Kathleen Bea F. Tupaz

On July 17, 2019, Father Saturnino Urios held a cultural event called the Abayan Festival where sections from each grade level of the entire junior and senior high school department celebrate and compete in a dance competition and food display competition.

Each section performed a dance interpretation in the festival where they were to represent their section saint in the form of dancing. The event was practically successful as it was certainly memorable for all of us students who strived and worked so hard to deliver a great performance, one that was worth watching for the audience and one that was worth winning in the competition held in the festival. Holding the dance interpretation competition, in my opinion, was a beautiful and clever way of showing the different saints that each section represented. The performances were made traditional and cultural, making it suit the event more.

We didn’t just perform dances, however (as stated in the beginning), we students also participated in a food display contest which was held right after the dance interpretation performances. It was another competition in the Abayan Festival where us students were to decorate a display of different Caraganon foods at the gym.

As I participated in the event, I slowly realized how truly important the Abayan Festival truly is. It was a festival held to commemorate how people would ask for guidance to cross the Agusan River safely as it served as the major hub for trade and human activity long before the Spanish Period. It was a day to celebrate our essence as Caraganons, a festivity to show the culture of Caraga. I watched the dance competitions with starry eyes as different sections of each grade level in the junior and senior high school department showcase their performances with effort, strength, and beauty. It wasn’t just their mere performance that amazed me, though. Every performance had remarkable ways of interpreting culture and stories. It made me realize how important it is to show your adherence to your culture.