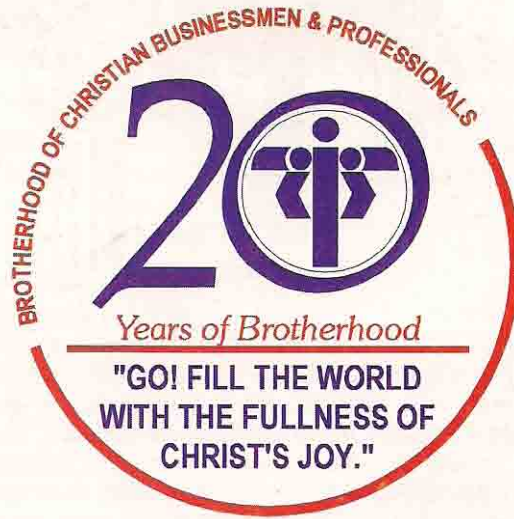


Kapatiran

Vol. XIV Issue 1

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2000



Then

and

Now



BCBP Breakfast Venues

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

Wednesdays – MAKATI : Beverly Hills Deli, Greenbelt, Makati

Thursdays – GREENHILLS: Club Filipino, Greenhills
VILLAMOR: Villamor Golf Club (1st & 3rd)

Fridays – MANILA: Aristocrat Restaurant, Malate, Manila

Saturdays

ALABANG: Ayala Alabang Country Club, Muntinlupa

BACOLOD NORTH: Roli's La Salle, Bacolod

BACOLOD SOUTH: McDonald's

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

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

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

BUTUAN: Butuan Royal Plaza

CAGAYAN DE ORO: Silver Court, Cagayan De Oro

CALAMBA: Riverview Resort and Conference Center

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

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

ILIGAN: Sunburst Restaurant, Sabang, Lipa City

ILOILO: Amigo Terraces Hotel

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

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

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

LIPA: Sawali Restaurant, Sabang, Lipa City

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel, Mactan City

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

PUERTO PRINCESA: Legend Hotel, Puerto Princesa

QUEZON CITY: Max's Restaurant, Quezon City

RIZAL: Manila East Golf Club, Taytay, Rizal

ROXAS: Kanami Restaurant

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

TAGBILARAN: La Roca Hotel

MEN'S LUNCHEON (12:00NN)

Saturday – DAGUPAN: Jollibee Junction A.B. Fernandez Ave.
cor. M.H. Del Pilar St. Dagupan (1st & 3rd Sat. – 7:30 A.M.)

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

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

LADIES' BREAKFAST

Wednesdays – MAKATI: Max's Greenbelt, Makati (2nd Wed.)

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

Fridays – MANILA: Aristocrat Restaurant, Malate, Mla. (2nd Fri.)

Saturdays

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

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

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

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

DAVAO: Terraza Millea (4th Sat.)

ILOILO: Amigo Terraces Hotel (last Sat.)

LAS PINAS: Italia Club 500 (3rd Sat.)

LEGASPI: Albay Hotel (4th Sat.)

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel (2nd Sat.)

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

PUERTO PRINCESA: Legend Hotel (3rd Sat.)

QUEZON CITY: Max's Restaurant, Quezon City (2nd Sat.)

ROXAS: Kanami Restaurant

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

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

TAGBILARAN: La Roca Hotel (3rd Sat.)

JOINT BREAKFASTS (7:30 A.M.)

Wednesdays – MAKATI: Beverly Hills Deli, Greenbelt, Makati
(1st Weds.)

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

Fridays – MANILA: Aristocrat Restaurant, Malate, Manila (1st Fri)

Saturdays

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DAGUPAN: Jollibee Junction A.B. Fernandez Ave., Cor. M.H. Del
Pilar St. Dagupan City

DAVAO: Terreza Millea (2nd Sat.)

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

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

LAS PINAS: Italia Club 500 (1st Sat.)

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

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

MACTAN: Flormont Hotel (4th Sat.)

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

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

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

PUERTO PRINCESA: Legend Hotel (1st Sat.)

QUEZON CITY: Max's Restaurant, Quezon City (4th Sat.)

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

SAN FERNANDO: Café Rustico, Olongapo – Gapan Rd.

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

SORSOGON: Fernando's Hotel (Merienda)

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

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

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

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

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

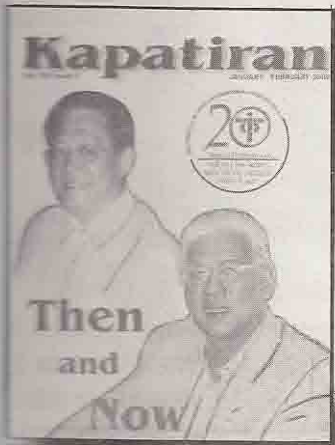
Kapatiran

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COMMISSIONED FOR EVANGELIZATION

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OUR COVER

Then and now. That's the way it is. Manny Banigan served his full term and more as president and inspires us in his valedictory message - truly, a testimony of a genuine BCBP way of life. Louie Morales assumes his post as the new BCBP president on 01 January 2000. In this issue, he presents his vision and mission for the Brotherhood and urges us to continue to live the BCBP way of life. The cover also presents the 20th Anniversary Commemorative Logo. The logo will be replicated in car stickers (now available) all activity streamers and banners, pins, letterheads, etc., to serve as constant reminders of our 20 long, struggling and yet Spirit-filled years.

Editor's Note

Talk about starting the year with a bang. We intellectually accepted that this time of the year after the Yuletide celebrations would result in the leanest issue ever. But we just let the Lord do his will and here we have a 44 page issue! We are starting this year with a feverish pace. Don't let your Action Group miss Nancy's article on the New Jerusalem: it is superb Bible Study material. We are also beginning featuring a terrific Christian business writer, Francis Kong, who unselfishly gave his permission to use his books. We also have an article from Manny Banigan, past President, which is so rich in wisdom, and the new president's inspiring vision from Louie Morales. Need I say more. Just enjoy the goodness of the Lord!



The doubts were real. The uncertainty was real. For one, the prayers were real. The money was real. All those billions of dollars spent to anticipate and counteract the effects of the infamous millenium bug were real. But now that it is over and we look in retrospect after the smoke of the Millenium New Year has cleared, man once again feels smug and confident, although a bit ruffled. It cannot be denied that huge sums of money had been spent to preserve the gains of the modern world. And yet, the world had been overcome by its vulnerability to a question which until maybe 5 years ago no one would have ever thought to ask: will this world come to an end?

A world dominated and admired for its brilliant advances in science, genetics, space technology, "Star Wars" weaponry, satellite communication, e-commerce and instantaneous electronic money transfers, internet technology, all fueled at a feverish pace by the once-mighty computer. Once beheld in awe for its unmatched speed at mathematical calculations when compared to human thought, lightning speed efficiency, even chess brilliance and mastery, the state-of-the-art computer had faced the doubts of its creators, a chink in its armor, the Millenium Bug. What was once depended on for coordination of train networks, operation of nuclear plants, flying of jet airplanes, operation of defense, banking and communication systems came under severe scrutiny for the minutest detail which might cause the biggest downfall of modern man. A worldwide computer glitch could cause a domino-effect of all kinds

the branches. Those who remain in me and I in them, will bear much fruit: for without me you can do nothing." All the best creations that man had to offer seemed vulnerable and helpless. And truly, all that we do with the Lord in this world is all that matters. His real presence in our life gives us the true substance of living.

And even a bit earlier for many Metro-Manilans including myself, a lot of inward looking has been put into motion since the early morning 6.8 earthquake of December 12, 1999. I found myself staring out a 10th floor window (not a good place to stay during an earthquake) in terror, waiting for the wild swing of that concrete structure to end on the surface of the street hundreds of feet below. Even with all the faith I could muster in those few seconds, the terror and the helplessness was very strong. But I never stopped praying even while moving my glance from the cold, dark

CROSSING

of problems from power outages, banking errors, unintended ballistic missile launches, fires and threatened interruption of delivery of food and fuel supplies.

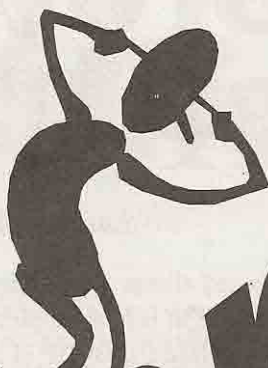
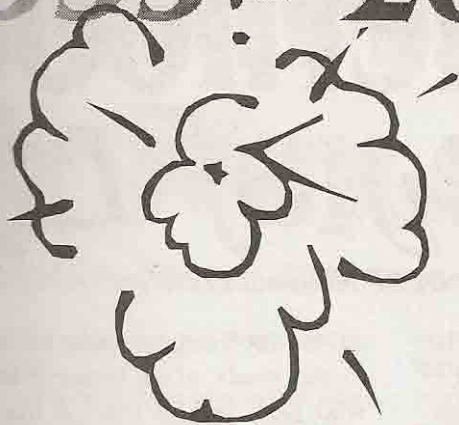
No event or non-event as time may prove has ever captured the imagination of the world, whether young or old as has this "Bug". No passing of time has been more watched or monitored than this grand "rollover" when the clocks around the world made the final tick from 11:59 p.m. of December 31, 1999. Before New Year's Eve, only God knew. And at no other time has the best that modern man had to offer looked so fragile, so weak, so unsure.

Faced with such huge uncertainty it was a call to look inwards. At no other point in time did the Lord's words in John 15 loom bigger, "I am the vine, you are

street surface to the faces of my startled family. But now looking back at those terrifying 9 seconds (it felt like 90 seconds at that level) I'm grateful that my response was prayer and nothing else. Knowing that my greatest hope and salvation lies with the Lord Almighty and nothing and nobody else. I was able to manage three, loud but well-paced "Glory-be's". And Lord, should I face a similar situation again in the future, may my response be the same.

And in any doubtful and uncertain situation we may find ourselves, my prescription or antidote, if you like, will be the same. A HEAVY DOSE OF SPIRITUAL POVERTY! For the Lord says, "**Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall inherit the earth.**" It is spiritual poverty that will drive us to the arms of the Lord where we can be sure of one thing – JOY! UNENDING JOY!

1999 /- 2000



the Millennium

In the face of uncertainty over where this world is headed we turn our gaze to the Lord where much is certainty. It has been said often, "We know not what the future holds, but we know who holds the future—the Lord!" And what does He hold?

Certainly, not a mere crystal ball. A reading in 1 John 1:1-4 says, ***"This is what we proclaim to you; what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked upon and touched with our hands concerns the Word of life—for the life was made visible; we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and made visible to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us, with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing this so that our joy may be complete."*** And by embracing Christ we will find our own joy complete as well! And so it is there, according to St. John. A whole new world without uncertainty but full of joy. A world beyond frustrations, uncertainty, doubt,

human hardship, tears, fears, sin and death. It is there! It is complete!

A work made complete by the Lord's sacrifice. A full life!
THE ONLY LIFE THAT WE MUST EARNESTLY SEEK IN SPIRITUAL POVERTY! Eternal life with the Father; Son and Holy Spirit!

Nothing in recent memory has expressed this spiritual poverty as well as that poignant moment when Pope John Paul II knelt on the threshold of St. Peter's to intensely pray for the pilgrim souls who will make that significant crossover from darkness into Christ's light in the Church. I felt that spiritual poverty also when the Pope ceremoniously knocked on the then-closed doors of St. Peter's which for me dramatizes the desire of the lost soul to seek life and eternal salvation in the Church.

Our BCBP vision echoes John 10:10, where the Lord says, ***"I have come in order that you have life life in all its fullness."*** As we ponder this vision in this Jubilee Year proclaimed on Christmas Eve, let us bear in mind that this concerns not merely the passing of time or of an age or era, but a turning of a page.

One of my favorite books is "Cities of the Past" not for its essays but for its wonderfully done color transparencies. If we visit the great cities of today like Athens or Rome we will find ourselves frustrated by sights of the "glory that was once Rome". Meaning, we find bunches of rubble instead of magnificently preserved structures. Artists have overcome these frustrations in this book by painting over the rubble with transparencies that you can overlay and see the actual "glory" of Rome in its height. Our spiritual life is like this book except that it is a city of the future. As time passes, we should not feel tiredness, weariness or frustration at the opening of each and every new year, but rather feel hope as we have lived each year in faith to the best of our abilities. We should see the Lord faithfully turning a page, a transparency that overlays over the ruins of our sinful life year after year to bring us to completeness, fullness and eternal joy in His Kingdom! — **Ronnie Caballero** ✦



Brotherhood: A Way of Life

Louie Morales, BCBP National President

Consider the following facts: in 1980, 24 men started the Brotherhood. Now there are estimated to be 10,000 members. There was only one venue for the Breakfast, there are 47 venues for the Breakfast today. The Brotherhood is turning 20 in the year of the Millennium and in the celebration of the Jubilee Year. Just looking at these auspicious facts and having seen the Brotherhood grow, in my 17 years of being in it and now having been tasked to lead the Brotherhood in the new millennium leaves me breathless. It is no doubt a spirit-willed situation but also it is a very daunting task to further the maturity of the Brotherhood.

I have been asked what my main thrust or objective will be. Although there are many tasks ahead of me, my **single-minded dream is to see or make it happen that all members make the Brotherhood a way of life.** To me this is the deeper reality of the BCBP mission and vision magnified through the thousands of brothers and sisters living up to their commitments to the Lord. Anyone who claims to be a member of good standing must be able to say categorically that my life is the BCBP way – a fullness of life in Christ. I therefore urge all our brothers and sisters to take a minute and see whether they can conform to the dictum that they are truly living their life the BCBP way. If we are to continue to be strong and grow to an even more potent community that lives in

the fullness of Christ then this must be our way of life. It is in this Spirit that I would like to lead the BCBP in the term that has been assigned to me.

Specifically, we can achieve this reality by following a **3-point agenda** in our involvement with the BCBP. The **first major task is to institutionalize the foundations of the Brotherhood.** I specifically would like to see the following areas of the organization installed in permanency through the coming years.

- a) Evangelization. Establish the evangelistic spirit of the BCBP. This means that we are first and foremost messengers of the Good Word and workers in the vineyard of the Lord with the simple task of gathering more brothers and sisters into a life in Christ.
- b) BCBP Life. Continue to enrich the traditions and life of the BCBP as best exemplified in the Breakfasts, Assemblies and Action Groups that are signature assets of BCBP.
- c) BCBP Programs. Faithfully observe the BCBP activities and programs that are so essential in completing our process of conversion, commitment and commissioning. Only the proper observance of these programs can guarantee the reality of leading a truly BCBP life.

Second, to truly see the Action Groups really be filled with "actions". The Action Groups were so named because they were to carry out the action portion of the hallmark of a true Christian – that of having faith and action. These Action Groups were so designed so we could act as a group not only supporting each other, helping each other out in our

day-to-day living but more so attending to the needs of our brothers and sisters who have less in life. I'd like to see the Action Groups generate more advocacy and social action programs as have now been incorporated by the NSPR as the new area of development in the BCBP.

"I'd like to see the Action Groups generate more advocacy and social action programs"

Third, to continue to let the Brotherhood organization grow. We still need to establish the Brotherhood in some remaining key markets of the Philippines. I think it is just a matter of time before we can realize the fulfillment of this goal. But the more important part of letting the Brotherhood grow is towards becoming global. Not only geographically but also in our discipline and the conduct of our affairs and programs that have to stand in consonance with the global developments. We have our chance to make this happen in this first year of the new millennium and I think we should grab the opportunity to take the first steps immediately.

Finally, all these things that I dream for the Brotherhood will fall flat and never become a reality unless the strong and deep fervor of the BCBP membership will share my dreams of truly making our Brotherhood our way of life. I ask not only for your utmost participation in this task but more so your concerted prayers for the Holy Spirit to continue to guide the leadership of the BCBP to attain all these. ✠

Brotherhood: My Way of Life

By Manny Banigan, BCBP Immediate Past President

1. How and when did you first meet the Lord?

I would like to believe that when God calls you, He may opt to use even the most peculiar event to get your attention. In my case, He used a brother in law, Haydz' brother, not only to encounter him but also to be hooked to him. In a number of times, we have resisted invitations by some friends to attend prayer meetings and/or to join charismatic prayer groups. In early 1982, my brother in law, who was then working with me, was diagnosed to be afflicted with cancer. While he was undergoing radiation therapy, Haydz and I, having heard of many miraculous healing coming out of the charismatic movement, decided to look for a prayer group that could pray over him for healings. We brought him to different prayer groups but it was in our parish prayer group where he was actually prayed over. My brother-in-law died about 6 months later but his sickness brought us to attend the then on-going Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) at our parish church where he was prayed over and where we first met Jesus in a strong way. In mid 1982, when an officemate and business partner casually mentioned of a Brotherhood Christian Life Program (BCLP) that he was invited to attend, I queried whether it was the same as the LSS and that if it were, whether we could be invited to join. The rest is history. We took and completed CLP No. 4 of the BCBP in August 1982.

"The subsequent years were a period of establishing a focus in our life together -- that of being aware of our need to be agents of change in our work environment..."

2. How would you compare your relationship with the Lord then with your relationship with Him at present?

I am a product of the public school system from elementary to high school and therefore, my brand of spirituality and knowledge of God up to and until 1982 is basically patterned from what I saw in and

experienced from my mother (my father having died when I was 6 months in my mother's womb) and what I saw and heard during masses. God was encountered nominally in early Sunday masses, Wednesday novenas to the Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baclaran, daily rosary at 6:00 p.m. and in the seemingly unending novenas of my mother to almost all the known Saints. From 1982, however, when I first encountered the Lord in a meaningful and personal way through the LSS and BCLP, my relationship with him took a radical change. In the beginning, the relationship can be likened to a son discovering for the first time how it is to have a father, and wanting to know more about the father who loves, who cares. A son longing not only to know but also to experience a father. Later on, the relationship graduated to a very personal and trusting relationship with Jesus. Today, especially during the last 8 years of my service, my relationship with the Lord can be compared to a continuing courtship between two lovers, with the Lord constantly showing his loyalty and faithfulness while I struggle to keep my commitments to the relationship. But the Lord knows me well and I am truly grateful that he recognizes my love for him and for this he keeps the relationship burning despite my numerous unfaithfulness.

3. How and when did your service as President start?

I was appointed Chapter Head of the Las Piñas Chapter when the Alabang Chapter was split into two in 1990. During the National Planning of the BCBP in 1991 that was held at the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) at the Ateneo campus, one of the clear directions of the Lord was for the BCBP to set up a body that would oversee the



national direction of the BCBP. This body was envisioned to take the place of the Executive Committee, which was then composed of Fr. Herb Schneider as Chairman, Bro. Fernando "Larry" de Larrazabal as Executive Director and the Metro Manila Chapter Heads as members. In early 1992, it was eventually decided that a National Council would be established composed of 5 members. In the Executive Committee meeting that followed, Fr. Herb Schneider announced the first members of the National Council i.e. Manny Banigan, President, Larry de Larrazabal, Director for Provincial Outreaches, Vic Lorenzo, Director for Metro Manila, Louie Morales, Director for Guilds and Bobby Laviña, National Treasurer.

4. What do you feel helped you the most in serving the Lord with such dedication? Why?

The day after my appointment as President, I sought a meeting with my pastoral leader in Ligaya Ng Panginoon mainly to express my apprehensions and anxiety for this new service. Since Fr. Herb Schneider was the immediately preceding head of BCBP, I told him that I couldn't see myself capable of following Fr. Herb's footsteps. He explained to me that in the Lord's service, we don't have to wear the shoes of those ahead of us. We simply are keepers of the vision that the Lord had entrusted to us and all that is expected of us is to keep that vision alive. That insight gave me a sense of assurance. I was not expected to copy the work of others but rather to simply keep the vision of the BCBP alive in the best way I can. The belief that it is the Lord who selects all his servants likewise



ways that should be pleasing in the eyes of God."

gave me the confidence that he will give the National Council the grace to perform the work that we have been privileged to do for him.

Another factor is a decision that my wife, Haydz and I had made when I first served as an Action Group Leader. At that time, we knew that our service, in whatever capacity, would only be for a short period of time in our life. As such, we decided to give the best of ourselves during this short period of service, after all, this privilege might not come a second time. We also don't want to come before God on Judgment Day unable to explain why we have neglected the service or the people who have been entrusted to us. To do even a small part of that which Jesus came to do on earth is a rare privilege that Haydz and I have always thanked God for.

5. In what ways have you grown as a Christian during this period of service?

Due to the nature of this service, I have seen in the concrete how the Lord works in ways unimaginable. The boldness shown by many BCBP mission teams nationwide in bringing Christ to different places in the country has imbibed in me a strong sense of mission. I learned to trust in God and in the power of prayer. I also have come to understand that in many instances, we are brought to the brink not only for God to see our faithfulness, but also for us to appreciate that he cares and he helps.

I have come to understand that I have different roles to perform in ways that should be pleasing in the eyes of God. As a husband, a father, a blood brother in my family, an employer, a member of the BCBP, a friend to others, and many more, but essentially, as a son of God. While I try to be

the best I can in these different roles, I also recognize my need to unceasingly improve.

• Since I needed to seek the Lord constantly for his wisdom and guidance in the performance of my service, my prayer and scripture reading time have been enhanced dramatically. And as a consequence of the many visitations in the various BCBP venues, I have experienced not only the value of giving love but perhaps, more importantly, to allow others to love me and my family as their way of declaring God's love. Indeed, I have grown in my Christian living in an accelerated way while in this service.

"I have come to understand that I have different roles to perform in

6. Can you mention a few instances when you were severely tested as a leader?

I guess, all of us who do service for the Lord receive some kind of testing at one time or another. It is in my service as President when some severe testing has come my way.

I still remember when the subject of Freemasonry became a big issue in one of our provincial outreaches about 4 years ago. In an issue of the Kapatiran, we reprinted an article about the stand of the German Bishops on Freemasonry where they concluded that the Freemasons have not changed and therefore the stand of the church remains the same. As soon as the article came out in the Kapatiran, I received a call from the head of that outreach and the Chapter Head of its mother chapter seeking clarification on the stand of the BCBP on Freemasonry. I learned that the said outreach had many Freemasons who had joined the BCBP and that the outreach governance then was composed mostly of Freemasons and they were not happy about the article. Not knowing anything about the subject, I secured whatever available material there was from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and other sources. In my next visit of the outreach, I provided our member-Freemasons copies of these materials with a request that they bring the matter before God during their prayer time and seek God's direction.

After about a year, these Freemason brothers informed the National Council of their decision to leave the BCBP. Despite said notice, however, they continued to govern the affairs of that outreach. Because of the brewing leadership crisis I, together with Bro. Rolly Ona, then the Director for Visayas and Mindanao and a member of the National Council and some leaders of the outreach's mother chapter, went to that outreach to address the matter. After conferring with and receiving the blessing of the local Bishop, I addressed the membership who were then attending an introspection retreat to explain the stand of the church on Freemasonry, based on the materials secured from the CBCP. I clearly professed that I did not know much about the subject but that the BCBP, being part of the church, has to follow the teachings of the church if we were to be relevant to the body. On said occasion, I received not a brotherly reception from the Freemasons. Instead, the retreat became a venue for expressions of anger, of disappointment, of frustration and of fear of losing the BCBP. I received hurting words, was subjected to scorn, reproach and disrespect as if I were the one who had made and imposed the stand of the church in relation to Freemasonry. This event led to the departure of almost half of the outreach's membership. By God's grace, however, this moment of seeming affliction became a rallying point for the unity and strengthening of the remaining members. And as if to make a statement, the much-depleted membership emboldened by the Holy Spirit took on a more aggressive evangelization thrust and community life formation program. In a year time, the outreach became a full chapter.

A similar incident occurred in another chapter when the National Council, in its desire to address a leadership dilemma decided to institute some



"The life transformation experiences of countless brothers and sisters nationwide will always be profoundly remembered for they serve as our constant inspiration of God's faithfulness to the people he loves so much."

changes in the chapter governance. During a chapter assembly, where I was to announce the changes in leadership, some members who did not want any change became hostile and the assembly lost its spirit and instead, an atmosphere of discord and conflict prevailed. As in the Mindanao incident, the chapter lost some members but again God in His goodness has allowed the chapter to grow and is now actively pursuing the mission and vision entrusted to us. After sometime, some of those who left finally found their way back to the BCBP.

7. What do you feel are the strengths of the BCBP as an organization?

Being vision and mission driven rather than personality centered, the action groups, the teaching programs, the BCBP breakfast, the business and family orientation spirit, the leadership development programs, the spirit of mission work, specific tenure of office for leaders, the continuing involvement of former national council members, former chapter heads and other leaders in the national affairs as one body in an advisory capacity, the Kapatiran as a medium, the dedication of the members and the generous spirit of servanthood among all the leaders as well as the openness and willingness of the national and chapter leadership to change as the Lord dictates, the spirit of wanting only to do God's will in every activity and a strong sense of stewardship.

Many more can be enumerated but I guess BCBP's strength can really be summed into two characteristics: submissiveness and desire to accomplish the will of the Lord.

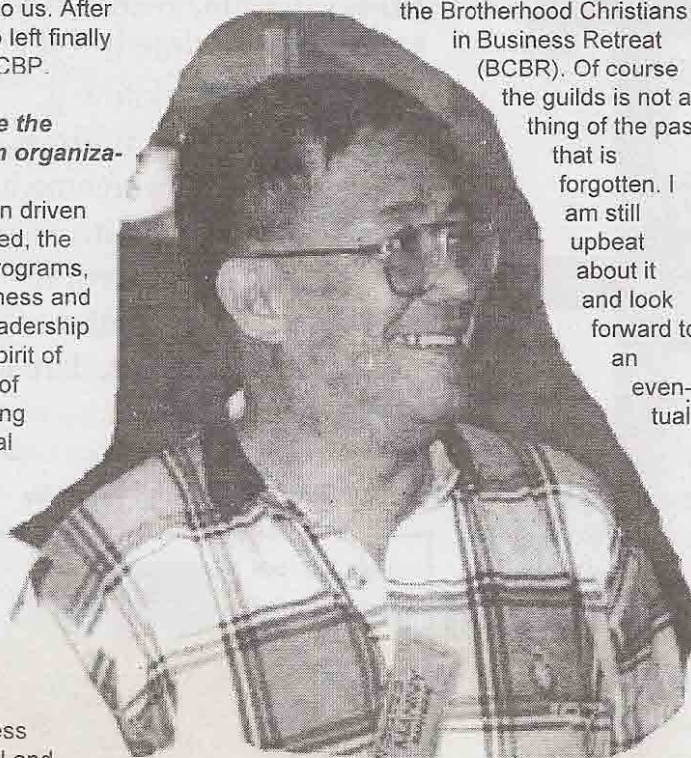
8. Do you feel there were opportunities that BCBP missed in the past? If yes, why? What do you feel are the other opportunities awaiting the BCBP?

Overall, I think the BCBP was able to pursue most of the significant opportunities the Lord allowed us to encounter. I imagine, however, that there may be some that we have not been able to accomplish, one of which is the establishment of guilds envis-

aged be effective venues for evangelization. In the early 90's, during a planning session, we heard the Lord talking to us about the establishment of guilds as an avenue for evangelization and transformation of the marketplace. While initiatives were made towards this direction, somehow, the BCBP has not been able to fully operationalize the program that was set-up. Instead, what we have been able to develop and implement is

the Brotherhood Christians in Business Retreat (BCBR). Of course

the guilds is not a thing of the past that is forgotten. I am still upbeat about it and look forward to an eventual



organization and operation of the Brotherhood of Christian Lawyers in the Philippines that was conceived during a visioning retreat attended by about 18 BCBP lawyers coming from the different chapters and outreaches. Who knows, the Lord may just allow this group of lawyers to be the first functioning guild within the BCBP.

9. What are the BCBP's areas of growth? Did you attain your personal vision of growth for the BCBP?

The first 15 years of the BCBP was a period of membership formation, of expansion, of community building, and of finding its relevance in the church and in the marketplace. The subsequent years were a period of establishing a focus in our life together -- that of being aware of our need to be agents of change in our work environment, of

supporting one another in overcoming business and professional temptations, of being good stewards in our personal, family and business/work affairs and for the Brotherhood. At the end of my term, we are still in that stage of continuing the process, but I would like to believe that my personal vision of growth for the BCBP during the time that I have been privileged to serve as President has been significantly attained.

10. If there was one more thing you could do for the BCBP, what would it be?

At this stage of the BCBP, my personal desire, subject to the Lord's plan for Haydz and me, is to be of help to the outreaches who are finding some difficulties in moving forward as a BCBP community. To share our BCBP life experiences that the Lord has so graciously gifted us with in the hope that the growth of these outreaches may be stimulated. Other than this, we can only seek God's plan for us and be submissive to it.

11. We are aware what a big sacrifice this service meant for your family. How did your family feel about your service?

Before I accepted the service, we had a family dialogue where we all discussed the new service, what it entails and the possible effect on our family life. Our children having been raised in a BCBP/LNP environment have expressed their full support and understanding. In return, we committed to spend quality and as best as possible, quantity time with them. Over the period of my service, we have had occasions of bringing our children to the chapters and outreaches we visited. The out-of-Metro Manila anniversary celebrations have been special events for all of us to be together and to experience the love and generosity of brothers and sisters nationwide. To date, my family is happy that they have been active contributors to my service through the support they have given us. I must say that our children have confided to us that the last 8 years have been a privilege and an enriching part of their life because of the so many titos and titas that have accepted us as members of their families.

12. What are your plans after this service aside from your ex-officio role?

I am still actively involved in the Las Piñas Chapter where I belong and look forward to being involved in the various chapter activities. Being a member of the Board of Trustees, I also look forward to the work we are tasked to do for the honor and glory of the Lord. Stepping down as President did not mean retirement. Haydz and me are confident that our service

I thank God for the gift of BCBP, for the joy that has come with it and the various service capacities that we have been privileged to work in for the Lord.

experiences are simply stepping stones for greater things the Lord has planned for us.

13. We are aware that Bro. Louie Morales' term begins January 1st. Do you have any final words for the BCBP in general?

I thank God for the gift of BCBP, for the joy that has come with it and the various service capacities that we have been privileged to work in for the Lord. In my heart, I am assured that the Lord has much more to offer to the BCBP members especially in terms of discovering more of Him and the experiencing of a true fullness of life with God. The life transformation experiences of countless brothers and sisters nationwide will always be profoundly remembered for they serve as our constant inspiration of God's faithfulness to the people he loves so much. On the other hand, these same life events that we have witnessed impels us, as it should impel all BCBP members, to see the great need and challenge to move forward in actively pursuing the Christianization not only of people but of the culture, environment, practices and spirit abounding in the businesses and practice of professions. In the 20 years of BCBP's existence, much has been given. We need only to look at ourselves and we will find a way of life that is pleasant and worthwhile living because it bursts with much hope for the future despite the many testings that we know will come our way. In the same score, much will be expected of us, not only in making the BCBP a bigger and more effective evangelizing organization but also in molding the membership to be a loving and caring body where each one will be an encourager and encouragement for the rest.

I will continue to pray that the present leadership will receive God's wisdom and direction and that it may find the resolve and boldness to make real God's plan for us in the BCBP. I also pray for the BCBP members that they may continue to see God as their greatest desire. May the Good Lord in his inimitable way look kindly upon all of us in the BCBP and deliver us from any spirit that is not of Him. ✠

LIFE

LIFE is an opportunity, avail it.
LIFE is beauty, admire it.
LIFE is bliss, taste it.
LIFE is a dream, realize it.
LIFE is a challenge, meet it.
LIFE is a duty, complete it.
LIFE is a game, play it.
LIFE is costly, care for it.
LIFE is wealth, keep it.
LIFE is love, enjoy it.
LIFE is mystery, know it.
LIFE is a promise, fulfill it.
LIFE is sorrow, overcome it.
LIFE is a song, sing it.
LIFE is struggle, accept it.
LIFE is a tragedy, embrace it.
LIFE is an adventure, dare it.
LIFE is luck, make it.
LIFE is life, defend it.

Mother Teresa's Philosophy of Life





Annie Salvador

MAKATI

It's been a long day. The clock tells me it's 9:21 p.m., but my joints and muscles feel like it's been forever since this morning when I got out of bed. Our one and only helper, Neneng, is off today: she'll be back in the morning. So, understandably, my hands are throbbing, my legs feel stiff, my back aches ... I'm tired.

Nelson is out on a Brotherhood meeting without me, as I'm "manning the fort." The children are asleep, at last. Dinner time was a struggle — they had so much more energy than I was up to. And then there was both time and a quick check to see that all homework was done. But finally, they are in bed, if not in dreamland, then well on the way.

Dishes are done, table's been tidied, leftovers are safely in the ref. Even Jewel, the dog, has happily eaten. I've picked up all the odds and ends one finds strewn around when day is done: a doll, a dirty sock, three sketches, a throw pillow and a bunch of Pokemon cards. I go around the house, making sure the doors are locked, the lights are off and things are pretty much straightened out.

Things are quiet, the work's all done, I'm ready for my favorite part: ME-time.

Too strung up to sleep, I take this time to wind down. A nice bath, some soft music... will it be a favorite book, or a tv movie? Maybe I can do my nails. I settle for the book and snuggle up, savoring the serenity, the solitude, the selfishness of it all. Ahhhh, I can stay like this till morning.

I shortly remember that there's an overdue article for Kapatiran that needs writing, so I walk to the computer and turn it on. But wait, a time like this needs something to perfect it, and I know just what it is. I slowly amble over to the freezer (no rush, absolutely no need to hurry at all) dig up that last scoop of vanilla ice cream and top it with some crunchy corn flakes — scrumptuous.

Back at the computer, I sit back and write my piece contentedly, not worrying about competition nor distraction. My article just about writes itself, this is what I call flow! On and on, at a steady pace, stopping once in a while for a spoonful of that heavenly ice-cream-and-corn-flake medley. I love ME-time!

It doesn't happen often, nope not ME-time. Frequently the moments after the children's bedtime are spent catching up on paperwork, phone calls or plain old sleep. Not that ME-time occurs only then — some mornings, after everyone has left for school or work, it happens (see *The Empty Nest*, Jul-Aug 98). More rarely, it pops up right in the middle of the day, when by



ME-time

some miracle, I find myself with time on my hands and nothing on my agenda. And precisely because of this scarcity, ME-times are so precious.

I thank the Lord for ME-times, which are like oases in my hectic days, bringing rest and restoration. He must truly love me, to be so thoughtful as to spring these little surprises on me from time to time.

Going back, my ice cream is almost gone, and my article is nearly done. I've talked about busy days and about lovely bonus moments like these that I'm enjoying right now. It's now only a matter of providing an effective close for my piece...

But what's that? I hear something outside the door. It sounds like a weak scratching. Opening it, I discover Mia, my soon-to-be-five-year-old, her hair tousled by sleep, little fingers clutching her favorite pillow, eyes beseeching me, "Mommy, I'm scared of the dark..."

Pushing the key that will save my article, I can almost hear the bubble popping. ME-time is over, it's time to love someone else again. "Let's read a story, and then you can go back to your room, okay?" I whisper. She nods, and as we settle down to read "The Little Red-Nosed Reindeer," I steal a glance at my clock: 10:26 p.m. Well, what do you know, it lasted 65 minutes this time! ♣

COMMISSIONED for EVANGELIZATION: *Continuing the Work*

by *Manolet Siojo*
BCBP Vice President

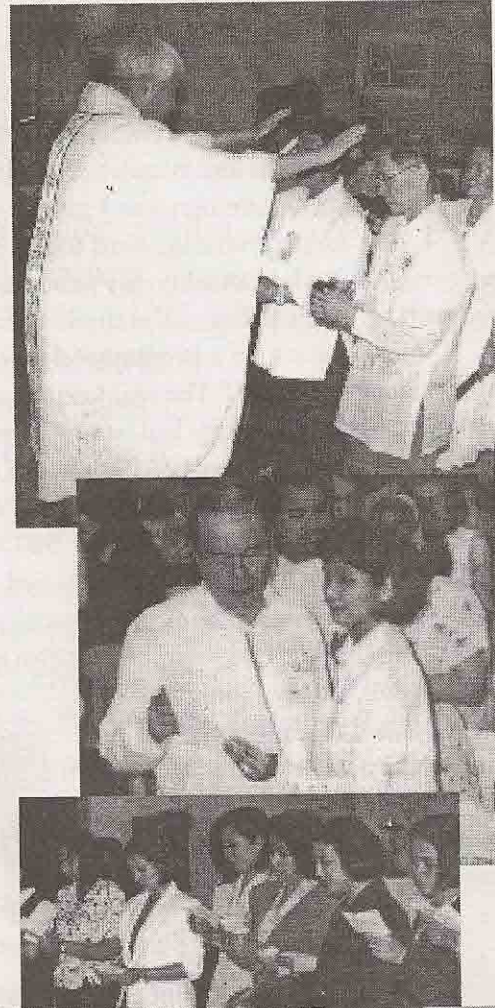
Composer Giacomo Puccini was stricken by cancer while working on his last opera Turandot. He said to his students. "If I don't finish it, finish it for me." Shortly afterwards, he died. His students carried out his wish. In 1926 Puccini's favorite student, Arturo Toscanini, directed the premiere in Milan. When the opera reached the point where Puccini was forced to put down his pen, Toscanini stopped the music, turned to the audience, and cried out, "Thus far the Master wrote, but he died." A reverent silence filled the opera house. Then Toscanini picked up the baton again, smiled through his tears, and cried out, "But the disciples finished his work." At the conclusion of the opera, the audience broke into a tumultuous applause.

Brothers and sisters, as I was reflecting on this particular article, I came upon this very touching story. Immediately I realized that, to me, this was a perfect analogy to use when we talk about being "commissioned for evangelization." Being commissioned for evangelization is really an act of continuing the work our Lord Jesus started. How many times have we been asked to continue or finish something that somebody else started? And what were our initial reactions? Doubt? Fear? Anxiety? Reactions like, "I don't think I have what it takes to do it", or "What will happen if I fail?"

And precisely this is why we need to go back to some basic "must haves." As those commissioned for evangelization, we certainly need several disciplines. Probably the same things that Giacomo Puccini taught and shared with his students. The first, to me, would be a clear understanding,

appreciation and acceptance of a VISION. Call it whatever you like – an objective, a goal, an endpoint. It makes our work today meaningful and with a purpose. As Puccini envisioned a finished opera, our Lord Jesus envisioned for us not just eternal life but a heaven here on earth. Our BCBP vision of a "Full life in Christ" should also mean a better world order. A better way of doing things, of relating with others, of doing our businesses and professions, etc. If we can picture that in our minds and hearts then we can certainly let others share in that vision.

I could imagine that Puccini was the type of teacher who challenged his students to be creative. He must have taught them to be courageous in trying out new ways of looking at and composing music. In the same



way, I believe Jesus wants us to be bold and unafraid to explore non-traditional approaches to winning others for His Kingdom. As we enter a new millenium I do feel strongly that the Lord is prompting us to take a look at our conventional evangelization tools and see where we can be more innovative. We are fully

aware of the changes taking place in our environment, our society, our businesses, and even our family life. If we are to evangelize effectively we need to know if we are still being responsive to the needs of our brothers and sisters, especially those who have yet to hear the Good News. If we need to CHALLENGE THE PROCESS because the old way is not working anymore, by all means we should.

matter what happens. I'm sure there were times that Giacomo Puccini felt burned out and tired. There were instances when he wanted to just give up. The beauty of his work, however, belies his dedication and commitment to his craft. He had the heart to continue regardless of whatever difficulties he may have encountered. Brothers and sisters, do we have the heart to

but really to give honor and praise to the Master. We need, in our work of evangelization, to recognize certain milestones and celebrate accordingly. This provides us the opportunity to affirm and reaffirm the work of our brothers and sisters. Ultimately, we are given the much-needed impetus to move on and continue the Lord's work.

As Giacomo Puccini had confidence in his students to finish his opera, we too need to believe that Jesus had the confidence in his disciples to carry on with the work of evangelization, of winning others over to the faith, of capturing the hearts and minds of people for His Kingdom. We have been

commissioned. We have been placed in active

VISION

celebrate!

Challenge the process

heart

TEAMWORK

The third "must have" of an evangelizer is to be a good team player. I don't think Puccini could have written the beautiful and immortal music that he did if he had not inputted TEAMWORK in his compositions. He knew the critical role that each musical instrument contributed to the orchestra. That knowledge enabled him to write the notes that would actually maximize the contribution of each instrument. We need to realize that we have been given different gifts and as such we have various roles in the work of evangelization. If we can appreciate this truth we can be "enablers" of each other. We do not work alone. We work together as a team, as a community of workers. And this is exactly how we should approach our work of evangelizing others. We plan, work and accomplish together.

The fourth "must have" is the HEART to carry on the work no

continue with the Lord's work especially in bad times? Or are we just fair-weather evangelizers? Our answer here determines our worthiness as the Lord's disciples. And consequently we are called upon to love and serve one another. We need to encourage each other's hearts.

Lastly, we must also learn to CELEBRATE our accomplishments. As Puccini must have, on many occasions, celebrated with his students, our Lord Jesus expects us to be joyful workers. This is not to say that we celebrate to glorify ourselves

service to win others for Christ. In Mark 16:15, Jesus clearly said, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation." Our marching orders are clear. And we are of course emboldened in many ways. The love that Jesus has for each of us, the love of our brothers and sisters.

And I conclude with Philippians 4:12-13 and I quote, "I am experienced in being brought low, yet I know what it is to have an abundance. I have learned how to cope with every circumstance - how to eat well or go hungry, to be well provided for or do without. In Him who is the source of my strength I have strength for everything." ¶



Salt Of the Earth Light Of the World

By Edwin L. Tan, Chapter Head
Puerto Princesa Chapter

In this island paradise, we of the Puerto Princesa Chapter have accepted our unique mission. Through word and deed, we in the BCBP are to convince the rest of the city and the province that they have encountered businessmen and professionals who live their faith in their persons, their homes, and their places of business or work. We are to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world". *"A city built on a hill cannot be hidden... your light must shine before others, so that they may see the good that you do and praise your father in heaven."* (Matt 5:14,16) Strong words. Clear orders. They resound with a firm warning, *"You are the salt of the earth. But if salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? It has become useless. It can only be thrown away and people will trample on it."* (Matt 5:13)

This is a tall order for a difficult mission, given Puerto Princesa City's singular profile. Ten years ago, she was a small, sleepy, provincial town-city with a handful of professionals and businessmen. More than half of the professionals were transients assigned here. After a year or two, they moved elsewhere. On the other hand, business was centered in a few well-entrenched Chinese families and even fewer Filipino entrepreneurs. Sundays and Holy days were a chance to close stores and to break for the nearby beaches. Some went for a quick Mass. Most did not.

It did not look fertile ground for a BCBP Outreach. The Alabang Chapter, however, remained undaunted. They came, sowed the first seeds, tilled the ground, and hovered over the new brothers and sisters.

Exactly ten years later, we have grown into a unified, vibrant community

shining strongly on God's world here in Puerto Princesa City. After 12 BCLPs, and despite the natural attrition of transferred transients still endemic among the professionals, we number two hundred fifty (250) active members with a ratio of 65% professionals to 35% businessmen. The ratio reflects the skew of more professionals moving into Puerto Princesa in the last five or six years. This is attributed to her growing fame as the cleanest and greenest city and province in the whole Philippines. These new immigrants have no families here and are more than willing to join the BCBP Community. Initially they joined in order to find new friends; eventually they found more – a deep experience with Our Lord and a growing family of spiritual brothers and sisters. We have fewer businessmen in our Chapter because the prevailing business culture is so resistant to the Brotherhood culture. Either the invitations to breakfasts are refused or those who do graduate fall out afterwards.

For those of us who have stayed and grown with our Chapter, we find ourselves changed forever. We are committed to do our Lord's work in our part of this world. And precisely because of this island's singular traits, our chapter has found it easier to make a strong impact on the rest of the community. Despite its recent rapid growth, Puerto Princesa remains a compact little world where news travels faster than the wind and both good and bad receive equal attention.

Over the years, our community has become known as a band of truly caring people of God – sacrificing parties for prayer meetings, the beach for parish service, and men's night out for family or couple outings. Members of the medical profession (like Doctor Oca Bayna with nurse/wife Dolly Bayna, couple Doctors Nick & Ging Funelas) hold hands and pray together prior to an operation, amazing the OP Room staff. In the city's only private hospital, the Palawan Adventist Hospital, this story made



the round among the staff until it reached our ears: whenever a seriously ill BCBP member is admitted, in the evening a large group of brothers and sisters come to pray and sing over him. As the songs filter out to the hall, the nurses comment, "There goes the BCBP! That patient will recover quickly!!"

In the 1997 Council of Manila, of the fifteen male delegates from the Vicariate of Palawan, our first Chapter Head, Fuji Rodriguez, and myself were chosen by Bishop Francisco C. San Diego to attend the two-week, live-in seminar at the San Carlos Seminary. There our present Bishop Pedro D. Arigo got to know us for the first time. Two years later, he says of us: "Business, like politics, definitely needs to be exorcised of the evil spirits of greed and be animated with the Christian spirit. The BCBP through its vision and mission statement and its growth and support system has actually realized this. And I wish to praise and thank the Lord for His graces apparently working in you people."

Word spread around the city that the BCBP is a strong pillar of support to the parishes where its members lived. We are seen as lectors and commentators in daily and Sunday Masses; we sponsor two Sunday Masses in two parishes every month. In the words of one appreciative parish priest, "When the BCBP sponsors a Mass, the offertory collection quadruples."

In the academe, we once fought firmly for freedom of worship on the Tinguiban campus of our only state university, the Palawan State University. In the beginning, the PSU president was a Roman Catholic who had encouraged a noontime Friday Mass on campus, and had invited the BCBP to offer catechism classes to the high

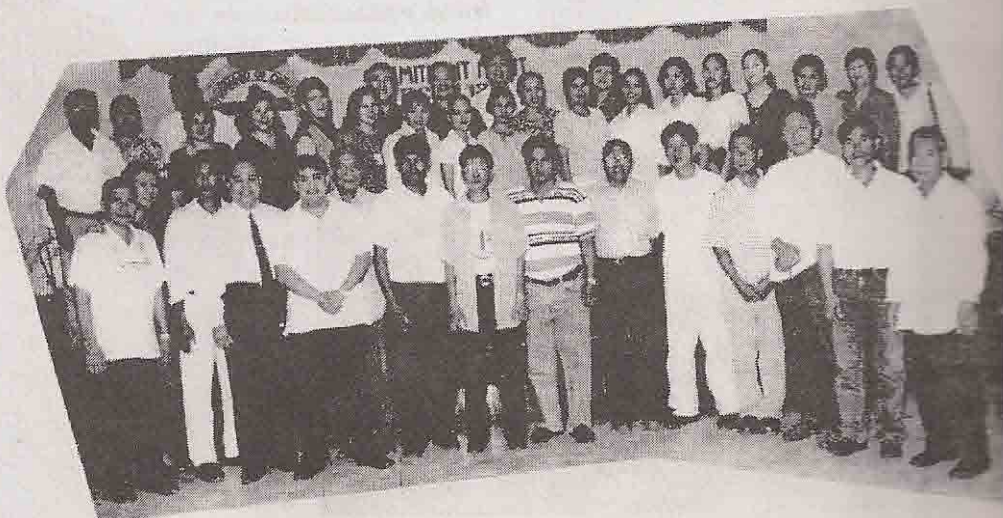
school students. A dozen brothers and sisters left work and business once a week to teach. Then a new president was appointed — he happened to be Protestant and averse to the Mass and to Catechism classes. He cancelled the classes and wanted to do the same with the Mass. At this stage, a few of our first BCLP graduates such as Sis. Ching Monera, Sis. Min Nieto, and Sis. Mely Miguel insisted that the weekly Mass be retained. It was. The following schoolyear, they once again lobbied for Catechism classes. They softened the president's heart enough to allow a number of Mesa Domini Sisters and Parish catechists to resume with the catechism lessons. At present, both the Mass and the classes continue at the PSU.

Another sphere where the BCBP light burns brightly has been in the government offices — where we have eighty-five very active brothers and sisters. In July 1999, an inspiring incident occurred before the start of the just-concluded BCLP 12. Its conscientious course leader, Bro. Zim Zabalo, of the

Opposite page: *The Puerto Princesa governance Team headed by its chapter head Edwin Tan (seated right), Ding Reyes, Mission Director (seated left and Ed Ponce de Leon, chapter Life Director (standing). Left: Bishop Pedro D. Ariso celebrating Mass during their recent Commitment Night. Below: The whole bunch of BCLP 12 graduates.*

Provincial Planning Office, personally attended to a lot of details. In the process, he incurred the displeasure of his immediate superior. Bro. Zim explained his work for the BCLP, and to his amazement his superior apologized for being angry and gave him leave to continue with his errands! The Honorable Salvador P. Socrates, Governor of Palawan, very aware of the BCBP's nature as his younger brother, Bro. Binoy Socrates, is an Action Group Leader, told me, "I personally know a lot of your members, very respectable members of our society, and I appreciate the fact that though you are all busy businessmen, you still come out as a very helpful community. I have seen you as very active leaders of your parishes. I wish you all well, and hope you will continue to grow both in number and in quality."

Even as we welcome these kind words, we know we have just begun our Lord's work. We must continue to bring His light into this part of His world. We must continue being the salt of this part of His world. He has given us an island paradise and we must deserve it in this life in order to gain entry into the eternal paradise of the next. ✦



The Best of Worlds



By: *Karina Montalvo-Jugo - BCBP-Bacolod North*

(writing for herself, Marissa, Joey, Jimmy, Johnny, Mike, Cashmere & Arsee)

He is a familiar face to many of us in the community. Bro. Digoy Montalvo has probably spent the last eight or nine years being “imported” by various chapters and outreaches to give sharings or teachings in breakfast meetings and BCLPs. I know people must talk after hearing his piece. Over the years here in Bacolod, BCLP participants and breakfast first-timers rave about him while old-timers continue to commend him even if he shares about the same things over and over again. And at all times, I can only stand back and say, “I wish you could know more!” Not that I wish people would know more about what he refuses to share - I wish people would know more about the inspirational matters Bro. Digoy always forgets to share because of his failing memory, because there are so many beautiful things about this man that attest to God’s goodness, grace, and mercy. I should know well. Bro. Digoy is my father.

As a child, I was always amazed with Dad. I especially enjoyed listening and imagining how he looked walking to first-grade barrio school with coffee in his thermos instead of the usual milk or juice. I would ask him to tell me over and over again tales about how he would set free all the fighting cocks in their neighborhood so they would fight, or of how he scared the neighbors with *niyog* “jack-o-lanterns” after removing the bamboo ladders from their entrance doors. Weekend nights were spent listening to stories about how he and his two siblings survived the massacre during the war; or of how he rallied his other relatives through the hardships as the war came to a close. To me “*Siga talaga ang Daddy ko!*”

Though work, business, and politics took him away most of the time, Dad managed to preserve a healthy relationship with all his seven children. He was a good father, a good friend, and our hero.

Misfortune struck our family when Mom, our grandmother and two sisters perished in the Don Juan sea tragedy in 1980. A year after that, Dad suffered 2 heart attacks, the latter of which required a bypass operation. We saw less and less of him with his continued involvement in politics. Later, we discovered he had three children from an affair which had started way

before our mother passed away. To add to all this, the family business went bankrupt. And in the succession of such misfortunes, each of us gradually drifted away from each other.

1989 was the year of reparation for the family. Dad joined BCBP’s first CLP and managed to finish the entire course amidst all lame excuses. It was prior to his baptism in the Holy Spirit when Dad unloaded on us all his “excess baggage” and asked for forgiveness for his infidelity to the family. Likewise, he asked all of us to help him with the struggle he was faced with and the decisions he had to make before committing his life to Jesus. By far, this is the most intimate and most beautiful occasion for reconciliation we have collectively experienced as a family. From that moment on, the seed of the renewal was planted deep into our hearts to pave the way to our respective conversions at a later time.

Today, most people are quite surprised to find out that Dad’s three children outside of marriage are now living with us. They have done so for the past eight years and are now leading normal Christian lives. Such was not a decision imposed upon us – on the contrary, it was a decision we imposed upon Dad! He had decided to end his affair as he committed his life wholly to God, but without his initial knowledge, we 5 surviving siblings decided to take his three children into our custody after discovering that they were leading very miserable lives in their most crucial adolescent years. We got Dad into a situation he couldn’t back out from as we flew in the three children from Manila to our home in Bacolod. ▶



It was a simple case of God's law of LOVE inspiring us to rise above all reason, logic, and principle dictated by man's law. Mortal man's law says legitimate children should be at odds with each other. God's law of love says, "Love one another, as I have loved you". Love one another as God had loved the beggars, the tax collectors, the Pharisees, the misfits of society, etc. 2 Corinthians 3: 4-6 says, "Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit, for the latter kills, but the spirit gives life." (Other inspirational verses can be found in Galatians 3:15-25).

It has now become our shared responsibility with Dad that these three children grow up to be good Christians and know their heavenly Father well. We share this feeling with love and confidence to all because we are witnesses to the fact that harmony in this situation is possible through God's grace.

It is in the confidence of God's goodness and mercy that Dad has become our greatest inspiration. Today, Dad has long retired from politics and has dedicated his life in the service of his creator. We have been fortunate enough to see a case of "total surrender" in the person of our Dad. Miracles have become common occurrences in our family life, simply because Dad has always remained steadfast in his faith and trust in the Lord.

Five or six years ago, Dad made a most crucial, if not, life-threatening decision - he opted to totally give up ALL maintenance medication he had been taking for his heart condition. True enough, miracles happen and

Dad is at his best. He briskly walks twice a day for about an hour while reciting 3 decades of the Rosary and probably would outdo any of us in the exercise. Dad is by far the longest-living bypass patient I know among acquaintances - 18 years and going into his 19th. The Texas Heart Institute where he had his bypass operation had given him 10 years back in 1981. These days they regularly write to check on his progress and are quite amazed. What a shock it must have been to them to learn that Dad threw away all his medicines 5 years ago.

Dad celebrates his 75th birthday this January 17, 2000. We had earlier planned to give a big celebration in his honor, but he opted for something else - still to go on a mission to restore God's Kingdom in troubled territories. We don't insist otherwise for we know he's happier with that, basking in the silent glory of God.

Each day after the turn of the millenium is a gift to Dad. He shares the same dream and prayer as the Holy Father Pope John Paul II - just to witness and lead the church into the new century and celebrate the Great Jubilee. And the Lord has been good to him.

We thank the Lord for our Dad. No inheritance will surpass the great inspiration he has given his children by his way of life and love. Dad's years of total surrender to God's will and plan give us the inspiration, courage, and strength to share the gift of LOVE to all. The Lord has really been good to us. He has given us the best of both worlds with our divine and natural fathers both working hand in hand to allow us to experience God's Kingdom here on earth. And what greater blessing is there than the both of them, working very harmoniously. ✠



CADIZ OUTREACH completes 2 BLCs

It was during the ongoing BCLP 14 in Bacolod that the idea of putting up an outreach was first thought of by the Governance. There had been two BEPs set-up, one in Silay City and the other in Victorias. The Cadiz outreach, then, would be the very first outreach that the Bacolod North chapter would undertake. Bro. Jim Ledesma who led a team of dedicated and tireless individuals in the task of recruiting and spreading the good news to the people of Cadiz.

Eventually all their efforts paid off as the very first breakfast meeting in Cadiz was finally held at the Terrace Garden Restaurant on October 10, 1998. The very first sharer was no less than Bro. Digoy Montalvo. Initially, there were twenty four (24) participants. It went on every other Saturday for five months, until it was time for BCLP1.

The BCLP1 started last February 20, 1999 with twenty four (24) participants. It was held at the Cadiz Nutrition Center where we had to compete with the noise of the countless tricycles and the constant banging sound from the repair shop in front of the center. The BCLP1 went on despite the minor glitches and eventually nineteen (19) of the participants made it to the commitment night on May 22, 1999.

BCLP2 began last November 6, 1999 with thirty two (32) participants. Bro. Luigi de la Rama, who is now the outreach coordinator, planned and worked out a combination that will eventually allow our Cadiz brothers and sisters to handle their own BCLP next time. The combination of the Bacolod and Cadiz members in all the committees as well as the DGLs and ADGLs was smoothly done and is slowly shaping our Cadiz counterparts into servants of the Lord.



Opposite page below: Bro. Digoy shown here with 4 of his children, 3 of whom, with their respective spouses, are with the BCBP.

The other 2 are with CFC and BLD. top: "Papa Digs" with 9 of his 12 grand children. Left: With Cashmere during her high school graduation 5 years after she came to live with them.

BEP-Silay looks forward



BEP-Silay envisions itself to be an OUTREACH OF BCBP BACOLOD NORTH in the Year 2000. After 6 years as BEP, it was the discernment of members of Community through their leaders to move forward towards that goal for an Outreach.

While the results of the visioning workshop held in May 11-12, 1995, (conducted by Brothers Rey Feria-Las Pinas Chapter and Boy Javier-Paranque Chapter) recommended that *“given the shared vision and mission of the governance of BEP Silay, and considering the enthusiasm of the leadership to be actively involved in the mission of the BEP, it is respectfully recommended that this BEP now be viewed as a full-fledged outreach, with a serious program to evolve into another BCBP chapter, it was decided*

to postpone its effectivity until later when a clearer picture of the Community’s direction had been determined.

Four and a half years after that visioning workshop, our Community is now prepared for that change in status and responsibilities. The challenges we know would be great as we cater to an irregular configuration of membership that includes, The Married Attending Singly Group (Men and Women), Singles (Men and Women), Couples, and the Youth Group (Lamb Youth Community) which caters to relatives and children of members in Community, ages 12-15.

There are plans to reorganize the other sectors to form their own mini-

communities, which would still be under BEP-Silay. And with functions as a separate community within the BEP Community (or Outreach), they would have their own set of activities (Assemblies, CLP’s, etc.,) with speakers from other Communities like Lingkod, for the Singles group, Acts (BCBP-Bacolod) for the Youth group and the most un-addressed sector of society, the Married Attending Singly Group which to date does not have a local Community to cater to their spiritual needs, sourcing out their teachings from the other Renewal Communities like Couples for Christ and Bukas Loob Sa Diyos.



As an Outreach, the Silay Community could expand its evangelization thrust through other sectors by organizing small prayer groups in their offices, institutions, etc., as well as to continue to reach out to new members through the CLP’s and the Breakfast.

We know the challenges will not be easy but as always, with the Lord’s guidance and inspiration – through the leaders in BCBP-Bacolod North, the challenges can be met successfully, for His glory and purpose. ✦

**BCBP B.E.P. VICTORIAS
GOVERNANCE TEAM**

Arnel Amparo
B.E.P. Head

Eric & Jocelyn Ballares
Head, Unit I

Rey & Virgie Catalan
Head, Unit 2

Gil & Edna Pajares
Head, Unit 3

Neneng Uyteipo
Head, Unit 4

Luisa Guardapez/Marivic Segaya
Heads, Unit 5

Mary Jean Bagulos
Secretary

Evelyn Segaya
Music Ministry Head

Leni Sanchez
Head, Intercessory Team

Vicente del Castillo, Jr.
Head, Assembly & Healing Ministry

Roy Jautea
Head, Service Team

BEP Victorias: *Our story*



the members of which, directly or by affinity, derive their livelihood from the company.

On February 27, 1998, amidst economic uncertainties, leadership was passed on by Bro. Arman Roldan, E.E.P. Coordinator the last 5 years to the first B.E.P. head of the Outreach, Bro. Arnel Amparo. The installation rites were witnessed by BCBP Bacolod North Chapter Head, Nene Gamboa and Mission Director Ricky Lim.

On March 8, 1998, the community launched its revival with the conduct of Christian Life in the Spirit Seminar (CLSS) No. 6, under course leader, Bro. Gil Pajares, assistant Bro. Tony Santiago and Chief Servant, Bro. Roy Hautea. On May 16, 1998, forty one (41) new members were added to the community.

But the crisis continued to hound the community. B.E.P. Head Arnel Amparo, in his message to the membership said,

“Due to the financial crisis that VMC has been through our community was greatly affected. Some of our brothers and sisters gradually found job opportunities outside VMC, others became too demoralized that they slowly experienced spiritual dryness, action groups were not done anymore ...and our newsletter also lost the strength and inspiration to go on.

But God is so good that He never wants this community to just drift away. Despite the

trials and difficulties, there are still persons who untiringly serve and look into the needs of the community. Thanks to our Governing Team who, after all these trying moments, held firmly and steadfastly to bring back the fire that once brought us closer to each other and to God.

On July 18, 1999, under the leadership of course leader Bro. Vic del Castillo, assisted by Bro. Eric Ballares and Chief Servant, Bro. Philip Vecino, CLSS No. 7 was launched. And on October 02, 1999, 42 new members were added to the dwindling membership of the community.

Today, B.E.P. Victorias remains committed to pursue the mission of BCBP with the revival of its Newsletter “Kauturan”, monthly Assemblies every last Friday of the month and a monthly “Evening with the Lord”, the equivalent of the BCBP Breakfasts.

As we look forward to the New Millenium, and the challenges faced by the Community, we continue to seek the intercession of the BCBP Community nationwide, to pray not only for B.E.P. Victorias Outreach but also for Victorias Milling Company, upon whom many families depend upon. ☩

In Photo: BCBP Bacolod and Victorias parents during LSS baptism of ACTS 2.

October 1993 marked the birth of what is today the BCBP B.E.P. Victorias Outreach. Organized by BCBP Bacolod Mission Team headed by Mission Director Digoy Montalvo, the outreach was envisioned to bring Christ to the Victorias Milling Company (VMC) officers and staff and their families and friends.

From its humble beginning, under the leadership of then B.E.P. Coordinator Bro. Arman Roldan of BCBP Bacolod Chapter, B.E.P. Victorias grew to about 200 members. The celebrated financial crisis that affect VMC extracted its toll on the community, most of

*The Salvadors minus Nelson
who was behind the camera.*



Nelson & Annie Salvador:

"Makati has its Magic"

By Danny Silbor, BCBP Makati

It has often been said that Makati Chapter stands on solid ground. This was so since its new Chapter Head, Nelson Salvador, is President of NS Marble company and is also a past president of the Marble Association of the Philippines. However, as you begin to know him and his wife, Annie, you soon realize that the quote is a description of their solid faith rather than the marble rock business. The couple's spiritual life stands on a solid foundation of steadfast faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Supporting Nelson in the Brotherhood and in their business is his wife Anita Consolacion Panlilio Salvador...Annie for short (Thank God for nicknames!). It is our Lord's plan that Annie is the slightly more popular partner of the two. Her picture appears in the editorial box in the Kapatiran where she has served as a columnist for a number of years now. She also has her own website... WEBSITE? Yes – **Website**.

To find out more about her (and help shorten this article!), just click <http://www.geocities.com/.assumption4477/panlilio.htm>.

The couple joined the BCBP Makati in August of 1986 right after they were married, when they were still Makati residents. The change of address to White Plains, Quezon City did not deter them from staying with the chapter.

Nelson and Annie have been married for 13 years now. Initially, it took them three years to bring forth their first child Nico. After that, their fertility literally came back with a vengeance. They have FIVE energetic and equally popular children as follows: Nico, Tono, Anton, Marga and Mia; aged as count-

down, to the limits of Annie's skill and patience as a mother. Today, however, she is such a skilled mother that she has been assigned as the Parenting Adviser of Assumption High School Class 1977. The BCBP nationwide has also benefited from her family management skills as she has a regular column on parenting in the Kapatiran called "From Cries to Kisses." Presently, since Nelson assumed his post, she has inevitably become "the mother of all the Makati Chapter."

And now back to the subject at hand: our chapter head Nelson.

Kap. - *What made you decide to accept your mission as the new Makati Chapter head?*

Nelson - It was not hard to decide. I had thought of it even before that someday I would be called to serve as Chapter Head. It is really a great honor to serve the Lord.

Kap. - *A past anniversary theme was "Christ in the center of business". This is still very much true today.*

What are your plans or visions on how BCBP Makati chapter can be more influential in the Makati business milieu?

Nelson - One of the priorities of the Chapter that came out in the Chapter planning is how we can be more relevant to the Vision & Mission of the BCBP, more specifically, how to evangelize the business world. We are trying to do this in a more specific and focused manner. How?

1). Making the members understand their role and priorities;

2). Organizing intensive seminars for members to enable them to have a deeper understanding of their roles;

3). creating a highly empowered Mission Team of 4 – 5 members. One approach is that the Team shall invite business owners, HRD Managers to the Breakfast for them see for themselves the BCBP. Once they have been sold to the idea of BCBP's Christian business evangelization concept, the goal will then be to have their subordinates, peers and even superiors join BCBP, too. We will also organize BCBR (Brotherhood Christians in Business Retreat) weekends for the business community and targeted companies.

Kap. - *Other than that, what other areas in the Chapter do you wish to improve or strengthen during your time as Chapter Head?*

Nelson - I wish to strengthen the love, sharing and helping between members: Love – we are planning to finally launch our children's formation ministry. It shall be love-filled as it will be a family affair.

Sharing – Saturday or Sunday assemblies with the whole family are planned for talks, socials for the kids and parents culminating with a family mass.

Helping – a BCBP Makati business exchange is being worked out. It will be a modified cooperative system doing financing, inter-business exchange and actual money pooling for donations and direct help.

A BCBP house is also being prayed for. The Makati Chapter has been duly appointed by the Board of Trustees (National Council) to be the lead Chapter in this project.

Kap. - *You are a Quezon City resident. What's the story about your Makati CLP? How come you and Annie opted to stay with Chapter through the years despite the convenience presented by your proximity to Greenhills and Quezon City?*

Nelson - Annie and I were newly married then and we used to reside in Makati. We have thought hard and tried to join other chapters but *Makati has its Magic*.

We joined the chapter through the usual routes. An old friend invited me for a business breakfast meeting at the Metropolitan Club near Rockwell. It turned out to be a Catholic renewal community breakfast. I enjoyed it; people were friendly. Open arms sila. After a month or so we joined Makati's CLP 11 in August of 1986.

Kap. - *How do you see the BCBP Makati Chapter in the next three years into the new millenium?*

Nelson - We see a more cohesive and dedicated membership. It is dreamed that our own schedule is carved after BCBP programs so no one can say that they can't make it to most of the activities.

Right: Nelson (right) together with his predecessor, Ronnie Caballero during one of the chapter's fellowship activities.

Kap. - *Can you cite actual practices or past incidents where you were able to demonstrate your BCBP values as a Christian businessman to 1) your employees; 2) your clients?*

Nelson - When Annie and I started, I was a simple "nothing-really-exciting" and "trying hard" trader-businessman. Annie was a bank executive. God gave us this marble manufacturing and export business through the prodding of relatives and the encouragement of our original action group. It seemed so easy to switch despite the huge amount of time and investment needed.

We were also encouraged by the fact that in this business, we do not need to compete with people to get a project. We wanted to create something of value from the Philippines. We wanted to teach, give employment, create something Filipino and earn dollars for the country.

Our employees – we have been very, very patient in trying to bring out the inner talent, creativity and industry of ordinary Filipino labor in the province. This is a very tough challenge.

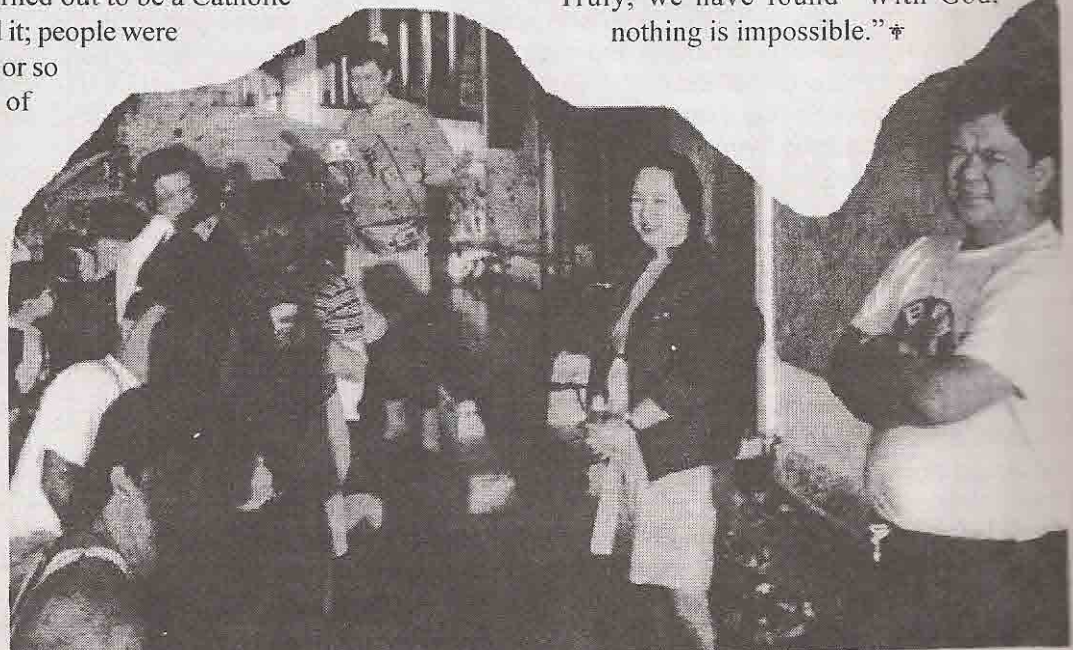
Our clients – this is not a problem at all. World demand is greater than world supply and, so far, it has been a suppliers market.

However, it is all not that simple. But our export business is pretty straightforward. Clients will specifically say they want the product at this price. No more no less. If you agree, then produce it and collect. No palusot, no lagays. Just what you agreed. Everything is clearly stated in black and white. We are lucky that the Japanese and Americans (our biggest market) are pretty straight forward. You offer, agree, produce and collect.

Kap. - *Which areas of the Scripture have exerted more influence in your life in the renewal?*

Nelson - Sirach 12: Verses 20-21: "My son, hold fast to your duty, busy yourself with it, grow old while doing your task. Admire not how sinners live, but trust in the Lord and wait for His light. For it is easy with the Lord, suddenly in an instant, to make a poor man rich."

Truly, we have found "With God, nothing is impossible." †



A cloudy day is no match for a sunny disposition.

Makati Chapter Life: The Year That Was

By: Floren Ballares, BCBP Makati



November 13, 1999 – **Annual Chapter Planning** One by one the ministry heads stood up and reported I could not help but be teary eyed. Wasn't it only last year when these ministries were put up? My husband, Oscar, and I used to do everything for chapter life and if there was anything that made our job lighter, it was the establishment of these ministries. Allow me to reminisce.... who headed what What had he/she done?

WORKS OF MERCY MINISTRY – I must say sister Chinggay Liboro did a very good job as head of this ministry. She took to it like a duck to water. We had two outreach activities last year – one was for Valentine's Day and the other for Makati Chapter's 19th anniversary celebration. We had the children from St. Francis Friendship Homes and Virlanie Foundation for the said events. The happiness of the children was infectious. And who would not be thrilled? Chinggay, her group and the rest of the Makati members showered them with personalized gifts, prepared games and entertainment complete with clowns and mascots. The venues were fully decorated for better appreciation of the kids and the food, plentiful. More importantly, it was not only us members who had interaction with the kids, our children did, too. It was a good way of introducing them to serving our less privileged and handicapped youth. The experience also taught them valuable lessons in appreciating the things they have in life.

INTERCESSORY MINISTRY – Our ministry heads, Topy and Susan Vasquez, including us, did not realize how serious and important this ministry is until it was set up. Knowing so little about the ministry they were about to head, Topy and Susan thoroughly researched on the subject of interceding. What they thought initially as the easiest ministry to handle turned out to be the most demanding. Why? Because intercessors are to be pure vessels of God's love and goodness. Their ministry embarked on a rigid review of their spiritual life and planned activities which would strengthen their relationship with the Lord such as daily masses and recitation of the rosary, attendance in teachings and retreats which enhance their knowledge of their ministry and a daily intercession for the concerns of the chapter members. Never had the Makati Chapter members been as assured of prayer warriors who would storm the gates of heaven for them.

FORMATION MINISTRY – Our dear brother Rex Resurreccion headed this ministry. Its establishment paved the way for the Teaching Nights which we had every first Friday of the month (usually moved to second Friday when there's a sectoral assembly). Topics for the teaching nights came from the result of the survey we had on subjects our members need to learn more about. And these were: faith in God, righteousness, commitment, evangelization, relationships, leadership and virtues. We also tried a new formula – back to back talks – first talk is based on current events, substantiated and complemented by the second talk. For example, in January, we had Ms. Lynette Santamaria, Vice President for Country Risk Management of Banco Santander, talk about the state of economy of our country. It was followed by the very powerful and fitting talk of brother Rolly Ona on trusting God. When brother Adolf Ortiz talked on Jesus' style of leadership, our brother Joey Avellana shared his personal leadership style in his office. That year also saw new speakers from the chapter such as Maura Avendano, Mila Isaac and Eric Tinio who talked on the virtues of charity, faith and hope. We also tried outside speakers who are experts on their subjects such as Ms. Josie Santamaria, a name in human resource management, who talked on Christian relationships in the office and Mr. Francis Kong, owner of Company B who talked about being righteous in business. The year was capped by a talk by Makati's Chaplain, Fr. Chito Dimaranan about the need to refocus on the simpler and more important things in life. It was indeed a great year for the Formation.

MISSION MISSION MISSION MISSION MISSION

By Manny Bade,
BCBP Makati

In Matthew 28:17, Jesus said: "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciple ..." This battle cry of all Christian communities finds itself no less significant and challenging than in the *Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals*, particularly in the Makati Chapter, which has served as a "breeding" ground, spawning the so many chapters and outreaches that now dot the Philippine archipelago, from Tuguegarao up north to Cagayan de Oro down South.

Inviting hard-nosed businessmen and professionals to attend breakfasts and eventually the Christian Life Program seminars is no mean feat. Invitations are usually met with quizzical eyebrows and incredulous stares. One simply doesn't have the time for breakfast because of early morning business meetings



and certainly one will find less time to attend BCLP seminars which will take all of so many weeks, thus disrupting the unwinding routine in the evening after a hectic day in the office. One just doesn't have the time until God, in His loving but inscrutable ways, manages to find that time for us.

And so armed with a missionary zeal and with God by their side, the Mission Team goes out into the urban and business centers and establishes breakfast meetings and conducts BCLP seminars. The going is rough; some Team members falter by the wayside, attendance is not encouraging; skepticism abounds. But with the patience of Job, the Mission Team plods on and in no time, sometimes in a longer time, the breakfast meetings take root until with sufficient number, BCLPs are conducted. Sharers and speakers are transported to the outreach venue. And soon the BCLP is over and the nurturing begins.



MUSIC MINISTRY The ministry so close to our hearts, Oscar and I are members of it. Through the very competent headship of Joey and Lulu Avellana, the music ministry expanded its repertoire of songs. Though its main purpose is to be able to lead the chapter in praising and worshipping God thru songs, this did not prevent the ministry from coming up with special presentations for activities such as Christmas parties. Who can ever forget their renditions of "Ilang tulog pa ba?", "Magkakapatid" and "Day by Day". May choreography pa yan? Para kang nakinig ng Minstrels and The Company.

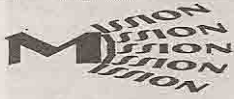
BCMR. The small number of participants did not prevent the head couple, Topy and Susan Vasquez and their team of the Concepcions and de Veras from rendering such a good service. It will be one BCMR to remember. However, we think it was not plain coincidence that the talks not only centered on husband/wife relationship but on family and parenting skills. That must be providential.

LITURGICAL MINISTRY

Though certain people had already been helping in the chapter's liturgical services, it was only in 1999 that the ministry was formally set up. It was headed by our very able brother and sister team Tony and Violy Borbon. This ministry spearheaded our Lenten recollection. And how can we ask for more? That recollection was spiritually packed! We had Bro. Allain Manalo of San Carlos Seminary talk about the structure and significance of the parts of the Holy Mass in the morning. In the afternoon, we had Dr. Antonio Gisbert on the wounds of Christ from a medical point of view. At the day's end, we heard Fr. Bernard Belleza about the essence of Lent - Loving others. Brother and sister Johnny and Ising Taroy who assisted Tony and Violy are taking over the headship of the ministry this year.



BUT WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT? It is not the ministries, not how well planned and executed the activities were, but the closer and deeper relationship between members forged while doing the various kinds of service assigned to them. Most important is the greater sense of belonging and love each member feels. Most important is that in or out of community, each member tries hard to be Jesus to the other. ✦



Meantime, the Mission Team has to nurture its own spiritual life in the community. Mission work can be debilitating what with the outpouring of one's time, resources, strength, and attention. A recharging, as it were, becomes imperative. This is where Chapter life activities provide the sustenance needed to infuse the necessary "vitamins" and "minerals" to revitalize an otherwise sagging spirit. Regular attendance at household/fraternal meetings, teaching nights and chapter assemblies goes a long way towards strengthening Mission work. What Chapter Mission takes away, Chapter Life replenishes.

In the outreach, a seed has been sown. We watch it grow into a sturdy tree never to be blown away by winds of indifference and discouragement. We assist in the development of an effective leadership structure, we provide needed funds, we inspire a deepening of their spirituality, we train speakers from their own ranks, we inculcate boldness in proclaiming God's words to others, and then we encourage them to set their sights into becoming a full-fledged chapter.

At the proper time, an outreach metamorphoses into a chapter, a time to be weaned away from the mother chapter. Farewells are said not in sadness but in expectation of seeing one another again, tears are shed not in sorrow but in hope of living up to be Christ's true disciple. Hugs are made to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. When one leaves, he leaves not with a heavy heart but with a deep sense of fulfillment that he has contributed to making more brothers and sisters know Jesus more intimately, love Him more ardently and to serve Him more passionately.

And so we move on – to conquer new frontiers, to explore new venues where God's word has not taken firm root in the marketplace and in the professions. Indeed, God's never-ending work continues in "making disciples of all nations." ✦

Manny Bade writes from his experiences as a member of the Makati mission team in BCBP Makati's opening up and establishing outreaches in Legaspi, Cavite, and Manila. He is presently serving as Mission Director of the Makati Chapter.

Exhortation

GOD FIRST, Human beings second

By: Emy Tagunicar, BCBP Makati

Lillian is a multi-faceted woman but nevertheless typical. A very pious Church-goer, she never misses on her Sunday masses, Wednesday novenas and Friday devotions in Quiapo. And of course, she never, never absents herself from any of her activities in half a dozen mandated organizations. Very religious, with a capital R.

If the Knights of Columbus could only accept females, Lillian would have been a prime candidate. Likewise, she feels sorry that up to now the Catholic Church still refuses to ordain female priests. Oh, how could the Vatican be so blind when Lillian – bless her sacred name – is patiently waiting for...

Back at home, she is a model peace maker. Whenever she gives extra money to her children, and occasionally to her parents, she'd rather do it quietly by not telling her husband about it. Kaya walang friction sa bahay. So as not to unduly

burden her husband's peace of mind, she simply keeps to herself her various Church activities and daily cares.

Siyanga pala, Lillian also works in a Makati office. Too bad the pressures of work (you know, deadlines, meetings, quotas, etc.) make her very irritable, criti-

cal, and often loses her cool in dealing with her stupid subordinates. And to make matters worse, the daily traffic mess almost always ruins her days (and so she cannot be faulted for sometimes yelling at stupid drivers and sometimes, stupid cops and pedestrians without good manners in crossing the street while she maneuvers her car.

But basically, deep inside her, Lillian believes she is at peace with God. For in her daily prayers to God, she never fails to emphasize that she always puts God first before man. She may sometimes fail in her relationships with people, but she compensates for this by never failing to glorify and exult God in her prayers and masses.

Question: Is this what God really expects of us? To exult Him before loving others? Is it possible, in the realm of divinity, to glorify God without necessarily glorifying humanity, as if God and men are in direct competition in the minds and spirits of our modern Lillians in our parishes?

Can magnifying God inevitably result in the demeaning of human beings since it is impossible, maybe not appropriate to treat God and people at the same level? To put it another way, does loving and caring for human beings distract and detract from our being able to love and glorify God wholeheartedly?



World Mission Magazine November 1999

Personally, I believe that CHOOSING BETWEEN GOD AND HUMAN BEINGS IS A FAKE DILEMMA.

In the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, He showed and proved by clear examples and understandable parables that God is more concerned with us, with our welfare, with our happiness and fulfillment, than in His own glory and in His own exultation.

Jesus Christ showed that God's will is for man to achieve complete happiness, to achieve all that is good and beautiful and everlasting in its totality. He wants us to live life to the fullest, to be fully liberated from our prejudices and biases, for us to master the total "kaginhawahan".

Therefore God wants nothing for Himself. And if this is so, how can we maintain the idea that, as the Lillians of the world would swear by as gospel truth, man has to choose between God and man, between glorifying God and the lifting up of man?

Love, according to Jesus Christ, is essentially love for God and love for human beings. In 1 John 4:20-21, he seems to wonder: "How can it be that people claim that they love God whom they cannot see and yet hate their brothers and sisters whom they can see?"

So there is no such thing as a direct response to God. We can truly manifest our love for God through our love for our brothers and sisters. We concretize our love for God when we show our concern for the well-being of other men. God's will does not call for neglecting our responsibilities to others. God's will does not call for the degradation of people but rather the uplifting of people.

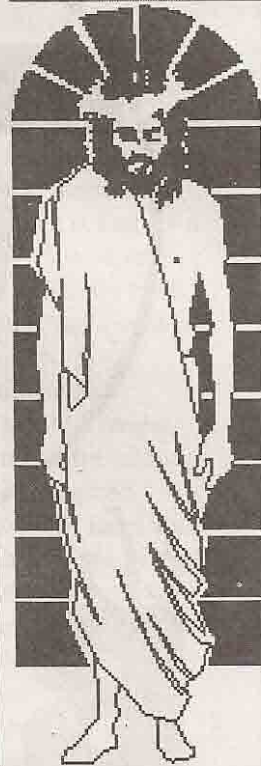
Worshipping God therefore cannot be made separate and distinct from serving men. No hair-splitting philosophy can ever disprove this. God calls us to love one another for the sake of that person and not because "we see God in that person."

For as the Scriptures say, " whatsoever you do for the least of my brothers, you do it unto me." Viewed from another angle and in the words of St. Irenaeus of Lyons, "the glory of God is man being fully alive and the vision of God is the life of the human being." ✠

2000 years ago



F. de Larrazabal



"But when the designated time had come, God sent forth his Son born of a woman....so that we might receive our status as adopted sons."

(Galatians 4:4)

At the stroke of midnight, the world broke loose to welcome the New Year. All across the globe, partying and merrymaking went all out to greet the year with a grand show of lights and fireworks.

But it was not so two thousand years ago, when Jesus was born. He came for only one purpose – to save and reform us from the wretched situation we were in. God's love would not permit us to continue living in that afflicted and deplorable existence. Jesus was born, assumed our guilt and finally was put to death. It was through his merits that we are found worthy to become the Father's adopted sons and daughters.

As adopted children, we need to focus and be thankful for those events that led to our salvation. However, in the last century, man has focused mostly on the accomplishments of science and technology, while many have overlooked the redemptive aspect of Christ's birth. Our emphasis has been mostly directed to man's advancements and progress. As of late, our concerns and fears

have focused on the economic problems and the Y2K bug, relegating the more serious ones to the dust bin.

More than two billion people face hunger and death. AIDS and cancer are reducing large numbers of the population. The planet as a whole is in drastic need of help due to man's continued abuse. Oceans and rivers are contaminated, mountains and rain forests are subjected to deforestation. The air we breathe is polluted; the ecology in general is seriously deficient. But what is most tragic is the absence of peace in man's hearts.

These problems, if left unattended, will have serious and tragic consequences on the world at large. We need to face this glaring situation before we become embroiled with its damaging effects. Not a happy note to start the new year.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding all these problems, here is wishing you a happy and peaceful New Year, and God's blessing to all mankind.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I worry, not so much for myself as for my children. I pray for the grace and wisdom for our government officials to undertake corrective measures to overcome these forthcoming tragedies. Protect us, your people, from the results that can come if we don't take measures to correct them. Amen.

Bettina Heras-Gonzales is a Senior Citizen who belongs to the Singles unit of the BCBP Makati Chapter under Maura Avendano. When a person is no longer as physically active and starts to feel aches and pains in the joints this usually is the sign of impending old age although many will refuse to admit this. This is when we start to feel self-pity, loneliness and uselessness.

There are different ways we can rise up against these feelings. We could probably check out and join different organizations that would suit our needs.

I chose or should I say I was chosen and called by name by our Lord to join the BCBP (Makati Chapter).

FLASHBACK:

I grew up a Catholic, studied in a Catholic school, knew that there was God who was there for me but would have to be feared because He wanted me to be a perfect person. So I went to Mass on Sundays, studied religion, obeyed the Commandments and participated in the Sacraments.

Then there were the invitations to join this community, that organization or that born-again renewal. There were always stumbling blocks so I was never part of any community, until 1991 when I was invited by my niece Tina Mateo and her husband Jigs to join BCBP Greenhills. Miracles really happen, I finished CLP 17 without any absence and was placed in the action group of Susan Lacson. I was active for a year then the "katamaran" set in.

NOW:

UNTIL 1997 – when I guess the Lord said "enough is enough, I want you now!" I found out that there was an active Singles Unit in the BCBP Makati. I together with my sister out-law Malou attended the CLP 27 at the Makati Sports Club. Since I had already taken the CLP, I told Malou I would just be with her for 1 or 2 sessions, but I never missed a talk, and everything that was taught and shared was all new and impressive to learn all over again.

After the CLP, naturally I was assigned to the Singles' Unit. There I met my 2nd family. Every activity was something to look forward to. There was an extraordinary closeness among the members of the Singles' Unit.

Home became the Canteen of Phinma where we met every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the BCBP. I felt that I was growing as a Catholic. There were activities like seminars and retreats that I had never undergone before. The learning process was fantastic. At my age I felt like I was a sponge, absorbing the teachings and good vibrations being revealed to us.

People that I had worked with for the past 10 years observed that there were changes in my behavior. While before when problems in the office would arise, like incompatibility with management regarding our clients, you'd probably hear me yelling and my face would be hard and angry, curses would not be far behind.

Nowadays, I have learned to accept the things that I cannot change and learn to accept the consequences. The hurt is still there when I feel that I am being taken advantage of, but the curse words have lessened and the glaring directed to the employee or officer concerned is gone.



the BCBP and ME

By: Bettina Heras-Gonzales, BCBP Makati

I feel I have grown as a renewed Catholic. Physical changes have been really observed by my officemates. They say that I look at peace with the world. Although the Lord has gifted me with a sense of humor, now I am even able to laugh at myself, my mistakes and even my problems. I guess I know that I am a person that is truly loved by my God, our Lord. The inferiority complex I felt because I am old and fat is now gone. The Lord thinks that when I praise Him especially when I do this singing in my not so nice voice, "I am beautiful". So be it.

In the BCBP, I have learned about so many, many good things.

I am an only child. In the BCBP I have learned how to have many brothers and sisters. When my mother died last June 10, 1999, I only called Sis. Maura and told her about my mother. Everyone that I was closest to in the community were there to share in my sorrow. The flowers sent had a purple ribbon which Sis. Floren knows is my favorite color. The pain of losing a loved one was made easier because I had brothers and sisters there for me in my time of sorrow.

I have learned about many virtues, one very important one is obedience. I have observed that in the beginning of my participation in the various activities of the BCBP, the people working in the service team were always all smiles as if they really were not getting tired. Sis. Floren and Bro. Oca were such an example to me, in strengthening my commitment to the community. **But once you say that you will obey**, there is no turning back. Not that I am complaining, but the fact is that for a hard-headed (used to be) person like me this discipline is very necessary in my maturing as a Christian. Now I am doing work that is assigned to me with a smile because I know that it will also please my God.

The Retreats given were not only fantastic but so enlightening. Never did I imagine that I would attend a retreat wherein the course leader would be a lay person like the one we attended in Calaruega with Nancy Catan. I never imagined visualizing myself with Jesus in a garden, holding His hand and feeling His love for me. I have never forgotten this feeling which really helps when I am feeling unloved and lonely.

Another Retreat was the one with Fr. Ramon at Tagaytay wherein we were taught about God, who would have different titles which was what we would like to give Him. My God was and will always be the God of Love. I learned about praying in the chapel for a long time which as a rule I never do. The exercises we had as we broke into smaller groups were very helpful. One example was: I was going to live with my children and having the house I was occupying rented out to help in my finances. I am a very independent person and I definitely was resisting this until Jun Ginete reminded me that I was indeed a lucky person, that my children and I were going to start a new relationship again, while other people my age just wait for their children to visit them. I am now living with my children for the past two (2) months, yes, there are heartaches and differences, but in totality the good things that have been happening have been beyond normal expectations.

In the BCBP, I have learned how to pray for others and their needs. When members greet and hug each other especially after prayers are said, it is here that I really feel what it is like to be a member of a large family that is full of love because it is God-centered.

Personal problems do not seem so great. There is a solution, because I have now learned and experienced that I have been called, chosen and will always be loved by my God our God. And also because when I call Sis. Maura whenever I need a shoulder to cry on, she's always there to listen. And she'll always say God will always make it right and of course He does!!! ✨

THE PRAYER

Ever since the computer entered – but thank goodness it has not dominated – our life, we have from time to time, quite accidentally mind you, tripped upon a program on the Net that carried some special jokes and funny stories which may be familiar to readers of this column. And now, believe it or not, we came upon a prayer that has prompted legislators in the Kansas Senate to walk out in protest.

If you're curious to know why they did so, well, we suggest that you read on. It's a very appropriate prayer for the present time, even here in the Philippines, and really worth passing on.

The prayer was made by a minister, Rev. Joe Wright, to open the new session of the Kansas Senate. Everyone was expecting the usual politically-correct generalities, but you know what he did? The legislators heard him make a stirring prayer passionately calling the country to repentance and righteousness.

The response was immediate. A member of legislators walked out during the prayer in protest. Later, more than 5,000 phone calls were logged with only 47 of those calls responding negatively. And there were even international requests for copies of the prayer.

Here then is that stirring prayer.

Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your direction and guidance.

We know Your Word says, "Woe on those who call evil good," but that's exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values.

We confess that:

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it pluralism.

We have worshipped other gods and called it multi-culturalism.

We have endorsed perversions and called it an alternative lifestyle.

We have exploited the needy and called it self-preservation.

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.

We have killed our unborn children and called it a choice.

We have shot abortionist and called it justifiable.

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem.

We have abused power and called it political savvy.

We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition.

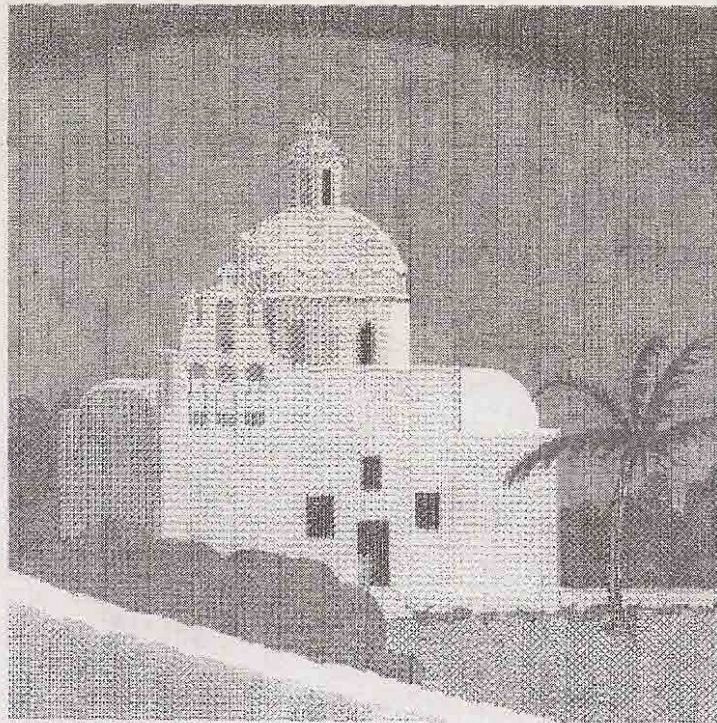
We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, O God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent to direct us to the creator of Your Will. I ask it in the name of Your Son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen!

(Reprinted from Nestor Mata's column in the Manila Standard, October 30, 1999.)



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Prayer is one thing that we renewed Christians have learned to put first in our daily schedules. We have realized how important this is in our relationship with the Lord. We all pray for different reasons: during trials, making an important decision, thanksgiving, for protection and whatever comes to our mind. As for me, the prayer for protection for my family and myself is one thing I have never missed, and the recent incident in my life proved how the Lord protected me.

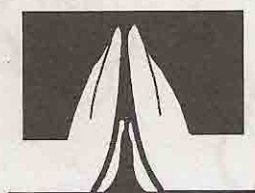
Our car had been in the repair shop for two weeks already, so I had been going home from work by myself. Last December 17 at 7:30 PM after work I took a taxi in front of Greenhills Theater. I told the driver to bring me to Project 4 via Ortigas Ave., then Santolan Rd. towards Camp Crame and Camp Aguinaldo. When the taxi was nearing the area where San Juan Cemetery is located, I noticed that the taxi slowed down, and the driver was looking at his side mirror. Somehow it dawned on me that something wrong might happen, but I also hoped nothing would. Before I knew it, two men suddenly got in the taxi and I realized that I was being held up. The first thing that I prayed in my mind was, "Lord, this is it. Please help me."

The man seated in front was shouting "relax, relax, akin na ang bag mo, pera lang ang kailangan namin." Without resistance, I handed over my bag, telling him to get everything, but just don't hurt me. The man beside me asked me to remove my watch and earrings, which I did and handed them to him. All the time that we were cruising along the Murphy-Cubao area, he was also telling me that they will let me go but not until they are sure that I won't create a scene. I told him that I wouldn't, so please just let me go. The man in front took the P140.00 from my wallet and the nativity cross given me by my mother-in-law. He also saw my ATM card and asked how much is in my account. I said very little, and even if they bring me to the bank, they wouldn't get anything. For fear that he might

do something, I did not have any choice but to hand over the P4,000.00 that I had. With that, he gave me back my bag, and told me that I can have the coins in my purse for my transportation home. He also told the driver to let me go, since I don't have so much money.

After about 30 minutes of driving around and giving me instructions on what to do the moment they finally decided to let me go, they dropped me off along 17th Ave. The two men got off, one of them putting his arm around me. I tried my best to calm myself and walk naturally, until a few meters away from the taxi, they finally let me go. But before they did that, the man seated in front gave me P40.00 for my transportation home. I just did what they told me, because all I wanted was to get home and be with my family. I walked towards a place where I could take a tricycle to get home.

When I finally got home, I broke down and cried, my body from head down trembling



The

PRAYER of PROTECTION Really Works!

By: *Veronica Ulanday, BCBP Greenhills*

in fear, but at the same time I was so relieved that I was finally home.

Honestly, what also bothered me was that the money that was taken was intended for Christmas gifts and other things for the season. What would happen now? Sam immediately sent a message to Roy Siojo that we will not be able to attend our chapter's Christmas party that night because of what had happened to me. A few minutes later, Roy called up to check how I was, then about an hour after, another brother from our chapter, Buboy Cantera called up to check on me also. I talked to him, my voice still trembling, crying asking him to please pray that I will be able to forget what happened. It was also later that I found out that Eddie Mendoza, our chapter head included me in his closing prayers at the end of the Christmas party. The trauma of not knowing when the holduppers would let me go, if I would still be able to get out of the situation alive or worse be raped, haunted my thoughts for sometime and I was not able to sleep until late the following afternoon.

The following morning after the incident, during my prayer time, I thanked God for bringing me back home to my family in one piece. During my prayers as I continued to thank God for protecting me during that ordeal. I felt no anger towards the three who did this to me, for I know how difficult life is now and I just pray that somehow I may also have touched them by the way I reacted. Most of all, I thank God for being there during my ordeal. By His grace, I was able to survive this situation in my life. I believe that He is listening to me when I pray for protection for myself and my family everytime we leave the house. And indeed He truly gave me not only His protection in that time of danger, but most of all His love so that I can be with my family. It is also at this point that I would like to thank all the brothers and sisters who are praying for me that I will be able to totally recover from the trauma that I experienced.

"Thank you Lord for the gift of brothers and sisters in this community!" It was by the grace of God that these men did not hurt or even touch me. ✠

Why do we pray the 2000 Hail Marys?
 Why do we have to pray unceasingly?

I would like to share with you about my participation in a special prayer meeting on A THOUSAND HAIL MARYS by the BCBP Cebu's intercessory prayer group last December 8, 1999.

My wife Offie and I are both BCBP Cebu members: BCLP 6 and BCMR 4. Being elders blessed with more blissful years than most of our co-members, we chose to work closely with the intercessory prayer group since in our chapter, there are only less than ten (10) active brothers now in the intercessory ministry. I belong to the Friday intercessory team while Offie belongs to the Wednesday team, which is the lead team in the intercessory group of three teams.

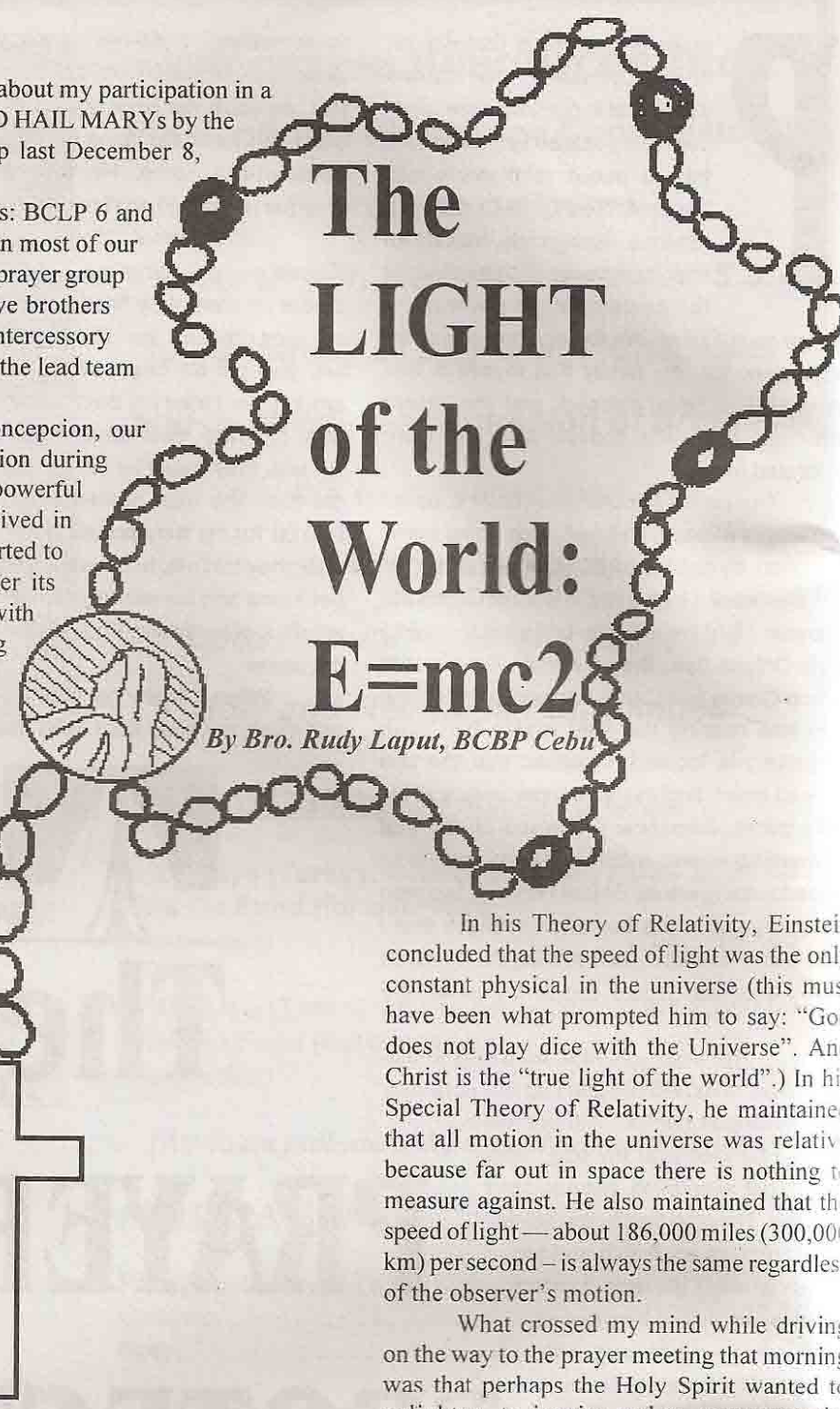
Last December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, our intercessory group held the 7th - 2,000 Hail Marys devotion during 1999. For those who are not yet familiar with 2-K HMs, this powerful intercessory prayer is a private devotion which was conceived in March, 1933 by a Salesian priest, Msgr. Juan Reis, who started to propagate it from a church in Ecuador several years after its conception. It is observed by praying 2,000 Hail Marys with our Blessed Mother to our Lord Jesus Christ. It starts by saying 15 mysteries - Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious, then followed by the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. It approximately takes eight (8) continuous hours of prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

On that very special feastday, Offie and I heard the early morning mass in our Parish Church. We noticed that towards the end of the celebration, the priest read the Consecration of the Philippines to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I was deeply touched to hear it viewed against the current challenges and realities, and the accelerating preparation for the Jubilee marking Christendom's entry to the third millenium.

While I was waiting for Offie on our way to attend the 2-K HMs scheduled to start at 8:30 AM, I casually opened a Readers Digest book, HOW IT IS DONE, and my attention was caught by an article titled - "ALBERT EINSTEIN: God does not play dice with the Universe". Like many curious Christians, I am blessed with an ear for interesting write-ups on well-known personalities, famous or infamous, talking about God. In this particular instance, I wished to believe that perhaps God might have a hidden message to be revealed through the life, works and thinking of this very famous and highly acclaimed physicist.

From that article I gleamed a closer look at the life and works of Albert Einstein (1879-1955), a German-Swiss-American mathematical physicist who ranks with Galilei and Newton as one of the great conceptual revisors of man's understanding of the universe. Summing up his general outlook, he once wrote, "God is subtle, but he is not malicious." He won the much-coveted 1921 Nobel prize for Physics for his work. The following formula for his Theory of Relativity is, for me, simply thought-provoking:

$E=mc^2$ (where E is energy, m is mass, and c is the speed of light), which shows that a small mass can be converted into a huge amount of energy. Among other things, this led to the invention of the atomic bomb: a fact which prayed upon Einstein's conscience for the last two decades of his life. "If I had known that my theories would lead to such destruction," he once stated, "I would rather have been a watchmaker."



The LIGHT of the World: E=mc²

By Bro. Rudy Laput, BCBP Cebu

In his Theory of Relativity, Einstein concluded that the speed of light was the only constant physical in the universe (this must have been what prompted him to say: "God does not play dice with the Universe". And Christ is the "true light of the world".) In his Special Theory of Relativity, he maintained that all motion in the universe was relative because far out in space there is nothing to measure against. He also maintained that the speed of light - about 186,000 miles (300,000 km) per second - is always the same regardless of the observer's motion.

What crossed my mind while driving on the way to the prayer meeting that morning was that perhaps the Holy Spirit wanted to enlighten, to inspire and to encourage the BCBP Cebu intercessory group, in the light of the physical efforts or energy to be spent on that day to carry on the 2-K HMs prayer. Perhaps, prayer intercessors can derive more energy by borrowing Einstein's formula, with slight modification as to its compound to adopt it as factors for our prayer of faith:

$E=MC^2$ (where E is for energy to pray for Eternal Life, or our goal for eternal salvation, M is through Mary as intercessor in our life's journey and C is the speed of Christ's light of salvation manifested by His boundless love mercy.

As a striving prayer warrior, I would like to believe that this divine formula on God's boundless love and as Light of the World derives its merit and power from two Scripture passages:



"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it:

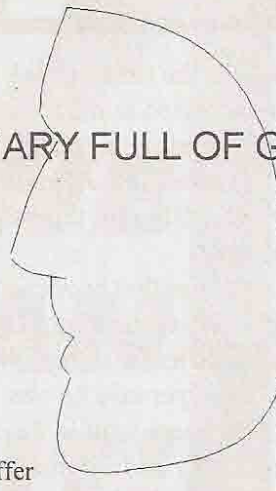
You must love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments, hang the whole Law and the prophets too." ...Mt 22:37-46

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." ... Jn 8:12

To unlock this simple prayer of faith formula are the following humble prayers to the Light and Love of the World – Jesus Christ:



HAIL MARY FULL OF GRACE



MORNING PRAYER

ALMIGHTY FATHER, You have so loved the world that You sent Your Son to save us. You have poured Your Spirit into our hearts that we may be witnesses united with Your Son. All good comes to us through life, death and resurrection of Your Son; all praise comes to You through the same mystery of Christ Jesus. At the beginning of this day, I offer You every thought, desire, word and action. Through the merit and power of Your Son, I consecrate myself to do Your will today. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit so that I may keep this resolution, that I may avoid all sin, and that I may be what You have called me to be: The light of the world and the salt of the earth. Amen.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

JESUS, LIGHT OF THE WORLD:
*When I am afraid and unsure,
 COMFORT ME ...with the
 Light of Your Presence.
 When loneliness chills me,
 WARM ME ... with the light
 of Your Love.
 When the road ahead seems dark,
 GUIDE ME ... with the light
 of Your Way.
 When I don't understand and my*

*Thoughts are unclean,
 FILL ME ... with the light
 of Your Wisdom.
 When I seem spent like a candle
 consumed,
 REPLENISH ME .. with the
 light of Your Life.
 Then , so filled with Your Light,
 USE ME ... so that I, with
 You, may be LIGHT FOR
 THE WORLD!*

I like to believe that with the Lord's grace and blessing, Offie and I were able to obtain choicest benediction and blessing not merely working for the Lord but by doing God's work by witnessing to the "Word" in faith and deed and through our humble service in the intercessory prayer group.

For this year , right on the eve of the great Jubilee, we have been generously granted the following gifts, in spite of our unworthiness and the very critical financial liquidity problem our family is now experiencing:

1. Our eldest son Thaddeus Noel was ordained priest (Congregation of the Mission – CM) on 27 February 1999;
2. Our younger son Felix Celestino's wife, Judy, gave birth to a baby girl (Krizia Therese) on September 19, 1999, our first granddaughter and the third grandchild: Kier John (6) and Keifer Thomas (5), being the two grandsons.
3. As a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the above gifts, for all the countless bounties received throughout my professional life which I failed much earlier to acknowledge with thanks, and for giving me near perfect health (never been hospitalized for any illness) in all my 63 years (thanks also to Offie's tender loving care), I finished saying devoutly (on my knees and on an empty stomach) the latest TWO THOUSAND HAIL MARYs offered by our prayer group to welcome the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

BLESSED FOREVER BE GOD OVER ALL! †



Eddie Mendoza

OUR FULFILL POTENTIAL

Barely two weeks from the time he took his first job, my son confessed to me the other day that he worried whether his new job was maximizing his full potential. Already he wanted to do new and different things, but wasn't sure what to do.

The following day after that happened, I met with seven Christian friends in a prayer meeting. Like my son, they, too, were wanting to do different things with their present occupations. One labor lawyer said he was seriously planning on setting up a kalamansi farm in Tayabas. Another, a lawyer also, was in the process of discerning whether to close down his partnership or not. A general manager of one of the largest bus dealerships was beginning a new trading business, preparing for the time when he would retire from his job. A gasoline dealer was bidding for a second station. Me, I felt unappreciated in my career which my bosses seem to think is already at its peak. An established contractor seemed to want out of the business which he had built up over the years. Finally, a banker, who is actually the chairman of his medium-sized bank, confirmed it all for us, saying that he too felt empty and unfulfilled and wanted to do something different, and, like my 23 year old son, wasn't sure what to do.

I was amused at how these midlifying 40-something were feeling just like a young man in his twenties. And so I started wonder if anyone, young or old, really knew what he wanted to be when he grew up. Or if he were in that position already that he thought he wanted, I wonder whether he would again think – as we all seemed to be experiencing – that his potential isn't fully maximized. How does one know if he is fulfilled? If he has reached his greatest career and earnings potential? Will anyone ever reach it?

It seems, like the Jews after they escaped from Egypt, our lives and our careers are nothing but a long journey of wandering in the desert. Or it could feel like the disciples of

Jesus, trying to cross a stormy lake in a small boat, barely making progress because they are facing strong headwinds. Or the fishermen who returned the next day having caught nothing all night.

Life is like that. It cannot be anything different. Our lives are so designed to search for something that we were meant to accomplish. And I believe, we all feel unfulfilled if we weren't on that exact road headed toward that exact destiny for us.

But whether we are entrepreneurs, research scientists, bankers, or farmers, we need to realize that our jobs and our occupations aren't our destiny. And each one of our occupations are meant to lead us all from our various diverse fields to the same destiny. We just need to have ears that hear, and eyes that see to know where we are going.

"Do you know where you're going to? Do you like the things in life is showing you?" are words from a popular song in the 70s.

Jesus gives us the formula. He says, unless the grain of wheat dies, it remains a grain of wheat. It will not reach its full potential. What good, he says, does it do anyone to gain the whole world and lose his soul? Gaining the whole world isn't going to maximize our full potential. And finally he says to be sure you're going the right way, he suggests, "follow me". And He says, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". I know where I am going. Follow me and do what I do. Look, he says, I'm the son of God. See me wrap the towel around my waist and serve you who are mere mortals! I am the maker of the Universe, and see me carry my cross up calvary and allowed myself to be murdered, executed in the most embarrassing way.

Follow me, he says. And you will find fulfilment, you will find water that will never make you thirsty again, you will find rest. "For if whoever wants to save his life, will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." Follow me. ✦

Despite some odds we were able to pull it off. I'm talking about the recently concluded PIM Prayer Rally. A project of such magnitude requires men and women, or should I say, brothers and sisters of great patience, multiple resources, teamwork spirit and a servant's heart. The brothers and sisters of the Brotherhood who worked with me starting from the drawing board right down to curtain call were simply amazing. Although there were some snags along the way, quick changes to be effected, decisions to be made and some minor personality clashes and petty "tampuhan", the team won. Wary of forgetting somebody, I just want to say thank you and more power to you brothers and sisters who stood pat all throughout until the completion of the project. You know who you are and what you did for this activity. Big or small, your contribution certainly made it all happen.

Not to be forgotten, I wish to acknowledge, too, the cooperation rendered by our partners in mission who diligently worked with us.

What have we learned from this experience? Simply stated, if we can only be clear about our desired end, openly define individual roles, and of course, put our hearts into it, we can do it! We have learned that we need to walk that extra mile to be potentially effective. We discovered that we must never presume that the other person thinks the way you do. You have to say what you mean, and mean what you say. A lot of patience opens up renewed relationships and fosters greater understanding of others. Ultimately, God must be the only priority in any undertaking.

Trust in God. Towards the "D'Day" I still had some reservations on several matters to be done for the rally. For one, the audiovisual presentation was never completed until the 11th hour. Completing the Powerpoint presentation was a photo-finish situation since some materials had not been submitted. Amidst cough and colds, traffic under dousing rain, I had to drive to the recording studio to do the voice-over myself. This was done after just completing another monumental activity of the Brotherhood, the National Leaders' Retreat and the election of the BCBP president in Baguio City.

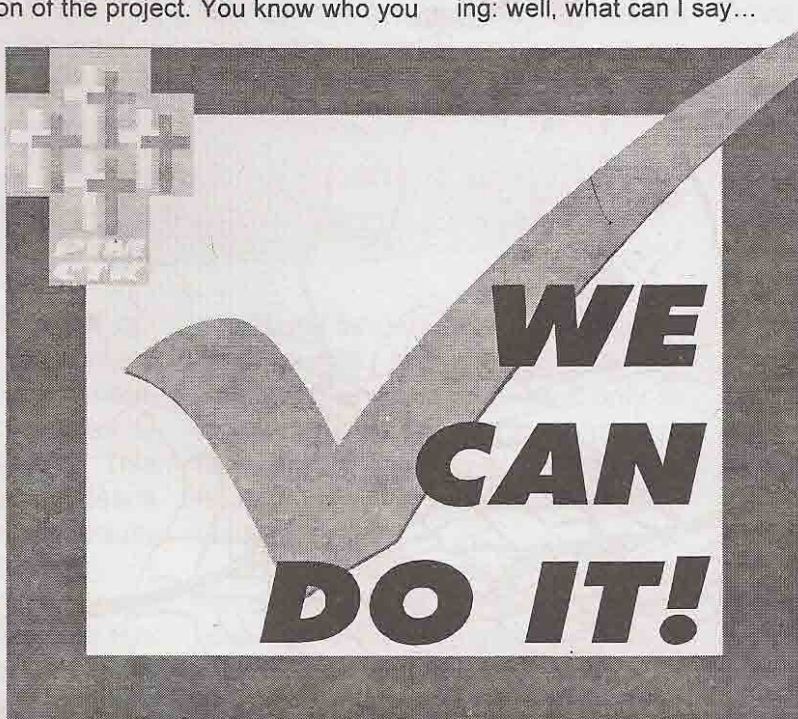
There were questions about security, problems in the registration, the erroneous rumour that Malacanang declared November 30 as not a holiday, the overhead projectors and acetates problem, the accommodations and placements, attendance, medical, communications, air-conditioning, parking passes, who's going to do this and that, etc. With all these crowding my mind, I retired to one

corner of the ULTRA and prayed: "Lord this is Your rally, be it done according to Your will." Thanks to God, and the brothers and sisters we did it.

After the curtain was down, I received comments, some good and others not so good. Comparing it with previous rallies, "it was not as jolly": to my mind I say, we did it to make the Lord happy and I believe we accomplished just that. Disorganized accommodations and registration, sorry, we can only do so much with so large a crowd, an attendance we believe that surpassed the previous. Rally proper was dragging: I believe the Holy Spirit was alive. Audio was fluctuating: well, what can I say...



Sammy M. Ulanday



The action group meetings, chapter assemblies, teaching nights, retreats, and anniversary celebrations are basic avenues that we should always render the same attitude, cooperation, and our hearts and minds as we did in the rally. This is the message I wish to transmit to everyone. Yes, it's been said many times and in many ways, but it's always worthwhile repeating. Repetition, after all is one effective way of learning. At hand is the 20th National Anniversary. Please keep glued to your chapter bulletin and attend all assemblies for updates. This is one celebration no one should ever miss. See you in Subic!

GOD'S PROTECTION ALIVE!

As a footnote, allow me to share a great manifestation of God's protection as experienced by my wife Veronica. Just a couple of days before our ninth wedding anniversary and a week before Christmas Veron was held up in a taxi cab on the way home.

Our car was in the repair shop and she therefore had to go home from work by herself. She took a cab at Greenhills Theater, and just nearing EDSA along Santolan Rd., the taxi slowed down and two men boarded the cab. Veron was terrified, while the driver, who is apparently a cohort, was poking some threats on her. No choice, she made the right decision not to fight it out and just simply gave them whatever valuables she had at the time, watch, earrings, money, and the Nativity Cross that my mother gave to her as souvenir from Holy Land. (Symbolically, does this mean Christ sacrificing for her sake and safety?)

They drove her around the Cubao and Murphy areas until they finally let her go in one of the streets unharmed. God protected her. We have heard of many similar experiences of others who, unfortunately were even harmed and raped. Thank God, faithful as He protected her from all that. We request you, dear brothers and sisters, to pray for Veron that she may completely overcome the experience, and to pray for the holduppers as well. Thank you. ✠

journeying with the millenium year 2000

By: Cris Ti-in, BCBP Tacloban



Almost everybody if not everyone, must have been busy with his or her different multi-colored expectations and plans (negative or positive) to prepare for this coming millenium year 2000. Some strengthened their faith and trust in God, others formed various cults inspired by their respective superstitious belief. One, is Ceferino Quinte of Sitio Sto. Nino, Barangay Salog, in the town of Leyte, Leyte which is more or less 87 kms. away from Tacloban City. He preached that the end of the world would come before the year 2000. He believed that is the meaning of when Jesus raised his two fingers at the time of his resurrection. His group of more

or less 2,000 members prepared themselves by digging an artificial cave. A BCBP brother Armando Dupio Jr., DENR geologist, conducted a survey of the cave after the place was shaken by an earthquake sometime in the early part of December 1999. According to Bro. Jun the cave has a dozen chambers inside that look like cubicles facing each other divided by a pathway coming from the main entrance which is 15 meters long going inside with a height of 5.6 ft. and width of 5.6 ft. also. They believe it is enough space for them to spare their lives as fireballs would be falling from the sky and flashfloods would hit the country a million times bigger than those in Venezuela.

One time a Redemptorist priest Rev. Father Martin Tobin in his homily during the Novena Mass of our Mother of Perpetual Help said, "Every Wednesday, I am extremely pleased seeing Sacred Objects lined up to be blessed, but this afternoon I am very, very surprised why there are hundreds of candles and matches piled to be blessed. Why? Are you going to burn the whole of Tacloban City? I will never bless those candles and matches because I do not want to be accused of being superstitious." Occasional church-goer parishioners here in Tacloban City were coming day-in and day-out bringing candles and matches to be blessed by the priest because they superstitiously believed that only blessed candles and matches would give light during the 3 days darkness before the world ends in the year 2000.

Our beloved brother Rev. Father Gerry de los Reyes, an SVD priest, and BCBP Tacloban Spiritual Director jokingly smiled and said, "If it is their line of thought, then we might as well bless LEYECO (Leyte Electric Company) so that it will continuously give electric light." All those superstitious beliefs are clear signs of spiritual immaturity coupled with a lack of trust in the Almighty God.

To prepare for this millenium year 2000, I believe we should focus on the passage from the Bible that says, "Whatever you do to the least of your brethren, you are doing it to me."

Evangelization is not a job we have to do, it is a mission we should want to do.

There are some if not plenty of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are still in need of spiritual nourishment, and this gives us the great opportunity to serve through evangelization. This passage is a light that directs and leads us to the way of serving God, especially serving Him through the BCBP.

Knowing that we are children of God, I feel obligated to carry out this task; if I don't – it is tantamount to saying that I am a careless brother among the children of God. I came to realize that I was created to be in relation with others, as the famous saying, "No man is an island," I cannot live alone, my whole existence is bound up with others, it is embedded in the social fabric of human existence. I would be destroying my commitment to BCBP if I would turn my back on our brothers and sisters.

To me, it would be like committing spiritual and moral suicide if I would refuse to get involved in the evangelization activities of our BCBP community. I am denying my very own self, if I don't care about our brothers and sisters who need to be evangelized, and if I don't do what I can to help everyone reach the opportunities for spiritual nourishment thru evangelization.

Jesus is calling us two times – when He says, "Come and follow me," and "Go and make disciples." He is calling us to grow and take responsibility for our whole life and all our actions. He calls us to love our neighbors, to open our hearts to other people and to care for them. He wants us to become constructive members of the community and to spend our creative energies in building the community.

The Lord Jesus wants us to love Him by loving each other. He invites us to care by addressing each other's needs. Jesus is telling us to build

bonds, not barriers, and to create unity, not disunity. He is always loving, forgiving, and saving – not only in individual persons, not only in each family and community but to the whole human society in order to bring us to God's kingdom.

Jesus needs every one of us in the community to be His instruments of peace, to carry on the good tidings and share them to our brothers and sisters. If we love and care for ourselves, we do not hear Jesus. We do not listen to the gospel, this is one way of denying Jesus, and the grace of the Holy Spirit will only fall on our deaf ears.

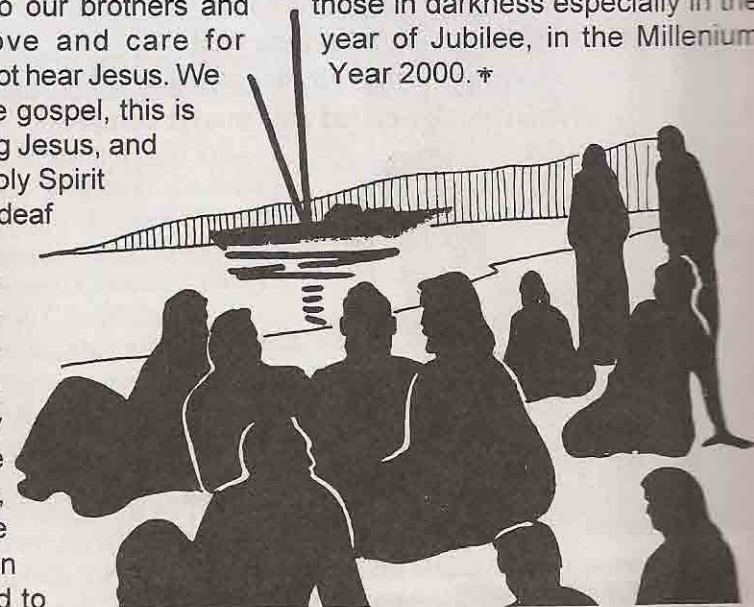
Undesirable happenings in our Philippine society can almost be found in every corner of the country. Perhaps, God allows these events to happen so we will respond to His calls. Jesus won't let us forget the cross, the power of love and the hope of the Holy Spirit. He reminds us that no matter how bad things get, there is

a way out, although it might not be an easy way. His invitation of laying down our lives for our brothers and sisters might not be attractive. But laying down our lives for others is the only way for Jesus promised, "It is the way to life and to victory," for every one of us.

It is very true that we cannot be alone, whether we like it or not, we are tangled up with other people in the society. Let us therefore work together with the BCBP family as we travel all the way to this millenium year 2000, bringing the message of this Great Jubilee, because God is inviting us to be His instruments of peace, joy and forgiveness.

Evangelization is not a job we have to do, it is a mission we should want to do. Someone evangelized us. Was it a priest? A fellow BCBP member? A playmate? Without that someone, where would we be in our faith? Wasn't it the witness of his or her love for Jesus that attracted us?

Evangelization, Conversion and Baptism combine to bring a deep and lasting transformation in our hearts and in the hearts of those we care for. God wants to empower all of us to bring the light of Christ to those in darkness especially in the year of Jubilee, in the Millenium Year 2000. ✠



marketplace matters

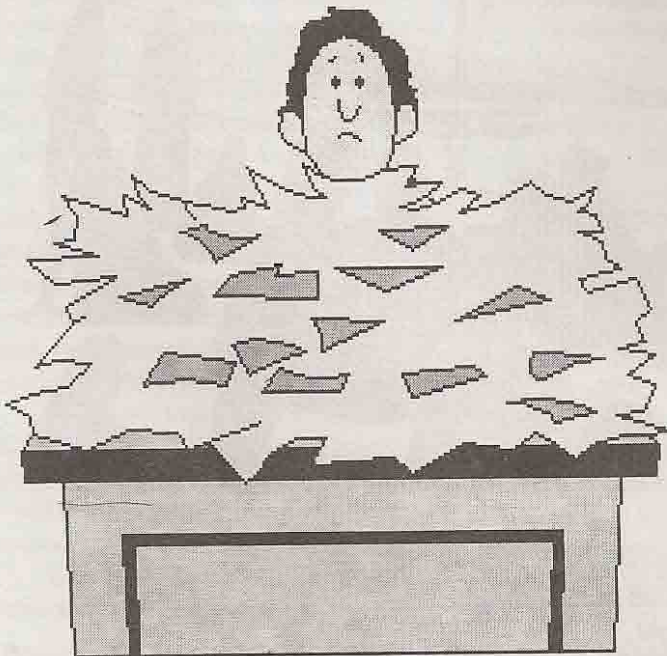
By Francis J. Kong

wicked trespassers

An eight year old, first-grade boy one day asked his mother why Daddy brings home a briefcase full of papers every evening. "It's because Daddy has so much to do, he can't finish them at the office and so he has to work nights," the mother replied. "Well, then," said the child, "why don't they just put Daddy in a slower group or a lower grade?"

If you are an executive, there must have been times when you had to bring your work home. I guess that's the price one pays to be an executive. But if you do it regularly, you have either taken more work than you should or you've not been managing your time well.

Another possibility is that you are afflicted with this not-so-common disease called the "martyr complex,"



which involves wanting to impress your colleagues and family. There is also another word for you – workaholic.

People can become addicted to work just as they can become addicted to alcohol. Here some signs:

1. A refusal to take a vacation;
2. An inability to put the office out of your mind on weekends and holidays;
3. A bulging briefcase full of work; and
4. A son or daughter you can no longer call by name.

You need to get away from work at the end of the day, both mentally and physically. Except for rare emergencies, time spent at home doing office tasks tends to be counterproductive, draining your energies and alienating your family.

And it's a bad practice that breeds on itself. The more often you bring home work, the more difficult it is to stop this nasty habit. Your drive to get things done dampens as you tell yourself, "if I don't get this finished today, there's always tonight...."

Psychologists say workaholics have a subconscious desire to be snowed under by work and stay that way. To appear indispensable, however boring his life, is devoid of leisure and enjoyment.

Most of us are busy with activities, not with achievement. And between them, there's a whole lot of difference. Achievement is getting things done while activity is staying busy all the time.

Let's pause for a while here. Many things in life are more important than work. Let us take your family, for instance. Where does it rank in your order of priorities? Haven't you noticed that your son or daughter has grown up so much? You can't kid yourself and neither can you kid your family by saying, "But I'm doing it all for you." Honestly now, we might be doing this for ourselves because we're already addicted to it. A workaholic's enjoyment is his employment.

There are much more worthwhile things to do. Pray, study the Word of God and have a regular family gathering. Teach your children how to pray. Build up their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ every day and equip them for life.

Don't fill up that briefcase. Try not to bring work home. One business writer drives home the point with this question: "How many people do you know, who, on their dying bed, would say this: "I wish I had spent more time in the office?"

Home is a private territory. Hang up a sign that says, "No trespassing" in your bedroom which doubles as your office extension. And consider your work a wicked trespasser to that sacred altar. *(Reprinted with permission) †*

national

Louie Morales is BCBP Millenium prexy

"The white smoke finally came out of the chimney."

After much discussion, Scripture readings, seeking the Holy Spirit's wisdom and guidance, and after several rounds of casting their vote, the Board of Trustees finally gave its mandate and elected Bro. Louie Morales as the new BCBP president.

At 6:00 PM of November 26, 1999 at the Hotel Supreme in Baguio City, Fr. Herb Schneider, BCBP Spiritual Director, started the Board meeting by reading 1 Tim. 3 and asked the Trustees to meditate on the passage. This was followed by discussions on what would be the qualifications, character and personality, amidst the present situation we are in, that we wish the new BCBP president must have.

The ground rules on the mode of election were set, and rounds of vote-casting started.

There were four eligibles for the position, namely: Louie Morales, Manolet Siojo, Rolly Ona and Charlie Carballo. Prior to the actual balloting, Charlie conceded and left the race to the three contenders. According to the rules set, the candidate getting the lowest number of votes is dropped from the race. Thus, after the first round of voting the race was left only between Louie and Manolet. Then the verdict was laid down - Louie emerged as the new president.

Louie's first official action as president was to recommend to the Board the creation of the office of vice president and subsequently nominated Manolet for the position, which the Board unanimously approved.

The Board also approved that the president will also be the chairman of the Board of Trustees. †

The New Brotherhood Organizational Structure

New Structure Explained - National, Regional and Chapter leadership

How does one member become the BCBP president? The new BCBP Structure chart can best answer this question. (Next page)

From the bottom of the diagram, a member can start his way up by committing himself to the various service ministries his chapter offers. Perhaps beginning with the "Buhat Ministry" and then taking all opportunities to attend seminars, teaching and training tracks and leadership training, he may soon graduate into becoming an ADL then DL and later as an action group leader (AGL).

By his qualities, knowledge and maturity gained through the years, he may be chosen to become a course leader, (possibly the BCLP track) which may eventually lead him to become a unit leader.

As a Unit Leader, a member may be recommended by the Chapter Head (CH) to the Mancom (Management Committee) thru the RCD (Regional Council Director) as one of the candidates to be the next Mission Director (MD) or Chapter Life Director (CLD). Subsequently and more often, the MD and CLD are among those recommended by the incumbent chapter head to replace him. (Policy requires that there should be three (3) recommendees for the positions of CH, MD and CLD).

After his service term of 3 years has ended, a CH may opt to start all over again as

a mere member or take any service (sans CH). In any case, he automatically becomes a member of the Advisory Council - a pool of former chapter heads, Mancom members and former members of the defunct National Council (NC), who are still active as per NSPR. At the same time, he is also eligible to be elected as RCD or as a Trustee.

The RCD is elected by and from among the incumbent and former chapter heads of the region.

There are five BCBP Regional Councils - Metro Manila Regional Council (MMRC), Luzon Regional Council (LRC), Visayas I (East) Regional Council (VERC), Visayas II (West) Regional Council (VWRC) and Mindanao Regional Council (MRC).

All five RCDs, together with the vice president form the Management Committee (Mancom) headed by the president. Mancom functions very much like the former National Council.

The five RCDs are joined by another five members chosen by and from among the Advisory Council, plus the Spiritual Director to form the 11-man Board of Trustees (BOT).

The BOT functions purely as the policy-making body, and elects the next president and vice president. Since RCDs are basically indigenous to, and elected by their respective regional leaders, their fundamental responsibil-



ity is the region where they belong, thus are deferred from being elected as president.

The national treasurer and directors for the different national service ministries are part of the Mancom support group appointed by the president. They may or may not necessarily be members of Mancom or Board. †

Subic beckons!

Duty Free Shopping, Love Boat Cruise, Forest Trail, Horseback Riding, Fishing. And the BCBP 20th Anniversary! What more can anyone want from a weekend?

The weekend is April 28-30, the place is Subic Freeport, Zambales, and the big event is the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals.

Festivities start with a golf tournament in the morning of Friday and will be capped by a Eucharistic Celebration on Sunday afternoon. Activities during the weekend include tours, a Friday afternoon Prayer Rally, the Saturday Grand

Breakfast, bowling and tennis matches, a Saturday evening Jeans Night. Sunday morning everyone is invited to join the fellowship games to be followed by lunch and the Closing Mass.

Accommodations range from the fabled APEC site – the Crown peak Hotel to a cozy self-contained housing unit in the Forest Hills Village Resort. The Anniversary Committee estimate that the total budget, exclusive of transportation, will be P1,500.00 per person to include 2 nights accommodation and 4 meals. Please get updated details from your chapter or outreach anniversary coordinator or head. Surprise prizes await “Early Bird” Chap-

ters or those with the most number of registrants.

For inquiries, please contact the 20th Anniversary Secretariat at SLS Trade com. BF Resort Drive cor, Gemma Cruz St., BF Resort, Las Piñas City 1740, or e-mail your messages to:

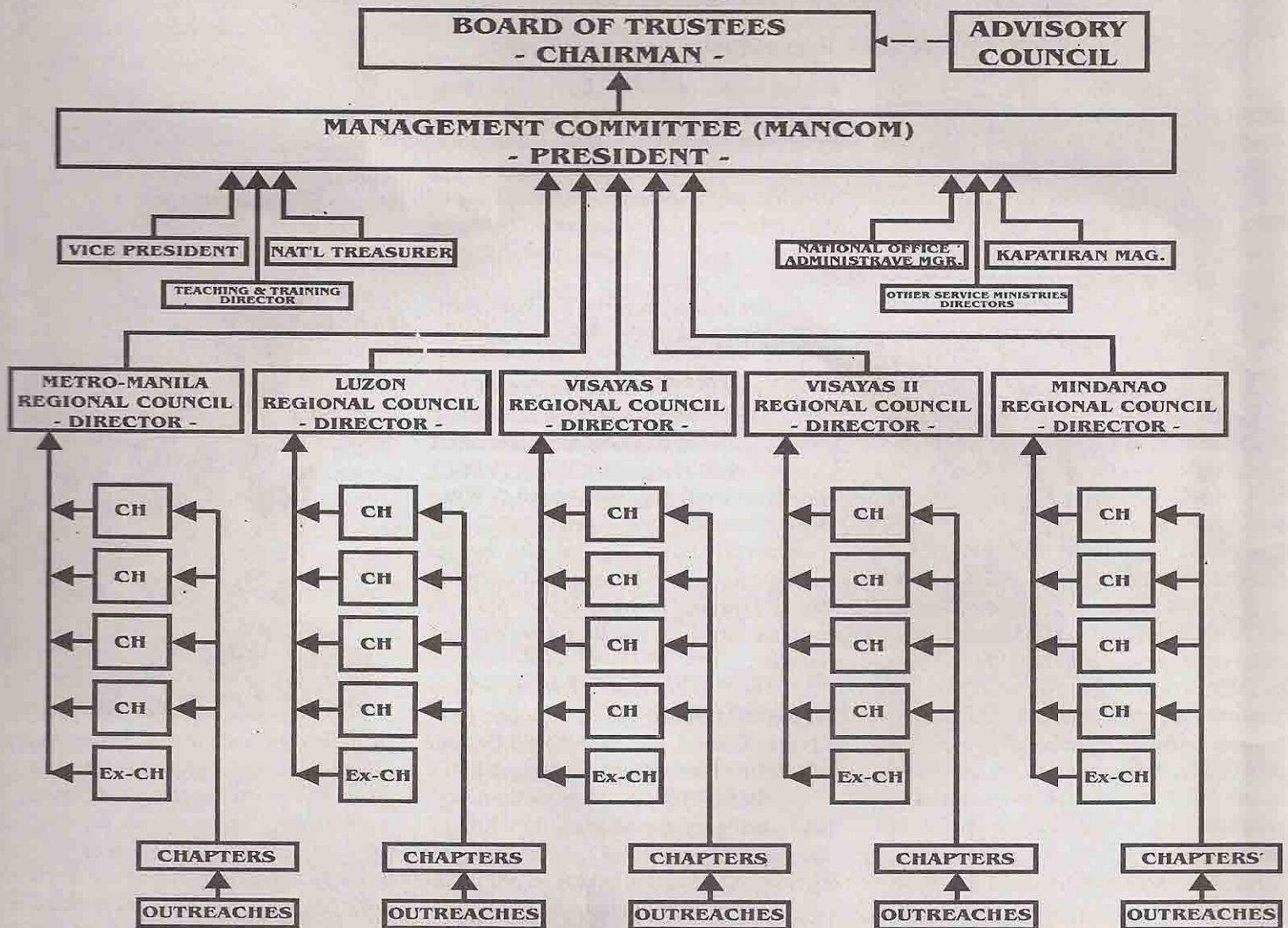
*bcbp2000@yahoo.com or
bcbp2000@hotmail.com.*

Or visit our website:

www.bcbp.org

See you all there! Register now and be part of this Jubilee celebration and milestone. ✠

The New Brotherhood Organizational Chart



BROTHERHOOD OF CHRISTIAN BUSINESSMEN & PROFESSIONALS
20th Anniversary Celebration, 28-30 April 2000, Subic Freeport, Zambales

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Please use block letters. Please mail or fax to us through any of the contact addresses or fax numbers listed below on or before 15 February 2000.

SECTION I: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Chapter : _____		Outreach : _____	
Name _____	Nickname _____	Birthday _____	
Address _____			
Tel. No. (include area code) _____		Fax No. (include area code) _____	
E-mail address _____			
Names of Persons Accompanying You		Nickname	Relation
Age	Birthday		
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____

SECTION II: ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Arrival: <input type="checkbox"/> By Air <input type="checkbox"/> By Boat <input type="checkbox"/> By Bus	Departure: <input type="checkbox"/> By Air <input type="checkbox"/> By Boat <input type="checkbox"/> By Bus
Place of Origin : _____	Destination : _____
Transport Co. : _____	Transport Co. : _____
Flight/Trip No. : _____	Flight/Trip No. : _____
Arrival Date : _____	Departure Date : _____
Arrival Time : _____	Departure Time : _____

Note: In case of changes in your travel plans, please feel free to inform us through any of the addresses or fax numbers listed below.

SECTION III: ACCOMMODATIONS

Please check your preference:

OWN ARRANGEMENT

CROWN PEAK HOTEL

Twin/Double (P 675 / person / night)

Triple (P 500 / person / night)

Quadruple (P 400 / person / night)

2 nights 3 nights

HOUSING FACILITY

(P3,200 / unit, good for 8 persons, fully furnished with kitchenette)

PERSONS SHARING THE UNIT:

2 nights 3 nights

SECTION IV: SPORTS FELLOWSHIP

Please check the one event you will be participating in:

Golf : [] Amateur [] Junior Ten Pin Bowling Tennis

Signature _____ Date _____

Please send the accomplished form on or before **15 February 2000** by e-mail, fax or postage mail to:

Mailing address: The SECRETARIAT, BCBP Las Piñas Chapter SLS trade.com, BF Resort Drive cor. Gemma Cruz St. BF Resort, Las Piñas City 1740 or: Lito / Ludy Pardo # 10 Gloria Diaz St., BF Resort, Las Piñas City 1740	Telefax numbers: Rey / Lyn Feria (02) 871-9691 or Lito/Ludy Pardo (02) 872-8909 or Jun / Myrna Medina (02) 874-9496
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E-mail address : bcbp2000@yahoo.com or bcbp2000@hotmail.com

bacolod south

BCBP - Bacolod South BCLP 15

BCLP 15 participants headed by Course Leader Paul and Ating Jochico assisted by Litong and Bebing Gaston, and chief Servant Bebot and wife Helen Ganihong, held their Commitment Night at the Bacolod Pavilion on November 20, 1999. A total of 80 participants completed the BCLP program which began on August 14, 1999. The Commitment Night program started with a Eucharistic Celebration and the Commitment Ceremony. Photo shows the group posing after presentations which included songs, dances, video shows, and skits. ✦



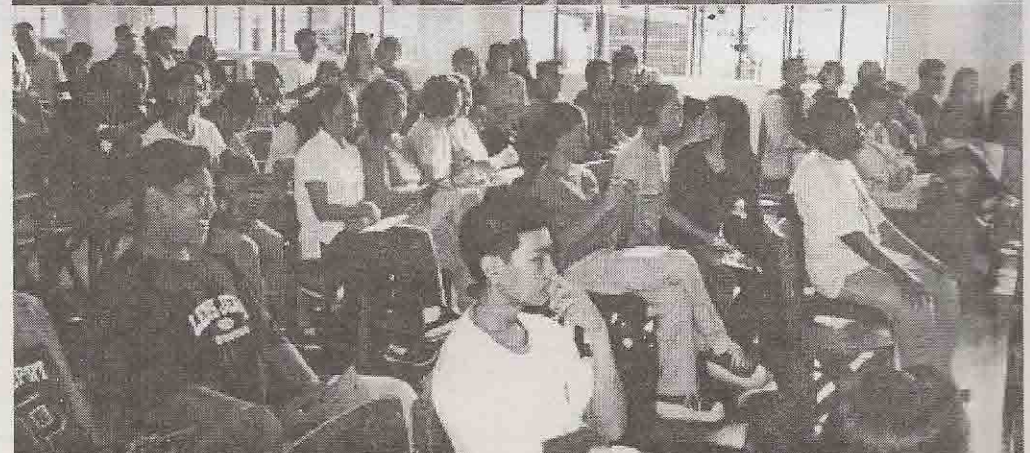
baguio

Crossroads retreat in Baguio

It was a great opportunity for the BCBP-PALS Quezon City together with some of the BCBP-PALS Las Pinas to organize an outreach in Baguio. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! God really wanted us to go there inspite of all the difficulties that we encountered. A hassle indeed to some of us, still, we all continue to search for signs and thus says the Lord "Go therefore and spread my word."

October 30-31, 1999 was a weekend which everyone of us will not forget, a memorable event that the youth of Baguio will cherish for the rest of their lives. The Crossroads Retreat held at St. Francis Xavier Seminary opened the hearts of the Baguio youth to the Lord. One by one, fellow Baguio teenagers arrived. We were all amazed that a total of fifty eight (58) participants attended the Retreat. Although some were forced by their parents, it seemed to be a blessing in disguise for them. Some girls were really shy and other boys seemed to be so wacky and naughty but all participated wholeheartedly.

There were lots of activities and group sharing that helped everyone to become acquainted with each other. The participants learned a lot about themselves, and most especially about our Lord Jesus and His wondrous deeds. They were taught how to pray and worship the Lord in a unique way. Of course, who would not forget the presentations of each group! Surely, they came up with such creative ideas. Talents spread out like fire throughout the night.



During the last day of the retreat, the whole families of the participants were present and Mass was celebrated. The parents were very supportive during the entire program. Two sets of parents read their letters to their children and vice-versa. It was a very touching moment and everyone was moved to tears, tears of joy. Messages of encouragement were also delivered by Tito Roy Calleja, Pancho Jamlig and Rey Feria. The most enjoyable part

was when the parents and the participants joined Gelo Bautista, Migs Calleja, Paul Obusan, Kuya Randy Feria in dancing the "Dip-dip" backed by the music ministry.

After the retreat, everyone wanted to continue, nobody wanted to leave. It had become a treasure deep inside our hearts. This is the beginning of new journey. A new light has shone in the north and for sure it will never fade. ✦

alabang

Gift-giving benefits under-privileged

In lieu of giving gifts to one another, Chapter Head Bobby Atendido exhorted everyone to donate to outreaches and charitable institutions specially chosen by the Chapter. These include the indigent communities in the Alabang area supported by the St. Jerome Emiliani and St. Susana parish; the under-privileged families living at the Clinic Site in BF Paranaque under the care of the Lord's Vineyard organization; the orphaned, abandoned and abused children under the auspices of the SOS (Save Our Souls) Children's Villages Philippines

particularly located at Mindanao Drive, Ayala-Alabang.

The Alabang Chapter Ladies' Breakfast group has been supporting the Lord's Vineyard for several years now through its FEED THE HUNGRY PROGRAM at the Clinic Site. Around 600 depressed families – widows, orphans, the aged and poor families with no less than five children – are beneficiaries of their charitable endeavor.

The Alabang Chapter Children's Formation Group, on the other hand, supports the SOS Children's Villages organization. ✦

Bowling tourney ends

To foster fun and camaraderie among the members, the Chapter sponsored a five-week long bowling tournament. The winners were:

MEN'S CHAMPION	: TEAM JAMES (LIGHT BLUE)
SECOND PLACE	: TEAM MATTHEW (YELLOW)
THIRD PLACE	: TEAM PETER (GREY)
LADIES' CHAMPION	: TEAM MARY (GREY)
SECOND PLACE	: TEAM ELIZABETH (LIGHT BLUE)
THIRD PLACE	: TEAM SARAH (DARK BLUE)
SINGLES MEN	: TOM GUIRREY (TEAM PETER) with a score of 245
SINGLES LADIES	: LILIA GUIRREY (TEAM MARY) with a score of 176
DOUBLE'S MEN	: SERGE DE LA FUENTE (TEAM ANDREW) with a score of 397
DOUBLE'S LADIES	: LILIA GUIRREY (TEAM MARY) with a score of 331

The Alabang Chapter's overall Sports Committee was chaired by Tiggs Caronongan. The Bowling Tournament Head was Eddie Garcia. In-charge of the various committees for the tournament were Ed Limcangco, Sponsorship; Dinky Dumuk, Trophies and Prizes; Orly Bautista, Physical Arrangement; Raymond Rosales, Publications; Gerry Espiridion, Statistics. ✦

And then there was golf

Ed Limcangco won the much-coveted PALACIOS CUP, a golf tournament sponsored by the Chapter in memory of its dearly departed brother Bobby Palacios. Ed garnered the Garnet Glass cup exquisitely designed by another brother Sonny Liwanag by winning 3 monthly tournaments. The Palacios Cup began in mid-1998 and ended in October 1999.

After the Palacios Cup, the BCBP Alabang Golf Club headed by Ed Limcangco, launched the MILLENNIUM CUP last November. Tiggs Caronongan won the first leg of the tourney. ✦



Colorful Christmas get-together held

The main ballroom of the Ayala-Alabang Country Club glowed with the different colors of the season as the Chapter celebrated its Christmas Party last December 12, 1999. The members came in bright colors with red as the predominant hue. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the different units. The much-vaunted *Emphysema* group whose members include some of the Chapter's elders led by Chapter Head Bobby Atendido himself sang romantically sweet Christmas carols. The Alabang Chapter Music Ministry Group likewise rendered four Yuletide songs. Ballroom dancing capped the evening.

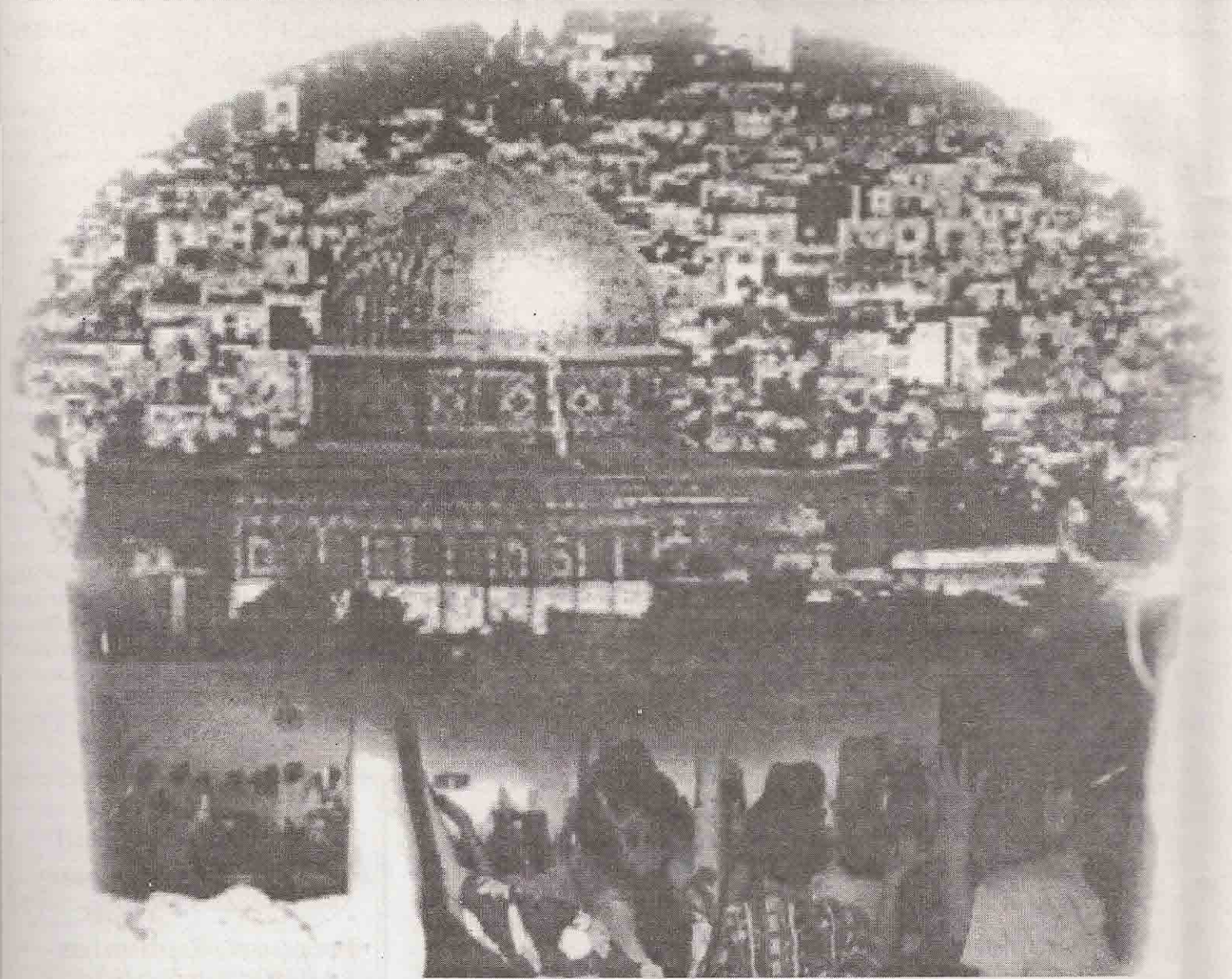
Previous to the chapter's Christmas Party, members prepared for the season of Advent, with a half-day recollection last December 4, 1999 at the Ayala-Alabang Country Club. The seasoned and renowned retreat master, Fr. Larry Tan of Don Bosco, gave the talk, which was very well received by the participants. The success of this activity spurs the Chapter to invite Fr. Larry to give more soul-stirring talks in the future. A Holy Mass ended the recollection. ✦

20th Anniversary
Subic
Freeport, Zambales
April 28-30 2000
REGISTER NOW!

20th Anniversary Commemorative Sticker
(above) now available

20th
National
Anniversary
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Freeport, Zambales
April 28-30 2000
REGISTER NOW!

20th Anniversary Commemorative Sticker
(above) now available



*Last November BCBP chapter and outreach heads gathered in Baguio with Fr. Herb Schneider for the annual BCBP leaders' weekend retreat. Reflections centered around the meaning of the Jubilee Year in terms of our freedom as Christians and our responsibility for sharing God's blessings, and on Jesus, the Book of Revelation and the New Jerusalem as a real city with real people. Nancy shares with us some of her notes and reflections to help us respond to Fr. Herb's challenge: **Where do we begin to shape our New Jerusalem? How do we answer God's call for us to build the Holy City on a spiritual level in the BCBP?***

The New Jerusalem: The Real City of Today

By Nancy Catan

"Contrary to popular belief, the New Jerusalem, City of the Living God, spoken of in the Book of Revelation is not somewhere up there in heaven, but it is a real city, a real community, with real people and real relationships."

With this startling statement for an opener Fr. Herb Schneider proceeded to explain the relevance of the Johannine Apocalypse, or Book of Revelation, to our life situation today. He particularly compared the New Jerusalem to the Christian community and then to the BCBP.

*To answer the question
"Who is Jesus?", we need to more clearly
understand what God is trying to tell us in
the Book of Revelation.*

In this Year of Jubilee we are asked to confront the question: Who is Jesus? And to do this we must turn to a study of the Book of Revelation. Fr. Herb also recommends reading the Apostolic Exhortation "Ecclesia en Asia", available on the Internet at www.vatican.va. These readings talk about today and give us a mission. The mission of bringing the heavenly Jerusalem to earth. The mission of strengthening the Church as a counter-culture to the world. And how do we do this? By making our respective communities (parishes, the BCBP, etc.) mirrors reflecting the biblical New Jerusalem. However, according to Fr. Herb, to do this properly we need to more clearly understand what God is trying to tell us in the Book of Revelation.

"One like a son of man"

Much of St. John's visions in the Book of Revelation are written in the language of symbols and visions. For instance as we look at Rev. 1:12 ff, the number 7 signifies perfection, the ankle-length robe denotes a prince or high priest. White hair tells us that this "one like a son of man" is immortal. "His eyes were like a fiery flame" emphasizing that nothing can be hidden from God's eyes. Verse 15 refers to the power of the Word of God. With the seven stars in his right hand, He holds the perfection of creation. These seven stars can also refer to the angels of the seven churches. This "one like a son of man" walks among the golden lampstands (v.13), again a reference to the churches. With a sharp two-edged sword, His Word, he can destroy a church as well as build it up for all-powerful is the Lord. He is with us; it is only our rejection of Him that prevents us from realizing His glory now, the glory of his face shining "like the sun at its brightest" (v.16).

The Lord reveals to St. John exactly what He expects from his people. God has absolute sovereignty and the only way to approach Him is in worship (4:9-11; 5:8-14). Chapter 5 specifically refers to Jesus as "a Lamb that seemed to have been slain" (5:6) and describes him as being all-powerful – "having seven horns" – and as having the fullness of the Spirit of God – "seven eyes". He receives the responsibility for the history of salvation – "the scroll" – and therefore brings man's salvation to completion (5:7). Jesus controls our destiny. He is the light and life of everyone in heaven as evidenced in the mighty sounds of praise and worship. We also see in this chapter the Holy Trinity spoken of as being God the Father, Jesus Christ, and His people in the Churches.

The drama unfolds

But life is not all wonder and glory. In chapter 12 we see the counter-players come into action. The woman refers mainly to the people of old Israel, although some modern theologians read between the lines and connect this woman to Mama Mary. She is pitted against the huge dragon and a great struggle ensues between God and the devil, between good and evil. When the dragon loses the battle, he goes off to "wage war against the rest of her offspring" (12:17) meaning us, with the war being a battle to win our hearts and minds away from God. He takes his "position on the sand of the sea"

(v.18) where he can mirror himself in the sea, considered in apocalyptic terms the reservoir of evil.

As St. John's visions continue, kingdoms are described as tyrannical rulers with their political power called by the devil out of the sea (13:1 ff. — The First Beast). However the devil keeps back some of his power using culture, political systems and commerce as his subtle instruments of war in leading man to a way of life that is not of God. Then the Second Beast appears (v.11) with two horns like a lamb but speaking like a dragon. This is the beast of Propaganda that excels in deceit, honey-coated lies and false prophecies. Verse 18 emphasizes our need for wisdom in discerning what is true and what is false. St. John seems to be telling us, "Don't buy into just any system that promises prosperity. Check to see whether this prosperity is wearing the disguised mark of the beast. Be wise and only follow God's system."

In chapter 17 ff. we read vivid descriptions of a harlot and then the bride of the Lamb. The harlot depicts a city of corruption and death contrasted with the bride of the Lamb, the symbol of the light and hope found in the Christian community. Over and over is emphasized the danger of compromise with the punishment of Babylon and the destruction of pagan nations giving us a picture of what happens to those who compromise their focus on the One God and the Lamb.

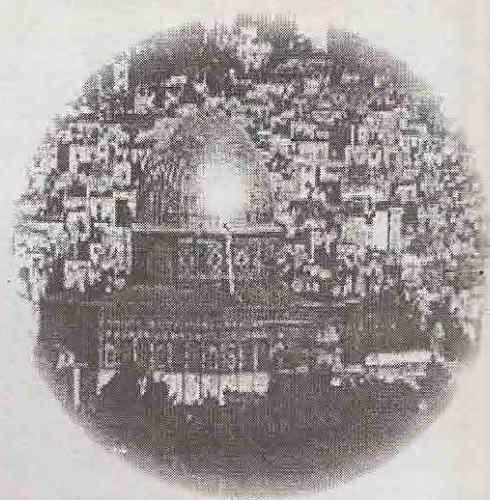
What do we need to do?

It is in the light of these visions that we can now better understand the instructions given to the seven churches (2:1-3:23), instructions that are applicable to every Christian community and church today.

The church in Ephesus had lost the fervor of its first love even though its works were commendable; the Lord God tells them to repent, return to the fire of their first love for God and restore relationships in their community. He admonishes the church in Smyrna to remain faithful despite hardships and suffering, even unto death. Pergamum was a pagan city and so to the faithful there the Lord God emphasizes "no compromise":

To the Christians in Thyatira his message is to not tolerate the enemy within. He brands the church in Sardis as "having the reputation of being alive, but you are dead" (3:1), and tells them to be watchful and strengthen what is left or else the church will die. He praises the church in Philadelphia, for despite the fact that the people were poor and powerless, they kept His word and did not deny His name; they endured in the faith.

But it is to the church in Laodicea that the Lord God has some of his most biting words. He calls them lukewarm, miserable, poor, blind and naked. In fact, the Laodiceans were prosperous and well-off; however, they spoke as Christians but they did not



The New Jerusalem, the City of the Living God: Qualities of a Christian Community Revelation 21 and 22

The New Jerusalem	Verse	Our Community
"clear as glass"	21:18	Should be transparent in appearance, purpose and activities.
"its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb"	21:22	Should have the presence of the Lord God and His Son Jesus Christ
"the glory of God gave it light... nations will walk by its light"	21:23, 24	Should reflect this glory and light not only in our community but in our respective marketplaces.
"the river of life-giving water... flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of its street"	22:1, 2	Should have the life-giving and life-nourishing Spirit of God in its center and also in the center of our lives.
"the tree of life that produces fruit twelve times a year"	22:2	Imagine what the BCBP would be like if BCLPs were held every month!!! If each of us were able to bring at least one newcomer to the breakfast every month!!!
"the leaves of the trees serve as medicine for the nations"	22:2	Should be a source of healing for all members and their families and marketplaces.
"its gates will never be shut"	21:25	Should open its arms in welcome to all who are interested to come in.
"The nations will walk by its light, and to it the kings of the earth will bring their treasure."	21:24	Should have members who walk their talk, and live out their commitment. This includes tithing.
"The treasure and wealth of the nations will be brought there"	21:26	Should have sufficient resources to carry out its mission and vision and evangelization programs.
"his servants will worship him" "Worship God."	22:3 22:9	Should be a community full of praise and worship of the One God.
"Let... the one who wants it receive the gift of life-giving water."	22:17	Should provide a support system that enables its members to receive God's gifts and promises.
"I warn everyone who hears the prophetic words in this book....."	22:18, 19	Should proclaim His Word and His coming without adding or subtracting from the message of Good News.
Blessed are they who wash their robes... "The righteous must still do right"	22:14 22:11	We need to do our part in keeping our community alive in Christ. This could include sharing and caring, tithing our time, treasure and talents, as well as keeping our own lives in good order.
"He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them."	21:13	Our God is a god of order. So, too, should our community be a community of order, under the headship of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
"the river of life-giving water... on either side of the river grew the tree of life..."	22:1, 2	In the river of life-giving water and in the tree of life we can see God's never-ending grace that gives life to those who are nourished by it. As we enjoy God's grace, we should also be unending in our persistence, faithfulness, worship, good works, generosity, love and righteousness.

live out the Christian reality. He threatens to spit them out of his mouth for their refusal to take a firm stand, either for God or against God.

At this point, Fr. Herb reminded us that the Year of the Great Jubilee, this year 2000, requires our total commitment to God the Father, to Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. And that we should check out the areas in which these seven churches failed to meet God's standards, compare them with our own life standards and practices, and in the areas we fall short, to do something about them – now and not tomorrow! Only then will we be able to enjoy the beautiful promises that the Lord makes to each of these churches.

*The devil uses culture, political systems
and commerce as his instruments of war.*

We are the real city

The last two chapters of the Book of Revelation, chapters 21 and 22, contain a vision of redeemed humanity living in the New Jerusalem in a New Heaven and a New Earth. We catch a glimpse of the wonder of the Holy City where God "will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away" (21:3-4).

This New Jerusalem is a real city, a real community with real relationships. Fr. Herb encourages us to see the Holy City's contours and outlines in our Christian community, in the BCBP. Like a city, we have an organization, a way of life and a shared culture. In our community we enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit, the River of Life that gives life to all who drink.

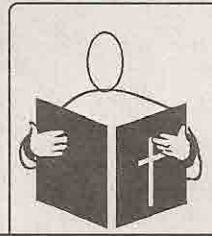
God is our temple

St. John saw "no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God almighty and the Lamb" (21:22). We need to see God as our temple, not merely some building. We are the ones who bring the Holy City down into our milieu and give it reality within our community. We are the ones who are the temple of God: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16) We need to experience the love of God in each other and we need to be able to let others see Christ in us.

With God as the temple in our city, there is no darkness nor confusion for the glory of God gives us light together with the light from the lamp of the Lamb (Rev. 21:23).

We are asked to bring our treasure into this temple (v.24,26). God is not only expecting us to gladly, abundantly and joyfully tithe but He also asks us to assume responsibility for our community, for our City of God by seeing to it that nothing unclean will spoil its beauty and purpose.

The New Jerusalem described in chapters 21 and 22 shows us the qualities of the community that God wants us to be. These qualities are summarized in the table accompanying this article. Reflecting on them can surely give us valuable insights as to how we can transform our Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals into the New Jerusalem of the marketplace, a city that God will truly be pleased with. Then we can sincerely cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus!" And in the closing words of the Book of Revelation: May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with us all as we eagerly await his coming. ✱



BIBLE SHARING

Looking closer

As you read and reflect on Christ's instructions to the seven churches, found in Revelation 2:1-3:22, consider some of these questions to begin your sharing:

1. The Church in Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7): In what ways have you lost your first love for Christ? What has helped you to keep the fire of that love alive? What can you do to let this fire burn stronger and brighter?
2. The Church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11): Has it been harder for you to live out your faith when you've been poor, or when you've had enough money? Why? In what ways do you feel spiritually poor? Spiritually rich?
3. The Church in Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17): What cultural influences distract you from your relationship with Christ? How subtle are these influences in your life? How direct? What weapons has God given you to do battle with?
4. The Church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29): Who or what has played a role similar to Jezebel in your life? How? How did the Lord free you from that influence?
5. The Church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6): If Jesus addressed this "wake-up call" to you, what would he want you to strengthen? Right now, would Jesus need a fire alarm to wake you up, or would a quiet call do it? Why?
6. The Church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13): What open doors has Christ placed before you? How have you taken advantage of the pathways he's made available to you? What are some closed doors he's placed in your life? How have you responded to each of these closed doors?
7. The Church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22): If Jesus took your spiritual temperature today, what would he find? Why? What is Jesus waiting for at the door of your life?
8. Which of the promises that Christ makes to each of the churches would you most like to come to reality in your life? Why? What do you resolve to do to be able to claim these promises?

Ronnie Caballero. The task of running the Kapatiran as we enter the year 2000, the Year of Jubilee, is a great challenge, says Ronnie. His vision for the Kapatiran includes having more and more contributions of news, features, focus articles and pictures coming from all over the BCBP country, making the magazine truly an informative, inspirational and unifying factor in our growth as BCBP members. And enabling members in both the nearby and far-flung chapters and outreaches to get to know each other better as brothers and sisters in Christ.



Nancy R. Catan. Nancy has been quite busy these last few months enjoying the presence of her sister Mary who is visiting her for the first time here in Manila. Despite her sight-seeing jaunts and spending a week on the beach in Dumaguete, Nancy did find time to help us with this issue. Her Back to Basics article on the New Jerusalem challenges us to build our BCBP community as a mirror image of the New Jerusalem, especially in this grace-filled time of Jubilee.



Eddie Mendoza. As Christian businessmen and professionals we need to seek ways to realize our full potential as evangelizers and children of God. This is part of his task as BCBP Greenhills chapter head – to see that each of the Greenhills members will be able to find fulfillment in following Christ in the BCBP. In his column Eddie shares with us his thoughts on how we can do this in our own respective chapters or outreaches and in our own respective marketplaces.



Annie Salvador. We see Annie in this issue not merely as a regular Family Life columnist, but as the wife of Nelson, chapter head of Makati. As wife of the chapter head, Annie shares his vision for the chapter and lends to it her own brand of humorous wisdom as she looks at the cost of being a full-time mother, wife, etc., etc., etc.



Fernando de Larrazabal. Tito Larry is an inspiration to us all with his never-ending concern for the BCBP family and his strong spirituality and views that he does not hesitate to share with others when the opportunity presents itself. In his reflections, he compares the times of 2000 years ago with the events of today and prays that Jesus will give us and everyone in responsible positions of authority the grace and wisdom to overcome the myriad problems facing us in this New Millenium.



Sammy M. Ulanday. After victoriously surviving a hectic holiday season in terms of BCBP life and family happenings (read his wife Veron's sharing, p.27), Sammy exhorts us to work together with one mind and one heart toward making the BCBP's 20th anniversary celebration a rousing success.



Francis J. Kong. Joining us in this issue is Francis Kong, a highly respected Filipino-Chinese Christian leader in the garments industry. Author of "Only The REAL Matters", a book of short musings on what it means to be a practical Christian in today's business milieu, Francis has given the Kapatiran permission to use and reprint materials from this book. Thank you very much, Francis. We are sure that the BCBP members will be challenged and inspired by your thoughts.



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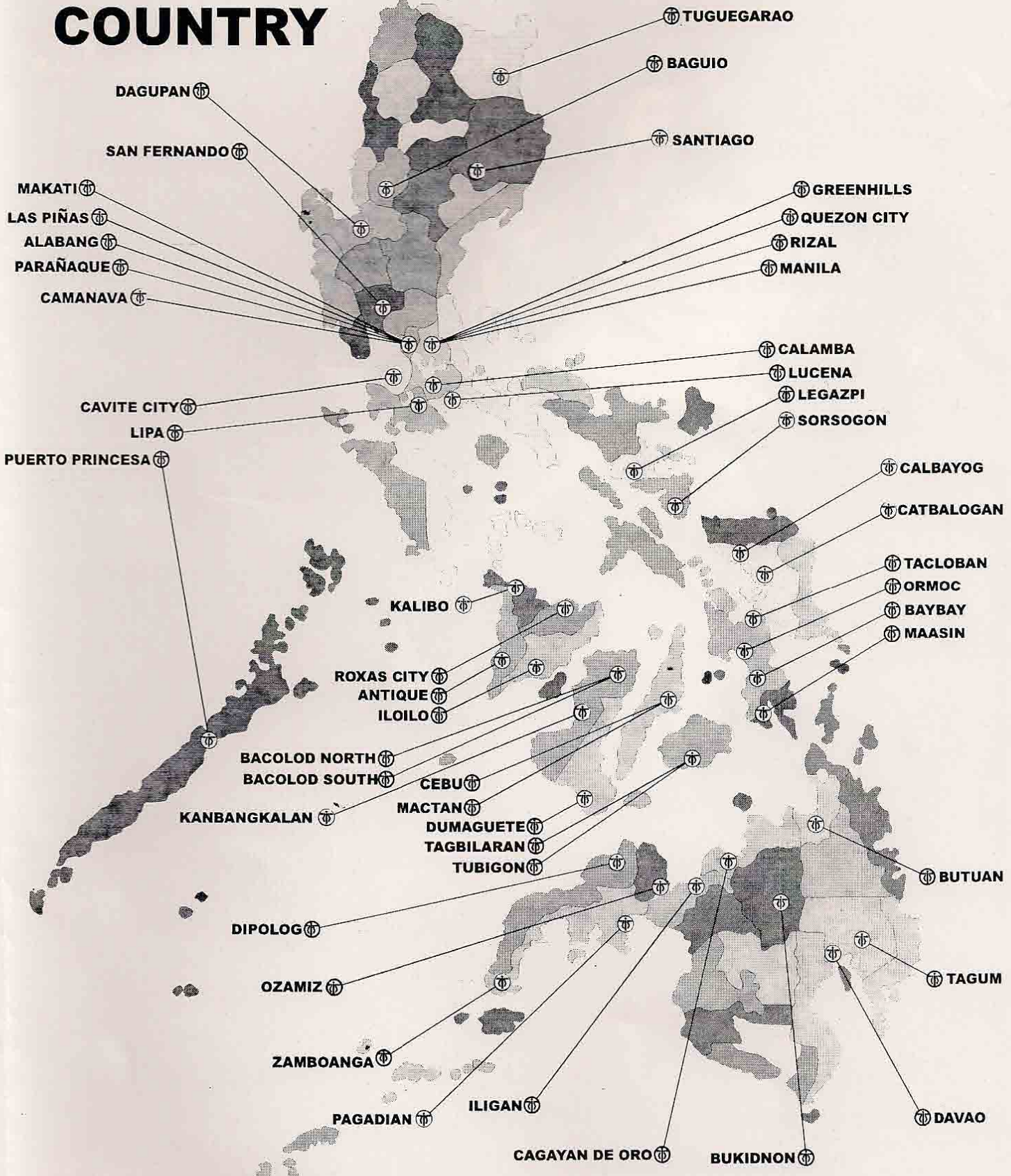
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THE BCBP COUNTRY



Give your business a new face.

Is your business running your life?

Then it's probably time to take a new perspective.

Give your business a new focus. A new face.

The face of Peace. The face of Love.

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

After all, you are His business.



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