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Philippine Carmelites launch independent province

Religious Life

Manila, Philippines — A mission area of the Dutch Carmelites in the Philippines has emerged from a painful era of establishment with members and partners prepared to take on the challenge of carrying on as an independent province.

As first provincial of the Philippine Province of Blessed Titus Brandsma, "It makes me feel a little tense," Carmelite Fr. Christian Buenafe, 47, said at provincial headquarters in Quezon City, northeast of Manila. "We will run our own structure, finances, formation, leadership and governance."

The Dutch province established an independent fund for the new province's annual operation and formation, which Buenafe estimated would cost around 12 million pesos (some \$265,000), excluding expenses for pastoral programs and for missions.

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