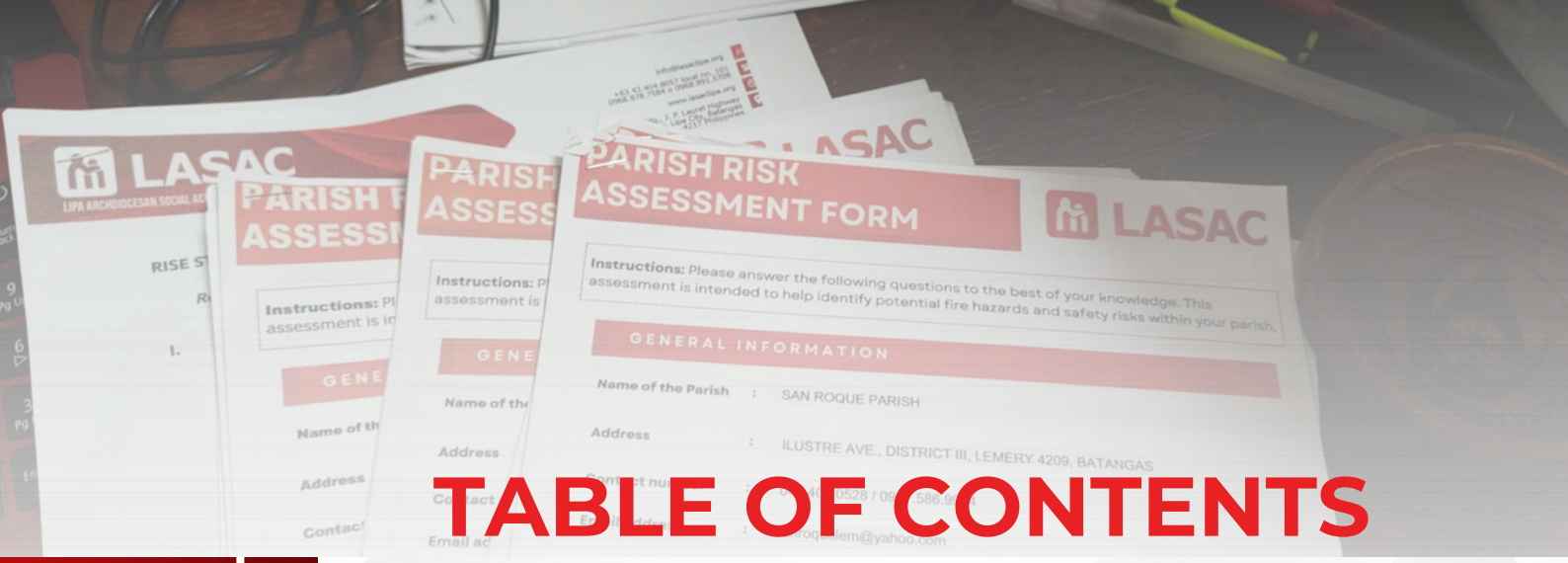
2025 Parish Risk Assessment Report

A Comprehensive Analysis on Parish Risks in the Archdiocese of Lipa

MINISTRY ON SOCIAL SERVICES

MINISTRY ON STEWARDSHIP

LASAC



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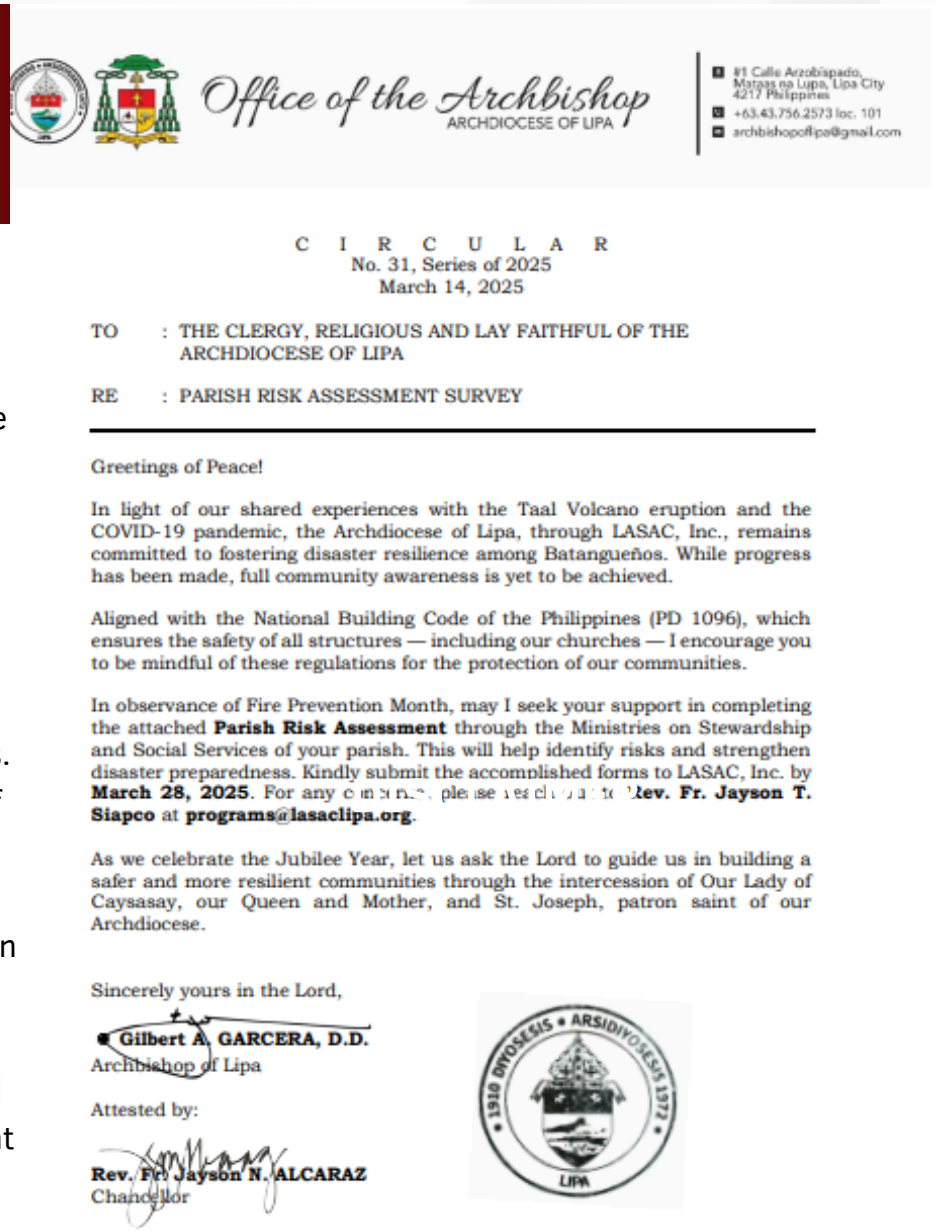
BACKGROUND

On March 14, 2025, the Archdiocese of Lipa issued Circular No. 31, Series of 2025[1], calling for strengthened disaster resilience across the Batangueño community. This initiative was inspired by lessons learned from recent crises, including the Taal Volcano eruption and the COVID-19 pandemic, which underscored the urgent need for proactive disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

CIRCULAR
No. 31, Series of 2025

This Parish Risk Assessment is part of the ongoing preparedness initiative of the Catholic Church in anticipation of different hazards specially the possible major earthquake that may affect the province of Batangas. On October 1, 2025, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC) convened an emergency meeting regarding the status of Taal Volcano and earthquake preparedness. During the meeting, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PHIVOLCS) presented information on the recent 6.9 magnitude earthquake in Cebu. When asked whether Batangas could experience a similar event, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) confirmed that it is possible, given the active fault systems traversing the province.



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C I R C U L A R
No. 31, Series of 2025
March 14, 2025

TO : THE CLERGY, RELIGIOUS AND LAY FAITHFUL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LIPA

RE : PARISH RISK ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Greetings of Peace!

In light of our shared experiences with the Taal Volcano eruption and the COVID-19 pandemic, the Archdiocese of Lipa, through LASAC, Inc., remains committed to fostering disaster resilience among Batangueños. While progress has been made, full community awareness is yet to be achieved.

Aligned with the National Building Code of the Philippines (PD 1096), which ensures the safety of all structures — including our churches — I encourage you to be mindful of these regulations for the protection of our communities.

In observance of Fire Prevention Month, may I seek your support in completing the attached **Parish Risk Assessment** through the Ministries on Stewardship and Social Services of your parish. This will help identify risks and strengthen disaster preparedness. Kindly submit the accomplished forms to LASAC, Inc. by **March 28, 2025**. For any concerns, please reach out to **Rev. Fr. Jayson T. Siapco** at **programs@lasaclipa.org**.

As we celebrate the Jubilee Year, let us ask the Lord to guide us in building a safer and more resilient communities through the intercession of Our Lady of Caysasay, our Queen and Mother, and St. Joseph, patron saint of our Archdiocese.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Gilbert A. GARCERA, D.D.
Archbishop of Lipa

Attested by:

Rev. Fr. Jayson N. ALCARAZ
Chancellor

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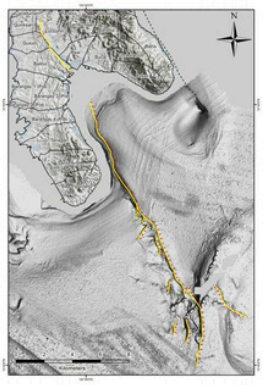
[1] *Archdiocese of Lipa, Circular No. 11, Series of 2025, "Parish Property Inventory Template," January 12, 2025.*

According to PHIVOLCS, aside from the Manila Trench and the Lubang Fault System, the following earthquake generators are present in Batangas:

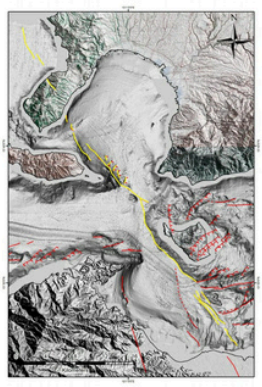
- Calatagan Fault – can generate Magnitude 6.7
- Batangas Bay Fault – can generate Magnitude 7.0
- Calubcub Fault – can generate Magnitude 6.05
- Pulang Bato Fault-can generate Magnitude 5.92
- Lobo Fault – can generate Magnitude 6.26
- Balayan Fault – can generate Magnitude 6.48

Batangas Province Fault System



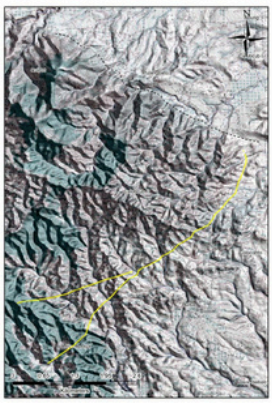
Calatagan Fault

Proposed Fault Name	Calatagan Fault
Fault Category	Active fault
Mechanism	Right lateral strike-slip
Fault features	Reidel Shears (Antithetic and Synthetic faults indicating right lateral movement), offset faults, scarps. Onshore and extends seawards. Fault propagating towards the south
Length (km)	28.3 km
Magnitude	6.78
Historical earthquake	----
Segment termination	Abrupt termination to the south. Reidel shears indicate fault is propagating southwards



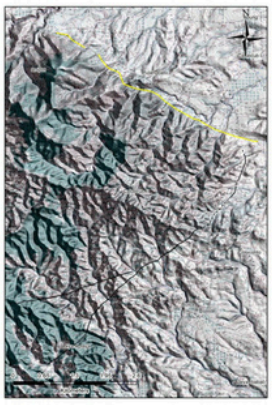
Batangas Bay Fault

Fault Name	Batangas Bay Fault
Fault Category	Active Fault
Mechanism	Right lateral strike-slip
Fault features	Riedel Shear (Synthetic faults indicating right lateral sense of movement), fault scarps, saddle, back scarp. Transects municipal of Mabini from NW to SE.
Length (km)	51.82 km
Magnitude	7.08
Historical earthquake	2017 EQ
Segment termination	Abrupt termination on southern portion. Left-step to Aglubang River Fault



Calubcub Fault

Proposed Fault Name	Calubcub Fault
Fault Category	Potentially Active fault
Mechanism	Reverse fault (?)
Fault features	Offset rivers, linear valley, offset ridges, fault scarp
Length (km)	6.3
Magnitude	6.05
Historical earthquake	----
Segment termination	Fault branches off in Brgy. Calubcub II. Abrupt termination

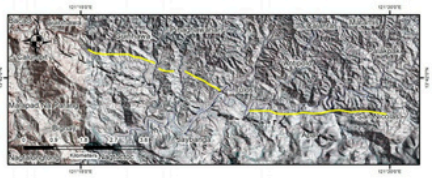


Pulang Bato Fault

Proposed Fault Name	Pulang Bato Fault
Fault Category	Potentially active Fault
Mechanism	Strike-slip
Fault features	Faceted ridges, linear valley, fault saddle
Length (km)	4.78
Magnitude	5.92
Historical earthquake	----
Segment termination	Abrupt termination

Lobo Fault System

Proposed Fault Name	Lobo Fault System: Pinaghawanan Segment
Fault Category	Potentially Active
Mechanism	Right lateral strike-slip fault
Fault features	Offset stream, offset ridge, change in elevation, triangular facet
Length (km)	9.51
Magnitude	6.26
Historical earthquake	----
Segment termination	Abrupt termination



Balayan Fault

Proposed Fault Name	Balayan Fault
Fault Category	Potentially active fault
Mechanism	Right lateral strike-slip
Fault features	Saddle, Triangular Facet, Sudden changes in elevation, Right lateral offset. Onshore and extends seawards. Dissected sea mount.
Length (km)	15.2
Magnitude	6.48
Historical earthquake	----
Segment termination	Abrupt termination

Given these risks, the Archdiocese through the Lipa Archdiocesan Social Action Commission (LASAC), Inc., and in coordination with the Ministries on Stewardship and Social Services, directed all parishes to conduct a comprehensive Parish Risk Assessment. This aligns with the mandates of the National Building Code of the Philippines (PD 1096) and Republic Act No. 10121 (Philippine DRRM Act of 2010)[1], emphasizing the integration of disaster preparedness, mitigation, and resilience in all institutional operations.

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

The Parish Risk Assessment was conducted to:

- Identify potential hazards, structural vulnerabilities, and capacity gaps within parish facilities;
- Strengthen emergency preparedness and community-based DRRM across the Archdiocese; and
- Foster a culture of safety, stewardship, and proactive risk reduction within faith-based communities.

It also serves as a **baseline assessment to guide future safety audits, retrofitting programs, emergency planning, and staff training** to ensure that every parish becomes not only a center of worship but also a center of safety and resilience during disasters.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Success for this initiative will be reflected through:

- 100% parish compliance in submitting complete and validated risk assessment forms;
- Establishment of functional Parish Disaster Control Groups (PDCGs) and designated safety officers;
- Development and regular updating of Parish Emergency and Evacuation Plans;
- Conduct of fire safety and first aid trainings among clergy, staff, and volunteers;
- Installation of basic fire protection and emergency equipment in all parishes; and
- Integration of DRRM in pastoral and administrative policies of the Archdiocese.

LONG TERM VISION

In the long term, this initiative aims to institutionalize a culture of preparedness and safety across all parishes, schools, and church institutions under the Archdiocese of Lipa. It envisions a Church community where:

- Facilities are structurally sound and compliant with national safety standards;
- Clergy, staff, and parishioners are trained to respond effectively to emergencies;
- Church properties are systematically managed and safeguarded; and
- Faith and resilience work hand in hand in protecting life, property, and creation.

[1] *Implementing Rules and Regulations of Presidential Decree No. 1566, Strengthening the Philippine Disaster Control Capability and Establishing the National Program on Community Disaster Preparedness (1978); Republic Act No. 9514, Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008*

RESPONDENTS

54.5% — **36 Parishes**
Number of parishes that submitted a completely filled-up form

19.7% — **13 Parishes**
Number of parishes that submitted but were returned due to missing parts

25.8% — **17 Parishes**
Number of parishes that have NOT YET submitted the filled-up form

Figure 1: Status of Parish Risk Assessment Form Submission

Out of a total of 66 parishes, 36 (54.55%) have successfully submitted a completely filled-up form, which reflects a little over half of the total number of parishes. Thirteen parishes (19.70%) submitted their forms but these were returned due to missing parts, showing that while there was effort to comply, either instructions were not followed carefully or certain parishes lacked the capacity to accomplish the forms properly. In addition, 17 parishes (25.76%) have not complied in any way. This means that almost one-fourth of parishes have provided no data, creating serious gaps in the overall assessment.

ANALYSIS

CHURCH FACILITY


Photo Courtesy: San Sebastian Lipa Cathedral Facebook page

The Church Facility section assesses the structural characteristics, construction types, and occupancy capacities of key parish buildings, including the main church, sacristy, adoration chapel, parish hall, convent, storage rooms, and comfort rooms. This component evaluates how each facility type contributes to the parish's overall resilience against disasters such as earthquakes and fires. Understanding the physical composition of these structures is essential for identifying areas that require retrofitting, maintenance, or compliance with the National Building Code (PD 1096). The findings provide a baseline for improving safety and ensuring that all parish facilities serve as secure spaces for worship and refuge during emergencies.

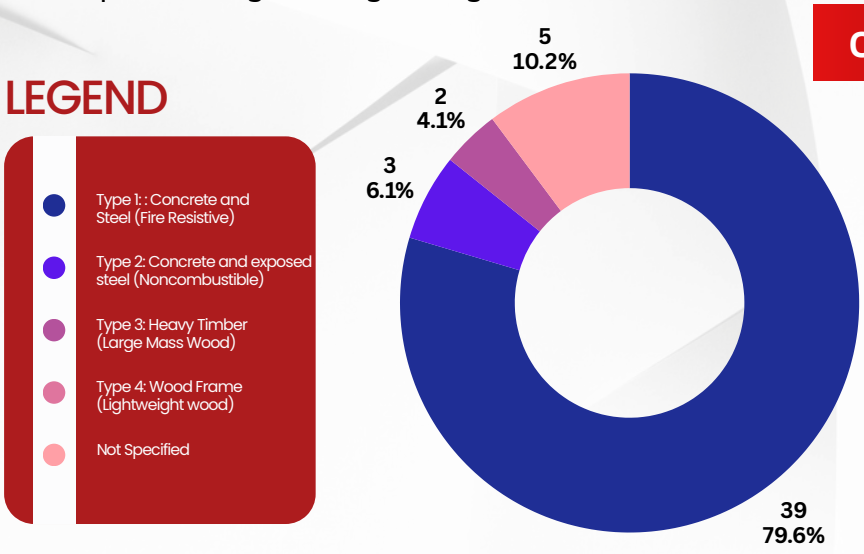
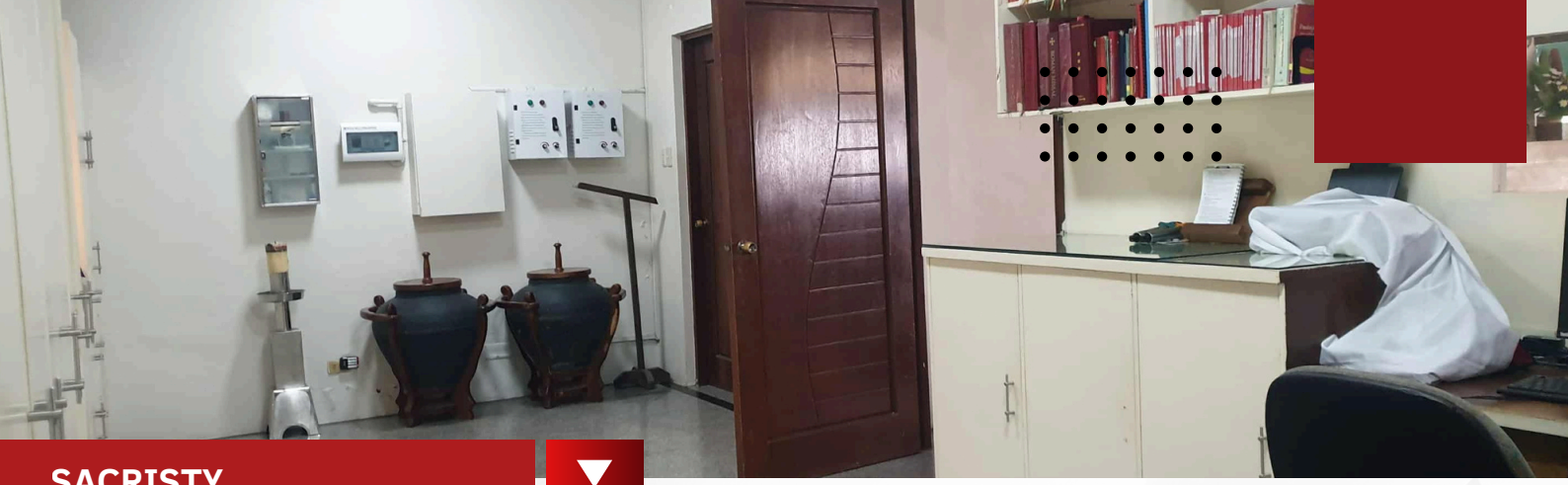


Figure 2: Distribution of Main Church Building Construction Types

CHURCH MAIN BUILDING

The main church buildings in the Archdiocese of Lipa are predominantly of Type 1 construction (concrete and steel, fire-resistive), accounting for 39 parishes (80%). Meanwhile, three parishes (6%) reported that their main church building is Type 2 (concrete and exposed steel, noncombustible), while two parishes (4%) reported Type 3 (heavy timber or large-mass wood). On the other hand, five parishes (10%) did not indicate the type of their main church building. These main church buildings serve as the largest-capacity and most critical facilities, with maximum occupant loads ranging from 200 to 2,000 people. On average, they can accommodate 800 parishioners, while the median load of 700 indicates that at least half of the parishes regularly host large congregations. Their average height is about 15 meters, with most being single-storey structures, though a few extend on their bell towers rise up to 40 meters. **These highlights that the main churches are the primary venues for parish-wide liturgical activities and also serve as potential evacuation centers during disasters**. The predominance of Type 1 concrete and steel fire-resistive construction further highlights their resilience, although taller structures require regular structural inspections to ensure earthquake and wind resistance.



SACRISTY

The sacristies are smaller auxiliary spaces with an average occupant load of 56 people. Like the main churches, most are built with Type 1 construction (36 parishes or 73%). Four parishes (8%) reported Type 2, two parishes (4%) reported Type 3, and two parishes (4%) identified Type 4 (wood frame, lightweight). Five parishes (10%) did not specify. Nearly all sacristies are single-storey and primarily function as preparation and storage spaces.

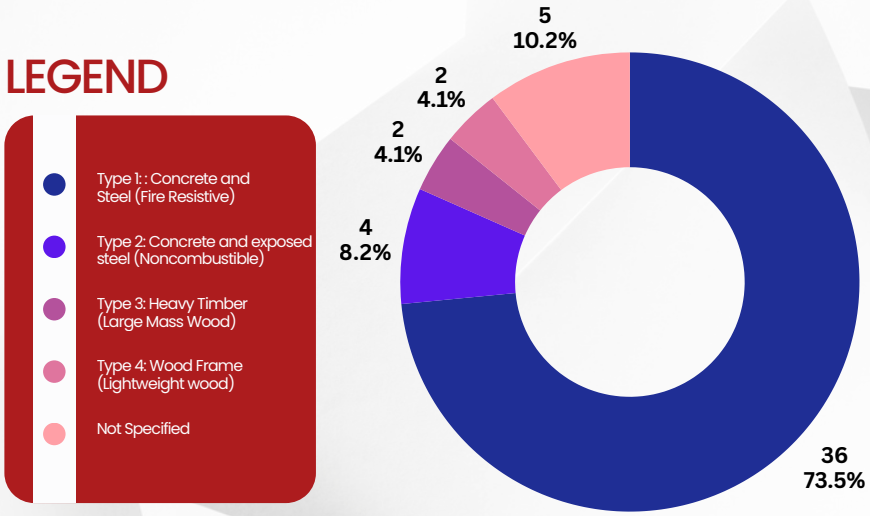


Figure 3. Distribution of Sacristy Construction Types

ADORATION CHAPEL

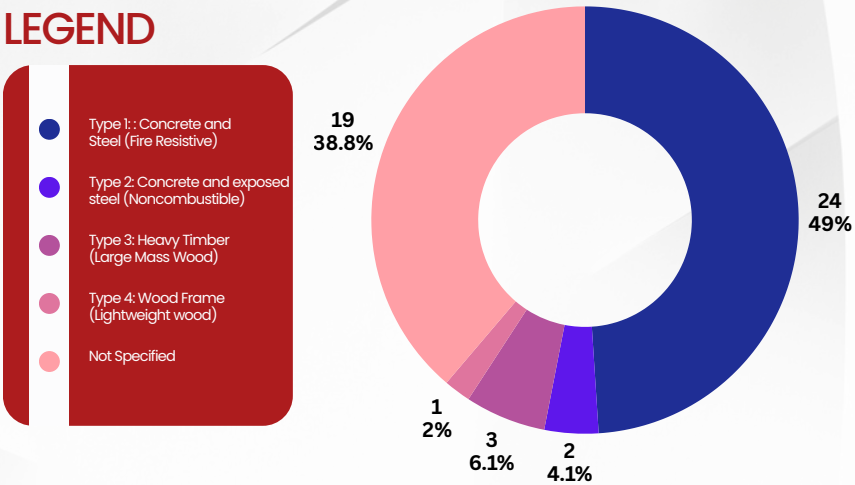


Figure 4. Distribution of Adoration Construction Types

With regard to the adoration chapel, the majority of parishes reported having a Type 1 structure, accounting for 24 parishes (49%). Meanwhile, three parishes (6%) indicated the use of Type 2 materials, and two parishes (4%) reported Type 3. In addition, one parish (2%) stated that its adoration chapel falls under Type 4. On the other hand, 19 parishes left the item blank, which may either indicate that the type of building was not specified or that the parish does not have an adoration chapel.

PARISH HALLS

The parish halls follow a similar pattern, with 36 parishes (73%) using Type 1 construction. Two parishes (4%) reported Type 2 materials, while another two parishes (4%) reported Type 3. Capacities range widely from 30 to 1,000 people, averaging 200 occupants. Notably, 27 out of 49 parish halls (65%) can host more than 100 people. While most are single-storey, their **large capacities and multi-purpose functions from assemblies and feeding programs to emergency sheltering make them vital parish facilities.**

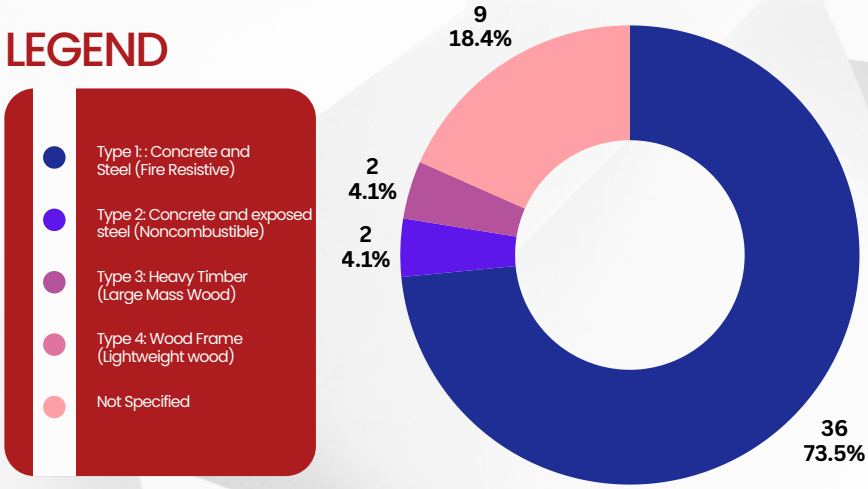


Figure 5. Distribution of Parish Hall Construction Types

CONVENT

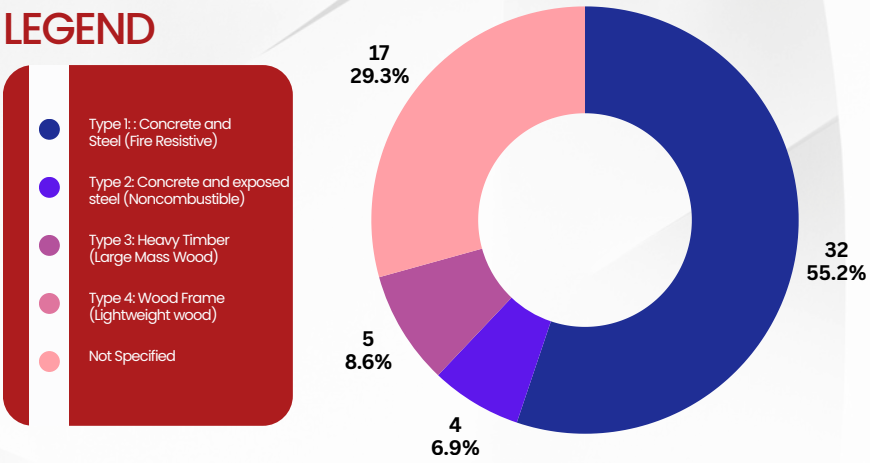


Figure 6. Distribution of Adoration Construction Types

The convents, serving as residential spaces for clergy and staff, are also mostly Type 1 structures (32 parishes). However, 9 parishes reported convents built with Type 2 or Type 3 materials, while 8 parishes did not specify. Convents typically house 3 to 20 residents and are more likely than other parish buildings to be multi-storey, with some extending to three floors. This vertical layout may be advantageous in flood-prone areas but also raises concerns about earthquake vulnerability.

STORAGE ROOM

The storage rooms are primarily Type 1 single-storey buildings (29 parishes or 59%). Seven parishes reported Type 2, two parishes (4%) reported Type 4, while 11 did not indicate their building type. These facilities play an important role in the safekeeping of parish resources, making their safety and durability crucial.

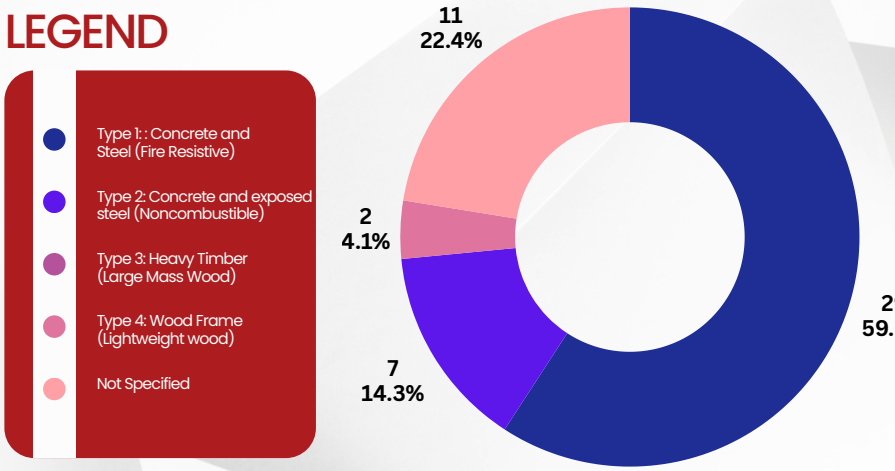


Figure 7. Distribution of Storage Room Construction Types

COMFORT ROOM

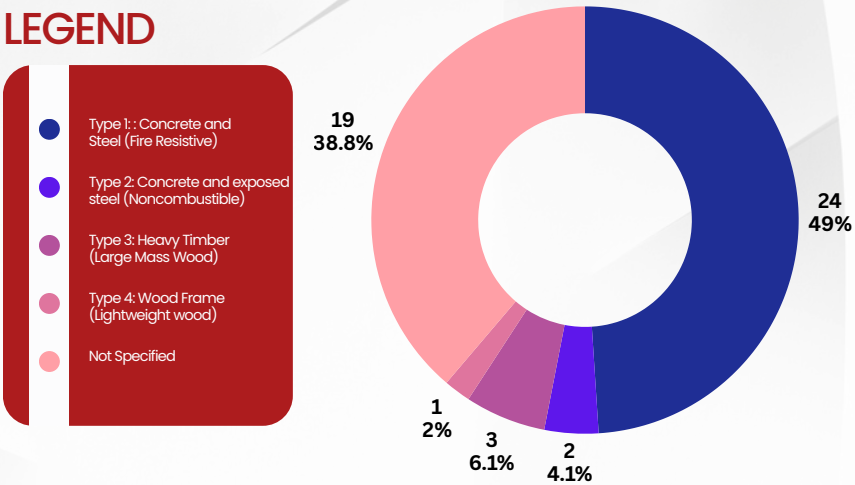


Figure 8. Distribution of Comfort Room Construction Types

Finally, the comfort rooms (CRs) are almost uniformly Type 1 single-storey structures (36 parishes or 73%). Four parishes (8%) identified their CRs as Type 2, while 9 parishes (18%) did not specify. With an average occupant load of 50 people, CRs are indispensable support facilities, particularly during large parish events and gatherings where sanitation demand is high.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The Administrative section focuses on the policies, management systems, and operational practices that directly influence parish safety and preparedness. It examines the presence of safety officers, maintenance routines, emergency plans, and the readiness of staff and volunteers to respond to emergencies. These indicators determine the parish's capacity for coordinated action and effective implementation of disaster risk reduction measures. Strengthening administrative systems ensures that every parish is not only structurally sound but also organizationally prepared to prevent, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Does the parish have a designated safety officer?	20	29	0
2	Is routine maintenance carried out at regular intervals?	46	3	0
3	Are leaks and deterioration promptly repaired?	47	2	0
4	Does the church have an emergency/ evacuation plan?	23	26	0
5	Do staff/volunteers know their roles in an emergency?	39	10	0
6	Is there a first aid kit on the church premises?	49	0	0
7	Is the first aid kit fully stocked and replenished as necessary?	46	3	0
8	Are emergency lighting facilities available to maintain illumination in the event of a power failure?	39	10	0

Table 1. Administrative Safety Practices of Parishes

Regarding the presence of designated safety officers, only 20 parishes (41%) reported having one. In most cases, these officers are volunteers affiliated with parish social service organizations. Meanwhile, 29 parishes (59%) stated that they do not have a designated safety officer. For the routine maintenance of electrical systems, 46 parishes (94%) confirmed that such maintenance is regularly conducted, while 3 parishes (6%) admitted having no maintenance protocol in place. On electrical safety, the overall results are relatively positive; however, the 3 parishes without regular inspections remain vulnerable to electrical faults and potential fire hazards.

When asked about building leaks or deterioration requiring repair, only 2 parishes (4%) acknowledged existing issues, while 47 parishes (96%) reported no visible concerns. Although this indicates that most parishes are in good condition, the findings suggest that minor wear and tear may already exist and could worsen during disasters if left unaddressed. Emergency preparedness, however, revealed the greatest gap. Only 23 parishes (47%) have an established emergency evacuation plan, while 26 parishes (53%) do not. This poses a serious concern, as the absence of a systematic evacuation strategy could place large congregations at risk during fires, earthquakes, or other emergencies. Given the high capacity of parish churches, **the lack of structured evacuation procedures is especially alarming**. On a more positive note, 39 parishes (80%) reported having trained volunteers or church staff available to assist during emergencies. However, 10 parishes (20%) remain unprepared, lacking personnel capable of managing emergency situations effectively.

The availability of first aid kits was notably strong, with all 49 parishes (100%) confirming their presence. This compliance can be attributed, in part, to a recommendation made during the Archbishop's Pastoral Visit in 2018. These first aid kits are located in key parish facilities such as sacristies, parish offices, convents, or CCD rooms. However, the inspection interval varies widely: while most indicated every 6 months, others listed "as needed," "annually," or "after expiration date," reflecting the lack of a unified inspection protocol. With regard to emergency lighting facilities, only 39 parishes (80%) confirmed availability, while 10 parishes (20%) reported having none. This is significant because parishes are large-capacity venues that often function during power outages, calamities, or nighttime liturgical events, making emergency lighting a critical safety feature. On a related note, 37 parishes (76%) confirmed having generators available to ensure continuity of operations during outages.

CHURCH PROTECTION

The Church Protection section evaluates the preventive measures in place to safeguard parish buildings and properties from fire, theft, and related hazards. This includes the availability of fire extinguishers, alarm systems, smoke detectors, and asset inventories. Since churches often serve as both heritage structures and public gathering spaces, effective fire safety and asset protection are crucial. The assessment identifies key gaps in compliance with the Fire Code of the Philippines (RA 9514) and recommends actions to strengthen parish fire prevention and emergency response capabilities.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are there sprinkler system (if installed) inspected annually?	20	29	0
2	Is a multipurpose fire extinguisher available?	46	3	0
3	Are smoke/heat detectors installed?	47	2	0
4	Do you have fire alarm systems in place?	23	26	0
5	Are fire alarm systems tested and serviced annually?	39	10	0
6	Are key/access records maintained?	49	0	0
8	Do you have a written list with photographic inventory of building contents and valuables?	39	10	0

Table 2. Fire Safety and Asset Protection Measures in Parishes

None of the surveyed parishes reported having a sprinkler system installed or inspected annually, reflecting 0% compliance with this advanced fire suppression standard. This complete absence highlights a critical gap in parish fire safety, as sprinklers are proven to be among the most effective defenses against large-scale fires. A more encouraging result is observed with fire extinguishers: 36 parishes (73%) reported having units available, while 13 parishes (27%) do not. However, availability alone is not sufficient. The number of extinguishers varied widely, ranging from just two units in kitchens or sacristies to as many as 45 strategically distributed across larger churches. Despite this coverage, only a small number of parishes confirmed that extinguishers undergo annual servicing and inspections, raising doubts about their reliability and readiness during an actual emergency. Without proper maintenance, extinguishers risk malfunctioning precisely when they are needed most.

The presence of smoke and heat detectors across the parishes is alarmingly low. Only two (4%) parishes (St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kaylaway and the Minor Basilica and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City) reported having such devices installed, while the vast majority, 47 parishes (96%), have none. A similar gap is evident in fire alarm systems. Only four parishes (8%) reported installations: St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kaylaway, the Minor Basilica and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City, the Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of St. Joseph the Patriarch in San Jose, and the Queen of All Saints Parish in Balele. This leaves 45 parishes (92%) without this critical early warning mechanism.

Even among the few with alarm systems in place, only three parishes (St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kaylaway, the Minor Basilica and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City, and Queen of All Saints Parish in Balele) confirmed conducting regular inspections. The near absence of detection and alert systems highlights a significant vulnerability, especially given that parish churches are high-capacity venues where safe evacuation during fires or related emergencies relies heavily on timely warnings.

On a more positive note, asset protection practices appear relatively stronger. 44 parishes (90%) maintain updated key and access records, while 5 parishes (10%) do not. Additionally, 37 parishes (76%) have adopted proper inventory protection practices, including written lists and photographic documentation of valuable assets. However, 12 parishes (24%) lack such measures, leaving significant gaps in safeguarding church heritage and property in the event of disasters or theft.

CHURCH GROUNDS

The Church Grounds section reviews the external environment and surrounding infrastructure of each parish, such as parking lots, fences, pathways, and drainage systems. Safe and well-maintained grounds are vital in minimizing accidents, ensuring accessibility, and preventing flood or debris-related hazards. This component reflects how parishes extend their commitment to safety beyond the church walls, maintaining a secure environment for both parishioners and visitors.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are parking lots and church grounds free from rubbish, debris, and potholes?	46	2	1
2	Are all fences/gates in good condition?	41	5	3
3	Are all pathways/external walkways are in good condition?	46	2	1
4	Are all steps in good conditions?	47	1	1
5	Do all steps have handrails and painted lines highlighting the change in elevation?	40	6	2
6	Are steps railings firmly secured and in good repair?	45	1	3
7	Are all ditches and drains clear of debris?	43	5	1
8	Have you securely stored all machinery?	43	1	5
9	Are all flammable materials (eg. fuel for machinery) safely and securely stored?	43	1	5

Table 3. Assessment of Safety and Maintenance of Church Grounds

The assessment of church grounds safety across 49 parishes shows generally high compliance with established safety indicators, though notable gaps remain in several areas. Across the nine indicators evaluated, the majority of responses were “YES,” reflecting that most parishes keep

their facilities safe and well-maintained. For instance, parking lots and church grounds were reported as free from rubbish, debris, and potholes in 46 parishes, representing 94% compliance. Similarly, fences and gates were confirmed in good condition by 41 parishes (84%), while pathways and external walkways, with 46 parishes (97%) ensuring their proper upkeep. Steps were also largely maintained in good condition, with 47 parishes (96%) responding positively.

On the safety features of church steps, however, gaps were noted. Only 40 parishes (82%) confirmed the presence of handrails and adequate lighting, leaving six parishes without this essential safety feature while 2 parishes marked the item as not applicable. Relatedly, 45 parishes (92%) maintained secure and well-repaired railings on steps, while the rest either indicated “NO” or marked the item as not applicable. The condition of drainage systems was another point of concern, with 43 parishes (88%) keeping ditches and drains clear, while 6 parishes reported otherwise.

In terms of equipment and hazardous material management, 43 parishes (88%) ensured tools and machinery were securely stored, but several parishes either did not comply or left this category blank. Safe storage of flammable materials was the weakest area of compliance, with only 43 parishes (88%) following proper storage practices, while the rest either indicated “NO” or marked the item as not applicable.

ENTER WITHOUT RISK

The Enter Without Risk section examines the safety of entry points, walkways, and interior passages within parish facilities. It focuses on hazard prevention measures such as non-slip surfaces, proper flooring, and cord management. Since most parish injuries occur in these high-traffic areas, ensuring slip-, trip-, and fall-free spaces significantly reduces everyday risks and promotes a safe worship environment, especially for the elderly and children.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are there sprinkler system (if installed) inspected annually?	34	13	2
2	Is a multipurpose fire extinguisher available?	39	7	0
3	Are smoke/heat detectors installed?	14	35	0
4	Do you have fire alarm systems in place?	43	6	0

Table 4. Indoor Entry and Floor Safety Conditions of Parishes

Majority of parishes, or 34 out of 49 (69%), reported having non-slip rugs and mats with tapered edges at their entrances. This indicates strong compliance in minimizing slip hazards at entry points, although 13 parishes (27%) admitted not having such mats, while two others (4%) marked the item as not applicable, suggesting either absence of such entrances or misinterpretation of the requirement. Similarly, flooring maintenance shows good practice overall. Thirty-nine parishes (80%) reported repairing or maintaining their floors to address torn carpets, wrinkled surfaces, or damaged tiles. However, 7 parishes (14%) have yet to act on these hazards, posing significant tripping risks during large gatherings. An additional 3 parishes (6%) considered the indicator not applicable.

With regard to cord and wire management, only 14 parishes (29%) admitted that cords or speaker wires were present across floors, aisles, or doorways. Encouragingly, a majority of 34 parishes (71%) reported keeping walkways free from such obstructions. While this shows awareness of the hazard, the continued presence of wires in nearly one-third of parishes highlights an important safety gap, as cords remain one of the most common causes of accidents during parish activities.

The strongest compliance was noted in the maintenance of clear aisles, steps, and exits. A total of 43 parishes (88%) confirmed that their passageways were free from blockages such as boxes, chairs, or musical instruments, while only 6 parishes (12%) admitted otherwise. This is a positive finding as it suggests most parishes prioritize emergency access and unobstructed evacuation routes, which are critical in ensuring safety during Masses, processions, and other liturgical celebrations

CHURCH SAFE MAIN BUILDING

The Church Safe Main Building section evaluates the safety of the main worship areas in terms of egress, signage, and seating security. It highlights the importance of unobstructed exits, outward-opening doors, visible emergency signs, and well-maintained pews or chairs. These measures directly affect evacuation efficiency and crowd safety during emergencies such as fires or earthquakes. Ensuring that these standards are met reinforces the parish's responsibility for protecting congregants during large gatherings.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are aisles clear of cords, podiums, chairs, candles and other objects?	20	29	0
2	Do you unlock all exit doors during occupancy?	46	3	0
3	Are exit doors clear from obstructions?	47	2	0
4	Do you have signs to indicate exits (ideally illuminated)?	23	26	0
5	Are all exit doors in good condition and functioning properly (i;e. open outwards with kick bar)?	39	10	0
6	Do all rooms with 50 or more occupants or over 1,000 sq ft. have two exit doors?	49	0	0
7	Are pews/seats secured and in good repair?	46	3	0

Table 5. Safety and Egress Compliance in Main Church Buildings

In terms of aisle clearance, almost all parishes are compliant, with 46 (94%) reporting that their aisles are free of cords, candles, or other obstructions. Only three parishes (6%), reported non-compliance in this aspect, which poses a serious hazard during emergencies as it could obstruct evacuation. On the matter of exit doors being unlocked during occupancy, all 49 parishes (100%), responded positively. This represents the strongest compliance indicator in the survey and ensures that parishioners are never at risk of being trapped inside the building during gatherings. Similarly, all parishes, also 100%, confirmed that their exit doors are clear from obstructions, showing that evacuation routes are consistently maintained and unobstructed.

However, door mechanisms remain a key concern, as inward-opening doors dominate and could hinder emergency egress. **Twenty-eight (57%) of parishes have inward-opening doors, which could pose safety issues during emergencies such as fires or earthquakes, as inward doors slow down evacuation**. In contrast, only five parishes (Parroquia de San Roque, Tingloy; Sta. Rita de Casia Parish, Bolbok; Parish of Sto. Niño , Marawoy, Lipa City; and Queen of All Saints Parish, Balele) have outward-opening doors, which are safer for crowd egress. The presence of five parishes (St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Bauan; San Isidro Labrador Parish, San Isidro, Lipa City; St. Mary Euphrasia Parish, Kumintang; Holy Family Parish, Alupay; and Immaculate Conception Parish, Laurel) with sliding doors indicates modern adaptations, while two parishes (San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish, Dagatan and the National Shrine and Parish of St. Padre Pio, Sto. Tomas City) are in traditional or rural settings where doors are absent.

However, the presence of exit signage is an area of concern. While 28 parishes (57%), have visible or illuminated exit signs, 21 parishes (16.7%), lack this crucial feature. In situations such as fire or power outages, this shortfall could endanger lives as parishioners may have difficulty locating exits. With regard to the condition and functionality of exit doors, 45 parishes (92%) confirmed that their doors are in good working order, outward-opening, and fitted with kick bars, but 4 parishes (8%) reported deficiencies. This indicates that while the majority are compliant, even a small number of malfunctioning exit doors can significantly compromise safety. For large rooms with a capacity of 50 or more occupants or a floor area exceeding 1,000 square feet, 42 parishes (86%) reported having dedicated exit doors. On the other hand, 7 (14%) failed to meet this standard. The absence of additional exit doors in large-capacity spaces represents a high-risk situation that could result in bottlenecks or stampedes in an emergency. In terms of pew and seat security, 44 parishes (90%) confirmed that their seating is secured and in good repair. However, 5 parishes (10%) reported otherwise, raising potential risks of injury during crowded events if unstable pews collapse or shift unexpectedly.

STORAGE ROOM

The Storage Room section reviews the housekeeping, organization, and fire safety practices in areas where cleaning materials and maintenance tools are kept. Poor storage conditions can pose fire or chemical hazards if flammable items are improperly stored or electrical panels obstructed. Proper labeling, ventilation, and access control are essential for minimizing risk. This component provides insight into the parish's internal safety culture and its adherence to safe maintenance standards.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are brooms, mops, rags and other cleaning supplies stored in metal cabinets?	20	27	2
2	Are the storage room locked at all times?	31	16	2
3	Is there a good housekeeping throughout the facility?	43	5	1
4	Is the room free of combustible, flammables, and general church storage?	37	9	3
5	Are main switches, shut off valves and plumbing properly labeled?	34	13	2
6	Is the smoke/heat detection tied to the fire alarm system?	2	19	28
7	Are the electrical panels free from obstruction?	43	4	2
8	Are all electrical/mechanical equipment and junction boxes covered?	42	3	4

Table 6. Safety and Housekeeping Standards in Parish Storage Rooms

In terms of storage practices, only 20 parishes (41%) keep brooms, mops, and rags in proper metal cabinets, while 29 parishes (59%) do not, showing that more than half fail to meet this basic safety measure. Meanwhile, 31 parishes (63%) keep storage rooms locked, but 18 (37%) reported that their storage rooms are left unsecured, raising risks of unauthorized access to cleaning agents or flammable materials. Housekeeping practices, however, are consistently strong across parishes, with 43 (88%) reporting good housekeeping throughout their facilities, while six parishes (12%), showed lapses. When it comes to storage of combustibles and general church items, 37 parishes (76%) indicated that their rooms are free of hazardous materials, but 9 parishes (18%) admitted otherwise while three parishes leave it blank.

Looking into labeling and safety controls, 34 parishes (69%) reported that their main switches, shut-off valves, and plumbing are properly labeled, though 15 (31%) have yet to implement this important safety feature. Notably, only St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Kaylaway and the Minor Basilica and Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City have smoke and heat detection systems integrated with their fire alarm systems.On electrical safety, 43 parishes (88%) ensure that electrical panels are free from obstruction, though 6 (12%) do not, which could hinder emergency access. Similarly, 42 parishes (86%) cover their electrical and mechanical equipment as well as junction boxes, while 7 (14%) leave them exposed, raising electrocution and fire risks.

KITCHEN/ PARISH HALL

The Kitchen and Parish Hall section evaluates safety and sanitation practices in spaces that often serve dual purposes—hosting gatherings, feeding programs, and community activities. The focus is on cleanliness, exhaust and grease management, and the presence of fire suppression tools such as Type "K" extinguishers or fire blankets. Given that kitchens are among the most fire-prone areas in parish facilities, this section is crucial in assessing how effectively parishes prevent and respond to potential fire incidents.

NO	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A
1	Are exits clear, adequately marked?	39	7	3
2	Is the kitchen kept clean and waste properly disposed of?	47	1	1
3	Are exhaust filters, ducts, and hood cleaned on regular basis?	35	4	10
4	Do you have multi-purpose or type "k" fire extinguisher/ fire blanket in the kitchen?	19	27	3
5	Is the kitchen free of grease accumulations?	45	3	1
6	Are refrigeration coils, motors, and compressors clean?	44	2	3
7	Are all floors clean and free of spills?	44	4	1
8	Do you have mops and "caution" signage available?	35	13	1

Table 7. Safety and Sanitation Practices in Parish Kitchens and Halls

A strong compliance was noted in exit clarity, where 39 parishes (80%) ensure that exits in kitchens are adequately marked, while 10 parishes failed to do so. Similarly, 47 parishes (96%) maintain clean kitchens with proper waste disposal, reflecting good sanitation standards across the majority. However, compliance significantly drops when it comes to exhaust systems. Only 35 parishes (71%) clean exhaust filters, ducts, and hoods regularly, while 4 parishes (8%) do not leaving them vulnerable to grease buildup and fire risks while 10 parishes (20%) answered non applicable. Even more concerning is the availability of proper fire protection equipment:

only 19 parishes (39%) have a Type “K” fire extinguisher or blanket in the kitchen, while 30 (61%) lack them. This indicates that more than half of parish kitchens are unprepared to address grease or cooking fires, a major safety hazard.

Grease accumulation was also flagged in 4 parishes (8%) while 45 (92%) maintained grease-free kitchens. Refrigeration system maintenance is another weak point, as only 44 parishes (90%) reported clean refrigeration coils, motors, and compressors, while 5 (10%) admitted poor upkeep. This not only reduces equipment efficiency but may also lead to overheating or fire incidents. Floor safety and sanitation practices are somewhat stronger, with 45 parishes (92%) keeping floors clean and free of spills, while 4 (8%) do not. On the use of mops and caution signage: 35 parishes (71%) comply, but 14 parishes still lack these safety measures, making them more prone to slip-and-fall accidents.

CONVENT STAFF TRAINING

The Convent Staff Training section measures the capacity-building efforts of parishes in ensuring that clergy, staff, and volunteers are adequately trained in fire safety, first aid, and the proper use of extinguishers. Training equips parish personnel with practical life-saving skills and reinforces a culture of preparedness. This component also serves as an indicator of long-term resilience, as continuous education and drills translate preparedness plans into actionable competence.

NO	TRAINING	PARISHES WITH CONVENT STAFF WHO ATTENDED	PARISHES WITHOUT CONVENT STAFF WHO ATTENDED
1	Fire Safety	11	39
2	First Aid Training	18	31
3	Practical Use of Fire Extinguisher	13	36

Table 8. Participation of Convent Staff in Safety and First Aid Training

Only 11 parishes (22%) of their convent staff have attended fire safety training, leaving the remaining 38 parishes (78%) without any form of structured fire preparedness program. Similarly, just about 18 parishes (37%), reported having first aid training, while a larger majority of 63% have never conducted such training or last did so more than five years ago. This reveals that most parishes lack the basic capacity to respond effectively to medical emergencies. Practical training on the use of fire extinguishers, particularly the PASS technique, is even limited, with only 12 parishes (27%), offering hands-on practice. In contrast, more than 73% of parishes have not provided their staff with this critical life-saving skill.

OVERALL ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATION

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The parish safety and facility assessment of the Archdiocese of Lipa reveals that **most parishes demonstrate strong compliance with fundamental safety practices** such as maintaining unobstructed exits, ensuring cleanliness of church grounds, and upholding basic housekeeping standards. **The predominance of Type 1 fire-resistive construction in major parish facilities reflects structural resilience, while the presence of first aid kits across all parishes indicates attention to emergency readiness.** However, significant safety gaps remain. **Nearly half of parishes lack emergency evacuation plans, many facilities are without exit signage, and fire protection systems such as sprinklers, smoke detectors, and fire alarms are almost entirely absent**. Kitchens, parish halls, and storage rooms also **present vulnerabilities due to poor fire safety equipment and unsecured hazardous materials.** The findings suggest that **while day-to-day maintenance is generally practiced, there is limited investment in long-term safety systems, emergency preparedness, and fire protection infrastructure**. Addressing these areas will be crucial to ensuring the safety of parishioners, clergy, and staff, especially given the large occupancy loads that churches and parish halls regularly accommodate.

A. OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

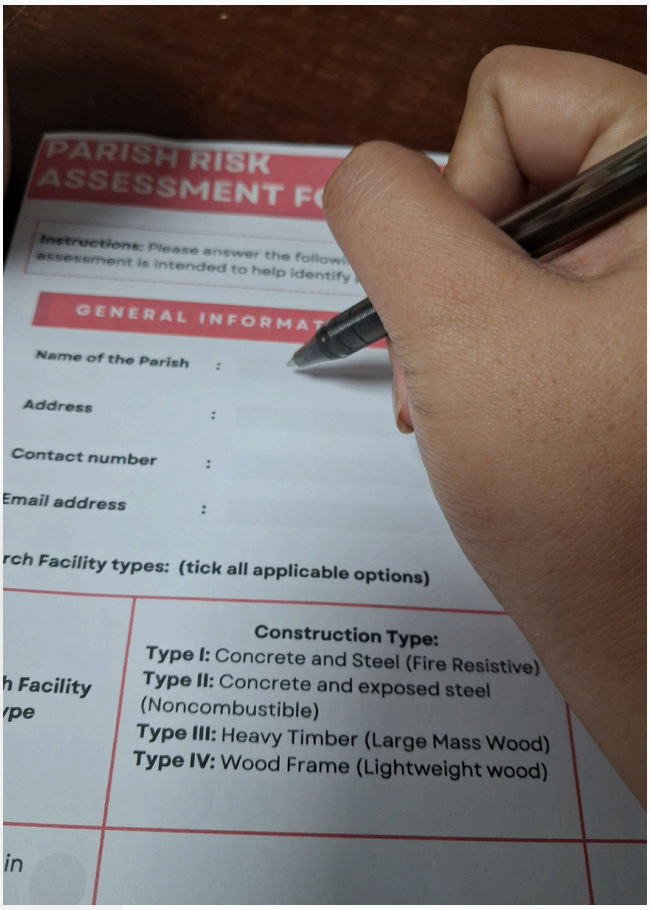
A.1 Discuss the result of this assessment with the clergy and provide copies to each parish.

A.2 Issue a follow-up circular presenting the results and corresponding action points.

A.3 Encourage parishes that have not submitted the filled-up form to comply and analyze their results for internal facility assessment.

A.4 Ensure that any future renovation or construction of parish facilities strictly follows the National Building Code of the Philippines (PD 1096) and standards set by local authorities.

A.5 Extend the same assessment process to other church institutions, including schools, offices, shrines, and congregations within the Archdiocese.



B. IMPORTANCE AND USE FOR PASTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES

This Parish Risk Assessment Report is not only a technical reference but also a pastoral instrument that supports the Archdiocese in promoting safety, stewardship, and disaster preparedness across all parishes. Its use extends to several key areas:

B.1 For the Pastoral Services of the Archdiocese:

B.1.1. Integrates disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) into the pastoral mission and social action programs of the Church.
B.1.2. Guides the formulation of Archdiocesan pastoral policies that ensure safety, preparedness, and stewardship in all ministries.
B.1.3. Strengthens inter-ministerial collaboration between Social Services, Stewardship, and Formation, ensuring that faith activities are conducted in safe environments.
B.1.4. Serves as a reference for identifying parishes needing technical, logistical, or training support for resilience-building.

B.2 For Parish Priests as Administrators:

B.2.1. Provides a tool for evaluating the safety condition of parish structures and facilities.
B.2.2. Supports the creation or updating of Parish Emergency and Evacuation Plans and organization of Parish Disaster Control Groups, as mandated by PD 1566 and RA 10121.
B.2.3. Assists in prioritizing maintenance schedules, retrofitting, and safety improvements.
B.2.4. Promotes accountability and compliance with Archdiocesan and national safety standards.

B.2 For Parish Finance Office:

B.3.1. Aids in identifying budgetary priorities for safety measures and facility improvements.
B.3.2. Serves as a basis for fund requests or expenditures related to disaster preparedness and safety compliance.
B.3.3. Ensures transparent stewardship by linking safety investments with long-term parish sustainability.
B.3.4. Supports compliance with Archdiocesan property and inventory requirements (Circular No. 11, Series of 2025).

B. IMPORTANCE AND USE FOR PASTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES

B.4 For Parish Staff and Convent Personnel:

B.4.1. Encourages participation in first aid, fire safety, and emergency response training.
B.4.2. Reinforces awareness of proper housekeeping and storage practices.
B.4.3. Clarifies roles and responsibilities during emergencies, fostering shared accountability.

B.5 In View of the Parishioners:

B.5.1. Guarantees that places of worship remain safe, accessible, and disaster-resilient.
B.5.2. Builds trust and confidence in Church leadership by showing care for life and safety.
B.5.3. Promotes parishioner participation in preparedness programs and volunteer initiatives.
B.5.4. Reflects the Church's pastoral care in concrete form, aligning faith with protection of life and creation.

C. TECHNICAL AND SAFETY

C.1 Church Facility

C.1.1. Require regular structural integrity inspections, especially for tall or multi-storey structures.

C.2 Administrative

C.2.1. Institutionalize the designation of trained parish safety officers and establish the Parish Disaster Control Group, as required in Section III, A2(b) of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Presidential Decree No. 1566[1]
C.2.2. Conduct writeshop for the creation of parish emergency/evacuation plan.
C.2.3. Require all parishes and church institutions to develop and conduct emergency evacuation plans and drills.

[1] *Implementing Rules and Regulations of Presidential Decree No. 1566, Strengthening the Philippine Disaster Control Capability and Establishing the National Program on Community Disaster Preparedness (1978)*

C. TECHNICAL AND SAFETY

C.3 Church Protection

C.3.1. Provide an adequate number of fire extinguishers, based on the occupant load and in accordance with RA No. 9514 or the Fire Code of the Philippines[1] of 2008 (Note: if not possible, at least provide 1 fire extinguisher per building)
C.3.2. Install emergency lighting in all churches and parish halls.
C.3.3. Set minimum fire safety standards requiring annual extinguisher inspections and smoke detector installation.
C.3.4. Conduct and update inventory of parish properties using the template provided in the released Circular No. 11 series of 2025 last January 12, 2025[1]

C.4 Church Grounds

C.4.1. Install handrails, marker, and adequate lighting on all church steps.
C.4.2. Conduct regular clearing of drainage systems to prevent flooding.

C.5 Enter Without Risk

C.5.1. Enforce strict cord and wire management during liturgical events.

C.6 Church Safe Main Building

C.6.1. Coordinate with the respective Local Government unit (Engineering/ LDRRMO) for the assessment on the structural integrity of the parishes.
C.6.2. Install visible and illuminated exit signage in all parishes.
C.6.3. Repair or replace malfunctioning exit doors immediately.
C.6.4. Conduct routine inspections to ensure pews remain secured and safe.

C.7 Storage Room

C.7.1. Use metal cabinets for storage of cleaning supplies.
C.7.2. Ensure all storage rooms are locked with controlled access.
C.7.3. Label all switches, valves, and plumbing clearly.

[1] *Republic Act No. 9514, Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008; Archdiocese of Lipa, Circular No. 11, Series of 2025, "Parish Property Inventory Template," January 12, 2025.*

C. TECHNICAL AND SAFETY

C.8 Kitchen/ Parish Hall

C.8.1. Require Type K fire extinguishers or fire blankets in all parish kitchens.
C.8.2. Mandate regular cleaning of exhaust hoods, ducts, and filters.
C.8.3. Conduct mandatory fire safety training for convent and parish staff at least once every two years.

C.9 Convent Staff Training

C.9.1. Ensure all staff receive basic first aid and CPR training in partnership with local Red Cross, BFP, or accredited trainers.
C.9.2. Provide hands-on fire extinguisher training using the PASS technique for clergy, staff, and volunteers.
C.9.3. Institutionalize annual refresher courses to build a culture of preparedness.

REFERENCES:

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List of parishes whose submissions were returned due to missing parts

San Nicolas De Tolentino Parish, San Nicolas
Most Holy Rosary Parish, Padre Garcia
National Shrine and Parish of St. Padre Pio, Sto. Tomas City
Immaculate Conception Parish, Laurel
Nuestra Senora De La Soledad Parish, Darasa
San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish, Dagatan
St. Claire of Assisi Parish, Sta. Clara
St. John The Baptist Parish, Lian
St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Kaylaway
Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of St. Joseph the Patriarch, San Jose
Parokya ng Mahal na Poon ng Banal na Krus, Matingain
Holy Family Parish, Alupay
Sta. Rita De Casia Parish, Bolbok

List of parishes that have NOT YET submitted the filled-up form

St. Francis Xavier Parish, Nasugbu
Sto. Domingo De Silos Parish, Calatagan
Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish, Agoncillo
Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of San Isidro Labrador, Cuenca
Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish, Aplaya
San Pascual Baylon Parish, San Pascual
San Isidro Labrador Parish, San Isidro, Batangas City
St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Isla Verde
St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Lobo
Our Lady of The Rosary Parish, Rosario
Sto. Niño Parish, Pinagtungulan
Divina Pastora Parish, Tambo
Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of St. Vincent Ferrer, Banay-Banay
St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face Parish, Talisay, Lipa City
Immaculate Conception Parish, Malvar
St. Augustine Parish, Santor
San Guillermo Parish, Talisay

Out of a total of 66 parishes, 36 (54.55%) have successfully submitted a completely filled-up form, which reflects a little over half of the total number of parishes. Thirteen parishes (19.70%) submitted their forms but these were returned due to missing parts, showing that while there was effort to comply, either instructions were not followed carefully or certain parishes lacked the capacity to accomplish the forms properly. In addition, 17 parishes (25.76%) have not complied in any way. This means that almost one-fourth of parishes have provided no data, creating serious gaps in the overall assessment.

RESPONDENTS

List of parishes that submitted a completely filled-up form

- Immaculate Conception Parish, Balayan
- Parokya Ni San Roque, Lemery
- Minor Basilica and Parish of St. Martin of Tours, Taal
- Parokya Ng San Isidro Labrador, San Luis
- Invencion De La Sta. Cruz Parish, Alitagtag
- Archdiocesan Shrine And Parish of St. Therese Of The Child Jesus, Sta. Teresita
- St. Francis of Paola Parish, Mabini
- Holy Family Parish, Bolo
- Immaculate Conception Parish, Bauan
- St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Bauan
- Minor Basilica and Parish of Immaculate Conception, Batangas City
- St. Mary Euphrasia Parish, Kumintang
- Most Holy Trinity Parish, Pallocan
- St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Ilijan
- San Juan Nepomuceno Parish, San Juan
- Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage Parish, Lodlod
- Immaculate Conception Parish, M. Kahoy
- Metropolitan Cathedral of San Sebastian, Lipa City
- Mary Mediatrix of All Grace Parish, Antipolo Del Norte
- Parish of Sto. Niño, Marawoy
- San Isidro Labrador Parish, San Isidro, Lipa City
- St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Inosloban, Lipa City
- St. John the Evangelist Parish, Tanauan City
- Queen of All Saints Parish, Balele
- Parroquia De San Roque, Tingloy
- Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish, Subic
- Nuestra Señora De La Paz Y Buen Viaje Parish, Wawa
- Holy Family Parish, Luyos
- Nuestra Senora De La Merced Parish, Taysan
- Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of St. Raphael the Archangel, Calaca City
- Archdiocesan Shrine and Parish of St. James the Greater, Ibaan
- St. Vincent Ferrer Parish, Tuy
- St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Sto. Tomas City
- Parroquia De Nuestra Señora Dela Paz De Balete, Balete
- St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Bolbok
- Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Payapa