



Seek God Ministries

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Dear friends and partners:

Merry Christmas from The Philippines! One of the things I have always enjoyed about the Philippines is that Christmas is a long season. Christmas begins in October in The Philippines. This is usually a nice time of year in The Philippines. The rainy season begins to lessen and the weather gets cooler as we go toward January.

However, we can still have a typhoon this time of year. You may be hearing about the death and devastation caused by Typhoon Bopha in The Philippines. The typhoon, a category 5, struck the southern Philippines devastating parts of the Island of Mindanao. We are in the northern part of The Philippines on the Island of Luzon and we were not affected by the Typhoon. Thank you to all who pray for us.

Last Saturday at Kingdom Celebration a team from the Logos Hope Ship came and blessed the kids with ministry and gifts. It was such a blessing to our kids, many of them are in very poor families and do not receive much, if anything, for Christmas. We had over 100 kids attend. This is actually the fourth time that a team from Logos Hope has



come to Kingdom celebration. The ship has been in dry dock for repairs and upgrades for several months. So we have been blessed to have them a few times and the kids always enjoy them.



The kids were so happy to receive their gifts. They included some things to enjoy and some things they can always use like toothbrush and tooth paste, soap, and other hygiene items that they need.



In The Philippines we do not always need to go out and look for ministry opportunities, many times they come to us. A few months ago a young boy began coming to the Transformation Center he was hungry and would ask for bread. He saw that the Transformation Center is a safe place and that we are nice and cared about him. That and the fact that we always have food made him decide that he did not want to leave. One of the first times that he came we fed him and later when it was starting to get dark we told him it was time to go. He then began begging to stay, he said that a woman that his mother lived with will beat him and he showed us marks on his legs. He was crying and begging not to have to go. It was one of those situations which I really don't like when a major battle erupts between my heart and my mind. My heart said let him stay but my mind was worried because we did not really know him that well and we did not have contact with his mother and we are not ready to take in kids, officially that is. Our buildings need much work, we need staff to help us, and we do not have the monthly support needed to setup a children's home, yet. So, we do the best we can with what we have; which is actually quite a bit considering our budget.

This time my mind won and I told him he had to go this time but he could come back the next day. That night the battle continued in my mind. Watching him crying and begging did something in me; it caused me to experience God's compassion for him, which happens often here. I was determined to help him and we began praying for him. The next morning he came back, early, and stood outside yelling for us to let him in. The person he feared was not at his house so he did not get beat when he went home the night before.

We began to make more effort to learn about him and his situation in life. One thing I have learned is that every time we deal with a kid in The Philippines each one is different, they are all unique. Sometimes the stories are similar and the things kids suffer on the streets are common. When they are on the street they may act the same as the others in their group. However, when you get to know them you realize each one is an individual with a unique personality created special by God and no one else on earth is just like that one.

I will call the boy David, not his real name. He is nine years old and he is small. He is only 42 pounds and 3' 10" tall. However, that does not stop him from travelling an hour and a half by bus to a city where he begs to make money. Sometimes he will be there for two days sleeping in the bus terminal or who knows where. He is in danger of becoming a real street kid.

David's mother probably had a difficult beginning also. She grew up poor and did not receive any education. When she was young she ended up working in Manila as a house maid. A son of the people she was working for began raping her. Later she became pregnant. Because of the shame the son and maid got married and moved away to where people would not know them. They had four sons, the oldest is in his twenties, and David is the youngest. When David was about a year old his dad died. It could have been from the long term effects of excessive drinking.

David seems to have an attention deficit disorder. In the US he would get help. In the Philippines he falls through the cracks. David's brothers did not have any problems in school. David has started school several times but does not last long. He just leaves or does not listen to the teacher and does whatever he wants. His mother does not know how to cope with him so she lets him do whatever. She cares about him but does not know what to do. She gave him away a few months ago to a family that wanted to have a boy. But he would not stay there he would just always leave without asking and go to the river or ocean and swim, usually with friends. They told the mom to take him back because of that. Then his mother came to us and asked us to please take him. We told her we would try to help but we explained that we do not have staff and we can not watch him every minute so he needs to listen and obey or we will not be able to keep him. She understood and was grateful that we would try.

We tried; I think he was here for more than a week that time. We learned a lot about him. For one thing he can learn, but he probably needs to be taught in short periods of time and then go on to something different. We gave him vitamins and nutritious food and that seems to help him. However, he would not listen and if we were not watching him he gets into to things that he shouldn't. We told him that we are not giving up on him and that he will be able to come back but if he wants to stay here he has to cooperate with us.

We have been able to teach him some things. However, he can also be very stubborn and has been used to doing what ever he wants when he wants. That is a street kid trait that has to be overcome. Actually we are all born with that trait. If a kid grows up with good parents they learn to trust and obey the parents. This makes it easier for a person to learn to trust and obey God, giving up their will to do His will. Theoretically

that is, it is a process for all of us. But for street kids that is a foreign concept and they need to start by having someone they trust teach them these things so that they learn the concept of denying their will and doing what they are told.

One day I had a heart to heart talk with David. It started with do you know what a street kid is? Yes he did. Do you want to be a street kid? No, he did not. Then I told him all about what life is like for a street kid and all the terrible things that happen to street kids and all the suffering that goes with that life and how it is usually a short life and about how many kids we know that already died. He has been on the street enough to know that I am right and he seemed to understand. Then I told him how life is supposed to be and that he has to want to learn so that he can learn reading, writing, and math. Then I told him about work and helping around the house and how it is actually fun because you can see that you accomplished something and that feels good. Work is fun. I told him how God wants him to learn to hear God's voice and obey Him so that he can do great things with God's help. We had already led him to give his life to Jesus before this. I think he understood and that talk seemed to help him.

We have been using the privilege of staying here as a reward for his good behavior. After coming and going many times he now has pretty good behavior when he is at the Transformation Center. He got better at helping do things around the house and he seems to want to learn. He actually has very good handwriting and makes great effort to make the letters perfectly. So, maybe he has some artistic talent. Part of what we try to do is identify gifts and talents to help the kids learn what they are good at. David is doing better than before. He really wants to stay at our place and he seems to make a big effort to be good. However, he requires constant attention or he gets into things that he should not.

The woman who David was scared of has moved away for now so he can go to his house and not worry. However, he is not exactly welcome there because they do not know how to deal with him. His mother is working as a caregiver and is often not in the home. Basically this is one of those situations that if we don't help him we do not know who else would. Our concern is that we do not have staff to help us take care of kids and also to teach them academically. Our family does the best we can but we also get burned out and need a brake sometimes. So with God's help we try to balance things out and do what we can.

Please pray for David and for us. It cost a lot of money to raise kids. Right now we know at least 12 kids including David that really need to be taken care of. We are trying to feed them and do what we can to help them for now.

We also want to say a big thank you to all that are helping us. You are making a big difference in many people's lives. We know that the Lord calls very special people to partner with us. You are so appreciated and we pray the Lord bless you and your family with abundant grace and peace.

One of the great things about where we are in The Philippines is that there is an abundance of the beauty and awe of God's creation around us. We are actually near a tropical rain forest. A while back I was able to get a photo of a Philippines Eagle circling over the Transformation Center. We get to see them from time to time. They are big and they fly majestically.

He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.
(Isaiah 40:29-31 NKJV)



Goals

Note: the list below is in priority order according to the needs of the ministry and the number of lives that are affected

1. More regular monthly support to continue the ministry and be able to help more kids.
2. \$23,000 US dollars for a Toyota 15 Passenger van, our current van is a 1994 Toyota; it is 19 years old and has served us well for five years but is now requiring expensive repairs more frequently. We need transportation for so many things we do in The Philippines including outreaches to street kids.
3. \$35,000 USD to purchase the farm lot behind the Transformation Center to grow fruits and vegetables for the ministry, feed the poor, and for possible income.
4. Funds for remodeling the Transformation Center we possibly need \$60,000 USD for completion but we can work in stages as funds become available.

We are so thankful for the Lord's provision and we are so thankful for YOU. All of you who have prayed for us and given financially to help us get this far, THANK YOU! We know that the Lord sends very special people to help in this ministry. The Lord is the One building the Transformation Center; He is the One producing fruit in the lives of people as each of us obey His voice.

We love you, and pray God's blessings on you and your family; Gary, Suzzhette, and Kids

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As it is written: "HE HAS DISPERSED ABROAD, HE HAS GIVEN TO THE POOR; HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOREVER." Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God. (2nd Cor. 9:9-12)

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