

PASUGO

APRIL 2022

# GOD'S MESSAGE

The Magazine of the Iglesia Ni Cristo (Church Of Christ)

A detailed painting of a garden path. The path is a light brown color, winding through a lush green landscape. On the left, there are several tall, dark green trees with dense foliage. In the foreground, there are pink and purple flowers, including what appear to be morning glories and lavender. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting a bright day with some shadows cast by the trees.

## JESUS CHRIST: THE GREATEST ROLE MODEL

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

# Maraming salamát, aming Tagapamahala

Ngayon po ay isang natatanging araw  
Kung saan ang aming lokal ay inyong dinalaw  
Aming Tagapamahala, pagmamahal ninyo ay umaapaw  
Inyo pong pagtuturo sa ami'y nagsisilbing ilaw.

Bagong Silang Singko ay lubos pong nagpapasalamat.  
Sa aming distrito, ito po'y laging maaalaala  
Pananampalataya po namin, kailanma'y hindi magkakalamat  
Kahit dumating man po ang pagsubok na kasinglawak ng dagat.

Kayo po ang nagsisilbing lakas  
Pangaral ninyo po na itinanim sa puso namin ay kita ang bakas  
Sa pangunguna ninyo po ay buong pusong makikipagkaisa  
Distrito ng Caloocan North ay susunod lagi sa utos ng Ama.

Sobra po ang galak ng aming mga puso  
Dahil narinig po namin ang inyong pagpapayo  
Isasabuhay po namin palagi ito  
Maninindigan po palagi sa aming pagka-*Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

Maraming salamát, Ka Eduardo  
Sa patuloy na pangunguna po ninyo  
Isinasama po namin kayo sa aming mga panalangin  
Kaligtasan ninyo po lagi ang aming hangarin.

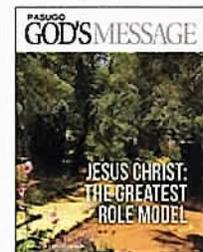
Napakapalad ng bawat isa sa amin  
Dahil pinahintulot po ng Ama na madalaw ninyo kami  
Isa lang po ang nais namin na sa inyo ay sabihin:  
Salamat po! Mananatili kami sa kawan at kailanman hindi na aalis.

JANNA JOY F. CADIGOY  
MANILA, PHILIPPINES

**OUR COVER**

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord Jesus Christ pleaded to the One true God, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

Photo by MARESEL LINIS



Sharing drop of life. Brethren from the Ecclesiastical District of Bataan participate in a blood donation activity (Story on p. 52).

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# FAQs

## If Christ is man and not God, why do Church Of Christ members worship and pray to Him?

IT IS THE WORDS of God written in the Holy Scriptures that the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ) members obey in worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ. Apostle Paul stated, thus:

“So God lifted him up to the highest place. God gave him the name that is above every name. When the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone will kneel down to worship him. Everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will kneel down to worship him. Everyone’s mouth will say that Jesus Christ is Lord. And God the Father will receive the glory.” (Phil. 2:9–11 New International Reader’s Version)

It is everyone’s duty to worship Christ. And when Christ is worshiped, glory redounds to the Father, the only true God Whom Christ introduced (John 17:3, 1).

God also instructs His people to pray to Christ: “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ... Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of

need” (Heb. 4:14, 16 New King James Version).

As our mediator to God (I Tim. 2:5), Christ intercedes for us with the Father when we utter our prayers. He certainly knows what our needs are, for He is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” (Heb. 4:15 NKJV) as He Himself is a human being, which He proved, thus: “But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. ...” (John 8:40 NKJV). Christ also showed that He is human in His state of being—He has flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), while God is spirit (John 4:24) or without any material form.

That Christ is indeed a human being was also affirmed by the apostles. Apostle Peter taught that “Jesus of Nazareth” is “a Man attested by God ... by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him” (Acts 2:22–23 NKJV). “Jesus was truly human,” according to Apostle Paul (I Tim. 2:5 Contemporary English Version).

Church Of Christ members, therefore, worship and pray to the Lord Jesus Christ not because He is God, but because doing so is in obedience to God’s will. ☺

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## Christians, not in name only

**A**BOUT A THIRD of the world population today consider themselves to be Christians, with some 2.38 billion people practicing some form of Christianity (*worldpopulationreview.com*). But while many of these people think that simply believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His teachings automatically makes them Christians, there is much more to being one than meets the eye. Apostle John, one of the pillars of the first-century Church Of Christ, taught that being a Christian comes with a distinct responsibility:

“Someone may say, ‘I am a Christian; I am on my way to heaven; I belong to Christ.’ But if he doesn’t **do what Christ tells him to**, he is a liar.” (I John 2:4 Living Bible)\*

Clearly, being a Christian or Christ’s disciple (Acts 11:26) is not just a label or designation anyone can rightfully attach to himself at will. A person may believe with all his heart that he is a Christian and that he belongs to Christ, but if he refuses or fails to do what the Lord commands him to, he is nothing but a pretender, or as the Bible puts it bluntly—a liar.

This is because the Savior Himself demands from those who claim to recognize Him as Lord that they fulfill the things He says:

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46 New King James Version)

Thus, without satisfying this requirement—obeying Christ’s commands—all declarations of being His disciples are mere empty claims and, to put it plainly, smack of hypocrisy.

Being a true Christian also necessitates validation from Christ Himself, since as the Shepherd, He knows and can identify who His sheep truly are:

“I am the good shepherd; and I **know My sheep**, and am known by My own.

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” (John 10:14, 27 NKJV)\*

Hence, the Savior made it clear that people who are not counted among His sheep, though they profess faith in Him, are not genuine believers:

“But you **do not believe, because you are not of My sheep**, as I said to you.” (John 10:26 NKJV)\*

Christ teaches how His sheep can be identified and where they can be found. They are the people who listen to His voice or obey His command to come into or enter the sheepfold:

“So Jesus spoke again: ‘In very truth I tell you, **I am the door of the sheepfold**. ... I am the door; anyone who **comes into the fold** through me will be safe’ ...” (John 10:7, 9 Revised English Bible)\*

The fold or flock where the true sheep or disciples of Christ can be found is the Church He built (Matt. 16:18)—the Church Of Christ:

“Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the **flock** over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the **church of Christ** which he has purchased with his blood.” (Acts 20:28 Lamsa Translation)\*

Therefore, people who are not in the Church Of Christ, notwithstanding their claims to being Christians,

are not really Christians, nor can they be called as such even in name only.

As true Christians, the members of the Church Of Christ, on their part, are duty-bound to have a mind that is "also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5 NKJV). The mind or attitude that He had was that of selfless humility:

"Have this same attitude in yourselves which was in Christ Jesus [look to Him as your example in selfless humility]." (Phil. 2:5 Amplified Bible 2015)\*

Christ proved His selfless humility by His unconditional obedience to God's will, even "to the point of death" (Phil. 2:8 NKJV).

Being human, Christ agonized over His impending death, yet He chose that path anyway to fulfill the Lord God's will. He said, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39 NKJV).

Thus, as the true Christians in our time, members of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ) highly regard the Lord Jesus Christ as the paragon of meekness and obedience to the Almighty God. They strive to imitate His selfless humility by submitting themselves completely to God's will, even when doing so requires total self-denial and tremendous sacrifice.

Whatever betide, they endeavor to "conduct [their lives] in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27 New International Version). While living "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation," they endeavor to remain as "children of God without blemish" to "shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15 Revised Standard Version). The Executive Minister of the Church, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, untiringly

exhorts them to undertake the complete and intensive renewal of life.

The faithful are also reminded to follow Christ's example of standing firm on the side of the truth even in the face of public backlash and disapproval. In dealing with social issues and other matters pertaining to their faith, faithful Church Of Christ members follow in Christ's footsteps in seeking to fulfill God's will, instead of trying to gain approval and acceptance of the society.

Christ's prayerfulness is also what true Christians today are called upon to imitate:

"In his life on earth Jesus made his prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God, who could save him from death. Because he was humble and devoted, God heard him. But even though he was God's Son, he learned through his sufferings to be obedient." (Heb. 5:7-8 Good News Bible)\*

In dealing with temptations, Church members also draw inspiration from Christ, Who, when lured by the devil, held on firmly to what "is written" (Matt. 4:1-11)—God's words enshrined in the Holy Scriptures. Thus, they stand firm against the machinations of the devil by holding fast to God's teachings as have been taught to them by His Messenger in these last days and by the Church Administration.

Indeed, true and faithful Church Of Christ members today prove that they are Christians in their thoughts, words, and deeds—and not in name only. ☪

\* Emphases ours

*Donna C. Lavoncin*  
Editor-in-Chief

“  
I can do nothing  
on my own.  
I judge as  
God tells me.  
Therefore, my  
judgment is just,  
because  
I carry out  
the will  
of the one  
who sent me,  
not my own will.  
”

John 5:30  
New Living Translation

# Church Bulletin



## Child Psychology seminar educates parents, elders in Cavite

In recognition of the benefits of proper child development, especially for the young members of the Church, a seminar on child psychology was held at the house of worship of the Local Congregation of Cavite City, Ecclesiastical District of Cavite, on March 5, 2022. The seminar aimed to guide the parents, Church officers, especially those with duties in the Children's Worship Service (CWS) and Christian Family Organizations (CFO), to "be an example to all believers," especially to the young brethren.

Brother Joseph Amarille, a minister of the gospel from the CFO office, served as the keynote speaker. He summed up the biblical advice to parents into the word TEACH as an acronym, in which T stands for Train [God's servants], E for Educate, A for Advise, C for Care, and H for Help children to be an example to all believers.

## Cubao brethren intensify propagation efforts

Church officers and members from the Local Congregation of Cubao, Ecclesiastical District of Quezon City, intensify their efforts in inviting their fellowmen to the evangelical mission held on March 22, 2022 at their house of worship.

Brother Ronnie Estrella, resident minister, officiated at the evangelical mission. In his Bible-based preaching, he emphasized the importance of following the command of the Savior Jesus Christ—enter the flock or the Church Of Christ—to receive salvation.

This truth is one of the reasons even newly baptized members, such as Sister Aira Faye Ramat, who brought guests to

the evangelical mission, eagerly share their faith. "Inviting people to propagational activities such as this is our duty as Church members. As a former Catholic, it is a great blessing for me and my family that we were encouraged to attend activities in the Church Of Christ. Now that we have received the true baptism, we strive to do the same to our friends and loved ones who are still nonmembers," she said.

With firm conviction, Sister Aira added, "Just as the Church Administration never tires in teaching and reminding us of our Christian obligations, we, too, will never tire in helping in the intensified works of sharing the true faith." (*Marck Angelo delos Reyes*)



Discussion on significant factors affecting children’s behavior, such as culture, environment, studies, and socio-economic status, further piqued the listeners’ interest. “I have learned that children’s behavioral development is influenced by their environment; therefore, it is vital that we help strengthen their

faith,” said Brother John Christian Ayson, a CWS officer.

The seminar also touched on children’s physical, emotional, psychological, social, and intellectual needs and its importance in their growing years, most importantly, their spiritual development as true Christians. *(Jennifer Ortiz)*

**Students of SFM-Toronto, Canada Extension distribute Pasugo magazines**

Being trained to lead the brethren in the Church’s works, the students of the Iglesia Ni Cristo (Church Of Christ) School For Ministers (SFM)-Toronto Extension distributed copies of the Church’s magazine.

Going around the vicinity of the Greater Toronto District office located at 3321 McNicoll Avenue, Scarborough in Ontario, Canada, the students approached many people, introducing themselves and the Church Of Christ by handing out copies of the *Pasugo: God’s Message* magazine.

Many thanked the students for giving them more information about the teachings upheld in the Church.

The ministerial students considered the activity a part of their training as future helpers of the Church Administration in, among others, leading the Church in the work of propagation. *(Ramon Palacios)*



**Malaysia Ecclesiastical District lauds KADIWA frontliners**

Cognizant of the sacrifices frontliners are making in the battle against Covid-19, the KADIWA organization in the Ecclesiastical District of Malaysia staged a program in appreciation of their fellow youth members in the medical and allied health profession.

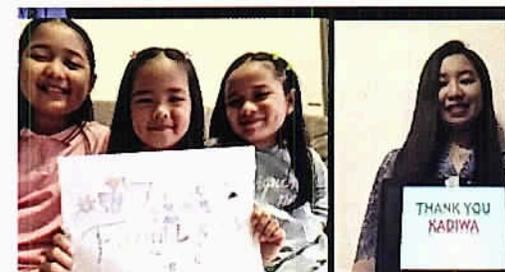
“We showed appreciation for how hard they’ve been working during this pandemic crisis,” said

Sister Eenah Caymo, who led the “KADIWA Frontliners Appreciation” program on March 6, 2022.

The brethren, who served as frontliners and kept themselves in isolation even during their days off, had the opportunity to connect virtually with their fellow KADIWA members from whom they received words of appreciation and encouragement via recorded messages or personalized digital

cards. They also took part in interactive games.

“It was full of fun and love. Being a frontliner, I enjoyed it. It





reminded me of all the love and appreciation from the members of the Church Of Christ, most especially from Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, our Executive Minister," said Sister Camille Elaine Fadallan, a Children's Worship Service Teacher and a pharmaceutical technician in a public hospital that looks after Covid-19 patients.

Brother Mc Daniel Martinez, the ministerial worker who oversaw the activity, delivered a brief message. He pointed out that although the frontliners are still "busy battling this pandemic, they also never stop fighting for their faith and performing their duties. They remain being active in the faith."

He encouraged the attendees, among whom were doctrinal instructees and candidates for baptism, to "draw inspiration from these frontliners."  
(Gazel Joy Ragat and Andro Milan)



### Albay SCAN members attend fire prevention training

On March 19, 2022, members of the Society of Communicators and Networkers, International (SCAN) in the Ecclesiastical District of Albay underwent a refresher training on fire prevention and basic firefighting techniques at the Guinobatan Fire Station in Guinobatan, Albay, Philippines.

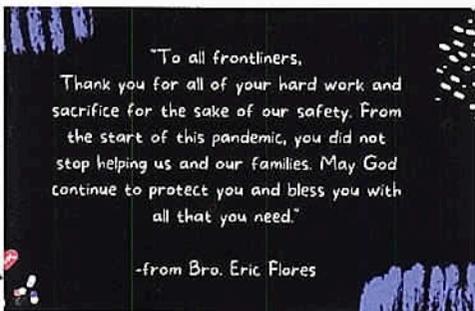
Brother Randy Rebuta, Senior Fire Officer 4 of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) in Guinobatan,

served as the resource speaker. He taught practical knowledge on fire prevention awareness, how to minimize property damage in case of fire, and the proper communication protocols to efficiently and adequately call out for the nearest firefighting unit.

"Seminars such as these go a long way in saving properties and human lives in case of fire emergencies," said Brother Randy. Also, as one of the head deacons

in the Local Congregation of Guinobatan, he further stressed that "more importantly, they will benefit the Church in its entirety, to protect the properties of the Church, especially our houses of worship." (Mikko Gallego)

For more Church news around the globe, visit [www.pasugo.com.ph](http://www.pasugo.com.ph)



"Sa mga kapatid naming front liners, hindi po matatawaran ang inyong sakripisyo at pagmamalasakit sa inyong larangan. Maraming salamat po at patuloy po kayong pagpalain ng ating Panginoong Diyos."  
- Sister Edrienne Money Ching

# THE FRIEND — ONE CAN — TRULY RELY ON

MARCH 5, 2022

ORDINATION OF 30 NEW MINISTERS AND  
COMMEMORATION OF MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

**H**AVING A TRUE FRIEND to rely on is certainly a great advantage. However, no matter how much our fellow humans are willing to help us, they can only do so much.

On the other hand, the Bible reveals that there are people who became God's friends and because of His help, they are able to surmount even the most difficult adversities. They are the servants of God who have firm faith in Him, completely obey His commands, and dedicate their hearts to Him. That was what the Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, emphasized in his homily during the worship service he officiated on March 5, 2022.

In that sacred gathering held at the Local Congregation of Templo Central, Ecclesiastical

District of Central, he ordained 30 ministers. Brother Rene J. Panoncillo led the opening prayer and Brother Romer D. Galang led the congregational prayer after the preaching of the Executive Minister.

Brother Bienvenido C. Santiago administered the ordinand's oath-taking, while Brother Arnel R. Canicosa led the prayer after the laying-on of hands of the Executive Minister. The benediction was said by Brother Eduardo Manalo.

The following are the experiences of some brethren who attended the sacred gathering, showing how God's loving care was manifested in their lives for completely entrusting themselves to Him:

# MIAMI FLORIDA

In her youth, Sister Kristine Fayer spent much of her time in Church activities with her peers in the Church and with the Children's Worship Service (CWS) officers. She recalled, "We were all in the CWS choir. When it was time for me to be a CWS officer and oversee the younger members, I strove to be an inspiration to them—just like those before me were an inspiration to me."

Her parents were her inspiration as well. "My parents are officers in the Church. They were both working full-time but were dedicated to the Church. And even until now, they both spend a lot of time in Church activities. I know that what they are doing is for God."

Although Sister Kristine herself had to face hardships and trials, she never stopped performing her duties as an organist. "When everything else in the world is going wrong, just like what was said in the lesson, God is our friend. He is the only One Who can help us hurdle our sadness. I maintain my relationship with Him when I perform my Church duty. I

give it my heart and soul. I thank God for everything. When we're in worship services, that's when we gain the strength we need," she affirmed.

Now as a parent, she revealed her concern on how the world might influence her children. "There's always a fear that someone might influence them to think contrary to the Bible. The

internet, social media, and people that they encounter can have strong influence on them," she shares.

Sister Kristine prays that her children will continue to stay faithful members of the Church Of Christ, understanding the value of the Church Administration's guidance. She said, "It's the foundation that we need. Whenever we have problems, we should

hold on to what we were taught through the biblical lessons."

Written by Renee Suarez



Sister Kristine with her family and parents

# ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR

Sister Alicia Buco and her husband, Brother Ramon, truly know the importance of the Almighty Father's guidance. They were not born in the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ). They had joined different religions in their youth but never truly felt settled in any of them. "We were searching back then where we can truly worship God," Sister Alicia shares.

That was until Sister Alicia heard about the Church Of Christ. In 1988, she attended an evangelical mission and was greatly enlightened by what she heard. "That was the first time I heard the teachings in the Church Of



Sister Alicia (right) with her mother (second from the right) and some brethren



Christ. I was amazed because the questions I had about religion were answered," she said. She excitedly told her husband about what she learned, and they soon found themselves attending the Bible studies on doctrines and were eventually baptized that same year.

Sister Alicia's conversion caused a rift between her and her parents. She and her husband were often barred



from her parents' home because of their decision to convert. Undeterred, Sister Alicia continued trying to persuade her parents to also find the true faith. She shared, "I didn't stop praying that they will be with us in the Church someday." Ten years later, her parents were baptized.

"Our whole household wholeheartedly trusts that our Lord God will hear our prayers," Sister Alicia said. She added that God's teachings taught

by the Executive Minister are akin to a guiding light even in the darkest of times. She expressed, "Despite the hardships in the world in our time, the Executive Minister continues leading the Church, always teaching us. He taught us that we should not lose faith in God. That is why we will constantly obey God's will."

Written by Heidi Yañez

# TEBAG

## PANGASINAN

Noong 2013, nagkaroon ng *mild stroke* si Kapatid na Wilmina Casamayor. Dahil doon, nahirapan siyang magsalita at maglakad. Nanghina ang kanang bahagi ng kaniyang katawan kaya hindi niya maayos na naigagalaw ang kaniyang kamay, dahilan para hindi siya makahawak ng panulat.

Gayunman, tuluy-tuloy pa rin ang pagdalo niya sa pagsamba, at nagniningas pa rin ang kagustuhan niyang makatupad muli bilang maytungkulin sa pananalapi, na natigil nang siya ay nagkasakit. "Gustung-gusto ko nang makatupad. Sinikap ko na sumulat ng mga numero at letra. Nagsimula ako sa mga guhit hanggang sa naisusulat ko na ang pangalan ko."

Pinagtuunan ni Kapatid na Wilmina ng malaking panahon ang pagsasanay na makapagsulat muli, kaya laging nasa tabi niya ang kaniyang panulat at *notebook*. "Talagang nahirapan ako dahil ang dati kong ginagawa ay natigil," wika niya.

Kahit may mga sandali na siya'y lumuha sa simula dahil bigo siyang humawak ng panulat at makapagsulat ay hindi pa rin siya sumuko. "Araw-araw akong nagsanay. Halos dalawang buwan din iyon. Tiniyaga kong magsulat para makatupad na muli," dagdag pa niya.

"Hindi ako nawalan ng pag-asa na pagagalingin ako ng Diyos. Nagpapanata kami ng aking sambahayan na ibalik sana ang dati kong lakas at bigyan pa Niya kami ng lakas para malampasan ang nangyari sa akin," pagsalaysay niya. Bukod sa pansarili niyang pananalangin, siya rin ay nagpapapahid ng langis. Siya at ang pamilya niya ay hindi nabigo sa kanilang pagtitiwala sa Diyos.

Sa Pasaalamat para sa anibersaryo ng Iglesia sa taon ding iyon, nakabalik sa pagtupad si Kapatid na Wilmina. "Napakasaya ko noon. Sobrang nagpapasalamat ako sa



Kapatid na Wilmina at ang kaniyang pamilya

## MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

- 60 YEARS ECCLESIASTICAL DISTRICT OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
- 65 YEARS CARRASCAL TANDAG CITY, SURIGAO DEL SUR
- 90 YEARS RIZAL SAN PABLO CITY, ILAGUA
- 65 YEARS MAMBURAO MAMBURAO, MINDORO OCCIDENTAL
- 85 YEARS ALFONSO CAVITE SOUTH
- 65 YEARS OCEAN VIEW NEGROS ORIENTAL
- 85 YEARS PAGBILAO QUEZON
- 60 YEARS AGLANOT ILOILO NORTH
- 80 YEARS SUCAT METRO MANILA SOUTH
- 60 YEARS CAMARIN CALOOCAN NORTH
- 75 YEARS GABAO ILOCOS SUR
- 60 YEARS LUY-A MASBATE
- 75 YEARS GUGO BULACAN NORTH
- 55 YEARS NASUHE SORSOGON
- 75 YEARS TEBAG SAN CARLOS CITY, PANGASINAN
- 55 YEARS PUGO LA UNION
- 70 YEARS BAYBAYABAS SAN JOSE CITY, AUYA ECCLIA
- 50 YEARS ATISAN SAN PABLO CITY, ILAGUA
- 70 YEARS MAMBUCAL BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL
- 50 YEARS SAN RAMON IBIGUA CITY, CAMARINES SUR
- 70 YEARS NAMALICAN BATAC CITY, ILOCOS NORTH
- 35 YEARS MIAMI CARIBBEAN
- 70 YEARS PASACAO I VAGA CITY, CAMARINES SUR
- 10 YEARS YOKOSUKA TOKYO, JAPAN
- 70 YEARS SAN CARLOS ILOILO SOUTH
- 5 YEARS ADDIS ABABA GWS NORTHERN AFRICA
- 70 YEARS SAN VICENTE CAMARINES NORTE
- 5 YEARS HIGH RIVER GWS CALGARY
- 70 YEARS STA. LUCIA CAPAS, TARIAC
- 5 YEARS TOTTORI GWS NAGOYA, JAPAN
- 70 YEARS DINGALAN PALAYAN CITY, AUYA ECCLIA



Ama dahil muli Niya akong binigyan ng pagkakataong makatupad. At hanggang ngayon, nakatutupad pa rin ako,” wika niya.

Kaugnay ng narinig niyang itinuro ng Namamahala, sinabi niya, “Ang tumatak sa

aking puso ay ang unahin lagi ang Diyos dahil napatunayan natin sa pamamagitan nito na tayo ay may

malaking pagtitiwala sa Kaniya. Ang mga panalangin natin ay ating makakamtan dahil sa Kaniyang pag-ibig sa atin at sa ating pagtitiwala sa Kaniya.”

Buo ang pananalig ni Kapatid na Wilmina na ang matibay niyang pananampalataya sa magagawa ng Diyos ang tumulong sa kaniya upang gumaling. Kaya, pangako niya, “Ipagpapatuloy ko ang pagtupad ng aking tungkulin at pagsamba sa Diyos. Ang natitirang buhay at lakas ko’y gugugulin ko sa paglilingkod sa Kaniya.”

Sinulat ni Lovely Rose Aquino

## ALFONSO CAVITE

**S**i Kapatid na Francisco “Jun” de Castro Jr., pangalawang pangulong diakono sa Lokal ng Alfonso, Distrito Eklesiyastiko ng Cavite South, ay nagtatrabaho noon bilang *technician* sa isang *hotel*. Ngunit dahil sa madalas na pagpapawala sa kanila sa trabaho, naging suliranin ito sa kaniya sa pagtupad niya ng kaniyang tungkulin sa Iglesia.

Taglay ang pananalig sa Diyos, pinili niya kung ano ang higit na mahalaga. “Nagpasiya akong piliin ang aking tungkulin,” wika niya. Iniwan niya ang kaniyang trabaho noon upang mapagtalagahan pa rin niya ang kaniyang tungkulin.

Bagaman nawalan siya ng ikinabubuhay noon, “Hindi kami pinabayaan ng Diyos. Katunayan nga, napagaral ko ang aking mga anak. Nakapagpundar din ako ng isa pang bahay,” pahayag ni Kapatid na Jun. Ang naging hanapbuhay niya pagkatapos mag-*resign* sa dating trabaho ay ang pagkukumpuni ng iba’t ibang *appliances* sa mga baryo na pinupuntahan niya. At kahit ngayon, sa panahon ng pandemya,

“Ibinibigay ng Diyos ang aming mga pangangailangan. Hindi man sagana, pero hindi naman nagkukulang,” pagpapatuloy niya.

Nagkaroon pa siya ng malaking panahon para masinop at maakay ang kaniyang sambahayan sa tapat na paglilingkod sa Diyos. Kaya maging ang kaniyang maybahay at mga anak ay masisiglang kaanib at mga maytungkulin sa Iglesia. “Napabuti pa kami. Nabuhay kami nang maayos, naitataguyod ang paglilingkod sa Diyos, at hindi napinsala ang aking pagtupad. Mas natutukan pa namin ang pagpapalaki sa mga anak namin,” dagdag pa niya.



Kapatid na Francisco at ang kaniyang pamilya

“Ang pagiging masunurin sa Diyos at pagsampalataya sa Kaniya ay pakikinabangan din sa ating pamumuhay ngayon. Napatunayan ito sa aking buhay nang manindigan ako sa aking tungkulin,” ibinahagi ni Kapatid na Jun. Kaya, ganito na lamang ang pagpapahalaga niya sa tungkulin sa loob ng Iglesia: “Ang tungkulin ay pinanumpa ko sa

Diyos. Simula nang ako ay tumanggap ng sagutin ay ipinasya ko sa aking sarili na maninindigan ako hanggang sa kamatayan.”

Sinulat ni Erica Janella Diego

**D**ahil sa hirap ng buhay, hindi na nakatapos ng pag-aaral si Kapatid na Eleonor Moreno. Siya ay namasukan bilang kasambahay para makatulong sa mga pangangailangan ng kaniyang pamilya at, higit sa lahat, upang may magamit siya sa paglilingkod sa Diyos. “Mula pa sa pagkabata ay napa-karami nang pagsubok at suliranin ang aking naranasan. Ngunit tinuruan akong magpakatatag sa aking pananampalataya at laging ipagpauna ang Ama.”

Nagpalipat-lipat siya ng amo noon dahil hinahad-



langan nila ang kaniyang pagtupad ng tungkulin sa *Iglesia Ni Cristo* kahit tapos na ang kaniyang trabaho. Siya noon ay maytungkulin sa Pagsamba Ng Kabataan (PNK), mang-aawit, at kalihim. “Kasabay ng mga pagsubok ay nananalingin ako lagi na huwag akong pabayaang ng Diyos. Susundin ko ang kalooban

Niya. Kahit mawalan ako ng trabaho, Siya naman ang magbibigay ng magandang kapalaran sa akin.”

Sa kabila ng lahat ng tiisin ay ipinasumpong sa kaniya ng Ama ang isang mabuting kapalaran noong siya ay nakapag-asawa ng kapuwa niyang masigla at mananampalatayang kaanib ng Iglesia. Siya ay si Kapatid na Antonio Moreno Jr. Silang mag-asawa ay masayang bumuo ng pamilya habang patuloy sa paglilingkod sa Ama at tumutupad ng kaniyang tungkulin.

Ngunit nakaranas pa rin sila ng mga pag-uusig sa kanilang pinagtatrabahuhan. “Noong nagdaranas kami ng mga pag-uusig ay ipinagpanata namin sa Ama na huwag na sanang maging hadlang ang ikinabubuhay namin upang patuloy kaming makatugon sa aming tungkulin. Ang mga pagsubok ay napagtagumpayan namin dahil naging tapat na kaibigan namin ang Ama. Kahit kailan, kahit saan kami makara-



Kapatid na Eleonor at ang kaniyang pamilya

ting, tanging ang Panginoong Diyos lamang ang laging una sa aming buhay.”

Dininig ng Ama ang panalangin nina Kapatid na Eleonor, mang-aawit mula sa Lokal ng Rizal, Distrito Eklesiastiko ng San Pablo City, Laguna. Siya at ang kaniyang asawa, kasama ang kanilang mga anak, ay

sa *compound* ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* na nakatira. Sila ay pinagtiwalaan na pangalagaan at ipagmalasakit ang gusaling sambahan ng lokal dahil si Kapatid na Antonio ay inatangan ng tungkulin bilang isang bantay-kapilya. Sa piling ng kanilang tungkulin na buong pagtatalaga nilang ginagampanan sa katuwaang maglilingkod sa Diyos at makatulong sa mga kapakanan ng Kaniyang bahay, payapa at matiwasay ang buhay at pamumuhay ng kanilang pamilya. Higit sa lahat, lalong napatibay ang kanilang pag-asa sa pagmamana ng Kaniyang mga dakilang pangako.

Sinulat ni Julie Ann Anden

## HEEDING GOD'S CALLING

**B**rother Mark Wilson Presilda had earned a college degree and was already working in a private company when, in 2010, he decided to heed the call of the Lord God, through the Church Administration, to join the ministry. It was after he attended a worship service officiated by the Executive Minister during which Brother Eduardo V. Manalo called on the young male Church members to consider joining the ministry.



# 30 NEW MINISTERS

- |                             |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Alagao, Liverato Jr. A   | 11. Cervantes, Jerson D.    | 21. Monton, Edzenth C.      |
| 2. Alea, Jason R.           | 12. Cristobal, Nehemias C.  | 22. Pajarillo, Christian A. |
| 3. Austria, Clethchkeene E. | 13. Doronio, Jayson F.      | 23. Perez, Cristian A.      |
| 4. Banaan, Lionel G.        | 14. Flores, Giovanni L.     | 24. Presida, Mark Wilson P. |
| 5. Barcebal, Jay-R C.       | 15. Galvez, Alfonso C.      | 25. Ramos, Chris Levi S.    |
| 6. Bautista, Triumpo Jr. V. | 16. Lapada, Jervine R.      | 26. Samson, Paolo E.        |
| 7. Bisa, Francis S.         | 17. Malilay, Jerson S.      | 27. Soriano, Rhayan B.      |
| 8. Canlas, James Arbie S.   | 18. Mallare, Ron Jerrick G. | 28. Uminga, Jefrey I.       |
| 9. Castillo, Patrick A.     | 19. Maron, Tracy Andro V.   | 29. Valen, Kenneth G.       |
| 10. Centeno, Adson A.       | 20. Marquez, Arnel B.       | 30. Viray, Daren Aldrin M.  |

“At that moment, I understood that there’s a need for more ministers because of the growing number of Church members. I firmly believe that to become a minister is a calling from the Almighty Father. I knew that it was not going to be easy. I had to leave many things behind and there were numerous challenges I had to face. But I also kept my faith in God,” said Brother Mark as he recalled how he was inspired to study in the ministry.

As he expected, Brother Mark did encounter difficult situations along the way. When he was in his fourth year as a ministerial student, he was assigned in the Local Congregation of Guagua in Pampanga. A typhoon struck and some of the brethren there were affected by floods.

Together with other ministers and ministerial workers in their area, Brother Mark visited the brethren to see their condition. “We had to guide the boats carrying the aid that we were going to deliver to our brothers and sisters. We did this for a whole day,” he recounted.

Going through such experiences was actually not a new thing for Brother Mark. Being a minister’s son, he grew up seeing his father make sacrifices to fulfill the duties in the ministry. His parents taught him the importance of loving and taking care of the brethren.



Brother Mark Wilson and family

He explained, “When I was young, I would oftentimes accompany my father when he fulfilled his ministerial functions. He showed me how to uphold the ministry without reservations.”

Now as a minister like his father, Brother Mark promised, “I will follow all the commandments of God wholeheartedly and I will remain united with the Church Administration. I will continue teaching the brethren the value of keeping their trust in our Lord God, no matter the situation in life.”

Written by Maniel Angeline Soriano



# GOD KEEPS US SAFE ON THE ROAD WE TRAVEL

**MARCH 19, 2022**

**DEDICATION OF 7 HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND  
COMMEMORATION OF MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES**



**W**ITH THE COVID-19 pandemic still not completely over, armed conflicts rage, and climate change triggering the worst of disasters, the global economy continues suffering.

Of course, the adverse effects of all these trickle down to the lives and securities of the citizens in whatever country they might be.

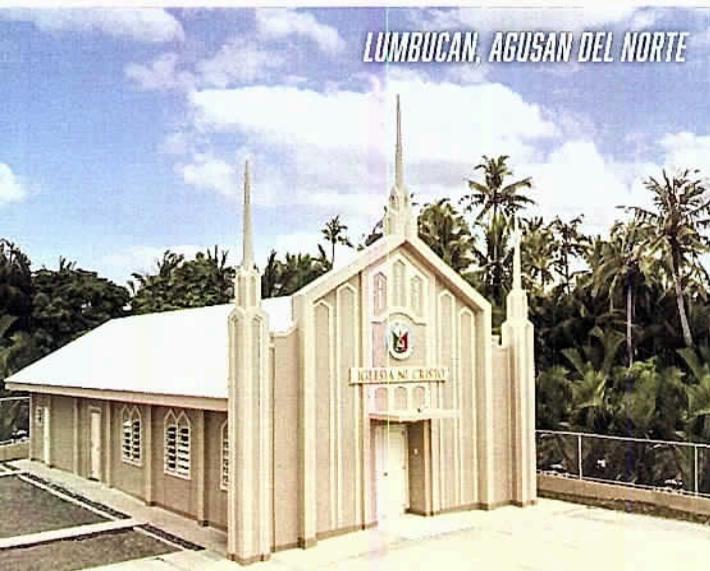
Amid these and other threats, *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ) members courageously get on with their lives. Believing that the Lord God will never abandon them, they remain steadfast in their duties to serve and worship Him. Their firm hope is that God is the One Who strengthens them and leads them on their spiritual journey.

This was emphasized to them yet again by Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, the Church's Executive Minister, in his



homily when he officiated at a worship service at the Central Temple in Quezon City, Philippines on March 19, 2022. The sacred occasion's whole proceeding was streamed live to the six local congregations and one extension, whose respective newly-built houses of worship were dedicated to God, as well as to the 38 local congregations celebrating their milestone anniversaries.

How was it manifested in the lives of the brethren that the Lord God is truly the One Who enables His chosen people to be strong and Who keeps them safe on the paths they tread despite the many extraordinary things that hinder them along their way?



# GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

## San Roque, Bohol

A 67-year-old deaconess in the Local Congregation of San Roque, Ecclesiastical District of Bohol, Sister Herminia Boybanting firmly upholds her faith by devotedly fulfilling her duty in the Church Of Christ despite the medical complications and other challenges she has to endure.

Sister Herminia was diagnosed with diabetes, which caused both of her feet to be swollen and darkened, and which also affected her eyesight. With her condition, fulfill-



ing her Church obligations became difficult. However, she asserts, "*Kung masakit ka, lalo ka nang musimba* [When you are sick you should attend worship services even more]."

The Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo Manalo, tirelessly reminds the Church members that they should not be discouraged no matter what they may encounter. Instead, they should always draw near to God because He will be their strength and protection throughout their journey. And that is what inspired Sister Herminia as she listened to the words of God during the worship service officiated by the Executive Minister through livestreaming in commemoration of their congregation's 75th anniversary.

"*Nagpatuloy ko ug ngana tungod kay salig man ko sa Diyos, ang Ama nga naghatag nahong kalakasan* [I continue to endure because I trust in God, the Father Who gives me strength]," she said with certitude. Despite the chronic health condition of Sister Herminia, her heart is full of genuine happiness as she is continuously being blessed with an opportunity to fulfill her duty, and her condition has been an inspiration for her children to actively worship the Lord God no matter what happens—a victory she was solemnly praying for.

Written by Queenie Simbajon

# EXPECT GOD TO ACT

## San Pablo, California

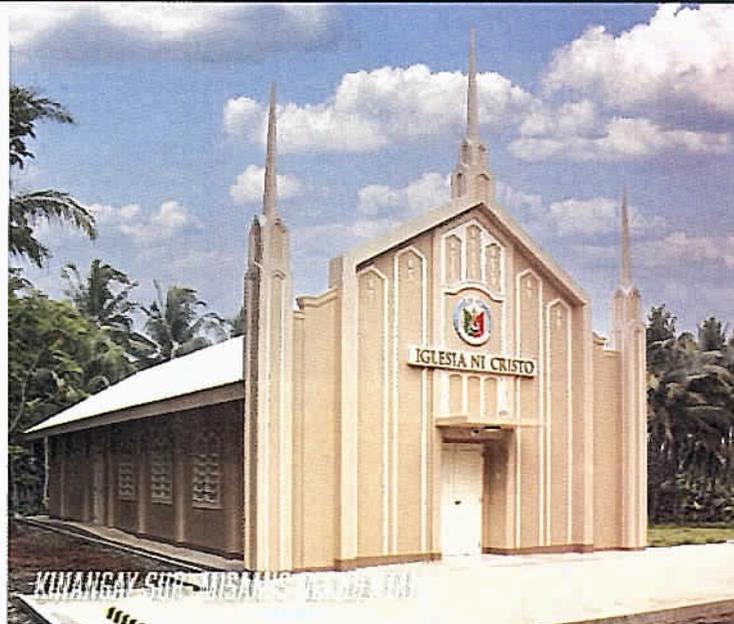
Sister Elizabeth Vega is not new to facing many troubles, one problem after another. She is the head secretary of the Local Congregation of San Pablo, California. She attended the livestreamed worship service officiated by Brother Eduardo Manalo, in which her local congregation was one of the connected sites.

After hearing the homily of the Executive Minister, she felt that she was once again strengthened in her faith. She comments, "We cannot really blame people for being horrified with all of these happening around us all at the same time. But as Church Of Christ members, we already knew long before that these things would happen."

She was diagnosed with ovarian cancer a few months

after she gave birth to her second child. And again, after a few years, she was afflicted with breast cancer. She was also witness to terrifying calamities that greatly affected her family. She witnessed firsthand as a tidal wave hit their home when she was just six years old and, a few years later, Mount Pinatubo erupted when she was in the Philippines and her husband was abroad.

She lost her mother who had Alzheimer's Disease in 2015. However, her parents have already taught her when she was still young how she should deal with problems she encounters. "I pray and



continue in performing my duties and never allow myself to be hindered and always do my best to show God how grateful I am for being in the Church. His answers are quick," she relayed.

We, members of the Church Of Christ are guided with the help of God through the Church Administration. It is through the dynamic leadership of our beloved Executive Minister that we receive God's timely teachings during our worship services. We are reminded that no matter what happens, whatever we face, we should always remember that God is there for us. He enables us to be strong and we depend on Him for solutions. This is His promise to His people, and He will never allow the consistently righteous to be moved, to slip or fall.

Written by Marjorie Villanueva



Sister Elizabeth Vega



# GOD IS ON OUR SIDE

## *Ketchikan, Alaska*

There is no reason for us to fail. Such was one of the many lessons the congregation learned from the homily of the Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, on March 19, 2022. Some of the brethren who attended the worship service through livestreaming were those from the Local Congregation of Ketchikan, Ecclesiastical District of Alaska, which has reached a milestone, its 10th anniversary.

Brother Bernie Bueza, one of the pioneering brethren in Ketchikan, was able to recall one of the many trials their local congregation went through since the time it was still a Group Worship Service (GWS). He narrated: "There was no assigned minister here yet, so we had to make adjustments with the schedule of our worship services. At times we had to talk to our co-workers, so we could exchange shifts with them, but would not be permitted by the management. So, we had to take the day off without pay. We had to because we had to attend the worship service, and the minister would still come from Seattle."

Despite the odds, Brother Bernie was unhindered. He was never remiss in attending the



Brother Bernie with his family



worship service. His conviction is that without God by their side, the most challenging times they went through in their congregation would have overcome them. He firmly believes that it is because of God's help and mercy that the brethren in Ketchikan have reached this day and are able to celebrate their milestone anniversary.

"God did not forsake us. And we had surmounted the difficult times with His mercy and help."

Written by Aurora Janelle Nery

# ANG PANGINOON ANG MANGUNGUNA SA ATIN

## *Pasay, Metro Manila*

"Nagsimula ang lahat sa simpleng pagtitinda ng mga palamig at itlog dito sa Baclaran. Dayo lang kami rito dahil galing kami sa Cebu at nakipagsapalaran lang kami sa Maynila," pag-alaala ni Kapatid na Paul John Parreño na, katulad ng maraming kapatid mula sa Lokal ng Pasay, Distrito Eklesiastiko ng Metro Manila South, ay pagtitinda ng iba't ibang uri ng kalakal ang pangunahing ikinabubuhay.

Matapos umanib sa Iglesia Ni Cristo ang kaniyang buong sambahayan, si Kapatid na Paul John ay tumanggap ng tungkulin at naging Pangulong Binhi sa lokal

at pangulo ng dako ng Pagsamba Ng Kabataan (PNK). Pahayag niya, “Simula noon, biyaya na mismo ang lumalapit sa amin.” Ngayon, siya ay isang kalihim sa lokal, guro sa PNK, at maytungkulin sa kapisanang KADIWA.

Sa kabila ng kanilang pagsisikap, dumating ang pagkakataon na humina ang negosyo ng pamilya ni Kapatid na Paul John. Dahil dito, huminto muna siya sa kaniyang pag-aaral. Gayunman, hindi nagbago ang kaniyang kasiglahan sa pagtupad ng tungkulin. Pahayag niya, “Binibigyan ko ng higit na malaking pagpapahalaga ang pagtupad ko ng tungkulin at pagsunod sa mga utos ng ating Panginoong Diyos.”

Sa awa at tulong ng Diyos, muling lumago ang hanapbuhay ng pamilya niya. Sa kasalukuyan, bukod sa isang sari-sari store, mayroon na rin silang tindahan ng *construction supplies*, at magbubukas na rin ang kanilang *hardware store*. Sumasampalataya siya na ang lahat ng ito ay biyaya ng Diyos. Pahayag niya, “Bukod sa aming pagsisikap, ito ay, higit sa lahat, bunga ng walang tigil naming pagpapanata sa Diyos at pagtupad ng tungkulin sa loob ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.”

Ayon kay Kapatid na Paul John, bunga ng pakikinig niya sa pagtuturo ng Kapatid na Eduardo Manalo noong ipinagdiwang ng kanilang lokal ang ika-102 anibersaryo nito, lalo niyang napagtanto: “Sa bawat daan na tatahakin natin sa buhay ay hinding-hindi tayo pababayaan ng Ama. Patuloy pa Niya tayong palalakasin at patitibayin sa pagdaan natin sa maraming pagsubok sa buhay.”

Sinulat ni Eryka Rose Raton



## A N N I V E R S A R I E S

Pasig  
Metro Manila East

Lagangilang  
Abra

Dumangas  
Iloilo South

Pasay  
Metro Manila South

San Isidro  
Negros Del Norte

Binabalian  
Alaminos City, Pangasinan

Gerona  
Paniqui, Tarlac

San Juan Mexico  
Pampanga East

Magpet  
Cotabato North

Dulag  
Lingayen, Pangasinan

San Pablo  
Naga City, Camarines Sur

Minalin  
Pampanga East

Malolos  
Bulacan South

Colosas  
Davao Del Norte

San Pablo  
Northwest California

Niungan  
Bulacan

Kabankalan City  
Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental

Ketchikan  
Alaska

Balza  
Paniqui, Tarlac

Magsaysay  
Cagayan East

Burbank  
Los Angeles County

Muntinlupa  
Metro Manila South

Buenavista  
Cagayan West

Fruitland, Idaho GWS  
Oregon

San Roque  
Bahol

Barcelona  
Sorsogon

Galway GWS (Ireland)  
United Kingdom

Catbalogan  
Western Samar

Biton  
Sorsogon

Peterborough GWS (England)  
United Kingdom

Estipona  
Paniqui, Tarlac

Calusamanga  
Quezon North

Rotorua  
New Zealand

Collado  
Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija

Show Low GWS  
Mountain States

Mabasa  
Nueva Vizcaya

Summerlin, Nevada  
Mountain States

Union City  
Northwest California



Kapatid na Paul John at mga maytungkulin sa kapisanang KADIWA

# NAMAMALAGING MALAPIT SA ATIN ANG DIYOS

*Pasig, Metro Manila*

“Nalungkot ... Natakot ... Na-stress.” Naramdaman ito ni Kapatid na Pilipina Carillo, “Penny” kung tawagin ng karamihan, nang ma-*diagnose* noong 2018 na may mabigat siyang karamdaman. “Mayroon akong *cyst* sa *ovary* at *myoma*. Naapektuhan din ang *cervix* ko,” pahayag niya.

Hindi niya lubos maisip kung paano niya ito haharapin, lalo na’t siya pa naman ay *breadwinner* ng kanilang pamilya. Ngunit bilang maytungkulin sa loob ng Iglesia, hindi siya pinanawan ng pag-asa. Alam niya kung sino ang unang-unang magpapalakas sa kaniya: ang Panginoong Diyos. Pahayag niya, “Ipinagpanata kong tulungan ako ng Diyos. Hiniling kong maka-*recover* ako.”

Nanghawak si Kapatid na Penny sa magagawa ng Diyos. Pahayag niya, “Bukod sa pagpapanata, nagpapapahid din ako ng langis.” Hindi niya ito kinaligtaan kahit inaasikaso rin niya ang paghahanap ng panggugol para sa kaniyang operasyon. Pahayag niya, “Kasi ang buhay ng tao ay nakasalalay sa Panginoong Diyos. Kasangkapan lamang ang mga manggagamot.”

At hindi nabigo si Kapatid na Penny. Nakaipon siya ng sapat na halaga para sa kaniyang operasyon.

Gayunman, pahayag niya, “Disyembre iyon, malapit sa taunang Pasalamat ng Iglesia. Gusto

ng doktor na operahan na ako dahil sa laki ng *cyst* na pinangangambahan niyang baka *malignant* o *cancerous* na.” Ngunit dahil sa kagustuhang makatupad sa pagsamba bilang kalihim ng lokal, nakiusap si Kapatid na Penny sa doktor na gawin ang operasyon pagkatapos na lamang ng Pasalamat.

Ilang araw makalipas ang Taunang Pagpapasalamat, nagpa-*confine* na siya sa ospital upang sumailalim sa operasyon. Mula sa puntong iyon hanggang bago pumasok sa *operating room*, hindi siya bumitiw sa pagdulog sa Panginoong Diyos.

Pagsasalaysay ni Kapatid na Penny, “Bago ang operasyon, payapa ako. Magaan ang loob ko. Nawala ang takot.” Naging matagumpay ang kaniyang operasyon. At salungat sa paniniwala ng ilang doktor, nakumpirma na hindi *malignant* ang *cyst* na tumubo sa kaniya.

Inspirado, nagpatuloy si Kapatid na Penny sa kasiglahan bilang maytungkulin. Dahil sa kaniyang pinagdaanan, lalo niyang napatunayan na “Hindi bagong bagay ang mga pagsubok, lalo na sa ating mga *Iglesia Ni Cristo*. Gayunman, may Diyos na gagabay, tutulong, at magbibigay ng solusyon sa atin.” ☺

Sinulat ni Kate Ernacio



Kapatid na Penny Carillo

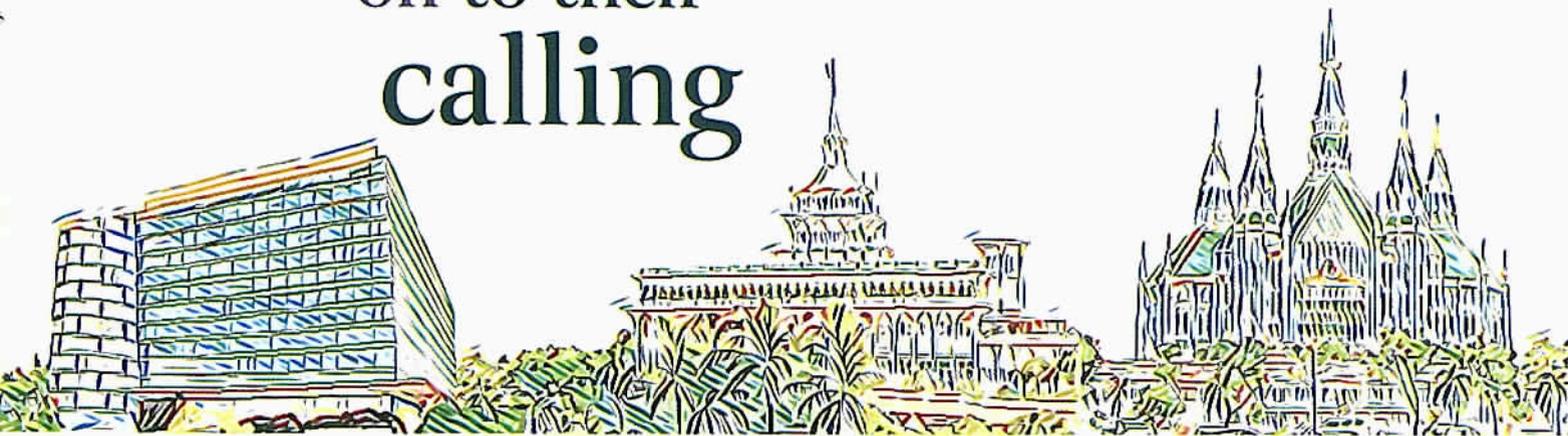
With research assistance from Mandy Nepomuceno  
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Contributing Photographers: Nielle Vincent Clocon, Ace Vergel Indes, Adan Guillermo Jr, Jonel Rios



# Helping the faithful hold on to their calling

Inauguration of EVM Convention Center and  
International Conference of  
Ministers and Ministerial Workers  
Quezon City, Philippines

By RONNIE H. MUTYA



**O**N MARCH 15, 2022, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo presided over this year's second International Conference of Ministers and Ministerial Workers at the EVM Convention Center right after he led the unveiling of the marker and ribbon-cutting for the massive edifice's formal opening.

Following the inaugural ceremony, the Executive Minister and his principal assistants in administering the Church headed to the convention center's main and largest hall, the Felix Y. Manalo Hall, for the first-ever conference to be held at the new edifice.

Brother Rene J. Panoncillo began the conference with his introductory remarks. Then, Brother





Bienvenido C. Santiago led the oath-taking of newly appointed district ministers, assistant district ministers, and pastors of congregations in Metro Manila. Afterwards, Brother Eraño S. Codera led the opening prayer.

In his Bible-based lecture, Brother Eduardo Manalo exhorted his co-workers in the holy ministry to be strong, courageous, and firm. They need to possess these qualities, he explained, as they fulfill their duty, in unity with the Church Administration, in helping the ever-growing number of brethren in the Church hold on firmly to their divine calling and election and, thus, be assured of the promised salvation.

The Executive Minister also urged the ministers and ministerial workers to be spiritually strong as it

is vital in proclaiming the true faith and in fortifying the brethren's faith. He reminded them that wherever they are assigned, they are expected by the Lord God to preach His message of salvation courageously.

Reflecting on the Executive Minister's lecture, Brother Nelcar F. Loberiano, Zamboanga del Sur district supervising minister, remarked, "Especially now that unusual events are happening in the world, it is essential that God's co-workers be brave. We need to possess this trait in facing all the challenges and in helping God's nation overcome all hindrances in reaching our salvation on Judgment Day."

Meanwhile, the district Light of Salvation (LOS) overseer in the Southern Africa Ecclesiastical District, Brother Jeisi Cabe, promised, "Using all



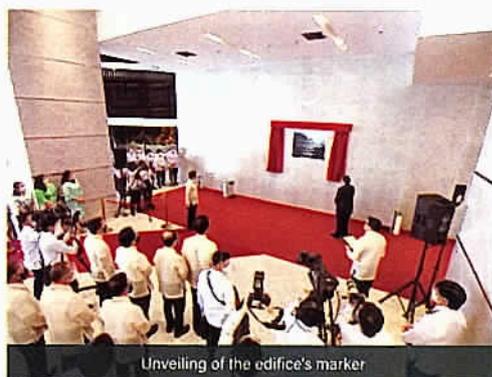
possible ways in accordance with the instructions from the Church Administration, we will continue encouraging the brethren to help in the work of propagation.”

The whole proceeding of the conference was streamed live to 479 sites worldwide—204 in the Philippines and 275 abroad—where other men of the ministry gathered. Aside from the FYM Hall, ministers and ministerial workers serving at various departments of the INC Central Office also occupied the convention center’s two other halls, the Eraño G. Manalo Hall and the Glicerio B. Santos Jr. Hall.

After the inspiring lecture, Brother Romer D. Galang led the closing prayer, invoking the Lord God’s all-important help to His servants in completely obeying His will that the Executive Minister taught them, for the sake of the Church and for His glory. ●



Brother Eduardo Manalo and his wife, Sister Lynn, during the ribbon-cutting ceremony



Unveiling of the edifice's marker



Felix Y. Manalo Hall | Seating Capacity: 2,936



Eraño G. Manalo Hall | Seating Capacity: 1,659



Glicerio B. Santos Jr. Hall | Seating Capacity: 271

## EVM Convention Center Inaugurated

**N**AMED AFTER BROTHER Eduardo V. Manalo, the EVM Convention Center is situated along No. 37 Central Avenue in New Era, Quezon City, Philippines. The Executive Minister and his wife, Sister Lynn V. Manalo, led the ribbon-cutting ceremony on the morning of March 15, 2022. Afterwards, Brother Eduardo Manalo unveiled the marker for the new edifice and the inscription on it was read by Brother

Joel V. San Pedro—all of which were witnessed by ministers and ministerial workers via livestreaming.

The EVM Convention Center has three main halls, namely, the Felix Y. Manalo Hall, the Eraño G. Manalo Hall, and the Glicerio B. Santos Jr. Hall. As stated in the marker, it will serve as a “venue where people all over the world can connect and work together to build a better future for all to the glory of God.” ●

# Religious Articles

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## How the Church Of Christ members give importance to Jesus Christ

By JENSEN DG. MAÑEBOG

THE BELIEF OF the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ) about Jesus Christ comes as a surprise to many. They find it unique, if not weird, as it is startlingly different from what they have learned from their respective religions.

The astonishment of many nonetheless propels them to further examine the doctrines upheld by the

Church Of Christ, and eventually join it, as all its beliefs are distinctly biblical. However, some of its detractors capitalize on its beliefs about Christ to malign it, spreading the false and malicious accusation that the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* belittles and underrates the Lord Jesus.

But the truth of the matter is that the Church Of Christ extols

Christ in perfect accordance with biblical truths. So, how great is the recognition ascribed to Jesus by the Church members?

### **The Bible as the Church's basis**

The Church Of Christ is of resolute faith that the Bible is the only trustworthy source of true knowledge about Jesus. After all, the Holy

Scriptures are “inspired by God” and “useful for teaching the truth” (II Tim. 3:16 Good News Bible).

The Bible explicitly teaches that Christ is “a Man” (John 8:40) Who has flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), unlike God Who is spirit (John 4:24). Many other biblical passages prove that Christ is different from God and is not God.

For instance, Christ died (John 19:30, 33) while God is immortal (I Tim. 1:17). God is the Creator (Mal. 2:10; I Cor. 8:6) while Jesus is the first-born of all creation (Col. 1:15). Christ has a beginning—He “proceeded forth and came from God” (John 8:42 New King James Version)—while God has no beginning, as He is “from everlasting to everlasting” (Ps. 90:2 NKJV).

These biblical truths nullify, among other things, other religions’ beliefs that Christ is “co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial” (of the same nature) with God.

### **Never a blasphemy**

The biblical beliefs of the Church about Christ nonetheless raise the ire of others. They exclaim that teaching that Christ is “a man” is a clear blasphemy or an affront to Him.

But far from despising Christ, stating that He is human even expresses the Church members’ great reverence for Him—for it is an affirmation of how exactly He introduced Himself:

“But now you seek to kill Me, a **Man** who has told you the truth which I heard from God. ...” (John 8:40 NKJV, emphasis ours)

So, if to teach that He is “a man” were to blaspheme Christ, then it would appear that He blasphemed Himself, and was blasphemed even by the apostles who directly taught that He is human (I Tim 2:5; Acts 2:22; 17:31 NKJV).

Concerning man, the Lord God Himself bluntly declares, “thou *art* a man, and not God” (Ezek. 28:2 King James Version). Making a clear-cut distinction between man and God, He further states, “I *am* God, and not man” (Hos. 11:9 NKJV).

### **Misrepresenting its belief**

Now, there are those who maliciously misrepresent the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* by claiming that it teaches that Christ is “just a man” or a “mere man,” that is, someone just like any other person in the world.

This, of course, is not true, for what the Church rather teaches is that Jesus Christ is a man with God-given powers, honors, and qualities that the rest of humankind do not possess.

Church Of Christ members profess the biblical teachings that Jesus is God’s beloved and only begotten Son (Matt. 3:17; John 3:16); His greatest messenger (Luke 4:18); and the truth, the life, and the only way to the Father (John 14:6; 6:44). They recognize that Christ is the only man Who did not sin (I Pet. 2:22; Rom. 5:12) as He was sanctified by the Father (John 10:36). He was placed above all that God created and was appointed to be the head of the Church (Eph. 1:20–22).

“

**For there is one God  
and one Mediator  
between God and men,  
the Man Christ Jesus.**

”

I Timothy 2:5  
New King James Version

### **Mediator, Savior, and the Founder of the Church**

What further makes Christ distinct from any other man is His being the only Mediator between God and men:

“For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus.” (I Tim. 2:5 NKJV)

So Church members also pray to Christ, for He is the Mediator to God and the throne of grace for them to attain mercy and grace, especially in the time of need (Heb. 4:14, 16).

Given the power to pardon sins (Mark 2:10), Jesus was also made Savior and Redeemer to give repentance and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31). And as the God-appointed Savior, He built His Church (Matt. 16:18), which He will save (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18)—the Church Of Christ which He redeemed with His blood (Acts 20:28 Lamsa Translation).

### Worshipping Christ

Church Of Christ members also worship Christ in obedience to the commandment of God Who exalted Him:

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9–11 NKJV)

Christ is worthy of worship as great honors were conferred upon Him by God because of His humility and obedience to Him (Phil. 2:5–8). Take note, however, that “every knee should bow” at His name, or

that Christ must be worshiped, not because He is God but because doing so is “to the glory of God the Father.”

### Our Lord

So great is the Church members’ recognition of Christ that they acknowledge Him as Lord:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:36 NKJV)

God has made Jesus Lord because the Father wants people to listen to and do what His Son says (Matt. 17:5; Luke 6:46). In fact, abiding in Christ’s words—not merely professing faith in Him—is the true essence of being a Christian or being His follower (John 8:31).

One of the teachings of Christ is for people to enter the flock or the Church Of Christ through Him (John 10:9 Revised English Bible; Acts 20:28 Lamsa). By joining this Church, therefore, the members have openly manifested how they truly hold in high regard the Lord Jesus.

We cordially invite you, dear readers, to solemnly consider His invitation to enter His Church. By obeying His teachings, we prove that we honor and revere Him, that we truly regard Him as our Lord (Luke 6:46), and that we are His true disciples: “So Jesus said to those who believed in him, ‘If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples’.” (John 8:31 GNB) 🌟

“

**Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**

”

Acts 2:36  
New King James Version

# God is the One Who enables us to be strong

By MANDY A. NEPOMUCENO

THE WORLD SEEMS to be falling apart—the pandemic is still ravaging various parts of the world as of the first quarter of the year 2022; meanwhile, the fighting between Russia and Ukraine rages, compounding economic woes, as threats of a wider armed conflict is seen to result in “a hurricane of hunger and a meltdown of the global food system” (*france24.com*); and global climate change has already spawned extreme weather systems, leading to massive flash floods, for example, that have destroyed and continue destroying thousands of lives and millions of properties.

Despite these, we, members of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ), continue thanking the Lord God for He has never forsaken His people. How is this evident in the lives of the individual members of the Church? And what should we do to continue enjoying God’s inexhaustible grace?

## In times of great trouble

Being members of the Church Of Christ does not make us immune to the sufferings that beset people in this world, and we, too, feel fear and pain. Even God’s servants in the past had gone through similar experiences, and they wept because of exhaustion from sorrow and troubles (Ps. 31:10 Good News Bible). We are never helpless, however, for God does not abandon His people:

“God is our refuge and strength, a help always near in times of great trouble. That’s why we won’t be afraid when the world falls apart, when the mountains crumble into the center of the sea, when its waters roar and rage, when the mountains shake because of its surging waves.” (Ps. 46:1–3 Common English Bible)

As God’s people in these last days, we firmly believe in these words. God is our refuge and help Who is always near to us, especially in times

of great adversity. We should not be afraid of any adverse circumstance because we can draw strength from Him. We are confident that we will never be on our own while confronting the challenges in life because the Lord God is always on our side. Our counterparts in the ancient times had that same conviction:

“It is the Lord Who goes before you; He will [march] with you; He will not fail you or let you go or forsake you; [let there be no cowardice or flinching, but] fear not, neither become broken [in spirit—depressed, dismayed and unnerved with alarm].” (Deut. 31:8 Amplified Bible)

The Lord God marches with us no matter what the situation is. He will not fail us, nor let go of us, nor forsake us. And so, cowardice should have no place in our heart. Rather than wallow in self-pity, let us turn to God—let us pray unceasingly and earnestly. Let us put our trust in Him,

and we can surely hope that we will have everything that we need (Ps. 34:10 Translation for Translators).

For God's faithful people, problems would seem nothing because He readily provides the solutions. We do not scramble for answers like the people of the world do. Instead, we yearn for the strength that only God can provide.

### Seek the Lord God

God's people are taught what to do so they could receive His strength:

"Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

"Honor his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek [the LORD] rejoice." (I Chr. 16:11, 10 Holman Christian Standard Bible)

We are taught to seek God—to go to Him for help and worship Him

continually (GNB). As a result, we never forsake the worship service. We attend religiously regardless of the conditions or obstacles we encounter. We consider it sacrilegious not to approach the Lord God and worship Him.

In the worship service, we are strengthened by God (I Chr. 16:11, 10 Moffatt Translation), such that we can face the world with renewed confidence. Hence, we should never forsake the worship service lest we are overcome by troubles and difficulties.

We, God's people, have a high regard for the worship service, as we learned from the Holy Scriptures:

"You are my God. I worship you. In my heart, I long for you, as I would long for a stream in a scorching desert. I have seen your power and your glory in the place of worship.

Your love means more than life to me, and I praise you ... You have helped me, and I sing happy songs in the shadow of your wings. I stay close to you, and your powerful arm supports me." (Ps. 63:1-3, 7-8 Contemporary English Version)

We long to worship God as one longs for a stream in a scorching desert. Our hearts long for His presence and glory. Thus, we prepare not only what we will wear in the worship service but more so our entire being, for us to receive His love, which we value more

than our very life. We will never even think of forsaking our worship of God.

The Church Administration strives to keep us strong in our faith and to guide us so that our entry into the Holy City is assured. However, as we journey through this world, we will undoubtedly face hardship and distress. That is why the leader whom God has placed in the Church fervently exhorts us on the importance of the worship service, for he knows, just as leaders of God's nation then knew, that we can reach our blessed destination only when God remains on our side:

"What if God had not been on our side? Let all Israel admit this! What if God had not been there for us? Our enemies, in their violent anger, would have swallowed us up alive! The nations, with their flood of rage, would have swept us away and we would have drowned, perished beneath their torrent of terror! We can praise God over and over that he never left us! God wouldn't allow the terror of our enemies to defeat us. We are free from the hunter's trap; their snare is broken and we have escaped! For the same God who made everything, our Creator and our mighty maker, he himself is our helper and defender!" (Ps. 124:1-8 The Passion Translation)

Faithful servants of God believe that whatever challenge they face will pass and that they will remain standing before God. So, on our part, we earnestly pray to God about this specific test that affects everyone—we beseech Him that He end the pandemic so that we may freely and safely continue with our services to Him. There is no reason for us to be

**God is the one  
who enables me  
to be strong  
and who  
keeps me safe  
on the roads  
that I walk on.**

Psalm 18:32  
Unfoldingword Simplified Text



skeptical or weary. We saw how God fulfilled His promises to His Messenger in the last days and to this work of salvation. Thus, we should hold on to His promises knowing full well that He is faithful to His word.

### **Expect God to act**

God's people do not simply wait for His help; we are taught that we should make certain that we are worthy of it. So, we strive to live in accordance with His will and to lead an upright life. We should always do what pleases Him and follow all of His commandments. And when adversities become too much for us to bear, we do what God's servants in the past did:

"Cast your burden on the Lord [releasing the weight of it] and He will sustain you; He will never allow the [consistently] righteous to be moved (made to slip, fall or fail)." (Ps. 55:22 AMP)

Let us cast all our worries and burdens to God. He will never allow us to be moved. And while we wait for God to make a way and we strain to see His promises come true, we should "still cling to [His] laws and obey them" because God is our refuge, shield, and only source of hope (Ps. 119:81-83, 114 Living Bible). He will provide the sustenance we need so we will not fall.

God's help is more than enough to get us through; and the Lord Jesus Christ will also empower us. He has proven this to His disciples, as attested to by Apostle Paul:

"I know how to be abased *and* live humbly in straitened circumstances, and I know also how to enjoy plenty *and* live in abundance. I have learned

“

**Seek the LORD  
and his strength;  
seek his face always.**

**Honor his holy name;  
let the hearts of those  
who seek [the LORD]  
rejoice.**

”

**I Chronicles 16:11, 10  
Holman Christian Standard Bible**

in any and all circumstances, the secret of facing every situation, whether well-fed or going hungry, having a sufficiency *and* to spare or going without *and* being in want. I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me—I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me, [that is, I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency]." (Phil. 4:12-13 AMP)

Such assurance should make us ready for anything that might happen. We are equipped with everything that we need—God's and Christ's help is all we really need—so we can make it to the end of our journey and finish our race. We are warned that life in this world will not get better anymore, because the end of days is at hand. Things may get even worse before the situation gets better. And no end can be better

than the time when God's promised salvation and eternal life are fulfilled.

So, we should not give up our confidence in God and in what He can do for us. Let us always remember that no matter how heavy the burden we have to carry, God will lend us a helping hand as we soldier on. Let this be our guiding principle in life:

"God is the one who enables me to be strong and who keeps me safe on the roads that I walk on." (Ps. 18:32 Unfoldingword Simplified Text)

Let us inscribe these words from the Bible in our hearts and even on the walls of our homes as a reminder of our firm conviction. Our faith in God is not simply wishful thinking that He will come to our rescue; rather, it is an expectant confidence that He will act in our favor and make everything right for us in the end.

Thus, in all our pains, sorrows, deficiencies, and rejections and in all our aspirations, good plans, decisions in this life, let us always seek God, for He is our refuge and strength. The Lord God will never deny us His help, as He has previously demonstrated to His people:

"But, O my soul, don't be discouraged. Don't be upset. Expect God to act! For I know that I shall again have plenty of reason to praise him for all that he will do. He is my help! He is my God!" (Ps. 42:11 LB) 🎧

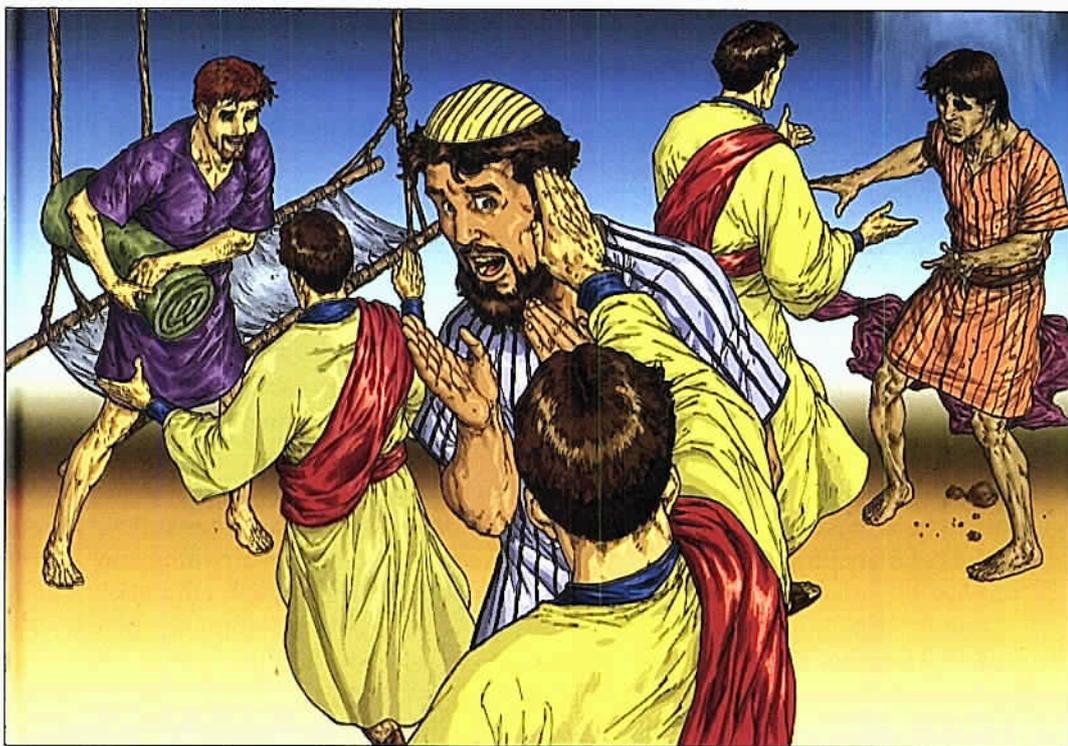
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*Based on the lesson taught by the Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, during the worship service streamed live from the Local Congregation of Templo Central on March 19, 2022*

## Jesus Christ heals the crippled, the deaf, and the blind

Christ, together with His disciples, was preaching the gospel from place to place until they reached and went back to Capernaum, a fishing village in Galilee. From His previous missions, many people heard the news that Christ healed all kinds of sicknesses. Thus, when they learned that He was at home, many came to where Christ was preaching but it was already filled with many people (Mark 1:14–15, 34; 2:1–2).

Through God's power bestowed on Him, Jesus Christ performed many miracles, one of which was healing all kinds of illnesses.



Artist's rendition by JULIUS M. GOPEZ

### Jesus Heals a Man Who Could Not Walk

JESUS WAS STILL teaching when four people came up, carrying a man on a mat because he could not walk. But because of the crowd, they could not get him to Jesus. So they made a hole in the roof above him and let the man down in front of everyone.

When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the man, "My friend, your sins are forgiven."

Some of the teachers of the Law of Moses were sitting there. They started wondering, "Why would he say such a thing? He must think he is God! Only God can forgive sins."

At once, Jesus knew what they were thinking, and he said, "Why are you thinking such things? Is it easier for me to tell this man his sins are forgiven or to tell him to get up and pick up his mat and go on home? I will show you that the Son of Man has the right to forgive



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# Trust the Lord confidently with all your heart

By RONNIE H. MUTYA

LIKE OTHER PEOPLE, members of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ) also face debilitating situations as they are still on their journey in this world. The difference, though, is that while other people succumb to anxiety and depression and other psychological woes, the faithful Church members do not allow the hardships to dampen their faith and enthusiasm in their services to God. They constantly receive encouragement and inspiration from the Church Administration through the teachings of the Lord God and of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Do not be troubled**

Why do true Christians never allow any problems to hinder them from their services to God? In Luke 24:38, this is what is written:

“And he said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And for what reason are doubts arising in your hearts?’” (David Robert Palmer’s Gospels Translation)

The Lord Jesus Christ does not want His disciples to be troubled. He sees no reason for doubts to arise in their hearts.

Despite uncertainties, true Christians should not be stressed out or be overcome by anxiety.

Instead, they should have faith and trust in what God can do for them. Why is that?

“What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead.” (Heb. 11:1 Living Bible)

Even if something seems impossible, a person who has faith in God has “confident assurance that something ... is going to happen.” There is no doubt in his mind that what he hopes for is bound to happen.

In the midst of hopelessness and uncertainty, Church members should be active in their services to God and never abandon their election from Him because He has a promise to them and they can expect Him to fulfill it. However, like Abraham, they must prove first their firm faith in God.

## **Faith worth imitating**

Abraham exemplified a kind of faith worthy of imitation. He proved it to God by focusing not on his inability or incapacity but on what God can do for him:

“When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis

of what he saw he *couldn't* do but on what God said he *would* do. And so he was made father of a multitude of peoples. God himself said to him, 'You're going to have a big family, Abraham!' Abraham didn't focus on his own impotence and say, 'It's hopeless. This hundred-year-old body could never father a child.' Nor did he survey Sarah's decades of infertility and give up. He didn't tiptoe around God's promise asking cautiously skeptical questions. He plunged into the promise and came up strong, ready for God, sure that God would make good on what he had said." (Rom. 4:18–22 The Message)

Despite his condition and that of his wife, Abraham did not lose hope of becoming a father and having a big family because he trusted in God's promises to him. Hence, Church Of Christ members ought to imitate Abraham's faith. This is the reason the Church Administration always reminds them to abound in faith and hope.

But what if severe problems arise along the way? Is it a reason to give up on one's services to God especially now that uncertainties abound? Apostle Paul taught in Hebrews 6:19 and 18, thus:

"We can be completely sure about what we hope for. God is like something really strong that does not move.

“

**What is faith?  
It is the confident  
assurance that  
something  
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certainty that what we  
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for us, even though we  
cannot see it up ahead.**

”

Hebrews 11:1  
Living Bible

When we hope, we fix our lives in God. We fix our lives like an anchor stops a boat moving away. The anchor holds that boat safely in the same place. When we hope, we reach behind the special curtain in God's house in heaven. We reach into the Most Holy Room.

"These two facts cannot change. God can never say something that is not true. And these two facts cause us to feel strong and sure. We are like people who have run to God. We have run to God so that he can keep us safe. So, we must continue to hope strongly for what God has promised us." (EasyEnglish Bible)

Although God's servants sometimes are heavily burdened with so many problems, they should not lose hope and feel unsafe because God "can keep [them] safe." All of the sufferings they endure are part of the spiritual process to keep their faith strong and pure (I Pet. 4:12–13 MSG). They should always remember that God has promised all the good things to them and they should expect to receive them.

### **Proving to God our trust in Him**

To receive God's guidance, the Bible teaches how His children should prove their trust in Him:

"Trust in *and* rely confidently on the LORD with all your heart And do not rely on your own insight *or* understanding. In all your ways know *and* acknowledge *and* recognize Him, And He will make your paths straight *and* smooth [removing obstacles that block your way]." (Prov. 3:5–6 Amplified Bible 2015)

When faced with seemingly insurmountable problems, many people tend to seek help from their trusted friends or those whom they think are influential, sometimes forgetting that these people, too, have limited capabilities.

Meanwhile, others fully rely on their own skills and knowledge, but end up still struggling to solve their problems by themselves. This should not be the case for God's people because He teaches them to "trust in and rely confidently" in Him. He is God Almighty. If the situation seems so heavy to carry on, God encourages the faithful to "acknowledge and recognize Him" for "He will make [their] paths straight and smooth."

Moreover, in order to receive God's promises and guidance, His faithful servants should have reverent fear of Him by not walking in darkness (Isa. 50:10 Amplified

Bible), that is, shun all forms of evil. Therefore, as what the Church Administration always reminds them, they should uphold intensive and complete renewal of life. Despite the worsening condition of the world, they should fully obey all of God's commandments and lead a holy life. In that way, they can show their complete trust and firm faith in Him.

Faithful members of the Church Of Christ understand that all the things happening in the world, even the pandemic and the worsening hardship, are the signs foretold in the Bible indicating that the end of the world draws near. That is why, according to Apostle Paul, they have to trust without any single bit of doubt that God will save them:

"Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the trouble we suffered in the country of Asia. We had great burdens there. The burdens were greater than our own strength. We even gave up hope for life. Truly in our own hearts we believed that we would die. But this happened so that we would not trust in ourselves. It happened so that we would trust in God, who raises people from death. God saved us from these great dangers of death. And God will continue to save us. We have put our hope in him, and he will continue to save us." (II Cor. 1:8-10 Easy-to-Read Version)

Though faced with uncertainties of what tomorrow brings, God's true servants are equipped with His teachings they continuously learn through the Church Administration that guides them in prevailing any hardships that they sometimes think bigger than their own strengths. Thus, whatever obstacles they may experience while still sojourning in this world, they trust God confidently with all their heart that He will save them not only from the great dangers in this world, but most importantly, from perdition on the Day of Judgment. 🕊

*Based on the worship service lesson taught by Brother Eduardo V. Manalo on April 12, 2020 during the worship service that was streamed live from PMD Multimedia Center, Quezon City, Philippines*

*Stories from the Bible, ... from page 30*

sins here on earth." So Jesus said to the man, "Get up! Pick up your mat and go on home." The man got right up. He picked up his mat and went out while everyone watched in amazement. They praised God and said, "We have never seen anything like this!"

### **Jesus Heals a Man Who Was Deaf and Could Hardly Talk**

Jesus left the region around Tyre and went by way of Sidon toward Lake Galilee. He went through the land near the ten cities known as Decapolis. Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk. They begged Jesus just to touch him.

After Jesus had taken him aside from the crowd, he stuck his fingers in the man's ears. Then he spit and put it on the man's tongue. Jesus looked up toward heaven, and with a groan he said, "Effatha!" which means "Open up!" At once the man could hear, and he had no more trouble talking clearly.

Jesus told the people not to say anything about what he had done. But the more he told them, the more they talked about it. They were completely amazed and said, "Everything he does is good! He even heals people who cannot hear or talk."

### **Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus**

Jesus and his disciples went to Jericho. And as they were leaving, they were followed by a large crowd. A blind beggar by the name of Bartimaeus son of Timaeus was sitting beside the road. When he heard that it was Jesus from Nazareth, he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" Many people told the man to stop, but he shouted even louder, "Son of David, have pity on me!"

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him over!"

They called out to the blind man and said, "Don't be afraid! Come on! He is calling for you." The man threw off his coat as he jumped up and ran to Jesus.

Jesus asked, "What do you want me to do for you?"

The blind man answered, "Master, I want to see!"

Jesus told him, "You may go. Your eyes are healed because of your faith."

At once the man could see, and he went down the road with Jesus. 🕊

(Mark 2:2-12; 7:31-37; 10:46-52 Contemporary English Version)

# Features



## Ayudando a la gente en Honduras a conocer la Iglesia De Cristo

By DANIEL QUITALIG and ANGELICA FISHER



### Helping the people in Honduras know the Church Of Christ

LIKE THE REST of the brethren all around the world, members of the Church Of Christ from Latin American countries continue sharing the true Christian faith to their neighbors and friends.

One of those countries that reached recently by

the mission of the Church Of Christ is Honduras. Because of the growing number of brethren as well as prospective members and doctrinal instructees, the Church Administration deemed it necessary to establish a group worship service

AL IGUAL QUE el resto de los hermanos alrededor de todo el mundo, los miembros de la *Iglesia De Cristo* de los países latinoamericanos continúan compartiendo la verdadera fe cristiana con sus vecinos y amigos.

Uno de esos países a los que llegó recientemente la misión de la *Iglesia De Cristo* es Honduras. Debido al creciente número de hermanos, así como de candidatos para ser miembros y estudiantes bíblicos, la Administración de la Iglesia consideró necesario establecer un Servicio de Adoración en Grupo (GWS) inicialmente en Cascadas, Choloma, Honduras para satisfacer aún más sus necesidades espirituales a medida que cumplen su deber de adorar al Señor Dios.

El GWS de Honduras celebró su servicio de adoración inaugural el 25 de abril de 2021.



A medida que la *Iglesia De Cristo* continúa fervientemente la propagación del evangelio en el país, los miembros de la nueva GWS se sintieron aún más inspirados para ser más activos en su fe, especialmente después del servicio de adoración lleno de gracia.

“Estamos muy felices porque ahora los hermanos aquí en Honduras—los estudiantes bíblicos, todos nosotros—podemos adorar y servir a nuestro Señor Dios porque ya tenemos una congregación de la Iglesia en este país” dijo el hermano Paul Martinez, un ministro del evangelio.

Durante el año pasado, Honduras ha experimentado su parte de pruebas y tragedias, no solo con la pandemia sino incluso con los desastres naturales. La tasa de pobreza en Honduras es bastante alta, lo que deja a muchas familias preocupadas por la comida, la ropa y otros recursos. La Sra. Rosa Medares, nacida y criada en el país, conoce de primera mano las luchas financieras que enfrentan los hondureños todos los días.

“La situación en Honduras es muy difícil porque económicamente

no estamos en un país que dé mucho trabajo. Es muy difícil encontrar un trabajo estable. La pandemia nos pega muy fuerte tanto económica como emocionalmente porque en términos económicos han cerrado muchos negocios; en otras áreas, muchas personas perdieron sus trabajos y ha sido un desafío emocional porque muchas personas dejaron a sus familias”, dijo Rosa.

Honduras también es el hogar de muchos trabajadores filipinos en el extranjero que trabajan para mantenerse a sí mismos y a sus familias en Filipinas. La primera parte de la Ayuda Humanitaria se llevó a cabo en el Centro Comunitario Filipino en San Pedro Sula. Cecilia Nicolas Tabobo atestigua sobre las dificultades de vivir lejos de su hogar.

Cecilia es una Filipina que vive en Honduras y dice que la vida ha sido aún más desafiante en el último año. “Soy una docente. Enseño inglés en la escuela. La vida no es tan fácil. La situación es muy dura porque la pandemia se llevó la mayoría de las empresas, las fábricas, los trabajos aquí,” dijo Cecilia.



(GWS) initially in Cascadas, Choloma, Honduras to all the more provide for their spiritual needs as they fulfill their duty to worship God.

The Honduras GWS held its inaugural worship service held on April 25, 2021.

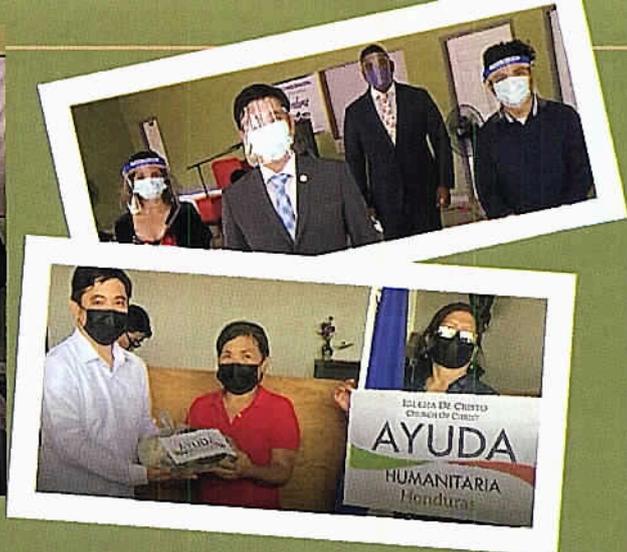
With the Church Of Christ fervently continuing the propagation of the gospel in the country, the members of the new GWS were all the more inspired to be more active in their faith, especially after the grace-filled worship service.

“We are very happy because the brethren here in Honduras, as well as those undergoing doctrinal instructions, can now hold our worship services to our Lord God,” said Brother Paul Martinez, a minister of the gospel.

Over the past year, Honduras has experienced its share of trials and tragedies, not only with the pandemic but even with natural disasters. The poverty rate in Honduras is quite high, leaving many families worried about food, clothing, and other resources. Ms. Rosa Medares, born and raised in the country, knows firsthand the financial struggles Hondurans face every day.

“The situation in Honduras is very difficult because, eco-





Pero la *Iglesia De Cristo* al reconocer las necesidades de la gente, pudo distribuir paquetes de ayuda a las personas necesitadas. Uno de los beneficiarios fue Cecilia.

“Esto es una gran ayuda porque después de la pandemia, después [del] huracán, vino ayuda,” dijo Cecilia.

En los días siguientes, la Iglesia continuó brindando alivio a los residentes de Choloma y Río Blanquito, Cortés.

“Gracias al Señor Dios”, dijo Anthony Pindo, uno de los beneficiarios, “viniste aquí y lo primero que hiciste fue llevar a cabo estas donaciones”. Agregó que por la pandemia y otros desastres naturales, otros “se quedaron sin familiares, sin amigos”. Dijo que estaba agradecido de que su familia no estuviera entre ellos.

Rosa expresó su agradecimiento a la Iglesia De Cristo por proyectos como la Ayuda Humanitaria. “Vinieron a ayudar a muchas familias, incluyendo a mi familia, les agradezco que ellos fueron parte de esta bendición,” ella dijo.

Los hermanos de Honduras se sienten bendecidos al seguir siendo testigos de cómo crece la Iglesia De Cristo en Honduras y en otros países de América Latina.

Si desea obtener más información sobre la *Iglesia De Cristo*, visite [www.incmedia.org/espanol](http://www.incmedia.org/espanol). 📞

nomically, we aren't in a country that provides a lot of jobs. It's very difficult to find a stable job. The pandemic hits us very hard both economically and emotionally because in terms of the economy, a lot of businesses have closed; in other areas, a lot of people lost their jobs, and it has been emotionally challenging because many people left their families,” said Rosa.

Honduras is also home to a handful of overseas Filipino workers, aiming to provide for themselves and their families in the Philippines. The first part of the Aid to Humanity event conducted in May 2021 was held at the Filipino Community Center in San Pedro Sula, situated in the northern part of the country. Ms. Cecilia Nicolas Tabobo, a Filipina living in Honduras, attested to how difficult it is being far away from home.

Cecilia stated that life has been even more challenging a year ago. “I am a docent. I teach English in school. Life isn't so easy. The situation is very tough because the pandemic took out most of the companies, the factories, the jobs here,” she said.

Recognizing the need of the people, the Church Of Christ provided care packages in aid to people in need. One of the beneficiaries was Cecilia.

“It is a great help because after the pandemic, after the hurricane, help came,” she stated.

In the days after, the Church continued providing relief to affected residents in Choloma and Río Blanquito, Cortés.

“Thank God,” said Anthony Pindo, one of the beneficiaries, “You came here and the first thing you did was to carry out these donations.” He added that due to the pandemic and other natural disasters, others “were left without family members, without friends.” He said he was thankful that their family was not among them.

Rosa expressed her gratitude to the Church Of Christ for projects such as the Aid To Humanity. “You came to help many families, including my family, I thank you that they were part of this blessing,” she said.

The brethren from Honduras feel blessed as they continue witnessing how the Church Of Christ grows in Honduras and in other Latin American countries.

If you would like to know more about the Church Of Christ, please visit [www.incmedia.org/espanol](http://www.incmedia.org/espanol). 📞

With research assistance from Kenneth Ouano and Aliw Pablo

## Cristiano, hindi sa pangalan lamang

**H**ALOS IKATLONG bahagi ng populasyon ng mundo—tinatayang 2.38 bilyong katao—ang nagpapakilalang sila ay Cristiano (*worldpopulationreview.com*). Subalit taliwas sa malaganap na paniniwalang sapat na ang pagsampalataya sa Panginoong Jesucristo at sa Kaniyang mga aral para maibilang na Kaniyang tagasunod o Cristiano, itinuro ni Apostol Juan, isa sa mga haligi ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* noong unang siglo, na ang pagiging Cristiano ay may kaakibat na pananagutan:

“Maaaring sabihin ng isang tao, ‘Ako ay Cristiano; Ako ay nasa daan patungo sa langit; Ako ay na kay Cristo.’ Ngunit kung hindi naman niya **ginagawa ang iniuutos sa kaniya ni Cristo na gawin niya**, siya’y isang sinungaling.” (I Juan 2:4 Living Bible)\*\*

Maliwanag na ang pagiging Cristiano ay hindi isang katawagan o designasyon lamang na maaaring ikapit ninuman sa kaniyang sarili. Maaaring ang buong akala ng isang tao ay siya’y Cristiano, subalit kung tumatangi siya o hindi siya sumusunod sa ipinag-uutos ni Cristo, nahuhulog lamang siya sa pagpapanggap, at gaya ng tahasang pahayag ng Biblia—siya’y isang sinungaling.

Ito ay sa dahilang ang Tagapagligtas mismo ang naghahanap sa mga nagsasabing sila’y kumikilala sa Kaniya bilang Panginoon na gawin nila ang Kaniyang sinasabi:

“At bakit tinatawag ninyo ako, Panginoon, Panginoon, at di ninyo ginagawa ang mga bagay na aking sinasabi?” (Lucas 6:46)

Kaya, kung hindi matutugunan ng tao ang pananagutang sumunod sa mga utos ni Cristo, ang kaniyang

pagiging tagasunod diumano ni Cristo o pagiging Cristiano ay isang pag-aangkin lamang.

Ang pagiging tunay na Cristiano ay kailangang may pagpapatotoo mismo mula sa Panginoong Jesucristo. Bilang Pastor ng mga tupa, kilala Niya kung sino ang tunay na sa Kaniya:

“Ako ang mabuting pastor; at **nakikilala ko ang sariling akin**, at ang sariling akin ay nakikilala ako, Dinirinig ng aking mga tupa ang aking tinig, at sila’y aking nakikilala, at sila’y nagsisisunod sa akin.” (Juan 10:14, 27\*)

Ipinaliwanag ni Cristo na ang mga taong hindi kabilang sa Kaniyang mga tupa, bagama’t kumikilala diumano sa Kaniya, ay hindi tunay na mananampalataya:

“Datapuwa’t **hindi kayo nagsisampalataya, sapagka’t hindi kayo sa aking mga tupa.**” (Juan 10:26\*)

Itinuro ni Cristo kung paano makikilala ang Kaniyang mga tupa at kung saan sila matatagpuan. Sila ang mga taong dininig ang Kaniyang tinig o sinunod ang Kaniyang utos na pumasok sa loob ng kawan:

“Kaya muling nagsalita si Jesus: Buong katotohanang sinasabi Ko sa inyo. Ako ang pintuan ng kulungan ng mga tupa. ... Ako ang pintuan; ang sinumang taong **pumasok sa loob ng kawan** sa pamamagitan ko ay maliligtas. ...” (Juan 10:7, 9 Revised English Bible)\*\*

Ang kawan kung saan masusumpungan ang mga tunay na tupa o alagad ni Cristo ay ang *Iglesia ni Cristo* na Kaniyang itinayo (Mat. 16:18)—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*:

“Ingatan ninyo kung gayon ang inyong sarili at ang buong **kawan** na rito’y hinirang kayo ng Espiritu Santo

na mga katiwala, upang pakanin ang **iglesia ni Cristo** na binili niya ng kaniyang dugo." (Acts 20:28 Lamsa Translation)\*\*

Samakatuwid, ang mga taong wala sa loob, bagkus ay nasa labas ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo*, sa kabila ng kanilang pagpapahayag at pag-aangkin sa pagiging alagad ni Cristo, ay Cristiano sa katawagan lamang. Sila ay hindi tunay na Cristiano.

Bilang mga tunay na Cristiano, ang mga kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* ay inaasahang magtataglay ng "pagiisip, na ito'y na kay Cristo Jesus din naman" (Filip. 2:5).

Ang pag-iisip ni Cristo ay ang "kaniyang di-makasariling kababaang-loob" (Filip. 2:5 Amplified Version 2015).\*\* Pinatunayan Niya iyon sa pamamagitan ng walang pasubaling pagsunod sa kalooban ng Diyos, at "siya'y nagpakababa at naging masunurin hanggang sa kamatayan" (Filip. 2:8 New Pilipino Version).

Bilang tao, hindi naging magaan sa kalooban ni Cristo na harapin ang Kaniyang napipintong kamatayan, gayunma'y buong giting Niya iyong tinanggap bilang pagpapasakop sa kalooban ng Diyos. Ang sabi ni Cristo, "Ama ko, kung бага maaari, ay lumampas sa akin ang sarong ito: gayon ma'y **huwag ang ayon sa ibig ko, kundi ang ayon sa ibig mo**" (Mat. 26:39)\*.

Kaya, ang mga tunay na Cristiano sa ating panahon o ang mga kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* ay nag-uukol ng napakataas na pagkilala sa Panginoong Jesucristo bilang kanilang huwaran sa pagiging masunurin sa Panginoong Diyos. Sinisikap nilang tularan ang Kaniyang di-makasariling kababaang-loob sa pamamagitan ng pagpapasakop sa kalooban ng Ama, sukdulang magtangi sila ng kanilang sarili at magsakripisyo.

Anuman ang mangyari, sinisikap nilang makapamuhay "nang naayon sa ebanghelyo ni Cristo" (Filip. 1:27 NPV). Bagama't sila ay nasa "gitna ng isang lahing liko at masama," nagpupunyagi silang makapanatiling "walang malay at malinis bilang mga anak ng Dios, na walang kapintasan" upang "magliwanag ... sa gitna nila, tulad ng nagniningning na bituin sa kalangitan" (Filip. 2:15 NPV). Sa pagkasangkapan ng Diyos sa Tagapamahalang

Pangkalahatan ng Iglesia, Kapatid na Eduardo V. Manalo, ang mga kapatid sa loob ng Iglesia ay walang humpay na inaakay tungo sa pagsasagawa ng totooanan at puspu-sang pagbabagong-buhay.

Lagi ring pinaaalalahanan ang mga kaanib ng Iglesia na sundin ang halimbawa ni Cristo sa paninindigan sa panig ng katotohanan sa kabila ng pag-uusig at pagkutya ng mga taga-sanlibutan. Sa kanilang pakikitungo sa mga isyung panlipunan at iba pang paksang may kinalaman sa kanilang pananampalataya, sinusundan ng mga tapat na kaanib ng Iglesia ang yapak ni Cristo sa laging pagbibigay-kasiyahan sa Diyos, at hindi sa mga tao.

Ang pagiging mapanalanginin ni Cristo sa Panginoong Diyos ay isang katangiang itinuturo sa mga kaanib ng Iglesia na sikaping maisabuhay:

"Noong si Jesus ay namumuhay rito sa lupa, **siya'y dumalangin at lumuluhang sumamo sa Diyos** na makapagligligtas sa kanya sa kamatayan. At dininig siya dahil sa lubusan siyang nagpakumbaba." (Heb. 5:7-8 Magandang Balita Biblia)\*

Sa pagharap sa mga tukso, tinutularan din ng mga kapatid ang halimbawa ni Cristo, na nang tuksohin ng diablo, ay nanghawak sa "nasusulat" (Mat. 4:1-11)—mga salita ng Diyos na nakasulat sa mga Banal na Kasulatan. Kaya, nagagawa nilang pagtagumpayan ang mga pakana ng diablo sa pamamagitan ng mahigpit nilang panghahawak sa mga aral ng Diyos na itinuro sa kanila ng Kaniyang Sugo sa mga huling araw at ng Pamamahala sa Iglesia.

Tunay ngang ibinubuhay ng mga tapat na kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* ang kanilang pagiging tagasunod ni Cristo. Sila ay Cristiano sa isip, sa salita, at sa gawa—hindi sa pangalan lamang. ☺

\* *Amin ang pagdirin*

\*\* *Isinalin mula sa Ingles*

*Donna C. Lovoncin*  
Editor-in-Chief



# Kung bakit mahalagang lumapit at dumalangin kay Cristo

NI SIEGFRED T. GOLLAYAN

**T**UNAY NA ANG MABUHAY sa daigdig ay isang malaking hamon. Sa pamumuhay sa mundong ito ay hindi makaiiwas ang sinuman na makaranas ng mga suliranin at tiisin. Ang mga pinagdaraanang matinding kahirapan ay nagdudulot sa iba ng kawalang-pag-asa. Ito naman ang nagtutulak sa iba pa na gumawa ng masama sa pag-aakalang iyon na lamang ang nalalabing paraan para makalampas sa gipit na sitwasyon.

Hindi magkakagayon ang sinuman kung nauunawaan niya ang itinuturo ng Biblia na may itinalaga ang Panginoong Diyos na may malaking maitutulong sa panahon ng pangangailangan at kapighatian. At upang lubos na pakinabangan, marapat lamang na lapitan ng tao ang ipinagkaloob ng Panginoon na tutulong sa kaniya.

## Ang ibinigay ng Diyos na makatutulong

Ipinakilala ng mga apostol ang ibinigay ng Panginoong Diyos na dapat lapitan upang tumulong sa panahon ng pangangailangan:

“Yaman ngang tayo’y mayroong isang lubhang dakilang saserdote, na pumasok sa kalangitan, si Jesus na Anak ng Dios, ay ingatan nating matibay ang ating pagkakilala. Sapagka’t tayo’y walang isang dakilang saserdote na hindi maaaring mahabag sa ating kahinaan, kundi isa na tinukso sa lahat ng mga paraan gaya rin naman *natin gayon ma’y* walang kasalanan. Magsilapit nga tayong may pagkakatiwala sa luklukan ng biyaya, upang tayo’y magsipagtamo ng awa, at mangakasumpung ng biyaya upang tumulong sa atin sa panahon ng pangangailangan.” (Heb. 4:14–16)

Sa Panginoong Jesucristo tayo dapat na lumapit nang may buong tiwala sa panahon ng pangangailangan yayamang Siya ang luklukan ng biyaya. Ang taimtim na dudulog sa Kaniya ay magtatamo ng awa, makasusumpung ng biyaya, at tutulungan sa panahon ng pangangailangan.

Sa pahayag ng Panginoong Jesus mismo na “hanggang ngayo’y wala pa kayong hinihinging anoman sa pangalan ko” (Juan 16:24), ay

madarama ang Kaniyang pananabik na ang tao’y lumapit sa Kaniya. Gayunman, hindi dapat ipagkamali na ang pribilehiyong ito na humingi kay Cristo ay taglay ng lahat ng tao. Tiniyak din ni Jesus kung sino ang kapag humingi ng anuman sa Ama sa Kaniyang pangalan ay pagkakalooban:

“Ako’y hindi ninyo hinirang, nguni’t kayo’y hinirang ko, at aking kayong inihalal, upang kayo’y magsiyaon at magsipagbunga, at *upang* manatili ang inyong bunga: upang ang anomang inyong hingin sa Ama sa aking pangalan, ay maibigay niya sa inyo. ... Ako ang puno ng ubas, kayo ang mga sanga: Ang nananatili sa akin, at ako’y sa kaniya, ay siyang nagbubunga ng marami: sapagka’t kung kayo’y hiwalay sa akin ay wala kayong magagawa.” (Juan 15:16, 5)

Ang mga hinirang o may kahalalan na mula kay Cristo ang tanging may karapatang humingi at pagkalooban. At ang mga hinirang ni Cristo ay itinulad Niya sa mga sangang nakakabit o nakaugnay sa Kaniya na Siyang puno nila.

Ang katumbas ng sinabi ni Cristo na Siya ang puno ng ubas ay Siya ang ulo ng Iglesia na Kaniyang katawan. Samantala, ang tinutukoy na Kaniyang mga sanga ay ang mga kaanib sa Kaniyang Iglesia (Col. 1:18; Roma 12:4-5)—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Roma 16:16 New Pilipino Version; Gawa 20:28 Lamsa Translation). Kung gayon, ang mga hinirang ni Cristo na binigyan Niya ng karapatang humingi sa Kaniya ay ang mga kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

Kaya, dapat tiyakin ng tao na kaanib siya ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* upang makalapit siya sa Panginoong Jesucristo at makatiyak ng Kaniyang

“

**Magsilapit nga tayong may pagkakatiwala sa luklukan ng biyaya, upang tayo’y magsipagtamo ng awa, at mangakasumpong ng biyaya upang tumulong sa atin sa panahon ng pangangailangan.**

”

Hebreo 4:16

pagtulong, lalo na sa panahon ng kahirapan at kagipitan. Para naman sa mga kaanib na ng Iglesia, dapat nilang tiyakin na pinakikinabangan nila at tinatamasa ang tinutukoy na biyaya at pribilehiyo sa paraang ugaliin nilang lumapit at dumalangin sa Panginoong Jesus para sa kanilang mga pangangailangan.

### Ang paanyaya ng Panginoon

Hindi dapat mag-atubili ang mga kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* sa pagdulog nila kay Cristo at hindi nila dapat pag-alinlanganan na tutugunin Niya sila. Sapagkat, Siya mismo ang nagbigay ng garantiya sa kanila na:

“Anuman ang hilingin ninyo sa aking pangalan ay gagawin ko upang maluwalhati ang Ama sa pamamagitan ng Anak. Hilingin ninyo ang anuman sa aking pangalan, at gagawin ko ito.” (Juan 14:13-14 New Pilipino Version)

Tinitindigan ng Panginoong Jesus na anuman ang hilingin ng mga hinirang Niya sa Kaniyang Pangalan ay gagawin Niya. At ito ay tiyak na magagawa Niya sapagkat “laging nabubuhay siya upang mamagitan sa kanila” (Heb. 7:25) at Siya “ang Dakilang Saserdoteng makatutugon sa ating pangangailangan” (Heb. 7:26 Magandang Balita Biblia). Ibinigay ng Diyos kay Cristo ang lahat ng kapamahalaan sa langit at sa ibabaw ng lupa (Mat. 28:18) kung kaya’t kayang-kaya Niyang tugunan o ipagkaloob ang pangangailangan ng lalapit sa Kaniya.

Dahil dito, ano ang paanyaya ni Cristo sa mga pagal na at nabibigatan sa buhay na ito? Ito ang pahayag Niya:

“Lumapit kayo sa akin, kayong lahat na napapagal at nabibigatang lubha at kayo’y pagpapahingahin ko.” (Mat. 11:28 NPV)

Kahit napapagod at nabibigatan na sa pagdadala ng buhay, hindi dapat mawalan ng pag-asa ang mga tapat na hinirang ni Cristo. Ito’y dahil ang Panginoong Jesucristo mismo ang nag-aalok ng lunas: lumapit aniya sila sa Kaniya at sila’y bibigyan Niya ng kapahingahan.

Tiyak na makakaya nila ang anumang dalahin sa buhay dahil sa “lakas na kaloob sa [kanila] ni Cristo” (Filip. 4:13 MB). Ipinangako pa ng Panginoon na, “Ang tulong ko’y sapat sa lahat ng pangangailangan mo; lalong nahahayag ang aking kapangyarihan kung ikaw ay mahina” (II Cor. 12:9-10 MB).

Higit sa lahat, naghihintay sa kanila ang tunay na kapahingahan sa langit kung mananatili sila sa pagkahirang hanggang kamatayan:

“At narinig ko ang isang tinig mula sa langit na nagsasabi, ‘Isulat mo ito: Mula ngayon, mapapalad ang naglilingkod sa Panginoon hanggang kamatayan!’ ‘Tunay nga,’ sabi ng Espiritu. ‘Magpapahinga na sila sa kanilang pagpapagal; sapagkat susundan sila ng kanilang mga gawa.’” (Apoc. 14:13 MB)

Nawa’y pakinabangan ng lahat ang dakilang biyayang ito sa paraang maging kaanib ng tunay na *Iglesia Ni Cristo* at doo’y gawin ang buong kataimtimang pagdulog at pagmamakaawa sa Panginoong Jesus na sila’y laging ipamagitan sa Panginoong Diyos upang tiyak na matamo nila ang tulong na kanilang kailangan. ☺

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# Walang isang bukal na dalawa ang tubig

NI MANDY A. NEPOMUCENO

**B**UNGA NG MODERNONG teknolohiya sa komunikasyon ay nagagawa na ng sinuman na makipag-usap anumang oras sa kaninuman saanmang panig ng mundo. Sa pamamagitan ng *internet, social media, email, text messages*, at iba pa, napakadaling makapagpadala ng mensahe o makakalap ng impormasyon, mula sa pinakamaiksing komposisyon hanggang sa pinakamahabang *post* sa mga sikat na *social networks*.

Kung gaano kabilis makapagparating ng mensahe sa kaninuman, gayon din kabilis makapagpakalat ng maling impormasyon. Kaya, kung paanong malaking tulong sa marami ang makabagong teknolohiya sa telekomunikasyon, malaking panganib din ang maaaring idulot nito kung mali at masama ang layunin sa paggamit. Dahil dito, mahalagang sangguniin

at sundin ang mga aral ng Biblia tungkol sa marapat na pag-iingat sa pakikipagtalastasan—binibigkas man o isinusulat.

## **Matutong magpigil sa sarili**

Ang isang katangiang dapat taglayin ng tao ay ang pagpipigil sa sarili. Ganito ang sabi ni Apostol Santiago:

“Tayong lahat ay nagkakamali sa iba’t ibang paraan. Ang sinumang hindi nagkakamali sa kanyang pananalita ay isang taong ganap at marunong magpigil sa sarili.” (Sant. 3:2 Bagong Magandang Balita Biblia)

Ipinapaalaala ng apostol sa atin na tayong lahat ay nagkakamali sa iba’t ibang paraan. Walang sinuman sa atin ang perpekto. Kaya huwag tayong padalus-dalos sa paghatol sa kapuwa at huwag magpapakalat ng kasiraan ng iba. Dapat ay marunong tayong magpigil sa sarili, kabilang dito

ang pag-iingat sa pagsasalita, pati na rin sa kung ano ang isinasa publikong *post* sa *internet*.

Paano inilarawan ni Apostol Santiago ang masamang ibubunga kung ang isang tao ay hindi marunong magpigil sa kaniyang pananalita? Ganito ang kaniyang pagtuturo:

“Kapag nilagyan ng renda ang bibig ng kabayo, ito’y napasusunod natin at napababaling saanman natin ibigin. Tingnan ninyo ang mga barko, bagama’t malalaki at itinutulak ng malalakas na hangin, ito’y naibabaling sa pamamagitan ng napakaliit na timon saanman ibigin ng piloto. Ganyan din ang dila ng tao; napakaliit na bahagi ng katawan ngunit napakalaki ng nagagawang kayabangan. Isipin na lang ninyo na ‘gaano kalaking mga gubat ang napaglalagablab ng isang maliit na apoy!’ Ang dila’y parang

daigdig ng kasamaan na kasama ng ibang bahagi ng ating katawan. Pinarurumi nito ang ating buong pagkatao at tinutupok ang landas na tinatahak ng tao sa pamamagitan ng apoy mula sa impiyerno." (Sant. 3:3-6 Filipino Standard Version)

Ang paggamit dito ni Apostol Santiago ng terminong "dila" ay bilang simbolo ng pagsasalita o pagpapahayag ng tao. Itinulad niya ang dila sa renda ng kabayo o timon ng barko na kahit maliit ay malaki ang nakataya kung hindi gagamitin nang tama.

Ang kapahamakang maaaring idulot ng hindi mapigil na "dila" ay itinulad sa apoy na "tinutupok ang landas na tinatahak ng tao." Kaya nitong sumira ng relasyon o samahan tulad ng pagkakaibigan, at ng magandang imahe o reputasyon at dignidad, kahit pa yaong iningatan sa matagal na panahon.

Dapat marunong magpigil ng dila o maingat sa pagsasalita sapagkat, dagdag pa ng apostol, "Kung inakala ninuman na siya'y relihiyoso, ngunit hindi naman siya marunong magpigil ng dila, dinadaya lamang niya ang kanyang sarili. Walang kabuluhan ang kanyang pagiging relihiyoso" (Sant. 1:26 BMB). Kaya hindi lamang ang ibang tao ang sinisira ng hindi marunong magpigil ng dila o ng pananalita kundi sinisira niya rin ang kaniyang sarili.

### Ang dapat gawin

Itinuturo din ng Biblia ang mga dapat gawin upang matutuhan ng tao ang magpigil sa sarili. Ang isang paraan ay ang ipinaalala ni

Apostol Pedro na pigilin ang sarili sa pagsasabi ng kasamaan:

"Ayon sa nasusulat, 'Ang mga nagnanais ng payapa at saganang pamumuhay, dila nila'y pigilan sa paghabi ng kasamaan. Ang anumang panlilinlang at madayang pananalita sa kanyang mga labi ay di dapat lumabas.'" (I Ped. 3:10 BMB)

Kung nais ninuman na magpapahayag o magsalita, dapat niyang pigilin ang sarili sa pagsasabi ng masama tulad ng mga panlilinlang o pandaraya.

Nakalulungkot na bagaman malaking tulong ang *internet*, talamak din doon ang mararayang pananalita. Anupa't may ikinapit na termino na sumasaklaw sa lahat ng maling impormasyon sa layuning makapanloko: *fake news*. Kabilang dito ang mga kasinungalingan na ang layunin ay makapanira, o inimbentong impormasyon na naglalayong maghasik ng kalituhan, takot, at gulo.

Ang marunong magpigil ng sarili sa pagsasalita ng masama, ayon sa Biblia, ay makapamumuhay nang payapa. Makaiwas siya sa mga problemang dulot ng pagpapakalat ng madayang pananalita. Dapat ding isipin kung ano ang maibubunga ng mapanlinlang na mga impormasyon kung ang sarili mo naman ang magiging biktima nito.

Sa halip na ang atupagin ay ang makasisira sa iba, dapat ituon ang pansin sa kung ano ang ikabubuti ng sarili at sambahayan. Ganito ang ipinapayo ng Biblia:

"Binanggit namin ito dahil nabalitaan naming may ilan sa inyong ayaw magtrabaho, at walang

inaatupag kundi ang makialam sa buhay ng may buhay. Sa pangalan ng Panginoong Jesu-Cristo, mahigpit naming iniuutos sa mga taong ito na sila'y maghanapbuhay nang maayos at huwag umasa sa iba." (II Tes. 3:11-12 BMB)

Binigyang-pansin ni Apostol Pablo rito ang tungkol sa mga taong walang inatupag kundi ang makialam sa buhay ng may buhay. Gayon ang gawi ng mga hindi marunong magpigil sa sarili. Ang ganito ang mahilig sa tsismis—o tsismoso/tsismosa. Hindi ba nakahihiya ang mabansagan ng gayon? Ganito ang turing sa kanila ng Banal na Kasulatan:

"Ang taong baluktot ang isipan ay naghahasik ng kaguluhan, at sinisira naman ng tsismis ang magandang samahan." (Kaw. 16:28 BMB)

Sa maraming pagkakataon, nasaksihan at nabalitaan natin ang kakayahan ng tsismis na sumira ng magandang samahan, gaano man ito katagal na. Ang pagpapakilala ng Biblia sa mga mahilig sa tsismis ay mga taong baluktot ang isipan na naghahasik ng kaguluhan. Kaya, hindi katakataka kung napagbubuhusan sila ng galit ng kanilang nabibiktima at naihatid sila ng kanilang gawi sa pagkapahamak.

### Ang kabutihan ng pagpigil sa sarili

Sa kabilang dako, "Ang maingat magsalita ay nag-iingat ng kanyang buhay ..." (Kaw. 13:3 BMB). Inililigtas ng mga maingat magsalita ang kanilang sarili sa mga pag-aaway at kaguluhan, at sa di-pagkakaunawaan.

Hindi lamang ang buhay na ito ang naiingatan ng mga tapat na hinirang ng Panginoong Diyos kundi maging ang inihahanda Niyang buhay sa darating para sa kanila.

Kaya, bago maging huli ang lahat, dapat matuto ang tao na pigilin ang kaniyang dila o magpigil sa sarili. Kaloob ng Diyos sa tao na Kaniyang nilikha ang kakayahang magpahayag o magsalita. Marapat gamitin ito sa mga bagay na kapaki-pakinabang. Ngunit, ang paalaala ng Biblia:

“Ito ang ginagamit natin sa pagpupuri sa ating Panginoon at Ama, at ito rin ang ginagamit natin sa paglailait sa taong nilalang na kalarawan ng Diyos. Sa iisang bibig nanggagaling ang pagpupuri’t panlalait. Hindi ito dapat mangyari, mga kapatid. Hindi lumalabas sa iisang bukal ang tubig-tabang at tubig-alat.” (Sant. 3:9–11 BMB)

Walang isang bukal na may dalawang tubig—tabang at alat. Kung ginagamit natin ang ating dila sa pagpupuri sa Diyos, marapat ba na gamitin din ito sa panlalait sa ibang tao? Ang tugon ng Biblia, “Hindi ito dapat mangyari.” Walang dapat na mamutawi sa ating labi na anumang makasakit at makapanlilinlang ng ating kapuwa.

Sa halip, gamitin natin ang ating dila sa kaniyang kaukulan. Maging maingat tayo sa anumang ipapahayag o sasalitain natin, at pag-ingatan nating huwag tayong makapinsala ng iba o magdulot ng kanilang ikapapamahak. Sa gayon, maiingatan natin ang magagandang

relasyon sa ating buhay, lalo na ang relasyon natin sa ating Panginoong Diyos. Kahit pa sa panahong ito na pabago-bago ang prioridad ng mga tao dala ng mabilis na pag-unlad

ng karunungan, hindi natin dapat mapabayaang ang pinakamahalaga—ang matiyak na tatanggapin natin ang pangako ng Diyos na buhay na darating. 🙏

## *Random notes*

### **No evidence of Christ-is-God belief, then and now or ever**

“The very fact that as late as the fourth century there were those within Christianity who, despite their acceptance of the Epistles of Paul and the Gospel of John, still argued against the divinity of the preexistent Christ shows that there was nothing in these writings which could be taken as conclusive evidence of a belief on the part of Paul and John that the preexistent Christ was God in the literal sense of the term.” (*The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, Vol. I, Wolfson, Harry Austryn, 2nd ed., Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964, pp. 306–307)

“... Even the Didache, or ‘Teaching of the Twelve Apostles’, the oldest literary monument of Christian antiquity outside of the New Testament canon, ... contains no formal profession of faith in the Divinity of Jesus Christ ...” (*The Divine Trinity: A Dogmatic Treatise*, Pohle, Joseph, 13th impression. Montana and London: B. Herber Book Co., 1950, p. 150) 🙏

(Source: July 1994 Pasugo Issue, RA by Bro. Reuben Aromin, pp. 12–16)

# Christian Achievers

## Active and proactive: a magna cum laude accountant and her faith

By KRIZCAR MEDINA

**G**OD-FEARING Sister Savannah San Pedro has always been proactive, seizing every opportunity presented to her toward fulfilling any task or work at hand.

“Savannah has always been inquisitive. As a child, she asked questions and did her own research regarding her academic works,” said Brother Rommel San Pedro, her father, a minister of the gospel in the Church Of Christ, as he remembered how she was growing up.

Sister Savannah, 25 years old, is a Children’s Worship Service (CWS) chairperson and KADIWA officer in the Local Congregation of Fairfax, Ecclesiastical District of Washington, D.C. Her parents taught her whom she can always depend on and ask for guidance. “We did our best to follow the biblical principles of parenting. We supported her and communicated with her about whatever problems she went through. We trained her from a young age to worship, fear, and love God. We taught her to respect her elders, especially the Church Administration. We also spoke about the great love

Sister Savannah





of the Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, and how he is a great example of humility, service, and devotion," Brother Rommel continued.

Sister Savannah's achievements include a bachelor's degree in accounting, a magna cum laude award from the George Washington University, and a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license. When asked how she got into accounting, she said, "I knew that it is a good fit for me since I love math." She is currently working as a tax accountant at a firm in Virginia. Her future goals are to earn a master's degree in taxation and to work her way up to becoming an accounting partner.

Aside from math, Sister Savannah also loves music. "I started playing the violin when I was eight years old. A few years ago when our district formed an orchestra, I was able to write and arrange some scores for the performances," she said. She considers it a great blessing to be part of memorable events in the Church. "It makes me proud to say that I was part of the Centennial Oratorio, the orchestra for the '50 Years in the West' celebration, that played at the Philippine Arena and at the Countdown to the Centennial," she continued.

Despite the challenges of a hectic schedule, Sister Savannah fulfills her Church duties. "Even when school and work activities became tough, I never thought of stepping down from my Church duties for these are 'super' important to keep. I always pray to God for guidance in everything I do. I ask Him to help me so that I can keep fulfilling my duties," she said. She also actively shares her faith with others. She said, "Being a part of CBI (Christian Brotherhood International) in college, I helped organize Bible studies inside the campus. I would book a room, invite classmates and friends to join, and ask a minister to lead us. Many were able to listen and learn about the Church Of Christ through that."

Keeping in mind God's words and her parents' advice, Sister Savannah has three things she wishes to share with her fellow youth in the Church: "First, let's be proactive. We can motivate ourselves to work hard and make the most out of every opportunity. Second, we ought to be adaptable to different situations, too. Having a contingency plan is always good. It doesn't mean that it's going to be the best plan, but having it will be to our advantage. Lastly, and most importantly, we need to keep in mind and heart that we are Church Of Christ members. And we need to show this in our words and deeds—being humble, kind, and loving to others. God will surely help us be successful in every way if He is pleased with us." ☺

# Mga kaukulan at katangian ni Cristo: Paano natin pakikinabangan sa ikaliligtas?

Ni GERSON S. NONATO

**T**INUTURO NG TAGAPAGLIGTAS, ang Panginoong Jesucristo, na Siya “ang pagkabuhay na maguli” (Juan 11:25), ang “tinapay ng kabuhayan” (Juan 6:48), ang “mabuting pastor” (Juan 10:14), ang “pintuan ng mga tupa” (Juan 10:7), ang “ilaw” (Juan 8:12), ang “daan” (Juan 14:6), at ang “puno ng ubas” (Juan 15:5).

Ang mga kaukulan at katangian ito ni Cristo ay nagpapakilala na hindi lamang napakahalaga ng pagsampalataya sa Kaniya, kundi may dulot itong napakalaking pakinabang—ang kaligtasan. Subalit, hindi ang mahalaga lamang ay sumampalataya tayo sa Kaniya upang makamantan natin ang pakinabang na dulot nito, kundi hinihingi rin sa atin na gawin natin ang wastong pagtugon kaugnay ng Kaniyang mga kaukulan at katangian.

Paano nga ba natin pakikinabangan ang mga kaukulan at katangian ng Panginoong Jesucristo? Mahalaga ba kung sa anong relihiyon tayo

kabilang upang pakinabangan natin ang pagsampalataya kay Cristo? Ang pagsampalataya ba kay Cristo ay hindi na nangangailangan pa ng pag-anib sa alinmang relihiyon?

## **‘Ako ang pagkabuhay na maguli’**

Ipinahayag mismo ni Cristo ang isa sa mga dapat nating sampalatayan sa Kaniya:

“Sinabi sa kaniya ni Jesus, **Ako ang pagkabuhay na maguli**, at ang kabuhayan: ang sumasampalataya sa akin, bagama’t siya’y mamatay, gayon ma’y mabubuhay siya.” (Juan 11:25)\*

Sinabi ni Cristo na Siya ang pagkabuhay na mag-uli sapagkat sa Kaniya ipinagkaloob ang kapangyarihan na buhayin ang mga sumasampalataya pagdating ng huling araw:

“At ito ang kalooban ng nagsugo sa akin, na huwag kong pabayaang mawala ang sinuman sa mga ibinigay niya sa akin, kundi buhayin

silang huling araw.” (Juan 6:39 New Pilipino Version)

Pansinin na ang tinutukoy na bubuhayin ni Cristo ay hindi lamang basta sumasampalataya sa Kaniya, kundi sila ang mga ibinigay ng Diyos sa Kaniya—sila ang mga tinawag ng Diyos upang ipakisama kay Cristo sa pamamagitan ng ebanghelyo (I Cor. 1:9; II Tes. 2:14). Para mapabilang ang tao sa mga ibinigay ng Diyos kay Cristo, kailangan muna silang mapangaralan ng ebanghelyo at maging “bahagi ng isang katawan” (Col. 3:15 Magandang Balita Biblia). At ang katawan na tinutukoy ay ang Iglesia na pinangunguluhan ni Cristo:

“At siya ang ulo ng katawan, *sa makatuwid baga’y* ng iglesia ...” (Col. 1:18)

Kaya, upang pakinabangan natin ang pagsampalataya na si Cristo ang pagkabuhay na mag-uli ay kailangang mapabilang tayo sa Iglesia na katawan ni Cristo—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Roma 16:16).



### **'Ako ang tinapay ng kabuhayan'**

Sinabi rin ni Cristo, "Ako ang tinapay ng kabuhayan" (Juan 6:48). Kaya Niya tinawag ang sarili na tinapay ng kabuhayan sapagkat Siya ay "nagbibigay buhay" (Juan 6:33) at ang buhay na Kaniyang ipagkakaloob ay ang buhay na walang hanggan (I Juan 5:11). Itinuturo ng Biblia na ito ay matatamo ng mga tao "dahil sa kanilang kaugnayan kay Cristo" (I Cor. 15:22 MB).

Ang may kaugnayan kay Cristo ay hindi basta nagpahayag lamang ng pananampalataya sa Kaniya; sila ay kabilang sa Iglesia, ayon sa pagtuturo ng Biblia:

"Isang dakilang katotohanan ang inihahayag nito—ang kaugnayan ni Cristo sa iglesia ang tinutukoy ko." (Efe. 5:32 MB)

Pinatutunayan ng Biblia na ang kaugnayan kay Cristo ng Iglesia ay isang dakilang katotohanan—samakatuwid, isang kasinungalingan ang paniniwala na hindi kailangan ang Iglesia para magkaroon ng kaugnayan ang tao kay Cristo.

Kaya, para pakinabangan ang pagsampalataya kay Cristo bilang tinapay ng kabuhayan ay hindi maiiwasan—at sadyang hindi dapat iwasan—ang pag-anib sa Iglesia na may kaugnayan kay Cristo, ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

### **'Ako ang mabuting Pastor'**

Ipinakilala rin ni Cristo ang Kaniyang sarili bilang "mabuting pastor":

"Ako ang mabuting pastor; at nakikilala ko ang sariling akin, at ang sariling akin ay nakikilala ako." (Juan 10:14)\*

Ang isang pastor ay may mga tupa na inaalagaan. Ang mga tupa ni Cristo ay hindi literal na tupa kundi mga tao na sumasampalataya sa Kaniya:

"Datapuwa't hindi kayo nagsisampalataya, sapagka't hindi kayo sa aking mga tupa." (Juan 10:26)

Maliwanag na hindi tunay na sumasampalataya ang hindi kabilang sa Kaniyang mga tupa. Ang mga tupa ni Cristo ay hindi lamang kumikilala kay Cristo kundi sila ay kinikilala rin ni Cristo:

"Ako ang mabuting pastor. Nakikilala ko ang aking mga tupa, at nakikilala nila ako." (Juan 10:14 NPV)\*

Ang kinikilala ni Cristo na Kaniyang mga tupa ay nasa loob ng "isang kawan" (Juan 10:16). Ang nag-iisang kawan na kinabibilangan ng mga tupa ni Cristo ay ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*:

"Ingatan ninyo kung gayon ang inyong sarili at ang buong kawan na rito'y hinirang kayo ng Espiritu Santo na mga katiwala, upang pakanin ang iglesia ni Cristo na binili niya ng kaniyang dugo." (Gawa 20:28 Lamsa Translation)\*\*

Kaya, ang sinabi ni Cristo na Siya ang mabuting Pastor ay pakikinabangan natin kung kabilang tayo sa mga kinikilala Niya na Kaniyang mga tupa. Ang mga tupa ni Cristo ay nasa loob ng kawan—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

### **'Ako ang pintuan ng mga tupa'**

Sa Juan 10:7, sinabi ni Cristo, "Ako ang pintuan ng mga tupa." Nagpakilala si Cristo na pintuan ng mga tupa sapagkat ipinag-uutos Niya na pumasok sa Kaniya ang tao upang maligtas (Juan 10:9). Ang pumasok kay Cristo ay "pumasok sa loob ng kawan":

"Ako ang pintuan; sinumang pumasok sa loob ng kawan sa pamamagitan ko ay maliligtas. ..." (Juan 10:9 Revised English Bible).\*\*

Ang kawan ay ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Gawa 20:28 Lamsa). Kung tala-gang sinasampalatayan ninuman si Cristo bilang pintuan ng mga tupa ay susundin niya ang Kaniyang utos na pumasok sa Kaniya sa paraang pumasok sa Kaniyang kawan—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

### **'Ako ang ilaw'**

Ang isa pa sa mahalagang kaukulan ni Cristo ay ang Kaniyang ipinahayag na Siya ang ilaw:

"Muli ngang nagsalita sa kanila si Jesus, na sinasabi, Ako ang ilaw ng sanglibutan: ang sumusunod sa akin ay hindi lalakad sa kadiliman, kundi magkakaroon ng ilaw ng kabuhayan." (Juan 8:12)

Ipinakita ni Cristo ang kahalagahan ng pagsunod sa Kaniya ng tao—ang sumusunod kay Cristo ay wala na sa kadiliman, sapagkat Siya ang ilaw, "kundi magkakaroon ng ilaw ng kabuhayan." Bakit sinabi ng Biblia na magkakaroon ng ilaw ng kabuhayan ang sumusunod kay Cristo? Sa Juan 1:4 ay ganito ang pahayag: "Nasa kaniya ang buhay; at ang buhay ay siyang ilaw ng mga tao."

Hindi dapat ipagkamali na kahit sa anong relihiyon kabilang ang tao, basta nagpapahayag ng pananalig kay Cristo, ay magtatamo na siya ng buhay na walang hanggan na kay Cristo. Maliwanag na itinuturo ng Biblia: "Ang kinaroroonan ng Anak ay kinaroroonan ng buhay; ang hindi kinaroroonan ng Anak ng Dios ay hindi kinaroroonan ng buhay"

“

**Bakit ninyo  
Ako tinatawag  
na ‘Panginoon,  
Panginoon,’ subalit  
ayaw naman  
ninyong sundin ang  
sinasabi Ko?**

”

Lucas 6:46  
Salita ng Buhay

(I Juan 5:12). Ang kinaroroonan ng Anak o ni Cristo ay ang Iglesia sapagkat Siya ang ulo nito:

“Sapagkat ang lalaki ang ulo ng kanyang asawa, tulad ni Cristo na siyang ulo ng iglesia, na kanyang katawan, at siyang Tagapagligtas nito. Kung paanong nasasakop ni Cristo ang iglesia, gayon din naman, ang mga babae’y dapat pasakop nang lubusan sa kani-kanilang asawa.” (Efe. 5:23–24 MB)

Bilang katawan ni Cristo at Siya ang ulo at nakasasakop dito, ang Iglesia ang Kaniyang ililigtas. Kaya ang kinaroroonan ni Cristo na Siyang ilaw o ang magtatamo ng buhay na walang hanggan ay ang mga sangkap ng katawan ni Cristo o kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

**‘Ako ang daan’**

Sa Juan 14:6 ay ipinakilala ni Cristo na Siya ang daan upang ang tao ay makaparoon sa Diyos:

“Sinabi sa kaniya ni Jesus, Ako ang daan, at ang katotohanan, at ang buhay: sinoman ay di makaparoroon sa Ama, kundi sa pamamagitan ko.”

Ang makaparoroon sa kaharian ng langit sa piling ng Ama ay ang mga tupa ni Cristo (Mat. 25:31–34). Ayon mismo kay Cristo, Siya “ang pintuang dinaraan ng mga tupa” (Juan 10:7 MB); at ang Kaniyang mga tupa ay ang mga pumasok sa loob ng kawan (Juan 10:9 REB). Ang kawan ay ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Gawa 20:28 Lamsa). Ang wala sa loob ng kawan o *Iglesia Ni Cristo* ay hindi tunay na sumasampalataya sa Kaniya:

“Ngunit hindi kayo sumasampalataya sa akin sapagkat hindi kayo bahagi ng aking kawan.” (Juan 10:26 Living Bible)\*\*

Kung tunay tayong sumasampalataya kay Cristo ay hindi tayo mag-aatubiling pumasok sa loob ng kawan—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo*.

**‘Ako ang puno ng ubas’**

Ipinakilala ni Cristo ang Kaniyang sarili bilang pananim ng Diyos—Siya ang puno ng ubas:

“Ako ang puno ng ubas, kayo ang mga sanga: Ang nananatili sa akin, at ako’y sa kaniya, ay siyang nagbubunga ng marami: sapagka’t kung kayo’y hiwalay sa akin ay wala kayong magagawa. ... Ako ang tunay na puno ng ubas, at ang aking Ama ang magsasaka.” (Juan 15:5, 1)

Inilarawan dito ni Cristo hindi lamang ang Kaniyang kaugnayan sa Diyos—na Siya ay sugo ng Diyos—kundi inilarawan din Niya ang Kaniyang kaugnayan sa Kaniyang mga alagad—Siya ang puno kung saan nakakabit ang mga alagad na itinulad naman sa mga sanga. Kung

paanong ang sanga na nakahiwalay sa puno ay hindi magbubunga, hindi rin makagagawa ng bunga ng kabanalan (Filip. 1:11) ang mga taong hiwalay o walang kaugnayan kay Cristo. Hindi sapat na sumampalataya lamang kay Cristo; kailangang mapabilang sa mga sanga ng puno na si Cristo.

Inilarawan ni Apostol Pablo ang katumbas ng puno at mga sanga: “At siya ang ulo ng katawan, *sa makatuwid baga’y ng iglesia*” (Col. 1:18). Si Cristo ang ulo; ang Iglesia ang katawan. Ang mga kaanib ng Iglesia ay ang mga sama-samang sangkap ng iisang katawan ni Cristo (Roma 12:4–5)—ang *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Roma 16:16).

Iba-iba man ang ginamit na paglalarawan ni Cristo ng kahalagahan ng pagsampalataya sa Kaniya ng tao subalit iisa ang nilulundo nito: kailangan nating maging kaanib ng *Iglesia Ni Cristo* upang pakinabangan at magkaroon ng kabuluhan ang ating pananampalataya sa Kaniya.

Huwag nawa tayong mag-atubili pa na sundin ang ipinag-uutos ni Cristo sa sinumang ibig maligtas na pumasok sa *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Juan 10:9 REB; Gawa 20:28 Lamsa). Huwag tayong pumayag na mapahanay sa mga tao na sinusumbatan ng ating Panginoong Jesucristo sapagkat ayaw gawin ang ipinag-uutos Niya:

“Bakit ninyo Ako tinatawag na ‘Panginoon, Panginoon,’ subalit ayaw naman ninyong sundin ang sinasabi Ko?” (Lucas 6:46 Salita ng Buhay) 🌟

\*Amin ang pagdirin

\*\*Isinalin mula sa Ingles

# Nasa langit na nga ba ang mga 'santo' ng Iglesia Katolika? (Unang Bahagi)

NI KENNETH A. OUANO

TUWING SUMASAPIT ang Nobyembre 1, ginugunita ng mga Katoliko ang tinatawag nilang Todos Los Santos o *All Saints' Day*. Itinuro sa kanila na iyon ay araw na kanilang "inaalaala ang lahat ng santo ng Diyos, ipinahayag na banal at hindi ipinahayag na banal (*canonized and uncanonized*), kilala at hindi kilala" (*The Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, p. 15\*).

Ang itinuturing ng Iglesia Katolika na mga "santo" ay "yaong mga **namatay** sa biyaya ng Diyos at **silang nasa langit na**, lalo na yaong mga ipinahayag na banal ng Iglesia Katolika" (*My Catholic Faith*, p. 56\*, amin ang pagdiriin). Ang mga rebulto ng mga tinatawag din ng mga Katoliko na kanilang mga patron ay niluluhuran at dinadasalan nila at ipinuprusisyon pa sa mga araw na kanilang ipinagdiriwang ang mga

kapistahan para parangalan ang mga ito.

Batay sa Biblia, tama kaya ang pagpaparangal na ginagawa sa mga santo ng Iglesia Katolika? Sila nga ba ay totoong nasa langit na?

## **Patay na nananalangin at namamagitan?**

Itinuturo ng mga awtoridad Katolika kung bakit sila nagdarasal sa mga santo:

"Bumabanggit ang debosyong Katoliko tungkol sa pagtawag o pagdarasal sa mga santo, na sa kaniyang pamamagitan tayo'y umaasa. ... Nangangahulugan ito na kakalinga rin sa atin sa pag-ibig na ito ang mga santo, na may personal na pag-ibig ng Diyos, at tutulong sa atin ang kanilang mga panalangin upang makamitan ang biyaya ng Diyos." (*Aral ni Kristo*, p. 255)

Maraming Katoliko ang nagdarasal sa kanilang mga santo sa paniwalang maaari silang ipamagitan sa Diyos dahil ang mga ito man daw ay nananalangin sa Kaniya. Pero ayon sa Biblia, ang patay ba ay makapanalangin sa Diyos? Sa Awit 115:17, ganito ang pagtuturo:

"Ang patay ay hindi pumupuri sa Panginoon, Ni sinomang nabababa sa katahimikan."

Kung paanong hindi makapupuri ang patay, hindi rin nito magagawa ang manalangin. Ang mga santo ng Iglesia Katolika ay hindi makapanalangin sapagkat sila'y nangamatay na. Ang patay ay wala nang alaala ni pag-iisip (Awit 6:5; 146:4). Kaya, may kinalaman pa ba ang mga nangamatay na sa ginagawa ng mga buhay pa? Ganito ang nakasulat sa Ecclesiastes 9:5-6:

“

## Ang patay ay hindi pumupuri sa Panginoon, Ni sinomang nabababa sa katahimikan.

”

Awit 115:17

“Sapagka’t nalalaman ng mga buháy, na sila’y mangamamatay: nguni’t hindi nalalaman ng patay ang anomang bagay ni mayroon pa man silang kagantihan; sapagka’t ang alaala sa kanila ay nakalimutan. Maging ang kanilang pagibig, gaya ng kanilang pagtatanim at ng kanilang pananaghili ay nawala ngayon; na wala man silang anomang bahagi pa na magpakailan man sa anomang bagay na nagawa sa ilalim ng araw.”

Hindi na magagawa ng patay ang mga bagay na dating ginawa niya noong siya’y nabubuhay pa. Wala na siyang anumang bahagi pa magpakailanman sa anumang ginagawa ng mga buháy. Kaya, hindi magagawa ng mga taong namatay na, katulad ng kinikilalang mga santo diumano ng Iglesia Katolika, ang manalangin sa Diyos ni ipanalangin sa Kaniya ang mga buháy.

### Namatay na, pero ang kaluluwa raw ay nasa langit?

Kahit itinuturo ng Biblia na nasa libingan ang taong namatay (Awit 88:5), iminamatuwid ng iba na ang

kaluluwa naman daw ay hindi namamatay. Pagkamatay ng tao, ang kaluluwa niya raw ay agad na hinahatulan ng Diyos. Ito raw ang dahilan kaya ang mga kinikilalang santo ng Iglesia Katolika na sinasabi nilang namuhay diumano nang banal sa lupa ay sa langit napunta. Ganito ang isinulat ni Gerard Linssen, isang paring Katoliko, sa kaniyang aklat na *Buhay Katoliko*, p. 185:

“Sa kagyat na sandali na tayo’y mamatay, tayo ay kaagad magbibigay ng ulat sa Diyos tungkol sa ating naging buhay, tungkol sa ating mga pag-iisip at pagnanasa, mga salita, mga gawa, at mga pagkukulang. Ang kaluluwa ay hindi mamamatay, sapagka’t ito ay espiritu. Ang kaluluwa ay walong kamatayan. Matapos niyang lisanin ang katawan siya’y ihahatid agad sa harap ng Diyos upang hukuman at tumanggap ng hatol na mananatili magpakailanman—walang hanggang kaligayahan o walang hanggang kaparusahan.”

Ayon sa aral-Katolika, ang kaluluwa ay hindi raw namamatay. Salungat ito sa nakasulat sa Biblia na “ang kaluluwa na nagkakasala ay mamamatay” (Ezek. 18:4). Ang katawan ng taong namatay ay nauuwi sa lupa at nagiging alabok (Gen. 3:19) at ang kaluluwa ay “dumidikit sa alabok” (Awit 119:25), katunayang ito’y kasamang namamatay rin.

### Pagkakaiba ng kaluluwa at espiritu

Marahil ay nagbubunga ng pagkalilito sa iba kung ano ang nangyayari

sa tao pagkamatay nito dahil hindi rin malinaw na itinuro sa kanila na magkaiba ang kaluluwa at ang espiritu. Ganito ang itinuturo ng Biblia:

“Sapagka’t ang salita ng Dios ay buhay, at mabisa, at matalas kay sa alinmang tabak na may dalawang talim, at bumabaon hanggang sa paghihiwalay ng kaluluwa at espiritu, ng mga kasukasuan at ng utak, at madaling kumilala ng mga pag-iisip at mga haka ng puso.” (Heb. 4:12, amin ang pagdiriin)

Taliwas sa aral-Katolika, magkaiba ang kaluluwa at ang espiritu. Batay sa Biblia, may tatlong mahahaling sangkap ang tao: ang katawan, kaluluwa, at espiritu (I Tes. 5:23). Iba ang espiritu ng tao sa kaniyang kaluluwa. Kung ang kaluluwa, na siyang pagkataong-loob (II Cor. 4:16) ay namamatay at dumidikit sa alabok pagkamatay ng tao, ano naman ang nangyayari sa espiritu? Ganito ang nakasulat sa *Eclesiastes 12:7*:

“Alalahanin mo siya bago manumbalik sa lupa ang ating katawang lupa at ang ating espiritu ay magbalik sa Diyos na may bigay nito.” (Magandang Balita Biblia)

Pagkamatay ng tao, ang kaniyang espiritu, na siyang “hininga” (Ecles. 12:7 Bagong Magandang Balita Biblia) o “diwa” (Dating Salin), ay bumabalik sa Diyos na may bigay nito sa kaniya. Ang kaluluwa naman ng mga namatay na dumikit sa alabok (Awit 146:4; 119:25) ay nangatutulong. Sa *Daniel 12:2* ay ganito ang nakasulat:

“At marami sa kanila na nangatutulong sa alabok ng lupa ay mangagi-

“

**Huwag ninyong ipanggilalas ito: sapagka't dumarating ang oras na ang lahat ng nangasa libingan ay makaririnig ng kaniyang tinig, At magsisilabas; ang mga nagsigawa ng mabuti, ay sa pagkabuhay na maguli sa buhay; at ang mga nagsigawa ng masama, ay sa pagkabuhay na maguli sa paghatol.**

”

Juan 5:28-29

gising, ang iba'y sa walang hanggang buhay, at ang iba'y sa kahihyan at sa walang hanggang pagkapahamak.”

Itinuturo din ng Biblia kung kailan darating ang araw na mangagigising ang mga taong namatay. Ganito ang pagtuturo sa aklat ni Job:

“Nguni't ang tao ay namamatay at natutunaw; Oo, ang tao ay nalalagutan ng hininga, at saan nandoon siya?

“Gayon ang tao ay nabubuwal at hindi *na* bumabangon: Hanggang sa ang langit ay mawala, sila'y hindi magsisibangon, Ni mangagigising man sa kanilang pagkakatulog.” (Job 14:10, 12)

Ang mga taong nangamatay ay ibabangon mula sa pagkakatulog sa araw na ang langit ay mawala o sa Araw ng Paghuhukom (II Ped. 3:10, 7) na siya ring araw ng Ikalawang Pagparito ng Panginoong Jesucristo (Mat. 25:31-34, 41). Sa araw na iyon, magsisilabas mula sa libingan ang mga nangamatay upang harapin ang hatol ng Diyos:

“Huwag ninyong ipanggilalas ito: sapagka't dumarating ang oras, na ang lahat ng nangasa libingan ay makaririnig ng kaniyang tinig, At magsisilabas; ang mga nagsigawa ng mabuti, ay sa pagkabuhay na maguli sa buhay; at ang mga nagsigawa ng masama, ay sa pagkabuhay na maguli sa paghatol.” (Juan 5:28-29)

Samakatuwid, hindi totoo ang paniniwala na ang kaluluwa ay hindi namamatay. Nagkakamali rin ang mga nagtuturo na pagkamatay ng tao ay agad siyang haharap sa hukuman ng Diyos at hahatulan. Ang mga taong nangamatay na ay nasa libingan pa at wala sa langit, kasama na rito ang mga kinikilalang santo ng Iglesia Katolika. ☪ (Itutuloy)

\*Isinalin mula sa Ingles

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## The Ecclesiastical District of Bataan

# Marching with faith and fervor onwards to salvation

By SIEGFRED T. GOLLAYAN and GEMMA LYN dJ. LALIC

**T**O MANY, Bataan is synonymous with courage against overwhelming odds. It was in this peninsular province in western Luzon, Philippines during the opening days of the Pacific War in World War II that the combined Filipino-American forces under the command of General Douglas MacArthur stood their ground against the

onslaught of Japan's Imperial war machine. The gallantry of the Bataan defenders bought time for MacArthur to escape to Mindanao and then to Australia and paved the way for his eventual return to the Philippines years after.

After the war, the people of Bataan mustered equal courage in rebuilding, rising from the

ruins, and moving forward to a future brimming with peace and prosperity. At present, it is known to be a haven for tourists who want a quick getaway from nearby Manila. Besides historical monuments and alluring beaches, it is also home to a heritage destination that features a collection of restored Spanish-Filipino houses.



### **BATAAN DEATH MARCH**

April 9, 1942. Approximately 75,000 Filipino and American troops on Bataan were forced to make an arduous 65-mile march to prison camps from Mariveles, Bataan (where they surrendered) to San Fernando, Pampanga.

### **FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE MONUMENT**

*Dinalupihan, Bataan.* A memorial commemorating the American and Filipino soldiers who fought and defended Bataan in 1941.



# About the Province of Bataan

**1754**  
Establishment

**12**  
Municipalities and City

**CITY OF BALANGA**  
Capital



The province is home to some of the breathtaking beach resorts, historical monuments, and heritage houses.  
PHOTOS BY SAMUEL DE LEON



# Ecclesiastical District of **Bataan**

District Office: Lerma St. Ibayo, City of Balanga, Bataan

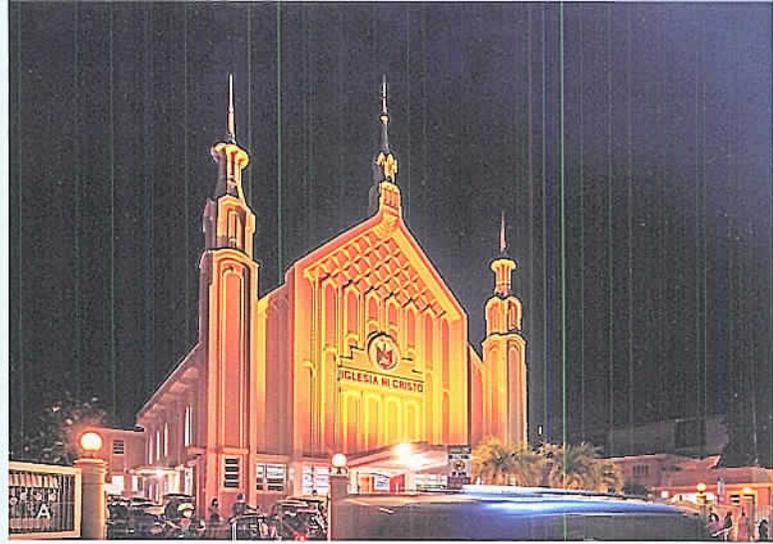
**1932**  
Establishment

**TAPULAO**  
Pioneer Congregation

**60**  
Current Local  
Congregations

**6**  
Current  
Extensions

**1**  
Current  
Group Worship  
Service



A) Balanga; B) Bataan district staff;  
C) Dinalupihan; D) Mariveles; E) Orani;  
F) Pilar; G) St. Francis; and H) Sabatan

Among the proud Bataños are members of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (Church Of Christ). Proud as they are of their province's history and natural wonders, they all the more take pride in the victorious march of the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* in their province, which they firmly believe and recognize as God's handiwork.

## The humble beginnings

It was in 1929 when some brethren from Pampanga decided to reside in the town of Orani in Bataan. Granting their request for a minister to tend their spiritual welfare, the Church Administration sent to them Brothers Bernardo Turla, Espiridion Domingo, and Jose Francisco. Together with the brethren, the ministers started missionary activities in the town of Tapulao, which initially resulted in the baptism of 13 converts.

The first worship service, as well as the first baptism, was held in Sitio Masapsap, a small neighborhood in the town of Orani. In the same year, the Church Administration approved the establishment of the Local Congregation of Tapulao then under the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical District of Pampanga. After three years, seeing potentially faster growth of the Church in Bataan, the Church Administration decided to form the local congregations in the province into a separate ecclesiastical district. With Brother Jacinto Torres as the

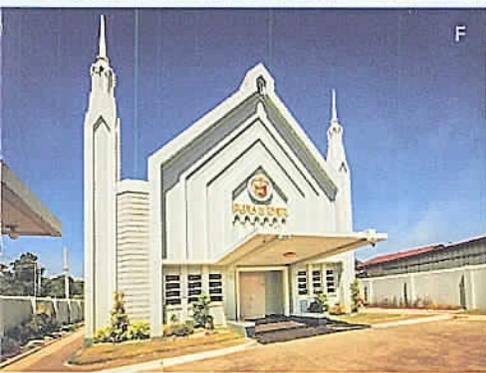


first supervising minister, the Bataan Ecclesiastical District was initially comprised of four local congregations, namely, Tapulao, Bantan, Tortugas (now local of Puerto Rivas), and Orani.

When war came to the Philippines in 1941, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo's* propagation work had already spread throughout the province. Added to the first four congregations were Orion, Abucay, Dinalupihan, Limay, Luacan, Morong, Samal, Hermosa, Culis, Cabcaben, and Prado Saba (now under the Ecclesiastical District of Pampanga West).

During the war, transportation became harder to come by. So, the Church Administration decided to temporarily place the congregations in Bataan under the supervision of the District of Pampanga once again. But even the war could not hinder the growth of *Iglesia Ni Cristo* in this province as proven by, among others, the establishment of the Local Congregations of Balanga, Daang Bago, and Sabang. In 1947, two years after





World War II ended, the congregations in Bataan were again organized into a different ecclesiastical district with Brother Rigoberto Laguio as the district supervising minister.

### Victories after victories

After the war, the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* saw faster growth in Bataan. In 1952 and 1958, respectively, Brother Felix Y. Manalo, the Messenger of God in these last days, conducted evangelical missions in the towns of Orani and Dinalupihan. In 1959, Brother Felix Manalo dedicated the concrete house of worship of the Orani Congregation with a seating capacity of 800. In the next four years, additional 15 congregations were established in Bataan.

As more local congregations were established due to the increase of members, the Church acquired more properties and houses of worship were built and dedicated to God. In 1981, the house of worship of the Mariveles Congregation was dedicated to God in a worship service officiated by then Executive Minister, Brother Eraño G. Manalo. This

was followed by that of the Orion Congregation in 1982.

In commemoration of the 48th anniversary of the Local Congregation of Balanga, where the district office was located, Brother Eraño Manalo officiated a memorable worship service that brought even more edification to the Church members. In 2010, the house of worship of the Balanga Congregation, the district's central local congregation, was dedicated to the Almighty God. As part of the unceasing efforts to spread the pristine words of God, the Ecclesiastical District of Bataan regularly conducted a series of evangelical missions throughout the years. As a result, Bataan now has 60 local congregations, six local extensions and one Group Worship Service (GWS).

To further strengthen the faith of *Iglesia Ni Cristo* members and their households, in 1996, under the theme "Year of Iglesia Ni Cristo Family," Bataan District conducted a series of activities: Get-Together (where the message of then Executive Minister Brother Eraño Manalo was read),

Family Counseling Hour, Family Devotional Prayers, Family Day, Family Olympics, Family Singing Contest, Parent Day, Song Writing Contest, Special Gathering for the families of Ministers and Ministerial Workers, Video Presentation like "Sugo ng Diyos sa mga Huling Araw" (Messenger in these Last Days), "Alibughang Anak" (The Prodigal Son), and "Hacienda Luisita."

The Bataan Ecclesiastical District has remained deeply committed to its diverse activities. Its 75th Milestone Anniversary was celebrated through Photo Exhibit, Trade Fair, and Musical Presentation. In 2013, Brother Ramir Pabalate, the district supervising minister, led the ribbon cutting for the INC Life Activity as a starter for the Pre-Centennial Celebration. A memorable Worldwide Walk was also held at the capital of the province, the City of Balanga and was attended by 3,500 brethren all over the district. Activities such as Kabayan Ko, Kapatid Ko, Medical and Dental Mission, and Coastal Clean-Up Drive were held as part of extending help



A & B) Series of baptism in March 19–27; C & D) Special worship service for choir members; E, F, & G) Cultural and Sports activities; H) Medical mission; and I) Blood donation

to our fellowmen. In September 2017, as part of the district's 85th founding anniversary celebration, Digipi Stage Play was performed at the Bataan People's Center, which brethren took delight in watching.

Bataan benefited from the *Lingap sa Mamamayan* (Aid to Humanity) programs of the Church. As one of the heavily stricken provinces by typhoon Josie in July 2018, the Church Administration quickly sent relief goods to the towns of Dinalupihan, Orani, Limay, and the City of Balanga.

### Memorable triumphs

Frequent evangelical missions and religious debates characterized the early years of *Iglesia Ni Cristo* in the province of Bataan. In 1952, Brother Felix Y. Manalo conducted a campaign (evangelical mission) in the town of Orani. This was followed in

1958 in the town of Dinalupihan. Led by Brother Pedro Briones, the then district supervising minister, a debate against Catholic defender Lino Javier was held in the town of Dinalupihan in 1956. Through the years, brethren in Bataan never got tired of propagating God's words. In 2007, a Grand Evangelical Mission was held at the plaza of the City of Balanga and was officiated by late Brother Maximo M. Bularan Jr. and Brother Ramil Parba, both ministers of the gospel. In 2015, a Grand Evangelical Mission was also held at the Plaza of Abucay, officiated once more by Brother Maximo Bularan Jr. In that same year, an Evangelical Mission through live streaming was officiated by Brother Angelo Eraño V. Manalo. In 2016, the late Brother Glicerio B. Santos Jr., then General Auditor of *Iglesia Ni Cristo*, officiated an evangelical mission in the city of Balanga. Also in that year,

a *Lingap sa Mamamayan* and Medical and Dental Mission was conducted. Brother Benildo Santiago officiated the said event.

The Ecclesiastical District of Bataan has equally exerted much effort in edifying the Church members. Special gatherings are held to further strengthen members. Oath-takings of new Church officers are also regularly held to help the Administration in overseeing the flock. On January 27, 2018, the brethren were blessed to have witnessed the ordination of 30 newly-ordained ministers officiated by our beloved Executive Minister, Brother Eduardo V. Manalo, in the house of worship of the Local Congregation of Dinalupihan. Such marks the fourth visit of the Executive Minister in the District of Bataan.

Amid the pandemic, the Ecclesiastical District of Bataan is able to



**Brother Isaias D. Antinew**  
District supervising minister



( A ) The ministers, ( B ) ministerial workers, and ( C ) the worship service class in Bataan Ecclesiastical District



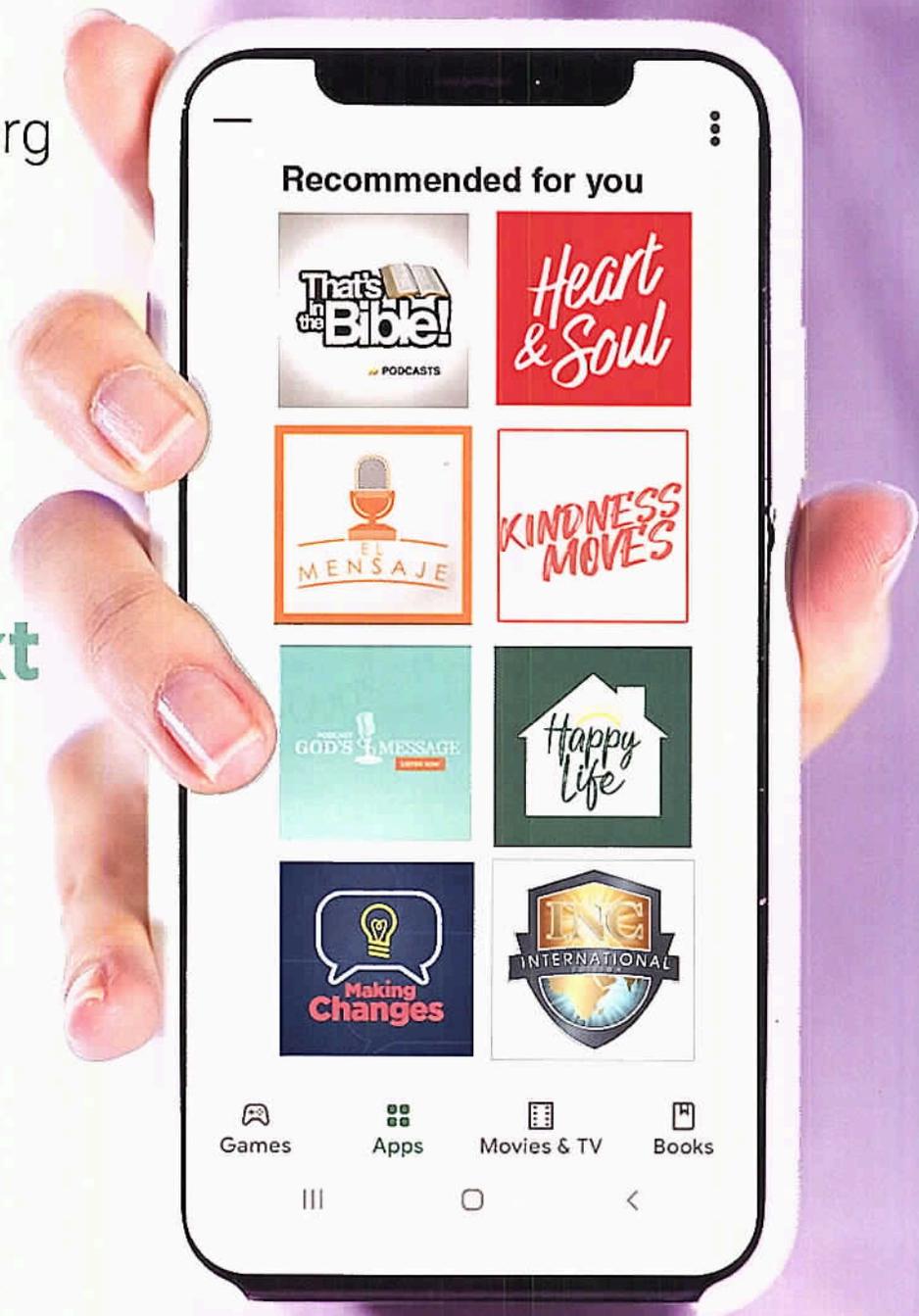
keep up with the endeavors of the Church. With the help of new technologies, brethren continue participating in Church activities. Worship services through video streaming, household worship services, online evangelical missions, baptisms, and others keep the brethren to continue reaping victories in these hard times.

With faith and fervor, the brethren in Bataan promise to soldier on, fulfilling all that their divine election asks of them so that they will continue being a part of the Church's victory march, and most of all, receive the promised salvation. 🙏

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