

# Kapatiran



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Look for quick tips on gift wrapping throughout this issue.



*God's gift to us this Christmas is His son Jesus. What is our gift to Him?*

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, ATBP.

Christmas is once again just around the corner, and what better way to usher it in than to fellowship with one another at the BCBP "Christmas Bazaar, Atbp, '92". Brothers and sisters and their families from all BCBP chapters gathered at the Philippine Marine Gym, Fort Bonifacio, last November 29 for a whole day packed with festivities, bargains and bingo.

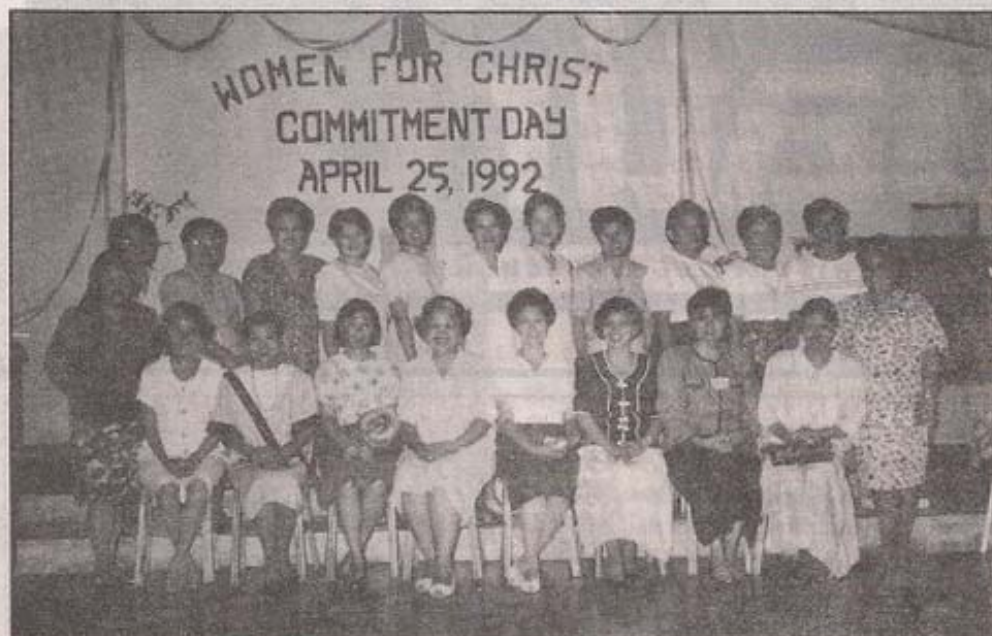
The affair began with a Mass celebrated at 8:00 a.m. by the BCBP's spiritual advisor, Fr. Herb Schneider, S.J.

The bazaar opened for business immediately after that.

Seventy stalls provided the shoppers with a wide array of things from which to select their Christmas gifts. Each of the Manila chapters was designated to coordinate different shopping areas: Quezon City coordinated the garments booths; Greenhills, Christmas decors and housewares; Makati, toys and gifts; Las Pinas, gifts and second hand articles; Alabang, food. There was even a section (outside the gym, of course) with second hand cars!

*cont. on page 8*





## WOMEN FOR CHRIST

A New BCBP Partner In Mission

*Rose P. Padre, Alabang Chapter*

The Lord continues to extend His loving care and protecting Hand to His children in a new outreach called Women For Christ. Started five years ago by Elvie Estrellado of the North District of the Ligaya ng Panginoon Community, the Women For Christ aims to meet the emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of solo women, particularly the widows, the separated, wives of overseas contract workers, single mothers, single women, and women who are "alone in the spirit."

The Women For Christ's evangelical thrust is to mold solo women according to Gospel values so they can follow Jesus, sharing their love and resources with one another and with other women.

Initiation to the WFC, including the support system, is similar basically to the BCBP with CLP, weekly action group meetings and monthly assemblies. Most meetings are held on Saturday afternoons from 2:00-5:00 p.m., a time the solo women find easier to meet than in

the evenings. WFC members enjoy a continuous program of formation including teachings, retreats and recollections, fellowship, life sharing, Bible study and works of mercy for the less fortunate.

WFC-South, begun in January 1992 under the leadership of Rose Padre, presently has 55 members, graduates of CLP 1. Ten solo women from the BCBP have recently joined Women For Christ: Zeny de la Cruz, Arlene Zuluaga, Leila de Gala, Heidi Hernandez, Minda Umali, Mila Manning, Rose Guiao, Betty Evangelista, Luz Atable and Liling Juan.

Two WFC Christian Life Programs are ongoing, one in the Parish of the Presentation of the Child Jesus, BF Paranaque and one in Assumption Convent, San Lorenzo, Makati. Other parishes with WFC groups are St. Paul the Apostle, Q.C.; Sacred Heart, Kamuning; Sta. Ana, Manila; Good Shepherd, Manuela Subdivision, Las Pinas.

## OUTREACH LEADERS MEET

The Jesuit Chinese school in Cebu was the site of the October 9-11 meeting of the leaders of all the BCBP outreaches (excluding Palawan). Manny Banigan, National Council President, and Fernando de Larrazabal, member of the National Council responsible for BCBP outreaches, called for the meeting in order to explain in detail the Vision and Mission of the Brotherhood, and its 9-point action plans for 1993 and coming years.

During the Friday night prayer assembly of the Cebu chapter, de Larrazabal talked on how to choose people for the Christian Life Program. Banigan gave a sharing-teaching on family life at the Men's Breakfast the following Saturday morning.

Saturday afternoon the entire group gathered for talks on "how to share in the Breakfast", "relationships with Partners in Mission", with the main discussions centering on the BCBP's mission, vision and action plans. On Sunday everyone tramped to the beach to enjoy the sun, the sea, and the fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ.

## CHAPTER SERVICE ASSIGNMENTS

|           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| December  | Las Pinas   |
| January * | Greenhills  |
| February  | Alabang     |
| March     | Makati      |
| April     | Quezon City |
| May       | Las Pinas   |

\* There will be no First Friday Mass in January.

*Remember  
This December  
That love weighs more than gold.*  
Josephine Bacon

*A good conscience  
is a continual  
Christmas.*  
Benjamin Franklin



## Las Pinas Monitor

### My Apologies, Sister, But...

*Efren Carag, Las Pinas Chapter*

Believe it or not, Fr. Herbert Schneider, S.J., conducted a retreat exclusively for the Las Pinas chapter at the Our Lady of Mercy Formation Center at Victoria Homes, San Pedro, from October 9-11, 1992. Away from the hustle and bustle of Metro Manila, situated at the edge of the world, the formation center provides a milieu conducive to a one-on-one dialogue with our Creator. Sister Mary Kerile laid out the welcome carpet for us with a brief message: E.S.P. - meaning "Eat well, Sleep well, Pray all the time."

The main purpose of the retreat, Fr. Herb announced, was to let us know what God wanted for us--to become worthwhile witnesses and avoid becoming counter-witnesses. He made a call for a return to basics, reminding us of why God created us--to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him and to be with Him. He advocated one simple rule of conduct: Put Christ on the throne. Everything else must be of lesser importance.

Angel Garcia handled the room assignments. Quite expectedly, he reserved for himself a room with a toilet and bath whereas Lito Pardo and I had neither toilet and bath nor cabinets but only three tiny side tables. Little did Angel realize that he had failed to arrange for Fr. Herb's accommodations, so, he ended up in the barracks and on a wooden bed. He tried to conceal his resultant backaches by talking about the triumph of mind over mattress.

Relationships. Fr. Herb observed that relationships are in a sense emotional bank accounts with deposits and withdrawals. Deposits are the little courtesies and kindnesses or even little things, making and keeping promises and fulfilling expectations. Withdrawals are the little discourtesies and acts of

### Stirrings At Smokey Mountain

"We've only just begun", not only so the song goes, but so Smokey Mountain goes nowadays. "Please, come and see us go," came the invitation of Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD, Parish Priest of Smokey Mountain.

At high noon on October 18, 1992, a number of brothers from the Las Pinas chapter, led by Joey Estagle, accepted Fr. Ben's invitation. They came, they saw in the flesh and were all overwhelmed in the spirit by what they experienced on that Sunday afternoon.

An odor of intense activity with edifying direction is oozing from Smokey Mountain. Nowadays you see a community stirring up to be born. Cooperatives, the secret of unity and growth, have sprung up and the inhabitants have attained dignity ready and competent to face the challenges and to satisfy the needs of the community.

One is refreshed and comforted by the words of Fr. Beltran who sees the spirit stirring in Smokey Mountain, the same spirit that can prod the whole country to growth.



▲ Matchbox covered with shiny gold paper and lined with tissue becomes a receptacle for a piece of jewelry.

thoughtlessness, the making of promises but not keeping them and not fulfilling expectations. There is an ensuing overdraft, Fr. Herb said, when the withdrawals exceed the deposits. But when

### Marriage Retreat In San Pedro

Eight Las Pinas couples from CLP 17 and 18 attended the chapter's three-day Brotherhood Christian Marriage Retreat last October 23-25, 1992, at the Mother of Mercies Convent, Victoria Homes, San Pedro, Laguna. The Convent is managed by the Hospitalier Sisters.

During the weekend of late bed-times, early mornings and hearty meal-times, the couples were able to share with each other in the couple dialogues their feelings and experiences, evaluating their relationships in the light of the BCMR talks and sharings given by Perry/Beth Domingo, Rey/Tess Datu, Manny/Haydz Banigan and Mar/Belle Ciabal.

The retreat culminated in the renewal of marriage vows, blessing of wedding rings and the signing of the BCMR marriage covenant during Holy Mass.

Congratulations to all retreatants: Pete/Lulu Bertis, Angelo/Lydia Lagman, Omar/Lot Guzman, Bobby/Khelle Gaerlan, Danny/Susan Tumamac, Charlie/Vet Ho, Domeng/Ester Zacarias, and Lito/Ludy Pardo.

The dedicated service team was headed by the course leaders Mar and Belle Ciabal, assisted by their action group members Jun/Lyd Figueroa, Ernie/Lallet Dela Cruz, Rod/Elsa Ignacio, Leo/Rose Nabor and Caloy/Cora Trinidad. The support of chapter head Joey and Tess Estagle as well as the unit leaders ensured the success of the chapter's marriage retreat.

deposits have piled up and the depositor has a lot of credits, his withdrawals or faults are often overlooked.

*cont. on page 4*



## MAKATI UPDATE

### Procession of Gifts

"Happy Birthday, Jesus!" is the theme of the Makati chapter's Christmas party which will be held on Saturday, December 5 at the Philippine Columbian Association from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Annie Salvador reports. The Makati ladies' core group headed by Annie is in charge of the annual Christmas celebration of the chapter.

In lieu of the traditional gift-giving among the chapter members, each person attending the party is asked to bring one gift for Jesus, preferably medical supplies, food, clothing, or other living necessities. Each one will present his/her gift to the Infant Jesus in a grand "Procession of Gifts". The gifts will go to a selected barrio in Central Luzon that the Brotherhood is helping recover from the ravages of Mt. Pinatubo's fury.

The afternoon's festivities include presentation by the chapter's Children's Choir. There will be games for the young ones (and young once) and, of course, some very special numbers.

### Be Active, Be Concerned

These were the strong admonitions given by October sharer, Telly Albert Zulueta, writer and journalist, to the Makati ladies during their November breakfast held on Nov. 11 at the Nandau Restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati.

Telly talked about different portents of coming tribulations and related them to the messages of Mary in her apparitions in many different parts of the world, particularly in Medjugorje where she herself had witnessed the sun dancing and other wondrous phenomena. The underlying message in all of these is "return to God, prepare yourself spiritually, and be actively concerned in bringing God's message to the world."

She presented to the group several practical ways of doing this for women.

Christian women must be actively concerned in doing something about making their neighborhood a better place for their children and grandchildren to live in. "We must never underestimate the power of a letter," she said as she urged the women to write to respective authorities to stop making movies that glorify criminals and espouse sinful practices, to the courts to let the judges know that we Christians want proper justice done, to the comics and magazine publishers to stop publishing suggestive and trashy materials, to TV and radio stations to clean up their programs.

"We must watch, wait, pray, do penance, and pray some more," she said. As Christian women, she recommended attending regular spiritual retreats. "If you cannot take the time out for a weekend or week-long retreat," she continued, "get hold of a good book of Spiritual Exercises and set aside about one and a half hours a week before the Blessed Sacrament for an intensive personal retreat into Christ's presence."

The Makati ladies' breakfast is held every second Wednesday, 7:30 a.m., at the Nandau Restaurant, Greenbelt, Makati. This venue is right next door to the Beverly Hills Deli, venue for the Men's Breakfast which is held at the same time.

### WELCOME CLP 20!

Mon/Miles Cabayu  
Romy Escandor  
Jake/Sarie Sin  
Arianne Valdez Cerdania  
Dolly Cerdania  
Sali/Meddy Agdon  
Doming Guevarra  
Demy/Susan Opinion  
Jun/Maan Tripon  
Rey/Arlene Sanchez  
Tani/Tess Campitan

### MY APOLOGIES...

from page 3

\* \* \* \* \*

There were two (2) surprise participants: Chico Villegas Ty, now a resident of Vancouver, Canada, and Leo Nabor, Sr., a native of Pinatubo (Pinatubo street in Mandaluyong). Angelo Lagman was no longer lonesome on the second day as buddy Bobby Gaerlan showed up in the early morning. Jun Obra and Nold Tarobal, brought together by illusions of an insurance bonanza, were inseparable as were Rod Boquiren and Ric Gloria.

\* \* \* \* \*

The retreat was very different from the many I have attended before. Fr. Herb made us work, not just listen. He introduced us into Praying with the Bible and made us go through the 7-step Bible prayer. In fact, for most of the last day, he asked us to prepare a Pastoral Plan for Personal Growth, covering the Spiritual, Intellectual, Social and Physical phases of our lives. Towards closing time, however, Pete Bertis still had an empty notebook. He complained to me, "Justice, ang hirap palang gumawa ng Pastoral Letter."

\* \* \* \* \*

Napocor did not spare us from the electric service interruption. The after-dinner talk of Fr. Herb Saturday evening had to be conducted at the concrete lawn. Some brothers were provident enough to have brought emergency illumination. Even the sisters and their lady assistants were listening in and very intently at that. When lights came on before midnight, I rushed to the kitchen and found Sister Cora hurrying there, too. I told her we would like to have breakfast already. Poor sister, she did not know what to do. Noon lang ako nakakita ng madre na nataranta. My apologies, Sister, but you may try to get even next time.

\* \* \* \* \*

Driving home alone in my van early Sunday afternoon, I had an empty feeling. It was as if my eyes were looking for something down the road. Oh yes, there was that sign about craving for more, "So good, ayus na ang kasunod!"



## LA NAVAL NEWS

## CLP #2: Exhibition of God's Power

One of the CLP #2 participants was baptized a Catholic just before the Mass, then he and his wife were married during the Holy Mass. Another couple also joined them to sacramentalize their marriage. More than 35 received the Sacrament of Reconciliation just before the Mass. A great outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred during the baptism or renewal of the Holy Spirit. And to prove His power once and for all, the Lord allowed a case of demonic possession so that the entire community would realize that we are in the midst of a spiritual battle, and that it is God Who reigns victorious!

All this happened on the afternoon of Sept. 11 during the baptism of the Holy Spirit for CLP #2 of the La Naval Outreach. Since then, the Lord has continued to work miracles, both large and small (is a miracle ever small?), in the lives of the 46 participants and the many servants from the La Naval CLP #1 and from Makati chapter.

During the sharings on Commitment Afternoon, October 3, Rollic Ona, Makati chapter head, commented that "this is one of the strongest group of sharings that I have ever heard. The Lord surely has something special in mind for this group."



*La Naval CLP #2 in session.*

The Saturday afternoon sessions at the Managers Club, Ft. San Felipe, continue with culture talks, bible study and leadership formation workshops. 1993 plans include a BCMR, Brotherhood Christian Marriage Retreat, and an evangelization training program.

## SURPRISE!

On Saturday October 17 surprises were the agenda for the afternoon's La Naval meeting. The music ministry, instead of beginning with the usual praise and worship songs, serenaded Jun and Nancy Catan on the occasion of their birthdays. The outreach then presented the Makati chapter mission couple with an oversized birthday card - a framed plaque bearing the signatures of all outreach members and the navy/airforce priests around a large BCBP emblem.

Outreach head Rick Abad, in presenting the plaque, thanked the Makati mission couple for their being an inspiration to the group, and for their faithfulness and perseverance in coming every Saturday for the past one and a half years to Cavite to shepherd and form the outreach in its growth as a BCBP Christian community.

Jun and Nancy Catan in their acceptance remarks praised God for giving them the opportunity for service. "We look at every Saturday as a day of recharging and renewing our spirits in the presence of your great enthusiasm for the Lord," they said. "We find that after spending the afternoon here in Cavite in the Lord's service, whatever we ask for in prayer is answered."

After the afternoon's workshop and sharings, all feasted on a double merienda. As they had promised, the Catans brought pancit, lechon and cake while the La Naval Outreach surprised them with another cake, and complete merienda.

## WELCOME! LA NAVAL CLP #2

Rey/Mabel Acosta  
Ming/Censie Aquilar  
Ninoy/Susie Aquino  
Bernie/Liza Bautista  
Bel/Mercy Belastrino  
Raffy/Sally Bolivar  
Chelsy/Vicky Cusi  
Roy/Divine Diveraturda  
Mas/Ellen Estenoso  
Jun/Del Marzan  
Rene/Chato Piliapil  
Nonie/Tita Taraya

Clarita Adle  
Mel Aracallana  
Leovy Bayot  
Ghen Busalanan  
Lilia Cabug  
Connie de Castro  
Placido Cobarrubias  
Vir dela Cruz  
Baby Enriquez  
Sony Fry  
Lottie Gardaya  
Lily Gaviola

Tessie Laquindanum  
Sally Matute  
Evy Nebres  
Frank Nonisa  
Claire Ordenez  
Sony Orozco  
Fe Pena  
Nene Rex  
Ne Rivera  
Julie Sakalayan

**Deadline for submission  
of materials for the  
Feb.-Mar. KAPATIRAN  
is  
JANUARY 8**



## ALABANG NEWSBREAK

## Discernment Retreat for 1993 Program

The expanded governance team of Alabang chapter, headed by chapter head Pete Padre, held a discernment retreat Nov. 20-22 at the La Sallette retreat center in Silang, Cavite. All unit leaders, action group leaders and service heads participated in the weekend meeting.

The objectives of the retreat included leading everyone to have a clear understanding of God's mission and vision for the chapter, clarifying roles and contributions of each service team, developing specific plans for each team and eliciting commitment for actualization of these objectives. Another primary purpose of the retreat was to get to know each other better through the spiritual and social interactions planned.

The output of the various discussion groups will be collated and used by the chapter governance team to chart the overall chapter plans and activities for 1993.

## Coke Executives Finish CLP

A six-week "intensive" Christian Life Program for the four plants of Coca Cola in Metro Manila culminated in a Commitment Night on October 3 with the participants and the servants victoriously proclaiming the kingship of Jesus.

The CLP, a project of the Alabang chapter's Business Evangelization Program (BEP) headed by mission director Orly Neri, was held at the Coca Cola Sta. Rosa plant in Laguna. Sixteen senior and middle managers, eight of them with their spouses, joined and completed the program. Please see

page 8 for the names of the Coca Cola BCBP members.

Prior to the intensive CLP, initial talks had been given by the Alabang mission team to the Coca Cola executives on Christian living and values, scripture readings and prayers. This led to the invitation for Alabang to give the CLP, but on a two talks per day (Saturday afternoon) basis.

After their CLP, the graduates organized themselves into the CCCB (Coca Cola Christian Brotherhood), which will initially be under the supervision of the Alabang chapter mission team. The CCCB now holds regular assemblies patterned after the BCBP breakfast format and action group meetings. Some of the leaders have also started attending the Alabang Men's Breakfast.

Plans call for a second CLP for other Coke executives early in 1993.

## NOT ONLY FOR CHRISTMAS

Somehow, not only for Christmas,  
But all the long year through,  
The joy that you give to others  
Is the joy that comes back to you;  
And the more you spend in blessing  
The poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart's possessing  
Returns to make you glad.

Whittier: The Joy of Giving

## Alabang Forms 'SWAT' Team

A SWAT team, or Social Welfare Action Team, has been organized by the Alabang chapter to respond to the needs of assistance in times of disaster and calamities. Named to the SWAT team were Freddie Pe Benito, Tony Espedido, Boy Sering, Tom Lazo and Ral-lye Ramirez.

As its initial project, the team is now collecting donations in cash, food and clothing for the Pinatubo victims. These will be brought to a specially selected evacuation center by a volunteer group from the Alabang chapter sometime in December.

On a continuing basis, the Alabang SWAT team stands ready to respond to any social welfare needs of victims of natural calamities.

## Growth Talks for Alabang Ladies

God has been specially good to the women of Alabang, reports Nene Tayag, Alabang Ladies' Breakfast head. Since September to November the breakfast has shifted from its regular format of life sharings to a series of talks/sharings providing direction, guidance and spiritual nourishment for the ladies' desire to grow in Christian womanliness.

September speaker, Agnes Gutierrez of Ligaya ng Panginoon, presented an overview of growing in womanliness in the way most pleasing to God. She emphasized purity of heart and mind as requisites in holiness. "As long as a woman puts God first in her life, lives out and manifests her holiness in her role as a wife, a mother and a daughter of God, then she is a true picture of what Christian womanliness is," Agnes said in summary.

cont. on page 8



## QUEZON CITY NEWS BRIEFS

### New Breakfast Venue

The Quezon City Chapter has a new breakfast venue (started last September 1992): Aberdeen Court Restaurant located at No. 1403 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. The Men's breakfast is still every Saturday; while the Ladies' Breakfast is every second Saturday of each month also at Aberdeen Court.

### RFM Breakfast

The Quezon City chapter opened its first "in-house" breakfast last November 6, 1992, at the RFM Corporation Building located along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong, Metro Manila. It is the first ever BCBP breakfast with a "corporate setting" with most of the top executives of the company in attendance, including RFM President Joey Concepcion who sponsored the first breakfast. Among the attendees were over eighty officers of RFM and more than twenty brothers from the BCBP Metro Manila chapters. Bobby Lavina, BCBP Treasurer, was the sharer.

This is one situation wherein executives of a single large corporation are being evangelized as a body. On the fourth or fifth breakfast, application forms for attendance in a special Christian Life Program (CLP) to be probably conducted in the same venue will be distributed to the attendees. Depending on the response, a CLP will be immediately conducted with the breakfast being temporarily suspended so as not to burden the participants in attending two activities within a week or day, i.e., a breakfast and a CLP. This means that the breakfast will have to give way to the CLP.

The CLP will then be conducted "in-house" with regular members from the various Metro Manila chapters serving, Quezon City being the lead chapter. The idea is to identify the areas where

the participants reside and get regular member couples of the BCBP from these areas to serve as discussion and assistant discussion leaders. Those who complete the CLP and join the BCBP will be integrated into the Metro Manila chapters where their places of residence are located.

### New Appointments

Rayben Maigue has been appointed head of the Quezon City chapter music ministry as Cito Villaflores and his wife Baby assume the position of unit leader vacated by Ben and Lyn Madrono. The Madronos are on leave from active service. Obet and Nene Ocampo temporarily take over the LSS Team while Gerry and Cecil Tabares are abroad on business.

### Christmas Breakfast and Party

The Quezon City chapter will hold its chapter Christmas Party during its regular breakfast on the second Saturday of December, the 12th. The joint breakfast will commence at 7:00 a.m. with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist to be officiated by Fr. Romy Castro,



▲ You can't wrap an automobile, a sofa or a 20-foot tree from the nursery, but you can take an instant photograph. Place snapshot and directions to find the real thing inside tissue-lined box; tie with ribbons.

SVD. Breakfast follows immediately after the Mass.

Birthday celebrators for the month of December will be serenaded with a happy birthday song in four voices arranged especially by Rayben and Nannette Maigue. Four group presentations by regular members follow the introduction of first timers and the acknowledgement of breakfast attendees who graduate from the blue card to the white card. Chapter head Benjie Quinto will deliver the Christmas message. A prayer response will follow.

The ladies are also coming up with a surprise raffle draw during the party. The 1992 Fisher of the Year award will be handed to the member who has brought the most number of new comers to the Quezon City Breakfast during the year. Singing of the BCBP theme song will close the event.

### Mission Activities

The LSS team of the Q.C. chapter headed by Obet Ocampo recently completed a Life in the Spirit Seminar at the Saldana Group of Companies with the participants making their commitment last November 14, 1992. The group is now working in tandem with some members of Couples For Christ in strengthening the newly established prayer group at Saldana Group of Companies.

Meanwhile, the Pepsi and RFM prayer groups continue in their efforts to evangelize more co-employees in their respective companies.

To strengthen the members of the mission team headed by mission coordinator Roy Calleja, special teaching and training sessions are being conducted for all the team members. This is preparatory to a more aggressive evangelization effort which the chapter hopes to realize in the coming year and thereafter.



# ALABANG NEWSBREAK

## GROWTH TALKS...

from page 6

Joy Maloles from BCBP Makati and the Ligaya ng Panginoon shared in October the need to return to the fervor of "first love" in our relationship with the Lord. She suggested four practices: firstly, honestly believe in your heart that God loves you personally very minute of your life, and then love Him back every minute of your life. Secondly, keep a list of the times that you experienced God and His Love in your life. Thirdly, make God the priority in your life, and fourthly, listen as the Lord tells each of us, "Give up your plans in your life. I know what is best for you."

A sister from Couples for Christ, partner-in-mission with the BCBP, discussed the blocks in our lives that prevent us from returning to the fervor of our first love. Tere Taggao listed some of these blocks such as unforgiveness, resentment, bitterness, disappointment, hang-ups, fears, worries, tensions, insecurities, fatigue, guilt, areas of attach-

ment, lack of order in life, temper, jealousy, dishonesty and being critical.

Tere compared the life of a Christian to a water pipeline. If there are obstacles in the pipelines of our lives, God's spirit and God's graces cannot flow abundantly. "Making God the center of our lives is the only way that will remove all the blocks or obstructions that clog up the pipelines in our lives," Tere said.

## 54 Graduate from CLP 21

Alabang's Christian Life Program No. 21 graduated 54 participants during their Commitment Night on November 28 at the Alabang Country Club. The CLP was headed by Charlie Carballo with the assistance of Bobby Atendido and Manny Jimenez. The new BCBP members were welcomed to the chapter during the general assembly on November 25.

The group will have their culture talks beginning early January 1993.

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, ATBP.

from page 1

There were mascots, goodies and rides for the children. But the "piece de resistance" was the children's choir festival featuring children ages 7 to 12 from the five Metro Manila chapters. From 10:00 a.m. until lunch time, the different choirs regaled their cheering parents and bazaar goers with a happy selection of songs for the season.

Lunchtime saw the BCBP's version of noontime variety shows with its presentation of "Hindi Pa Kami Laos" showcasing the Alabang chapter's band and other performers from the different chapters who were out to prove that they are what they claim they are not.

The Bingo Social and raffle draw rolled off at 2:00 p.m. with bingo cards selling briskly at P100 for five cards. By the end of the afternoon, everyone agreed that it had been a most successful BCBP bazaar.

The coordinating chapter of this year's Bazaar and Christmas fellowship was Alabang chapter. Composing the committee in charge were Bobby de la Paz (Alabang), overall chairman, and members Jeanette Calleja (Q.C.), Irma Puno (Greenhills), Jules Villamor (Makati) and Angel Garcia (Las Pinas).

Activity coordinators were: Mass - Pons Preysler (Alabang); Bazaar - Hermie Rodil (Alabang), Nanette Jamlig (Q.C.), Irma Puna (Greenhills), Binggay Singson (Makati) and Lulu Leandro (Las Pinas). Coordinating the children's choir festival were Ric and



▲ A seashell—itsself a present—makes the perfect "box" for a small tissue-wrapped gift. Tie with a ribbon.

## WELCOME COKE CLP 1

Jesus Jose/Doreen Calderon  
Eduardo/Ernie del Rosario  
Nilo Bustillos  
Eriberto/Vacion Dyquiango  
Godofredo Gadia  
Angel/Myrza Sabas  
Jesus/Zeny Leonidas  
Manuel Santos  
Ricardo Pineda  
Loreto/Lorna Arcera, Jr.  
Edgardo/Mariet Acervo  
Anselmo Jimenez  
Rodolfo Susi  
Telesforo Limjap  
Manuel Garcia  
Emmanuel Berbano  
Aleli Sevilla  
Romeo Simpao  
Edgardo Ocampo

Didith Lazatin (Alabang), Nancy Limuaco (Q.C.), Roy Siojo (Greenhills), Lucy Legaspi (Makati), and Perry Domingo (Las Pinas).

Jun Magbanua (Alabang) was in charge of the bingo and raffle draw, with Rolly Aberion (Greenhills) and Beth Ginete (Makati) taking care of the prizes. Musical numbers were coordinated by Angel Garcia (Las Pinas) and Nancy Limuaco (Q.C.). Finance officer for the affair was Nena Espiritu of Alabang.

Special thanks goes to the Philippine Navy through Captain Walter Briones of the La Naval outreach, Makati chapter, for the use of the PN gym, and to Swift Hotdogs and Nestle Phils. for their donation of mascots, welcome banners and bandaritas that livened up the day's festivities.



## THE THINGS I DO FOR MY HUSBAND

*Maria Cristina B. Santos, Cagayan de Oro Outreach*

I am the type of person who never really paid much thought of whether there is a God or not. I simply didn't care. If He was there then fine, if He was not, then that was fine also. I'd just have to go on with my life, God or no God. When I'm in a tough situation or in a middle of a problem no one could make me kneel down and pray about it. Life is tough anyway, somehow I'll just have to live with it and survive.

Then one night I found myself attending a Christian Life Program (CLP) for would-be BCBP members. If there was any divine intervention about the whole thing, I couldn't care less. I was doing it for my husband. I'd been through a lot of similar gatherings like this and had not been affected, so why should this one be different. So just to make my husband happy, I'd go with him every Tuesday and Thursday saying to him, "Come on, let's go and get this over and done with."

But slowly the Lord was working in me, softening my heart. It was like water, little by little dripping on a rock and one day it breaks. My experience with the CLP was nothing grand, but it made me focus my life on the light...like being drawn to the light at the end of a dark tunnel.

I guess I could say that the CLP has planted a precious seed in my heart, the seed of Faith. It made me believe again in Someone Divine and Loving. And like any other seed, it has to be nurtured for it to experience growth...and maybe by growing, life can become less of a struggle. However, I cannot do it alone, I need to allow the Holy Spirit to work in me, and I need the support and prayers of my brothers and sisters in Christ.

## THE C.L.P. AND AFTER

BCBP members share  
about their CLP experi-  
ences and Jesus' effect on  
their lives.

### CALLED TO THE CLP

*Vicky Ramirez, Alabang Chapter*

Before I joined the BCBP (CLP 19, Alabang), I was a member of many organizations. I had attended three Life in the Spirit seminars, regular retreats with Pro-life members and my officemates. I always attended seminars and lectures in our parish. There was always this feeling of comfort and consolation when I heard the Word of God. But during those times, I was always alone. My husband, Paul, was never interested in joining me. We had been invited to join Couples for Christ, Families for Christ and other organizations but he declined all invitations.

When Paul was invited by Milo and Jojo Panlilio to attend the CLP in Las Pinas February of last year, he told them he couldn't make it because of his work. But he promised to attend the next CLP which was to be in Sept. 1991. In between was anxious waiting. I was so excited and happy because for the first time Paul made a commitment.

When Jojo informed me that the September schedule was postponed to January 1992, I was so disappointed because I was sure Paul wouldn't be available in January. It was truly God's

*cont. on page 12*

## THE GREATEST SURGEON HEALED OUR SON

*Mariette Sh. Atienza, Cagayan de Oro Outreach*

Barely two weeks had passed since our Baptism in the Holy Spirit and our graduation from CLP 4 when the greatest crisis in our life happened. It was on a Saturday when we almost lost our youngest son Dodie in a head-on vehicular accident. Our Nissan pick-up with our driver and our son Dodie collided with a 10-wheeler truck loaded with a 20-foot container van. The pick-up was a total wreck, our driver died, and Dodie... On the way to the hospital, a 15-minute drive, all I could do was cry aloud and call out to the Lord for mercy. "Do not forsake us, Lord, I know You love us, please don't take Dodie away from us..." I knew from the CLP that we only have to have that much faith in Him to ask.

I was not prepared for what I saw in the emergency room...Dodie, motionless on the stretcher, his eyes closed, unconscious, blood on his face, hands and shirt, jeans torn and only one shoe on. I cried all the more. I knew how it felt to have a child died when our second son Roroy was taken by the Lord 18 years ago. At that time, I was bitter, always asking, "Why Lord, why is this happening to us?" But that Saturday I just had so much faith in the Lord.

When the doctors and nurses cleaned up Dodie they found that he had no injuries, no lacerations, no broken bones, only a big lump (bukol) on his forehead. All the blood on him was that of the driver whose face, head, shoulders had been badly lacerated and jawbone broken. The neurologist, however, was not satisfied with the x-rays and decided to do an angiogram to find out if there was any hemorrhage in the brain. He said that we needed a neuro-surgeon to be around in case there was a hematoma.

*cont. on page 12*



## THE TIME I FELT CLOSEST TO THE LORD

*Pepe Ledesma, Bacolod Outreach*

I had just finished my CLP 5 in Bacolod, I felt I was on top of the world and secure in what I was doing. I was on my honeymoon with God. In a state of bliss, I was revigorated with the experience of finally establishing a personal relationship with God.

Then, after about two weeks, my world collapsed! My father, who is the world to me, suffered a massive cardiac arrest. I was a witness to this since I was with him at the hospital and watched his heart monitor register a flat line for a minute or so. I watched my father die.

As I stood helplessly watching the doctors trying to revive him, the Lord spoke to me, "Pepe, apart from Me you can do nothing and are nothing." It suddenly dawned on me that I was so focused on my own anxiety and concern that I forgot to surrender my Dad to the Lord. I was so engrossed in my own selfishness that I forgot to surrender the very person I professed to love so much.

There and then I totally surrendered my father to God, and as I let go, the Lord started to take control. He gave me peace, comfort, strength and faith in His infinite goodness. For that miracle, I am eternally grateful. In total surrender of everything did I feel closest to Him for He showed me that He was truly a faithful and loving God.

As I reminisce on this, I too discovered how the Lord works through the community to show His love for us. At the lowest point of our lives, the community came out to support us. I remember friends and relatives who came to visit Dad and pray with us for his recovery. Their overwhelming show of concern and love made me feel the love of a God I could not see nor touch. In them I experienced His love and compassion.

I praise and thank the Lord for these precious moments of closeness to Him.

The BIBLE is an instrument not an ornament; a chart not a charm. Other books were given for our information but the Bible alone was given for our transformation.

## THE C.L.P

### POST CLP BLUES

#### The First Trial and

#### Triumph of Discipleship

*Ronnie Caballero, Makati Chapter*

More than a year has passed since I came home from the BCBP Makati Chapter's CLP 17 Commitment Night overcome with the Lord's love because of the wondrous deeds I had the opportunity to witness that night. How profoundly the Holy Spirit had changed the life of the participants! There was zeal, boldness, joy and laughter as people proclaimed the goodness of the Lord and their new-found faith in Him. I could see and feel their joy, a holy people in love with the living Savior.

Today, only a third of that CLP remain active in the Brotherhood; the rest have chosen to quietly drop their commitment to the Lord in the BCBP for other vague priorities. I'm not saying that they have encountered the BCBP's own narrow door and decided that they just don't fit in. Or maybe they just didn't stick around long enough to see what else the Lord could do with their lives.

If one were to divide the activities of the BCBP into phases there would be

## Reflections of a Staffer's Dad

*by Eduardo S. Canlas, Ph.D.*

When my third daughter, Susan, decided to serve the Lord as a CYA staffer, working in schools in Manila like U.P., Ateneo, and so forth, it came as no surprise to me.

About a year earlier, my wife and I had renewed our relationship with the Lord. We joined a movement called the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and



*Susan Canlas, with CYA Director Rogel Plata looking on*

Professionals [one of CYA's partners-in-mission].

At that time, I offered my entire family in the service of the Lord. Admittedly, my offer to serve God as a family was quite vague and nebulous. But when my eldest

daughter decided to dedicate one whole year to the Lord's service, I sensed the Lord saying, "A promise is a promise."

Then, my seven-year old son, Andrew, gave me another reminder about my promise to the Lord. One evening, while I was putting him to bed I said, "Andrew, let's kneel down, close our eyes, and ask our Lord what He wants us to do." Without much fuss my little boy said, "Okay, let's pray."

In less than a minute, he was finished praying. I asked him, "What happened?" He replied simply, "The Lord told me, Andrew, you will be my servant."

These incidents convinced me that our Lord takes very seriously the promises we make to Him. So, when Susan told me her decision to work for CYA, I was not the least bit surprised. I only remarked to myself, "The Lord must be collecting again on my promise to Him!"



# AND AFTER

three phases: Pre-CLP, CLP and the Post-CLP. It seems that the Post-CLP phase is where our good efforts and resources abundant in the Pre-CLP and CLP stages fritter away. We need to focus also on the people who stay. . . what is the common denominator that links all of them?

Simplistically speaking, the CLP graduates survives the "honeymoon" stage and is able to translate his CLP experience/decision to commit into his everyday life. From simple doctrinal faith he moves on to a living, active faith. He is able to rise from just seeing his own individual needs to seeing the needs of others. He becomes not just a recipient of service but a giver of service. He begins his metamorphosis of servanthood and discipleship.

I believe the key to having a servant's heart lies in being filled with God's love. St. Paul warned the Galatians against making their faith a matter of obedience of the Law; rather, he said, faith must be a commitment to the person of Jesus Christ (Gal. 2:16, 5:6). It is impossible to truly love others without first having faith in Jesus.

If a believer cannot move from his being a receiver of service to becoming a giver of service, it may well be because he has not realized the depth and breadth, the immense vastness of God's love for him. At the worst, it could be self-centeredness that robs him of focusing on Jesus.

With God as the inexhaustible source of love the only variable hindrance even to the mature believer (post-CLP and thereafter) is his inconsistent realization of God's love. If we feel weary at the post-CLP stage or find ourselves floundering in our commitment, it may be worthwhile checking on our reservoir of God's love for it is this very Love that is the fuel that propels us to our servanthood and eventually to our permanent place in His eternal Kingdom.

This Makati chapter Action Group has enjoyed growing together since their CLP days in 1985. The action group is headed by Vic/Rita Cuna with members Chito/Tess Gonzales, Jun/Nancy Catan, Rem/Rose Gopez, Andy/Ces Fornier and Nel Fabie. Not in the picture are Philip/Elsa Anievas, Ando/Manon Hernaez, Mon Fabie, Bobby/Lorie Geronimo, Ben/Linda Pastoral and Ike/Noemi Talens.



## LIFE AFTER THE CLP

*Leeze Chan Cosico, Alabang Chapter*

My husband used to always describe me as "segurista", one person who will never attempt to delve in the unknown, one who is scared to take unnecessary risks, who is so afraid of what tomorrow has in store, always rigid - never flexible. That was me in a nutshell!

Through the CLP (CLP 17, Alabang) and the sharings of my brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord woke me up to the reality that He knows all about me and He still loves me. With the painful realities of life staring me face to face, the Lord left me with no other choice but to look up to Him as my Divine Savior, Provider and Protector - or else go bananas.

Growing spiritually and growing with the Holy Spirit have provided me with the much needed strength to have

more faith and trust in my Divine Father. I will honestly say, though, that once in a while, I still do get bouts of insecurities although, now, I refuse to wallow in self-pity anymore (before my gravest sin).

Mind you, I have had to learn the hard way and I know I have yet to learn a lot more. But I am more relaxed with my life now. Am I stronger? Well, I certainly hope so! For one thing, the Lord has proven in my daily life that He is and will always be with me, providing, guiding, protecting. I no longer fear tomorrow and what it will bring. The Lord has taken over the driver's seat in my journey of life with the Holy Spirit providing the light to see the way.

But again, I know that the Lord is definitely not finished with me yet...and I am truly eager to learn more...

## Only Seeds

**A** woman dreamt she walked into a brand new shop in the marketplace and, to her surprise, found God behind the counter.

"What do you sell here?" she asked. "Everything your heart desires," said God.

Hardly daring to believe what she was hearing, the woman decided to ask for the best things a human being could

wish for. "I want peace of mind and love and happiness and wisdom and freedom from fear," she said. Then as an afterthought, she added, "Not just for me. For everyone on earth."

God smiled, "I think you've got me wrong, my dear," he said. "We don't sell fruits here. Only seeds."

*Anthony de Mello*



# THE GREATEST SURGEON...

from page 9

The only two neuro-surgeons in the whole of Cagayan de Oro were out of town. What bad luck! but our brothers and sisters kept on reassuring us that we do not need a neurosurgeon as the Lord Himself is the greatest surgeon of them all.

As the angiogram was going on, my husband Roy and I, together with our BCBP brothers and sisters prayed in the room we occupied in the hospital. I realize now that I had never prayed so hard and so intimately in my entire life. I knew I was really talking to the Lord, asking Him to spare the life of our son Dodi. Our brothers and sisters were all praying for Dodi and for us as a family for the courage and strength to accept God's will. Then... after awhile, one of our friends broke the good news to us - the angiogram found no sign of any blood clot. Dodi was okay! We all thanked God for His great mercy and wonderful miracle.

Later that night, I couldn't sleep, my mind was like a tape recorder, re-

winding all the events of that fateful afternoon. I was crying the whole night thanking God for the miracle and for letting us come out of the experience victorious. I said to the Lord, "This time Lord, it is our turn to do You good..."

That night as I opened the Bible that one of our sisters had left for us to read, I came upon a passage from Sirach chapter 2, verse 1-6: "My son, if you have decided to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials. Keep your heart upright, do not be upset in the times of adversity. Hold fast to the Lord, do not separate yourself from Him so that you may be successful to the end of your days. Accept all that happens to you, be patient when you are humbled. As gold is tested in the fire, so those acceptable to God are tested in the crucible of humiliation. Have confidence and He will take care of you." It was a direct message from the Lord. I had goose pimples while reading the passage.

As I prayed that night, I asked the Lord to show us the way, the right path to be able to serve Him and we feel the BCBP is the right path for us. Praise the Lord for He is good!

# JUNIOR HELPERS

You may have all sorts of willing hands eager to serve around the house if you give your youngsters titles and a clear-cut job description. For example:

- **Washroom Attendant:** Swab out sink, straighten towels, clean tub when necessary, check supplies, maybe find an occasional donation in "tip" saucer.
- **Room Manager:** Take responsibility for one common room. Decorate it for holidays, vacuum, dust, keep it picked up.
- **Police Inspector:** Haul a carton around the house once a day and pick up everything that's left lying where it shouldn't be. Deliver to appropriate bedrooms or put where everybody can retrieve own stuff.
- **Master Baker:** Direct Christmas-cookie bake. Make desserts for major meals.
- **Caterer's Assistant:** At grownups' parties, make ice (in advance), hang coats, pass hors d'oeuvres, clear plates.
- **Social Secretary:** Address and stamp Christmas-card envelopes, post them.

# GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

# WANTED

Administrative assistant, female, knowledge of accounting, typing and computer operation. Some experience preferred. Apply at:

BCBP Secretariat  
T-9B, Milelong  
Tel. no. 86-53-28

# CYA

is looking for a larger house to rent from Apr. 27 - May 22 for Summer Training Household.

Contact Gil Galeste at tel. nos. 971-943 or 995-445.



Makati Office: LG18 Chiyland 7 Condominium,  
Alfaro Street, Salcedo Village, Makati, M.M. Tel. 86-65-13  
Plant: 5631 Ampere Street, Makati, Metro Manila Tel. 831-6727  
Manila Office: 307 Trinity Building T.M. Kalaw, Manila

# CALLED TO THE CLP

from page 9

in January. It was truly God's blessing when Luz Galvez invited us to take the CLP in Alabang instead.

We attended CLP 19 and completed it without a single absence. Little by little we were touched by the Lord and our relationship as a couple became alive again.

Now we are both serving God by being in the service team of CLP 20. The Lord is working in our marriage and I am now at peace and happy, although we are still struggling to really follow what the Lord wants us to be.



In previous articles on evangelization, Tita talked about how we can evangelize those around us. Now she shares with us some of her experiences in reaching out to far-flung areas with Christ's message. -- Editor

Being an evangelizer means being on the road. Jesus Himself, "the very first and greatest evangelizer" (E.N. 7) never stayed put. "To other towns I must announce the Good News of the reign of God, because that is why I was sent (Lk. 4:43)." Neither did the apostles who followed in His footsteps.

Take St. Paul, my favorite role model for evangelization as an example. My prayer to him, especially during missions, is simple:

*"Infect me with the virus of your zeal to proclaim the Good news of our Lord Jesus Christ, no matter what it takes, dear St. Paul."*

And his characteristic reply is: "Oh, really? Well, then, I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ... proclaim the Word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient... be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry (2 Tim. 4:2,5)." Tough, huh? That's St. Paul.

Soon enough I found out that one must never give his unqualified "Yes, Sir!" to this exhortation unless he really means it. Like that time when my husband Pete and I were coming home after conducting the evangelization program for the bishop and his parish priests in Gumaca, Quezon Province. A runaway, fully loaded ten-wheeler rammed us from behind and gouged the entire right side of our old Toyota Crown. The Lord protected us from bodily harm but twelve other vehicles were not

so lucky; some turned turtle, some rammed into trees, two people died. Surveying the wreckage, we could only thank the Lord. But I couldn't help kidding my favorite saint: "This you never went through!"

## Joy Rides

Being on the road means traveling by land, air and sea. Around this time last year I was out for more than a month in the company of missionary sisters who wanted to plant the seed of evangelization in their 31 schools all over the country. I can tell you right now that driving to missions, even when it involves an occasional unromantic entan-

glement with a ten-wheeler is sheer luxury compared with these trips. The only thing worse I can imagine is rush hour on the expressway.

For one thing, mission schools are usually situated in remote areas accessible only by either "sungkahan" or "tal-cum-powdered" roads. The ruts were so deep and mud-filled, I half expected to see carabaos taking a mudbath in them! It would take me a couple of hours upon arrival to untangle my innards and dislodge my heart from my throat. I even examined my dentures for any damage at the rate they were rattling all the way!

Travis by jeepney or bus meant racing for it, baggage and all, tossing your luggage to the roof and grabbing the nearest handhold. If you're lucky, you get a seat, but, as my companion described it, "upong singko", half-in-half out. The alternative to this is to get to the terminal many hours ahead of trip time.

Livestock are not unusual seatmates. Because of scarcity of transport in some places, there are people inside, outside and on top! My scariest moments were when long-haired, fatigue-clad, fully armed men would suddenly appear and hitch rides.

Now, pumpboats can be a lot of fun -- except for the sea. Once again I found myself talking to St. Paul: "Aw, c'mon, St. Paul. You know I am doing my darndest to follow in your footsteps, but could you draw the line on shipwrecks please? You know I can't swim!"

And in such situations a favorite prayer of Cardinal Sin comes to mind: "Lord, please help me. My boat is so small and Your ocean is so big!"

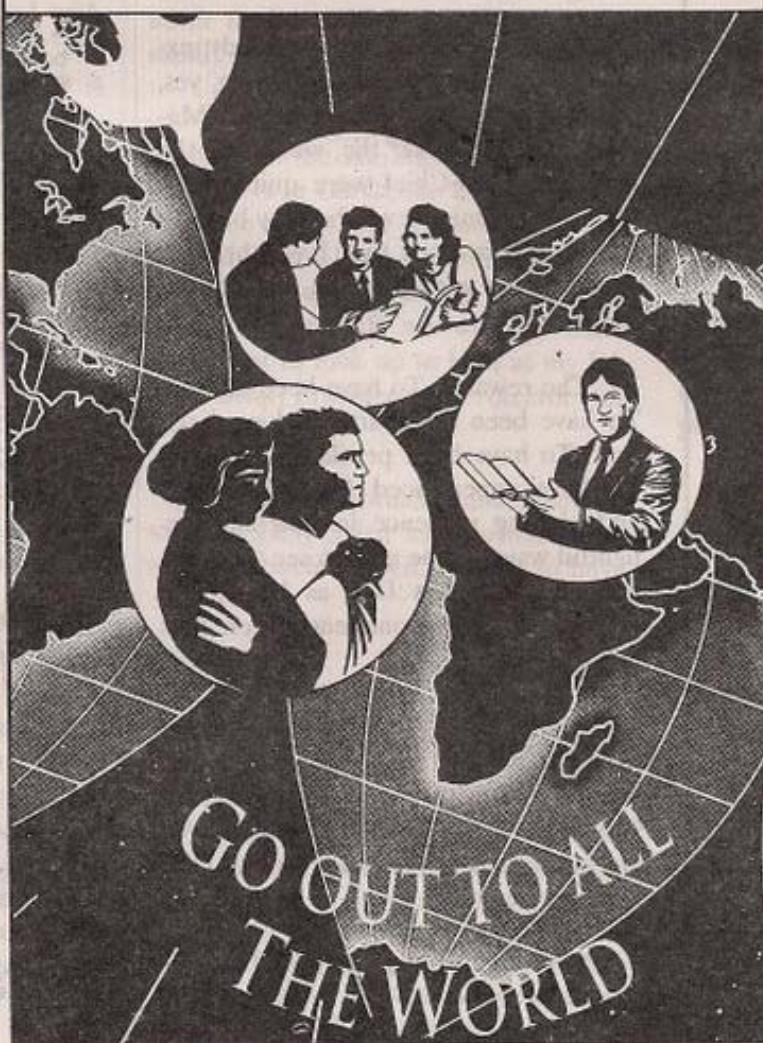
## Fancy Roommates

I've had some pretty interesting roommates in the course  
*cont. on page 14*

# (MIS) ADVENTURES ON THE ROAD

New Evangelization #9

Tita O. Cerdania





## (MIS)ADVENTURES...

# THOUGHTS FOR THE LAY EVANGELIST (That's You and I!)

Through this toilsome world, alas!  
Once and only once I pass;  
If a kindness I may show,  
If a good deed I may do  
To a suffering fellow man,  
Let me do it while I can.  
No delay, for it is plain  
I shall not pass this way again.  
Teach me to feel another's woe,  
To hide the fault I see;  
That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me.

Alexander Pope

I sought to hear the voice of God,  
And climbed the topmost steeple.  
But God declared: "Go down again,  
I dwell among the people."

Louis Newman

I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything,  
But still I can do something;  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do  
the something that I can do.

Edward E. Hale

If I can stop one heart from  
breaking,  
I shall not live in vain;  
If I can ease one life the aching,  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Unto his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain.

Emily Dickinson

from page 13

of my trips. There was "B'r'er Rat" as big as a cat, who took to promenading around my bedroom floor at night. One of the nuns did some exorcism prayers and they worked.

When "B'r'er Rat" disappeared, "Friar Tuck" took over (a tuko or gekko lizard), who took a fancy to me and spent the night silently watching me. Praise God for mosquito nets.

## The Rewards of an Apostle

Looking back at those experiences, especially in the light of the fruit of our labor which the Lord continues to multiply, I sometimes catch myself wondering: Did I really do all that? And immediately, the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit would answer: No, but you did allow Me to do it through you.

Mission trips are indeed heady, exciting and Spirit-filled days. Trying, yes, but then when I signed up for the "Marines" (evangelists), the words of the Commander-in-Chief were quite clear: "I do not promise it will be easy but you have My guarantee that I will be with you until the end." He was, and continues to be.

The reward? To have been chosen. To have been set apart. To have been sent. To have been privileged to serve. To have experienced His faithfulness and abiding presence in new and delightful ways. To be able to see the wonder on someone's face as he or she meets Jesus in personal encounter. This is the reward.

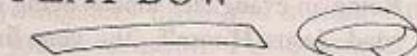
And so the evangelist came home from the mission trips, battleweary and scarred but with the victory shout of (who else?) St. Paul: "Hallelujah! We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us."

Next stop -- Lahar country.

## Pro Bows

They look like a professional tied them . . . but they're not tied at all

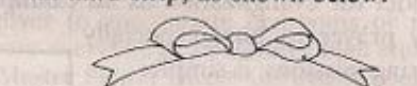
### FLAT BOW



▲ Roll a strip of ribbon into a ring; tape to hold.

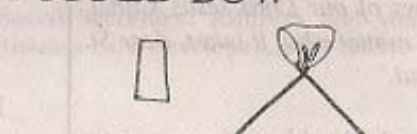


▲ Cut second, longer piece; notch ends. Place under ring. Wrap both with third strip, as shown below.



▲ Stick bow to package with double-faced tape.

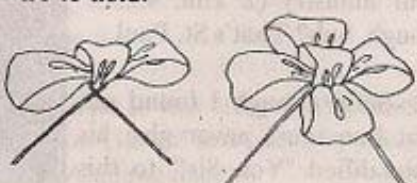
### PUFFED BOW



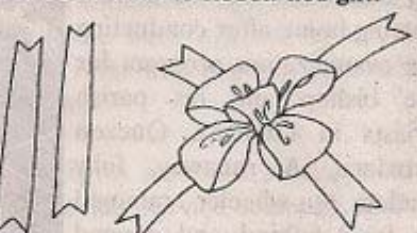
▲ Make a ring of short strip of ribbon; tape to hold. Twist long wire through ring.



▲ Make two larger ribbon rings. Flatten and stack at right angles under small ring. ▼ Twist with same wire to hold.



▼ Notch ends of two long ribbon strips. Twist wire around strips under bow. Wire to ribbon-tied gift.



**GIVE JOY  
THIS CHRISTMAS**



A bunch of baby-boomers will soon occupy the White House. Bill and Hillary Clinton, together with Al and Tipper Gore, are all baby-boomers, having been born between 1945 and 1954.

Eyeballing the ages of BCBP members (please don't get mad at me, sisters), I believe that the majority of the members would be classified as baby-boomers. And if you are one (or if you are older than a baby-boomer), this article may help you understand why you (particularly the husband) are having difficulties with your children.

So if you will allow me, brothers and sisters, let us take a nostalgia trip to the past.

During your grade school years, you remember how obedient you were to your parents. When you were asked to do your homework, brush your teeth, take a bath, or go to sleep, you did not request for an extension nor did you frown or question why. You were not even reprimanded for watching too much television simply because most homes did not even have one. During your high school years, the best was Elvis, the Everlys, the Ventures, or the Beatles, and you remain faithful to that belief to the present day. Chances are, you did not smoke pot nor did you take drugs. In your college or university years, you can only recall the running battles you had with the school administration and the Metrocom.

Then you start rearing up children, and the nostalgia bubble bursts.

Much to your dismay, you find out that you are continually on the defensive to the never-ending "Why?" of your children. Then you feel so smart as you discover the magic word "Basta!" This self-adulation is short-lived, however, when the magic spell cast on your children by this word eventually loses its power.

When your children tell you your nostalgia music is corny, you immediately go on the offensive by telling them their "sounds" are not really music

# GROWING PAINS OF A BABY BOOMER

Jess Gallegos, Alabang Chapter

*Why aren't your children more like you were back then in the good old days?  
Are you still groping for the magic formula for raising your children?  
How do you cope with "modernized" children?  
The Answers...? Read on...*

but plain and simple noise. You will then remind them that the Righteous Brothers who sang "Unchained Melody" of "Ghost" fame were during your time, conveniently forgetting that the song was popularized by Roy Hamilton (or was it Jimmy Young?) during your parents' time.

To your grade school and high school kids, you will proudly relate how you stayed off pot and drugs, only to be reminded that there hardly weren't any available during your time. Then you are rudely awakened by reality when you overhear one of your younger children asking the eldest, "Is Daddy telling us that it is okay to fight the school administration and the police?"

Well, baby-boomer, times have indeed changed. During your time, your only desires were to play (dyolens, teks, basketball, etc.), go to Saturday night parties or soirees, and dabble around once in a while with cigarettes, alcohol, and dirty books. With the media bombardment your children are now getting, their desires cover all spectrum of fun. Your "tumbang-presos" is now extinct, replaced by Nintendo (by the way, weren't you the one who bought this?). High-tech discos, concerts, shopping malls, and food chain outlets are preferred over your "yucky" parties. Your children have been wooed and won over by several loves (with you as 'karibal'), going by the initials TV, CD, VCR, and PC.

Whereas you took three rides (jeepney-bus-tricycle) to visit a girl on Sundays, you now allow your kid to drive your car or their own car when they reach sixteen (more accurately, to drive for the family and to run errands). You now allow them to use your Handycam because the thrill is over, but definitely not your your cellular (cellulite or circular, according to your kids) phone. Not yet, anyway.

As you grope around for the proper handle on your children, another magic word is discovered...wife. Let her handle the kids. After all, you're the bread winner. This ploy works for a little while, but apparently, Wonder Woman's efforts are not enough. Still, you remain indifferent, hoping against hope that you will not get the blame if the children are not raised properly. As time progresses, you will probably either get mellow, become guilt-stricken, or get painful nudge from the Almighty.

As you start to change, you realize that your children do have the right not to live in the sixties but in their time. If you're open enough, you must have figured out that you yourself should start living in the nineties and not in your nostalgic years. Since you were not yet a renewed Christian at that time, you felt then that the only things that must be brought back to the future and imparted to your children were the time-tested values not

cont. on page 17



## BCBP BREAKFAST VENUES

### MEN'S BREAKFASTS

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Wednesdays | MAKATI : Beverly Hills Deli, Greenbelt<br>DAGUPAN : Pinkee's Restaurant<br>(1st, 3rd Wed. only)   |
| Thursdays  | GREENHILLS : Club Filipino, Greenhills  |
| Fridays    | MANILA : Savory, Escolta cor. Jones   |
| Saturdays  | ALABANG : Ayala-Alabang Country Club<br>BACOLOD : Roli's Drive-in Restaurant<br>CEBU : Fernando's Sunburst Restaurant<br>ILOILO : Amigo Terraces Hotel<br>LAS PINAS : Shakey's Pizza Parlor,<br>President Ave., Phase I, BF Homes<br>QUEZON CITY :<br>Aberdeen Court Restaurant,<br>1403 Quezon Ave., Q.C.<br>PALAWAN : Kamayan Restaurant<br>TAGBILARAN : JJ Seafood House<br>(2nd, 4th Sat. only) |

### 6:15 FELLOWSHIP

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Wednesdays | Arc Dates n' Nuts, Jupiter St., Bel Air.<br>Open to both men and women. |
|------------|---|

### JOINT BREAKFASTS

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 1st        |   |
| Wednesdays | MAKATI : Beverly Hills Deli   |
| Saturdays  | LAS PINAS : Shakey's Pizza Parlor,<br>President Ave., Phase I, BF Homes |

### LADIES' BREAKFASTS

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 2nd Wednesdays | MAKATI : Nandau Restaurant, Greenbelt   |
| 2nd Saturdays  | ALABANG : Ayala-Alabang Country Club<br>BACOLOD : Cozy Nook Restaurant<br>CAGAYAN DE ORO : Kundiman<br>Restaurant<br>QUEZON CITY :<br>Aberdeen Court Restaurant,<br>1403 Quezon Ave., Q.C.<br>LAS PINAS : Sunduan Restaurant,<br>Aguirre St., Phase III, BF Homes |
| 3rd Saturdays  | CEBU : Fernando's Sunburst Restaurant   |
| Last Saturdays | ILOILO : Amigo Terraces Hotel   |

### LADIES' LUNCHEONS

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 3rd Thursday  | GREENHILLS : Beijing Gardens,<br>Shaw Blvd.<br>(Center for Peace) |
| 3rd Saturdays | DAGUPAN : Pinkee's Restaurant                                     |

from page 24

## Setting Up The Belen



The Christmas tree has become traditional in many Filipino homes. However, no Catholic home and, for that matter, no BCBP home should be without a Belen. The whole family can help set up the Belen at one time or in stages. On the first Sunday the stable and the empty manger can be set up. The animals, the shepherds and the angels can be added on succeeding Sundays. On Christmas Eve, the family in a procession brings the figures of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus to the manger scene. The three kings can appear on the feast of the Three Kings.

## Warming The Manger

Each day every member of the family can place straw or strips of paper in the empty crib to represent their offerings to the Christ Child. Each straw or strip of paper represents a particular offering like a rosary, Christmas prayer, Holy Mass, visit to the Blessed Sacrament, sacrifices, visits to the sick, alms for the poor, good deeds at home, in school or in the office, giving up smoking, the movies or TV. The more straw and strips of paper in the manger, the warmer the Christ Child will be when he comes.

## Advent Banner or Poster

The family may cut out letters from felt paper/cloth and glue them on a board, felt, cartolina or illustration board. Suggested words are: "Maranatha!", "Come, Lord, Jesus!", "Rejoice", "Jesus is the Reason for the Season!" This banner or poster may be hung in a conspicuous place in the house.

## Packages For The Poor

The whole family can go shopping and put goodies in a plastic bag ready for needy neighbors, orphanages, etc. Don't just give the gift packs, talk for a while with the receiver to let them know that your family really cares.



## Receiving The Sacraments As A Family

Going to confession and participating in Holy Mass as a family is particularly pleasing to the Infant Jesus not only at Christmas time but on every possible occasion throughout the year.

MAY GOD BLESS OUR FAMILIES WITH THE GRACE OF ADVENT AND THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS!



# HUGS CAN'T WEAR OUT

by Lynne K. Bohlman

Shoes wear out  
If you run and play.  
Crayons can melt  
In the heat of day.

But hugs can't wear out.

Trees grow old  
And their branches drop.  
Balloons blown hard  
Can suddenly pop.

But smiles can't wear out.

Shirts will tear  
If you pull too hard.  
Pools can leak  
All over your yard.

But good deeds can't wear out.

Cookies in a box  
May all disappear.  
Worn-out radios  
Are hard to hear.

But kisses can't wear out.

Broken banks  
Won't hold your money.  
And old jokes  
Are no longer funny.

But kind words can't wear out.

Things get lost  
Or just fall apart.  
You can't let them  
Break your heart.

Remember... Thank goodness...

Love can't wear out!



## GROWING PAINS...

from page 15

of your generation, but that of your parents and grandparents, such as 'delicadeza' and 'palabra de honor'. Your memories can remain when you want to reminisce, but the children should not be a part of your nostalgia trips.

But as you progress in your attitudinal and emotional transformation, you find out that the more you change, the more difficulties you encounter in raising up your children. To

your dismay, the catechism lessons you memorized in class (if you studied in a Catholic school) are of no help at all. What standards should you use? Are there any guideline policies around? Is there a how-to manual you can buy? Can the people in the planning department help you out? Can you hire a consultant?

Finally, you become fortunate enough that God intervened in your life and allowed you to bungle your way into the BCBP. Then you realize that on top of your already heavy responsibilities, you also have the tremendous burden of being the spiritual head of the family. Hand-in-hand with a multitude

of reasons (the most popular of which is your busy schedule) why you will not be able to fulfill them, most of you may back off, but the ones made of sterner stuff (or those who have made the Lord the CEO in their lives) will tackle these responsibilities head-on.

If you press on, baby boomer, then you have arrived!

## REJOICE IN ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE!

Isaiah 35:1-10



**TIME**

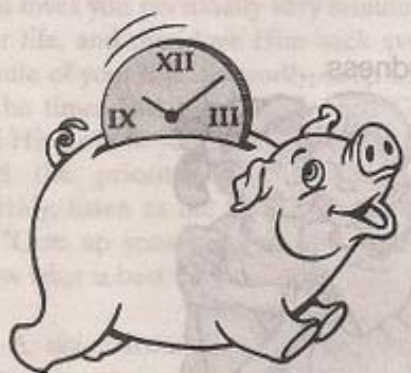
should never be spent; it should be invested. When time is wasted, i.e., used to no purpose, it is spent, not invested. It pays no interest and no dividend.

**TIME**

invested in work and employment should be aimed at improving productivity—accomplishing more in fewer hours.

**TIME**

invested in "utilities"—sleeping, eating, personal care, commuting—should be aimed at strengthening your personal support system.



ERIC BAUTISTA

**DISCRETIONARY TIME**

should be invested in:

- building friendships and cementing family ties;
- maintaining your health;
- improving your skills and knowledge and contributing to the good of your home and your community; and
- relaxing in ways that refresh your body, mind, and spirit.

**How to Reduce Wasted Time**

- Stay aware of your goals, and your habits. Do you spend the most time on the most important things?
- If you are a "day person," get up an hour earlier each day. If you are a "night person," set aside an hour each night. Use the time to work on a special project.
- Use travel time to outline goals, make notes for projects, read, or listen to educational tapes.
- Gain an hour each week by dropping just one TV program. Use TV time, especially commercials, for tasks that don't require much concentration, such as balancing your checkbook or outlining a speech.

**A BUSINESSMAN'S PRAYER**

Grant me the self-awareness to know honestly what I am, what I can do, and what I cannot;

Grant me the judgment to channel my energies into those avenues which best utilize my abilities and do not require talents which I do not possess;

Grant me the wisdom to admit error cheerfully and learn from my experiences, that I may grow and develop and avoid repetition of mistakes;

Grant me the humility to learn from others, even though they be younger, less experienced, or of humbler station than I;

Grant me the courage to make decisions whenever they are necessary and to avoid rashness when they are not;

Grant me the sensitivity to judge the reactions of others that I may modify my actions to meet the needs of those affected;

Grant me the consideration to recognize the worth of each individual, and to respect all those with whom I have contact, neither stifling their development nor exalting myself at their expense;

Grant me the perspicacity to acknowledge that I can be no more effective than my subordinates enable me to be, and to deal with them so that they can help me by helping themselves;

Grant me the tolerance to recognize mistakes as a cost of true learning and to stand behind my subordinates, accepting my responsibility for their actions;

Grant me the insight to develop a personal philosophy, that my life may have more meaning and satisfaction and that I may avoid capricious action under the pressures of expediency;

Grant me the patience to live realistically with my circumstances, striving always for the better, but recognizing the perils of too rapid or too drastic change;

Grant me all these things, dear Lord, that I may live a more useful life, through serving my fellowmen, and, through them, serve Thee.

Amen.

*Robert L. Katz, Harvard Business School*



# CHRIST HAS BEEN LEFT OUT

One Minute Meditations by  
Fernando de Larrazabal

(1)

"Merry X'mas and Happy Holidays" were the greetings we got during the last season of Christmas. Santa Claus was the most prominent figure during the holidays. Wherever we went, one could not fail to notice Santa's presence everywhere. There were songs sung about him. He was also continuously televised in commercials and programs. You walked through shopping malls and Santa was prominently displayed. Some have even done away with Christ's name in greeting cards and display signs, by shortening the greeting to just "Merry X'mas". Christ has been left out.

I was always under the impression that Christmas was the birthday of Jesus when all Christians commemorate the day God was born a man. But I guess I must be wrong, for how can a few of us be right when a great number exclude Jesus from this season. Why has the Babe of Bethlehem been deposed by the imaginary figure of Santa Claus? Maybe, if the few try hard enough, we can bring Jesus back this Christmas. Let's make this our project.

(2)

"...Astrologers from the East arrived one day in Jerusalem inquiring, 'Where is the new born king of the Jews?'" (Mt. 2:1-2)

The visitation of the Three Wise Men is celebrated on January 6, the end of the season of Christmas. Unfortunately, this day is also the end of the spirit of good-will that predominates during this season of love, generosity and kindness. For a very short period peace reigned in our midst. Cessation of hostilities in many parts of the world gave us a foretaste of real peace. The following day, Jan. 7, normalcy returns and all that period of good-will is soon

# On Mothers and Children

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

Whenever a child is born into the world, relatives speculate whether or not it resembles the father or the mother. Christmas was the first instance in history that anyone could say that the resemblance was only on the mother's side.

But it is perhaps truer to say that it was not the Child who resembled the mother, but the mother who resembled the Child; for this is the Child Who made His mother. He preexisted her; she was created by Him; therefore, it was she who was the child.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mothers often tell their children when pointing to the sky: "Heaven is way up there," but when Mary held the Child in her arms, it is true to say that she looked down to Heaven.

\*\*\*\*\*

Just suppose that you could have preexisted your own mother, in much the same way that an artist preexists his painting. Furthermore, suppose that you had an infinite power to make your mother anything that you pleased, just as a great artist like Raphael had the power of realizing his artistic ideals. If you had this double power, what kind of mother would you have made for yourself?

forgotten. We Filipinos have a term for this - "Balik Sa Dati".

For the next eleven months many go back to a life of selfishness and greed. The spirit of Christmas is no more, what prevails is the spirit of the world. Will we ever change? Yes, if we wait for the



Now, if you who are an imperfect being and who have not the most delicate conception of all that is fine in life, would have wished for the loveliest of mothers, do you think that Our Blessed Lord, Who not only preexisted His own mother, but Who had an infinite power to make her just what He chose, would, in virtue of all of the infinite delicacy of His Spirit make her any less pure and loving and beautiful than you would have made your own mother? If you who hate selfishness, would have made her selfless, and you who hate ugliness, would have made her beautiful, do you not think that the Son of God Who hates sin would have made His own mother sinless, and He Who hates moral ugliness, would have made her immaculately beautiful?

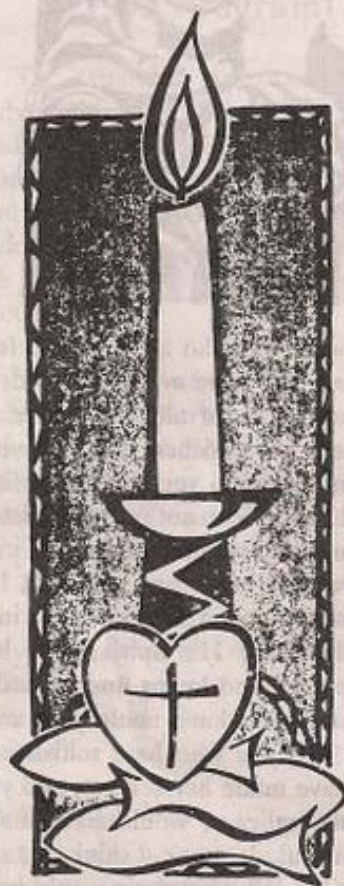
\*\*\*\*\*

If you ever want to know the real qualities of a man, judge him not by his attitude to the world of commerce, his outlook on business, or his genteel manners, but judge him rather by his attitude to his own mother. If you want to know the quality of a religion, judge it exactly the same way, not by the way it seeks to please men, but rather by the attitude that it bears to the Mother of Our Blessed Lord.

next season of Christmas, we will again enjoy the peace, love and generosity of Christ. In the meantime, what happens? Is this the life we want? Each one of us can change it if we extend the spirit of Christmas beyond Jan. 6 to Dec. 25. Merry Christmas!



# Keeping the Candles



When I arrived in the Philippines (30 years ago in December), I found the lights of Christmas here, too. Parols, candles in the windows, strings of fairy lights adorning trees and bushes and buildings, churches ablaze with lights in welcome for Baby Jesus on Christmas Eve.

But I've always felt sad when after the Christmas season, the lights are turned out and everyone returns to the busy-ness of living in the world.

Jesus Himself said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." If we welcome the Baby Jesus on Christmas Eve, if He really is the Light of the world, then why do we turn off the Light after Christmas?

Wherever Christmas is truly experienced and kept, it will be in the hearts and homes and churches of those who have borrowed their light from the Christ Child, who have lighted their lamps with the candles from Bethlehem.

What are these candles from Bethlehem? The candles of memory, of love, of true worship, of peace and of blessing.

## Candle of Memory

First, there is the candle of memory. We need to remember the history of God's people and His plan for them. Bethlehem was where Ruth lived with Naomi, where she met and married Boaz. Bethlehem was the birthplace and home of David. He composed the psalms among the hills of Bethlehem while tending his father's sheep. The prophets prophesied about Bethlehem. The Wise Men traveled long and far

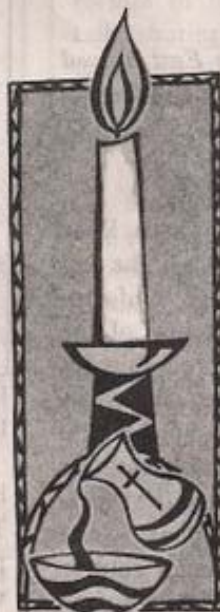
to reach that small hamlet, to be able to bow down and worship the Babe in the manger. The angels sang their "Glorias" in the skies above Bethlehem. The Star lit the candle of Bethlehem for us showing us the way to our Savior.

Today more than ever we need to relight the candle of memory. Amidst the rampant commercialism assaulting us on all sides, we need to remember the true meaning of Christmas. The candle of memory should rekindle in our lives the light of promise, faith and hope that radiated from Bethlehem's Light, born in a manger.

## Candle of Love

God's gift of His Son clearly tells us of the greatest love of all. And from the humble stable in Bethlehem this love became the Light that has the power to light up the whole world, to light up our hearts, to brighten our lives.

The familiar song goes: "It is better to light just one little candle than to lin-



Sometime during the Christmas season when I was young, Dad and Mom would bundle up my brother, sister and me into warm clothing, pack us into the car and off we would go into the crispy cold evening to look at the lighted Christmas displays on our neighbors' lawns and buildings around the town. We would slowly drive through the snowy streets in Rutland, Vermont, ooh-ing and ahhh-ing at the life-size belens, Santa and his reindeer resting on the top of someone's roof, real trees decorated in ice and snow and weather-proof colored light bulbs, wreaths adorning doors and windows, outside lamp posts wound with greenery and lights lighting up the sidewalk for those passing by.



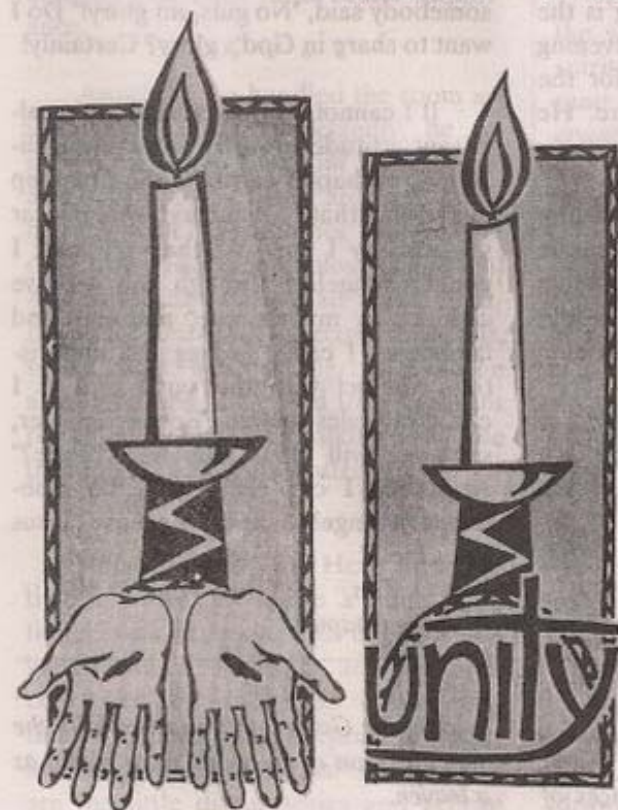
# of Christmas Alight

ger in the dark..." This little candle of love can penetrate the shadows of hatred with its light. This candle of love enables us to bear all things, believe all things, hope in all things and endure all things. This candle of love will never fail or go out unless we blow it out with our hatred, rebellion or sin against the Holy Spirit.

## Candle of True Worship

Whenever I witness the Nativity drama being reenacted, the choirs singing "Glory to God in the highest!" and the simplicity of Mary and Joseph wondering at the beauty of the Baby Jesus, I cannot help but lift my thoughts to God in worship, praise and adoration. All who came to see the Baby that night in Bethlehem "fell down and worshiped him" and "returned, glorifying and praising God."

How shall we best light this candle of true worship? We need, each one of us in his/her



own heart, to say, "There is born to me this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Jesus is born to me, He came down from heaven as a Babe for me, He lived and died and lived again for me. God's gift is given to me, personally. And so I must receive this gift of love, Jesus, personally. I believe that once we fully realize this wonderful truth we, too, will fall down and worship God from our heart.

## Candle of Peace

The prophet Isaiah said, "His name shall be called ... the Prince of Peace." The prophet Micah prophesied: "And this man shall be our peace." The angelic chorus high above Bethlehem sang of peace. And on many occasions Jesus Himself spoke of peace and He left us His peace so that we would not be troubled or afraid.

So many wars and rumors of war, so many areas of strife, so many instances of men, women and children hurting, maiming, killing other men, women and children...what has happened to the candle of peace that was enkindled with the birth of Jesus? Every part of our world needs the light of Christ's peace, and the good works of his peacemakers. We need Christ's peace in our hearts and in our homes, in our communities and in our parishes, in our businesses and in our nation. But first of all, I need to experience Christ's peace in my own life before I can become an effective peacemaker to others.



## Candle of Blessing

We read in Ephesians 1:3 that "God...has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens" and St. Paul in the verses following describes these blessings that are ours in Christ. Among them are the call to holiness, the gift of divine adoption, the grace to have a unique spiritual relationship with God through Christ, the gift of faith, the responsibility to glorify and praise Him, and the revelation of God's plan for us.

When Jesus was born that night so long ago in Bethlehem, He lit for us this candle of blessing. What are we to do with these blessings? Accept them, and use them and live them in such a way as to bring praise and glory to God. My candle of blessing "must shine before others, that they may see (my) good deeds and glorify (my) heavenly Father." (Matthew 5:15-16)

I am sure, brothers and sisters, that you can think of other candles that were lit that night in Bethlehem. Perhaps you and your family can ceremoniously light up all these candles, one by one, during the Christmas season to better see the effect that these candles have in banishing the darkness around us.

For me, not only do I intend to relight the Bethlehem candles but I pray that I may keep them alight throughout the year. With Christ as my Light, this is the least I can do.

Nancy R. Catan



## MONEY CHANGERS

The gospel one particular Sunday was the story of Jesus driving out of the Temple of God all those who bought and sold and the money changers. And He said to them, "It is written, 'my house shall be called a house of prayer' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

"Fair enough and rightly so," was my silent personal reaction to this account. The homily that followed, however, gave me much food for thought. It seems that for the Jews the Temple was the Temple of the only God, where the priests sacrificed animals and celebrated true worship. The priests made money from the vendors by allowing them to sell their wares in the very areas dedicated to prayer and purposely intended for the foreigners, the pilgrims from distant lands. The franchised money changers likewise provided income for the priests as they were the only ones allowed to change the foreigners' money to local currency.

And if we were to examine modern day practices, would God be any happier?

*Tony Espedido  
Alabang Chapter*

## NO TIME

"I am sorry, I just don't have the time" or "I'll see if I can have time for that." Time is a commodity a lot of people don't seem to have. No time for the family, no time to relax, no time for this or that, and WORST of all - no time for God.

I met such a busy man. His appointment book is really loaded even up to and most especially in the evenings. You would say this man needs a 40-hour day. There is, however, something different with this busy man. Almost every day he serves as a lay minister at the 12:15 mass and also at the 5:45 mass. He goes to the EDSA Shrine on Mon-



▲ Wrap huge cartons with newspaper, then embellish with felt-tip pen or designs stamped on with sponges cut to shape and brushed with paint.

▼ If it's big and lumpy—say, a chair, luggage or guitar—bag it, bow it, festoon with tinsel. Plastic garbage bags come white, green, black.



day evenings to listen to regular enrichment talks. Wednesday morning is the Makati Men's Breakfast; in the evening he is at the Greenbelt Chapel for the weekly enrichment talks given there. He even helps get the speakers.

Thursday evenings you can find him at the Center for Peace for intensive prayers, Friday evenings attending BCBP activities, Saturdays and Sundays he serves at both noontime and evening masses.

I asked him, "How do you manage to fix your time?" He replied, "Ask HIM."

*Jane Manalo  
Makati Chapter*

## LEAVEN IN THE WORLD

*The laity are called by God to live in the world, the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, where led by the*

## THE CHALLENGE

Reading Tita Cerdania's latest articles on evangelism led me to ponder my role as an evangelist. As a businessman and professional making a living in the concrete jungle, apart from behaving suitably in the company of our brothers and sisters who share our same love of Christ, have I done anything else to spread the Good News? Serving in the CLPs, BCMRs and assemblies to me are easy tasks...it is quite effortless to be-have Christlike in a Christian setting.

I think that the real challenge for us is truly in the marketplace where we are, where we don't have total or near total control of the environment. We in the marketing field always count on feedback to validate or test our moves, well, the ultimate feedback I could ask myself is, "Would I be recognized as a BCBP brother (or committed Christian) by my words and actions alone (and not by the sticker at the back of my car)?"

Why am I a timid evangelist, reluctant to share the wonderful life-giving knowledge that I possess? Fear of rejection, of being laughed at, of losing esteem are all valid points...but as somebody said, "No guts, no glory!" Do I want to share in God's glory? Certainly!

If I cannot (yet) overcome my recalcitrant attitude towards direct evangelization, perhaps I can take the first step in showing that I am indeed what my car stickers say I am. At the very least I could evangelize through the positive changes in my attitude, manners and language. I can guard against unchristian conduct with the same zeal as I chase my sales targets. Sooner or later, someone will ask, "Why the change?" And then I can reply with the time-tested evangelist line, "Because Jesus loves me..."

*Alex O. Tan  
Alabang Chapter*

*spirit of the Gospel, they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven.*

-Lumen Gentium, no. 31



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# THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

Christmas is traditionally a time of gift giving and the exchange of good wishes with family and friends. It is a time for healing relationships, for waking up early to attend the Simbang Gabi, for pageantry and color, for preparation for the celebration of the birth of the Baby Jesus some 2000 years ago.

Christmas is a time for children. We look forward to family gatherings, to the kisses and hugs of our children and grandchildren, to seeing the delight and wonderment in their faces as they gaze on the Christmas tree and the tantalizing assortment of gifts waiting for them. How excited they are, how warm and loving their embraces as they lavish their thanks on the givers!

During this season of Advent we are asked to reflect on God's greatest gift to mankind, to us - His Son, Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16)

I can not help but compare the way I receive God's gift to the way our grandchildren receive their Christmas gifts. On a scale of 1-10, where do I rank in comparison to my grandchildren's a) breathless anticipation, b) joy, c) enthusiasm in showing off their gift to everyone they see, d) exuberant thanks to the giver, e) examining the gift with great concentration, never stopping to look for new ways to let it work, f) carrying it with them wherever they go so it won't get lost or misplaced.

Jesus tells us, "*Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*"

And so my prayer this Advent and Christmas season, yes, even for the New Year is: Lord, give me a child's heart so that I may receive and treasure Your gift of Jesus in my life with the same enthusiasm and joy and gratefulness that my grandchildren have.

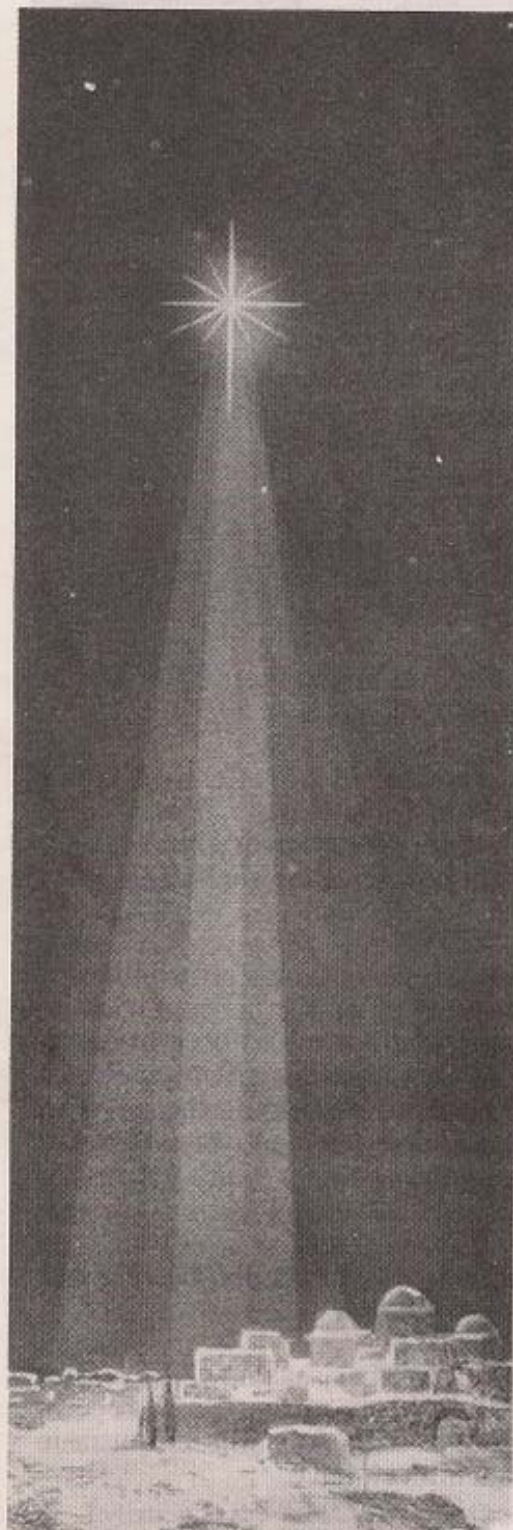
May You Enjoy A Jesus-Filled Christmas And A Blessed New Year!

Nancy R. Catan

Rejoice and be merry in song and in mirth! O praise our Redeemer, all mortals on earth! For this is the birthday of Jesus our King, who brought us salvation. His praises we'll sing!

From an old church gallery book discovered in Dorset, England.





## ADVENT: A SEASON OF GRACE FOR THE FAMILY

*Rose Padre, Alabang Chapter*

The liturgical year of the Church has four seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. The liturgical calendar begins with Advent which consists of four weeks before Christmas. Every Advent, the Church wants us to remember Christ's historical coming 2,000 years ago, and to await His final and glorious return at the end of time.

The world needed a Redeemer after the Fall of Adam and Eve. Our God is a God of order. There was preparation before the Father would send His Son into the world. He would not just send the Messiah into a world that was totally unprepared for His coming. The remote preparation was the Old Testament, covering thousands of years when the chosen people waited for the Messiah; one prophet after another foretelling His coming.

### Preparing Ourselves



The immediate preparation was the Voice calling in the desert to "Prepare the way for the Lord." This was St. John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus, exhorting that "every valley be lifted up, every mountain and hill be made low, the crooked roads be made straight" and then all the world will see the salvation of our God.

"Lift up every valley" means for us to add to what is lacking in us, to do more good, like having more prayers, fasting, almsgiving, practicing more virtues like charity, patience, humility, and simplicity.

"To make low every mountain and hill" we should remove sin in our lives: our greed, pride, selfishness, self-centeredness, and self-indulgences.

Setting our priorities right will "make crooked roads straight" in our lives. This could mean removing our vices, our bondage to gambling, alcohol, porno magazines, and x-rated tapes.

What better way to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus this Christmas than to lift up every valley, make low every mountain and hill, and

make the crooked roads in our lives straight!

### Preparing Our Family

Advent is a season of grace in the life of the Church and in our own personal lives and the life of our family. It is the appointed time to draw near to God as a family. Advent as a time of joyful anticipation for the coming of Jesus should be a family affair.

We can make Christmas more meaningful especially for our children by engaging in certain Christian practices that will focus on Jesus and rekindle in the hearts of all family members a deeper love for Him. These Christian practices will not only help make our Christmas preparation and celebration more meaningful this year but will also bind joyfully together the entire family, setting a Christian tradition that hopefully will be passed down to the third and fourth generations of BCBP families.

### Advent Wreath



The circular wreath symbolizes the everlasting nature of God. He has no beginning and no end. The four candles stand for the four weeks of Advent. The light from the candles represents Christ as the Light of the world. The three purple candles show that Advent is a time of repentance. The pink candle which is lighted on the third Sunday or "Laetare" Sunday reminds us to rejoice for Christ, our Saviour, is coming soon.

The family lights the first candle on November 29, the first Sunday of Advent this year, and everyday of that week before dinner time. Advent prayers, or the Scripture passage for the day, or the Reflection for the day in the WORD AMONG US, can be read. On the second Sunday, two candles are lighted, and so on. The Advent wreath can be a daily reminder to the family of the sentiments of the Church during the Advent season.

*cont. on page 16*