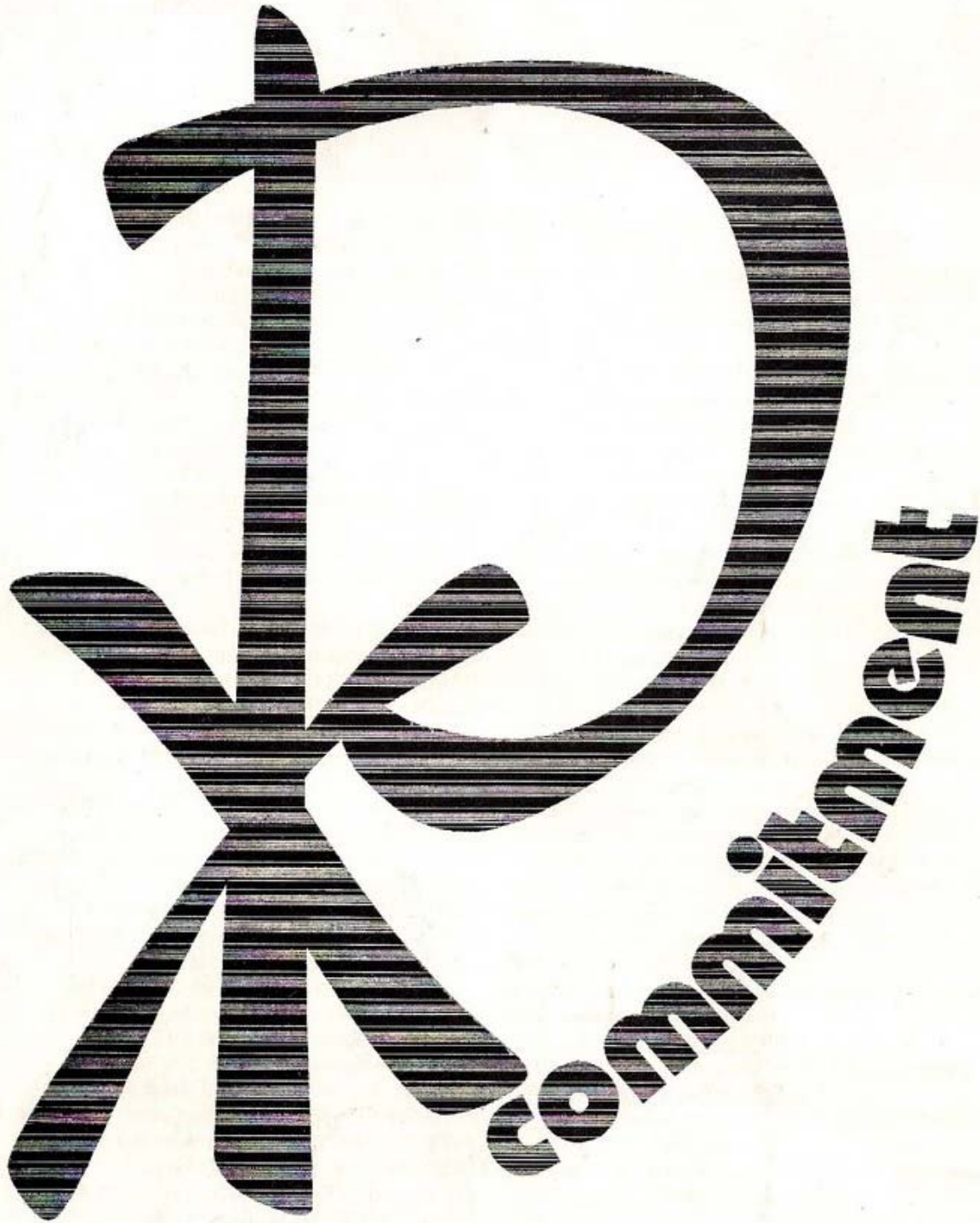


Kapatiran

Vol. XIII Issue 3

May - June 1999



Breakfast Venues

MEN'S BREAKFAST (7:30 A.M.)

Wednesdays - MAKATI: Makati Sports Club

Thursdays - GREENHILLS: Club Filipino, Greenhills

VILLAMOR: Villamor Golf Club (1st & 3rd)

Fridays - MANILA: Racks, Remedios Circle, Malate, Manila

Saturdays

ALABANG: Ayala Alabang Country Club, Muntinlupa

BACOLOD NORTH: Roli's La Salle, Bacolod

BACOLOD SOUTH: McDonald's

BAGUIO: Prime Hotel, Session Rd., Baguio (2nd & 4th Sat.)

BAYBAY: Angelicum (1st & 2nd Sat.)

BUKIDNON: Taipan Rest., Valencia (1st) Hotel Malibu Malaybalay (3rd Sat.)

CAGAYAN DE ORO: Paulo's Restaurant, Cagayan de Oro

CALAMBA: Riverview Resort and Conference Center

CEBU: Ding Qua-Qua Rest., Gen Maxilom Ave, Cebu City

DAVAO: Terraza Millesa (1st, 2nd & 3rd Sat.)

ILIGAN: Sunburst Restaurant

ILOILO: Amigo Terraces Hotel

LAS PIÑAS: Italia Club 500, BF Resort, Las Piñas

LEGASPI: Albay Hotel, Legaspi City (2nd Sat.)

LUCENA: Halina Hotel & Rest., P. Gomez, Lucena City (1st & 3rd Sat.)

LIPA: Sawali Restaurant, Sabang, Lipa City

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel, Cebu City

PARAÑAQUE: BF Citi Business Center, Elizalde St., BF Homes

PUERTO PRINCESA: Badjao Seafront Restaurant

QUEZON CITY: Terrace Grill, 119 Roces Avenear cor. Morato

RIZAL: Manila East Golf Club, Taytay, Rizal

ROXAS: Kanami Restaurant

TACLOBAN: Don's Cabin, Justice Jimenez St. (2nd & 4th Sat.)

TAGBILARAN: La Roca Hotel

MEN'S LUNCHEON (12:00 NN)

Saturday - DAGUPAN: Celebrity House, Arellano St.

MEN'S MERIENDA (4:00 P.M.)

Saturday - TUGUEGARAO: Marilyn's Restaurant (2nd & 4th Sat)

LADIES' BREAKFAST

Wednesdays - MAKATI: Makati Sports Club (2nd Wed.)

Thursdays - GREENHILLS: Club Filipino, Greenhills, SJ (3rd Thurs.)

Fridays - MANILA: Racks, Remedios Circle, Malate, Mla. (2nd Fri.)

Saturdays

ALABANG: Ayala Alabang Country Club (2nd Sat.)

BACOLOD NORTH: Jollibee, Bacolod City (3rd Sat.)

CAGAYAN DE ORO: Tia Nanang, Corales St. (2nd & 3rd Sat.)

CEBU: Ding Qua-Qua Restaurant (3rd Sat.)

DAVAO: Terraza Millesa (4th Sat.)

ILOILO: Amigo Terraces Hotel (last Sat.)

LAS PIÑAS: Italia Club 500 (3rd Sat.)

LEGASPI: Albay Hotel (4th Sat.)

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel (2nd Sat.)

PARAÑAQUE: BF Citi Business Center, Elizalde St., BF Homes

PUERTO PRINCESA: Badjao Seafront Restaurant (3rd Sat.)

QUEZON CITY: Terrace Grill (2nd Sat.)

ROXAS: Kanami Restaurant

RIZAL: Manila East Golf Club, Taytay, Rizal (1st Sat.)

TACLOBAN: Don's Cabin (2nd Sat.)

TAGBILARAN: La Roca Hotel (3rd Sat.)

JOINT BREAKFAST (7:30 A.M.)

Wednesdays - MAKATI: Makati Sports Club (1st Weds.)

Thursdays - GREENHILLS: Club Filipino (1st Thurs.)

Fridays - MANILA: Racks Restaurant, Malate, Manila

Saturdays

ALABANG: Ayala Alabang Country Club (4th Sat.)

BUTUAN: Echelon Hotel (2nd & 4th Sat.)

BACOLOD NORTH: Roli's La Salle (4th Sat.)

BACOLOD SOUTH: McDonald's (4th Sat.)

BAYBAY: Angelicum Parich Hall (2nd & 4th Sun.)

CAGAYAN DE ORO: Silver Court, Capt. Vicente Roa St., (3rd Sat.)

CAVITE: Emperor Restaurant, Cavite City (3rd Sat.)

CEBU: Ding Qua-Qua Restaurant (3rd Sat.)

DAGUPAN: Celebrity House, Arellano ST. (3rd Sat.)

DAVAO: Terraza Millesa (2nd Sat.)

DIPOLOG: Top Plaza Hotel (2nd & 4th Sat.)

DUMAGUETE: Bethel Rest House (1st & 3rd Sat.)

LAS PIÑAS: Italia Club 500 (1st Sat.)

LEGASPI: Albay Hotel, Legaspi City (2nd Sat.)

MAASIN: Valtebian Restaurant, Leyte (1st. & 3rd. Sun.)

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel (4th Sat.)

ORMOC: Pongos Hotel (2nd & 3rd Sat.)

OZAMIZ: Supermix Restaurant (1st & 3rd Sat.)

PARAÑAQUE: BF Citi Business Center, Elizalde St., BF Homes

PUERTO PRINCESA: Legend Hotel (1st Sat.)

QUEZON CITY: Terrace Grill (4th Sat.)

RIZAL: Manila East Golf Club, Taytay, Rizal (3rd Sat.)

SAN FERNANDO: Cafe Rustico, Olongapo-Gapan Rd.

SAN JOSE: Regina's Restaurant (1st & 3rd Sun.)

TACLOBAN: Don's Cabin (4th Sat.)

TAGBILARAN: JJ's Seafood Village (2nd & 4th Sat.)

TAGUM: Molave Resturant (1st & 3rd Sat.)

TUBIGON: Parish Palao Hall (1st & 3rd Sat.)

TUGUEGARAO: Marilyn Restaurant (2nd & 4th Sat.)



RONNIE CABALLERO

Greetings to all brothers and sisters in Christ!

This issue feels very special, very close to home because it deals with COMMITMENT - a most sought after quality by God and men. Like most topic we undertake, we cannot hope to do justice to it in one small issue. But as with every issue, our role in Kapatiran is merely to whet your appetite, curiosity and imagination so you can make each topic an area of personal spiritual growth. And instead of adding more lines in explaining the topic, I wish to honor the growing list of dedicated, committed men and women who quietly toil to bring you each issue of Kapatiran, and I tell you the BCBP is blessed to have such talented people in this area of service. We welcome aboard Polet &

Jeng Tiano of Alabang, our latest addition in the staff. More importantly we ask for your prayers and support for this magazine so you can be united with us in proclaiming Christ in every issue, and rest assured the we, too pray for you. Get in touch with us at our new E-mail address - kapatiran@netscape.net

The Cover. Our cover simply speaks for itself - that the commitment we have made is totally dedicated to Jesus Christ and no one and nothing else. Set against a white background, a symbol of purity, it conveys the message that ours must be that of faithful and untarnish commitment to the Lord.

FOCUS: COMMITMENT

MODERN-DAY MARTYR

How courageous is my commitment to God? How much do I value my faith? Am I willing to actively stand up for what I believe? This issue's Focus article on Commitment brings us face-to-face with these hard questions. How will you answer?

COMMITMENT IS...

When one decides to commit himself to Christ, he begins to carry his own cross. The weight of that cross determines the sum total of his commitment. - *by Pete Medina*

COMMITMENT EVOLVES INTO A WAY OF LIFE

A first-person account of living this seemingly unattainable trait. Danny narrates his realization of the real meaning of commitment through his own experiences. - *by Danny Silbor*

THE PRIVILEGE OF OBEDIENCE

Obedience dominates "Chapter Joe's" notion of commitment. He says that obedience is one of the many ways our commitment and love for God are lived. - *by Joe Coruña*

FEATURES

WAKE-UP CALL

FASTING - A guide for successful and prayerful fasting. - *by Pete Medina*

SLOW DANCE; TELEPHONE MEDITATION

RESIGNATION AS AN ADULT

BANISH THE BLAHS; KEEP YOUR AG ALIVE

KUDOS

MT. PINATUBO COMMISSION'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PROVING TO THE WORLD THAT THE FILIPINO CAN

SHARINGS

WEAVING THE TAPESTRY OF OUR BCBP LIFE

Weaving a tapestry is like going through life. In particular we focus on our spiritual life here in the Brotherhood. And if we can describe this tapestry by way of colors, it would be a very colorful one. - *by Charlie Carballo*

JESUS NEVER FAILS

Engulfed by fear, Nene experienced God's protection in perfect timing and excellent script. - *by Nene Ocampo*

REGULARS

Editorial

2 TRUE LOVE - GOING GLOBAL 4

Echoing next year's anniversary theme "Going Global", Ronnie zeros in on two important aspects of our BCBP life — LOVE and COMMITMENT — in his editorial. He sends out a call for committed men and women to witness for Christ with love and uncompromising honesty in the Philippine marketplace - *by Ronnie Caballero*

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ALL FOR WHAT? 15

Sammy reflects on the quality of commitment that is expected of a BCBP member and asks "All for what?" in his article. He then concludes that that is the wrong question. The better question would be, "All for Whom?" - *by Sammy M. Ulanday*

7 In the Marketplace

CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER 16

An article that focuses on our attitude towards money and the need to be absolutely clear about its purpose in our lives. Eddie presents a list of some questions to help us examine our work and the money we earn in relationship to God. - *by Eddie Mendoza*

7 From Cries to Kisses

PULLING THROUGH 17

We get a glimpse into the pressures of family life as Annie writes about all her five children getting sick at the same time followed by school-generated anxieties. She joyfully finds that whatever happens, the Lord remains constant. Always. - *by Annie Salvador*

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THE MASTERPIECE 18

With this story, Nancy invites us to reflect on our commitment to Jesus Christ, and to His Father and our Father. - *by Nancy Catan*

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ALABANG, MACTAN, RIZAL, DIPOLOG

M MODERN-DAY M MARTYR

By Charles W. Colson

It was a test all of us would hope to pass, but none of us really wants to take. A masked gunman points his weapon at a Christian and asks: "Do you believe in God?" She knows that if she says "yes," she'll pay with her life. But unfaithfulness to her Lord is unthinkable. So, with what would be her last words, she calmly answers "Yes, I believe in God."

What makes this story remarkable is that the gunman was no communist thug, nor was the martyr a Chinese pastor. As you may have guessed, the event I'm describing took place recently in Littleton, Colorado.

As the Washington Post reported, the two students who shot 13 people, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, did not choose their victims at random - they were acting out of a kaleidoscope of ugly prejudices. Media coverage has centered on the killers' hostility toward racial minorities and athletes, but there was another group the pair hated every bit as much, if not more: Christians. And, there were plenty of them to hate at Columbine High School. According to some accounts eight Christians - four Evangelicals and four Catholics - were killed.

Among them was Cassie Bernall. And it was Cassie who made the dramatic decision I've just described - fitting for a person whose favorite movie was "Braveheart," in which the hero dies a martyr's death. Cassie was a 17-year-old junior with long blond hair, hair she wanted to cut off and have made into wigs for cancer patients who had lost their hair through chemotherapy. She was active in her youth group at Westpool's Community Church and was known for carrying a Bible to school. Cassie was in the school library reading her Bible when the two young killers burst in. According to witnesses, one of the killers pointed his gun at Cassie and asked, "Do you believe in God?" Cassie paused and then answered, "Yes, I believe in God." "Why?" the gunman asked. Cassie did not have a chance to respond; the gunman had already shot her dead.

How courageous is my commitment to God?
How much do I value my faith? Am I willing to
actively stand up for what I believe?
This issue's Focus article on Commitment brings us
face-to-face with these hard questions.
How will you answer?

As her classmate Mickie Cain told Larry King on CNN, "She completely stood up for God. When the killers asked her if there was anyone who had faith in Christ, she spoke up and they shot her for it." Cassie's martyrdom was even more remarkable when you consider that just a few years ago she had dabbled in the occult, including witchcraft. She had embraced the same darkness and nihilism that drove her killers to such despicable acts.

But two years ago, Cassie dedicated her life to Christ, and turned her life around. Her friend, Craig Moon, called her a "light for Christ."

Well, this "light for Christ" became a rare American martyr of the 20th century. According to the Boston Globe, on the night of her death, Cassie's brother Chris found a poem Cassie had written just two days prior to her death. It read:

*"Now I have given up on everything else
I have found it to be the only way
To really know Christ and to experience
The mighty power that brought
Him back to life again, and to find
Out what it means to suffer and to
Die with him. So, whatever it takes
I will be one who lives in the fresh
Newness of life of those who are
Alive from the dead."*

The best way all of us can honor Cassie's memory is to embrace that same courageous commitment to our faith. For example, we should stand up to our kids when they want to play violent video games. We should be willing to stand up to community ridicule when we oppose access to Internet pornography at the local library. For the families of these young martyrs, I can only offer deep personal sympathy and the hope that they might take strength from the words Jesus spoke to the woman who honored Him by pouring ointment on His head.

"Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." Matthew 26:13. "Well done, good and faithful servant. Now enter into the joy of your Lord." Matthew 25:23.

Source: Internet.

Commitment is a deliberate act of engaging or pledging or a process of entrusting or consigning something for safekeeping.

When one decides to commit himself to Christ, he begins to carry his own cross. The weight of that cross determines the sum total of his commitment. In the case of our Lord Jesus, the cost of His commitment to do His Father's will was His life, which He willingly gave up to redeem our sins. His crucifixion made us the beneficiary of the free gift of salvation. For me, Jesus' commitment is the mother of all commitments.

When Linda, my wife, and I signed our BCBP white cards, we voluntarily entrusted and consigned our life to the Lord, hoping to do His will for the safekeeping of our souls.

Since we joined the BCBP in 1986 the good Lord Jesus has touched us in so many ways and has taught us all about commitment.

Commitment is believing that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him; it is being faithful to our prayer time, scripture reading and reflection, avoiding wrong doings, putting order in our personal and family life.

Commitment is calling your action group leader when he fails to remind you of the next meeting or assembly or activity.

Commitment is telling your action group leader of your desire to join an outreach activity of the chapter even if it means humbling yourself by telling him that you are so financially hard-up that you may not be able to cover the cost of the meal. It is the loving act of the action group leader to cover the cost of the meal of that financially distressed member.

Commitment is fetching your member who has no means to get to the household meeting even after a 3-hour grueling drive from work; it is remembering to fetch a brother who is the guest sharer in the outreach program where you serve as coordinator. It is asking for forgiveness when you forget to fetch him and find him at the appointed time and place even when it took him 3 1/2 hours to travel by bus. It is continuing to do your work even when you seem to get little support from fellow members.

Commitment is keeping your cool when, as the course leader, you get a call from one or two of the speakers a week be-



COMMITMENT

is...

*Pete Medina,
BCBP Rizal*



fore the start of your BCMR informing you that something came up and they cannot be available. It is also yourself, as course leader, delivering the two talks despite the little time to prepare.

Commitment is attending assemblies, meetings and other activities of your chapter even when you feel you want to stay home because de la Hoya is defending his boxing crown or a PBA Championship game is on the air. Or even when you wanted to avoid seeing some faces in the Assembly. Or continuing to attend even when the Music Ministry fumbles and seems to need more practice and ...er... commitment. It is waking up at 3:30 a.m. every Saturday and enduring a 3 1/2 hour trek (one way) so you will reach your chapter's outreach breakfast on time, before anyone else comes. It is attending to your chapter's activity even if it means absenting yourself from an important meeting called by your company president (but after you have obtained permission from your boss).

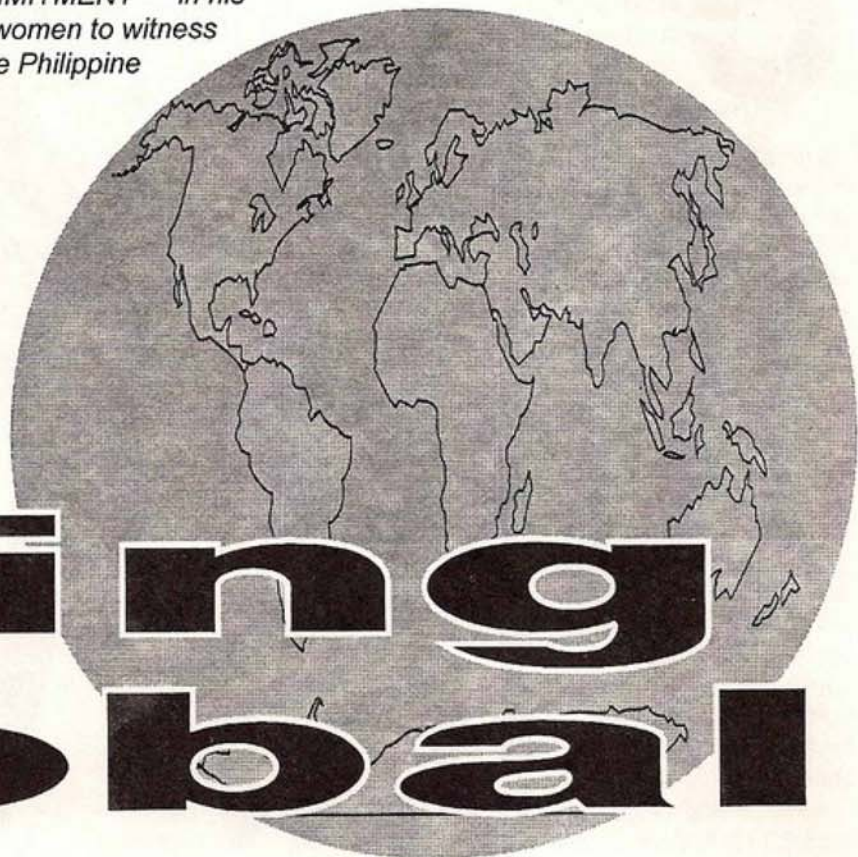
Commitment is obliging and submitting to the will of your governance team even if you feel you have a better idea. It is religiously remitting your pledge of financial support knowing that your love offering will enable your chapter to remit its dues to the National Council, even if it means foregoing a new pair of shoes.

Commitment is resisting the temptation to share a bit of "hot news" to a sister seated besides you in the middle of the Holy Mass since your voice may distract others.

It is leaving your decrepit car that bogged down midway to your destination to render the first talk in the BCMR and having the grace to grin in front of the mechanic who apparently is taking advantage of your graciousness by overcharging you for the repair. It is shouldering more than one half of the total cost of the BCMR of which you are the course leader, even if it means postponing the body repair and repainting of your 10-year-old car.

In my walk with the Lord, there are the 13 years that we have been with the BCBP wherein we have experienced what commitment is. The amazing thing is realizing that we are able to do it, to live it, to actualize commitment in our everyday life and, for the most part, to live out this commitment joyfully. We always find that the love of the Lord Jesus, whose life's experiences and teaching are the best in terms of commitment, continually upholds and strengthens us. We've realized that commitment is faith — a faith that produces hope, a hope that leads us back to love, the Love where it all began, the love of God for us.

Echoing next year's anniversary theme "Going Global", Ronnie zeros in on two important aspects of our BCBP life — LOVE and COMMITMENT — in his editorial. He sends out a call for committed men and women to witness for Christ with love and uncompromising honesty in the Philippine marketplace.



True Love- going global

fr. Joseph Galdon S.J., a well-known professor, writer and counselor said in one of his homilies that he shoos away young starry-eyed couples who proclaim to him that theirs is a true love that matches no other. He says very simply to them, "Come back after 10 years and I'll know if you are truly in love." I know Fr. Galdon (the Bob Hope look-alike of Ateneo) and his straightforwardness. (Fortunately, me and Mari have been happily married for the past 18 years.) He really means to shock one into reality, into a decision to love rather than encourage a love based on feelings.

Another quote drives this point home, "The real test of true love is having all things go wrong but still having a special way to love despite of all the wrong things that may happen." Truly, in ten years many wrong things may happen in a love relationship. So we learn to forgive, heal, try to love unconditionally and move on faithfully, thinking that we have done enough. But God expects more of us. Does He?

In the early years of Christianity, many things did go "wrong" for the early Christians, as in horrendous persecutions and mass terror from both the Jews and the Roman Empire. But the early Christians, had that special love for the Lord that persisted and gave birth to the Catholic Church which outgrew its persecutors by leaps and bounds.

In the nineteen years that BCBP has existed can we really say that we have loved the Lord with a true love despite all the growing pains that we have experienced? Have we loved despite barriers, failures and setbacks? What does God really expect of us? Hold your breath—He expects us to be martyrs—as part of the definition of martyrdom implies—which is being a witness.

Within the essence of the BCBP we have been trying to do that —" to bear witness" — at least that part of being a martyr (it may take us another 20 or 40 years to grow into the

other aspects of martyrdom—which is physically dying for our faith)! Let us go back to St. Paul, who in Acts 20:24 says, " I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given to me — the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace." Heartlight Magazine offers this thought about this verse, "How important is grace? Paul said it was more important than his life. Telling about that grace was more important to Paul than his life! In fact, that was his life!" Talk about true love!

And Paul certainly was not fazed by the "wrong" things which happened in his ministry as in beatings, stoning, imprisonment and rejection. The simple answer to that is that the martyrs of early Christianity had conquered death. In fact the seeds of our church are in the blood of the martyrs. Their mindset or their brand of faith was truly exceptional as large numbers of believers showed no fear of death up to the very end.

In our day, as BCBP members serving and witnessing in the marketplace, what will it mean to be a present day martyr (or even part martyr)? This poem "The World Needs Men"(and women if I may hastily add) should give us a hint:

The World Needs Men....

- ..who cannot be bought;
- ..whose word is their bond;
- ..who put character before wealth;
- ..who possess opinion and a will;
- ..who are larger than their vocations;
- ..who do not hesitate to take chances;
- ..who will not lose their individuality in a crowd;
- ..who will be as honest in small things as in great things;
- ..whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish desires;
- ..who will make no compromise with wrong;



- ..who will not say they do it, because everybody else does it;
- ..who are true to their friends through good report and evil report; in adversity as well in prosperity;
- ..who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning and hardheadedness are the best qualities for winning success;
- ..who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for truth when it is unpopular;
- ..who can say "No" with emphasis, although all the rest of the world says "Yes".

Can we show such a true love? Have we stood up to be counted in our immediate marketplaces? Can we in conscience say that we have proclaimed the Gospel to the four corners of the earth or to the four corners of the marketplace in the Philippines? Has Makati, Ortigas Center, Quezon City, Alabang, Las Pinas and Rizal Visayas and Mindanao been shaken with the impact of Christian witnessing too bold to ignore? Have businessmen and professionals taken notice? Have we witnessed with uncompromising honesty, standing for the truths of the Gospel in times of trials? Have we exhausted our efforts in the Philippine marketplace to herald out our faith as a prime example to believers in other marketplaces?

The fight against corruption alone has barely scratched the surface. Fortunately, the fight is also coming from the outside coming in -but not necessarily from Christian initiatives. The U.S. State Department has made the fight against corruption an important part of its foreign policy. Not surprisingly, the initiatives are monetary—in order to even the "playing field". I would like to quote from Boo Chanco, Philippine Star columnist, who writes in his article "INVESTOR COUNTRIES FORGE ANTI-CORRUPTION TREATY", the following: "The United States feels silly about losing competitive edge because of corruption. U.S. firms are criminally barred by the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act from participating in bribery of foreign government officials in international business transactions. Thus, corruption has been a real impediment to American firms seeking to do business abroad.

More specifically, they are losing business to companies whose home governments do not have anti-bribery laws as stringent as the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. They estimated that contracts lost in this manner to be about \$30 billion last year.

Now, the playing field will be equalized. There is a new treaty called the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions.

In this convention, 34 nations have agreed to enact criminal laws that will follow closely the prohibitions in the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

The convention obligates the parties to criminalize bribery of foreign public officials, including officials in all branches of government, whether appointed or elected. This prohibition includes payments to officials of public agencies, public enterprises and public international organizations. This would cover government-controlled corporations, such as airlines, utilities, and state telecommunications companies, which are increasingly important in public procurement.

The parties must apply "effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal penalties" to those who bribe foreign public officials. The convention also requires that the parties be able to seize or confiscate both the bribe and bribe proceeds—net profits that result from the illegal transaction—or impose equivalent fines so as to provide a powerful disincentive to bribery."

As members of the BCBP, we already know the biggest disincentive to bribery is that Jesus now reigns upon his throne and his judgement and wrath will soon be upon us. But as we know this, we are not to sit in our ivory towers and be inactively pious. God expects us to be as cunning as wolves to use our worldly knowledge, position, wealth and influence with our hearts surrendered to God to outwit the ungodly and evil. As the worldly and profit-oriented have proven in the above convention or treaty, they can even stand and unite on moral ground to win the fight against corruption.



"As members of the BCBP, we already know the biggest disincentive to bribery is that Jesus now reigns upon his throne and his judgement and wrath will soon be upon us."

We, on the other hand, should not lose such opportunities or be far behind in pleasing God with our plans and actions of making the marketplace subject to the kingdom of God.

As we ponder on the coming strategies for the globalization of the BCBP mission let us not waver and doubt if the battle can be won, BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN WON ALREADY! Ours is merely a responsibility

to bear witness and give glory to the name of the Lord. Jesus knows that every time He is proclaimed, "Satan falls like lightning from the sky." So, let's keep on proclaiming through our business dealings, our income tax returns, our company policies, our entertainment of clients, our lifestyles, our treatment of employees and all other areas possible where God's light must shine, where He is Lord and center of our lives. Let's be involved because God keeps a straight record—He keeps only one book—the Book of Life—where our names are written in Heaven. Let's keep them written there and serve him until he shares with us those eternal dividends—ETERNAL LIFE!

COMMITMENT

evolves into

a way
of

LIFE

Danny Silbor, BCBP Makati

Little did I realize way back in January 1992 that the well-meaning advice of one of our mentors in the BCBP to make sure to attend only one BCBP affair per week (I had newly graduated from Makati's BCLP 18) would soon become academic and unrealistic. But during that time I had no problem following that advice. I was still a "single" member since my wife Tess would yet join me in BCLP 21 in 1993.

My first realization of how committed I was, was when I attended the Steward Leaders Training at the DAP in Pasig with Fr. Herb Schneider himself as trainer/facilitator in 1994. I shared attendance with others who introduced themselves as chapter heads, mission directors and other service heads from the different Metro Manila chapters. I ended up introducing myself as an assistant to the action group leader, a music ministry guitarist and "just plain BCBP member." It was on the third day of the seminar that I found out just how much my way of life had changed while just being a "plain member." We were asked to fill out our activities for one week according to our roles in life. As I worked through my roles as a father, husband, sales manager, and "just plain BCBP member", I saw that I had been too close to the forest to see the trees. My activities per role read:

Role #1: Husband — help make son's school reviewer. Drop and fetch Tess to her job at the bank daily.

Role #2: Father — buy materials for Michael's project on Monday, make exam reviewers by Tuesday.

Role #3: Sales manager — finish the monthly reports by Tuesday, do bookings for next month starting Monday morning.

"What do we gain from all our work? I know the heavy burden that God has laid on us. He has set the right time for everything...the best we can do is to be happy and do the best we can while we are still alive ... and enjoy what we have worked for. It is God's gift." Ecclesiastes 3

Role #4: BCBP member - action group or chapter assembly on Friday, BCLP 22 on Thursday, men's breakfast on Wednesday, plus music ministry practice on Tuesday. And that makes it four nights a week...Huh? Four nights a week!!!!?? Boy, I was really deep into this BCBP thing and it seemed so natural. These activities were not something I had to do whether I liked it or not. I simply liked doing them ... with others. It dawned on me that I liked being in a closely-knit supportive community in Christ.

And to think when I finished my BCLP in 1991 I hardly knew how to read the bible, I had not held a guitar in 20 years! Soon after my own BCLP, I was asked to join the next BCLP's service team (just to observe!), then the music ministry. About a year after that I was asked by our unit head Annie Salvador, then eight months pregnant with her fifth child, to take over her slot as Kapatiran correspondent for Makati. Since I could not refuse a pregnant woman asking for help, I accepted my first official duty outside of my action group. Soon after as we were plunging deeper into service, we were deployed with our unit to the Legaspi outreach, now a chapter. Then I became the head servant of BCLP 25 in Makati.

Because of my fervor I was "rewarded" (read this as 'given bigger responsibilities') by being tasked to serve on the Governance team as Service Director. I continued to hold on to my being an action group leader, a Kapatiran representative and a music ministry guitarist, all of which I enjoyed. It was about that time that my wife and I were experiencing job changes and work conflicts. Something had to give - what gave was the quality of my service to the Brotherhood. Soon enough I had to let go of my governance position and the Kapatiran position and even had to forego some of my regular BCBP activities.

I realized that even as an "ordinary" member, the four-times-a-week attendance was easily attainable. Everything apparently becomes more difficult as soon as you assume the headship of more than one major service. I found it necessary to try harder to strike a balance in my life. BCBP time, family time and career time should complement each other and not conflict for attention.

I am still an AGL but this is much easier now since my members have matured already. I have gone back rather haltingly as a Kapatiran contributor. I regularly play the guitar in the breakfast and BCLPs. Surprisingly I still find time to attend to Brotherhood activities three to four times a week. And I have enough time for my career and, as importantly, for my family.

the privilege of OBEDIENCE



Once again my wife, Hedy, and I were invited to give a talk in BCBP Davao during their BCMR along with some other members of our chapter. Once again I readily agreed

as I look at this as part of the commitment to serve that we nourish in the Brotherhood.

"He who obeys the commands He has from me is the man who loves Me." John 14:21

Obedience is one of the main ways we express our love for God. The Lord gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32); the Lord reveals himself to those obeying Him (Jn. 14:21), and conceals himself from the disobedient (Lk. 10:21). The obedient not only know God's revelation but even his dwelling within them (Jn. 14:23). In obedience, love is expressed, the Spirit received, God revealed, and His indwelling received. Sin and death entered the world through disobedience, but salvation entered the world through Jesus' obedience (Rm. 5:19), even to death on the cross (Phil. 2:8).

To me, obedience is the essence of the Christian life and the heart of our relationship with the Lord. Obedience is one of the most important ways of imitating Christ. It is a prerequisite to exercise authority over the evil one (2 Cor. 10:4-6). Obedience is one of our greatest privileges, for the Lord could have accomplished his plan of salvation without letting us participate through obedience.

Obedience is a way of life (1 Peter 1:2) and the way of love. And it is our way, the way that we follow in the Brotherhood.

"Get out of complacency, bring back the zeal you had before. Go out and shine; bring back sinners to Me. I will always be with you. You don't have to search for Me. Continue to pray and I will bless your work. You will have true happiness in serving Me."

We must have been sleeping for God to jolt us with this "wake-up" call during an assembly. God is nudging us to rise up, go and shine with the same freshness and cravings we possessed as when we made our first commitment to the BCBP.

Barely two months ago not even the flooded streets nor the heavy traffic could have prevented the many from attending the Recommitment night. There was a long queue of brothers and sisters who renewed their commitments to the Brotherhood. But lately it has been observed that there has been a decrease in attendance at assemblies, teaching nights, breakfasts and action group meetings —

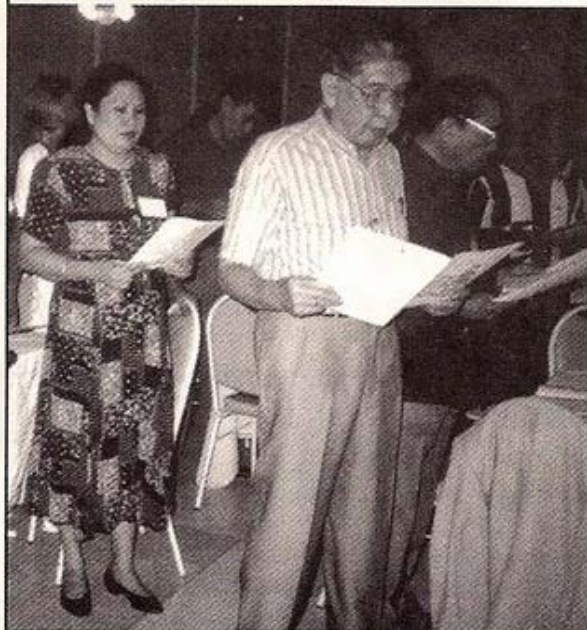
WAKE-UP CALL

activities which are vital to BCBP culture and essential to the growth of the individual member. Some brothers and sisters must have missed the point.

When we agreed to join the BCBP we were not merely signing the white card as a proof of a promise. We were, in essence, saying "Yes" to Jesus! We have made a covenant to serve Him — through the BCBP. Our "Yes" is not accidental — it's providential! It is making the initial step to a holy journey with Christ. And in obedience let's do it! Unless we serve, we will never know the true joy that is reserved for us.

Source: "Taytayan", Mactan Newsletter, March 1999

COMMITMENT/LIFE... from page 5



Bro. Ipe Mendoza, fondly called "Mang Ipe" or "Papang", of the Greenhills chapter, at 82 and 15 years as a member, is still at it - serving as Action Group Leader and more. Talk about commitment!

I am finding out that the Brotherhood activities are times that actually refresh, revitalize and renourish my spirit, especially now that they are

balanced with the rest of my life. My commitment to God through the BCBP has shown me the way to a more balanced and orderly life, and this commitment has evolved into a way of life for me. I have discovered that commitment cannot be judged simply by titles and positions, but by one's willingness to serve and that attendance in itself at an activity is a form of service.

My advice to all you BCBP servants: Be realistic about your work situation. Being fired up with the Holy Spirit does not mean that you can do away with being realistic and ignore putting proper order in your life. Consider carefully the nature and time demands of your service; do not accept the headships of two different services at the same time. Yes, you are willing to serve the Lord, but remember that He views family time and career/work activities as areas of service, too. Above all, in the spirit of Ecclesiastes 3: enjoy serving the Lord, be happy and do the best you can. *Note: As of June 1999, Danny has accepted his appointment as a Unit Leader.*

FASTING

A guide for successful and prayerful fasting

Sooner or later as we live out our commitment to the Lord through the BCBP, we come face to face with having to supplement our prayer with fasting. Pete Medina, BCBP Rizal shares with us a guide to help make our time of fasting both prayerful and successful.

1. Surrender yourself to the Lord and ask for permission to fast.

2. Maintain a prayerful countenance throughout the day of the fast. (Note: Prayerful does not necessarily mean sorrowful...!)

3. Have a list of all specific needs to pray and fast for (healing of sicknesses or relationships, need for a job/business projects, release from serious sins and wrong doings/habits, for community concerns like attendance, financial condition, etc.).

4. Focus and be intent on things of heaven rather than those on earth. Do not fast with the wrong motives.

5. Ask the Lord for grace to give you the right perspective in fasting and strength to persevere in it.

6. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you to fast as Jesus did.

7. Fast by eating only one meal (a day) unless the Lord has given you a better way to fast. Fast in covenant love. (Editor's note: You may also consider fasting by giving up something important to you like smoking, or watching T.V. or drinking soft drinks. Making a sacrifice to do some-

thing pleasing to the Lord, i.e. daily mass, spending time with the sick or elderly, is also a form of fasting.)

8. Read and reflect on related scriptures on fasting (Isaiah 58, Lev. 16:29, Mark 2:20, Matt. 4:2, Acts 13:2, 1 Kings 21:25-29, Jonah 3:5-10, 2 Chronicles 20:3 and Esther 4:16).

9. Seek the Lord's will on what day (or days) and what way you are to fast each week. You may be called to total fast in which you eat nothing or to a partial fast in which you limit your intake of food.

10. Persevere and grow much closer to Jesus. As you fast, you may have more prayer distractions, health changes, and interruptions. Persevere in your commitment to fast.

11. Remember, Christian fasting assumes that we have met Jesus and have rejoiced in the community of His covenant love. If we are in a state of sin or don't know Jesus, His community, joy and covenant, then we will find fasting very difficult, confusing and meaningless.

12. Listen to Jesus. Think of Jesus' final coming and the perfect joy of heaven.



Telephone Meditation

A well-known Buddhist monk suggests the following mindfulness meditations while receiving or making phone calls:

- ❖ When the phone rings, do not answer it immediately. Breathe in and out deeply. As you breathe in, say, "I am calm." As you breathe out, smile. Do the same thing for the second ring. And answer the phone only on the third ring.
- ❖ When you want to make a phone call, read the following poem before dialing:

*Words can travel many thousand kilometers;
They are to build up mutual understanding and love;
I am determined that my words will be beautiful like flowers,
I vow that my words will be beautiful like embroideries.*

You may wish to paste the poem on your phone to help you be mindful while talking.

Source: Peace Ideas Bulletin, #24



Slow Dance

Have you ever watched kids
On a merry-go-around
Or listened to the rain
Slapping on the ground?

Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight
Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?

You better slow down
Don't dance so fast
Time is short
The music won't last.

Do you run through each day on the fly?
When you ask, "How are you?"
Do you hear the reply?

When the day is done,
Do you lie in your bed
With the next hundred chores
Running through your head?

You'd better slow down
Don't dance so fast
Time is short
The music won't last.

Ever told your child,
We'll do it tomorrow
And in your haste, not see his sorrow?

Ever lost touch,
Let a good friendship die
'Cause you never had time
to call and say "Hi"?

You'd better slow down
Don't dance so fast
Time is short
The music won't last.

When you run so fast to get somewhere
You miss half the fun of getting there.
When you worry and hurry through your
day,
It is like an unopened gift...
Thrown away...

Life is not a race.
Do take it slower
Hear the music before the song is over.

Art Sampang
BCBP San Fernando, Pampanga

Mt. Pinatubo Commission gets new execu- tive director



Art Sampang, a member of the BCBP San Fernando, Pampanga, Outreach, was appointed in January of this year 1999 by President Estrada as the executive director of the Mt. Pinatubo Commission (MPC). Tasked with the resettling of some 5,000 families displaced by Mt. Pinatubo eruptions and subsequent lahar flows who are still staying in various evacuation centers, Sampang is also giving emphasis to livelihood projects and food production programs in the resettlement sites in Pampanga, Zambales and Tarlac.

Formerly a police reporter, deskman and tourism section editor of the defunct Manila Chronicle for 18 years and until recently columnist of the Pampanga-based Sun Star, Art writes an occasional column for the Kapatiran. He and his wife Arlie finished BCLP 3 of the San Fernando, Pampanga Outreach of the Greenhills Chapter in March 1997. He has been serving as breakfast emcee since December 1997. His brother Ener Sampang is a member of the BCBP Manila Outreach.

Art last served the government as Provincial Administrator of Pampanga from June 16, 1987 to March 15, 1992 and even became OIC-Governor of Pampanga from Dec. 1, 1987 to Feb. 1, 1988.

Jun Catan
BCBP Manila Outreach

Proving to the world that the Filipino can

Gonzalo O. Catan, Jr. "Jun", outreach head of BCBP Manila, bested 26 other inventions in the sanitation-ventilation-heating category in the 27th International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva, Switzerland, and came home with a Silver Medal. His winning entry is called "PHI" or "Public Household Insecticide".

The Geneva exhibition showcased about a thousand inventions from 44 countries all over the world. Fifty-five judges who were all experts in the fields of science and technology, agriculture and others, carefully evaluated and studied the entries. Jun's entry was one of several Philippine inventions selected by the Dept. of Science and Technology to represent the Philippines. Last year it was the recipient of the top prize in the Invention Commercialization category during the 1998 National Science and Technology Week sponsored by the DOST. Catan's PHI is certified as environment-friendly. It is a water-based insecticide that makes use of 21 useful microorganisms among other indigenous materials, to kill household pests. Produced with antidote and biomediated with activated carbon, it is then impregnated with synergized botanicals. His invention is also intended for general pest control and broad-spectrum sanitation. Aside from its very low insecticide odor, it excels in effectively and efficiently controlling pests without creating adverse effects on the environment. It is particularly effective against the dengue transmitting mosquito. PHI is sold by Jun's firm, the MAPECON, and comes in a package that includes a bottle of concentrate, a measuring scoop and a medium-sized sprayer. This kit costs only P220 and is good for several applications.

Another one of Jun's 38 patented inventions, Green Charcoal, won for him a

Partial reprint of an article by Virna Luz R. Natalia in Philippine Graphic Magazine, June 14, 1999.



bronze medal in the 1996 International Invention Contest also in Geneva. Green Charcoal is biologically produced through a microbial-enzymatic process from grassy or cellulosic materials and plant-based enzymes, which are then compressed into mini-logs or briquettes as a high-energy, economical fuel for cooking and heating purposes.

In an exclusive interview with the Philippine Graphic magazine (June 14, 1999, p. 45), Jun states that his winning is "a means to inspire our people, entrepreneurs, businessmen and our young people — that we as a people are very creative and at par with other inventors all over the world." As a reformist who never submits to shady deals, he sees such problems as challenges for the Christian businessman to overcome. He believes that the more that one stays honest, the more the guarantee of success.

A member of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals with the Makati Chapter since 1986, Jun now heads the Manila Outreach.

COMMITMENT IS..
SIRACH 2: 1 - 18

NATIONAL COUNCIL

BCBP gears up for the third millennium



Director for Teaching and Training Manolet Siojo facilitates Vismin Joint Conference

The National Council has started gearing up for the third millennium. The program, dubbed as "BCBP in the Midst of Change" was formally launched early this year on February 5-6 when the National Council co-sponsored the Luzon Council Conference held in Puerto Princesa. The same conference was held on June 18-20 in Iligan for the Vismin Council Joint Conference.

The conference, designed by Manolet Siojo, Director for Teaching and Training, was intended to draw inputs from the different chapter and outreach heads. The conference proceedings were anchored on assessing our performance and achievements based on the 1993-1998 Development Plan. Results of such assess-

ment later on became the basis for determining what the BCBP would want to achieve or do in the coming millennium.

The outputs from the two conferences will now be consolidated to form the major topics of discussions in the forthcoming National Strategic Planning Retreat 2 (NSPR-2) scheduled this coming September in Talisay, Batangas.

The NSPR 2 proceedings are expected to formulate implementing guidelines and procedures that will enable the BCBP to realize its plans for the future years, while at the same time, to address the impending changes which are anticipated to surface, both in the local and national levels.

The twin conferences were ably facilitated by Manolet who provided the del-

egates with information on how to deal with changes. He expounded on the change concepts and gave the chapter heads guidelines on how to plan for changes. The conferences were further supported by the national president, Manny Banigan who briefed the delegates on where we are now based on the Development Plan of 1993, and by the National Treasurer Bobby Laviña who presented a "change scenario" for the next five years.

The conferences gave the chapter heads the opportunity to discuss what's happening in their respective domain and to share their own individual plans for the future through workshops and group discussions. The spiritual aspect of the conferences was rendered through personal reflection and contemplative exercise based on Scriptural passage of Matthew 28:16-20.

The Luzon Conference was held at the Tropical Sun Inn and was hosted by BCBP Puerto Princesa led by its chapter head Edwin Tan, while the Vismin counterpart was held at the Tinago Residence Inn hosted by BCBP Iligan spearheaded by chapter head Bobby Borromeo.

The three regional directors, Fernando de Larrazabal for Luzon, Rolly Ona for Visayas and Sadi Saguisag for Mindanao gave their support by facilitating the workshop discussions. Louie Morales, director for Evangelization and Guilds rendered additional support during the Vismin conference run.

BCBP leads PIM Prayer Rally

The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals has been assigned to lead this year's celebration of the Partners in Mission (PIM) Feast of the Christ the King Prayer Rally. Given the task as lead chapter for the BCBP is the Makati Chapter with its newly installed chapter head Nelson Salvador at the helm of the Steering Committee.

This year's PIM Prayer Rally is to be held on November 30, 1999 at the Philippine Sports Arena (formerly (ULTRA), and banners the theme: "Father we are one" as a way of emphasizing unity among the PIM organizations despite diversity in calling, charism and organizational thrust and structures.

Makati chapter is supported by representatives from the different Metro Manila chapters namely, Sonny and Charis Marquez of Greenhills, Thor Olalia of Las Piñas, Omar Guzman and Alex Guiiao of Parañaque, Noli Tiongson of Quezon City, Manny Jimenez of Alabang, Pete Medina of Rizal, Vic Cuna of Manila outreach, and Oca and Floren Ballares, Makati chapter life director.

Nelson, supported by his wife Annie, is on top of all the preparations and encourages all members not only those in Metro Manila but as well as those from the neighboring chapters and outreaches, to attend this prayer rally.



Nelson Salvador, newly installed chapter head of BCBP Makati with wife Annie who writes in the Kapatiran under the column "From Cries to Kisses".

"I urge all our members to give their support to this undertaking by being there when it happens," Nelson said.

Manila celebrates 2nd anniversary

The Manila Outreach celebrated its 2nd anniversary as an outreach on May 22 at the Mapecon quadrangle. 83 members and guests participated in the mass, dinner and program of games and contests.

National council president Manny Banigan and his wife Haydz, together with Director of Visayas and Mindanao Council Rollie and Emma Ona, graced the occasion. Makati chapter head couple Nelson and Annie Salvador led a delegation from BCBP Makati, Manila's mother chapter.

Outreach head Jun Catan welcomed the members and guests and summarized the outreach's accomplishments: 4 BCLPs, 2 units with 9 action groups, a dynamic, complete and functioning governance team in place, weekly men's breakfasts, a monthly ladies' breakfast and a monthly joint breakfast. All other BCBP activities are regularly observed. The first six months of 1999 have been dedicated to leadership and members formation; BCLP #5 begins in June.

In his remarks Manny Banigan referred several times to the outreach as a chapter (is this prophetic?) as he congratulated the group for finally being able to make the Brotherhood's marketplace thrust felt in the heart of the metropolis after so many, many years of being only a breakfast venue.

First ladies breakfast held

20 Manila outreach ladies gathered on May 14 in the upper room at Racks Restaurant, Remedios Circle, Malate, for the 1st ladies breakfast of the Manila Outreach. Nancy Catan was the morning's sharer with Annie Salvador of BCBP Makati giving the reflective discernment.

Ladies breakfast head Cynthia Gaité announced that the ladies breakfast would be held every second Friday of the month as she encouraged everyone to invite their friends to attend.



[Top photo] Manila outreach head couple Jun and Nancy Catan (center) join in singing "Happy Anniversary" before blowing out the candles of the outreach's anniversary cakes. They are flanked by Francis Mapile (right), outreach mission director, and his wife Edel (left). [Below] Manila Outreach inaugural Ladies breakfasters.



TUGUEGARAO

Intercessory Prayer Group meets weekly

BCBP Tuguegarao's intercessory prayer group meets every Saturday for one hour for its weekly worship at the Adoration chapel behind the Tuguegarao Metropolitan Cathedral. The leaders of this group, Sis. Luz Babaran and Sis. Tess Bannaban, consider this weekly adoration as an essential source of spiritual strength in their min-

istry of intercession and a vital cog in the chapter's evangelization programs.

Most of the members of the Intecessory Group are also members of the Healing Ministry. They make it a point to not only pray for sick members and friends but to also visit them personally to strengthen them.

Alabang installs new chapter head

Roberto "Bobby" Atendido, Sr. was installed as the new chapter head of BCBP Alabang last February 13, 1999 in simple rites during the Joint Men's and Ladies' Breakfast at the Alabang Country Club. Bobby joined BCBP Alabang's BCLP 15 in 1988 together with his wife Fe. He served the chapter for eleven years in various capacities as action group leader, breakfast team and music ministry head, chapter treasurer and mission director.

The couple have four children, namely Roberto, Jr., 25, Patricia, 22, Kristina, 14 and Francesca, 9. They are also known as the grandparents of two-year old

Mikhaela, daughter of his eldest son, Bobbit, and the 'miracle' baby who has touched every Alabang member and transformed each one into a prayer warrior — strong in faith and hope and love.

Bobby plans to continue the many programs initiated by his predecessor Charlie Carballo, former chapter head for almost five years. Despite his demanding position as president of Asian Alliance Investment Corporation, one of the leading investment houses in the country, Bobby willingly takes on this new responsibility for the Lord. He says, "Truly, He is magnificent and we thank Jesus for calling us into the Brotherhood."



Past and Present. Charlie Carballo with wife Josie, former BCBP Alabang chapter head with the new chapter head, Bobby Atendido with wife Fe.

Group Dynamics

LEMON GOLF

For those of you who want to play golf but can't (the weather is too hot or too rainy, you are too busy, etc.), why not introduce Lemon Golf at your next action group fellowship. You can hone your skills, introduce others to the game, and have a lot of fun at the same time!

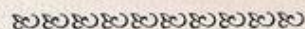
Use a lemon or dayap or small native orange for the golf ball and either a broom or a mop for the club. A contestant uses the stick end of the broom or mop, holding the large end up. The idea is to hit the lemon or dayap fruit, as one would hit a golf ball, down the fairway, which is across the sala floor. The hole is either a chalk circle about twelve inches in diameter or a string placed in the form of a circle. Or to make it even more challenging, turn a dinner plate upside down, instructing the contestants that the lemon must roll up onto the plate and remain on top of the plate. The one who accomplishes the feat with the least number of strokes — of course, without damaging the 'golf ball' — is the golf champ of the evening.

Or you can lay out a six hole course, with a few interesting obstacles (how about a towel trap, or lots of paper clips spread out on a newspaper), and stage a tournament.

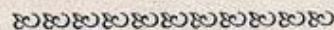


Signs that you've had too much of the '90s...

- You try to enter your password on the microwave.
- You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of 3.
- You e-mail your son in his room to tell him that dinner is ready, and he e-mails you back "What's for dinner?"
- You chat several times a day with a stranger from South Africa, but you haven't spoken to your next door neighbor yet this year.
- You didn't give your valentine a card this year, but you posted one for your e-mail buddies via a Web page.



A friend was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the priest was standing at the door as he always was to greet his parishioners. He shook the hand of my friend and pulled him aside saying, "You need to join the Army of the Lord!" My friend replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Father Carl." Father Carl questioned, "How come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?" My friend whispered back, "I'm in the secret service."



A mother was teaching her three-year-old daughter The Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, she repeated it after her mother. One night she said she was ready to solo. The mother listened with pride, as her daughter carefully enunciated each word right up to the end. "And lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us some e-mail, Amen."

MACTAN

All set for BCLP 9, BCLP singles 2

ON APRIL 10 BCBP Mactan opened three simultaneous Brotherhood Christian Life Programs: the Mactan group at the Days Hotel in Lapu-Lapu City, the Mandaue group at the Flormont Hotel, and the Singles group also at the Flormont Hotel.

Nelson Daus heads the Mactan group as course leader with Jess Atoc as chief servant. Appointed course leader for Mandaue is Hector Tina and Butch Pilapil is chief servant. The singles' BCLP course leader is Jojo Boquiren with Mon Cataros as assistant course leader. Liza Malaluan, Margie Burguite, and Yenyen Sabijon are the chief servants team for the singles.

It may be recalled that last year in March, Mactan took the bold step of conducting its first simultaneous BCLPs that yielded a total of 100 graduates. Most of these brothers and sisters are now actively involved in the different service ministries of the chapter.

Youth launch first breakfast

FIFTY-ONE youth whose ages range from 11 to 16 registered as first breakfasters during the first Youth Breakfast organized by BCBP Mactan's youth last March 27 at Jollibee, Gaisano, Mactan. 16-year old Jonas Barro, a fresh high school graduate from USP and son of Lito and Nena Barro shared his youthful life and his refreshing relationship with the Lord. Subsequent youth breakfasts will be held on the last Saturdays of every month.

Leo and Hannah Alcosoba is the couple heading the Youth Ministry with the help of Rey Daus and the Youth Core Group.

RIZAL

Teaching ministry initiated'

THE CHAPTER life directorate of BCBP Rizal has recently established the Teaching Ministry under the leadership of Norman and Marijo Benares. It aims to provide community members with teachings for spiritual development and leadership development following the prescribed Brotherhood teaching tracks. Special teachings on healing, both inner and physical, on the sacraments and trainings for greeters, music ministry members and other major services will also be provided on request. The min-

istry will also promote a year-long program on bible reading.

The new ministry is composed of Mon/Patty Cocson for teacher/speakers training, Jack/Monette Tolentino for AGL, DLs and ADLs training, Chuchu/Edith Gutierrez for the bible reading program, Raul/Marie Manalo for discussion topics for action group meetings, Edwin/Rose Espiritu and Noli/Chuchi Lopez for mini-teachings, and Norman/Marijo Benares for special teachings.

Rizal breakfast transfers to Taytay

DUE TO an increased attendance and the warm reception given to the BCBP Rizal's breakfast in Taytay, mission director Ping Ramirez has decided to hold the breakfasts indefinitely at the Manila East Golf driving range. The new Saturday schedules are: two joint men's and ladies' breakfasts will be held on the first and third Saturdays of the month, while the men's breakfasts will remain every second and fourth Saturdays. The men's and ladies' separate breakfasts will, in the meantime, be suspended.

Breakfast head Jess Sundiam and his breakfast team have vowed to make



the breakfasts more Lord-centered, light and lively. A pool of emcees and response givers is being organized even as the team welcomes new faces and willing servants.

DIPOLOG

Dipolog harvests 62

BCBP DIPOLOG, one of the country's youngest BCBP outreaches, recently graduated 62 from its BCLP #2 in Dipolog City. Special guests for the occasion were BCBP national administrative manager Sammy Ulanday and his wife Veron. The outreach and the BCLP is under the direct supervision of BCBP Dumaguete whose mission team headed by Dumaguete's mission director Ely Dejaresco brave the waves via the Dumaguete Supercat

every weekend to serve the Dipolog outreach.

The Dipolog governance is headed by Chito and April Lopez; the outreach's secretariat is manned by George and Shionne Damarillo. Breakfast head is Nits and Pat Bernad assisted by Ed and Vivian Baron. Ike and Lina Gamalinda handle the music ministry. Nonoy Morallo is the outreach's treasurer. Unit leaders are Ed/Vivian Baron and Pidoy/Khing-Khing Uy.

COMMITMENT IS... HEBREWS 4: 14 - 16

Weaving the tapestry of our BCBP life

Charlie Carballo, Alabang Chapter

One of our favorite songs of the 70s is Carole King's "Tapestry". The first stanza goes this way:

*"My life has been a tapestry of rich and royal hue
An everlasting vision of the ever changing view
A wondrous woven magic in bits of blue and gold
A tapestry to feel and see, impossible to hold."*

Weaving a tapestry is like going through life. In particular we focus on our spiritual life here in the Brotherhood. As we look back to the past 12 years of our life in the Alabang Chapter, we can say that indeed a tapestry has unfolded. And if we can describe this tapestry by way of colors, it would be a very colorful one.

There are splashes of **green** — we grew in number and moved with the Spirit to give many BCLPs and BCMRs. There are patches of **blue** and **brown** — we crossed water and land to



open breakfasts and outreaches in the various provinces. Then there are **gray** strokes marked with **red** — we had our moments of indecision, and listlessness, when we underwent periods of dryness or changes that initially brought about anxieties and even hurts.

Then we find the fine **gold** strands, interspersed with **pink** and **yellow** — we ventured to new programs, for the children, the youth and the family. Finally we see a free space, of color **white**, as we pause for a while to bring in a new design.

Throughout these years with the Alabang chapter, we have been together, every year gaining new friends, and our BCBP family grew bigger and stronger. Our work and service in the chapter could not have lasted without the love, encouragement, counsel and support of so many brothers and sisters. We have toiled together, laughed much and at times cried. Through it all there is rejoicing in my heart for I consider it a privilege to work in the service of the Lord in the Brotherhood.

Another poem about tapestries written by a certain Eileen touches me when she says:

*"My tapestry grows as each stitch I take;
There are many mistakes that I make.
How will it look when I finish my task?
Will it be a picture that will last?"*

As my wife Josie, and I move on to the next stage in God's plan, as much as we thank you, brothers and sisters in the Brotherhood, we also ask your forgiveness for any words or acts on our part that may have hurt anyone. We pray that by God's grace any differences that may have come in between would be wiped away in the spirit of Christian love.

The Lord is a God of wonderful surprises. We will continue to serve Him in the way that He wills. We feel excited. As we wait expectantly on the Lord, we remain open to the leading of the Spirit. And whenever any cloud of darkness or any wave of doubt comes, we are reassured as He whispers to us: "Be still and know that I am God."

Robert Frost writes:

*"The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep."*

And so our journey goes on and our task continues for the Lord has said: "Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind." Today, this is OUR task, and we can never say that we have done enough. Great joy awaits all of us as we look forward to the day when we shall have a beautiful tapestry, the tapestry of our life, to offer to our Father. And we pray that, pleased with our offering, the Father shall say to us: "Well done, my children, come and inherit the Kingdom that I have prepared for you."



Sammy M. Ulanday
Greenhills Chapter

ALL FOR

What?

Somewhere, somehow, we reach a point when we may ask ourselves this question. Time may come when we may seem to look at ourselves as being foolish or blind, or being too naive. Or maybe at this very moment our frame of mind is shifting to the notion of simply doing what others are doing, and apparently getting away with it.

These thoughts might have crossed my mind when as early as Wednesday morning in the office I try to finish as many chores as I can so that my load will be lighter the following day. Thursday comes and I continue to work a little bit more than usual - still striving to accomplish those reports, make all those phone calls, encode data to the computer, write letters, re-schedule meetings earlier, attend to my boy's project, buy the groceries early in the week, re-setting appointments, have that clogged sink fixed, visit the doctor, etc., etc., etc. All for what?

Friday comes and I am so relieved that there's not much to do, for I have done most of my chores earlier in the week. All for what? It's Friday! Chapter assembly night!

Get off early from office, weave through traffic, arrive home for a snack or early dinner, kiss the kids good night, pick up my spouse, and off I rush to the assembly.

Seven-thirty on the dot we arrive, and are greeted by the janitor who is just starting to arrange the chairs and clean the room where the assembly will be held. "Maybe I got the time all wrong," I said to myself.

I look at my watch. It's almost eight and no one else is around except me, my spouse and the janitor leisurely moving those chairs.

Thirty minutes past eight a couple arrive but still no sign of the service ministry nor the music ministry. We chat for a while with the other couple. It was a good conversation, and a good thirty minutes more were chunked off from my watch, then two more couples arrive.

Finally, the clinging of tambourine filtered through the air and the shadow of the guitars and speakers began to form somewhere in one corner of the room. At last the first note of a song fills the air. Two songs, three, four, maybe we shall have



some practice songs before we formally start the assembly. Ahhh, "Let us all stand to sing our opening song," the worship leader announces.

The same rushing and waiting continue the following week for the action group meeting, only to arrive at the hosts' house and be greeted by the maid with the re-assuring words that "... on the way na sila Sir at Ma'am." It's already eight o'clock and our host is "still on the way"! Great!

Has this happened to you? If so, I can't blame you if you would entertain the idea of quitting. On second thought, maybe it's not you who should quit. You have been diligent in minding your responsibility as a member, at least in the area of attendance and punctuality.

But all throughout these years, you have been doing the same thing, attending assemblies and AGMs, and on time at that. You ask yourself - "All for what!"

You're lucky and certainly blessed, for you have been gifted with a committed heart. Surely, you have manifested and put into practice this commitment - all for what? Maybe, the better question is "all for Whom?"

Yes, we do the things we do in the Brotherhood not for our chapter head nor our action group leader nor for the president of the BCBP. But for the one to whom we have primarily committed ourselves to - Christ Jesus.

I am reminded of what I wrote in the past when I said, "The Brotherhood represents Christ, that whenever we do something for the BCBP we do it for Christ. Consequently, what we fail to do for the BCBP, we fail to do for the Lord. Thus, an opportunity to do something for BCBP is a privilege given to us to do something for the Lord."

Therefore, if we do not give that extra effort to assure our attendance to, and being on time in any BCBP activity, then maybe it can be reflective of how we unwittingly do the same for the Lord.

And so, for those of us who always make it a point to do whatever we can to live out our commitment, let's congratulate ourselves, for we are doing just fine. Let us not allow the half-hearted, the quarterly-committed, and the "I'm too busy to attend" members dissuade us from doing what we've been doing all these years. For in the end we shall be the living testimony for the others to envy - "for those who sow, so shall they reap." Whatever we do today shall be the very foundation of what we would be in the future and what we would become.

Brothers and sisters in **attendance** - rejoice!



Eddie Mendoza
Greenhills Chapter

CLEAR AND PRESENT

DANGER

The worldly attitude towards money and power presents a clear and present danger to a Christian businessman's desire for sanctification. Jesus Himself said so when He taught His followers that "you cannot give yourself both to God and to Money." (Luke 16:13) Let me repeat it: the worldly attitude towards money and power presents a clear and present danger to a Christian businessman's desire for sanctification.

Businessmen will more readily give up their mistresses than sacrifice a few pesos by conducting all their business dealings with justice and charity. And I'm afraid Christian businessmen are no exception to that. Notice how we in the BCBP, for instance, are quite clear about the teaching on adultery, and how we make sure we get rid of that "serious" sin. Yet we pussyfoot our way around issues that might affect a man's business or livelihood, almost afraid that we may be sued or something. "Hey, it's alright if you tell me about how to run my personal, spiritual life, but don't you tell me how to run my business. After all, this is my money, not yours. And besides, are you prepared to support my family in case I lose my job or my business goes bankrupt?"

The clear and present danger to getting a businessman to trust in the Lord is his attitude towards money and power. This is such a great obstacle, that it really would take pure faith to be able to say to this mountain, "Be taken up and cast into the sea." (Mark 11:23)

In order to change our attitude towards money, we need to look at our business life from the point of view of Jesus Christ. One way to begin doing this is for each one of us to sit down and put together a personal mission statement, what one author calls a "career manifesto".

Every successful business began with a business plan. Even basketball teams have their game plan. Ayala had a well laid-out urban plan for Makati way back when it

was still swampy land. So, why not write down your personal life plan, an honest-to-goodness statement of purpose, intentions, and motives. This will give you a chance to think through not only what you intend to accomplish with your life and your business or your career, but more importantly why you want to accomplish this.

A few of the questions you might want to consider include:

- ♦ Why am I in the career I'm in?
- ♦ How does my work accomplish something that God wants done?
- ♦ What resources has God given me to do His work?
- ♦ How does my work show my love for God?
- ♦ How does it serve others, including my employer, employees, and customers?
- ♦ What is my plan for assisting the needy?
- ♦ How does my work serve myself and my family?
- ♦ What is the relationship of my work to non-work areas (like family, the BCBP, etc.)?
- ♦ What is my purpose as I interact with the people who work around me?
- ♦ What do I intend to do with the income I gain from my work?

After writing your manifesto, present to God your attitudes towards money and power, repent for the times you chose the path of money and what money could buy, rather than God's narrower and more self-sacrificing path. And allow Him to transform you and make an effective agent of change in the marketplace.

It is a lie that money can buy you happiness; we know that, but do we live that? Jesus reminds us again today when He says, "Do not lay up for yourselves an earthly treasure. Make it your practice instead to store up heavenly treasure. Remember, where your treasure is there your heart is also." (Matt. 6:19-21)



Annie Salvador
Makati Chapter



i was almost 30 when my eldest was born, and I do believe I entered parenthood with my eyes open. I knew it was not going to be a bowl of cherries. After a decade of parenthood, I must conclude that I was totally clueless about what was coming.

My days are filled — absolutely brimming — with surprises. Many of them are pleasant, even ecstatic. I have frequent experiences of little, albeit sublime joys and miracles. Mia can pop out of nowhere with a tiny flower for me smiling, “I love you, Mommy,” as she quite often does. Passing by the study room any old afternoon, I hear my boys whispering to each other, intent in their “club meeting,” planning a dinosaur diorama or inventing a time machine. When I was down with the flu last month, Nico quietly handed me a handmade, gaily colored get well card, signed by all my children.

Not all my surprises are of the pleasant variety. Knowing my children as much as I think I do, I still cannot anticipate all their reactions and responses. When it comes to mischief and antics, I find myself totally out of my league. And of course, no one is ever prepared for events like sickness, injuries and problems.

I have just emerged from two such rough spots. In February, Marga came down with a viral infection. Praying for her healing, I also prayed that none of the others would catch her illness. Well, no one did, but all my four other children came down with another viral infection, ALL AT THE SAME TIME. There I was, like Florence Nightingale minus the credentials, thermometers in my breast pocket, preparing a table beside my bed (our room was designated sick bay) laden with ice bags, medications, coloring books and novenas. The sleeplessness, fatigue and worry were overwhelming, especially when Nico tested positive on the tourniquet test (dengue!!! My heart screamed). It was only when the last child was well and back to school when I was able to truly relax.

The second recent difficulty had to do with school. We were preparing for our long-awaited Orlando vacation, and had requested our sons’ school to allow them to leave immediately after the final tests. To our dismay, we found out that two of them might have to attend summer school (yes, Virginia, Mandarin IS tough!). Two whole weeks were spent in diligent review, one-on-ones with the boys, conferences with teachers and steady prayer. In fairness to Xavier School, everyone from teacher to assistant principal was supportive. And in fairness to our boys, they worked so hard and passed all their tests.

During these times, I realized a peculiar thing about myself. My prayer time suffered, in terms of structure: I lost both time and inclination to sit still for prayer. Yet, my prayer life was richer, somehow: I found that I was constantly talking to the Lord — before reading temperatures, driving to school for a meeting, while waiting in corridors, holding my son for a blood extraction, while on hold over the telephone, when waking up in the middle of the night to toss with my preoccupations.

I questioned myself. Was the suspension of structured prayer a turning away — did I actually fear for my children’s sake? Was it instead an expression of trust — a relaxation — MY way of clinging to the Lord? Indeed, I had moments of worry and fretting, even if eventually, I came to saying, “Thy will be done.”

The funny thing is, regardless of how I handled my crises, the Lord remained constant. I take comfort in this, and push the paradigm into my life as a parent. My children will turn this way and that in their path towards adulthood, they will get sick and hurt, they will fail and stray. But if I stand there somewhere, constant and generous and wise and prudent, they can derive assurance from that and will turn out ok.

It is often said: “Ask and you shall receive.” Indeed that is a promise. But does it say we receive what we ask for? God can and DOES draw straight with crooked lines. He can confuse us a lot, but he can surprise us a lot more. And this is sure: he will reveal immovable faithfulness, unmatched generosity, astounding wisdom and perfect timing. Always.



Pulling THROUGH

The Masterpiece

As we approach a new millennium and celebrate the Year of God the Father, we are being called to examine our relationship with God as our loving and caring Father.

Without the experience of the love and protection of God the Father we, sooner or later, will feel the bitter taste of being like orphans, uncertain about the origin of our life and confused about its meaning, future and purpose. Only in the presence of God the Father will we be fully aware of our human-divine past, and will we find real hope, enthusiasm and confidence for the future.

To often we want to accept God the Father on our own terms, and try to mold Him into our own image, instead of acknowledging that, contrarily, it is He Who made us in His image and it is we who should be allowing Him to transform us into His likeness, into holiness and perfection. Is this possible? Only if we surrender ourselves to Him, only if we commit our lives to Him.

This story, *The Masterpiece*, was sent to Kapatiran by Charisse Ch. Fortich of BCBP Cagayan de Oro, arriving on the same day as my reading it on the Internet and while I was reflecting on what to write in this Back of Basics section. Coincidence? No. Synchronicity? Yes. And so I want to share this story with you and invite you to reflect on its message in terms of your commitment to Jesus Christ, and to His Father and our Father.

—Nancy R. Catan



As winter approached, war engulfed their nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, the elderly man received a telegram that his beloved son was missing in action. The art collector anxiously awaited more news, fearing he would never see his son again. Within days his fears were confirmed. The young man had died while rushing a fellow soldier to a medic.

Distraught and lonely, the old man faced the upcoming Christmas holidays with anguish and sadness. The joy of the season — a season that he and his son had so looked forward to in the past would visit his house no longer.

On Christmas morning, a knock on the door awakened the depressed old man. As he walked to the door, the masterpieces of art on the walls only reminded him that his son was not coming home. He opened the door and was greeted by a soldier with a large package in his hand. The soldier introduced himself to the old man by saying, "I was a friend of your son. I was the one he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you."

As the two began to talk, the soldier told of how the man's son had told everyone of his and his father's love of fine art work. "I'm also an artist," said the soldier, "and I want to give you this." As the old man began to unwrap the package, paper gave way to reveal a portrait of the man's son. Though the world would never consider it a work of genius, the painting featured the young man's face in striking detail. Overcome with emotion, the old man thanked the soldier, promising to hang the portrait above the fireplace. A few hours later,

Years ago, there was a very wealthy man who, with his devoted young son, shared a passion for art collecting. Together they traveled around the world, adding only the finest art treasures to their collection. Priceless works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet, and many others adorned the walls of their family estate. The widowed elderly man looked on with satisfaction as his only child became an experienced art collector. The son's trained eye and sharp business mind caused his father to beam with pride as they dealt with art collectors around the world.

"According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son ... gets it all"

after the soldier had departed, the old man set about his task. True to his word, the painting went above the fireplace, pushing aside thousands of dollars worth of paintings. And then the old man sat in his chair and spent Christmas gazing at the gift he had been given.

During the days and weeks that followed, the man learned that his son had rescued dozens of wounded soldiers before a bullet stilled his caring heart. As the stories of his son's gallantry continued to reach him, fatherly pride and satisfaction began to ease his grief, as he realized that, although his son was no longer with him, the boy's life would live on because of those he had touched. The painting of his son soon became his most prized possession, far eclipsing any interest in the priceless pieces for which museums around the world clamored. He told his neighbors it was the greatest gift he had ever received.

The following spring, the old man became ill and passed away. The art world was in anticipation, since, with the old man's passing, and his only son dead, those paintings would be sold at an auction. According to the will of the old man, all of the art works would be auctioned on Christmas Day, the day he had received his greatest gift. The day finally arrived and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paintings. Dreams could be fulfilled this day; greatness could be achieved as some could say, "I have the greatest collection."

The auction began with a painting that was not on any museum list. It was the painting of the old man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid, but the room was silent. "Who will open the bidding with \$100?" he asked. Moments passed as no one spoke.

From the back of the room came, "Who cares about that painting?"

It's just a picture of his son. Let's forget it and get on to the good ones." More voices echoed in agreement. "No, we have to sell this one first," replied the auctioneer. "Now who will take the son?"

Finally, a friend of the old man spoke. "Will you take \$10 for the painting? That's all I have." "Will anyone go higher?" called the auctioneer. After more silence he said, "Going once, going twice...Gone!" The gavel fell. Cheers filled the room and someone shouted, "Now we can get on with it and bid on these treasures!"

The auctioneer looked at the audience and announced that the auction was over. Stunned disbelief quieted the room. Then someone



spoke up and asked, "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a portrait of some old man's son! What about all of these other paintings? We demand an explanation!"

The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son...gets it all."

Just as the art collectors discovered on that day... The message is still the same. The love of the Father ... a Father whose son gave his life for others ... and because of that Father's love ... whoever takes the Son gets it all.

Bible Sharing



The powerful weapon of praise

Praise is a powerful weapon to break down walls, open closed doors, and win battles as we fight to extend God's kingdom in the marketplace. The psalms are filled with praise as are most of the liturgical canticles recited in daily prayers. Why should we praise God? Praising God blesses us by focusing our eyes on His greatness. It transforms our perspective on life's difficulties.

- ❖ God is worthy of praise. Is. 51:13. 1 Chron. 29:11. Ps. 148:3. Luke 19:40.
- ❖ Praise deepens our intimacy with God. Ps. 22:3. 2 Chron. 5:13-14. Ps. 63:2-5.
- ❖ Praise is a weapon in spiritual warfare. 2 Chron. 20:6 ff. Acts 16:25 ff.
- ❖ It tempers our disappointments. Hab. 3:17-18. Ps. 42:11. 2 Sam. 12:20. Job 1:21.
- ❖ We are created to praise God. Eph. 1:12. Ps. 34:1. 1 Thess. 5:16-18.

1. Read through your favorite psalms plus Psalms 96, 148 and 150. Then answer these questions:

- WHO is exhorted to praise God?
- WHAT is the value of praise?
- WHERE are we to praise God?
- WHEN should we praise God?
- WHY is God so praiseworthy?
- HOW can we praise God?

2. What is one way you can add more praise to your life in this next week?

JESUS NEVER FAILS

Nene Bundoc Ocampo

Nene Bundoc Ocampo, together with husband Obet, is a member of the BCBP Quezon City chapter. She manages the Hiyas ng Buhay Enterprises, a Christian bookstore in Pulilan, Bulacan. Nene translates "The Word Among Us" into Filipino entitled "Ang Salita sa Piling Natin." She lives with her family in Masagana Homes, Sta. Rita, Guiginto, Bulacan.

After entering the Ideal Houseware Department Store in Escolta, I was sure that I was being followed.

I was carrying around P123,000 withdrawn from the dollar account of my sister who is an overseas worker. I initially thought of buying a manager's check, but the teller told me that if I was going to use it in Bulacan that it would still need the three-day clearing. No way since my sister-in-law needed a substantial amount for the hospital bill of her mother, scheduled to be dispensed that day in November, 1997. I would also need cash the following day to bid for a stall in our public market.

Fear engulfed me. My initial reaction was to call up my husband. Praise God! The sales lady allowed me to use

their in-house phone. I told Obet that I am being followed by a man and I asked him to fetch me. But both of us realized its impracticality because he would be coming from Ortigas, San Juan and he would yet be commuting.

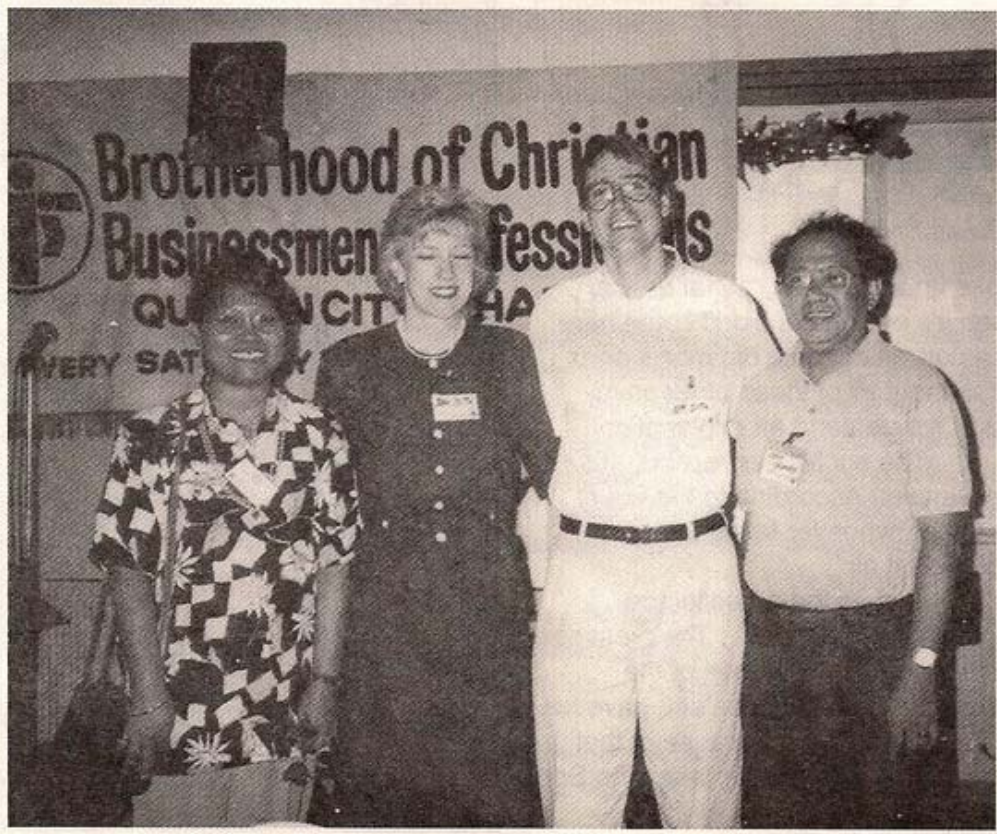
He advised me to call up Benjie, my nephew. He was at home and could pick me up. He knew the department store where I was because they had just bought their beds there and had them delivered in Bulacan.

The saleslady overheard my phone calls and she showed concern about me. I did not hesitate to tell her my predicament.

God granted me the grace to be calm at that time of crisis. I smiled and talked softly to the saleslady, who was later joined by her two colleagues.

That guy, quite a bulk at more than 150 pounds, wearing a white polo shirt, carrying a big leather black bag on his shoulder and looking like a postman in his attire, had been following me since I went out of the PNB Escolta branch. He was there scanning the magazines at the newsstand when I got some photos processed at the YKL outlet nearby. He passed by me when I stopped at a department store to look at the displays. But I spotted him windowshopping in another display window seemingly waiting for me.

Nene and Obet Ocampo (left and right respectively) pose with Jeff and Jane Smith during a pre-Christmas breakfast at the Quezon City chapter where the visiting couple were the guest sharers. Jeff is the publisher of The Word Among Us based in Maryland, U.S.A.



Jesus NEVER FAILS

indeed bought a piece for himself, perhaps to divert my suspicion against him.

That's when I approached the saleslady for the telephone.

While waiting for my nephew, I pleaded with the ladies not to leave me alone. I didn't know how long I waited, but it seemed like forever. I could hear the palpitations of my heart while I was praying aloud. It was at this point when I saw a frame with the text of Psalm 46 posted on the wall at the back of the wrapping counter. *"God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not be afraid...The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."* (Psalm 46:1-2,7). I claimed God's protection promised in it.

The other ladies left the counter and presumably told their colleagues about my ordeal. They were now all looking at the guy who would not leave the store yet. When he sensed that he was being watched by the staff he went out. From where I was standing in the store, I saw at least two men at the other side of Escolta looking in our direction. He must have pointed me out to them and now they were all waiting for me to come out of the store.

How would I go out to take the car of my nephew when he comes? What if Benjie could not park nearby and we would have to walk a distance? What if they grab me when I go out?

Outwardly, my lips were smiling while talking to the ladies. Our strategy would be to ask their security guard to escort me to the car. I asked God to also send His angels to protect me on my way to the car. And He did! He sent a couple of them! In uniform yet! Two policemen suddenly came and chatted with the two security guards of the Ideal Housewares. I felt like shouting for joy as they agreed to escort me to the car when my nephew comes. One even jokingly motioned that he would be at my right and his companion at my left as if they are my bodyguards.

I saw Benjie's green car coming. The policemen opened the car door for me and waved goodbye. Benjie immediately locked all the doors and windows of the car and sped away. I only relaxed when we passed by Recto. Then my knees began trembling, my jaws hardened, and my back ached. I forced myself to talk to Benjie about my ordeal lest I would collapse.

That was God's protection in the perfect timing and excellent script. I realized God's assurance was there all along. Coming out of the bank, I recalled I met a lady wearing a yellow t-shirt with "Jesus never fails" inscription. Walking down Escolta, the Holy Spirit warned me of the man in white with evil motive. Needing a telephone, the saleslady readily allowed me to make a private call, a deviation from store policy. When fright was gripping me, the assurance of God as my refuge was posted on the wall. When I would be contented with security guards for escorts, He sent two well-built policemen to see me to the car. And when I needed to disappear from the scene, he made Benjie available with his car to take me away. Praise God!

My whole body trembled when he got close to me while I was choosing an airpot from the display rack inside the Ideal Housewares. He

ONE MINUTE MEDITATIONS



Larry de Larrazabal
Makati Chapter

Our God is Merciful

"Then all Israel returned and put to the sword those inside the city. There fell that day a total of twelve thousand men and women, the entire population of Ai." Joshua 8:24-25

Ai was the second city after Jericho that Joshua razed to the ground, killing its entire population, including women, children and babies. According to the book of Joshua, all these massacres were done on command of the Lord God.

It is quite apparent the people of that time did not know the full extent of God's love. They had a wrong impression of who God really is. If we were to accept this concept of God, we would have to conclude that God is a God of wrath, anger, unforgiving, a warlike destroyer of entire populations.

But this is not the God Jesus taught us to love and to address as "our Father". The God who came down was one of compassion and love who offered himself up for the forgiveness and remission of sins. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, clearly shows who God is — *"Though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at. Rather, he emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being in the likeness of men."* Philippians 2:6-8. Is this the same God who had an entire population killed? Can you believe this?

The true God, the one we Christians believe in, is obviously not the same one they typed him to be. It is through Jesus that we now know who the Father is — *"The Father and I are one."* John 10:30. There is another similar reference — *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."* John 14:9.

Our God is the God of Divine Mercy who goes after the lost one, leaving the ninety-nine behind (Matthew 18:12). Can this be the same God who commands the killing of entire populations? I think not!

Prayer

Dear Jesus, God of love and mercy, I thank you for the patience and love which you have showered me. I have sinned much and deserve to be punished, but you take pity on me and provide me with numerous opportunities to repent. You are truly a God of compassion and forgiveness. Grant me the grace to never sin again. Amen.

Resignation as an Adult

To whom it may concern:

I hereby officially tender my resignation as an adult. I have decided I would like to accept the responsibilities of a 6-year-old again.

I want to go to McDonald's and think that it's a four star restaurant.

I want to sail sticks across a fresh mud puddle and make ripples with rocks.

I want to think M&Ms are better than money, because you can eat them.

I want to play ball during recess and paint with watercolors in art.

I want to lie under a big tree and watch the sun dance between its leaves on a hot summer day.

I want to take a nap on the floor in the middle of the afternoon.

I want to return to a time when life was simple ... when all you knew were colors, addition tables and simple nursery rhymes, but that didn't bother you, because you didn't know what you didn't "know" ... and you didn't care.

When all you knew was to be happy because you didn't know all the things that should make you worried and upset.

I want to think that the world is fair. That everyone in it is honest and good.

I want to believe that anything is possible. Somewhere in my youth, I matured, and I learned too much.

I learned of nuclear weapons, war, prejudice, starvation and abused children.

I learned of lies, unhappy marriages, suffering, illness, pain and death.

I learned of a world where men left their families to go and fight for our country, and returned only to end up living on the streets begging for their next meal.

I learned of a world where children knew how to kill and did.

What happened to the time when we thought that everyone would live forever, because we didn't grasp the concept of death?

When we thought the worst thing in the world was if someone took the skipping rope from you or picked "you" last for basketball?

I want to be oblivious to the complexity of life and be overly excited by little things once again. I want to return to the days when reading was fun and music was clean.

When television was used to report the news or for family entertainment, and not to promote sex, violence and deceit.

I remember being naive and thinking everyone was happy because I was happy.

I would walk on the beach and only think of the sand between my toes and the best seashell I could find.

I would spend my afternoons climbing trees and riding my bike.

I didn't worry about time, bills, or where I was going to find the money to fix my car.

I used to wonder what I was going to do or be when I grew up, not worry about what I'll do if this doesn't work out.

I want to live simply again.

I don't want my day to consist of computer crashes, mountains of paperwork, depressing news, how to survive more days in the month than there is money in the bank, doctor bills, gossip, illness and loss of loved ones.

I want to believe in the power of smiles, hugs, a kind word, truth, justice, peace, dreams, the imagination, mankind ... and making angels in the sand.

Source: the Internet

Banish the BLAHS

Sooner or later, it happens to every group. You're moving along just fine — and then the blahs strike. The people in your action group bore you. Scripture is dry as dust. Your prayers all land in the far corner of the ceiling with the cobwebs. Members are coming later and even later to assemblies.

What can you do to keep your group alive? In his new book, *Real Small Groups Don't Just Happen*, Neal McBride suggests these 'blahs busters.

- Suspend your usual format or agenda for one or two meetings and do something entirely different. Ask group members, "What is something you've always wanted to do with this group?"
- Go on a weekend retreat. Escape as a group for fun and relaxation.
- Change your setting. Switch venue to a new location. Meet in a quiet coffeeshop, or on the lawn of the sports club, or the town plaza. Once in a while try the beach, or hold your meeting sitting on the seawall watching the sunrise or the sunset, or on a hill (or the top of a tall building) for star-gazing and moon-viewing. Go on a nature hike.
- Meet with another group. (In the BCBP we call this cross groupings.) Instead of the usual fellowship or bible study, tackle a worthwhile project together. You might want to consider adopting some street children for the day, or helping a member clean his house, or plant his garden, or repair his kitchen appliances. Teach each other new skills (a new computer program, cooking or barbecuing, flower arranging, car maintenance, tennis or golf strokes, etc.).



KEEP YOUR AG ALIVE

Fill in the blanks

Has your group been together for some time? Think you know all there is to know about each other? Here's an exercise that promises to be revealing and entertaining.

Give every group member the same list of 10 incomplete sentences (samples to follow). Instruct them to complete at least five of the sentences without letting others see their responses. Of course, each one must be completely honest in his/her response. Then collect the forms and read the responses aloud. Let group members try to guess the writer of each sheet.

Here are some sample open-ended statements:

- One of my secret ambitions is: _____
- My dream vacation spot is: _____
- My favorite food is: _____
- The food I hate the most is: _____
- The last book I read was: _____
- My most valued possession is: _____
- My favorite subject in high school was: _____
- The three people (living or dead) I'd most like to go out to dinner with are: _____
- My favorite zoo animal is: _____
- My favorite TV show when I was a kid was: _____
- If I were president of the Philippines, the first law I'd enact would be: _____
- The best advice I ever received is: _____
- The thing I like best about being alive today is: _____
- My favorite flower is: _____



Ronnie Caballero. Echoing next year's anniversary theme "Going Global", Ronnie zeros in on two important aspects of our BCBP life — LOVE and COMMITMENT — in his editorial. His thoughts are in line with his vision for the Kapatiran ... that of having a committed, competent and enthusiastic team throughout the BCBP nationwide who gather news, write articles, put together their respective chapter focus, and meet deadlines without kilometric reminders.



Nancy Catan. We congratulate Nancy for her unending and patient support and encouragement to her husband, Jun, throughout their many happy years together (37 this year!) that resulted this year in Jun's recognition as an internationally-awarded Filipino inventor (Kudos, pg. 9). Jun, we're proud of you ... not only for this prestigious Silver Medal but also for the many others you have garnered for your numerous inventions...and for the great work you are doing in the BCBP's Manila outreach.



Eddie Mendoza. As chapter head and corporate executive, Eddie daily comes face to face with the clear and present dangers that a Christian businessman or professional must deal with. In his article he focuses on our attitude towards money and the need to be absolutely clear about its purpose in our lives. He presents a list of some questions to help us examine our work and the money we earn in relationship to God.



Fernando de Larrazabal. Tito Larry continues to inspire us with his youthful enthusiasm and mature outlook. We often wonder where he gets his energy until we remember that he seems to be directly connected to the source of energy, God. Keep it up, Tito Larry!



Sammy M. Ulanday. Talk about commitment! If there is a BCBP activity going on, you'll probably find Sammy there, either in front or behind the scene. Sammy reflects on the quality of commitment that is expected of a BCBP member and asks "All for what?" in his article. He then concludes that that is the wrong question. The better question would be, "All for Whom?"



Annie Salvador. We get a glimpse into the pressures of family life as Annie writes about all her five children getting sick at the same time followed by school-generated anxieties. Despite making like "Florence Nightingale minus the credentials" and reviewing her sons in Mandarin, Annie still manages to find time to pray. She joyfully finds that whatever happens, the Lord remains constant. Always.

KAPATIRAN

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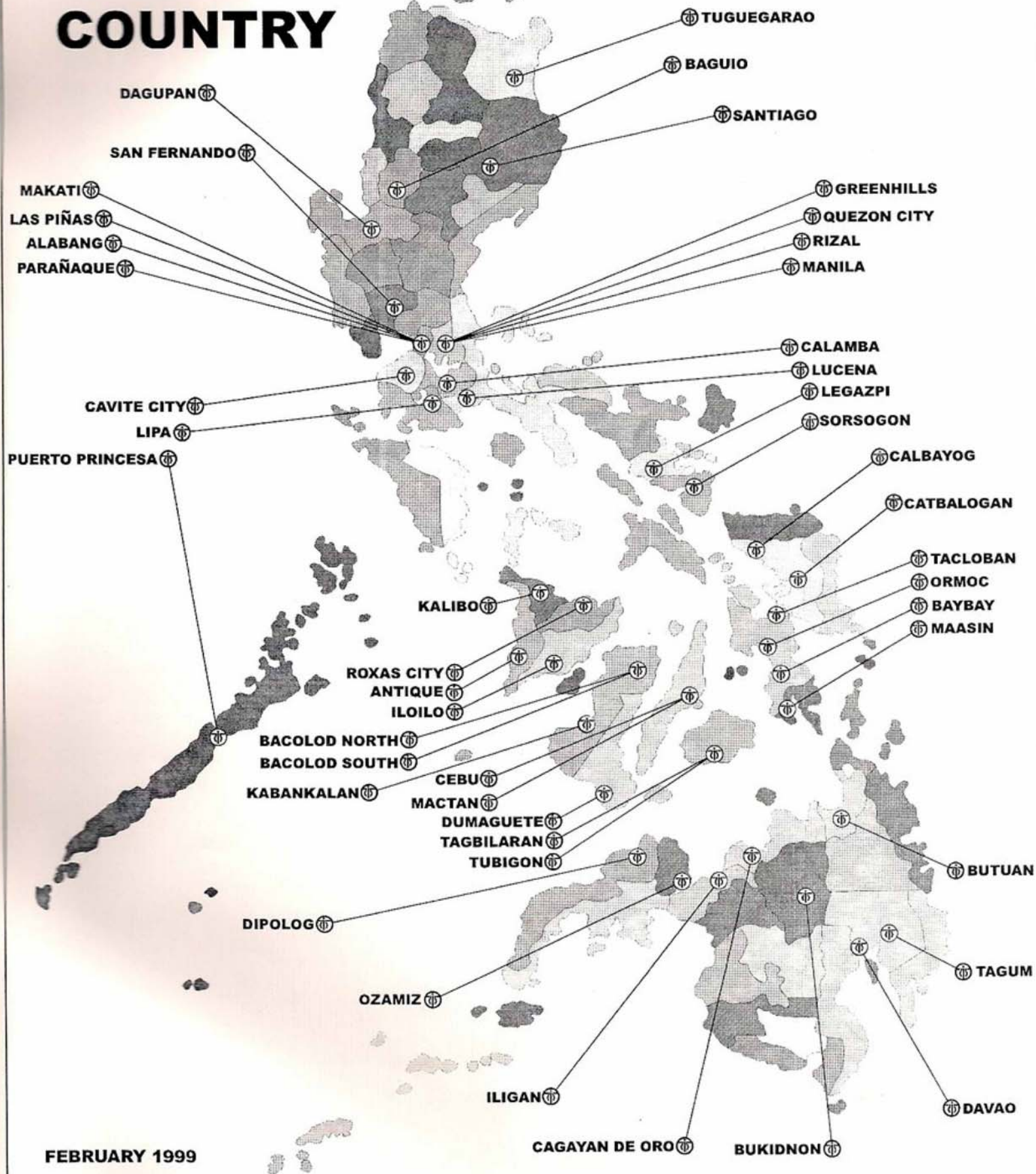
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CHAPTER FOCUS ASSIGNMENTS

- July-August 1999 Issue — Las Pinas/Mactan/Iligan
- September-October 1999 Issue — Greenhills/Tagbilaran/Davao
- November-December 1999 Issue — Legaspi/Cebu/Dagupan
- January-February 2000 Issue — Puerto Princesa/Makati/Bacolod North
- March-April 2000 Issue — Paranaque/Tuguegarao/Bacolod South
- May-June 2000 Issue — Alabang/Maasin/Baguio

THE BCBP COUNTRY



Give your business a new face.

Is your business running your life?
Then it's probably time to take a new perspective.
Give your business a new focus. A new face.
The face of Peace. The face of Love.

Let Jesus Christ be your business partner and
you 'll know your business is in good Hands.

After all, you are His business.



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Unit 31, P&L Condominium 5598 South Superhighway cor. Arellano Ave. Makati City
Tel: 804-0611-12 loc. 216 and 242; Tel./Fax: 551-1973 E - Mail: bcbp-nc@i-manila.com.ph