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## **DOST-ITDI pushes sustainability culture, plants trees**

In co-stewardship of the vast natural resources under everyone's care, DOST-ITDI and its researchers planted trees along the perimeter of SVD Laudato Si' Farm in Tagaytay City, Cavite Province on December 8, 2023.

*"We take our corporate social responsibility very seriously. And activities like this has become an annual undertaking,"* ITDI Deputy Director for ATS, Dr. Zorayda V. Ang explained.

The bamboo tree planting activity capped the two-day DOST-ITDI Strategic Planning Workshop.

Rev. Fr. Samuel Naceno-Agcaracar, Executive Director of SVD Farm and Rector of the SVD Tagaytay Community, welcomed the ITDI team to the pristine 5.8-hectare landscape. He shared to the researcher-guests that the Laudato Si Farm is Pope Francis' encyclical or papal letter on the environment – On Care for Our Common Home. Laudato

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Si means "Praise be to you" which is the first line of a canticle by St. Francis that praises God and all of His creations.

He added that their mission, as caretakers of "our common home," is to strengthen the spiritual welfare of guests, employees, and the community through the farm's solemn ambiance and daily liturgical services at the SVD Farm Chapel of the Virgin of the Poor. It is also their end goal to help uplift the economic conditions of surrounding communities through livelihood and income-generating training programs. *"We also promote organic farming and try to be scientific in our approaches to realize optimal sustainability of the Farm and its resources."*

In support of their mission, Dr. Ang brought along the ITDI Team to personally experience the fostering a culture of sustainability and responsibility of the Farm. Five groups successfully planted bamboo in five planting sites.

Feeling uplifted, our ITDI team and recipient farmers, in this small activity, bonded in the role that each of us play in building a greener future and creating significant positive impact for tomorrow. (JABacud\PMISD; AMGuevarra\TSD)

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