

THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT

Empowering Children from Poverty in the Name of Jesus

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Warm greetings from the Philippines! I am please once again to share with you the victories and challenges we experienced in our ministry to the Ilocano children in the Philippines!

Since my trip to Ilocus Norte and Abra, God extremely led us to different ministry challenges. After our trip to these two provinces, we conducted a three night crusade last January at Bugayong Gymnasium with the Krevolaveks. It was a tough but fruitful crusade that led the conversion of high school students and some families in the village where we are pioneering. Now the principal is asking me if I could conduct a one-month value formation program to the 700 high school students using the bible as textbook for the program. Let us pray that this will be actualize this coming June.



Carol and Josie with the 10 newly graduates of VLCCM

But the month of February was somewhat warfare from the devil,

because, there were three dearest people



Youth Camp in Buyaen Bayambang

who met an accident and lost their lives. First was the death of Pta. Vicky, a fellow pastor from Eastern Pangasinan who died recently because of cancer, then the second was the accident of the daughter of Ptr. Redentor, the one I mentioned in my letter, who fatally broken her shoulder due to motorcycle accident. When we received the call from the Bumanglag family we were shocked. How can a 12 years old daughter of pastor can experience this kind of accident? The situation forced us to intercede for Princess healing and recovery. As we collectively shared the situation of Redentor's family through text messages, we discovered that they were not alone, but their trials were exceedingly transformed into comfort because of the many prayers of Christian believers who interceded for Princess. 11/2 month after the accident, we had a dinner of thanksgiving for Princess recovery

One week after the event, our fellow pastor, a veteran evangelist from our municipality met another

motorcycle accident that caused him to die on the spot. Until this time we don't know who caused the accident and haven't received a bit of report from the police who was responsible for the accident. It was a hit and run situation. When we received a call from the chairman of ecumenical fellowship of ministers, we were shocked once again, but this time, we realized that our fellow servants were under attack. We were all horrified when the news reached us. We feel indignant to the irresponsible driver who done this thing. We all feel lost to what happened to our dear fellow pastor. Nevertheless the somewhat feeling of "loss" of a dear brother from the Lord turned into something that amazed us all. We did not anticipate that the death of our fellow AG pastor leaved a visible impact and legacy to the body of Christ in Pangasinan. It was my first time to see pastors from different denominations, politicians and business people from the province paying a visit to the body of the Ptr. Wanasen. In fact, one prominent Christian leader from the municipality shouldered all the expenses of his burials For a week, it never stops people coming from different towns and provinces who came and paid a visit to his body. From Abra where I ministered last December, there were 25 people came to see the body of this dear pastor. Ptr. Wanasen's life is characterized by simplicity and spiritual poverty, yet his death reminded me the richness of his life that he shared to brothers and sisters. The somewhat spiritual warfare that we experienced the month of February turned out to be a "soul" searching examination of our spiritual vocation and legacy in the

ministry.



Pastor Joel and the staff of the youth camp

In connection with this, I thank God for using Carolyn and I to empower poor children in the community of Bugayong. The Day Care that we started one year ago was able to commence its first graduation ceremony last March. Ten children from poor families were able to complete their studies. During the graduation, we were amazed how God supplied and sustained the feeding program of the church and the needs of our two teachers.



Carol and the graduating children

The day care is operating as self supporting with nobody promised to sponsor us. We just stepped by faith and trust God that he will join us. It became operational through the individual gift of people touched by God. The month of April and May is filled with camp meeting schedules. In just one month I

spoke and facilitated two camp meetings to the young people. As I spoke and shared the Word of God to these young people, am increasingly aware the importance of ushering always the young people to be filled with the Holy Spirit. In our camp meeting two weeks ago, it was hard for me to stop our night services because many young people were so hunger to the presence of the Lord. God is doing marvellous to every service. Results of these are the two young people from churches who will be enrolling to ABC. I heard only this morning that 2 young people from Nagsaag AG will be attending ABC in Baguio this year. Also, a Christian brother from Bayambang after our camp in this town shared with us also his interest to donate his 1 hectare property for the creation of Centre of Church Action on Poverty (CCAP), a livelihood training center for poor members of our people.

The town of Bayambang is composed of 77 villages with almost a hundred thousand populations, but no single AG church. At present I am currently working the curriculum of CCAP and agreed with the idea that we will select one village to implement the program of CCAP. As I am writing this reflection, I am at Nagsaag Assembly of God Church speaking once again to hundred of children. Our tents are set under the mango trees in the community elementary school. We enjoy sleeping together with our children. Wow, God is so awesome; I did not expect how God is placing my life strategically to empower future God's people that will shape future families and communities. The last time I spoke to kid's camp was three years ago and I was a little bit nervous if I can truly enter into their level of

thinking. Praise God for the Holy Spirit that always endows revelation and creativity. I am not only learning how to communicate with children but it is worth noting to imitate their faith in God.

A prayer that from us, an army of Christian children will arise and become powerful witnesses in the Philippine society. God bless you Sir!