spirit, and heart. It reflects the strength of their ancestors, the grace of their culture, and the courage they carry in their hearts.

During the Festival Tarum Dance night, Catarman, Northern Samar shared a very colorful and variant celebration, and a story of Catarman, Northern Samar. This is the story of a modest family-a mother and father who discovered in their weaving of beautiful tikog grassmats a source of hope and center of their lives. Despite having tough hands and resilient spirit, their main product, the mats and bags, and the building of a good life, in Catarman's less busy parts, were their only concern.

However, their hearts were troubled because their son who was born blind. While the boy was wishing to aid his parents, they were wishing to give their son the eyes of a gift. They prayed with every knot, every weave. They labored. And with every blade of grass, they kept their hope alive. Their prayers were answered and the mercy of Ginangam nga Inang Kalipay, Our Lady of the Annunciation, opened their son's eyes. The darkness which was before is now the light. The difficulties which were before, are now the victories.

Through their simple handiwork, they have found a means of livelihood not only helping to sustain their families but also that of people from other places, and even those around the globe. This is the significance of the Tarum Dance Festival. It serves as a recognition of their origins, their durability, and their luminous future. It is a festive time of family, religion, and the strong spirit that characterizes every Catarmananon in Catarman, Northern Samar.

In order to keep cultural traditions alive and staying relevant in the modern world, he suggests that local storytelling should be modernized by creating and producing more materials to be used as historical references such as coffee table magazines, brochures, and digital documentaries, Mr. Tabiaso also said that because of the gadgets, youth these days are disconnected from one another. They are calling for a collaboration between the Church and the Local Government Unit (LGU) to preserve the culture and the history of the church of Catarman, Northern Samar through the historical events.

Key Informant Ms. Lea Devotee of Our Lady of the Annunciation

Ms. Lea has been Mother Butler of the Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish for twenty-six years, a period that highlights her deep love for the Blessed Mother. In an interview, she shared about the first days of the parish and mentioned that the first church was a very small concrete building that only made up a part of the present large one. She started her work in 1981 with the help of Msgr. Victorio Galit. At that time, she got to know the church's background well through the catechism classes which she is now very happy to teach to her own children and grandchildren.

In relation to the celebration of the parish, Ms. Lea noted that despite the passing of time, the fundamental fiesta rituals in Catarman, Northern Samar have scarcely altered, revolving mainly around a nine-day novena to Our Lady of the Annunciation. Always a devoted Mother Butler, she is almost always at the Masses and events, considering the fiesta as a very important period for family get-togethers. The day of the feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation or every 29th of August is the Pontifical Feast Mass. Usually it is the bishop of the diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar who leads the mass together with all the priests of the local parishes of Northern Samar.

She described that the mass started with a grand entrance of the bishop and priest, the cathedral’s bells ring continuously while a long, formal procession moves up the center aisle, the altar servers bearing a crucifix and incense, followed by dozens of visiting priests from different local parishes in Northern Samar, and finally the Bishop wearing his full liturgical vestments, including the mitre the bishop's hat and holding his crozier the pastoral staff.

Ms. Lea expressed concern for the future, noting a disconnect with the younger generation whose attention is often captured by mobile devices even during sacred services. To ensure that both faith and history of the parish would endure, and continue her tireless service, hoping to preserve the real spirit of the Mass for the devotees.

Key Informant Ms. Zenaida Devotee of Our Lady of the Annunciation

Ms. Zenaida's official holder as a Mother Butler in the Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation is for five years now, although her regular involvement in church programs goes back to a much longer time. Wanting to express her love for Our Lady of the Annunciation and make new friends through church activities, she even finds praying at the church as the best outlet for her feelings and soul, thus calling the parish her home or a comfort zone.

Her devotion to the church is mainly based on the stories of the ancestors in the parish that were mostly shared orally. Still, she worries that the gap between modern ways and people is expanding as the youth are getting away from the church. She observes that they are even using mobile phones at the Mass celebration which is a sign of how far they have gone to the point of faith forgetting. Nevertheless, the present-day problems do not make Ms. Zenaida lose faith. On the contrary, she is a firm believer that the church through its special programs aimed at the youth will not only attract them to the church but also make them the center of the community again.

Key Informant Maribeth Devotee of Our Lady of the Annunciation

a lifelong devotee in her late 70s, provided an invaluable historical and emotional narrative for the study. Having witnessed nearly eight decades of celebrations in honor of Our Lady of the Annunciation, her recollections offer a vivid look at how the devotion transformed from a simpler, deeply solemn community ritual into the grand municipal fiesta of today.

Maribeth reminisced about the appearance of the fiesta in her childhood and younger days in the post-war period. She portrayed the celebration as an occasion that was not commercialized at all and was greatly focused on the community and church. According to her, even if the town has developed socio-economically, a change from the recollection of the old, simple houses to the busy town hall, the enlarged church building and the huge number of the faithful during the religious parade are the signs of a tiny visita he described traditional customs which are losing their essence or changing. She narrated the great seriousness of the novena when the whole family would walk barefoot to the church as a sign of penance *panata*. She also mentioned the detailed care in the *pagbihis* the ritual washing and dressing of the image of the Virgin Mary, a holy work handed down from one specific local family to another. To her, these religious activities were very demanding in the sense of sacrifice and she compared them with today's practices of the young generation which are more comfortable.

Key Informant Alex Devotee of Our Lady of the Annunciation Photo Source: Taken by the Researcher

Mr. Alex pointed out that the conversion of *visita* into *fiesta* is a matter of the home domestic church above all else. He associated his memory of a house where the daily rosary and the yearly fiesta were the two main elements of family life. He detailed how his family's deep love for the Virgin Mary's fiat his acceptance of God's will really led to his son's decision to become a priest. Alex's son is the one who serves in the very church altar before which they have been praying through generations is, for him, the greatest sign of the Virgin's favor to their family. Lolo Alex, who has seen the parishes transforming their lifestyles through many decades, affirmed on how the church *fête* has changed its focus from a very intimate, local church event to a very big and multi-sectoral operation.

He reminisced the old times when the church community was very small and every family was informed on who was making the *andas* procession carriage or cooking for the pilgrims. He talked about how his son and other priests keep on working to make sure that the secular features of the town fiesta like beauty contests, commercial fairs, and concerts will not take away the solemnity of the novenario and the main procession. He said that the real achievement of the fiesta is this respect, cooperation between the town officials and the priests.

Key Informant Fritz Youth Representative

Fritz has been a committed altar server at Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish in Catarman, Northern Samar, for four years. Initially, he joined the service when his cousin invited him. Although his service comes mainly from his faith, he confesses that his understanding of the formal history of the parish comes only from the oral narratives of the parishioners and the pieces of information visible in the local tarpaulins.

The church was first established by Franciscan missionaries who had it as a very simple wood and nipa structure, like a traditional kubo was his meaning from these accounts. Over time, the parish was elevated to a Cathedral, with Most Rev. Angel T. Hobayan serving as his first bishop; a man so revered that he was buried within the church walls following his passing. For Fritz and his family, the devotion to Our Lady of the Annunciation is a central part of their identity. He faithfully participates in the nine-day novena masses, while his family upholds the Filipino tradition of hospitality by preparing meals to welcome relatives who traveled from afar for the fiesta. He also join the penitential walks, reflecting on the Passion of Christ along the main roads. Together with his fellow altar server, family and friends. They also participated the the Good Friday procession ,a life-sized religious statues or pasos representing the Christ's passion with the statue of Our Lady of the Annunciation was pulled or carried through the darkened streets, accompanied by a sea of devotees holding candles.

Key Informant Napoleon Trex Youth Representative

Trex, a resident of Allen, Northern Samar, who relocated to Catarman, Northern Samar has dedicated five years of service as an altar server at Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish. While he admits that some details of the church's history have faded from his memory over time, he clearly recalls that the original structure was built from humble wood and nipa before being destroyed by a powerful storm. He attributes the resilience displayed by the Franciscan priests as being the main factor that led to the rebuilding and even strengthening of the church, thus making it the well-protected landmark that it is today. As one of the highly respected members of the church community, Trex is not only spiritually very devoted but also takes part in novena masses, pilgrimages, the veneration of sacred images, and the saints' procession.

Thinking of the present-day difficulties of the parish, Trex reveals that one of the main reasons for the loss of importance of local history and religious traditions is the constant use of digital devices by the youth. He adds that technology usually acts as a diversion for young people from their cultural heritage. Notwithstanding his worries, he still believes in the saving of the culture or customs. Trex shows the Diocesan Heritage Team as the successful case of a project which could be repeated in other places; he says that with the help of historical information and educational shows being strategically located outside the parish building, the church will be able to close the past-present gap effectively, thus making the inheritance of the church visible and relevant to everyone.

Key Informant Rose Youth Representative

Rose said that the devotion to Our Lady of Annunciation is something very deeply ingrained in her family since a lot of her family members were already doing it. She remembers that she had been going to novena masses since she was little. For her the celebration is not only a holiday but a very important part of her identity as a young Catarmanon. Rose saw a definite difference between how young people and older generations get involved. Her elders, for example, are very much into the serious, liturgical side of things (like going through the silent novena prayers and praying traditional rosaries), whereas she recognized that the students and young people of her age group get attracted to the lively, festive parts of the fiesta. She pointed out how the youth take part in the street dancing, the cultural contests in schools, and the artistic hanging of community decorations. Rose acknowledged that a gap exists in the minds of some students who see the fiesta only as a holiday from school or a party rather than a historical and religious celebration.

According to her, local schools and parish youth ministries should come up with more innovative ways of collaborating, like using interactive seminars or youth-led cultural festivals, to educate people about the real

history of the Our Lady of the Annunciation devotion, thus, making it stay significant for the succeeding generations.

Key Informant Jay Ann Youth Representative

Jayann said that her most profound attachment to the fiesta comes from school-related activities. She explained that during the fiesta week, local high schools and universities in Catarman almost completely stop their normal classes to hold various intramural cultural and socio-civic events. According to Jayann, engaging in school-wide contests like festival dance groups, choirs performing local hymns, and creatively decorating booths is really the point where students' dedication and community pride merge.

The old generations mostly did devotion by themselves or just with the family. But Jayan was very forceful in showing that the fiesta is a very attractive, social, communal bonding of students. For her and her friends, the fiesta is a kind of homecoming event on a big scale where the students who are living off Catarman come back to their origins and peer circles. Jayann raised concerns about the heavy commercialization of the celebration. She noted that some of her peers get easily swept up in the disco nights, concerts, and commercial fairs, sometimes forgetting the patron saint at the center of the event. She recommended that the student council and youth-led parish organizations launch more peer-to-peer historical awareness campaigns, so students don't just celebrate the fun, but also protect the heritage.

Key Informant Emie Lyn Educator

Teacher Emielyn shared that within the Department of Education's decentralized curriculum framework, teachers endeavor to weave general elements of Northern Samar's culture, arts, and traditions into social studies and humanities classes. Yet, in all honesty, she shared that she has not yet given a lesson on the history and development of the devotion to Our Lady of the Annunciation nor the town's change from a colonial visita to a flourishing parish community. When the researcher wondered why the history has not been in the classroom discussion until now, Emielyn replied without hesitation that the biggest reason is the very few written, verified, and easily accessible reference materials. She was very clear that in the absence of these standard textbooks or educational modules, teachers will simply end up not teaching those subjects.

To date, stories about the devotion are transmitted mainly through the oral traditions of families, or through the little and scattered records in church archives, which has left a very large gap in the formal academic field. : Because this history is not yet structurally taught in schools, Emielyn observed a noticeable disconnect among students. While the youth are deeply enthusiastic about the modern *fiesta*, participating eagerly in school festival contingents, street dancing, and social events, they generally lack an intellectual understanding of *why* the celebration exists or how it shaped the socio-political identity of Catarmanon people over the centuries.

Key Informant Jerry Educator

Teacher Jerry said that how he celebrates depends on the setting. The public-school students he teaches get generally acquainted with the culture and the pride of the local fiesta as part of the regular curriculum whereas with his gospel teaching students it is the spiritual essence of the celebration and Mary's fiat teaching the children that he focusses on the significance of the Annunciation and theological meaning of the liturgical rituals. Teacher Jerry verified that formally the historical transition from *visita* to *fiesta* is not something he teaches in the school curriculum because of the absence of a lesson plan and historical references. Even in catechism classes, the emphasis is on teaching the faith, most especially the Catholic doctrines, rather than the history of the local church of Catarman which grew from colonial times. Apart from he noted that the youth learn the faith but they lack the history that connects their faith to their specific homeland.

Teacher Jerry even went ahead to dream of a place in the future when school lessons and church catechism will be harmoniously complementing each other through the use of localized historical data. He mentioned that if it was possible to have the results of this thesis implemented in schools, teachers similar to him would find it very easy to make a connection between the secular and the sacred. By telling the real historical hardships of the early

Catarmananon ancestors who put up the original visita, students would not only be inclined to show their modern fiesta through respect but more so they will understand the fiesta in a very intellectual way.

Religious Cultural Practices Associated in the Celebration of Our Lady of Annunciation.

Rev. Father Julius Agustus R. Balanquit said the annual celebration of Our Lady of Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar is celebrated every August 29. It combines solemn Roman Catholic traditions with lively cultural practices to encourage the community to be one, share identity, and spiritual reflection. The celebration starts with Nine-days of novena masses. The Nine-day novena mass or Siyam na-aldaw in waray, all of the devotees of Our Lady of the Annunciation would pray the Holy Rosary, the specific Novena to Our Lady of the Annunciation, asking for her intercession and guidance. Each day has a sponsored from the different local organizations, barangays, and institutions, local schools and community it is their faith and service. The parish priest will share reflections about the Blessed Mother, particularly her fiat or her "yes" to God's will, that inspired the community. The novena mass includes in the events was the living rosary, flower offerings to Our Lady of the Annunciation, and the community processions together with the devotees.

According to Mr. Randy C. Tobiaso, Municipality Tourism Officer on the Vesperas in August 28, a day before the Our Lady of the Annunciation town fiesta, they held a lively and colorful civic grand parade with Local Government Units, Pulisya ng Catarman and every school band in Catarman Northern Samar from elementary to college level was participating, and after the parade was the competition for the exhibition in every participating school. The Vesperas is one of the busiest days before the fiesta.

On the evening of Vesperas the mass is often presided over by the Bishop of the Diocese of Catarman along with visiting clergy from the other region. After the mass a solemn procession of the Our Lady of the Annunciation image was conducted together with the devotees and church servants, accompanied by the community, they walked alongside the carozza carrying the image of Our Lady of the Annunciation with candles while they were reciting the rosary, and singing hymns of praise to Our Lady of the Annunciation.

After the solemn procession, there were lot of traditional activities that Catarmanon was busy with, like Community Social Nights that Catarmanon will enjoy themselves dancing with their friends and family, the other activity was a coronation nights of Mr. King and Ms. Queen of Catarman, Northern Samar which is organized by the Local Government Units with the special participations of the Mayor of Catarman, Northern Samar.

And the main event of the Vesperas evening was the The Kuratsa Dance, Catarman, Northern Samar fiesta is not complete without the traditional Kuratsa dance. In the article of Hernani, Province of Eastern Samar the ultimate expression of the Catarmanon joy, community bond, and the cultural pride is Kuratsa dance. It is a performance of flirtation, pursuing, and storytelling of a man and a woman with the distinct phases, first is the: The Approach, it is a dance begins with a man and a woman going to the floor as the traditional string band Tugtog san Kuratsa with Kuratsa Mayor the major key and Kuratsa Menor the minor key. They will dance gracefully toward each other, acknowledging their partner with respectful bows.

Second is The Courtship, the man begins to actively pursue the woman, attempting to win her attention and affection, the man will dance around her with expressive, energetic steps. The woman playfully evades him, using her skirt or a handkerchief to tease, retreat, and coquet, keeping him at a distance while maintaining eye contact. And the last is the Match of the music which was very lively, joyful crescendo, the woman will finally accept the man. The man and woman danced synchronizely. The evening end with free drinks for all the Catarmanon enjoying the company of the friends and families.

On the day of the Fiesta of Our Lady of the Annunciation, Mother Butler Ms. Lea a key informants mentioned in the interview of the researcher that in the morning was the Pontifical Feast Mass. It was traditionally led by the Bishop of the Diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar alongside all of the priests from the local parishes in Northern Samar, were duly present. The mass will began with a grand entrance of the Bishop and priest. The cathedral's bell rings continuously while a long, formal procession moves up the center aisle. The altar servers bearing a crucifix and incense, followed by the priest and the visiting priest from different local parishes in

Northern Samar, and finally the Bishop wearing his full liturgical vestments, including the mitre the bishop's hat and holding his crozier the pastoral staff.

The cathedral choir will sang triumphantly Waray-Waray liturgical entrance hymns. Because of the solemnity of the feast day, incense used throughout the mass. The Bishop incenses the altar and the beautifully decorated statue of Our Lady of the Annunciation, which is mostly displayed near the sanctuary, surrounded by massive arrangements of a colorful flowers. The sermon s about the local history with faith. The Bishop talked about the Virgin Mary, reflects on the historical events of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar, who survived historical raids, fires, and destructive typhoons and the challenges of the community to live out unity, charity, and gratitude. The Holy the Pontifical Feast Mass was attended by the devotees of Our Lady of the Annunciation together with their families. It also serves as a meaningful way to reunite family members who have been separated by time or distance.

After the Pontifical Feast Mass traditionally the Catarmanon prepared some foods for the salo-salo to welcome thier relatives, friends from the other places in Northern Samar. They also prepared a small altar of Our Lady of the Annunciation and place it in the entrance of the house. The Catarmanons also prepare their houses by hanging new window curtains, cleaning the surroundings, and painting some walls. For the Catarmanon, this was the only time of the year they open their house to the public to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of the Annunciation, which they prepare for it with such deep devotion.

Another celebration was being celebrated in the parish was a religious cultural practices during the Holy Week or Semana Santa. The Panaet or Station of the Cross, many Catarmanons participated in the traditional station of the cross, especially the younger generations,one of the key informants Fritz mentioned that they join the penitential walks, reflecting on the Passion of Christ along the main roads. Together with his fellow altar server, family and friends they also participated the the Good Friday procession ,a life-sized religious statues or pasos representing the Christ's passion with the statue of Our Lady of the Annunciation are pulled or carried through the darkened streets, accompanied by a sea of devotees holding candles.

Another activity being celebrated was the Tarum Festival. Tarum festival was a colorful cultural celebration held annually in Catarman, Northern Samar, every late January. It is to honor Señor Sto. Niño de Catarman, Northern Samar. The festival had grand street dances, tribal competitions came from the local barangays of Norther Samar, and theatrical performances of town's history, faith, and resilient.

According to Municipality tourism officer Mr. Tabiozo. Tarum, a word deeply-rooted in the soul of Catarman, Northern Samar it is a name born from a legend. Iyt was said that the old man was sharpening his “sundang” or bolo, when a group of foreign travelers asked a question he didn’t understand. Thinking they were asking about his blade, he replied “Kataruman”, he said the sharpness of his bolo. From that simple exchange, a name emerged, Catarman. But Tarum is more than just a word, it became the town’s identity. It stands for sharpness, not because of the blades, but of mind, spirit, and heart. It reflects the strength of their ancestors, the grace of their culture, and the courage they carry in their hearts.

During the Festival Tarum Dance night, Catarman, Northern Samar shared a very colorful and variant celebrations, and a story of Catarman, Northern Samar. The story of a simple family, a mother and a father, who were given hope and found their purpose through making beautiful things out of tikog grass. Through their hard working hands and deep faith, they create mats and bags, making a life for themselves in the pretty quiet area of Catarman. However, their hearts were broken when their baby was born blind. While the little boy wished to be of help to his parents, they wanted to give him the present of sight.

While they were weaving and making knots, they were also praying. They were laboring. Besides, with every string of grass, they were holding on to their dreams. Their prayers went to the sky, and by the kindness of Ginangam nga Inang Kalipay, Our Lady of the Annunciation, their son's eyes were opened. Where there was darkness before, now there is light. Where there was difficulty before, now there is success. Their humble handiwork turned into a successful business that not only reached other towns but also countries around the

world. This is the purpose of the Tarum Dance Festival. It is a tribute to their roots, resilience, and radiant future. A celebration of family, faith, and fierce pride that defines every Catarmananon in Catarman, Northern Samar. The other festival that Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish in Catarman Northern Samar celebrated was the The Ibabao Festival. It was also called Northern Samar Foundation Day. The festival starts from mid of May to June 19, it is an annual and month-long celebration held of Catarman, Northern Samar it value the Northern Samar heritage and historical identity, as Samar Island was formerly known as Ibabao on June 19, 1965 before the province's was made. There were The Grand Float parade and the participated from all Municipalities of Northern Samar. They were showcasing a colorful floats that tells the story of each town, they were proudly showing off the food they planted, the life of the fishing folks, and the culture they live by every day.

From the Provincial Municipality of Northern Samar they said that the highlights of the Tarum Festival is the Festival Dance Competition there were twelve (12) contingents from the different municipalities of Northern Samar. Showcasing their town's festival through lively music and dance. The twelve (12) festival tribes came from the municipalities of Catarman Northern Samar, Gamay Northern Samar, Silvino Lubos Northern Samar, Las Navas Northern Samar, Lapinig Northern Samar, Catubig Northern Samar, Lope de Vega Northern Samar, Laoang Northern Samar, Biri Northern Samar, San Roque, Bobon Northern Samar, San Jose Northern Samar and Pambujan Northern Samar and San Antonio. They were performing with passion and colors that reflect the heritage, culture and identity of Northern Samar.

More than a competition, the Ibabao Festival Dance also serves as a platform to promote cultural preservation and foster a sense of community and identity Norther Samar. Behind the performances of every Municipalities, the panel of judges meticulously evaluated the participating tribes, led by the head of the dance committee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts together with National Committee on Museums of NCCA. The winner of the competition was given a trophy and a cash prizes, and a consolation prize for the participating contestant.

Documentary Material

"A Heritage of Faith: The Legacy of Our Lady of the Annunciation" is a documentary work presented in a style of a coffee table magazine. It serves as a visual and cultural tribute to the spiritual legacy of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar. By pairing evocative photography with scholarly historical roots, this keepsake archives the town's religious identity from the celebration of the fiesta and festivals ensuring these cultural traditions remain a living legacy for future generations.

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the research journey, outlines major discoveries, synthesizes the main conclusions, and shares suggestions that stem from the investigation titled From Visita to Fiesta: a Historical and Cultural Study of the Celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar.

Summary

The objective of this research was to trace the historical foundation and cultural traditions of the dedication to Nuestra Señora de la Anunciación or Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar, and explore how the devotion can serve as the "Cultural Magnet" for the community in terms of identity formation and spiritual resilience. Utilizing a qualitative historical research design, this study gathered archival data and oral histories from key informants, including local religious historians, tourism officials, church servers, and longtime devotees to trace the town's transition from a humble 16th-century Jesuit mission outpost visita into a prominent, cathedral-centered provincial capital.

A historical data shows that Catarman (originally Calatman or Catadman) was founded by Malay voyagers and was later a Jesuit mission station under Catubig in 1605. It was made a visita in 1612 under the Residencia de Palapag and had a missionary in common with Bobon until it received permanent missionary assignments. The town had its share of historical hardships. It suffered the Agustin Sumuroy Rebellion in 1649, lethal childhood

epidemics in 1715-1716, destructive raids by Moro pirates and a calamitous typhoon on December 8, 1851 that wrecked half of the town and the church building. The Franciscans took over pastoral leadership after the global expulsion of the Jesuits in 1768, while actively reinforcing the stone church infrastructure and the local socio economic terrain. The 20th century was filled with great milestones, most especially the canonical erection of the Diocese of Catarman on March 11, 1975, which made the parish church a Cathedral See. On March 11, 2025, the parish celebrated its historic 50th Golden Founding Anniversary under the leadership of Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Charles John Brown.

The study explores the rich traditions surrounding the feast day of August 29. This date was deliberately chosen to fit in with the sequential regional "fiesta system", apart from the liturgical Solemnity of the Our Lady of the Annunciation on March 25. The festivities include the Siyam na-aldaw or novena masses for nine days, a festive civic grand parade on the Vesperas (August 28), the performance of the traditional Kuratsa dance and the solemn Pontifical Feast Mass. The parish also celebrated bigger socio-cultural events such as the observances of Holy Week, the Panaet and Good Friday processions, the Tarum Festival in January in honor of Señor Sto. Niño, and the Ibabao Festival that was celebrated all over the province. To protect the historical roots and cultural practices from the ravages of fast-paced modernity and digital temptations among present-day youth, the study ended with the production of a high-caliber documentary-type material in the form of a coffee table magazine, *A Heritage of Faith: The Legacy of Our Lady of the Annunciation*.

The research is based on the following assumptions of the study: 1. The historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar were rich and diverse. 2. The religious cultural practices associated with the Celebration of Our Lady of the Annunciation were deeply culturally ingrained and 3. A meaningful documentary material can be made.

FINDINGS

The following are the salient findings of the research:

The study finds that the historical roots of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman were rich and diverse. They came from pre-colonial Malay voyagers from Borneo and Makassar Island who established Calatman or Catadman along the natural sea route of the Pacific Ocean. These roots expanded with formal Christianization through early Jesuit missionary expeditions led by Father Miguel Gomez in 1597. This effort led to Catarman became a mission station under Catubig in 1605 and its placement under the Residencia de Palapag in 1612.

This diversity includes a long line of 20 Jesuit missionaries who served and shared visita with Bobon until King Charles III expelled them in 1768. After that, Fray Nicolas Antonio de Herrera took over the pastoral leadership, followed by a series of dedicated Franciscan friars who served until 1898. The historical timeline shows remarkable resilience. The devotion endured being burned during the Agustin Sumuroy Rebellion in 1649. It also survived a deadly childhood epidemic in 1715 to 1716, which was controlled through novenas to San Francisco Javier. Continuous Moro pirate raids were met by the strengthening of a stone kuta (fortress) under Father Vicente Lopez. Additionally, a terrible typhoon on December 8, 1851, destroyed half the town and the church building. This rich history led to the construction of a stone church around 1895. In 1900, the clergy became secular. Catarman was declared the capital of Northern Samar in 1968. The Diocese of Catarman was officially established on March 11, 1975. Finally, the 50th Golden Founding Anniversary will be celebrated on March 11, 2025.

The liturgical Solemnity of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Catarman, Northern Samar on March 25, the main custom is the town fiesta, which was held annually on August 29. This date was carefully chosen by church leaders to create a sequential regional fiesta system in Northern Samar. The Siyam na-aldaw or Nine-day novena masses is the praying of the Holy Rosary, living rosaries, flower offerings, and solemn community processions are examples of spiritual pillars that endure across generations and play a crucial role in establishing a common social identity and a connection to the community's ancestors.

The vibrant Vesperas civic grand parade on August 28, which includes neighborhood schools and the Pulisya ng Catarman, community social nights, and the commitment of longtime volunteers like the Mother Butlers who provide decades of service were examples of how this cultural ingrainedness extends to civic and communal cohesion. It is also greatly manifested through the Holy Week rites of the Panaet penitential walks and the Good Friday candlelit processions, along with the traditional Kuratsa dance which is the highlight of group happiness and pride and is characterized by different phases like The Approach, The Courtship, and The Match accompanied by the Tugtug san Kuratsa string band. These age-old traditions also involve larger regional celebrations, like the Tarum Festival, which pays tribute to Señor Sto in late January. Niño illustrates the province-wide Ibabao Festival with dancing competitions and big float parades, as well as the local story of the making of sundang (bolo) and the ancestral craft of tikog grass weaving.

The key output of the research is the suggested creation of a coffee table magazine named: "A Heritage of Faith: The Legacy of Our Lady of the Annunciation". It will have the collected stories of the lives, pictures, and thoughts of the individuals, which will also act as a learning and memorial resource.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Deeply honoring Our Lady of the Annunciation was the very first and most fundamental defining element of Catarman Northern Samar's entire civil, historical, and social history, as the change in the Catarman, Northern Samar community of faith from an insecure 16th-century visita to a thriving Cathedral is the most evident proof. The overall history of the town, which features the arrival of the Malay people during the pre-colonial period, various Jesuit and Franciscan changes, and enduring through war, childhood diseases, pirate attacks, and most destructive typhoons, shows how the local belief and church building have been a steady source of strength for the people of Catarmanon in every period of the change.
2. The serves as a primary "Cultural Magnet" that is deeply ingrained in the local people's mind, their consciousness, is evident from the constancy of the Siyan na-aldaw novena masses, the Vesperas grand parade, the traditional Kuratsa dance, Holy Week processions, and regional festivals like the Tarum and Ibabao festivals. Besides the traditional rituals, they have strong mechanisms to bring the people together socially and cohesively as well as to keep their intangible culture heritage a very live and unifying factor in their present day civic life instead of just a static relic of the past through this dynamic ritual system which is also a good mode of interaction between the secular municipal authorities and spiritual worship.
3. Creating rich documentary materials, for instance, a coffee table magazine as proposed, is definitely a crucial approach for the preservation of heritage. Through combining beauty of visual narrative with rigorous historical research, this paper finds that these media are really capable of effectively closing the gap between generations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The light of the forementioned findings and conclusion, the researcher strongly recommends the following.

1. For the Local Government Unit (LGU) and Tourism Office can take a step further by implementing the historical timeline that is already documented as part of their local tourism and cultural map. "Vesperas" and the beautiful change in church architecture are two cultural landmarks that can be highlighted in the map. These can be ways to appeal for funding to continue heritage preservation and promotion.
2. For the DepEd Northern Samar (Education Sector) would consider Social Science and History teachers to a great extent. These teachers can use this study's results especially the use of oral histories as a mode of teaching to localize curriculum content. This research work serves as a starting point for exposing students to the role of Spanish colonial instructure and the development of local religious traditions.
3. For the Church and Religious Organizations, The Diocese and parish urged by the Diocese and parish authorities to set up a separate parish archive or a small heritage gallery. This area may be used to keep the historical stories, archival documents, and the oral testimonies collected during this study. It will serve as a fixed place where both locals and visitors can discover the "Visita to Fiesta" ordeal.

4. For Future Researchers future studies may expand on this research by conducting a comparative analysis of other visitas within Northern Samar. This can help in finding out whether the architectural and social layouts observed in Catarman, Northern Samar are the same throughout the region or only the capital is a reflection of these, making it even more a part of the historical story of the province.

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