



Official Newsletter

**Voice of the Spirit**

Vol. 2 # 1 January, 2009

### **CHRISTMAS IN CONTEXT**

*Rev. Joel A. Tejedo*

*“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that through he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9).*

Every time I come across the passage that Jesus was born in a poor family, born in a manger and lived in the small City of Nazareth that is composed of 150 families, as some scholars discovered, I am fascinated at how the Son of God lived and shared his life in the poor community where he chose to live. It makes me wonder how the Son of God stayed aloof from heaven and chose to dwell as a human being, not on the side of the rich and mighty, but in the context of the poor and impoverished. Imagine the Son of God who chose to be born in a poor family and intended to live and share in the daily struggles of the people with whom he lived for more than three decades? Without question, during those times, his environment may have been subject to poor sanitation, lack of food, dengue attacks during rainy season, and probably a lack of access to medicine, which most of the time was a constant struggle of children living in rural areas. I can't imagine how Jesus feels about the heavy taxes imposed by the tax collectors on his parents. Surely, Joseph and Mary were victims of exploitation from the rich people, and they, too, shared the same struggle as most 21<sup>st</sup> century parents, who lived below the poverty line.

How awesome to know that Jesus came and expressed the love of God in concrete

ways. Jesus' expression of God's love however, was not only unique. It was one of many examples that his disciples should have emulated when they proclaimed the Good News to the people. The Christian witness then should be incarnational and contextual. The way the love of God should be expressed in the community should be patterned after Jesus' example of complete identifying in the context that he chooses to reach. The Christian witness that is detached from the "flesh and blood" issues of the community seems relegated from the example of our Lord.



*VLCCMI Christmas Party, 2008*

Likewise, The Verna Linzey Childcare Ministry International is trying to express this "down to earth" expression of God's love in concrete manners through attending to the most desperate needs of the children. It was



*ABC Students play with VLCCMI Children*

awesome to consider that from its inception, VLCCMI continues to feed children every Sunday, provide a child-friendly learning center five days a week, provide scholarship assistance for Bible school students, and facilitate livelihood training skills for their parents. As an example of this love, VLCCMI conducts its Christmas party at the Tabernacle of Grace Assembly of God by giving gifts to the children. Sister Carolyn Tejedo, all the way from Manila, bought toys and clothes for the children. We cannot describe the joy and the laughter of the children and seeing them receive a Christmas gift from their very own teacher. Added to this is the collective participation of the church members and the parents who prepared delicious food plus the creative games played by the children during the party. Last trimester, though I was out from two Bible Schools where I am teaching, we chose to provide scholarship assistance to Brother Baltazar Tictica, a VLCCMI member, who is working with the poor children in the mountain areas. Brother Tictica came to the center last December and preached to the children about his life experience as he grew up in a poor family. We are so pleased to

hear testimonies of changed lives by the power of God. After the Christmas party, my wife and some members made house-to-house visits, inviting the children in the community to watch “The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian,” a Christian film that was authored and inspired by C.S. Lewis, who is a devout Christian professor from the University of Oxford.

In addition to this, we are pleased to share that through the generosity of Dr. James Linzey from the US and Sister Carolyn Leng from Malaysia, we started to lend a small capital for five women who demonstrated hard work, but due to poverty, they lack capital to finance their local trade. These women are: Mrs. Evelyn Espiritu (P2,000), Mrs. Bebe Quibuyen (P2,000), Eleizer Cabaddu (P 8,000), Mrs. Sheba Milanés (P 8,000), and Hilda Tomboc (2,000). These women are working as vendors in the village, farmers, and sell RTW in the market. We feel convinced that through this act of compassion to the poor, we empower lives to experience dignity and wholeness.

As a parting word, “let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” (Gal. 6:9).



*VLCCMI Medical Mission*

## My Life Testimony

Nestor Carting

I am Nestor Carting, married with two beautiful children (ages 6 and 3). My wife, Brenelyn, and I came from Banaue Ifugao. But due to poverty, we migrated to Pangasinan and worked as wood carvers with my parents-in-law. At the start, we stayed and slept in a dilapidated house not knowing if we would survive or not. It was a little bit tough for me to migrate to a place where we don't have many relatives and friends. Since I came from a devout Christian family, I always seek an opportunity to serve God. But to live in a new place, I wasn't so sure if I could bring my family to a spiritual climate as we are used to in Banaue Ifugao.



*The Cartina Improvised House*

However, I praise God for knowing that the place where my parents-in-law are working is near the church. It was an additional blessing for me and my family to soon get acquainted with Pastor Joel Tejado and his family. We received so much affirmation from them and eventually we joined the church and became active members in the church. Later on, my eldest son, Reymart, enrolled as one of the pupils of VLCCMI TOG Learning Center.

In addition, I thank God for His many blessings upon my family. Pastor Joel and together with the church members never stop encouraging me to excel in everyway, especially in the craft and skills God has given me. It was wonderful to recollect two years ago that I was just a worker for my parent-in-law. But now, I am managing my own local business. I started with nothing. But now I acquired equipment to enrich my God-given abilities. Through prayer, I am currently making wooden crafts such as chairs, tables, etc. I thank God for blessing me with God-fearing people who believe that by God's

grace I can reach my highest potential in life. Today, my wife and I are serving as trustees for the Tabernacle of Grace church. To God be the Glory! (Translated from Ilocano to English)

### “Poverty, Keep Away!”

By Joan

I

At a tender age I experienced varied things:  
Stow away, no parents to look after!  
Seeking for a friend, who truly understands  
‘Till I wonder and--  
The only precious treasure I have is gone—  
robbed--  
Whom to seek for refuge from bad  
experiences—  
Poverty, why you are always there!

II

Where is justice for us?  
Are we to be like this?  
Our only dream for help suddenly vanished--  
No parent to care--  
Do we still have to hope for the dawn to  
break?  
We hope not to be frustrated.  
Our fragile life is in peril.  
Where is victory, where?  
Hoping to find a haven!

III

In poverty I see a glimpse of hope and triumph  
That a little child like me desires.  
In every comet of light in heavenly bodies,  
Every blink of my eyes symbolize justice.  
The passing time and day,  
Little by little, my hope is being molded,  
From my childhood, ‘till the time I make up  
my own mind.

IV

My dreams will serve as my shield.  
In my slumber, even in my dream,  
Keep on reaching my dreams amidst  
adversity!  
Though poverty remains, my dream will  
prevail.  
My only plea: poverty, keep away...  
Poverty, keep away!

## DONATIONS AND LOVE GIFTS, 2008-2009

Dr. Jim Linzey	USD 2,900
Dr. Verna Linzey	165
APTS Mission Offering	700
NLDC Youth	40
Carolyn Leng	328

To all our sponsors and friends, who contributed to the ministry of VLCCMI, we want to thank you for your constant support and for continuously believing in our ministry to the impoverished children in the Philippines. Through your love gifts, we were able to:

- Feed the Children on a weekly basis
- Maintain the Learning Center
- Help those students in need
- Buy equipments such as computer, tables, and chairs.
- Provide training for livelihood program
- Attend camps and conferences for the children
- Lend small amount of money for unemployed women in the community



*A farm like this is also being prayed for continually by VLCCMI to provide income for the foundation*

## VLCCMI CALENDAR, 2009

January 13-14	District Convention
February	Mass Children Dedication (Sponsored by VLCCMI)
March	Commencement Exercises
April	VLCCMI Kidz Camp
May 15-17	VLCCM Youth Camp
June	Mass Wedding (Sponsored by VLCCMI)
July	Church Action on Poverty Seminar Workshop
August	VLCCMI School Retreat
Sept-Nov	US Tour of Ptr. Joel Tejedo
October	Film Showing to High School Students
November	Prayer Conference
December	Christmas Party

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Please send your donation to:  
Peso Account #: 1122-02440-4  
US Dollar Account: 8-122-00126-3  
Account Name: Verna Linzey Childcare  
Ministry International  
Bank Address: McArthur Hi-Way, San  
Vicent East, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan,  
PHI