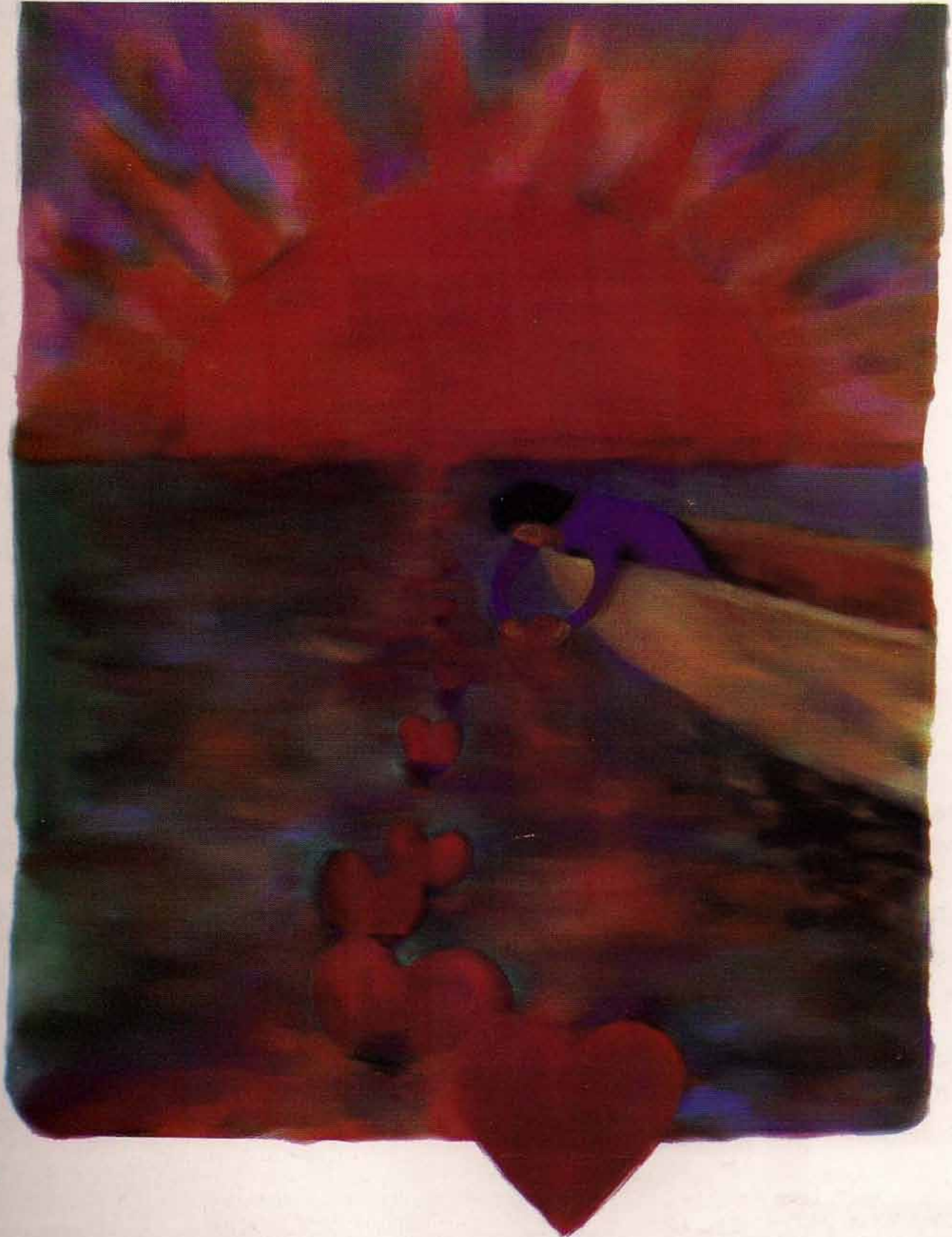


Kapatiran

Vol. XIV Issue 2

MARCH - APRIL 2000



BCRP 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

CATBALOGAN: Maqueda Bay Hotel, Tomalistas Dist.,
Catbalogan, Samar,

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

DAVAO: Terraza Millesa (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, Sabarig, 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, T. Morato Ave.

RIZAL: Manila East Golf Club, Taytay, Rizal

ROXAS: Kanami Restaurant

TACLOBAN: YamYam Food Lane, Salazar 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 Millesa (4th Sat.)

ILOILO: Amigo Terraces Hotel (1st 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, T. Morato Ave. (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: Terraza Millesa (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.)

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

PUERTO PRINCESA: Legend Hotel (1st Sat.)

QUEZON CITY: Max's Restaurant, T. Morato Ave. (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 Palao Hall (1st & 3rd Sat.)

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

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OUR COVER



Fishermen seed the waters with fingerlings in hope of a bountiful catch of fish in the future. Likewise, we as Christian stewards need to seed the waters of our marketplaces with love in order that transformational changes for a more Christian environment and morality may occur. Our Cover illustration adapted from an illustration by Jan Stamm, Discipleship Journal Issue #114 Nov./Dec 1999, depicts the Christian steward as a fisherman/woman spreading the Good News of Love on the waters of Love.

Our theme for this issue focuses on what we believe to be a fundamental aspect of being a Christian and BCBP member—stewardship. We offer you a look at stewardship as a legacy of love that we can hand down from generation to generation, much as God our Father has handed down to us from the time of Creation. Then we bring this down to practical terms with a sharing, a tribute, and a look at the Steward Leaders Training course offered to BCBP members. The three chapters in focus, Bacolod South, Parañaque and Tuguegarao, give us a good picture of the BCBP process from the first breakfast to chapterhood. And we invite you to reflect on our special feature page on Peace, something that is so badly needed in our communities and country today. So get your cup of coffee or tea, sit down, put your feet up and enjoy the wealth of material that is in this Kapatiran. Happy reading!

Editor's Note



whose image DO YOU BEAR?

Last March 11, 2000 while on a visit to our brothers and sisters in Legazpi, Albay I was “volunteered” as one of the guests on a local TV broadcast of the Archdiocese of Legaspi-sponsored show “The Jubilee of Businessmen” (courtesy of PBN TV 6, Sis. Brenda Locsin). While I never have been on TV before, I was nervous. Not because I may be discovered as a new TV talent, but because of the chosen topic for discussion, “The Christian and His Money – Focus: Stewardship”.

My worry was not about what to say, modesty aside. Because we in the BCBP have in our mainstream teachings these very topics of which I have been an assigned speaker for such as The Christian and His Money – BCLP Culture Talk, the Steward Leader’s training and the Brotherhood’s Businessman’s Retreat (BCBR). But so have many others. Other brothers and sisters have taken their turn to stand up and be counted as witnesses of Christ’s lordship over their businesses and professions. But to say it on TV was something else. It was almost as if the Lord himself were asking this steward an accounting of his faith learning.

It was a leap of faith to do so. But the opportunity was there to glorify God. So four of us BCBP brothers found ourselves the next day sweating before the TV cameras. Not because it was hot but more so because we have to mean what we say. WALK OUR TALK. We

must have had the biggest lumps in our throats for all of Bicol to see.

But we took comfort in God’s word that week in Mark 12:16. When looking upon the *denarius* Christ said, **“Whose image and inscription is this?” They replied to him, “Caesar’s.” At that Jesus said to them, “Give to Cesar what is Cesar’s and give to God what is God’s.” Their amazement at him knew no bounds.**

Indeed amazement was what we felt that day because God provided us with what to say. There was no script to read nor outline to follow. Just simple witnessing. The simple witnessing of what Mark 12 says – WE ARE IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD – THEREFORE WE MUST GIVE OUR VERY SELVES – OUR HEART AND SOUL TO GOD. – BECAUSE WE BELONG TO GOD!

But truth hurts and the sword of the Spirit cuts both ways. The Spirit rebukes the evil and their ways but it prunes and disciplines the righteous as well. Which is more painful? Either way, I would say offhand. But in reality as we know it in the Brotherhood the way of the righteous is more painful.

The evil upon hearing the sharpest rebuke may just shrug their shoulders and literally laugh their way to the bank. Dr. Scott Hahn in one of his lectures said, **“THE WORST PUNISHMENT GOD COULD GIVE FOR YOUR SIN IS TO LET YOU ENJOY IT!”**

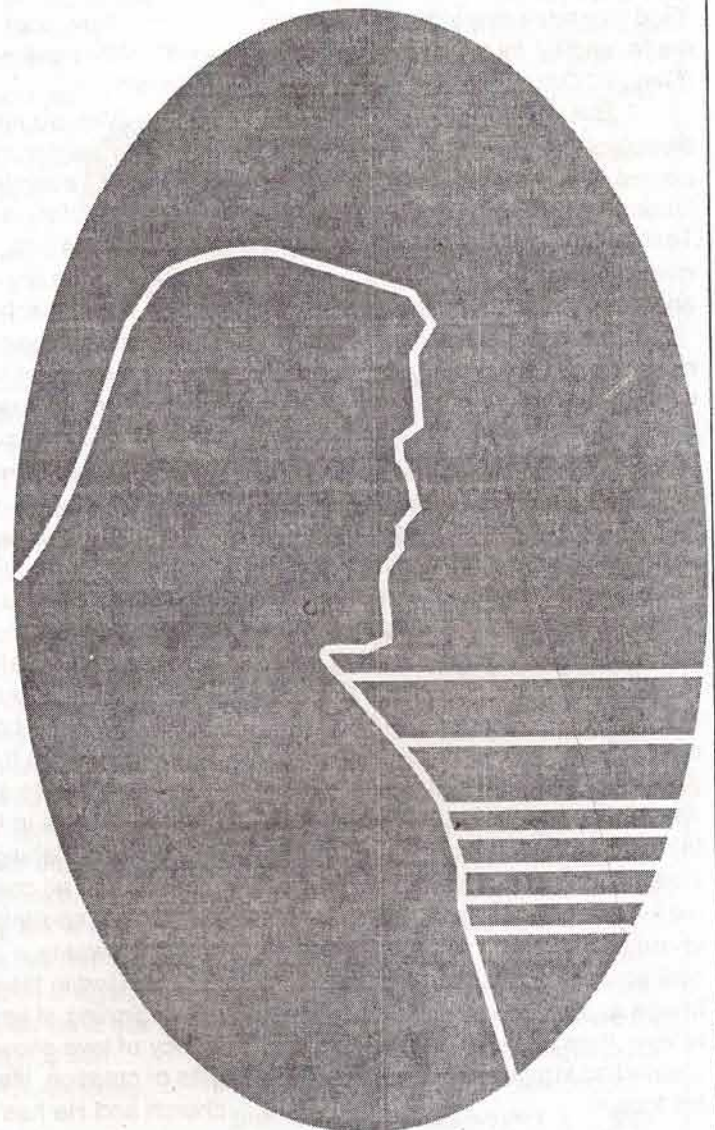
Get up from the floor, because this one floored me, too. Yes, the worst is for God to allow you to enjoy your sin because that makes it doubly difficult to be convicted and give it up. Whatever form your sin may take whether it be an attractive, "caring" mistress, a regular payola envelope, a Rolex watch for looking the other way in overpriced government projects, the immaculate golf greens of your country club courtesy of your smuggling operations, a shiny BMW 7-series limousine or an elegant Lincoln Navigator from your misdeclared company taxes, sacks of money in your trunk from 'jueteng' operations, a Mediterranean-style mansion in Ayala Alabang from your insider trading gains, bulging Swiss accounts from your shabu operations, etc., etc., all without exception will have an irresistible pull DOWNWARDS in case you are not looking. But nonetheless, YOU WILL ENJOY THE RIDE. DEFINITELY! But the destination will be that sea of fire surrounded by the endless gnashing of teeth. And when you are there guess whose image you will bear.

In BCBP Action Group meetings and fellowships it is a common experience to hear the lament of brothers and sisters groaning under the process of God's pruning. Their dilemma would range from the reduced profits or imminent company closure because of the filing of the correct taxes, payment of just wages or even just minimum wage, agonizing how to downsize or remove employees, how to keep operating at a loss and keeping employees when bank interest alone will give big gains, whether to pay the bribe to the B.I.R. official in order to keep operating, etc., etc. — all of these represent the struggle of the righteous towards holiness, towards becoming the image and likeness of God.

One priest told me in the confessional that what is important is that we maintain the struggle even though we may fall. What matters is our determination to rise up again. I am reminded of that tale of a man who was visited by an angel. He was simply asked to keep on rolling this huge boulder towards the peak of a steep hill. Whenever his strength would desert him he would simply step aside and watch the boulder roll down. "How long must I do this?" asked the man. "Just keep on doing it until I tell you to stop," said the angel. Days passed. Weeks passed. Months passed. The man faithfully carried out the seemingly nonsensical task. One day the angel came by and told him to stop. "What was the purpose of this whole exercise?" the man inquired. "See how strong and sinewy

you have become. Your character has been molded from the work and determination under the sun. Now you are ready for God's work!" replied the angel.

Without the right spiritual muscles, we will not be able to budge the boulder of corruption and immorality in the marketplace, but daily we must continue to struggle. Even though we may fall, we must be ready to stand up to face more of the same. Not made easier by the ridicule and incredulous stares of co-workers and co-investors, we must bravely carve out our holiness, a product of our leap in faith. Even though we may be voted down in the board rooms and sneered at by the B.I.R. examiner, we must relentlessly push. For one day we will gain the strength to push all the way to the peak and know for sure whose image we bear — THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! —Ronnie Caballero *



STEWARDSHIP: creating a legacy of Love

Nancy
Catan,
Manila
Chapter

"In the beginning ... God created the heavens and the earth." He liked what He saw and continued on creating – light, day and night, sky, water and land, seed plants and fruit trees, the sun, moon and stars, animals, fish and birds, and man and woman. "God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good." (Gen. 1:1-31)

This is how the unending and awesome story of God's love for us begins. As we read on in the book of Genesis and throughout the Old Testament we are caught up in the magnificent unfolding of how greatly and deeply God loves us.

But it is in the New Testament that we are directly confronted with God's love in an intimate personal way. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." (Jn. 3:16) John further involves us in God's love in his letters by stating "See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are." (1 Jn. 3:1) And in one of Scripture's clearest and most powerful statements on God's love, 1 Jn. 4:7-21, John tells us in no uncertain terms that "God is love" and his love is brought to perfection in us as we live in love and reach out in love to our brothers and sisters. Therefore since God created us in his image as his children, and since He is love, then it follows that we are created as images and channels of his love.

How does God want us to love? What and who does He want us to love?

We are commanded to love God, our neighbors, our brothers and sisters, our enemies, those who are unloved and/or uncared for. (Matt. 22:36-40; 5:43-48; 25:31-46; John 13:34) These are only a few of the many, many teachings Jesus gives us in the gospels on the subject of love.

We must also love and care for the earth He has given to us. When God settled Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, he instructed them "to cultivate and care for it." (Gen. 2:15) We read in Isaiah, chapter 45, verse 18: "For thus says the Lord, The creator of the heavens, who is God, the designer and maker of the earth who established it, Not creating it to be a waste, but designing it to be lived in: I am the Lord, and there is no other." In Psalm 8 the psalmist sings of the Lord God's glorious plan for mankind: for us to be stewards over all creation, nourishing and caring for his creation and all creatures, not desecrating, spoiling, killing or letting any go to waste.

God in his wisdom has from the beginning of time created for us a legacy of love showering us with his gifts of creation, life, community and church and He has given us the

responsibilities of being stewards of this love and these gifts. Paul calls this "the stewardship of God's grace" (Eph. 3:2) and says that we are "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. 4:1) A mind-blowing thought, isn't it? You and I are stewards of the mysteries of God, of the uniqueness and wonder of God's infinite and unconditional love.

There are basically three types of stewardships entrusted to each one of us: the stewardship over ourselves, the stewardship over our relationships, and in general the stewardships over things, property, finances, organizational areas of responsibility in our workplaces, our natural environment, and the world within our reach. Stewardship over ourselves includes taking care of our physical, mental, and emotional health, our intellectual and creative ability, and above all our relationship with God or our spiritual health. We need to learn to love and care for ourselves so that we will be in sterling condition to love and nourish relationships with others. And all of this must be accomplished and lived through love, in love and with love – well anchored and based on God's love.

Paul further describes the limitlessness of our stewardship responsibility in his letter to the faithful

We are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

in Ephesus. He prays that "you, rooted and grounded in love, may have the strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:17-19) There is just so much to His love that we, his stewards, can never know more than a taste in our lifetime.

God's love is so different from the other kinds of love we normally experience. His love is the only love that has absolutely no conditions, no hidden agenda. God has no ego needs – and that means he is free to love each of us uniquely for who we are, His children. We do not need to do anything or become anything. He loves us as we are, as He created us, unconditionally and first, even before we come to know and to love him. Yes, God's love is unconditional but there is responsibility that goes with it. It is this very quality of his divine love that enables us to respond to Him freely and joyfully. As we experience the warm embrace of God's love every day, we are emboldened to step out in faith to share Him with those people we meet.

A good and faithful steward is one who manages his master's possessions in such a way as to return these possessions to his master in a better and more improved condition than when they were first given to him. The loyal steward is ready to do this upon the call of his master, at any time, willingly to give an honest accounting of his stewardship.

In practical terms what does this mean? God has given me life; if He calls me back to him tonight, am I ready and willing to account for what I have (or haven't) done with my life? God has blessed me with a loving

spouse, children and grandchildren; am I able to communicate God's love to them? God has endowed me with various skills and talents; am I using them for His glory? He has provided me a means of livelihood; are our employees able to see Christ in me? He has led me into the BCBP; does my BCBP service nourish his legacy of love? We need to examine our stewardship in every area of our lives, both the big areas (family, church, livelihood, etc.) as well as the smaller ones (being kind to our helpers, hospitable to strangers, etc.).

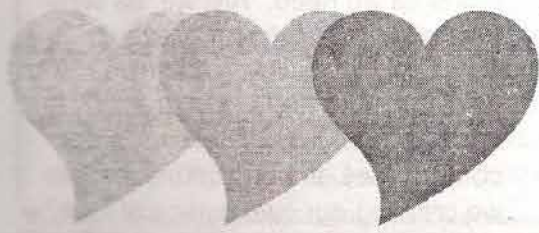
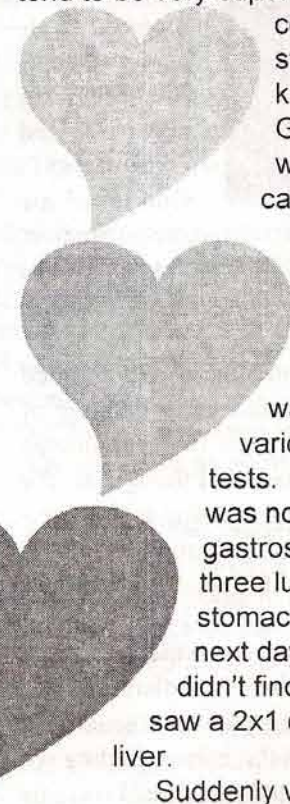
My initial introduction to the principles of Christian stewardship was during my BCLP in 1985 (Makati BCLP 9). But it only came to have a deeper meaning for me when I took the Steward Leaders Training seminar given by Fr. Herb Schneider in 1994. At that time after conscientiously doing the reflection exercises I was able to formulate my personal Principle and Foundation (P & F) statement. It begins with: "I will be an anchor of love for my family and friends with Mary as my model."

Looking back I realize that at that time, this was more of an intellectual exercise for me, fairly superficial as far as being a life-changing concept. Even as I strove to live out my P & F, it was only after taking the SLT Facilitators' Course in 1997 and actively giving SLTs since then that I began to realize the ever deepening meaning of stewardship love. And Mama Mary is certainly a role model in this! Not only did she live her whole life in love but she left us a legacy of love to inspire and guide us in our daily lives, a legacy that is still actively impacting our lives today, 2000 years later.

However, many times we tend to be very superficial and grow complacent in our stewardship. I know I was – until God jolted me with a "wake-up call" last March. I went to a doctor for treatment of a recurring hyperacidity condition and was scheduled for various routine tests. The ultrasound was normal but the gastroscopy showed three lumps in my stomach lining. The next day a CT scan didn't find the lumps but saw a 2x1 cm. mass in my liver.

Suddenly without warning I was face to face with my own mortality ... and I found I wasn't as prepared for it as I had thought I was! (Are we ever really, really prepared for it?) I asked myself, am I ready and willing to give a stewardship accounting to God of the legacy of love He has given me? Have I truly been an anchor of love to my family and friends? These were and still are hard questions to have to instantly answer – like leisurely coming to class several weeks before exam time and having the professor suddenly announce that he will give the final exam that morning and the result will be your final grade determining whether you pass or fail the course, and whether or not you will graduate or flunk out! No cramming allowed!

Brothers and sisters in BCBP Makati and Manila were alerted for prayers, all our employees



I have a choice!

Floren Ballares, Makati Chapter



The Lord works in mysterious ways. At a time when I already felt comfortable with my so called "spirituality", God jolted me

out of it to make some improvements. But, in God's dictionary, improvement does not mean dressing up but dressing down.

My husband Oscar and I joined the first Steward Leadership Training of the Makati Chapter last 1997 because as unit leaders, we had to. I thought all the while it was about leadership per se - getting what you want, getting things done. I was not prepared for what it was meant to be.

We were merely in the first hours of the program when God disturbed my moral consciousness with the freedom He has given me and the corresponding responsibility expected from me. I remem-

ber asking if what we're attending was a leadership training or a spiritual retreat. The title was deceiving.

The talks and group dynamics on values affected me so much as I found myself to be such a complicated person. I thought being good was being everything. That day, God reduced me to the minutest person I could be.

My mission and vision changed. These became anchored on the values and virtues which were most important to me. My values were reduced to only 3 - love, justice and humility. *Dati, wholesales ang values ko. Akala ko mas marami, mas mahusay.* My previous vision and mission were selfish. God was not there, it was all me. It was full of pride. Before we ended the seminar, I was able to formulate my vision and it was inspired by Colossians. I want the Lord Jesus to present me to the Father free of reproach and blame. A week later, God in His goodness showed me a bookmark which clearly stated my personal mission. It came from Micah 6:8. My mission in life now is to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with my God.

My relationship with my husband improved tremendously. We learned in the seminar that the cause of most of our problems is our differences in values. It took us 17 years to learn that. With God's grace, we both resolved to "marry" our values. We also agreed to begin our day by attending the Mass together to gain guidance and strength from our Lord. And should I say, the Eucharist has done miracles in our lives.

The most important learning I got from the training is that I HAVE A CHOICE. I can choose to be lost in my daily business and forget about the Lord or the people he sent me to care. I can choose to be enveloped in my problems and be cold or angry at anyone at every given chance. I can choose to forget the Lord at times when I am deliriously happy. But that is not what the Lord is asking of me. He wants to be with me in my joy, in my distress, in my tiredness, in my anger, even in times when I just want my mind to go blank. He wants other people to see Him, hear Him, feel Him and experience Him through me. It is one tough act to do for Him. But, I CHOOSE to heed the Lord and let Him be with me at all times - whenever, wherever and whatever circumstance I am in. I CHOOSE to make good my new mission in life. PRAISE GOD! ✠

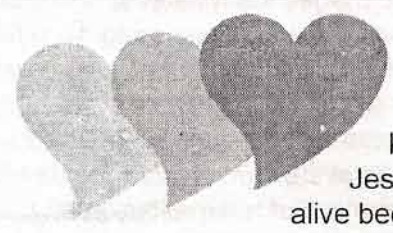
STEWARDSHIP:

nationwide were praying, masses were offered, family and friends besieged heaven with their prayers. And God heard and answered. My liver scan the following day was clear. A miracle, praise God! I'm still, medically speaking, under observation, but I am certain in faith God has healed me and is continuing to heal and strengthen me as He prepares me for even greater stewardship in his vineyard. God in his unfathomable mercy and grace has rescheduled my final exam and is giving me the opportunity to prepare more thoroughly for it!

Now that I've had my own personal Lenten season passion and cross experience, my awareness of the miracle of life, God's legacy of love and the abundance of his

blessings moment by moment (His legacy of love continuing...) brightens my outlook and sharpens my focus on the journey upward ... and on my stewardship responsibility and the necessity of building and nourishing caring and loving relationships with Him, with family and community, and yes, even with our environment. Each day becomes a new adventure!

I now realize that living a life of love is the best way to erase from my heart the fear of death. I resolved, and renew this resolve daily, to live deeply and fully in love every day - with God, with life, with Jun my husband and my family, with my neighbors in Christ - to love unconditionally and with a forgiving heart and to strive to live so people would say of me, "I



know Jesus is alive because of the way you live."

One of my favorite prayers is Psalm 16, especially verse 5: "You have given me all I have; You, O Lord, are all I need; my future is in your hands." This could well be the Christian steward's prayer. God has created a legacy of love for us, and this is all we need. Are we, as stewards of the mysteries of his love, spreading and sharing this love? Are we continuing his legacy of love? In our own way, in our families, in our communities, in our workplaces, are we creating our own legacy of love? ✠

He chose
to be a

servant



Mang Ipe Mendoza
(1917 – 2000)

I am deeply saddened by the passing away of Mang Ipe. In my 15 years in the BCBP, I have regarded Mang Ipe as one of my few role models of true Christian service. I will miss his physical presence. I will miss his words and actions that have encouraged and inspired me with my service. I will miss his laughter and positive outlook that seemed to infect anyone he encountered. I will miss him like a son will miss his father. But I am also rejoicing. Rejoicing because Mang Ipe, the brave and gallant warrior, has finally been called home by his King.

Mark Katipunan, a former Greenhills chapter head, would always tell me, "Manolet, remember that everytime you serve you must ask yourself these questions, whose kingdom am I building? Am I building God's kingdom or

True stewardship includes being a good servant as well as being a good leader. For after all, as a servant we exercise our stewardship, too, although perhaps not as noticeably as others. Mang Ipe choose to be a servant-steward and his life and acts of generosity touched the lives of so many, many people in the BCBP. We are honored to give him this Tribute of Appreciation for his example of true servant-stewardship. May the Lord through the BCBP raise up many more servant-stewards like Mang Ipe. —Editor

mine?" I'm sure that for Mang Ipe the answer was simple and clear. He never served to build his own kingdom. You see, Mang Ipe did not choose to serve. He chose to be a servant.

Mang Ipe's service was true because it was firmly grounded in a deep and personal relationship with God. It did not come through his own human effort. Mang Ipe's service was true because he found it almost impossible to distinguish the small service from the large service. Mang Ipe was not impressed with the "BIG DEAL" or titanic service or nice-sounding titles. For Mang Ipe, there was no such thing as a small service, only small and self-righteous servants.

Mang Ipe was a true Christian leader because he knew how to follow those who had responsibility over his service. Even with his obvious seniority in age, wisdom, experience, and professional success, he submitted humbly to the leadership of his community – and there lay his own greatness.

Mang Ipe's service was true because it did not require external rewards. Mang Ipe graciously accepted praise, appreciation, and human applause. But never, never did he seek these out. His service was contented in remaining "hidden". For Mang Ipe, the Lord's approval was completely sufficient.

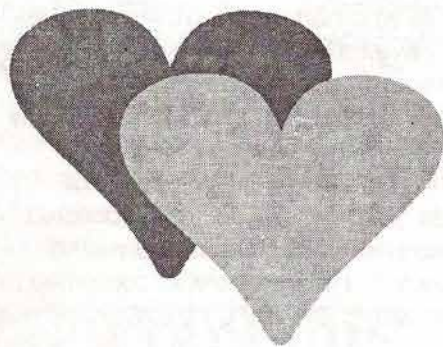
Mang Ipe's service was true because it was liberated from that obsessive need to measure results. He was purely delighted in just simply being able to serve. Mang Ipe never picked or chose whom to serve. He was indiscriminate in his service. He was, to the end, obedient to Jesus words in Mark 9:35 and I quote, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."

Mang Ipe served because he did not "feel" like it. For him, it was not a matter of mood or whim. He served simply and faithfully because there was a need for it. So for Mang Ipe, service was an integral part of his life. It was never a one shot deal. Finally, Mang Ipe's service was a service that built up the BCBP community. It was a service that was quiet and unpretentious in caring for the needs of others. And I call that simply the ministry of presence. It was just being there always to reach out and touch others. Of just being there to listen and encourage others.

To Mang Ipe, our Papang, we promise to carry the torch you have passed on to us. Please continue to pray and intercede for us in the BCBP. **-manos**

Steward Leadership Training (SLT) anyone?

Beth Ginete, Makati Chapter



In April 1997, some twenty (20) members from different chapters (i.e. Alabang, Las Pinas, Makati, Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod and Cagayan de Oro) convened in Camiguin Island. We attended the first 4-day Facilitator's Training for the Steward Leadership Training course conducted by no less than Fr. Herb Schneider, S.J., our community's spiritual director and author of this course. Prior to the facilitator's training, we also had to attend the 4-day SLT program and underwent the same lectures, exercises and group dynamics that were required from each participant of the program.

By relying on these facilitators to re-echo and teach the program to other members of their respective chapters, Fr. Herb's dream to spread the program to as many BCBP members as possible became a reality.

However, a very common and pervading misconception of the Steward Leaders Training is that it is only for leaders. Why has the course been referred to as Steward Leaders? Are all stewards, leaders? Are all leaders, stewards? What is a steward?

Fr. Herb defines the steward as a "house manager" from the Old English word *stig* meaning house and *weard* meaning guardian or manager. During the ancient times, the steward would be like a modern CEO. He would manage the household, business and servants/employees in a certain house/estate assigned to him by the owner. Therefore, a steward in this context, is a person to whom the possessions of another have been entrusted. In contrast to a leader in this modern world who is characterized by power and dominion over others, the Steward Leader is characterized by a genuine dedication to love, serve and contribute to the benefit of others, using those "possessions" entrusted to him by the owner. It is in this context

that the course poses a challenge to participants, particularly the BCBP members, to make each member realize that as a steward, he or she is called to be responsible in everything that has been entrusted to him/her by God who created and provided all these things.

The SLT is not merely a skills training or a techniques building seminar but an alternative way of living—a life where a person's values are identified and pursued, a life where his different roles and choices are directed and focused towards a purpose. One of the outputs of the program is for each participant to draw up and write down his Principle & Foundation or personal mission statement.

After my own training, I was able to establish my own Principle & Foundation and it has significantly helped me in making decisions amidst life's various choices. From earth-shaking to trivial day-to-day decisions, my Principle & Foundation has helped me resolve where and how I would spend my time and what activities I should spend my energy on. I have learned that I should take personal responsibility for the choices I make in life. Therefore, I can not point to anyone or anything when the results of my choices turn out unfavorable or not in accordance with my expectations. I am free, therefore, I can choose. I can choose to love rather than hate. I can choose to be serene rather than be in a state of turmoil or anxiety. I can choose to forgive rather than harbor a grudge and be imprisoned by the hurt another person has caused me.

The program enhances further the skills that result in closer and effective relationships. These skills are: communication and listening, delegation and time management, negotiation, problem solving and analysis. The SLT, however, is distinguished from other management seminars by its emphasis on the foundation of all these skills, that is, on unconditional love.



being BCBP members is one who influences change leading to Christ-centered behavior and practices in our sphere of work. It is expected that a member who lives out the Steward Leader principles more and more will experience a deeper personal transformation. As a member of the community, the BCBP shall become not merely an organization that a member belongs to, but an avenue to make himself or herself available for the fulfillment of God's plan and purpose for his/her life. Following the example of Jesus as the model of a Steward Leader, he or she will now live his/her life for service, contribution and dedication to the welfare of others.

BCBP is blessed to have such a rich, valuable and life-giving program available to its members. Nancy Catan has even gone beyond the BCBP to teach the Steward Leaders principles and skills to non-BCBP organizations

Jesus himself teaches us and points to Himself as an example of the Steward Leader. Therefore, a steward leader who commits to and practices these skills based on Jesus' principles and values can expect more fruitful and productive relationships with his/her family members, the business milieu or marketplace, and his community in general.

There have been many instances where I have the opportunity to practice what I learned from the SLT especially when I deal with highly and emotionally-charged real life situations. A frantic boss, a panicking client, a conflict with my husband or misunderstanding with any of my children – these situations can create such tremendous pressure and inflict hurts in the relationships if handled irresponsibly, that is, without the SLT principles and skills. Yet, after applying the skills of empathic listening, negotiation skills, problem analysis and solving founded by a deep desire to love unconditionally the other person, I am able to come out of the situation at peace, fulfilled and empowered even more to bring Christ-like love into my day-to-day relationships and situations.

As accredited facilitators, Nancy Catan and I wasted no time in convincing our chapter to schedule the program

for our members. The first SLT Course was conducted by the Makati Chapter last January 1998, followed in May 1998 and the third batch, last June 1999. To-date, we have already graduated 35 participants from the Makati Chapter, Manila and Cavite outreaches. Mem-

"Thank you for your patience and taking time to teach us these principles. It helped me re-open my life. I was healed from some painful experiences I had with some brothers and sisters. It helped me to re-focus my pains in the past."

"Keep up the good work. The knowledge you have imparted will be enough gratification when you know that people have improved somehow by having taken this course."

"Thank you. You have just given me a gift."

"I think the program is densely packed with useful materials in daily living. In fact, I wish it were a fuller, stretched-out course."

"Encourage others to take the full course considering the valuable impact it can have on their lives."

bers who have attended the programs have realized that indeed, SLT is not just an ordinary skills training seminar. Let's hear it straight from some of them... (see insets).

Are the principles of Steward Leadership applicable, relevant or even "do"able in this present "dog-eat-dog" world and time? This is the challenge that is given to those who have finished the course. Their lives should manifest a difference in the way they see their lives and how they live. The essence of

such as the Augustinian sisters and lay formators. Both of us have conducted the program for some private companies and other schools like the Don Bosco academe and Ayala Life employees. Even members who have taken the program agree that this should not be limited to the BCBP members only. They recommend this also to the following: "my spouse", "my friends", "authority and heads of big corporations and companies", "my officemates and staff".

" I have to take the time for myself so that I can become a better person. I should always be aware that as a Steward Leader, there are people who look up to me and therefore my words, thoughts and deeds should be anchored on Christian values and unconditional love."

"It made me realize that there were so many things that I -still needed to know but didn't bother to find out as I was satisfied (I thought) with my life, with what I had and knew already. I discovered I didn't like some of the things I did (either on impulse or as a habit). It gave me an opportunity to discover myself."

"As a Christian, I have the responsibility to put my value system to work in my life everyday, in all my encounters and decisions. That in order to do this, I must truly die to myself. This idea will push me to look at my life, my habits and effect change. I look forward to the results, and at the same time, feel pain at the sacrifices I need to make in the process."

" I learned that I am not only responsible to myself or my family but also the world. Normally, I leave worldly problems only to world leaders to resolve. Imagine if each person would only care and contribute and continually do this, the world will be such a nice place to live in."



"other renewal groups; we should share it with the rest so that the Philippines can be a better country as a whole."

After his own SLT, our Chapter Head, Nelson Salvador commented, *"Let us try to work for a system where all BCBP members can take this Steward Leaders Training just like the BCBR and BCMR. They don't know what they are missing! SLT is very relevant today, with economic difficulties, with more complicated working systems and relationships. Let us work hard to*

think of ways to make everybody take it."

The SLT course is a special gift to all of us. More special, because it was given to the BCBP. Like a gift, it is up to us to receive it, open it up and use it. Therefore, the next time you hear of an SLT being conducted in your respective chapters, take this as a special and rare blessing and grab the chance to attend it. None of the attendees who have gone through the program ever regreted it... neither I, nor will you.

The SLT Program

Duration: 24-30 hrs; Friday night to Sunday afternoon (ideally done on a 4-day full course program but due to time constraints of members, has been compressed to 24 hours, more or less).

Venue: Preferably live-in seminar with appropriate space and areas for group dynamics and individual meditations.

Materials and Method of Teaching: SLT Participant's Manual

(P200/manual), a load of handouts, Lecture, Group Sharing, Individual Meditations, Role Playing.

Qualifications & Other Requirements: One who is searching for a deeper meaningful and purposeful life; Come with an open mind, a cooperative heart and a willing spirit. A good sense of humor is an advantage but not required.

Facilitators available: Contact your nearest Chapter or Chapter Head.

what an unforgettable breakfast



Louie Morales
BCBP President

Looking back, this is probably the expression that I used after attending my first Brotherhood Breakfast. Some 20 years ago, a group of men came together to start this unforgettable experience which we know today as the Brotherhood Breakfast. The Breakfast is uniquely Brotherhood for up to today no other spiritual organization has successfully used a breakfast venue as an effective tool to bring Christ into the lives of businessmen and professionals. It is uniquely Brotherhood also because we have been able to propagate the same evangelization venue to over 60 cities and capitals all over the Philippines. It is one of the foundations of our Brotherhood way of life.

Personally, the Breakfast started my own walk towards Christ some 16 years ago after attending the original venue at the Makati Sports Club although I only attended one breakfast at the Makati Sports Club and in a sense asked the Lord for a "postponement" of my regular attendance. One year later they opened up the Alabang Breakfast and without much cajoling, I attended. One Breakfast led to the other and one activity in the breakfast which I will never forget is the Music Ministry. The Music Ministry somehow interested me in coming back to listen to more sharings every Saturday morning. This led to my involvement in Brotherhood music (BCBP Men's Choir) which led to the BCLP and eventually to a whole new way of life in the Brotherhood.

The Breakfast is one of the Brotherhood institutions that is solidly a good foundation for the whole evangelistic work and mission of the BCBP. It is not only a unique tool of evangelization but is probably the most effective and painless way of re-introducing Christ to the lives of businessmen and professionals. It is a foundation of the BCBP organization that we must continue to cherish and care for, so that it continues to be powerful and an unforgettable encounter for the first-timers at Breakfast. I am sure that a great majority of our brothers and sisters in the Brotherhood have had very unique experiences in either the Men's Breakfasts, the Ladies' Breakfasts or Joint Breakfasts that

are conducted in many venues of the BCBP. I am also very sure that the stories and sharing of victories coming out of the conversion of men and women in the practice of their professions and businesses are good examples that a lot of people can relate to in their own lives.

But the question is when was the last time you brought a first-timer to the Breakfast? The best measure for a good program is to measure it by the use of its members in fulfilling the desired results in their evangelistic work. How many people have you really introduced to Christ in the Breakfast? Maybe it will prick your conscience a bit because I am really concerned that we are not doing our share in the BCBP if we don't invite first-timers at all. With the absence of the new comers, the BCBP Breakfast will begin to deteriorate and fail. Without first-timers we are not sharing a gift but rather are being selfish in just keeping this wonderful encounter with Christ all to ourselves.

If we are serving or heading a Breakfast, the more relevant question that we must answer is "How have I kept our Breakfast interesting, powerful and memorable for those who attend?" The Breakfast must not be seen as an ordinary venue where we just come to eat, fellowship and enjoy the company of only the BCBP members. If these were the case, then the Breakfast will simply be another coffee club, a kapihan or worst, a "chismis" eating group. If we truly love the Breakfast and the purpose for which it was given to us by the Holy Spirit, to introduce a new life to our brothers and sisters, then we have the responsibility to care for it and tend to its continuing luster and effectiveness. We must always ask ourselves if we are still doing the evangelistic purpose for which it was given to us.

Consider Matthew: "When two or more are gathered in My name, I will be in their midst". I believe this happens every time that there is a BCBP Breakfast. The Lord gives us a chance to introduce somebody to Him every Breakfast.

This makes the Breakfast an unforgettable experience. †



Eddie Mendoza

WHY BOTHER?



Sometimes work can feel like a chore. No, a thankless job. And when you get that paycheck you feel cheapened, like you deserve more, or that it isn't worth it all. Does that ever happen to you?

You may feel grossly unrewarded, after a while. You realize – as you go the extra mile, take on extra work, grab everything that comes your way – that you don't get paid more for this. I know what that feeling is like, believe me.

A customer berates you even after you have put your best foot forward. Or he treats you like a slave, lacks all sorts of courtesy and graciousness, demands the moon, and walks away feeling as if you owed it to him to say thank you for the opportunity to help him. Doesn't that get you mad?

You are committed to change things, and invest a lot of time, energy and money to make new things happen for the good of the company and the individuals, but people resist your recommendations.

No matter how well you do your job, you will encounter someone who will make life miserable for you. In fact, the better you are at work, the more likely you are setting yourself up, one day, for some exasperation. This is true whether the task is one of dealing with customers or dealing with your child, or even dealing with your action group member.

When things don't go our way, even after giving it our best, there is a strong tendency to feel discontented, unfulfilled, and unrewarded, and we ask ourselves, "why bother?" And then – even for a short while – we give up, we relent in our attempts to do the right thing, we take the easier way, we dismiss our ideals. I know I have.

To be able to cope with these things, and before we start wishing that life would be easier and free from all sorts of troubles, it helps to remind ourselves about certain truths. Jesus spoke of troubles to his disciples. "In me you may find peace," he says. "In this world you will have trouble." (John 16:33)

It seems we will never be without adversity and trouble. It seems that we have been placed in this world, in the marketplace, where

there is harassment, where there is thanklessness, where there is suffering. We are made to walk through the valley of darkness. We are sent like sheep among wolves. In our midst is a roaring lion ready to devour us.

Next time you wonder why, as children of God, we weren't sent to a better place, imagine how Jesus himself felt when he found himself in the small town of Bethlehem. Within a few days from His birth, Herod was already out to kill him.

We read in Sirach 2: "When you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials. Be sincere of heart and steadfast, undisturbed in time of adversity. Cling to him, forsake him not. Accept whatever befalls you. In crushing misfortune be patient." (2:1-4) The passage ends with: "For in fire, gold is tested, and worthy men in the crucible of humiliation." Don't pray for things that you can possess after the trials, pray for what you are becoming in the midst of trials. For God uses our trials to turn us into gold.

So, let's not even think of wishing away our trials and troubles. Instead, Christ repeatedly suggests for all of us to embrace our troubles. "Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps." Each day, Jesus says. (Luke 9:23)

And when we embrace our troubles, just as Jesus embraced His cross, His promise is His peace, not as the world gives peace (John 14:27) but the kind of peace that is beyond all human understanding because it is the peace that survives adversity. It is the peace that survives the storms, the peace that is unsinkable in troubled waters, the peace that looks beyond Calvary towards resurrection. Jesus guarantees us, "Take courage! I have overcome the world." †



Francis Kong

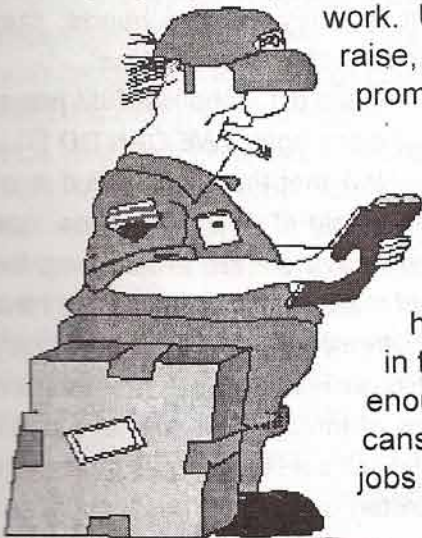
Sometime in 1980, a Gallup survey for the American Chamber of Commerce showed that many people still believe in the value of work ethics. Close to ninety percent of the respondents expressed that working hard and giving their best in their jobs are personally important.

Two years later, results of a similar survey revealed that barely sixteen percent said they were doing their best and eighty-four percent admitted they were not working hard. This dichotomy between what people believe in and what they actually do is nothing new. A great majority of workers say that working hard is a fine virtue but it is not for them.

The surveys further showed that these workers could deliver more if only they would receive – you guessed it – more. What is essential lies in the answer to “What’s in it for me?” If the answer matches their expectation, which is usually monetary in nature, they may suddenly use up their highest potential to be paragons of excellence and hard work. I have promoted employees who I felt were deserving and qualified to assume higher responsibilities. But most of them rejected the offer saying, “I am not properly compensated to carry on additional

work. Unless I am given a raise, I don’t care about this promotion.”

This partly explains the decline in productivity in what was once heralded as the most hardworking labor force in the world. This is enough reason why Americans are fast losing their jobs to their more enterpris-



ing and sacrificing Asian counterparts. The sad part is that we, Filipinos, are not at all very Asian. How could we be when we are still running after the American dream? We are more like those Westerners who are losing to our Asian competitors.

Work has become mere utility for many of us. The focus is no longer on how we can use it to build up others. Our main issue now lies in what we can get from it.

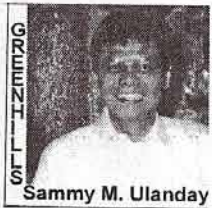
My business usually requires me to visit Japan once a year and it never ceases to amaze me how the streets of Tokyo can become perennially busy. At nine and even as late as ten in the evening, many offices remain lit and open. Through the windows are seen scores of Japanese employees with their sleeves rolled up either skimming through loads of paper or busy at their computers. You may say that everything is for the money. Here’s something to surprise you: They do not receive any overtime pay. A good Japanese friend told me that it is shameful for a Japanese employee to leave any work unfinished. No wonder that Japan has emerged as the most powerful economy in the world today.

There is nobility behind their work. They have minds that are set on giving rather than taking. Such godly principle adhered to by a supposedly non-Christian nation!

God’s Word in the book of Galatians 6:7 reveals an inescapable life principle, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”

Let’s cultivate a mind-set on giving rather than taking. Or talking. Let us put nobility in our work that our country may become a nobler place to live in. (Reprinted with permission.) †

LOVING YOUR WORK



Sammy M. Ulanday

WE CAN DO IT!

again and again.

the month of April this year was one of the most hectic months, so far I have ever experienced in the Brotherhood.

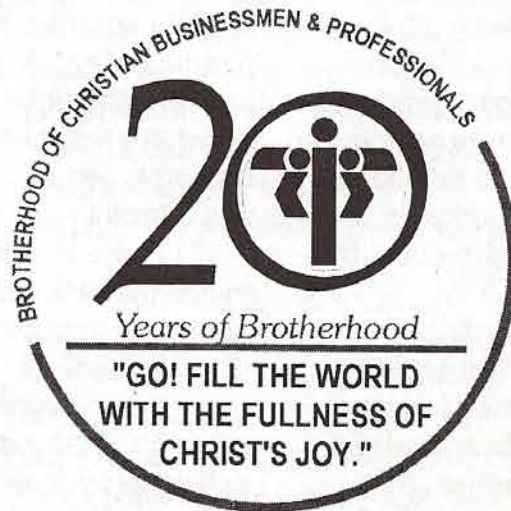
We started the month with a mission trek to Legazpi

City to visit our brothers and sisters there in the Bicol region. The overnight stay in the land of pili and chili was in itself too tight, heightened even further by our flight being delayed for over an hour.

Just a week thereafter, the Chapter Life Directors' retreat followed with a record attendance of sixty brothers and sisters from all over the country. Managing such a big crowd, literally all by myself, was very challenging and yet exciting. Thanks for the assistance of Ray and Arlene Sanchez of Makati as well as of Dodo and Junette Sta. Maria of Quezon City, who gave support in transporting the delegates from the airport to the venue in Talisay, Batangas.

This year's Holy Week was one experience I personally liked so much. My wife Veron and son Saul spent the Lenten season at my wife's hometown in Bangued Abra. Well, there were really not that many happenings except for the daily Masses we attended, "Bisita Iglesia" and the main event - the "Salubong" which was staged right in front of Veron's ancestral home.

There was a bounty of food, most of which I call "cardiac delights". Games of darts, cards and mah-jong ate up most of our free time. And of course, I squeezed in moments with the Lord under the canopy of the provincial nature greats.



And then the main event ensued. The last week of April proved to be the biggest and busiest yet ever - the 20th anniversary week. I'd like to dwell a little bit more on this.

This week was the pinnacle of long months of preparations. Rey Feria and company were on their toes, they deserve a big round of applause. On top of this, what really makes me happy to see was that the other Metro Manila chapters, with their particular heads and designated lead men for the anniversary celebration - were all up and up in doing their specific assignments. I could

see in their eyes the enthusiasm and willingness to do whatever they could to make the celebration prove its worth.

I saw, particularly during meetings, the chapter heads were exchanging notes, trading responsibilities, covering up for others, bending down to give way to others, sharing resources both in manpower and materials, assisting, congratulating, encouraging, etc. They were of one mind! They knew what was at stake, they were aware of the consequences, they felt the needs, they wanted success! Nothing less!

As we did in the last PIM prayer Rally, I'd say again, WE CAN DO IT!

Now that the Brotherhood is on the threshold of new challenges, now that we have started entertaining the idea of globalization, now that we have grown tremendously, we can do nothing less than what these brothers and sisters of the anniversary have done. As St. Paul said to the Corinthians, "be completely united, with one thought and one purpose."

Now is the time to be one. There's only one Brotherhood, and this is our community. Now is the time to reassess our community priorities. Are you one with us or with the others? We have a choice and the choice is ours - to be with the Brotherhood for the rest of the times when we will again and again say - we can do it - again and again! ✠

first Holy Communion



Annie Salvador

MAKATI

life, another reality dawned on me. As much as we tend to mark events like First Holy Communion, what sets them apart is actually just a matter of chronology. Simply put, outside of being the first, it was NO DIFFERENT from all other Communion: in all of them, there is Jesus!

This was so much like the fuss everyone made about the so-called "millennium's first sunrise." How its country's dawn was touted and gushed over on the cable channels! At that time I was telling myself: but God puts on the same spectacular light and sky show every morning! We're really just extremely unappreciative people, waiting for Christmas when every day can be merry.

How much we take for granted! How many opportunities for gratefulness we pass up!

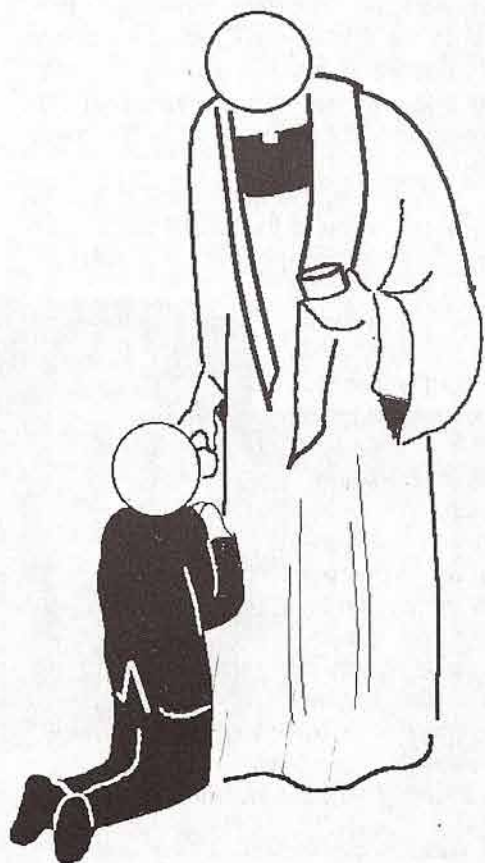
I recall my First Holy Communion and how through the years, the Eucharist has enriched me.

And I recall how often, too often, I received the Lord without much ado, even mechanically, even irreverently. And I realize how much I've been missing.

What a good thing it is that we have a God of New Beginnings! As I yield to his workings, he will refine me, granting me the gift of better appreciation. O Lord, let me open my eyes to the bounty that you surround me with, all the time and everywhere. Let me behold my children as sunrises: daily miracles gracing the palette of my life. And let all my Communion be as a First Holy Communion for me, that I may have joy and victory and jubilation – and Life – always. ✠

more deeply moved by its significance. My son was receiving the Body of Christ! He was experiencing his first partaking of the Sacrament of the Eucharist! Jesus, our Savior and Lord, was entering my son, filling him anew with Life! Contemplating this reality simply made my heart burst: it was brimming with joy, victory, and jubilation! Why then shouldn't I be moved to tears?

Later today I sat down and quietly reflected on this. As I thanked the Lord for granting Anton such a precious gift that he could now enjoy every day of his



Today my third son Anton had his First Holy Communion. It was, of course, very significant for him and very emotional for me. Having gone through two previous ones, I knew from experience that despite my efforts to control myself I would be crying at all the right moments: the time when each boy would go to his parents with a thank-you kiss, the recitation of Parent's Prayer and of course, the Communion march.

I surprised myself: from the processional, when we marched with him down the center aisle and escorted him to his seat, I was helpless. I worked so hard at concentrating on the Holy Mass, but every prayer, every song, every ceremonial action would set me off. I spent the rest of the time with tissue in hand, sniffing and trying my best to keep my eye makeup from running.

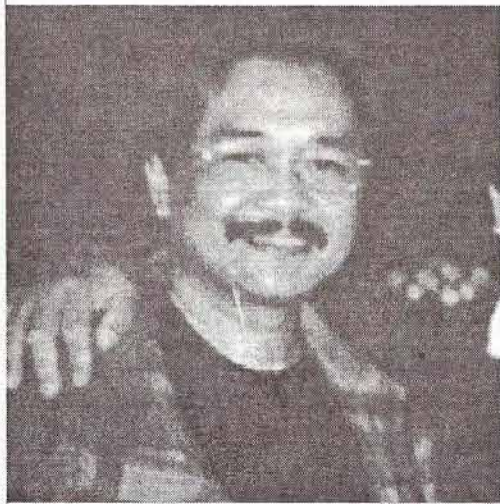
What is it about First Holy Communion and mothers? It seems such a potent combination for tears. Indeed it was a deeply moving occasion, so perfect for reminiscing about this eight-year old that was once a babe in my arms. In an hour or so, I went through his entire lifetime, especially relishing outstanding events and loving him all over again.

But more than the memory quotient of the moment, I was

Stewardship in Service

SHARING REFLECTIONS: AS CHAPTER HEAD AND AS REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Art Legarde, BCBP Bacolod South



I joined the BCBP way back in 1990, and after some time, I was privileged to serve God in different capacities, but I never imagined or entertained the thought that a time would come when the Lord would give me an enormous responsibility to serve as Chapter Head. Perhaps others were more "spirit filled" to assume the position, but not me! But after five years, I was suddenly confronted with the reality I could be called into the service, as I was one of the three whose names were submitted to the National Council for final discernment and selection. At that time, I was a member of the Governance, serving as Life Director.

Well, the rest is history. As soon as the results of the selection officially came out, it was announced in a Chapter Assembly that I would be the next Chapter Head. Did I have a way out? I realized, in spite of all my apprehensions, that I owed my God so much, there was no way I could refuse Him. I remembered what I was like before my renewal and where He has brought me and my family—to a life of love, peace and joy in spite of the problems that come and go. More importantly, I believed that He died on the cross for us so we may spend eternity with Him. How could I in my unworthiness, find a reason to refuse?

I knew and expected that there would times when I would face a heavy burden filled with tremendous responsibilities, times when I would feel it was the loneliest service — and yet, all these turned out to be my greatest blessing! Never have I been so blessed in all my life. God opened my eyes to many important spiritual realizations concerning community life, especially regarding relationships. My family experienced significant and countless blessings, and I have experienced continued spiritual transformation and most of all, the nearness of God.

First, God made me realize that my role is to be the caretaker of souls and the keeper of the community's vision. And that the key to all, is the presence of genuine love. Therefore, it became rather clear to me that as the Chapter Head and the caretaker of souls, it was my responsibility and privilege to make sure that God remains present in the heart of the members.

With this, the adherence to the Vision and Mission of the BCBP will just follow, thus, accomplishing my servant leader's role as keeper of the vision. And the only environment where God could truly reign and continue to flourish, is through a spiritual ground called **LOVE**. I realized this, when, one day, God led me to a certain passage in **1 John 4:12** which says, "No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, **GOD LIVES IN US and His love is made complete in us.**"

Since then, we have emphasized to all our leaders the shepherding and witnessing responsibilities that begin with the Chapter Head and flow through all the leaders, the responsibility to really take care of our members, to establish personal relationships, to be sensitive to their needs, to always be available, and to keep on reaching out, especially to those who are not so active. After all, eternity is at stake here, as well as the mission of the BCBP, and therefore, every single soul God has sent to the community, is worth caring for. We realized that the "required" commitment expected from the membership could be achieved and even surpassed, if only all of us — both leaders and members — will do our share in caring. Wherever there is love, God reigns in the midst of them and wherever God is, so shall the members be. Love indeed is the key, love is what differentiates the BCBP community from other civic organizations.

Second, never in our lives have we experienced such peace and harmony in our relationship as a couple and in our relationship with our children as in these years of service. And during these years,



how we have seen the grace of God work on our children. They have grown in their relationship with Him, as all are renewed, and we have seen them become God-fearing children, always considering God in all their plans and decisions. Our two children who are already working have been blessed in their careers, and our other two children who are still in school, are doing well in their studies, as well as in other school activities. And in all these past years, God's provisions for our needs and even sometimes our wants, were never lacking. It is true when you take care of God's business, He takes care of yours, too, and in a much better way than we could ever do on our own.

Thirdly, knowing my weaknesses, God used the service as His instrument to bring about the spiritual changes He wanted to take place in my life. It could not be denied that the position of Chapter Head has its own share of frustration, discouragement and disillusionment. The position has taught me humility, patience, understanding and compassion. Furthermore, it has helped develop in me an attitude that knows how to "wait on God," and to be totally dependent on Him in all things. Oh, how God, in His almighty goodness, has blessed my wife and me, in this area of our lives.

Lastly, and most importantly, at no other time in my life have I felt God's nearness as much. I felt His intimate presence through the love and care I genuinely experienced from our members. I know I am also a man of faults and failures, but I could always count on their patience and understanding. My family and I have truly experienced God's nearness in our lives in a genuine way and our relationship with Him has deepened with the love and care our members have continually showered upon us. In turn, we have also been inspired and gifted by the privilege of witnessing the kind of love our members have for God, their devotion to Him, and their sacrifices in serving Him without counting the cost.



I indeed, the service that I never imagined to be part of, the positions that I wanted to run away from, have become my greatest blessing. Now, in retrospect, I could only praise and thank God for the honor and privilege He has granted me, His unworthy servant. I have been given the opportunity to live out a particular calling, a privilege that comes only once in a lifetime, even though in God's standard, I know I never did enough. **The service has made me realize that every soul is worth caring for.**

At present, I have been called to move on to another service as Regional Council Director for Western Visayas. I accepted the job, this time without any hesitations, although towards the end of my term as Chapter Head, my own desire was to become an ordinary member again, with a leader to shepherd me. Nevertheless, I accepted the appointment willingly, for no other

reason, except the realization that we are mere servants of the Lord and He may use us as He pleases, where He pleases. And our response despite our unworthiness, can never repay Him sufficiently for all the love He has given us.

I look at this new position not as a title or as a promotion, but rather, just as another opportunity of service for the Lord. It is a humble reminder that as a servant leader, I now have to shepherd and serve members not only of one Chapter, but several Chapters and Outreaches in the Western Visayas Region. I am constantly reminded that my main responsibility is no different from that of a Chapter Head- it is to be the caretaker of souls and the keeper of the BCBP Vision, the gardener who properly cultivates the soil so that LOVE may grow and flourish under the guidance and direction of our Great Shepherd, and in union with the BCBP National Leadership.

As I have started to go around visiting Chapters and Outreaches in the Region personally interacting with leaders and members, I am once again witnessing their love for the Lord, coupled with their zeal in serving Him. I can only say that I am proud to be part of the BCBP family, a God-given privilege that allows all of us to truly experience "fullness of life in Christ" through the BCBP WAY OF LIFE.

PRAISE, HONOR, GLORY AND THANKS to You, Our Almighty God, for giving my wife Lucille and me, the opportunity to be part of the lives of the members of the BCBP in a larger setting. ✠



BACOLOD SOUTH

The Work of a Decade

Ten years after BCBP Bacolod - South was founded, everything is expected to be in place. And it is. Thanks to a succession of strong, dedicated leaders and members, who are still very much around and visible, the ground work of the programs and policies of the chapter has been firmly laid out; and the regular activities go on smoothly without much of a hitch. Angel "Jun" Vargas now heads the Chapter and he is the first to acknowledge the splendid pioneering work of brothers like Art Legarde, Ray Garcia, Digoy, Jimmy Montalvo, and Tony Garcia (anybody else?). At one time or another, these trailblazers have taken on different roles and tasks needed by the fledgling BCBP South. And the quality of their zeal and dedication remains a trademark of the community they have given their life and service to. Today, BCBP Bacolod South continues to attract a new men and women among the business and professional sectors of Negros Occidental - men and women who are sincerely searching for a truly meaningful Christian life in the marketplace.

Quo Vadis?

After ten years the Chapter asks itself, "Where do we go from here?" After 15 Christian Life Programs that have swelled membership; after outreach missions in Iloilo (now a flourishing Chapter)

Reaching Out and Journeying Inside

Tess Alampay Gaston

Kabankalan, Silay and Cadiz (the latter two now part of BCBP Bacolod North Chapter); after the activation of the different ministries which address the major concerns and goals of the chapter; after all these, where indeed

are we still bound for? What's the agenda for year 2000 and beyond?

Having seen the community expand rapidly, the Chapter has decided that before any further reaching out takes place, there should be a serious refocusing inward into the dynamics of community life. Many have felt and expressed the need to pause a while and regroup to strengthen community ties. From the Governance, to the Support Group, to the Action Group, the password is love and caring for each other. Leadership is to be defined primarily by service --- service to the

members of one's group and the community as a whole. Active service in the community would be a prerequisite for service outside of it. This comes as no surprise for those who follow Christ, for didn't our Lord himself say "By this shall all men know that you are my followers, that you love one another," not as an abstract ideal or a pious sentiment or transient feeling, but love as an active virtue and a real, practical caring that brings each and every member of the community into the life of another. An attitude that leaves no one outside the pale of the community's resources, its emotional support and its spiritual powerhouse.



Top: Chapter Head Jun Vargas & Wife Ginny (extreme right) take time for bonding with ministry heads at their Hinigaran fishpond. L-R Ed Taruc - Assemblies, Bobby Tinsay - Kid's Ministry, Joseph Castro, Sonny & Tess Gaston - Marriage & Family Ministry, Fely Castro, Gina & Boni Avelino - Intercessory, and Escalante.

Left: Unit 6 Support Group begin an early summer together at Happy Beach in Hinoba-an, four hours away from the hustle and bustle of Bacolod. Seated L-R Cynthia Regino, Bev Lacson, Tess and Joshua Gaston. Standing: L-R Boni & Gina Avelino, Sonny Gaston, Joey and Michelle Pandan, Unit Leader Sar Regino & Luigene Lacson.

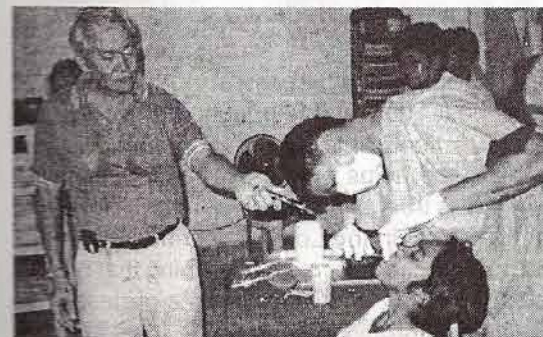
Towards a Nurturing Community

A series of talks in the general assemblies and special Christian Living lectures since August served to emphasize this renewed thrust of the community. Unity in Christ results from enhanced sensitivity to others, through forgiveness, through more frequent



oftentimes, values of competition and profit flatly contradict Christian ideals of honesty, fairness, justice and charity, serve to encourage community members. Moreover, in a small city like Bacolod, families get easily drawn into the circle of friendship formed by fathers and mothers within the BCBP. This too, is a plus factor for unity and solidarity.

community prayers and intercessions for each other. The leaders, be they in the governance, in the support group or the action group make it a point to express the concerns of the individual members and the community responds as one to a brother or a sister's need. It would be unseemly to cite here specific instances of exemplary generosity, grand gestures of reconciliation and fraternal affection and service, for the members concerned seek the comfort of anonymity. But since the launching of the Chapter's love and caring



agenda, the community has seen a resurgence in the vigor and participation in community masses and assemblies, action group meetings, breakfast meeting and spontaneous fellowships. Many rejoice in the warmth of friendships based on a common pursuit Christian ideals. Sharing of one's uphill climb in a market place where,

An Unquantifiable Factor

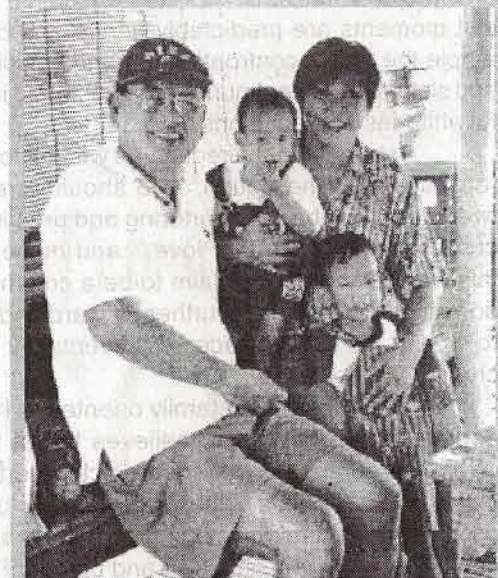
There are no means of quantifying the progress and growth of a community inwards but it doesn't bother us at Bacolod South. We feel in no need to measure what we're too busy enjoying. - Tess Alampay Gaston.

Social Action Ministry in action - doing it to the least of our brethren. Top to bottom (1) Feeding the hungry with arroz caldo. (2) Harnessing the energy and charm of ACTS 2 kids for distribution of basic goodies. (3) Dr. Ed Ang, Head of Social Action sets up clinic before the altar while hundreds line-up to be healed. (4) Kai-shek stands guard while Marty Jacinto does battle with a tooth at the free and makeshift dental clinic.

Personal Note on the writer.

Tess became a member of BCBP in 1996 (CLP 11) together with her husband Sonny. She admits having a difficult time getting acclimatized to the BCBP way of life and remained in the community primarily because of the example and encouragement of her husband who was actively involved from the start. But she gradually found her way into the community and is happy that she has found a venue for personal growth and service...."up to the time I reach my golden years." she says. Sonny and Tess head the Marriage and Family Ministry of BCBP Bacolod South and are AGLs. Tess is also the editor of BCBP Updates, the quarterly newsletter of BCBP Bacolod South.

Tess is an English and Comparative Lit major graduate of U.P. Her main apostolate outside of BCBP is teaching at the diocesan seminary of Bacolod. She also teaches French in the graduate school of the University of Negros Occidental. She used to be a bank manager until she opted to be a housewife and mother to their growing family of five: two boys and three girls. She claims there is nothing plain about being wife and mother, especially when you are with the BCBP. Her most cherished role these days is being a young grandmother to Joshua, a very sociable and well behaved gentleman of three who tags along with Sonny and Tess at almost every BCBP affair, and is unofficially the youngest active member of the community.



SIDELINE ON center stage

Angel "Jun" Vargas - Chapter Head Bacolod South

Interview by Tess Gaston

Chances are you won't immediately spot Jun in any assembly, party or event. And that would be intentional on his part. By nature self-effacing, he instinctively shuns attention to himself. He is happily contented to let others hug the limelight while he remains quietly hidden in the sidelines. His penchant for anonymity, however, belies the crucial role he plays in the community. Those who have worked with him and who have, at one time or another, sought his counsel or help know they can rely on his immediate and direct support at all times. His leadership as Chapter Head for Bacolod South is characterized by a humble availability to everyone and a non-judgmental acceptance of personalities and predicaments. There is in Jun an unmistakable joy and readiness to translate charity into concrete acts of generosity. His words and gestures in difficult moments are predictably gentle and conciliatory, by his example the rather confrontational and volatile among the brothers and sisters in the community are chastened into taking more peaceful attitudes and solutions.

Asked in what direction he wishes to lead the Chapter, Jun replies without hesitation, "We should strengthen the bond between our members by nurturing and practicing fraternal love and concern. Really live that love...and make it a lifestyle. Only in this way can we really claim to be a community. When we have done that, we can move further outward and be credible witnesses to God in the marketplace; and eventually be effective agents of change in our society."

Jun is very much family oriented. That explains his unique approach to service. He believes that if the bonding is strong within the community, every project undertaken is going to be a family affair. It will be a chance not simply to render service but an occasion for affirming ties, shared values and common strengths and skills. With Jun as father and pastor of the chapter, there will



probably be little room for aggressive superstars rising dominant in Bacolod South. But there will be range and scope enough for ordinary individuals to pool their limited time, talent and treasure in order to come up with a meaningful family production.

Jun's particular leadership style comes from a strong Catholic family background. He models himself from heroes drawn from within the family circle and whose influence

Jun remembers since early childhood. For instance, his maternal grandfather, Dr. Jose Soriano, a farmer businessman and frustrated architect who spent his life building churches taught Jun the value of hard work, simplicity in lifestyle and a deep religious faith. Jun relates with unconcealed pride how his grandpa's legacy has kept their family together for five generations. It goes without saying that as a family man, Jun is doing his best to keep the tradition alive. Then there is a saintly, soft spoken uncle who counseled him never to take his salvation for granted, no matter how godly a life one may seem to be living.

If Jun now is so quick to respond to the needs of others, it is because he himself has received love and caring all his life, and he is merely making a return for all that has been given him.

At 48, Jun seems like a man who has it all - bank executive at Isla Bank, businessman farmer, husband to pretty wife, Ginny, father of 3, Chapter Head of Bacolod South. If one's first impression of him is he is a peaceful and contented person, it is because he has allowed God to literally

take over his life. "In the past," he says, "I thought that hard work, self-discipline and determination will bring me anywhere and get me anything I want. That God helps only those who help themselves. To some extent this is true, of course. But after I joined the BCBP I learned primarily to trust in the Lord. That no matter what the outcome of my efforts, He is there for me. Everything that befalls me is for my own good. Moreover, the work I do as a professional and a family man, I see as a gift from God and so the trials are part of the gift and do not discourage me as they used to." That faith has helped Jun overcome his lack of trust in himself and in others. He is able to transcend personal difficulties and hurt, and is led to the right decision. Jun is very much aware how human and fallible he is but then he doesn't let this floor him. The secret is to learn from one's mistakes and humbly accept them.

It is only two months since Angel "Jun" Vargas, has been at the helm of Bacolod South, but it would be safe to predict that with him there, it will be smooth and happy sailing throughout. - Tess Alampay Gaston ✦

At BCBP Bacolod South, we allow ourselves to be proud of only one thing - our Music Ministry. It's not because of any outstanding individual singer nor even of the powerful harmony of blended voices and instruments, but because of the uplifting music the choir invariably creates and which draws the whole community to a deep, prayerful worship. The "feel na feel" quality is electric and contagious. Those who attended the annual convention of the Brotherhood in Bacolod last year attest to this fact.

Few people know that behind the joyful spontaneity lie hours of long practice, self discipline and sacrifice. Even fewer are aware that the unlikely taskmaster is a young, boyish looking, soft-spoken man of unshakeable faith in God. At 33, Esteban Neleus Dingcong is a professional follower of Christ - in the spirit and manner of our Lord's early disciples. To make that claim for a 21st century ordinary mortal may sound like an exaggeration, or at best literary license. But it isn't. And therein lies the joy of witnessing the wonderful, simple and day-to-day presence of God in our secular and materialistic world. Therein lies the secret that animates the song and the music.

At 14, when most adolescents think only of unbridled fun and freedom, Nel set out to be a priest. Till he was 24 he single-mindedly pursued the love and ideal of his youth. It was a big blow to him and his family when, almost at the end of his priestly formation, he was told by his religious formators that God had other plans for him in the secular world. After a few years of questioning and spiritual search, he settled down - a family man but first and foremost a man in the service of

God. While trying to make a living for his family, Nel discovered he had no apparent marketable skills. He couldn't get a steady job in a profit - oriented world that prizes only quantifiable, concrete and demonstrable skills and value none of the invisible and immeasurable gifts of character and intellect.

But this seeming failure in the world convinced Nel that God wanted an exclusive franchise on his most important asset, his love for music and his compelling desire to share it. To do this, however, Nel knew he had to surrender completely and totally to God's love and providence. At first, it looked like the classical cop-out to many, including his wife, his family and his friends. But Nel was sure of his calling. Following Christ's order to take no heed of purse or provision, he proceeded to offer free musical direction to any and all religious groups in the diocese. So good was he at the job that Bishop Camillo Gregorio tasked him with unifying the different renewal groups through music and song. A role he continues to play to this day.

"I come from a very talented musical family but I was the most "disintunado" and the least proficient in playing a musical instrument. My father and my older brothers were the performing stars. Yet God has chosen me to serve him. Maybe so that in my nothingness he could fill me up." Nel says with disarming naturalness and humility. "When God calls, one has no choice but to answer. Now I know that my family is proud of the work I do, in spite of the fact that I have no fixed salary and we live from day to day trusting in God's blessings."

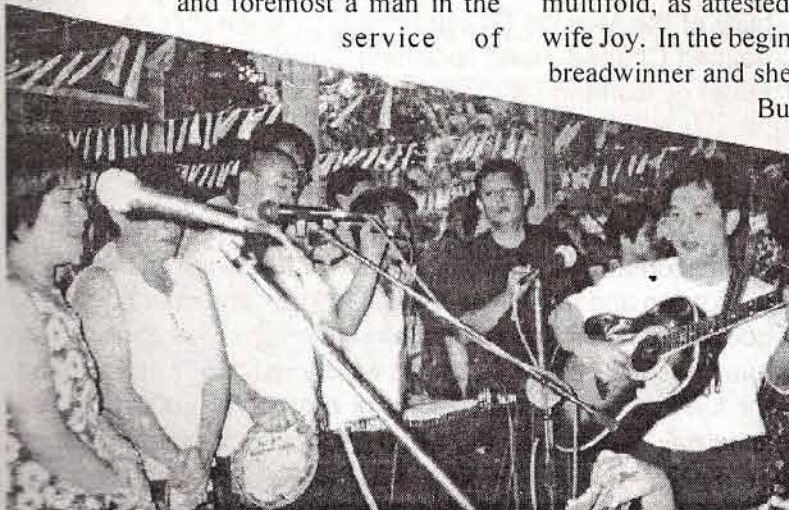
And these blessings have been multifold, as attested by both Nel and his wife Joy. In the beginning Joy was the only breadwinner and she was very good at it.

But her third pregnancy

forced her to choose between their child and a very demanding though profitable job. With much struggle she chose the first. "Nel had really taught me to pray and trust in God." Joy admits. "Though Nel never asks for payment for his services, we receive enough to keep the family alive and well - sometimes God provides for us more than we could ourselves." Nel and Joy recalls how, during a rice crisis, some years ago, they were down to their last two kilos of rice. Nel, unknowingly gave even that away to a needy relative. With a childlike trust in God they just prayed for their next meal. Before meal time a sack of rice arrived, not just rice but a rare and special kind. Next morning when they opened their front door, another sack of rice, left by an anonymous donor fell down at their feet. Before the week was over they received seven sacks of rice-which they turned started to give away to others.

"Our BCBP community is our family and in it we have been so lucky to receive love and security. BCBP has helped us grow as a couple", Joy observes. But she is the first to say that Nel is a wonderful father, loving and fun. He is also the peacemaker in the house. As for Nel, he says, he will continue this work of sharing his music till the end of his life. "People ask me for my plans for my children, their education and all...but if God loves me, as I know he loves me, and if he has provided for me as he has generously done all these years, then I know that God has plans for my three kids."

As I gathered up my notes to end the interview I recall the line "Seek you first the kingdom of God and all things shall be added unto you." I felt myself privileged to receive, at first hand, a new insight into this message through the witnessing of a brother and a sister in the community. - tag ✦



giving GOD priority
IN SONG

focus
on

bcbp
PARAÑAQUE

after almost six years since its birth in 1994, BCBP Parañaque has grown today into a strong and vibrant chapter. Compared to a handful of brothers who started up the chapter, Parañaque's current roster has a total of 171 active members broken down into 73 couples and 25 singles. Of these, 12 are entrepreneurs who own and operate small and medium scale businesses, 24 are business executives, 4 are government officials, 28 are private company employees and 22 are professionals including a dentist, a doctor of medicine, and a nurse, 7 lawyers, 1 school administrator, 7 engineers and 4 real estate brokers. As of last count the chapter has also 8 members who are retirees from the government and the private sector.

BCBP Parañaque officially came into being when the national leadership of the Brotherhood decided to split the Alabang and Las Piñas chapters in July 1994. Two units each from the two chapters became the core group of the new Parañaque chapter. At that time, Alabang and Las Piñas were the only chapters on the south side of Metro Manila and virtually all of their members came from the tri-localities of Alabang, Las Piñas and Parañaque. It was felt then that the time was ripe to split the memberships of the two chapters so that the spin-off would hasten the reach of the renewal community into the fast-growing area. Looking back, that spin-off has without a doubt contributed to the tremendous growth of the Brotherhood community south of Manila.

The fledging Parañaque chapter wasted no time and spared no effort in getting the organization to a fast start. Picked as the first chapter head was Rem Gopez, a retired Philippine Air Force colonel. Other notable figures who assisted in the start-up of Parañaque included Bill Gamboa, Jun Densing, Alex Guiao, Alex Betita, Ferdie Baena, Boy Javier, Rene Cortes, Perry Domingo, Chuck Colayco, Johnny Avila, Jun Avelino, Caloy Pineda, Rene Leandro, Lito Francisco, Rommel Tillah, Monching Sunga and many others. Just like any other new-born organization, the chapter went

through some growing pains and encountered many challenges along the way. Take for example the venue of the breakfast meeting which moved to six different locations in a relatively short period of time. The first breakfast was held at BF Shakey's. Sometime later, it was transferred to the BF Bowling lanes, then to Elorde's on Sucat, followed by a short stint at Big Foods coffee shop on Aguirre St., BF Homes. BF Citi was the breakfast site for a good part of 1999 but starting last January the chapter found a new home in Pidente restaurant, also in BF Homes.

After about three years at the helm, Chuck Colayco took over from Rem Gopez. Chuck's most notable achievement in his relatively short stint of about one and a half years was to unite the membership and strengthen the interpersonal relationships of the members, the brothers and sisters who came from diverse backgrounds. During Chuck's tenure two Christian Life Program seminars were held which contributed a big number of new members to the chapter. Chuck was replaced last year by Rene Cortes who was then active in the Ligaya Ng Panginoon community. Rene returned to the Parañaque chapter and initially took over the responsibility of the Mission Director. Shortly thereafter he was appointed Chapter Head replacing Chuck. Asked what is the thrust of his leadership, Rene replied that the main task at hand is to capitalize on the tremendous gains that the chapter has achieved in recent months and to maximize evangelization in the market place.

Indeed, BCBP Parañaque has grown into a mature organization thanks to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the dedication and selflessness of its leaders and members. One good measure of their involvement in the organization is the number of brothers and sisters who consistently attend chapter functions. For the first three months of 2000, a typical Saturday men's breakfast would have no less than forty attending and joint breakfasts would have 55 or more couples attending! †

parañaque leadership



The present leadership of the chapter cuts across various disciplines and fields of human endeavor. They are: (counter clockwise)

RENE & NONEE CORTES – Chapter Head Rene is presently connected with Kraft Foods Phils., Inc. as Food Service Director while Nonee runs a school bus service

OMAR & LOT GUZMAN – Chapter Life Director Omar and Lot are with Far East Bank & Trust Co. as trust officer and auditor, respectively

CHUCK & RUFFI COLAYCO – Mission Coordinator Chuck and Ruffy operate a school of languages

FERDIE & JOJO BAENA – Men's Breakfast Head Ferdie is a senior manager with the B.J. Marthel Corporation whereas Jojo is a District Sales Manager of PAL

JUN & TITA DENSING – Unit Head Jun is a consultant with the Asian Development Bank

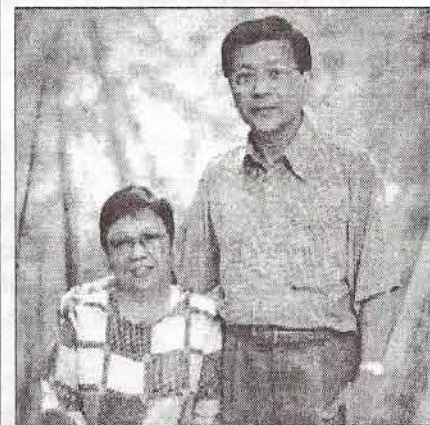
MONCHING & FE SUNGA – Unit Head and Chapter Treasurer Monching and Fe own and operate an offset printing company

SERGE & NENE TAYAG – Unit Head Serge is presently a consultant with Kodak Phils., Inc.

NOEL & MALOU AZARCON – Kapatiran Correspondent Noel is into chemicals trading while Malou is a real estate broker

NONONG & CHACHI TIRONA – Music Ministry (Nonong) Ladies Breakfast head (Chachi) Nonong is a businessman with varied interests

KIT & AILEEN BASILIO – Secretariat Kit is a retired airline executive and is now active in business.



leading parañaque

BCBP PARAÑAQUE

YEAR ROUND

ACTIVITIES AT A

GLANCE

The annual calendar of BCBP Parañaque is full of activities designed to enhance both the spiritual and secular lives of its members. On this spread, we bring you some of the chapter's key events which gives fulfillment to members all year round.

Photo no. 1-Saturday breakfast Joint breakfast sharers Jun and Tita Densing bare the story of their lives and narrate how the BCBP renewal movement has brought them and their family closer to Jesus Christ.



Photo no. 6 -Christmas Program. The spirit of Christmas is enjoyed by all of the chapter's members during the special Yuletide season program last December. Photo shows the members of the Densing Unit who won the "Live Christmas Tree" contest.



Photo Nos. 2 & 3 – Brotherhood Christian Life Program Photo shows Manny Banigan, former national president, giving his talk to participants of BCLP-26.

Some of the participants who successfully completed BCLP-27 sign their commitment cards in the presence of unit heads Monching and Fe Sunga (First and second, L to R) and action group leaders Carmel and Ed Cosico (third and seventh, L to R) in rites held at the Alabang Country Club.



Photo no. 4- Brotherhood Christian Marriage Retreat (BCMR) photo shows participants of the BCMR held in February this year at the Merciful Sister's retreat house in Tagaytay shortly before the start of the ceremony for the renewal of their marriage vows.



Photo no. 5 Annual Picnic. Chapter members in their families take time out on the weekend during the summer to seek respite from the heat and the humid condition of the city by picnicking in the out-of-town resort. The well-attended 1999 picnic was held at the Wonder Island Resort, Calamba, Laguna.

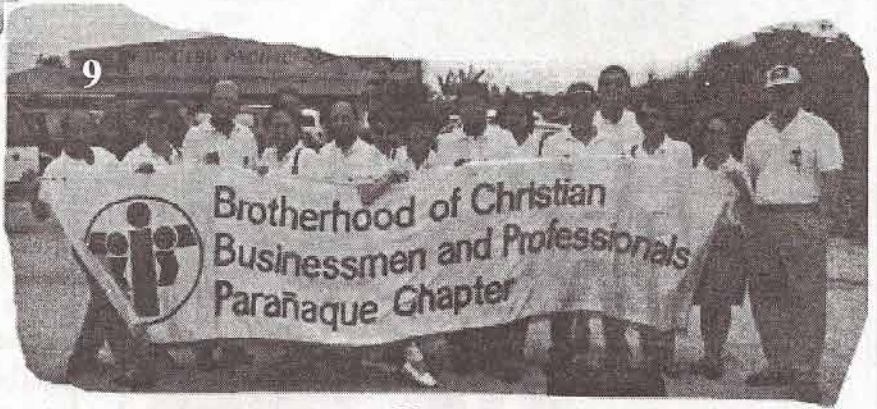
Photo no. 7- Valentines Party. Chapter members hold special parties in February to commemorate Valentine's day, including the giving of roses to the ladies. In photo are some members of the Densing unit who attended the February 2000 Valentine get-together at the residence of Jun and Tita Densing.





Photo no 8-Pilgrimages to various churches in nearby towns and cities outside Metro Manila add a new dimension to the lives of the pilgrim- BCBP brothers and sisters. Here some members of the action groups under the unit of Serge and Nene Tayag led by Sol Advincula, Paul Ramirez, Jojo Pascual and Chuck Colayco pose for a souvenir picture in front of the Santa Rosa church in Laguna.

Photo no. 9-National Anniversary Celebration. The delegation from Paranaque chapter to the 1999 national anniversary celebration held in Bacolod City upon their arrival in the west Visayan City. In photo from left to right are Jun Avelino, Fe and Monching Sunga, Nonee Cortez, Jun Densing, Kathy Tillah, Tita Densing, Danny and Alma Balili, Alex Guiao, Rommel Tillah, Odette Guiao, Erleen Avelino and Ferdie Baena.



Photos nos. 10 and 11-Chapter Founding Anniversary. BCBP Paranaque celebrated its 5th Foundation Anniversary on the 10th of July 1999 with a special program featuring a mass officiated by Fr. Ben Beltran, with community singing and special numbers presented by the various units and action groups. Emcee Ed Quiazon congratulates Willie San Diego after he acted out his role as a chief in a skit which was also enjoyed by, from left to right, Alex Betita, Roger Ramos, Paul Ramirez and Jun Densing. At right is the music ministry in action with from (left to right) Roger Ramos, Rommel Tillah, Benjie Laqui, Danny Balili and Sheila Alonday.



Photo 12- Lords Day. Some of the chapter's leaders including (left to right) Monching Sunga, Rommel Tillah, Rene Cortes, and Omar and Lot Guzman lead the Lord's Day rites. Also in attendance are the two sons of Rene Cortes.



Photo 13-Joy of Discovery. Graduates of CLP 27 attending the Joy of Discovery seminar which teaches techniques on how to properly study the Bible take time out for a picture-taking session. Seated left to right are Rene and Nonee Cortes, resource speaker Tita Cerdana and Omar Guzman.

MESSAGE

March 26, 2000



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We are truly grateful for your prayers and best wishes for the continued growth of BCBP Parañaque Chapter and the fulfillment of its mission to evangelize the market place in this part of Metro Manila.

We praise and thank God for the countless blessings our chapter has received all these years since its founding in 1994. For one, we are grateful for the robust membership count we are currently enjoying, thanks to the good "harvest" we had from the very successful three Christian Life Program seminars conducted these past two years. Another bright development is the resurgence in interest on chapter activities by some older members who have stayed at the sidelines until recently. Equally important, we are experiencing a very high level of involvement by members in all of the chapter's affairs. The desire to serve is truly overflowing!

As we march into the new millenium, we are confident that BCBP Parañaque will more than ever play a key role in ministering to the spiritual needs of its members. And we trust that you will continue to include us in your prayer petitions, particularly to seek divine guidance and direction in our thrust to win more souls for Christ in the market place.

Yours in Christ,

Rene & Nonee Cortes
Chapter Head

"Blest too the peacemakers, they shall be called sons of God."

(Matthew 5:9)



F. de Larrazabal

The world is in turmoil and there is hardly a place where peace reigns. The streets are filled with an ever growing abundance of crime. Murder, rapes, gang wars are all over the cities. And we are now faced with the alarming situation in Mindanao.

Homeowners have to build high fences to protect themselves. Life is a cheap commodity which can easily be done away with. Protectors of the law are in cahoots with crime syndicates, leaving the ordinary citizen without much protection. In many homes there are marital separations, divorces, child abuse, drug addiction, etc. The world situation is in the worst shape.

What does the future hold for civilization? Will peace ever reign over mankind? It seems that strife has been present throughout man's long history and is growing more ominous with the passing of time.

The world is in need of peacemakers. We cannot solve all the world's problems, but we can at least bring peace into our homes, among family and friends. We generally avoid getting involved in situations where we are not directly concerned but sometimes we may need to take the first steps. Jesus said this of peacemakers, "They shall be called sons of God." Blest will you be if you are a peacemaker.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, on the day you were born, a multitude of heavenly hosts appeared, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the high heavens, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests. You came to bring peace but the world has denied you and continues in turmoil. Will there ever be peace? There will be no peace until the world accepts you. In the meantime, what can I do? I can promote peace and harmony among my family, friends, and wherever I have some influence. I pray, O Lord, for the talents and wisdom to be able to reconcile and bring peace among those who need it. Amen.

will
peace
ever
reign?

peace begins here...

Be at peace with yourself. Even as God calls you to growth and progress, God loves you as you are. You have worth beyond measure, for you are a child of God.

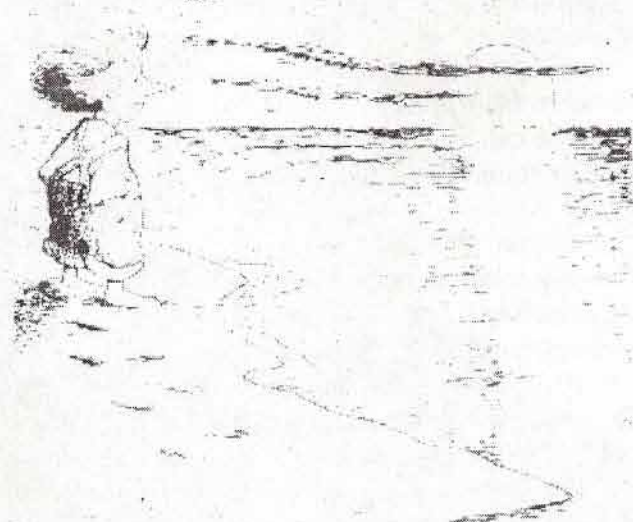
Terrible wars have begun over the control of territory and the exercise of power. Consider your own need to possess and have power over others. The more you can let go of this need, the less reason you have to disturb the peace by acts of violence. You can become a bridge instead of a border patrol.

Your peacekeeping may be local, but it's the same as an international mission: to stop sniping, lay down arms, talk face-to-face, agree on basic principles, honor the agreement. With practice, you can declare your life a demilitarized zone.

To make peace, you must be at peace. Peace begins in each individual heart. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Peace is as real as the clouds, which - though they appear wispy and insubstantial - hold power and blessings for the earth. As they grace the sky, so will peace grace the earth. Believe in the possibility, the reality of peace.

Choose your own peace theme - a favorite song or hymn or poem or prayer. Hum, sing, read, or say it when you feel under siege.



Excerpts from Peace Therapy written by Carol Ann Morrow, illustrated by R.W. Alley. Paulines Publishing House, c1999.

a phone call... GOD's call

By Diddi Perez, Fil & Clare Agbisit, Nil Galapia,
Amy Mamba, Ching Raymundo

Sharing Our Beginnings

Morning, July 9, 1993. I received a telephone call from Johnny Avila, a relative and a resident of Parañaque. He invited me to attend a meeting at Pension Lorita. From the little information he gave me over the phone I understood that he and some companions were in Tuguegarao to establish a religious organization. I was not eager to accept the invitation because at that stage in my life, I was not disposed to join any religious organization or activity. I was full of hurt memories and harbored ill feelings against persons and events. All I was concerned with was my law practice. I was even more turned off when he asked me to see them at Pension Lorita because the request violated the Tagalog adage—"Kung sinong may kailangan, siyang lalapit". So I briefed my wife, Teresing, about Johnny Avila's telephone call and told her to find excuses, even white lies should he call again because I did not want to receive his subsequent calls.

Later that afternoon, however my secretary told me of a telephone message that Bro Johnny Avila and his companions, who were then in the house of Dr. Domingo de Leon, were proceeding to my house. I decided to hide but on my way, a client came. While I was entertaining him, Bro Johnny Avila and two companions—Bro

Mael Kalata, a compadre, and a neat gentleman with white hair, appeared. I had no chance to hide. The white-haired gentleman was introduced as Mr. Rem Gopez, Mission Head of BCBP Las Piñas Chapter. The three were members of the advance party of the Chapter. They came to Tuguegarao to determine the feasibility of establishing an outreach. That was the purpose of the invitation for me to attend a meeting at Pension Lorita that was to be held at 3:00 p.m. the following day, July 10, 1993. I promised to attend although I was more decided not to.

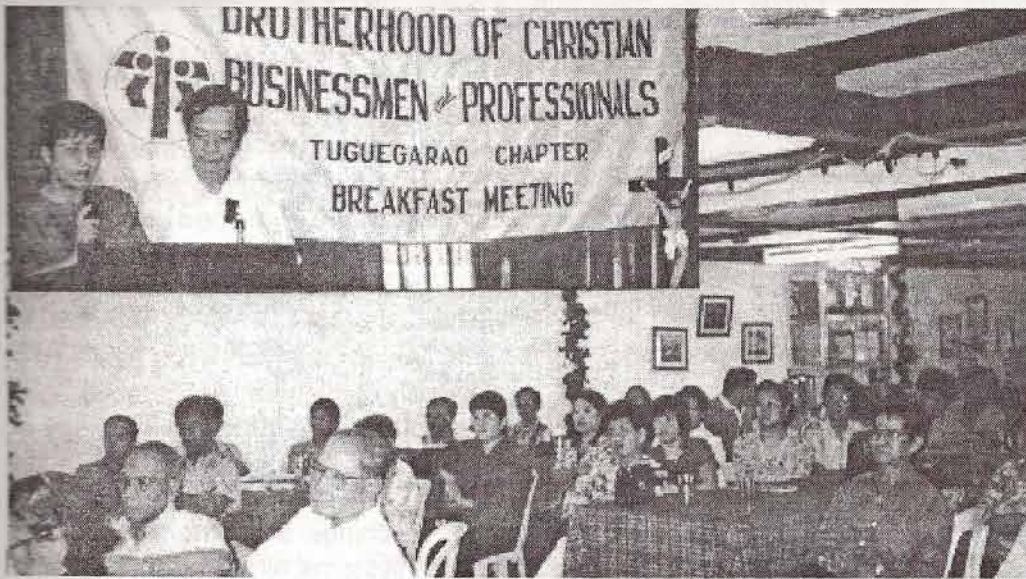
His ways not mine - I cannot explain why I changed my mind. Before 3:00 p.m. the following day, a Saturday, I was at Pension Lorita and found the three who came to the house, together with Mr. Romy Coral, owner of Pension

Lorita, testing the sound system. The meeting was set at the unfinished but elegant conference room of Pension Lorita, located along Rizal St. Tuguegarao, Cagayan.

The brochures and handouts about the Brotherhood distributed to us looked costly. Those who attended the meeting were Mons. Marcelo Bassig, our Parish Priest, Drs. Solon Romero, Ronnie Guzman, and Rafael Sumabat, Amoy Bautista, Romeo Corral (owner of Pension Lorita), and myself. Just as the meeting was starting, another group from the Las Piñas chapter arrived, namely: Bros. Joey Estagle, the Las Piñas Chapter Head, Frank Nuguid, the Music Ministry Head, and Rudy Eco. They had taken the PAL flight to Cauayan, and a bus ride from Cauayan to Tuguegarao.



Sowing the seed. Bro Joey Estagle, Las Piñas Chapter Head sells the BCBP idea to businessmen and professionals in Tuguegarao, July 10, 1993. In the picture: Bros Rem Gopez, Frank Nuguid, Johnny Avila, Rudy Eco, and Joey Estagle, standing.



Growing in the faith. Brothers and sisters listen to Brother Popong Castillo and wife Sister Ella (inset) share their spiritual growth experience in one of the regular bi-monthly breakfasts:

After the self-introductions, Bro Joey Estagle, Rem Gopez and Mael Kalata, took turns in selling the BCBP to the group. They announced their intention to open up and establish an outreach in Tuguegarao. Mons. Marcelo Bassig, Parish Priest of Tuguegarao, welcomed the visitors and manifested his full support for their mission.

Bro Ronnie Guzman and I had breakfast with the visitors the following morning before they took the plane back to Manila. The breakfast was preceded by a mini-sharing with Bro. Mael Kalata as the sharer. That meeting became the "giant step" toward the establishment of BCBP Tuguegarao Outreach.

The first outreach breakfast - I was invited by the Las Piñas visitors to attend the Saturday breakfast meeting of their chapter on July 24, 1993. My schedule showed that I could attend the breakfast if I wanted to because I was to have a hearing in Quezon City on July 22, 1999. I was not too keen about attending, but neither did I resist the invitation. What struck me was the unsolicited offer of Bro. Johnny Avila, who resided in Parañaque, to pick me up in my residence at Provident Village, Marikina, some 30 or so kilometers away. He promised to bring me to Italia Club 500 in Parañaque for the meeting that was to start at 7:30 in the morning. For me that was a tall order to fulfill. When I woke up on the that day, it was

raining very hard. I hoped that Bro. Johnny Avila would not come, but to my great surprise, at about 6:00 o'clock that morning, he came.

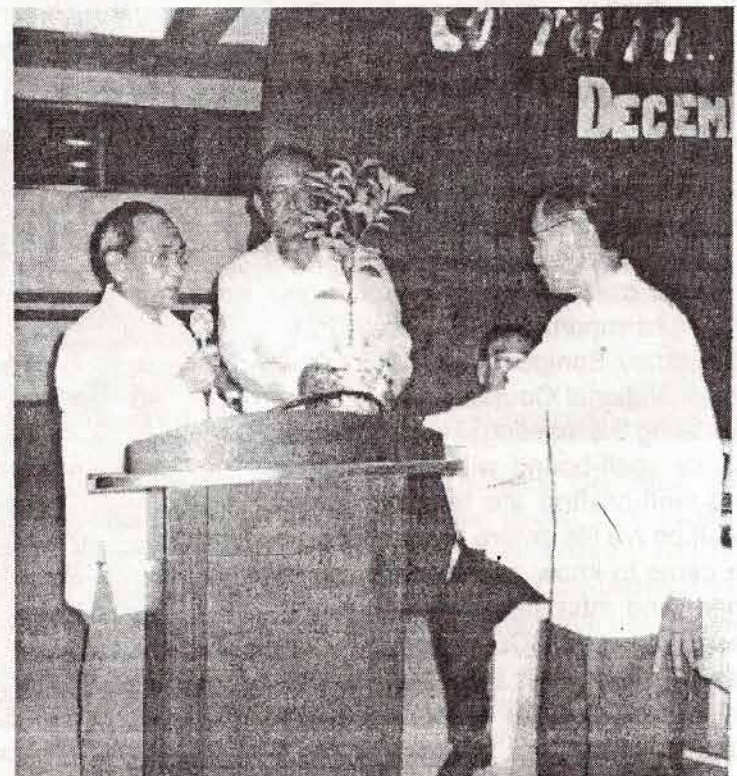
While the rains pounded hard on his car, Bro Johnny Avila literally monopolized the conversation. All he talked about was how his conversion to a renewed spiritual life came about, dealing how he joined the brotherhood that led him to make a 180-degree turn from his past to embrace a full life in Christ, and the windfall of blessings that God had given to him and his family after his conversion. Normally I should have been turned off by this kind of monologue but instead it softened my initial resistance against joining the BCBP. At Italia Club 500, I felt an initial uneasiness from the attention given to me but after I was introduced to the members of the Brotherhood and as the proceedings went on, the sincerity of the group, the atmosphere of prayer, and sharing given by the sharer, Bro. Ed Mendoza of

Greenhills Chapter, totally disarmed me. Right then and there, I decided to help in the establishment of the Tuguegarao Outreach.

After the breakfast meeting, I joined the conference which made plans to hold the inaugural breakfast in Tuguegarao. At that meeting were Bros Joey Estagle, the Chapter Head, Rem Gopez, the Mission Director, Johny Avila, Pete Bertis, Jr. and others. It was decided that a group to be led by Rem Gopez would make another trip to Tuguegarao on August 1, 1993 to make the final preparations for the inaugural breakfast.

The following brothers from Metro Manila came to attend the inaugural breakfast meeting on 15 August 1993: Bros Manny Banigan, the BCBP National President, Joey Estagle, BCBP Las Piñas Chapter Head, Manny Dacayan, Mon Malinao, Rey Datu, Jun Figueroa, Ismael Kalata, Arnold Tarobal, Lex Veridiano, Allen Reyes, Pete Bertis, Jr. and Tony Pedro. **30**

Brother Dar Navarro offers to brother Ninoy Carag, Mission Head, the symbolic seedling, signifying the nurturing of the new life in Christ at the end of BCLP. Looking on are brothers Peping Taguba, Chapter Life Head, and brother Diddi Perez, Outreach Head (partly hidden)





Celebrating with songs of praise and thanksgiving. The Music Ministry in action, 5th Anniversary celebration, August 25, 1998.

GOD's call

Thirty businessmen and professionals from Tuguegarao attended that inaugural breakfast meeting.

After the Eucharistic Celebration at St. Peter's Cathedral with Most. Rev. Mons Diosdado Talamayan, Archbishop of Tuguegarao, as the main celebrant, the inaugural breakfast meeting started at 8:30 a.m., with Rey Datu as the Emcee who made the meeting lively with his puns and wit, breaking the formality of the atmosphere with his opening remarks that like the Holy Family who were not welcomed in the inn and had to go to a stable, he, too, was refused hotel accommodations upon arrival in Tuguegarao because all the hotels were fully booked. He checked-in at a motel outside of town and he was mistaken for an early morning pleasure seeker.

Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan, spiritual father of the Archdiocese, graced the occasion, highlighting its importance and significance. Bro Manny Banigan, President of the BCBP National Council, gave a sharing during the meeting. He held his audience spell-bound with his inspiring and well-crafted life testimony that dwelt on his life before his BCLP, how he came to know and develop a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus during his BCLP and how his life has changed after that. Archbishop Talamayan gave a response to the beautiful sharing.

That breakfast planted the BCBP seed in Tuguegarao.

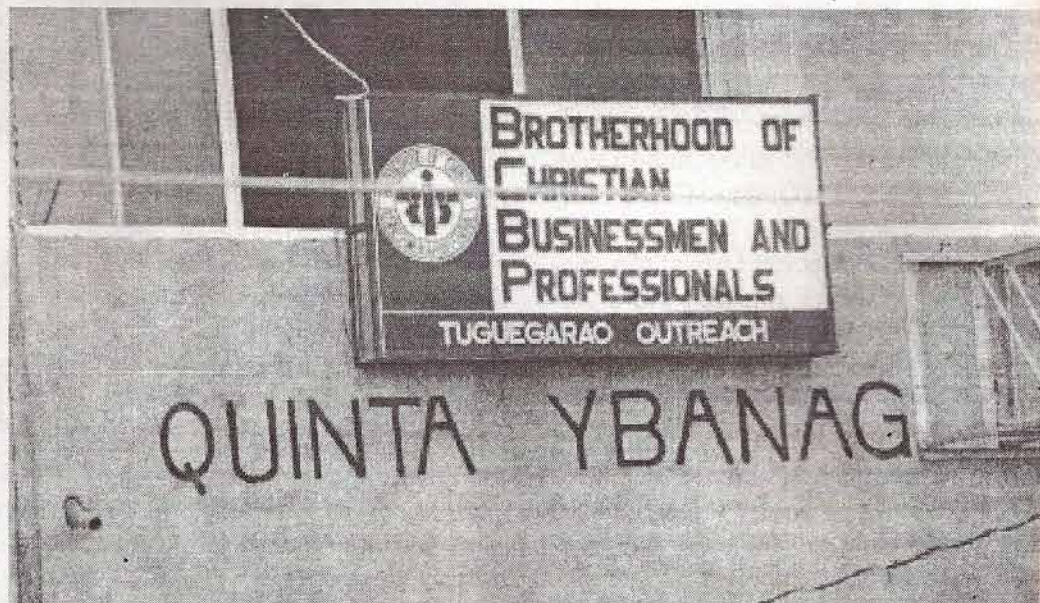
Growing Up - After the inaugural breakfast, bi-monthly merienda meetings have been held every second and fourth Saturday of each month, with sharers coming from Metro Manila. For 1993-94, the bi-monthly merienda schedules were interrupted by two Brotherhood Christian Life Programs (BCLPs). The first BCLP graduated thirteen (13) couples and eight (8) singles on 23 January 1994, while the second BCLP produced twelve (12) couples and four (4) singles who made their commitment to the Lord on June 5, 1994. All together they were distributed into five Action Groups.

Meanwhile on July 1, 1994 the Parañaque Chapter was formally created, breaking the Las Piñas Chapter into two. Consequently, Tuguegarao Outreach was placed under the Parañaque Chapter, creating a situation where the Outreach was older than the mother Chapter.

As an Outreach, it has availed assiduously of the means of perseverance provided for under the methodology of the BCBP. These included action group meetings, fellowship, merienda meetings, teachings and other growth and support systems, all calculated to ensure a full life in Christ and to bring Christ in the marketplace according to the mission and vision of the BCBP.

A Home for BCBP

Two years ago, a generous BCBP couple, Bro. Amin and Sis. Ching Soriano, products of CLP I and Leaders of Unit I, donated the entire 3rd floor space of their commercial building in the heart of Tuguegarao for the use of the Chapter. While they could have derived a juicy income by renting it out to commercial establishments, they opted instead to offer it for the Lord's purpose. Called the "Gorgeous Hall" by the donors, it has become a "home" for the Tuguegarao BCBP - a venue for its meetings, teach-ins, First Friday mass, worship, seminars, training, and other activities. ✦



The BCBP Tuguegarao home office, right smack at the center of a marketplace

Brotherhood Christian Life Program (BCLP)- GOD'S PLAN AND POWER IN MOTION

BCBP Tuguegarao has conducted eight BCLP classes to date with a total of 247 graduates, making up a sizable community of workers for the Lord's vineyard. Nine of them, however, have gone back to their Maker.

The initial BCLP was conducted in January 1994, followed by two more in the same year, one in June and another in November. In just one year as an outreach, Tuguegarao embraced 97 brothers and sisters into Brotherhood.

After the initial salvo, however, the BCLP tempo slackened to one class a year from 1995 to 1999. BCLP 4 in 1995 produced 30 graduates; BCLP 5 in 1996, 52 graduates; BCLP in 1997 25 graduates; BCLP 7 in 1998, 30 graduates and BCLP 8 in 1999, 13 graduates.

Some of BCLP classes have been marked by tragic incidents. In BCLP 3 the spouse of one couple participant was called to join the Creator just a few hours before commitment day. In CLP 7 another participant succumbed to a fatal heart attack while joyfully practicing for a graduation number the night before commitment day. The Course Leader in this same class collapsed unconscious from a heart attack while he was delivering his commitment talk, interrupting the proceedings for some time. We saw in this incident the power of prayer and the mercy of the Lord. While the Course Leader lay prostrate and unconscious in front of the participants, the whole assembly stormed heaven with prayers full of spiritual passion while several brother and sister doctors who were present did all they could to revive him. After an undetermined number of minutes which seemed like an eternity, he was revived. He was brought to the hospital for observation, but lo and behold, after an hour, he reappeared and joined the graduation proceedings! It was a very dramatic demonstration to the new crop of BCBP members of what prayer can do. ✠



The Parañaque music ministry assisting in a Tuguegarao BCLP.

Brotherhood Christian Marriage Retreat (BCMR)

BCBP Tuguegarao has conducted four marriage renewal retreats for its members since its inception as an outreach. The first was held on February 17-19, 1995; the 2nd on April 12-14, 1996; the 3rd on May 22-24, 1998; and the 4th on February 12-14, 1999. All the seminar retreats were held at the Regional Training Center of the Department of Health, at Carig, Tuguegarao, which has the facilities needed for a BCMR, like private rooms for couple participants, conference rooms and kitchen facilities. A total of 43 couples have benefited from the BCMR seminars. Judging from the feedback of the participants, the marriage retreats have given new meaning to husband-wife relationships resulting in improved and renewed love relationships among the spouses. One couple asked: Can we join again next time?

Staff Training and Development

As part of its growth activities and in preparation for its eventual chapterhood, BCBP Tuguegarao has identified core staff that would take care of the various activities of the chapter. Among the activities undertaken by the outreach was the training of a pool of speakers, called the Speakers Bureau, from which were drawn the speakers for the various talks during the CLPs, BCMRs or teach-ins. Incorporated into this training were team building activities designed to develop team spirit and cooperation. Some members of the Speakers Bureau have been trained to talk on particular topics, while others are given topics as the need demand. There are now 27 brothers and nine sisters that compose the Speakers Bureau. This number enables the chapter to assign speakers on short notice when circumstances do not allow others



to be available for certain speaking schedules. Beginning with BCLP 6 and BCMR 3, the Outreach has tapped local speakers from within the membership to handle all the modules. BCLP 8, the first Christian life program undertaken as a full-fledged chapter, benefited from the previous experiences and training of the speakers and the service team. ✠

Healing of hurts, burying the past. Brother Bandoy Lozada and wife Sister Ester do the symbolic ceremony during BCMR 4, February 14, 1999, a doubly significant Valentine's day.



Mark 4:26,27 compares the Kingdom of God to a seed that a farmer sows. "This is how it is with the Kingdom of God, it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how." We who live in the Cagayan Valley, accustomed to farming, fully appreciate and understand the meaning and significance of the analogy. The farmer prepares the land – he plows and harrows it to remove the weeds, walks through the length of the land following the furrows which line up the land as a result of the plowing and harrowing, line by line, row by row, dropping the grains of corn into the furrows, covering the grains with soil with his foot as he goes along. Thereafter, he begins to wait with faith, expecting the grains of corn to sprout and grow. When they do he tends them, fertilizes the soil, and weeds them so that the sprouts will not be choked.

(Acceptance speech of Bro. Diddi Perez, Chapter during the installation of BCBP Tuguegarao as a Chapter on August 14, 1999, Crown Lodge Hotel, Tuguegarao, Cagayan)

we will grow

The farmer does not know how and why the seeds sprout and grow, he does not even know when the seeds will sprout, but he believes and expects that they will sprout and grow.

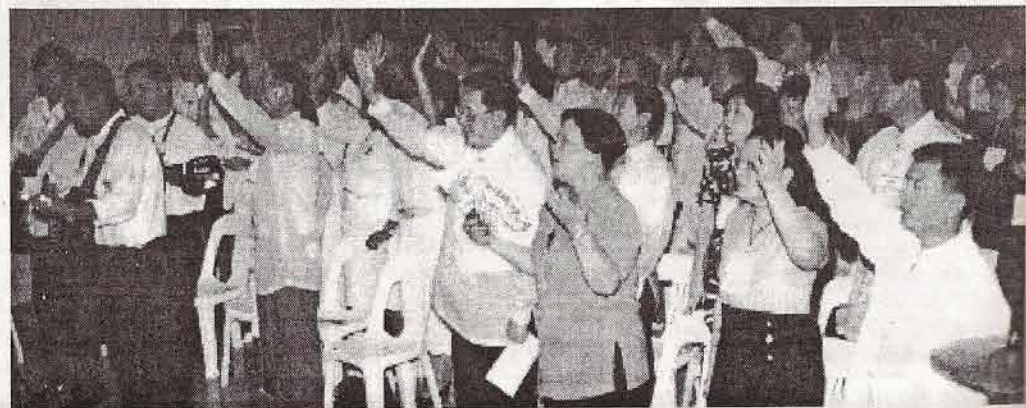
This can be said of the Tuguegarao BCBP. The Las Piñas Chapter and the National Council in 1993 scattered seed in Tuguegarao. They slept and rose night and day, and the seed sprouted and grew. But they prepared the land, plowed and harrowed it – they came, they planned, and opened the Outreach six years ago today. When the seed sprouted, they nurtured and sustained it with their time, talent and treasure. We did not know why busy lawyers like Manny Banigan, businessmen like Joey Estagle, executives like Chuck Colayco, their wives, and many others untiringly came to Tuguegarao on weekends, undaunted by the long and bumpy trips, faced the risks of close-traffics in Santa Fe, sometimes arriving in Tuguegarao in the wee hours of the morning. They braved travel by plane that sometimes did not land due to poor visibility. They came to share their life-testimonies, to conduct BCLPs, to sing songs of praise and worship that were soul-lifting to God. They came in great numbers during the baptism of the Holy Spirit and on commitment days, thus developing strong fraternal ties with and among us. By their witnessing, Christian brotherhood, an

idea that was vague to us before, became a concrete experience. The Holy Spirit, which heretofore was almost unknown, suddenly became a God whose gifts are indispensable to one's spiritual growth. By the methodology of the pre-BCLP, the BCLP proper, and post-BCLP, the processing toward the attainment of the three Cs- conversion, commitment and commission – and full life in Christ became realities, no longer the unattainable vision and mission. Slowly but surely we were transformed. We became bible-reading Catholics, daily mass goers and communicants. We were growing spiritually, individually and as a community. The transformation has been visible and contaminating. We have businessmen who were not religious before their BCLP, but after their BCLP they became intensely prayerful, as they have never been before or who had abandoned their

bibles on bookshelves, but after their BCLP they have become daily bible readers, communicating with God through the Bible. Before their BCLP they did not know the Lord, but after their BCLP they were converted to a personal relationship with God and became deeply committed to the Lord.

We could not explain all these visible transformation and phenomenal changes in our lives brought about by the BCBP. The inevitable conclusion is that the seed of the BCBP that was scattered has already sprouted and grown. We do not know the "hows" and "why" of these changes, but we know that they happened. We like the farmer, expected, believed, and anticipated them to happen.

After six years that seed has already grown into a tree. Proof of this is the presence here of more than 150 brothers



Common sense mellowed and experienced is wisdom. –A.R. Orage

we will grow

and sisters of the Tuguegarao BCBP Chapter, product of the BCBP methodology, who, like Paul, trained themselves for godliness. They participated in all the proceedings and activities under the direction and control of the National Council. Under the supervision and tutelage of the Las Piñas and later on the Parañaque Chapters, they underwent the Lord's discipline of throwing out everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

We, in collaboration with our mother Chapter, Parañaque, and the active participation of the National Council, particularly the President, have also scattered the seed of the BCBP in Santiago City. It is about to sprout. Proof of this is the presence here of the core group of the Santiago Outreach. I may sound presumptuous and too exuberant, but on this historic occasion of joy and jubilation, we dare say that we, the members of BCBP Tuguegarao Chapter, are strong even if we are weak, rich even if we are poor, for the Lord. May we be permitted to be the innocent children whom the Lord loves, emboldened by the presence and company of the members of the National Council, and encountered by the inspiration given us by our mother Parañaque Chapter.

With these premises and under the circumstances, I am emboldened to accept my appointment as the Chapter Head of the Tuguegarao Chapter. Praise the Lord!

In behalf of the Tuguegarao Chapter, I thank the members of the National Council, in particular, Brother Manny Banigan and Sister Hayds, Brother Rene Cortez and Sister Nonie, Brother Bobby Laviña and Sister Marite, Brother Chuck Colayco and Sister Ruffie. I thank our other visitors from Metro Manila, Bro. Pete and Sis. Rose Padre and Bor. Vic and Sis. Lorna Mendoza for their square dance participation; likewise Bro. Roger Ramos Bro. Sammy Ulanday, Bro. Rommel and Sis. Cathy Tillah, Bro. Rollie and Sis. Emma Ona. I thank the membership of Tuguegarao Chapter, the Santiago Outreach, and all others who have contributed their time, their talents and their treasures to make us a full-grown chapter. May the Lord reward you a hundredfold. †

Reaching Out



Top to bottom. The Santiago Outreach performing during the Tuguegarao installation. The movement spreads. Empowerment of the Santiago City Outreach. Brother Willy Simbul, designated Santiago Outreach Coordinator and wife Sister Beverly, receive Christ, the source of all power and center of the BCBP life, in symbolic ceremonies, from Brother Ninoy Carag, Tuguegarao Chapter Mission Head. Looking on are Brother Peping Taguba, Chapter Life Head, and Brother Diddi Perez, BCBP Tuguegarao Chapter Head.

Empowerment and commissioning at the Santiago City Outreach. On hand to attend the breakfast, give seminar talk on the BCBP mission/vision, service, conversion, commitment and commissioning but not very visible in the picture are: Brother Manny Banigan and Sister Hayds; Brother Rene Cortez and Sister Nonie; Brother Chuck Colayco and Sister Ruffie; and Brother Sadi Saguisag.

Mancom issues BCBP Curriculum

After much discussion and consultations the BCBP Mancom has finally issued the BCBP curriculum.

The curriculum was designed:

1. To implement a standard program of required teaching and training for all regular BCBP members.

2. To provide BCBP members with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to enable them to live out effectively their personal commitment to God, to others, and to the BCBP's mission of transforming the marketplace.

3. To provide a framework of Christian formation that will allow individual chapters/outreaches to initiate other teachings and trainings that will address their specific needs and concerns.

4. To prepare members for future leadership service assignments.

In essence, the Curriculum shall be implemented based on the following guidelines:

A. Prerequisites - Prior to taking any teaching and training program, an individual must have fully satisfied the requirements to become a full-pledged BCBP member, detailed in order as follows:

1. Must have completed the four (4) breakfast attendances and attained an associate membership status.

2. Must have completed the Brotherhood Christian Life Program (BCLP).

3. Must have completed the BCBP Culture Talk Series.

4. Must have been assigned to an Action Group.

B. Responsibilities

1. Chapter Heads are required to submit a yearly teaching and training program schedule (Yearly Chapter Plans under PD 2A) which is due at the end of January each year.

2. All Chapter Initiated Programs (CISPs), in their entirety, must be submitted to the Mancom thru the Director for Teaching and Training for study and approval before implementation (PD #1).

3. Chapter Heads have the personal responsibility to ensure that all CISPs do not contradict Christian principles, and are in accordance with, and support the BCBP mission and vision. (PD 2, 22).

4. CISPs which have contributed to the growth of members and have provided a substantial and meaningful impact to the overall formation program

of a particular chapter, may be recommended for inclusion to form part of either of the two required tracks.

C. Priorities

1. The Members' Required Track (MRT) and Leaders' Required Track (LRT) are priority tracks over the Chapter-Initiated Programs (CISP). In this sense, we consider that CISPs as support programs.

2. A member must have completed the MRT and LRT programs prior to appointment to any service assignment. Service assignment in this sense is defined as those that involve the responsibility of handling, leading, caring, and directing a group of people. This includes in particular the following:

a). ADL, b). DL, c). AGL

d). Governance Team positions (as defined in PD 22 A - UL, MD, CLD, CH)

e). Head of major service ministries: Breakfast, Music Ministry, Intercession, Liturgical, Secretariat.

f). Headship of the different teaching and training courses: BCLP, BCMR, BCBP.

3. A member must have completed the Intra-Personal and Inter-Personal Levels of the MRT, and Intra-Personal Level of the LRT, before being assigned a Talk for any course.

4. A member must have completed the Initiation and Immersion tracks before he can give a breakfast sharing. ✠

Brotherhood Movements

The year 2000 introduces several movements in the National as well as local levels.

In the national level, we have the following appointments: National Treasurer-Manny Jimenez of Alabang; National Director for Mission-Ed Lising of Cebu; National Director for Family Programs-Charlie Carballo of Alabang; National Co-directors for Leadership Programs -Manny Banigan and Rolly Ona of Las Piñas and Makati, respectively.

Also Mancom has appointed Doy Nunag of Alabang as BCBP Legal Counsel, and Bobet Deluria of Greenhills as National Director for Information Technology (IT).

In the chapter level, Cagayan de Oro progressed into CDO East and CDO West with Art Neri and Bong Pelaez as chapter heads respectively. While in the

Visayas, Cebu is now Cebu North under Rolly Villa and Cebu South led by Lloyd Limbaga; Mactan is now Mactan and Mandaue headed by Nelson Daus and Ted Oliva, respectively.

Ted Fernandez replaced Teddy Siapno at the helm of Dagupan, Dofel Banares took over from Maning Lorenzo of Legazpi, Art dela Cruz replaced Roy Calleja of Quezon City.

Several outreaches are expected to become chapters in training within the year: Manila, Lipa, Baguio, San Fernando, Calamba, Lucena, Tacloban, Dumaguete, Roxas, Butuan, and Dipolog.

In its last meeting the Mancom approved the RCDs plans to open several other locations in the country as well as laying down the ground work for a possible start of the BCBP international evangelization program. ✠



OUTGOING-INCOMING. Outgoing Dagupan chapter head Teddy and wife Joan Siapno (top); Incoming Quezon City top honcho Art and Lallie de la Cruz.

THE CURRICULUM - TEACHING AND TRAINING PROGRAMS TRACK AND TIMETABLE APPROACH

<u>INITIATION TRACK</u> 6 - months	<u>IMMERSION TRACK</u> 6-8 months	<u>SERVICE TRACK</u> 7-12 months	<u>LEADERSHIP TRACK</u> 13-18 months	<u>ADVANCED TRACK</u> 19-24 months
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THE BCBP WAY OF LIFE PATTERNS

1. 4 Breakfast Attendances 2. BCLP 3. Culture Talks 4. Commitment	1. Action Group Meetings Focus on Bible Sharing: 7-Steps, LLL, Life-Sharing 2. 1st. Fri. Assembly & Teaching 3. Chapter Assembly 4. Breakfast 5. Retreat	-ditto-	-ditto-	4. Breakfast SHARING 4. Outreach & BEP Involvement
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REQUIRED TEACHING AND TRAINING

	1. Prayer Series & MMGS 2. Christian & his Emotion 3. EPS 4. Tithing Talk	1. BCMR 2. CPR 3. CSS	1. BCBR 2. Social Teachings of the Church	1. BCMR-2
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LEADERSHIP REQUIRED TRAINING

	1. DGL Training 2. AGL Training 3. Retreats for CH, MD, CLD	1. SLT 2. Leadership Training for CH, MD, CLD
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CHAPTER-INITIATED SUPPORT PROGRAMS (CISP)

Growth Programs in the Inter-Personal and Meta-Personal Levels that will address specific needs of members and chapters such as:
 Family Programs, Bible Study Programs, Christian Business Ethics and Practices

BCBP Website to be launched this year

The Mancom announces the finalization of plans to launch the official BCBP website.

As of this writing, BCBP is still using the website launched by the 20th anniversary committee headed by Rey Feria of Las Piñas. This shall later be endorsed to the National office and shall be the initial take off point for the new website.

According to Bobet Deluria, the newly appointed National Director for Information Technology, and in charge of

the program, once all the materials and structural elements have been completed, the website will be operational by the end of the second quarter of this year.

The website shall provide e-mail addresses for all chapters and outreaches carrying identical domain name service (DNS), e.g. *greenhills@bcbp.org*, and providing redundant and fast website download for all BCBP chapters.

The BCBP website will be hosted by Tridel Technologies, Inc. (*i-manila.com.ph*) the current Internet Service Provider (ISP) of the BCBP.

Primarily, the website is intended to provide members easy access to the different facets of the Brotherhood operations, announcements, updates, activities, fast and reliable communications between and among the chapters, and national leadership/office, as well for general information.

In connection with this, the Mancom wishes to reiterate its directive that all chapters, chapters in training as well as outreaches provide themselves with the basic requirements for internet facilities.

The website is part of the BCBP's plan for globalization. ✦

tuguegarao

BCBP Tuguegarao chapter update

1. CHRISTIAN LIFE PROGRAM

The latest Christian Life Program (No 8) was conducted by the brotherhood from November 7 to December 12, 1999. It was called the "Lucky 13" group because it was composed of 6 couples and one single female as the chosen participants. The venue was the new air-conditioned function room above the college canteen of St. Louis College of Tuguegarao.

During the baptism of the Holy Spirit, one of the very active priests in the archdiocese, Rev. Fr. Roger Cortez, delivered a very touching homily on the power of the Holy Spirit in every individual's life. He stressed the fact that the grace of the Holy Spirit is a very effective weapon in repelling the negative forces that pull us away from the teachings of Christ.

The course leaders were Bro. Johnny and Sis. Nita Cabbuag who were subsequently appointed as Unit Leaders. The discussion group leaders who automatically became the action group leaders were Bro. Popo and Sis. Ella Castillo and Bro. Mel and Sis. Ingrid Calubaquib.

Our Chapter Head, Bro. Diddi Perez, was unfazed by the harassments along the way. Likewise, the Mission Heads, Bro. Ninoy and Sis. Teresing Carag, were relentless in pushing through all plans for the conduct of the first CLP. They urged all

members to continue praying and fasting. When beset by obstructions in their plans, they said "perhaps we are not praying enough". The intercessory group led by Bro. Ely Baylon and Sis. Luz Babaran enjoined members to join in their prayers and offer some fasting days for the success of the Santiago Outreach.

Finally, last March 12, 2000, the first Christian Life Program of the outreach officially commenced. The chapter went in full force to lend support to the designated servers and most especially to the participants. The Course Leader was Bro. Dar Navarro assisted by wife Sis. Helen. The head servant was Bro. Willy Simbul of Santiago assisted by Bro. Bandoy Lozada of Tuguegarao. There were 27 participants - 12 couples and 3 singles. The president of the University of La Salette, Rev. Fr. Romeo Gonzales, MS, graciously allowed the use of their high school building for the BCLP. Our own members - Bro. Sammy and Sis. Levy Castro who are VP for Administration at ULS were very supportive.

There is so much to thank the Lord for, even if there is still much work to be done. He heard our prayers to make things possible because we totally depended on Him. His grace enabled us to go through seemingly insurmountable difficulties similar to labor pains as when a mother strives to make a safe

delivery. There is joy in service but the best plans can be aborted unless we receive empowerment from God through prayers.

II. NOVENA FOR 20th ANNIVERSARY

In preparation for its 20th National Anniversary, the BCBP instituted a chain of novena prayers which started as early as October 1999. Tuguegarao Chapter had its turn last January 9-17, 2000. This spiritual activity drew together many members who joined nine consecutive evenings of praise and supplications for the success of the celebrations at Subic on April 28-30. The Adoration Chapel of the St. Peter's Metropolitan Cathedral provided a perfect ambience for the novena.

III. ST. THERESE RELIC VISITS CAGAYAN VALLEY

From its venerated origin in Lisieux, France, the pilgrim relic of St. Therese of the Child Jesus arrived in Tuguegarao City on February 10, 2000. She was enroute from Iligan, Isabela and was welcomed to Tuguegarao by Most Rev. Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan together with other priests and members of the Archdiocese. Thousands of Catholic devotees and spectators from Cagayan and neighboring provinces filled the Tuguegarao Metropolitan Cathedral in order to have a glimpse and to say a prayer before the relic. The series of liturgical services and concelebrated masses were well attended. The relic was brought to the San Jacinto Seminary at 3:30 PM, then to the St. Claire Monastery at 5:30 pm and back to the cathedral at 7:00 PM. Vigil that evening was up to 11 PM.

The next morning, the Tuguegarao Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Rodolfo Beltran, said the Mass where he exhorted the people to be as simple and as devoted to Jesus as St. Therese was. St. Therese was a Carmelite nun who was canonized as a saint not because of any ostentatious work but by being a humble, prayerful nun who meditated lengthily on the Blessed Trinity. She was named the 33rd and the youngest doctor of the Catholic Church. Doctor here means not academic excellence but a very high degree of spirituality. ✦



A Chapter is born. Members unfurl the new BCBP Tuguegarao Chapter banner during the Installation Ceremonies, Crown Lodge Hotel, August 14, 1999.

zamboanga

Zamboanga outreach conducts BCMR I

Barely a month after it celebrated first Commitment, Zamboanga Outreach conducted its first BCMR on February 4-6, 2000, at the Nuestra Señora la Virgen del Pilar Lay Formation Center and Retreat House in Mercedes, some 17 kms. away from the city proper. The retreat provided for an intimate spiritual encounter between the 12 couples and God so that their relationship could provide for opportunities to glorify the Lord. ✠

mactan

Recommitment for the new millenium

Mactan welcomed the new millenium with a Thanksgiving and Recommitment mass held on January 3, at the Holy Family Church during the community's first Assembly night for the year 2000. The occasion will also be remembered as Mactan's last assembly together as one chapter before it starts to multiply into the Mandaue and Mactan chapters with the Singles as a Unit in training under the LINGKOD NG PANGINOON. ✠

Music Ministry

The Music Ministry held a fellowship last January 29 at Cora Flugfelder's residence at Silver Hills, Talamban. Theme of the fellowship was: "Holding on Together for Love of Service and Music". The fellowship's objectives were as follows:

1. To renew one's commitment to the ministry;
2. To promote the spirit of brotherhood/camaraderie among its members;
3. To strengthen relationships among the members by knowing each others' weakness.

Breakfast Fellowship

We had a total of twenty-five (25) first timers for the month.

For the month of January 2000, we had four (4) breakfast fellowships which were all held at the Majestic Restaurant, MEPZ, Lapu-Lapu City. ✠

legazpi

Discussion/Assistant Discussion Group Leader's Training

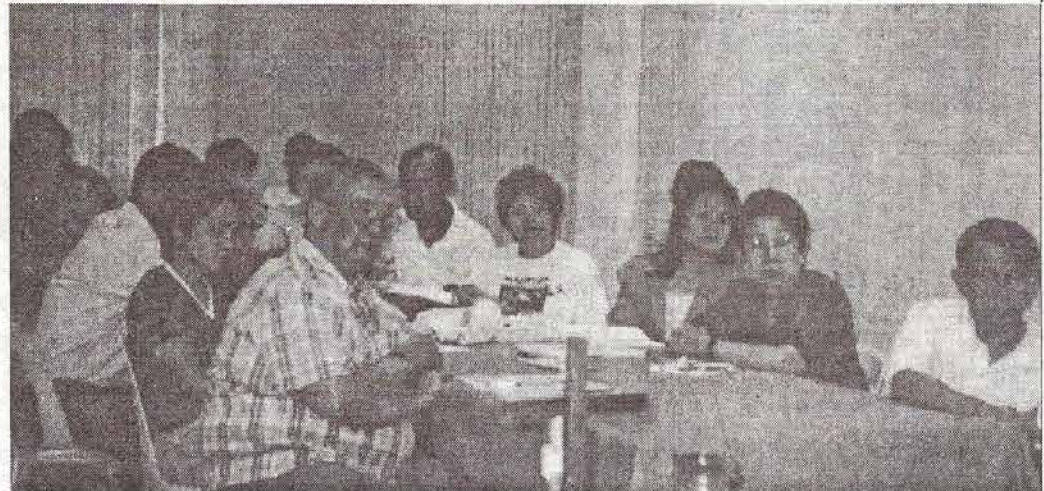
On January 9, 2000, the Training Section of the Formation Committee of our Chapter's Life Program conducted a whole afternoon training session for Discussion/Assistant Discussion Group Leaders (DGL/ADGL), in the light of the upcoming BCLP-2 for Sorsogon Outreach which will start on January 30, 2000. The session was held at Simon of Cyrene Conference Hall in Daraga, Albay.

The participants, facilitators and trainers were forty seven (47) in all; forty (40) from Legazpi Chapter and seven (7) from Sorsogon Outreach. ✠

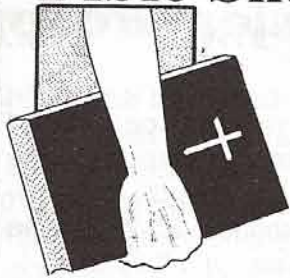
BCBP Legazpi Chapter Assembly National Thanksgiving

The first activity which BCBP Legazpi undertook for year 2000 was on January 7, a 1st Friday, whence we held our monthly Chapter Assembly coincident with National Thanksgiving Day of the BCBP community. Venue was the Albay Pastoral Center, with Unit 1 of Bro. Ric/Sis Zeny Lee as host unit. Worship Leader was Bro. Emong Moral, ably backed-up by the Music Ministry. Members who attended profusely greeted one another a happy New Millenium.

The assembly was graced with the presence of Rev. Fr. Andre O. Lim, Chancellor-Secretary of the Diocese of Legazpi, who gave a very informative discourse on the "Great Jubilee Year 2000". ✠



Bible Sharing



What does LOVE look like?

What does it mean to love, not just in abstract terms, but in concrete, practical terms. We talk of love without definition and too easily equate it with strong feelings rather than practical realities. What does it really mean that God has called Christians to love one another?

The Bible points to the example of Jesus. Check out these scripture passages then discuss and share in your action group and among your friends these four ways of living a practical kind of love.

1 John 3:11-18 and 1 John 4:7-21

1. Love knows others. Jesus knew people in a profound way. People who met Him were often amazed that He knew the whole truth about them. Remember the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4)? If we want to love as He did, we must always remember there is a depth of reality in everyone we meet. We need to discard our masks, our fears and distrusts and to listen with a heart full of love to what other people say and feel.

How easily do I relate to other people? Why do I find it sometimes difficult? How can I be more like Jesus in interacting with people?

2. Love accepts others. Often we fail to follow our Master in His accepting attitude. We talk about unconditional love, but in actual practice, we tend to either directly or indirectly put conditions to our giving

unconditional love. St. Paul says, "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you" (Rom. 15:7).

What conditions do I usually make before accepting someone as my friend? Do I meet people with a sincere welcome in my smile, regardless of their status in life, or their financial condition, or their undesirability in my eyes? What, to me, makes a person acceptable to me?

3. Love forgives others. Forgiveness means loving in spite of wrong. Love may see the sin in others, but love sees beyond what is offensive and loves anyway. The best example of this is the Prodigal Son and we ask ourselves: which son am I? Would I be able to forgive as did the father?

How easily do I forgive others? Do I make it easy for others to forgive me?

4. Love serves others. In John 13 there is a portrait of the love of Jesus in action. Knowing that Judas has already betrayed Him, that Peter would deny Him, and that the others would soon all run away from Him, Jesus saw their dirty feet and washed them all. Think of this! He accepted them just as they were and forgave them and served their needs. Then He willingly died to pay the penalty of their sins. Such was the full extent of His love.

Do what extent do I love and serve others? Is my service done out of a forgiving, unconditional love? If not, what is preventing me from doing this? How can I be more like Jesus in this regard? †

Several of the coming months have five Fridays and as is the custom in the Brotherhood, the fifth week is set aside for fellowship activities and cross groupings. Here are a few games to liven things up and help members interact in a fun atmosphere.



Paper Cutting Race

Take several newspaper sheets (one for each participant in the game) and thumbtack each newspaper by the upper lefthand corner to the wall. Then give a pair of scissors to each contestant and instruct him/her that he is to cut the newspaper in zigzag fashion so that it will become a long strand, reaching across the room. The first one to make his strand reach across the room is the winner, the one who has the longest unbroken strand also gets a prize. Anyone who breaks his, automatically disqualifies. Or, if you wish, let anyone who breaks his strand run to a distant room for a piece of mending tape.

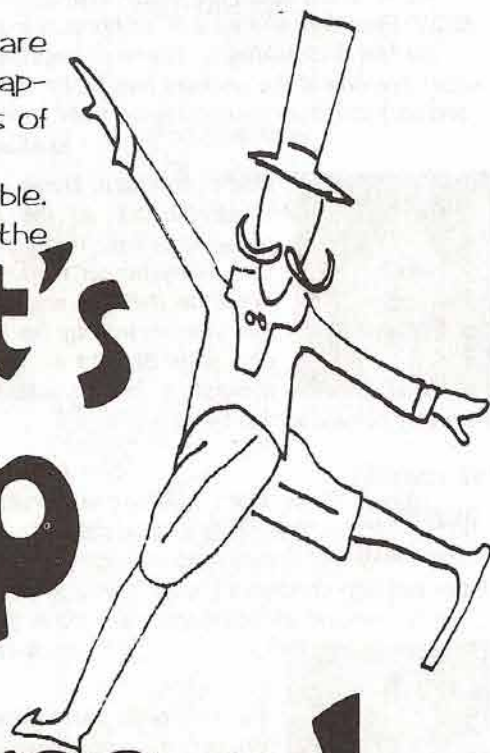
Soap Bubble Race

About three teams, with three on a team, are sufficient for this game. One team member in each group is given a soap-bubble with an ample supply of soapy water. The other two members of each team are given fans.

At the signal **Go**, each soap blower from each team blows a bubble. The other team members then proceed to try to fan that bubble across the room. The soap blower follows behind them. If the bubble breaks before it can be fanned across the goal line, then the soap bubble blower blows another bubble at the point where the last one broke. The first team to get a soap bubble across the goal line is the victor.

fellowship

It's time!



Musical I.Q. Challenge

Choose two teams. Team #1 sings an excerpt of a BCBP song, one or two lines is enough, for Team #2 to name the song. A time limit should be assigned, for instance, 1 or 2 minutes, for the challenged team to give the full and complete name of the song in order to gain a point for their team and the right to challenge the other team. Be sure to have a referee and impartial time keeper as this game can become quite boisterous.



Laugh Experts

Call for volunteers to see who can produce the greatest variety of laughter. Award points to the one whose laugh is the most unusual, the one whose laugh is the loudest and the one who brings out the biggest laugh from the audience. Later in the fellowship, you might want to name the night's most laughable person.



Ronnie Caballero.

"I am filled with joy at the great response we are getting from the chapters in focus," says Ronnie. His vision for the Kapatiran includes making the news magazine truly responsive to the BCBP members nationwide as an informative, inspirational and unifying factor in the growth of members and community. "Keep those articles and sharings coming," encourages Ronnie.



Nancy R. Catan. As a facilitator for the BCBP's Steward Leaders Training, Nancy says that the key to being a good steward is love. She herself has experienced first-hand this love: God's healing love, the love of husband and family, and the sharing and caring love of the BCBP brothers and sisters in community. And it is this love that she tries to share with others in her Issue Focus article, that also serves as her regular column, Back To Basics.

Louie Morales.

As he writes about the BCBP Way of Life, our new BCBP President shares with us his own experience in the Men's Breakfasts. These unforgettable experiences are one of the anchors that BCBP is founded on and as such, they must continue to be "unforgettable" to all who attend.



Eddie Mendoza. Eddie is very active as BCBP Greenhills Chapter Head, as the head of his family, as a business executive. In his column he ponders on the question, "Why bother working so hard to be a Christian?" We know that he was greatly influenced in his Christian involvement by his late father, Mang Ipe (see Tribute, page 8), and we at Kapatiran extend our heartfelt sympathy for his loss together with our prayers for a heavenly reward for his father.

Annie Salvador.

Here is Annie again, rejoicing and crying all at the same time over one of life's initial rites of passage, her son's very first communion. Reading this we remember our own children's rites of passage as well as our very own and we ask ourselves: Have they made a difference in our lives?



Fernando de Larrazabal. In this issue, Tito Larry addresses the current unrest and turmoil in our country and the world today. Peace is what we need, he says. And we need to be the ones to initiate peacemaking in our own little ways, in our own milieu.

Sammy M. Ulanday.

We don't see how Sammy copes with all the activities and responsibilities that he does and still be smiling at the end of the day (well, most of the time, that is). More power to you, Sam!



Francis J. Kong. Author of "Only The REAL Matters", Francis shares with us the importance of loving our work. Again, we thank him for allowing us to use material from his book for our Kapatiran.

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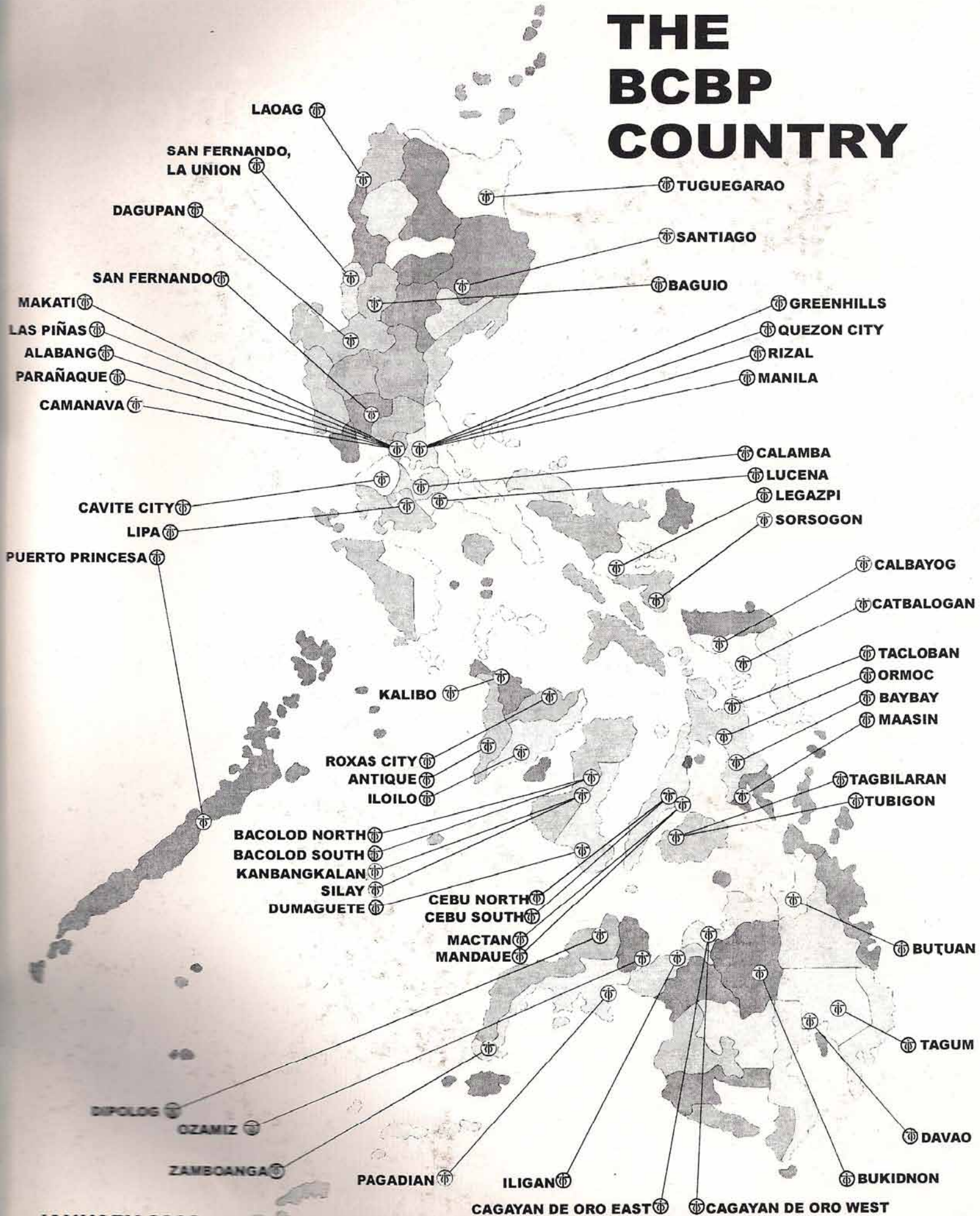
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THE BCBP COUNTRY



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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