



# KAPATIRAN

M A G A Z I N E

This season is a time of thanksgiving and...  
The celebration for the celebration of the coming of...  
the Holy Spirit at Christmas time. It is a time of...  
thanksgiving, this is meant to say, that I really love the...  
spiritual relationship with Him? How can I best...  
thank and give glory for His coming? Bishop Javala...  
thanked us as He honored in everything because the...

Advent is a time of hope. Because the hope and...  
promise of our Salvation. It is the living sign of God's...  
love and the promise of a better way of life in Him. The...  
hope that we found in the last issue of 2004...  
because 2004 was a year that we crossed a barrier in the...  
land of the living. It was the present situation we...  
were in a nation that the hope and promise of...  
the living. We have looked to look up through the dark...

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december 2004



## EDITOR'S

NANCY R. CATAN

Note

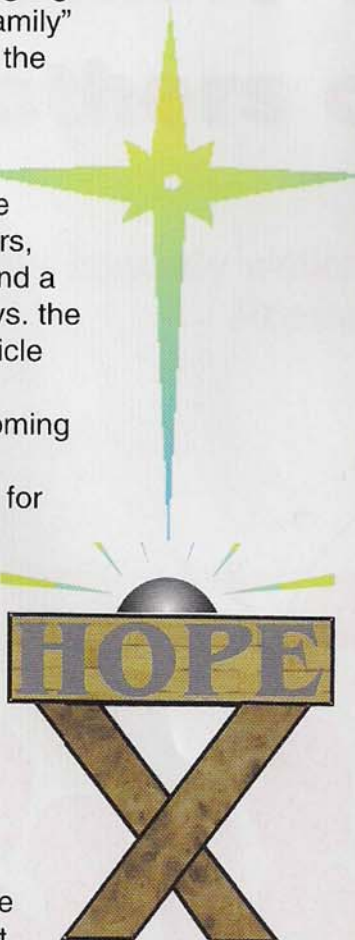
**A**dvent season is a time of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of the coming of the Baby Jesus at Christmas time. It is a time of Reflection. Who is Jesus to me? Am I ready for a deeper personal relationship with Him? How can I best prepare my heart and my soul for His coming? Bobby Laviña challenges us to "Be Honest" in everything "Because We Can".

Advent is a time of Hope. Jesus is the Hope and Source of our Salvation. He is the Living Sign of God's Love and the Promise of a better Way of Life in Him. It is this hope that we focus on in this last issue of 2004. Manolet's BCBP Way of Life juxtaposes a battle in the Lord of the Rings, Part II, with the present difficulties we face as a nation, with the hope and promise of Emmanuel. Ronnie invites us to look up through the dark night to see the glory of the Shining Light. My article "Hope for the Filipino Family" suggests how we can respond to the present realities of life.

In this issue we also feature several "honest heart" sharings, the BCBP's non-negotiables in the Formation of members and leaders, the latest from BCBP California and a discussion on the Culture of Life vs. the Culture of Death in my Basics article "Bio Ethics".

Even as we prepare for the coming of Jesus into our hearts this Christmas, we are also preparing for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the BCBP that will be celebrated in Cebu on May 20 and 21, 2005. Register now! (please see page 1)

The Editorial Board, staff members and contributors who make the Kapatiran possible wish you all a most joyous Christmas and a New Year full of Hope, Peace and Prosperity as we experience fullness of life in Christ.



## KAPATIRAN MAGAZINE

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the Brotherhood of  
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December 2004

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*Contributions are encouraged,  
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25th NATIONAL

*Anniversary*

# ALL SYSTEMS GO!



1980 2005

**25** *Years of Thanksgiving*

Theme: *"Salvation for all"*  
 May 20 - 21, 2005  
 Cebu City, Philippines

*Isaiah 49:6*

Yes, brothers and sisters, the *25 Years of Thanksgiving*, the Brotherhood's national anniversary celebration is in high gear. Cebu region, the celebration's host, has already organized all committees, made reservations for the venue, arrangements with numerous hotels and lodging facilities, transportation and caterers for the anticipated

huge number of delegates, and yes, the dangit, pusit, dried mangoes and lechon have already been ordered.

So, what are you waiting for? Reserve now and avail of the discounted registration fee. A registration form comes with this issue of the Kapatiran. (You may reproduce this form). Fill it up and send right away. You can also register on line. Just go to our website: [www.bcbp.org](http://www.bcbp.org); click "on towards 25th anniversary in Cebu". On that page click "Pre-registration Form" Fill up then click "submit".

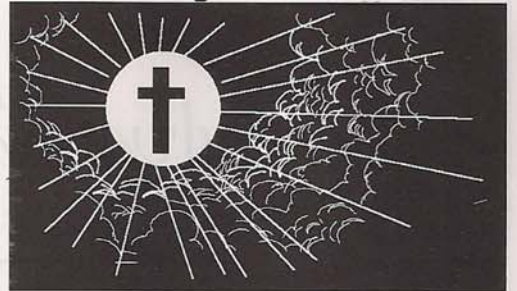
Above you see the official 25th Anniversary celebration Logo. We ask that all chapters and outreaches use this logo in their communications on all possible occasions.

As we always say, "Be there when it happens!" Join the fun and celebration and be one with us as we celebrate **25 YEARS OF THANKSGIVING**.



## REGULARS

- 1 25TH NATIONAL ANNIVERSARY**  
*ALL SYSTEMS GO!*
- 4 BCBP WAY OF LIFE:**  
*THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE*  
By MANOLET M. SIOJO
- 6 LICENSED TO PARENT:**  
*HOPE FOR THE FILIPINO FAMILY*  
By NANCY CATAN
- 8 LOWER YOUR NETS:**  
*OF DARK NIGHTS AND THE SHINING LIGHT*  
By RONNIE CABALLERO
- 9 MY BCBP NOTEBOOK:**  
*HUMILITY*  
By MAR FIGUEROA
- 10 BACK TO BASICS:**  
*BIO-ETHICS: EMBRACING THE CULTURE OF LIFE*  
By NANCY R. CATAN
- SHARINGS:**
- 12 ● I WENT FROM BRIBES TO BLESSINGS**  
By FRANCIS ADRIANO, BCBP GREENHILLS
- 18 ● HONESTY IS POSSIBLE**  
By BOY LOPEZ, BCBP PARAÑAQUE
- 20 EVERYDAY EVANGELISM:**  
*JESUS IS THE REASON*  
By NANCY R. CATAN
- 21 ONE MINUTE MEDITATION**  
*MERRY CHRISTMAS*  
By FERNANDO DE LARRAZABAL



### 31 FUN UNDER THE SUN:

- SAY WHAT??

### 31 ACTIVATING YOUR ACTION GROUP:

- How Do I Love Thee?*
- Let Me Count The Ways*

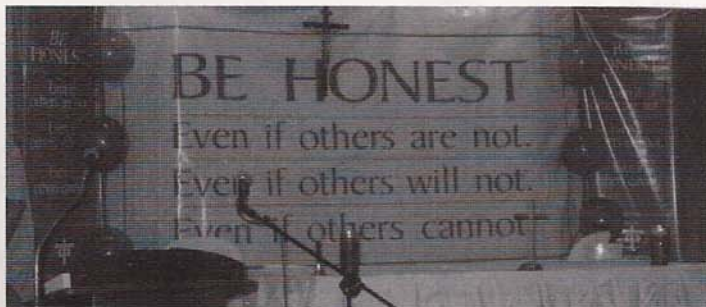


## BROTHERHOOD ADVOCACY: BE HONEST CAMPAIGN

19 *BCBP ILIGAN HOLDS 1ST  
CIVIL SERVANTS' FORUM ON  
HONESTY*

14 **BECAUSE WE CAN...**  
*By BOBBY LAVIÑA*

17 **PRAYER FOR HONESTY**



## BCBP BEST PRACTICES

22 **BCBP FORMATION**  
*NON-NEGOTIABLES*



## BCBP CALIFORNIA, USA

28 *BCBP SOWS SEEDS OF  
HOPE IN AMERICA*  
*By JENG TIANO, BCBP SOCAL*





**BCBP***Way Of Life*

By MANOLET M. SIOJO

***Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,***

As we end another year we hesitantly look ahead and ask ourselves:

*What is in store for us? More of the same — rising prices of consumer goods, fuel, and electricity?*

*Can we expect some real dramatic changes in the way our government is run?*

*What about all the cases of blatant graft and corruption? Will those guilty ever be punished?*

*Will the future ever brighten up at least for our children?*

*Is it time to seriously think about going abroad?*

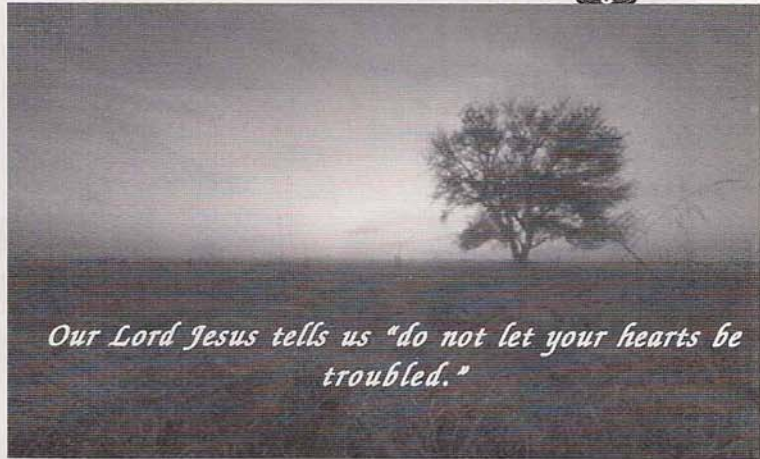


# HOPE





Sheer hopelessness seems to be the dominant sentiment fast encroaching on all areas of our life today. This reminds me of a scene in the movie, "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers". As the kingdom of Rohan was preparing to defend its land and citizens, all able-bodied males who could carry a sword were being drafted to fight. Imagine 10,000 marauding Uruq-hai set to destroy all men, women, and children of Rohan — and eventually destroy all humans of Middle



*Our Lord Jesus tells us "do not let your hearts be troubled."*

Earth. Lord Aragorn was to lead a ragtag group of 300 men and teenage boys to defend Rohan and stall the onslaught to give time for the women and children to escape to the mountains. Amidst the frenzy of battle preparations Aragorn encounters a teenager wearing an armor much bigger than him. With fear written across his face, the lad managed a few words, "The men are saying we will not last the night. They say that it is hopeless." Aragorn bent down, held the boy and calmly replied, "There is always hope."

And the story went on. The defenders of Rohan stood their ground at Helms Deep until the break of dawn when, and as he had promised, the wizard Gandalf arrived with reinforcements to defeat and drive away the Uruq-hai. What a beautiful victory story of faith and hope?

How about we brothers and sisters? Do we have our own victory story or are we stuck in our "Rohan" predicament feeling that "we will not last the night" and that the future is indeed bleak.

Our Lord Jesus tells us "do not let your hearts be troubled." If we do believe in our identity as sons and daughters of God, then Jesus' words of assurance should be sufficient. A business project may not push through; a lingering illness may not have a permanent cure; a loved one may still refuse to reconcile — but we cannot lose hope.

We know that in His time and by His unique design our crisis will pass and a beautiful dawn will present itself. Then, the

Lord's victory will be ours. And what sweet victory that will be!

Brothers and sisters, we need to claim the promise of Advent — the arrival of our Messiah. We need to welcome Jesus, the Destroyer of our hopelessness and unbelief.

We need to continue to give of ourselves in committed service to His people. We need to reach out and give hope to those who really need it at this time. We need to persevere in loving those who are difficult to love. Only then can we truly be God's people — a people of pure hope.

Together with our children Miguel, Bea, Gabriel and Bettina we claim with you the Lord's promise in Isaiah 9: 5- 6:

*"For a child is born to us, a Son is given us; upon His shoulder dominion rests.*

*They name Him Wonder-Counselor,  
God-Hero,*

*Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne and over His kingdom, which He confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever."*

May you and your families be filled with hope for what lies ahead, and truly experience a joyful and peaceful Christmas. We pray that your vigil will be short and your daybreak swift. ✠

**Manolet and Carla**



**LICENSED***To Parent*

Nancy R. Catan

*This Christmas season we deviate from our usual column material and reflect on the Filipino family's role in response to current social/economic realities.*

- Editor

# HOPE *For the* FILIPINO FAMILY

**MANY CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS** focus on the Baby Jesus, his mother Mary and his earthly father Joseph. The Holy Family. A family of love, of togetherness, a basic unit of Christian life, the first school of discipleship, a covenant relationship. The family unit has been called many things, but it is first and foremost an intimate community of life and love (Familiaris Consortio, 39) and the cornerstone of society.

As we take a look at the Filipino family today, we find it faces formidable obstacles that are threatening its structure and stability. There is a growing breakdown of the Christian family caused by serious economic difficulties that often result in one parent working overseas. There are children who, left on their own by their parents, turn to drugs, alcohol, juvenile delinquency and petty crimes. We see increasing instances of spousal separation, infidelity, absentee parents, live-ins and permissive sex. There is agitation for legalizing divorce and same sex marriages that, if permitted, would further damage the solidarity of the Filipino family.

From the sociological viewpoint, the family is seen as a group of persons united by ties of blood or adoption to provide a home for the rearing up of children. Family members always feel that they can turn to each other for help, for comfort in time of difficulty, and for assistance in any type of situation.

The Family Code (Sec. 1, Art. XV, 1987 Constitution; Article 149) recognizes the family as the foundation of the nation and mandates the State to recognize the sanctity of family life and to protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution (Sec. 12, Article II). The State has no authority over internal family affairs but it does regulate family relations that affect third-party and public interests such as abuse of spouse or children



and the parental obligation to give support to the children.

But it is the religious viewpoint of the family that we should be concerned with. The Church views the family as a covenant relationship and a domestic church. It is a community of persons integrally committed to one another and rooted in love that serves and nourishes life and shares in the life and mission of the Church. The family is also an economic community as it provides for each member's daily needs; it is an education unit responsible for teaching every member Christian values of love, forgiveness, justice, obedience, honesty and fairness. The family is a household of faith, an incubator of spiritual belief, religious convictions and traditions with the objective of growing these beliefs into action in everyday life. The Christian family therefore is a wellspring of the Culture of Life, following our Creator's example in procreating life,





providing for its needs, and seeing that this life is good (Genesis 1:31).

What, then, should be the response of the Christian Filipino family to the current economic and social realities that undermine and threaten this most basic unit of life and society?

Firstly I believe that we need to understand clearly the areas of concern and the forces that adversely affect wholesome family life today. We should educate ourselves and try to understand why these things have so much influence on us and on our children.

What is it about the media hype of world lifestyles that differ drastically from Christian lifestyles that attracts us? What is really behind the economic instability brought about by spending more than we have? What are the roots of greed, selfishness, and the willingness to forego one's values in order to survive in an environment that is dominated by crab and colonial mentality? We also need to be aware of the reasons for such social factors as premature marriages, strained and damaged relationships, tensions and conflicts between generations, frustrations and depression resulting from economic, social and political inequality and uncertainty.

Secondly, we are called to take action to promote and preserve the moral values that support our family and society. Be informed, discuss issues with family and community members, be active in parish concerns and projects that support Christian family solidarity. Communicate with your civic and political leaders. Speak out on issues that concern you and your family.

Participate in the Brotherhood's family life activities. Encourage the youth to be active in productive and value-building livelihood activities. Support the BCBP's Be Honest Campaign and Eco-Reach programs. Turn off the T.V. and get out into God's creation. Cultivate your garden. Hold regular family councils to ventilate concerns and affirm positive actions. Start a text chain to alert and educate friends about important issues. Adopt a poor family, send a financially challenged student to school. Get involved!

Read, review and reflect on Church documents that deal with your concerns. A "must read" is the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* (CBCP: ECCCE Word and Life Publications, Manila, 1997). It is easy-to-read and contains

understandable and practical explanations of our faith.

There is HOPE for the Filipino family. Jeremiah's words in Lamentations 3:17-33 reveal the path from despair to hope.

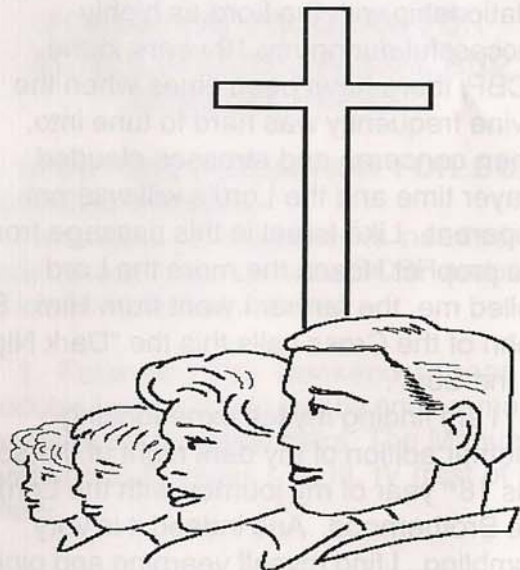
*I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope:*

*The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness.*

*My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*

Lam. 3:21-24

The first step along this path is our decision to hope in the Lord and not give in to despair, discouragement or temptation. The challenge of social transformation begins with us, personally and in our families. We need to stop grumbling and criticizing, and begin to live the Gospel actively, dynamically in our lives day by day. Instead of planning to leave the Philippines for allegedly "greener pastures" shouldn't we rather make our act of faith and hope in our own country: "I am created by God a Filipino. I love my country. What can I do to make things better?"



Some material for this article was adapted from *Transformative Education: A Source Book for Basic Education, Vol 1* (Phoenix Publishing House, 2002).





When Israel was a child I loved him,  
 out of Egypt I called my son.  
 The more I called them, the farther they  
 went from me,  
 Sacrificing to the Baals and burning  
 incense to idols.  
 Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,  
 who took them in my arms;  
 I drew them with human cords,  
 with bands of love; I fostered them like one  
 who raises an infant to his cheeks;  
 Yet, though I stooped to feed my child,  
 they did not know that  
 I was their healer.  
 Hosea 11:1-4

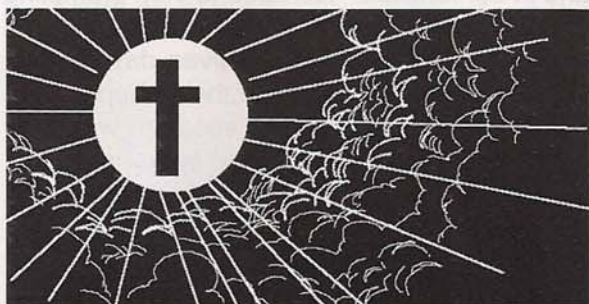
## LOWER

### Your Nets

By RONNIE CABALLERO

What does my dark night feel like? It is a time when the Lord seems far away and prayer becomes laborious. The concerns and anxieties of the world swirl around me, vying for my attention, trying to divert me from the glorious message of the Hope and Joy of Christmas. At the same time I feel myself undergoing a period of growth and cleansing, a time of refocusing and reprioritizing my life, a time of persevering in the Lord.

# Of Dark Nights and the Shining Light



## EVEN THOUGH I VIEW MY

relationship with the Lord as highly successful during my 18 years in the BCBP, there have been times when the divine frequency was hard to tune into, when concerns and stresses clouded prayer time and the Lord's will was not apparent. Like Israel in this passage from the prophet Hosea the more the Lord called me, the farther I went from Him. St. John of the Cross calls this the "Dark Night of the Soul".

I am finding myself experiencing another edition of my dark night of the soul this 18<sup>th</sup> year of my journey with the Lord in the Brotherhood. And indeed it is very humbling. I find myself yearning and pining for a glimpse and feel of the Lord. One spiritual writer calls this a "time to love the Lord for who He is and not for the joy he gives."

This is a time when despite the flatness of feelings, the powerful truth of the Lord's great love remains. He stoops to feed me, he holds me close to him with bands of love, He teaches me how to walk tall and straight. He invites me to look up, behold his Light and know that He is my healer, my hope and my salvation.

What an anchor to have in this storm! I look back on the years since my baptism in the Spirit in 1986 and marvel at the ways the Lord has made known to me his will and plans for me in all areas, in personal spiritual growth, in family relationships, investment decisions, BCBP community relationships, chapter concerns, mission activities, tithes, land purchases, corporate directions. So many of these have been Spirit-led and borne fruit. Only those that were ill-conceived and products of my own self-seeking pride ended in failure.

These past 18 years have not been easy, the coming years will be even more



challenging as the Lord reveals more areas of my life in need of His mercy. But I know that for every dark night of my soul, there will be times of great rejoicing. Every year as I read about how the shepherds looked up and saw the glory of the Lord shining around them, how the angel of the Lord said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy..." my own heart looks up to see the Light shining out of darkness, lighting up my dark night with rays of hope and love and joy.

Even as my soul struggles through this dark night, I am learning to sing with the psalmist: "How good to celebrate our God in song; . . . He heals the brokenhearted, binds up their wounds, numbers all the stars, calls each of them by name. . . . the Lord takes pleasure in the devout, those who await his faithful care." (Psalm 147:1,3-4, 11) "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom do I fear? The Lord is my life's refuge; of whom am I afraid?" (Psalm 27:1)

Brothers and sisters, this Christmas season, look up with me and see the stars and experience the wonder of Christ's Light shining away the darkness around us. Let us rejoice in the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy:

*The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
Upon those who dwelt in the land*



*of gloom a light  
has shone.*

*You have  
brought them  
abundant  
joy and great  
rejoicing . . .  
For a child is  
born to us . . .  
the Prince of  
Peace.*

Isaiah 9:

1-2, 5 ✠

## MY BCBP

### Notebook

By MAR FIGUEROA

# Humility

AS WE READ AND REFLECT on Jesus' birth in a manger, we need to take a look at the virtue of Humility. What is true humility?

Humility is not thinking too highly of yourself. Zephaniah tells us: "Those who are left will be the lowly and the humble, for it is they who trust in the name of the Lord" (3:12).

Humility is gentleness. We read in Titus 3:2 not to speak evil of anyone and avoid quarreling. "Instead, (we) should be gentle and show true humility to everyone."

Humility is willingness to confess sin. This is very basic for we are human and prone to sin. Forgiveness comes in when we humble ourselves before our Creator, confess our sins and seek his forgiveness. David's song of contrition, Psalm 51, shows us the way.

There are many passages in the Bible to guide us in our practice of humility. Two of my favorites are Deut. 8:2-3 and Phil. 2:3ff.

I have found this equation of life to be a good guide:

Tolerance	- Conflicts	= Unity/Peace
Patience	- Quarrels	= Harmony
Understanding	- Envy	= Cooperation

So by taking out column 2 from our lives, we enrich ourselves with God's love, put on humility, and the energy generated will sustain us continuously in this journey to the Lord in the BCBP. ✠





*In our September issue, we began our discussions on the Ethics of Life and tackled the basic aspects of Human Sexuality. We continue our study of the Ethics of Life in this issue by taking a look at the principles of Bio-Ethics and how we can apply them to bring about a Culture of Life to replace today's prevailing Culture of Death.*

## BACK

### To Basics

By NANCY R. CATAN

**T**he Gospel of Life is at the heart of Jesus' message. He said: "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) This is also the call of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals – fullness of life in Christ.

What really does this fullness of life mean? Life, especially human life, comes from God and belongs to God. Life on earth is a sharing of God's life, a sacred reality and responsibility given to each one of us. This life is brought to perfection in the gift of ourselves to God and to our sisters and brothers. God entrusts us to one another and directs us to embrace the Culture of Life through caring and concern and the gift of self to others.

# Bio-Ethics: Embracing the Culture of Life

## THE CULTURE OF DEATH

In today's milieu there is a "conspiracy against life" that is subtly encroaching on the sanctity of life. This conspiracy takes the form of a "culture of death" and damages not only individuals in their personal, family, and community relations, but also distorts relations between peoples and nations.

One basic feature of this Culture of Death is the noticeable absence of God in a growing secularized lifestyle. Inundated by a flood of distorted and hedonistic values, many lose sight of God and forsake their Christian values for personal pleasure, physical beauty, materialism and the satisfaction of worldly desires. It is sad that by losing contact with God and living only for the moment as if He did

not exist, these people also lose sight of the mystery of the world as God's creation as well as the mystery of their own life. This brings about a loss of faith, the loss of the only trustworthy and solid Anchor for our lives, resulting in modern humanity's confusion.

Pleasure is maximized; pain is minimized. Having and hoarding becomes more important than "being". Sexuality is depersonalized and exploited. Society's weakest members, such as the poor, the needy, the unborn, the children, those who have less in life, are increasingly marginalized, uprooted and oppressed. Crimes and attacks against human life such as abortion and euthanasia are accepted and tolerated. Subhuman working conditions, the selling of human flesh, the use of people as mere tools for profit — these are all signs that the Culture of Death is gaining ground.





## THE CULTURE OF LIFE

We need to view our life as much more than mere existence in time. Life is always "a good". It is the seed of an existence that transcends the very limits of time. God himself has planted eternity in the human heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God. And to proclaim Jesus is to proclaim life. Therefore, as "people for life" we must celebrate the Gospel of Life, to view life in its deeper meaning, and to look for God's living image in every person. This is the Culture of Life.

The entire law of God serves to protect and nourish life. His commandment points us to the path of life (Deut. 30:15-16). He demands an accounting for human life from us, even as He did from Noah (Gen. 9:5). God's commandment, "You shall not kill" is clear and definite in its meaning. God forbids anything, any action that would contribute to the Culture of Death. This commandment leads us to love, respect, promote and serve life actively and wholeheartedly.

Bio-Ethics principles are all about living out the Culture of Life ourselves and enabling others to live in dignity and fullness of life. We need to safeguard the dignity and sacredness of life, especially when this involves the unborn, the children, the sick and the dying. Doctors and nurses, healthcare professionals, caregivers and family members must be made aware of the Christian Ethics of Life relating to healthcare, especially in patient care decisions concerning artificial fertilization, contraception, abortion, sterilization, withdrawal of life-sustaining procedures and euthanasia. (Specific instances of operative bio-ethics principles are discussed in more detail in the BCBP Teaching Track.)


### WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY?

As people of Life, as committed Christians, we have the obligation to be at the service of life, as individuals and as community. As a Christian community we are

tasked to continue to manifest charity, care and concern for others, and develop, advocate and maintain programs in support of life. We have the moral and civic responsibility to work in shaping society so that the life of all is defended and enhanced, always understanding that society begins with each one of us and with our families. It is in the family where the values of Life and Love are taught and nourished, especially in the special attention given to the young and the elderly, the sick and the physically challenged family members.

The future of society depends on the rediscovery of the innate human and moral values that promote and strengthen the Culture of Life.

Many positive signs can already be seen – growing sensitivity to violence and war, greater concern for the unborn, the weak, the poor and powerless, and a reawakening to the importance of the quality of life, ecology and the ethical problems affecting human life. But more advocacy is needed.

We must build a new Culture of Life that confronts today's Culture of Death. Moses' invitation rings loud and clear: *"I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you."* (Deut. 30:19-20) As we choose life, we need to live out St. Paul's exhortation that concludes with *"Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good"* (Romans 12:9-21). 

Recommended reading:

John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)*, March 25, 1995. (Pasay City: Daughters of Saint Paul, 1995).





**A**fter coming home from Australia in 1988, I took the Board Exam for Customs Broker and landed in second place. I was subsequently employed as a customs examiner in 1989. During my early days, I was straight forward and honest in my dealings. I tried hard to follow what was right but temptations followed, and the peer pressure and the need to be accepted became great and powerful. As time passed, I fell into the flow and culture of doing things the customs-way but deep down I knew it was wrong. Slowly but surely, I began covering up the good of Christ in my heart and rationalized my actions. The culture slowly ate me up and I became part of the system.

## BUSINESS

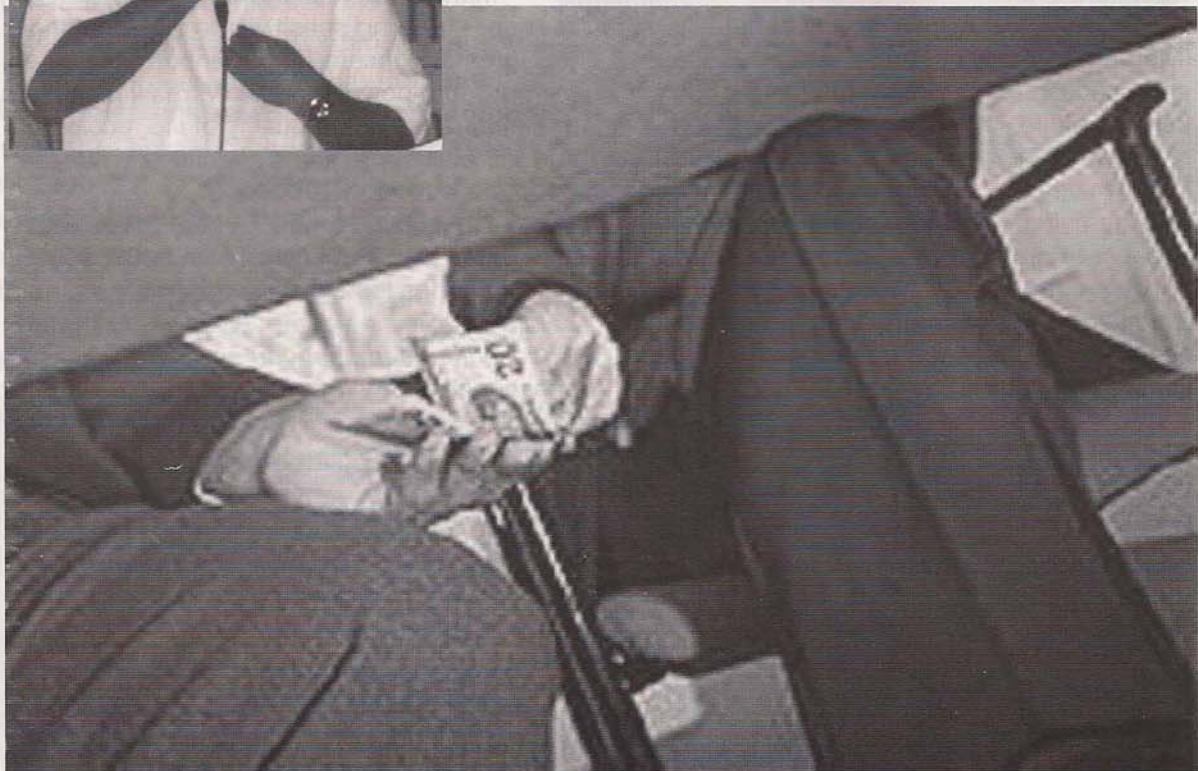
*Sharing*

FRANCIS ADRIANO, BCBP GREENHILLS

I started having table transactions, above the table and including the table. I would be earning up to P50,000.00 a day and yet this was not enough. With money, beautiful women followed. This eventually led me to the bottom of the pit – Shabu. I developed what we call “the professional habit”. It destroyed everything good in me – it poisoned my mind, hardened my heart. I made many wrong choices in my life and this was a result of those choices.



# I WENT FROM BRIBES TO BLESSINGS





My mother through her anxieties and sadness sought God's comfort and healing for me. She prayed for me for so many years that God would give me a new heart and that I would turn my life over to Christ. My addiction and sinful way of life lasted for a year.

In 1992 I accepted an invitation to attend the Christian Life Program of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals. In the days that followed after the renewal, I could feel the battle raging within me. My desire to do illegal transactions was strong but God's Spirit gave me the strength to fight back and stand up whenever I would fall. During those days I increased the intensity and frequency of my prayers and visits to the Adoration Chapel. Attending daily mass became a habit. Gradually my outlook in life changed. I built up enough courage to start refusing to accept bribes. I started examining and appraising items correctly. I started to be honest to my wife.

One good act leads to another until honesty became my standard. I opened the door to Jesus. What an overwhelming feeling of love, hope and above all, faith! Christ transformed despair and pain to hope and joy. I realized that my love for my family after all surpassed my desire to continue my extra marital relationship. The Holy Spirit released me from my bondage.

In 1993, during my prayer time, I began to sense that Christ wanted me to leave my job. I could not accept this at first for it was grossly illogical. I had a promising career ahead of me. Most of my contemporaries said that I had the potential to be a District Collector. It was our means of support and I did not have any single centavo saved for rainy days.


As the prompting persisted, for one year I asked for prayers and guidance. Clearly, Christ wanted me to choose only His will in a leap of true faith. He now wanted me to take a definite act, an act I had long delayed and deliberated upon, an act supported by many signs of His will, His love, His mercy, an act I had to take in order to receive His promises.

On June 10, 1994, I resigned from the Bureau of Customs. I decided to be a disciple of Jesus and carry the cross (Luke 14:25) of stepping out in faith by leaving the "comforts" of working in the Bureau of Customs. My future was clearly in God's hands.

Was I sorry for this action? Was I worried? No. For God manifested His glory and plans for me. He was there to hold my hand and guide me. With money borrowed from my mother, I put up a business. It was not meant to be and closed down after a year. During that time I was totally broke, zero, bottom line. To support my family I ended up peddling religious frames until one night in a BCBP prayer meeting I was offered a job by a BCBP brother

to head his marketing department. This same brother in Christ is the reason why I am connected with Mirant Philippines as Support Services Manager for their Sual power plant.

God has blessed my life with a good job, a loving wife, beautiful children and a dream house. That God chose to bless my life despite my terrible sins of the past humbles me. I deserved nothing. No, that's not true, I deserved the worst. Instead He has showered me with the best.

*"To all who did accept Him, to all who believe in His name, He gave power to become children of God."* John 1:12. Praise God! 

*My desire to do illegal transactions was strong but God's Spirit gave me the strength to fight back and stand up whenever I would fall.*





Address by Bobby Laviña, BCBP Vice President, to the BCBP Community during the Internal Launch of the Be Honest Campaign in Metro Manila, September 18, 2004.

**A**ll of us know of former President Bill Clinton. Many of you do not, however, know that he recently wrote his autobiography entitled "My Life" and sometime in June this year, he was interviewed by Dan Rather about this book on the TV show **60 Minutes**. When the discussion turned to the Lewinsky affair, Bill Clinton shifted into 'mea culpa' mode, describing it as "unconscionable" and "a terrible moral error". He noted that he did it "because I could". He went on to say that this reason, "because I could", is "the most morally indefensible reason anybody could have for doing anything."



# Because WE CAN...

## BCBP

Advocacy  
BOBBY LAVIÑA

Now I know that not many people here will turn to Bill Clinton for advice or teaching on ethics and morality, but isn't there a valuable lesson here?

"Because I could..." Read the newspapers everyday and see how these three words have permeated our society:

- Officers of Government Owned and Controlled Corporations paying themselves salaries in the millions, "because they can".
- Pre-need companies selling educational plans beyond their licenses, "because they could".
- Business executives scamming the country with the use of fake tax credit certificates, "because they can".
- *Manok na iniiniksiyonan ng tindera para bumigat ...* "because she can".
- In relationships, there are those who have second families, "because they can".
- Congressmen staying fat on pork, "because they can".

We know that it really is difficult to find a mantra that is more appealing because in our lifetime, we have gotten knocked on the head 20 million times with mottos like "Whatever turns you on!" or "Just do it!"





And just like a termite, immorality, unethical behavior, dishonesty slowly undermine the backbone of our society...

- We may start off with idealistic views of society: how it should be and how we will help in making it that way, so in the beginning, we might squeal or complain.

The worst thing about this whole regime of corruption and dishonesty is that it hurts the poor more than anyone else. They are the ones who will not get the right education because the textbooks did not come. They are the farmers who will not be able to bring their produce to market because the bridge has not been repaired. They will not get the promised housing unit because the money was diverted by the contractor. They will remain sick because the generic drugs supplied by the businessman are little more than placebos.



- We then see how much "S.O.P." is going around and how those in positions of power gain more wealth and power by encouraging dishonesty.
- We keep quiet, not wanting to rock the boat.
- We begin to be a beneficiary of the dishonesty. *Sino ba naman tayong magmamalinis, di ba?* After all, I am merely being pressured by my boss!

Or I have no hard evidence that the money in the envelope given by my boss came from bribe money or resulted from unfair business practices!

- After a while, *Bakit ba si boss lang ang kikita?* I am the one who is exposed here. I am the one in the front line. I can do this, too, and I can finally have that BMW . . . which, by the way, *para hindi mabuko*, I will put in the name of my brother who lives in the US. *Sasabihin ko, "Pinagagamit lang niya sa akin."*

As businessmen and professionals, we see this every day. And as Christian businessmen and professionals, we want to do something about it. We want to act. *Hindi pwedeng hindi tayo kikilos!* The country is currently faced with so many concerns that originate either from lack of backbone virtues like integrity and honesty or from crises that cause compromises in values. We in the BCBP, therefore, feel that we must do something. We must move so that we can spur the vast majority of well-meaning citizens, businessmen, government officials and employees, professionals and even church leaders to hunker down and take a stand.

*Kung iyang tatlong katagang iyan lang ang gagamitin nating rason para sa lahat ng ating gagawin*, if we have no higher standard of behavior than "because I could", then we do not know the distinction between I can do and I ought to do. We cannot distinguish between selfishness and integrity, between self-interest and duty and we therefore have no business aspiring for the life hereafter.

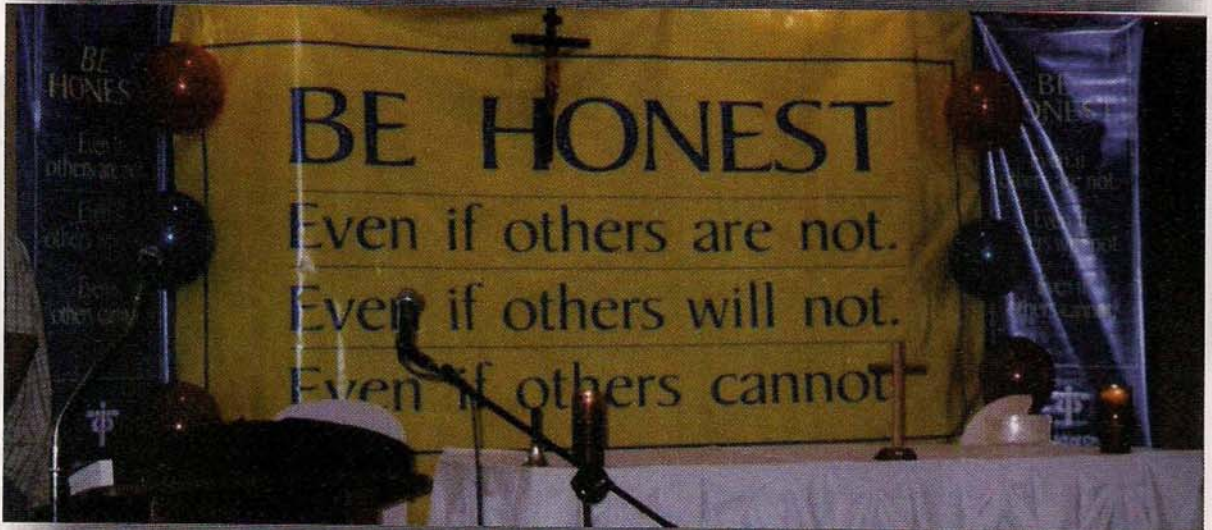




Today we offer an alternative:  
**BE HONEST!**

We launch the "BE HONEST" campaign here in Metro Manila as it has been initiated through BCBP outreaches and chapters all over the country. I know that this is an internal launch and I understand the discomfort that people are feeling about coming out and preaching when our hands are not really clean but I also know what we all signed up for in our commitment cards when we joined the Brotherhood.

And so we ask you to reproduce a poster or print a sticker or wear your t-shirt that reminds people:




We urge you to post or use these in as many places as possible. The offices that are more sensitive or prone to dishonesty are our principal targets but ALL workplaces are candidates. It is a very simple project so all of you, our members, and even your colleagues and friends can get involved. It is direct, so there is no room for ambiguity.

**What is it about "Be Honest!" that you don't understand?** It involves each person individually so his or her action is not dependent on anyone else's. We will decide individually if we want to be honest or not.

There is only one difficulty with this campaign. It is not that people might laugh at us for being goody-goody. Not even that we might become the target of those who will be negatively affected. Our biggest difficulty, I think, is that **IT FORCES ALL OF US TO WALK OUR TALK.**

Make no mistake about it. We in the BCBP will be under the microscope more than those whom we target. The fence sitters will be watching if we are able to sustain our zeal before they join in. Our example, what they see us do, will convince people to support this program or let it slide like all the others.

So what shall we do? For those of us who are employed, we will work diligently for the eight hours that we are being paid. For us businessmen, we will pay proper taxes. All of us, all BCBP members, will speak **ONLY** the whole truth. We will commit to be honest in **ALL** things and at **ALL** times ... even if others are not, even if others will not, even if others cannot.

And if people come up to you and ask you why you are doing this, just answer, **"Because I can!"** 





## PRAYER FOR HONESTY

Let us all now seek the Lord's strength as we go into battle.

*Loving Lord, thank you for thinking about us. Thank you for caring for us. You know our situation. You know our society, our culture around us. You know that our world is not perfect . . . neither are our offices, our homes, our government, nor even our church.*

*Around us, there is so much corruption. But we are not totally innocent. Deep within us we know that we are also guilty in some way or another. Lord, you know that we are struggling hard. We know what is right, but something pulls us back and we continue what hurts us . . . what hurts other people.*

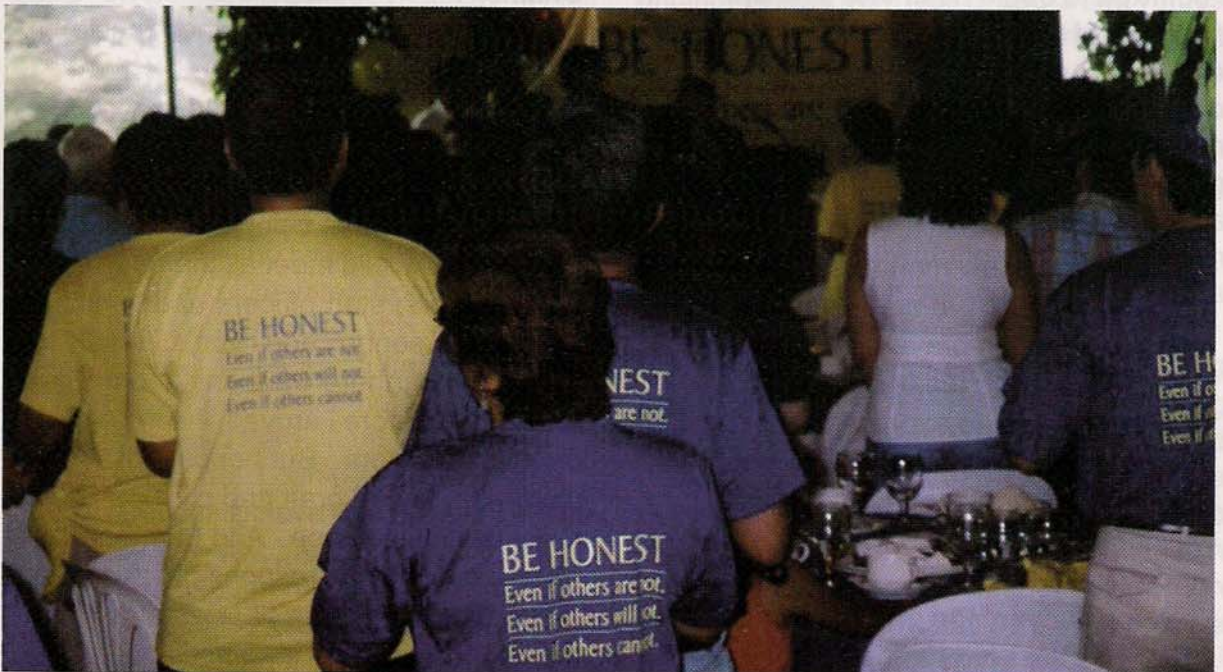
*But you are not taking us out of this world because you want us to be holy where we are. You have sent us into the world. Help us . . . challenge us . . . change us.*

*Free us, Lord, from the things that prevent us from following what is good. Remind us of the kind of person we have committed to be. Remind us of the kind of person you really want us to be.*

*Strengthen us in our resolve to do what is good . . . to be honest in all things and at all times. This is what we want . . . but we need your help.*

*All this we pray through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

*With material drawn from Albert Alejo, S.J., Team Leader for "EHEM: A Manual for Deepening Involvement in Combating Corruption".*







## SHARING

### *Honest Heart*

Boy Lopez, BCBP Parañaque


# HONESTY IS POSSIBLE

When I joined the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals way back in 1993 I committed to bring Christ into my market place – the Philippine Air Force. My initial evangelization efforts started with the introduction of opening and closing prayers in our meetings. I admit it took me several months after my BCLP to build up the courage to begin as at that time the attitude of the military towards those branded as “overly religious” would place you in one of two categories: either branding you effeminate or as one who has loose screws or lost his marbles. I didn’t want to belong to either category.

But after a few months I decided to take the risk and be “crazy” for the Lord. I required opening prayers in our weekly meetings. Some junior officers approached me to express their appreciation for my initiative. Their comments emboldened me to include closing prayers in all our activities, socials and athletics.

I took advantage of the authority and privileges the Lord permitted me to have

as the base commander of Villamor in 1997 to set up the BCBP breakfast inside the base. The launching turned out to be an almost SRO affair, with 64 first timers. The attendees found it difficult to turn down the invitation of the base commander. I realized then that when an endeavor is in accord with His will, everything will fall in place. The Manila Chapter music ministry even came from nowhere and in full force when music became a problem.

In all the five major units I was assigned to as the commander throughout my career, I followed a procedure in instituting reforms. Upon assumption of command I would meet all the unit commanders, staff officers and senior enlisted personnel, and I very candidly told them, “If ever there were any anomalies transpiring before I arrived, I won’t dig them up anymore. But henceforth, starting today, all graft and corrupt practices must cease. And I am holding all heads of offices responsible to see to it that no malpractices will exist under you. If ever there is anybody who is not 






comfortable with this policy, he is free to request for transfer. However if you choose to stay and try to violate this instruction, I will be forced to throw the book at you.” After the meeting, I would then give instructions to the intelligence personnel to closely monitor and give me a feedback personally. I was quite successful in all my assignments except for the last one, when

I was the commander of all air force units in Mindanao, a post I held for six months prior to my retirement. I guess the logistics officer thought that since I had only six months to go, it would do him no harm to try or maybe he did not believe me at all. He attempted to pursue an anomalous transaction that was already in the pipeline when I arrived. The intelligence got hold of the information and I immediately ordered an investigation. I ordered his relief from position and had him court martialled. With that, all the others exclaimed, “Hindi pala nagbibiro si sir!”

Additionally I saw to it that all the key officers and some senior enlisted personnel participated in the programming and budgeting of all funds. The output would then be published on the bulletin board so that everyone would know how and where every centavo of the unit funds had been spent.


The culmination of all these practices was when my wing in Palawan was awarded as the “Most Transparent Wing in the Philippine Air Force” in December 1998.

My transparency efforts were primarily designed to prevent me from succumbing to financial temptations as I encountered financial difficulties from time to time. But not only did the Lord help me keep honest, He gave me the courage to influence others, too. Praise God! 

## BCBP Iligan Holds 1<sup>st</sup> Civil Servants’ Forum on Honesty

The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals, BCBP, Iligan Chapter conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> Civil Servants’ Forum on Honesty on October 29, 2004 at the Sangguniang Panglungsod hall of the Iligan City Hall. 71 participants, mostly Department Heads and Division Chiefs of the Iligan City Government and one Department Head from the Philippine Ports Authority, attended the day-long seminar.

The forum followed the BCBP, Brotherhood’s Christian Businessmen’s Retreat, format and added a “Be Honest Movement Campaign” luncheon talk. Iligan City Mayor Lawrence L. Cruz gave the full support of his office to the BCBP project. BCBP Iligan’s Program and Services Director Pete Generalao served as the Forum Coordinator.

The participants were one in their appreciation of the forum and recommended that the same teachings be made available to all city government officials and employees. 





**"JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON."** Jesus is the reason there is a Christmas, to celebrate His birth as a man-child, as our Savior. This is the season that boasts of day-in-and-day-out celebrations, gift-giving, and family reunions. It is a time when we celebrate the hope of our salvation and the great Love of our Father in heaven for us.

**EVERYDAY**  
*Evangelism*  
By NANCY R. CATAN

# JESUS *is the* REASON




Christmas is the season of symbols, too. There is the Christmas tree, the Star of Bethlehem, the giving of gifts, Misa de Gallo and Christmas Eve Mass, Noche Buena, the Advent wreath, the Christmas candles and strings of lights, and many others.

God has created us with restless hearts that yearn for him. Yet, so many people are oblivious to God and focus on

His creatures instead. They miss out on the full meaning of life. We see this during the Christmas season, even for months ahead of the season . . . people focusing on gifts, glitter and parties, missing out on the real meaning of Advent and Christmas.

This season, then, offers us a wonderful opportunity to live out our faith and share our faith with others. Integral everyday evangelism is simply bringing a living Gospel into our everyday lives in such a way as to demonstrate to those around us that Jesus is alive in us today. We are also evangelized when we encounter the mysterious God through symbols that manifest His presence. And the greatest symbol of God's presence is the human person committed to the Lord and living a life of Christian witness, of integral and everyday evangelism.

Talking about the meaning of Christmas and the coming of our Savior is empty talk unless it is anchored on true Christian love and compassion for others. As we live a life of Christian witness, we become living symbols, an authentic evangelistic presence, to evoke a response to God from those around us. 



**THE THREE WISE MEN** came to pay homage to the new-born King, bringing with them these gifts. During Christmas, the birthday of Jesus, it is traditional to exchange gifts. Families get together, having fellowship with one another, amid joy and laughter. The house is lit up like a Christmas tree. Special meals are cooked, to everyone's delight. Midnight comes and everyone wishes each other a "Merry Christmas".

## Merry Christmas!

*"Then they opened their coffers and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."*

Matthew 2:11

Now, let's move to another scenario and join those who have nothing in life. Christmas to them is like any ordinary day. They continue to live in squalor.

Should it rain, they would surely get wet, and if it be a sunny day, they would be overpowered with the heat emanating from their flimsy low ceiling. They have no lights, except for one or two bulbs. No sound of music is

heard, except for the hungry wailing of the children. There are no gifts to open and no special meals to be served.

What is there for them to be joyful about? You will be surprised, they have the joy that comes with hope. After all, this is what the Babe in the manger came to bring. In their hearts they remember that Jesus was also born in a similar situation as theirs.

***Merry Christmas to one and all!*** ❧

### Prayer

*Dear Jesus, Christmas is a day of joy, an occasion to be merry, remembering how you gave up your throne and chose to be born in poverty.*

*Your dear mother had to give birth in a stable where you were laid in a manger.*

*This was your choice, but unlike you, the multitudes of people who live in poverty and squalor have not made that choice.*

*Many consider them the rejects of society; unlike you, no one cares how they were born or how they live.*

*Give me the desire to recognize you in them and provide whatever assistance I can give them, remembering what you said,*

*"I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it to me." Amen.*

Matthew 25:40.

*From Fernando de Larrazabal's book **Where Are My Hands and Feet**, p.131.*

## JESUS is the Reason....

This Christmas let us act on our faith and do something. Be honest with yourself and with God; ask forgiveness for wrongs you have done. Congratulate an honest employee. Write a letter. Feed a hungry person. Pray. Give without expecting a return gift. Play with a child. Tithe honestly and joyfully. Help the sick and elderly in your community attend Misa de Gallo. Reach out to a person in need. Smile and laugh often, not at others, but

with others with the love of Christ in your heart. Live joyfully. Invite a friend to a BCBP breakfast. Light an Advent wreath together with your family and neighbors. Decorate your Christmas tree with "honesty acts"; for every honest, loving and caring act you or your family members do during the season, hang a special card stating the honest act on your tree.

Let Jesus be the Real Reason for your celebration this Christmas season. ❧

## ONE MINUTE

*Meditation*  
BY LARRY DE LARRAZABAL






**BCBP**
*Best Practices*

BY ROY CALLEJA

# BCBP Formation NON-NEGOTIABLES

## BACKGROUND

Since the BCBP started, internal evangelization was simply termed as the "Chapter Life". The title remained in use until the turn of administration when Chapter Life was changed into a more appropriate title of Formation. The proponents of the new designation - then the Mancom 2000-2002 - believed that life in Christ is a constant, ever-progressing spectrum of changes. And in these changes, a person's life evolves continuously and in the process is formed into a newer, more intimate close relationship with Jesus Christ and with his brothers and sisters in the community.

It was also during this time whereby the BCBP Curriculum was fully implemented. The curriculum traces the life of a member from the time he graduates from BCLP, through the times when he will undertake leadership or service positions, going into mission work, and later on to have a continuing full life in Christ even at the time when he shall already be considered an elder of the community.

Today, the BCBP Formation Program has fuller and more comprehensive components with Roy Calleja as the National Service Coordinator (NSC) at the helm. Bro. Roy has introduced the new BCBP Formation Program Manual with additional teachings as well as an enhanced definition of certain terms and topics.

What then are the Non-Negotiables in the Formation Ministry of the Brotherhood? Practically everything that is written in the new Formation Program Manual. We shall not put in all the components of the Manual here. Instead we shall cite some of the more important aspects of Formation as well as some significant elements of the new Manual.

## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. DEFINITIONS

#### A BCBP MEMBER IS:

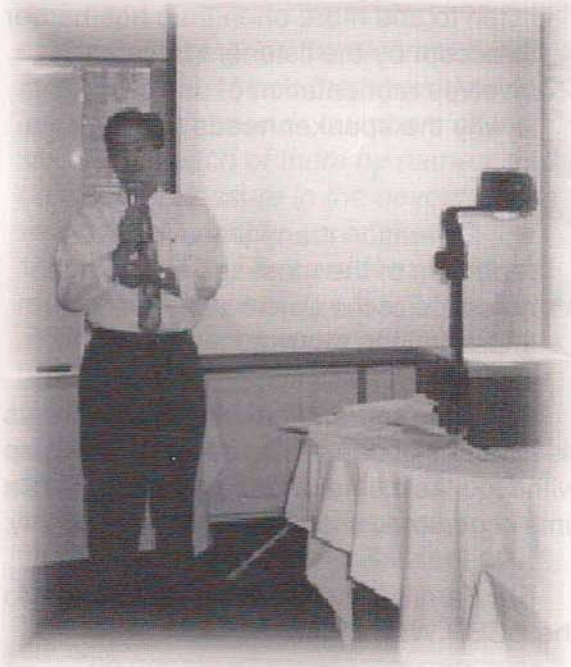
- One whose life's foundation is on God's love.







- One who has knowledge of himself from God's point of view and because of his knowledge sees an on-going need for the redeeming work of Jesus Christ in His life.
- One who has a felt knowledge of Jesus Christ, a knowledge that moves from the Head to the Heart and ends up in the Will, a knowledge that leads to gratitude.
- Full of gratitude, a BCBP member is one who discerns God's will in His life and puts His will into action.



This vision of a BCBP member is pictured to be attained by putting into action the BCBP mission statement of providing a way of life and a support environment where members, given the grace and guided by the Holy Spirit, can experience fullness through the continuing process of :

- ◆ Conversion through a personal relationship with Christ based on knowledge of self and on a foundation of security in God's love attained through active participation in the BCBP breakfast, the BCLP and BCBP Way of Life, a knowledge that leads to accepting

Jesus Christ, in an on-going way, as one's Saviour.

- ◆ Commitment to the values espoused by Christ by spending time in getting to know Jesus Christ through the teachings, the way of life and activities of the BCBP, a knowledge that should lead to gratitude and to a deeper commitment to know and follow and Christ.



- ◆ Commissioning as disciples to spread the Good News in the marketplace as the BCBP member's response to God's love and knowledge of Jesus Christ through the BCBP, a knowledge that is based on the Ignatian gift of Discernment and a knowledge that should lead to action.

*"Lord that I may know you and myself more fully, love you and be committed to you more dearly and follow you more nearly."*  
- Ignatian Way

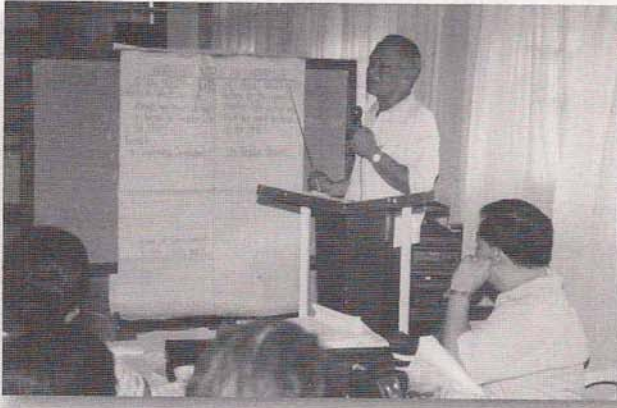
**BCBP FORMATION** is a consistent process by which a member undergoes a process of reorientation, of conversion, commitment and commissioning, a process which in order to be effective, moves from Head to Heart and ends up in the will, the





seat of decision and desire. The Formation Program has the following features:

1. BCBP Formation focuses on the inner dynamics of the person's identity and growth. Formation is a process and not just the activities, teaching tracks, etc. Because of this process, the person is inner directed, interiorly reliable and dependable.



2. The program includes BCBP tradition which includes purchase of songbooks, learning new songs in every meeting, maintaining BCLP schedule for new BCBP members as a phase-in period, etc.

3. Following the evangelization strategy of Jesus Christ with the first apostles, the program focuses on the role of all Action Group Leaders whether they be ordinary AGL's, UL's, CH's, RCD's etc. to serve primarily by example and lead others to serve also by example: "Imitate Me as I imitate Christ." Everyone should be a member of an active, functioning action group.

4. Making use of existing and new teaching tracks of the BCBP, the teachings and/or seminars shall focus on transforming the movement of the message from the Head to the Heart to the Will. This means the following:

- Speakers should not only be able to convey the message of the talk but speak from the heart using personal witnessing as much as possible. This

necessitates the formation of regional speakers' bureaus, and identification of dominant Chapters in every region as a source of speakers.

- The topics should always have discussion starters and/or portions complemented by selected readings which the members can use for personal prayer since no one is sanctified by a good speaker but only by God through prayer.

- Teaching *per se* is oftentimes hard to listen to and more often than not harder to accept by the listeners because it involves reorientation of one's life. This is why the speaker needs to witness a lot.

- Formation many times involves repetition of the message to make the message of the Lord have a greater impact.

5. The program makes use of retreats as a means of deepening one's relationship with God, as a time of discernment and as a time of personal encounter with the Almighty.

6. Family Teachings are integrated into the BCBP Way of Life.

7. Programs shall be on-going. It takes years for traits to become habits then to result in character.

8. The Brotherhood Formation program is a process of building blocks. Therefore there should be consistency of application irrespective of the changes in the chapter leadership.

## B. MANUALIZATION

Teaching Tracks and written tradition shall be divided into the following manualized sections:



1. Integration of new Members into the Brotherhood. This includes schedules of AGM, Teaching Tracks using the BCBP Curriculum, First Friday Masses and other activities with the sole purpose of increasing the member's knowledge of God and himself or herself and allowing this knowledge to lead into commitment.

2. The Leaders Manual. This focuses on AGL's and ministry heads for the purpose of character formation, discernment of spirits, skills enhancement and the deepening of one's relationship with God.

3. Specialized Formation Manuals for top leaders, e.g., RCDs, CH and former CH, etc. These Manuals deal with different topics that are appropriate to the spiritual phase of their lives with God. These phases include stewardship, spiritual poverty, mid-life, dryness, patience, perseverance and endurance, etc. For this group, the retreat medium will be most often used.

### C. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE DIFFERENT FORMATION MINISTRIES

1. Teaching Ministry: To provide a support structure whereby members can, guided by the Holy Spirit, have the opportunity to know, experience and remember Jesus Christ and be transformed using all the necessary teaching resources available.

2. Liturgical Ministry: To provide a support structure whereby members can, guided by the Holy Spirit, participate fully on a personal level and as a community in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and be touched by Jesus Christ through this Sacrament.

3. Assembly Ministry: To provide a support structure whereby members can, guided by the Holy Spirit, know, experience and remember Jesus Christ through community worship, exercise of spiritual gifts

and witnessing and because of this be transformed.

4. Music Ministry: To provide a support structure whereby members can, guided by the Holy Spirit, praise, worship and experience Jesus Christ individually and as a community through praying with songs.

5. Intercessory Ministry: To provide a



support structure and an opportunity for members to pray and intercede to Jesus Christ for each other's individual needs as well as for the fulfillment of the mission and vision of the BCBP, the country and the Church.

### FORMATION PROGRAM FOR ACTION GROUP LEADERS AND MINISTRY HEADS

#### A. SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR BCBP LEADERS MANUAL

Formation of character is needed for leadership and service in the BCBP and shall be implemented as follows:

1. **Format**: The weekend retreat for Modules I and II is followed by once-a-month meetings for the other talks. The Manual is divided into Modules I, II, III, IV (rest of the talks).

2. **Dynamics**: In order to be consistent with the Formation Program of experiencing a "felt knowledge" whereby the movement shall be from the Head to the Heart, to the





Will, the dynamics shall consist of talks by an experienced senior chapter leader who can also share experiences, bible study, group discussion and prayer at home whereby the suggested readings can be used by the participants as daily scripture readings. The service meeting shall also feature the "Follow the Leader" concept on how to handle action group worship whereby the worship shall be a facsimile of AGM with songs of praise and worship, exercise of the gifts, seminar topic handout on AGM themes and the like. Different songs in the songbooks shall be sung to enable the participants who have completed the program to sing and hopefully memorize majority of the songs. The manual shall be completed over 1.5 years. Likewise different participants will be required to handle prayer and worship proper.

Aside from the topics, emphasis of the

b. Short talk on discernment as part of prayer. It is recommended as a series of 5 separate talks which can be scheduled as part of Module III.

c. For Session I there should be an additional explanation on "Serving to Lead Others To Serve" (Jn.13:1-6, Matt. 20:20-28) and please give examples. Also touch on the story of Ambrose as this explains the struggles of leaders who have stepped down and are now supposed to served with humility.

d. Session IV talks generally about differences of people who come together in service. We should emphasize that we are different but need to work together and that leaders should accept the differences of people as complimentary in our chapters. This also explains the different leadership styles of leaders.

e. Session VII emphasizes the need to be committed and to be always reminded about our commitment.

**4. Attendance:** Required to attend are existing AGLs and other Ministry Heads and those identified by the chapter leadership as potential leaders provided they have completed with the Intra-Personal

Teaching Tracks.

**5. Another track** that should be included is Steward Leadership Training. This should form Module 4.

## B. SKILLS TRAINING COMPOSED OF:

1. BCLP Staff Training.
2. Action Group Leaders Training Program.
3. Strengthening and repair of relationships (New compilation of talks will be furnished by NSC for Formation).

discussions shall be on the struggles in service which are related to the topic. This should be used as a guide to opening oneself before God concerning his/her concerns.

**3. Training of Trainors.** A trainer's manual shall be provided with the following additional inputs for Module I:

- a. God's master plan for evangelization to train leaders through the Action Group Leader who in turn trains others in their Action Group.





4. Formats in AG Meetings (to be provided by NSC for Formation).

5. Growth of Action Group members into service. This takes place during the first year's membership and includes completing the Intra-Personal Track.



### **C. RETREATS**

The retreat shall be used for leaders to deepen their relationship with God.

1. Annual Chapter Retreat.
2. The AGL's Retreat shall have the following format:
  - a. Retreat where the focus is on one's personal encounter with God.
  - b. Retreat Topics should deal with:
    - Prayer
    - Imitate Me as I imitate Christ
    - Elijah Retreat
    - Other topics

### **FORMATION PROGRAM FOR MATURE BCBP MEMBERS**

The Formation Program for Mature BCBP members is designed for the following:

1. Those who have taken a majority or all of the courses in the BCBP Curriculum and/or,
2. Those who are serving or have served in senior leadership positions i.e. Chapter Governance Team members, RCD's, NSC's, BOT and/or,
3. Senior members of the BCBP who are qualified or can be voted as members of the BOT.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

#### ***ADHERANCE TO THE MANUAL***

Although the Formation Program Manual is not yet available community-wide, several components have already been released through the Chapter Formation Directors during the Best Practices Seminars that have been conducted. At the same time, Bro. Roy is on the road, so to speak, visiting as many chapters and regions as possible to reorient them into this new formation thrust. There are guidelines and order of conduct of teaching tracks that are specified. Chapters are advised to follow accordingly.

#### ***SPEAKERS BUREAU AND REGIONAL TEACHING CENTERS***

Chapter level as well as regional level Speakers Bureaus are now being organized. At the same time, all regions are advised to organize a Regional Teaching Center. To facilitate the implementation of the new Formation Programs, the NSC for Formation shall conduct teachings in these regional teaching centers where all formation directors as well as accredited speakers shall be required to attend.

***PROGRAMS ON THE WEBSITE.*** Most of the new teaching programs as well as the guidelines in the new Formation Programs are now available for downloading from our BCBP website.




**BCBP**
*California, USA*

JENG TIANO, BCBP SOUTH CALIFORNIA

# BCBP SOWS Seeds of Hope in America

## How It All Began in Southern California



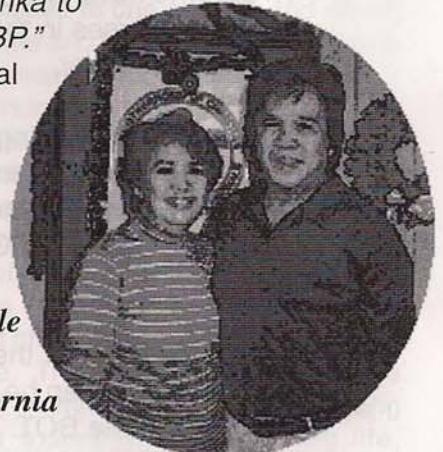
*“There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heaven... A time to plant and a time to harvest... A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them...”*  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

**P**rior to leaving our country to start a new life in the United States, many of us who were once active BCBP members in the Philippines were told by our action group leader, unit head or even Chapter Head to help set up BCBP in America. Not surprisingly, many of us may have grinned quizzically, cast that doubtful look and shrugged the suggestion off as mere wishful thinking. How could we ever do that? Not in this lifetime. Not when you are so occupied putting your life in order in a strange land, so busy assimilating the system, the culture, and the multi-ethnicity. Not when you are so displaced and perhaps, so disoriented.

But now is the season to plant the seeds of BCBP in another country. Each of us may have a story to tell on how it all began but let me recount how the seeds started sprouting here in Southern California.

On January 26, 2002, BCBP members from Cagayan de Oro met at the residence of Dito and Tata de la Cerna in Long Beach, California. Dito was the first Breakfast Head of Cagayan de Oro and was an active member of the Mission team back home. In attendance were Louie and Lita Jully, Dodong and Chita Racaza, and Fabiola “Fabs” Gorospe. They had a prayer cum action group meeting wherein Fabs kidded Dito, *“siguro pinadala kayo ni Lord sa Amerika to start the BCBP.”* After this initial meeting,

*Dito & Tata dela Cerna, the first servant couple of BCBP South California*





more BCBP members belonging to the different chapters in the Philippines were identified and contacted through the able support and

perseverance of Tatang Sadi Saguisag, BCBP National Mission Director.

To seal the plan of setting up BCBP in Southern California, an action group meeting was again held in the de la Cerna's residence on August 23, 2003. In attendance were the de la Cernas, Tatang Sadi and Ester Saguisag, Fabs Gorospe, Ed and Susy Dimaculangan, and Louie and Lita Lilly.

Able forming a trinity of alliance in helping reconnect lives in Southern California were Tatang Sadi Saguisag, Dito de la Cerna and Arman Amante. Arman, from the Alabang Chapter, diligently set up a directory to identify the various geographical locations where each and every former BCBP member now resides in this part of California.

On the side, as all these events were transpiring, those who were contacted were busy e-mailing one another about the possibility of forming a BCBP Outreach here in California. Suddenly, the once remote idea was now becoming a reality. Things began to fall into their proper places. It was God's perfect timing at work.

On September 14, 2003, the third and largest BCBP Action Group Meeting was held once again at the residence of Dito and Tata. In attendance were more than 15 couples and a few singles representing various chapters in the Philippines. That day, it didn't really matter what chapter we represented. We were One. We were all BCBP members and that was that. We



*Where BCBP South California hold its Breakfast every 3rd Sunday. North California have theirs every 4th Saturday at Musikahan sa Lutong Bahay.*

were like long-lost brothers and sisters now finally reunited. We felt we were no longer alone, struggling in a foreign land all on our own. We found a strong ally in one another. Indeed, it was one joyous occasion to reconnect and share experiences about life in America.

As a group, we chose the de la Cernas to be our Outreach Head in Southern California. Their kind and generous hearts more than guided our choice. Though reluctant to take on the immense challenge, they were prevailed upon by the group.

The first ever BCBP Breakfast dry run was held on December 7, 2003 at DJ Bibingkahan in Artesia and continued henceforth every third Sunday of the month. The first couple sharers were no other than the de la Cernas themselves, a true embodiment of leadership by example.

The BCBP Breakfast was formally launched on June 20, 2004 at Musikahan sa Lutong Bahay in Bellflower with Louie and Lily Morales as breakfast sharers with more than 70 members and first-timers in attendance. On July 31, we were privileged to have BCBP President Manolet Siojo and his charming wife Carla as our gracious Breakfast sharers. Dito and Tata dela Cerna were formally installed as Outreach Head for Southern California. Manolet and Carla met with the leaders and members to hear first-hand





the plans, status, suggestions and resolutions to the various concerns of the new outreach.

Today, members look forward to our once-a-month Breakfast gathering, a practice unique to the BCBP. Action group leaders have also been assigned to



*It doesn't matter whether you're in the States or in the Philippines, practicing songs before the start of the breakfast still is a must (left). The BCBP traditional introduction of the first-timers is still very much a part of BCBP Breakfast (above).*

shepherd the flock located in the various areas of Southern California. The Governance team also meets regularly to map out plans, resolve issues, and hear suggestions on how we can become better servant-leaders.

Though the task is daunting, we are held together by our common hope, our

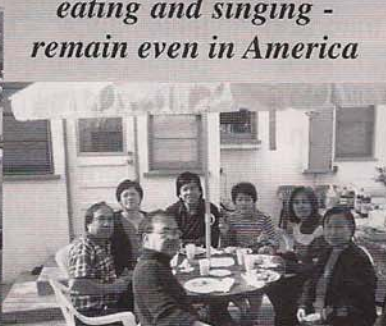
common history and our common experience of making a new life in an uncharted territory. We can only rely upon your faith, support and constant prayers that we can make the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals an organization that can truly live up to its name here in America. ✕

#### **About the author:**

Angelina "Jeng" G. Tiano

*Jeng Tiano arrived with her husband Polet and two sons, Niko and Gio, in Southern California in November 2000. Polet and Jeng were active BCBP Alabang Chapter members. Two weeks before the big BCBP action group meeting on September 14, 2003, Polet and Jeng started to join another community. When they heard about the BCBP meeting at Long Beach, they were ecstatic. Tatang Sadi and the rest of the members prayed over Jeng that fateful September 14 because she was due for a major operation on September 24. In her words: "If this is not God's perfect timing, what is? I missed praying in community especially at a time like this...now BCBP is here in the U.S. praying for me."*

*The BCBP favorites -  
eating and singing -  
remain even in America*





# Say What???

Thank God for church ladies with typewriters. These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:

## FUN UNDER

### The Sun

- ❖ Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.
- ❖ *The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water." The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."*
- ❖ **Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8pm in the recreation hall. Come and watch us kill Christ the King!**
- ❖ "Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands."
- ❖ *The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.*
- ❖ **Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community.**
- ❖ The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy."
- ❖ *All Saints Day announcement: Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.*
- ❖ **Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.**
- ❖ The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- ❖ *Announcement: "The cost for attending the "Fasting and Prayer Conference" includes meals."*
- ❖ **Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.**

Source: Internet

## ACTIVATING

### Your Action Groups

## How do I love thee? Let me count the ways...

**THE BEGINNING LINE** from this familiar sonnet (for those of you who remember your English literature) can be the basis for great Christmas action group or family activities.

### 25 Ways


Have each member of the group list down 25 ways of saying "I love you" to a member of their family. Ex. Use loving nicknames, or, spend the afternoon together. Then share your list with the others. The group/family might want to make a composite list of the best ways to frame and give as a gift to loved ones.

### Ways to Make Someone Feel Special

How can we make someone we love or care for feel special this Christmas season? Have everyone identify one or two people and what they

would do to make them feel special. Then have each one share about what makes him/her feel special. Ex. Create a special song to honor your mom. Make a bookmark for your friend's bible.

### How do I love the Baby Jesus?

Every day of Advent and during the Christmas season have every family member write out one way that they will love the Baby Jesus for that day, and place all the slips of paper in a special basket, or pin them on the Christmas tree. On Christmas, gather around and read all the ways to love the Baby Jesus. Question for sharing: What has this activity taught me about "love"? This can also be done in the Action Group by reading and sharing the ways of loving Baby Jesus either during your Christmas party or during your first action group meeting of the New Year. 





# BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST VENUES

CHAPTER/OUTREACH	VENUES	DAY	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH
<b><u>METRO MANILA NORTH</u></b>						
<b>METRO-WIDE</b>	<b>MAKATI SPORTS CLUB</b>	<b>WED</b>			J	
<b>CAMANAVA</b>	Max's Restaurant, EDSA, Kal	SAT	S	M	J	M
<b>GREENHILLS</b>	Club Filipino	SAT	S	J	M	M
<b>QUEZON CITY</b>	Max's Rest, Scout Tuazon	SAT	S	M	J	M
	Stepsaperp	SAT	-	-	S	-
<b>RIZAL</b>	Manila East Golf Club, Taytay	SAT	M	S	M	J
<b>MARIKINA</b>	McDonalds Sumulong H'way	SAT	J	M	J	M
<b><u>METRO MANILA SOUTH</u></b>						
<b>ALABANG</b>	Ayala Alabang Country Club	SAT	M	S	M	J
<b>LAS PIÑAS</b>	KFC Alabang - Zapote Rd	SAT	J	M	-	M
<b>MAKATI</b>	Max' Restaurant, Glorietta 3	WED	J	S	M	M
<b>MANILA</b>	Orchidarium & Butterfly Pavilion, Rizal Park	FRI	J	S	M	M
<b>PARAÑAQUE</b>	Max's Restaurant, Sucat	SAT	M	J	M	S
<b>PASAY/VILLAMOR</b>	Villamor Golf Club Greenside	SAT	J	M	S	M
<b><u>NORTHWEST LUZON</u></b>						
<b>BAGUIO</b>	Prime Hotel	SAT	-	J	M	S
<b>DAGUPAN</b>	Regency Hotel, De Venecia H'way	SAT	J	S	M	M
<b>LAOAG</b>	Palazzo del Laoag	SAT	-	J	-	J
<b>SAN FNDO-LU</b>	Sea & Sky	SAT	J	J	-	-
<b><u>NORTHEAST LUZON</u></b>						
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	Hotel Roma	SAT	M	J	M	S
<b>SANTIAGO ISABELA</b>	Oye's Diner	SAT	M	-	M	-
<b>BAYOMBONG</b>	FTM Food Haus	SAT	-	J	-	J
<b><u>CENTRAL LUZON</u></b>						
<b>ANGELES</b>	KM 86 Food Rest, Sta. Maria, Balibago	SAT	J	J	J	J
<b>BULACAN</b>	Max's Restaurant, Guiginto, Bulacan	SAT	J	J	J	J
<b>CABANATUAN</b>	Royce Motors Canteen, Maharlika H'way	SAT	J	J	J	J
<b>OLONGAPO</b>	Ann Raquel Restaurant, Magsaysay Blvd.	SAT	J	J	J	J
<b>SAN FNDO-PAMP.</b>	Villa Conchita Resort, Olongapo Gapan	SAT	J	J	J	J
<b>TARLAC</b>	Nay's House, Romulo St., Tarlac	SAT	-	J	-	J
<b><u>SOUTHERN TAGALOG</u></b>						
<b>BATANGAS CITY</b>	Alpha Hotel	SAT	-	J	-	-
<b>BIÑAN-SAN PEDRO</b>	Max's Restaurant	SAT	J	M	S	M
<b>CALAMBA</b>	Riverview Resort & Conference Center	SAT	J	M	S	M
<b>CALAPAN</b>	Parish Hall Calapan Cathedral	SAT	-	J	-	J
<b>CAVITE CITY</b>	Pat's Restaurant	SAT	-	-	J	-
<b>DAET</b>	Villamilia Hotel	SAT	-	J	-	J
<b>IMUS</b>	Rojonet Aquinaldo H-way, Imus Intrscn	SAT	J	-	J	-
<b>LIPA</b>	Sawali Restaurant, Sabang, Lipa City	SAT	M	S	M	J
<b>LUCENA</b>	Halina Hotel & Restaurant	SAT	M	J	M	J
<b>ROSARIO</b>	Servato's House Restaurant	SAT	-	J	-	-
<b>SAN PABLO</b>	Coco Palace, Nat'l Highway	SAT	J	-	J	-
<b><u>BICOL-PALAWAN</u></b>						
<b>LEGAZPI</b>	Hotel La Trinidad, Legazpi City	SAT	-	J	-	S
<b>NAGA</b>	Champagne Garden Mayon Ave.	SAT	J	-	J	-
<b>PALAWAN NORTH</b>	Legend Hotel	SAT	S	-	J	-
<b>PALAWAN SOUTH</b>	Barcelo-Asturias Hotel	SAT	-	M	-	J
<b>SORSOGON</b>	Jollibee Sorsogon	SAT	J	-	-	J
<b><u>CEBU REGION</u></b>						
<b>BALAMBAN</b>	Balamban National High School	SAT	-	J	-	M
<b>BANTAYAN</b>	Bantayan Southn inst. Social Hall	SUN	J	-	J	-
<b>BOGO</b>	Marcella	SAT	J	-	J	-
<b>CEBU NORTH</b>	City Sports Club, Ayala	SAT	J	M	S	M
<b>CEBU SOUTH</b>	Sacred Heart Ctr, D. Jakosalem	SAT	J	S	S	M
<b>CONSOLACION</b>	San Narciso Church	SAT	J	-	J	-
<b>MACTAN</b>	Majestic Restaurant	SAT	M	J	M	S
<b>MANDAUE</b>	Mc Donald's, JY Square, Lahug	SAT	M	J	S	J
<b>TALISAY</b>	Chowking Talisay	SAT	-	M	-	J



# BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST VENUES

CHAPTER/OUTREACH	VENUES	DAY	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH
<b><u>TAG/DUMAGUETE</u></b>						
BAIS	Bros Haven	SAT	-	M	-	J
DUMAGUETE	Bethel Guest House/DepEd City Div. Conf Hall	SAT	J	M	S	-
SIQUIJOR	Garden Orchid, Larena	SAT	J	-	M	-
TAGBILARAN NORTH	JJ Seaford Village	SAT	-	J	S	M
TAGBILARAN SOUTH	Bohol Tropics	SAT	-	J	S	M
TUBIGON	PPC Hall	SUN	-	J	-	J
<b><u>NE LEYTE &amp; SAMAR</u></b>						
BILIRAN	Country Inn Hotel	SUN	J	-	J	-
BORONGAN	Esadel	SAT	-	J	-	J
CALBAYOG	Bread Mix	SUN	J	-	S	-
CATBALOG	Maqueda Bay Hotel & Restaurant	SAT	J	-	J	-
CATARMAN	DCC Annex	SUN	-	J	-	J
TACLOBAN	Agus Restaurant, Real St., Tacloban	SAT	S	-	M	J
<b><u>SOUTHWEST LEYTE</u></b>						
BAYBAY	Angelicum School	SUN	-	S	-	J
MAASIN	Ampil Function Room	SUN	J	-	S	-
ORMOC	Pongos Hotel	SAT	-	J	S	J
SOGOD	Parish Center	SAT	J	-	-	-
HILONGOS	-	SAT	J	-	J	-
PALOMPON	Palompon Institute of Technology	SAT	J	-	M	-
<b><u>NEGROS REGION</u></b>						
BACOLOD NORTH	Quan Restaurant - La Salle	SAT	M	M	M	-
	Jollibee - La Salle/Casa Noble	SAT	-	-	L	J
BACOLOD SOUTH	Bacolod Exec Inn	SAT	M	M	M	-
	Mc Donalds - Lacson/Casa Noble	SAT	L	-	J	-
BACOLOD EAST	BCBP Activity Center	SAT	M	-	M	-
BINALBAGAN	Kabisig Food Center	SAT	-	J	-	J
CADIZ	Zaldariaga Pavillion	SAT	J	-	J	-
KABANGKALAN	Variable	SUN	M	-	-	-
	Snackee Restaurant	SUN	-	-	J	-
SILAY	Palamintuan Restaurant	SUN	-	M	L	M
	Palamintuan Restaurant	SUN/QTR	-	-	J	-
VICTORIAS	VMC Fastfood/Marjhuns Rest	SUN	-	M	-	J
TALISAY	3R's Restaaurant	SAT	M	-	M	-
<b><u>PANAY REGION</u></b>						
ILOILO	Amigo Terraces Hotel	SAT	J	M	S	M
KALIBO	Nazareth Home	SAT	J	L	J	L
	Rich Rest	SAT	-	M	-	M
BORACAY	Tropical Guest House Stn 3	SAT	J	J	J	J
ROXAS	Pizza Junction, Rizal St.	SAT	-	M	-	M
	CAP Auditorium	SAT	J	-	J	-
	President's Inn	SAT	-	L	-	L
<b><u>MINDANAO EAST</u></b>						
BUTUAN	Luisiana Convention Center	SAT	-	J	-	J
CDO EAST	Mindy's Restaurant	SAT	M	M	J	M
	VIP Hotel	SAT	-	-	-	L
CDO WEST	Vip Hotel	SAT	M	S	J	M
DAVAO	Royal Mandaya Hotel, Davao City	SAT	M	S	M	J
DIGOS	CAP Building	SAT	-	J	-	J
GEN. SANTOS	East Asia Royal Hotel	SAT	J	-	J	-
GINGOOG	New Lanes Rest. along National H-way	SAT	-	J	-	J
MALAYBALAY	House Malibu	SAT	J	-	S	-
SURIGAO	Gateway Hotel	SAT	J	-	J	-
TAGUM	CAP Bldg. Tagum City	SAT	-	J	-	J
VALENCIA	Taipan Restaurant	SAT	-	J	-	S
<b><u>MINDANAO WEST</u></b>						
DIPOLOG	Top Plaza Hotel	SAT	-	S	J	M
ILIGAN	Al Fresco Resort & Restaurant	SAT	M	J	M	S
OROQUETA	Lumantas Garden	SAT	-	J	-	J
OZAMIZ	Royal Garden Hotel	SAT	M	-	J	-
PAGADIAN	That's Diner Restaurant	SAT	-	J	-	J
ZAMBOANGA	Alavar's Seafood Restaurant	SAT	J	-	J	-



# **Be HONEST**

**Even if others are not  
Even if others will not  
Even if others cannot**

**"He who walks honestly walks securely"  
*Proverbs 10:9***

A message from  
 **The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals**