

By Bobby M. Reyes of Bacon-Sorsogon (Bac-Sor) City and West Covina, CA

My literary guru, Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao, has been called by many critics as "irreverent." He makes fun even of the clergy and the lay people in his writings and exercise of humor. He has been saying that he is not an atheist because he believes in the existence of God. But he has been stressing that religion is between man and God. And worship should be a personal relationship between mortals and the Divine Authority.

Mr. Bunao says that he has no axe to grind against the Born-Again Christians, although people may misinterpret his saying that he would write someday my biography and call it, "Bobby Reyes: The Quintessential Born-Again **st** Filipino." Yes, he has been saying that Born-Again Christians, especially Filipino Catholics, should have been more proactive in matters of scandals in the Catholic Church, in the Philippine government and even in American politics.

And speaking of the Sabbath, Mr. Bunao says that the Filipino idiom, "sabat nang sabat," was taken from the root word "sabi," the Filipino term for "to speak" and Sabbath Day. He says that the Spanish friars and the American clergy—who followed the Hispanic missionaries in the Islands—kept on giving long sermons during the Sabbath Day and they alone could speak during religious rites and masses on Saturdays and/or Sundays.

The Los Angeles-based Filipino poet-pundit says that on Saturday mornings, he observes the Sabbath by going to his version of the temple. He says that he goes to a coffee shop on Temple Street to meet with friends and fellow philosophers, if not with "filosopos" (sic, the Filipino version of the Greek philosophers?). Sometimes he says that he goes on the same Saturday morning to a second sanctuary, which is the Social Hall of the Filipino-American Community of

Poet-pundit Bunao on Sabbath - MabuhayRadio

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Los Angeles (FACLA) that is also located on Temple Street.

Editor's Note: Perhaps some Filipino Americans emulate Mr. Bunao by congregating on Saturday and Sunday mornings at the Starbucks' along Temple St. in Pomona, California?

Mr. Bunao goes further by saying that if he does not feel well on a Saturday morning, he does observe the Sabbath at home. After all, he says that he has four sanctuaries at home: the left and right temples of his head and the temples of his eyeglasses. In fact, he says that he has too many temples, especially if he adds the places that he visits on Temple Street in Los Angeles (and in Pomona?).

I am able to get back – from time to time – at Mr. Bunao, who has been including his close friends, especially this writer, in doing his self-deprecating humor. The first jest was my announcement in a lampoon issue of then www.yimby.com on April 1, 2000, that Fred Burce Bunao was going back to his parents' original domicile, the Bicol Region in the Philippines, to organize a new Christian church. I said in the lampoon of an article that after he manages to establish his church, his followers would by then hail him as the "El Sadai." The people of Sorsogon Province use term, "sadai," as their version of the Bicolano word, "sadit," meaning, "small." After all, Mr. Bunao calls himself a "six-four-tall writer." Yes, six-inches and four-feet in height.

And of course, I have written proudly that Mr. Bunao has always looked eye-to-eye with Sen. Juan Flavio Velasco and even with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Because more or less, they are of the same height. But then Mr. Bunao is a literary giant and Senator Flavio appears to be colossal among his peers in the Philippine Senate. The Philippine President has still to prove that she is not a moral midget or a dishonest dwarf (according to Mr. Bunao and even Senator Flavio?). # # #

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