



Dear Praying Friends,

Last night we finally got some cooling rain which has cut the 100°+ heat index we've been experiencing for several weeks. Our summer weather has been brutal with very high temperatures and humidity with no rain. Nonetheless, our ministries among street children and disaster victims have been going full blast with no let up. Like our weather, our hearts are hot for God and for people. The following are brief updates on answers to prayer and fervent requests for more.

1. Fire Relief

May 22 we gave a large sleeping mat, mosquito net, fry pan, cooking pot and water pail each to 200 families who recently lost everything due to a huge fire which left an estimated 7,000 people homeless. We were able to partner with the Living Body of Christ Church which is located near the fire zone and they will continue to minister to these people. The local community center was packed and the people were grateful for receiving these items and Pastor Cardona gave an excellent message on the life of Job after which approximately 80 people indicated trusting Christ as Savior. The operation cost approximately \$4,650 and I explained to the recipients that these funds came from God's people who love them and wanted to help them. A large part of this budget came from a family living near the fire zone.

2. Typhoon Ondoy Surveys and Relocation of Families

A week ago Wednesday we visited approximately 300 families who were completely washed out by Ondoy last September 26 and are now living in an abandoned factory with the permission of the owner and local government. These families previously lived along railroad tracks and survived by recycling items. We were asked to visit by a worker from a church who has been feeding about 100 children and ministering the Word of God to them since they have been in this factory site the last 6 months. The length of time that the families are allowed to stay at the site has lapsed so they are being asked to move to a relocation center quite a way out of town but the site is not complete so they don't want to go there. According to a report we heard Thursday, the families were hosed with powerful water to disperse them and of course this caused lots of confusion and tension. We'll see if we can help the families with a feeding program.

Thursday we also surveyed a huge area that was ravaged by typhoon Ondoy killing many people and causing lots of destruction. Our tour guide was Pastor Quiambao who since the great flood has been very diligent in visiting families, praying for them, sharing the Gospel and distributing relief items. I was amazed as we visited many people how they showed great appreciation to Pastor Quiambao so their appreciation for him is very obvious. We met a widow with 4 young children who is temporarily staying with a neighbor because she lost her home and we met an old woman who is living alone with no support in a make-shift shack along a creek so we are looking into building a simple home for each.

* I said to Mary Ann Thursday night that if I didn't see with my own eyes and walk through these types of situations, I wouldn't believe the stories of death and destruction caused by typhoon Ondoy. I also said I would go nuts if I didn't believe in the goodness, grace, mercy and providence of God as we encounter needy people each and every day. It is mind boggling when I consider the depth and breadth of poverty of the Philippines along with the natural beauty of this country, the gracious smiles of the poor and the mind-bending sacrificial ministries of God's people working among them.

* It was reported in the May 28 edition of the Philippine Star newspaper that the government needs to relocate 100,000-200,000 families living along the Pasig and Marikina Rivers and the shores of Laguna de Bay at the cost of P22 billion or approximately \$489 million. They better get to it because rainy season starts in June and we see many families living in make-shift shanties in flood-prone areas. So if this isn't dealt with, we will see this tragedy happen over and over again.

3. Erik & Michelle Anderson and Jacki & Lori Rouleau

We mentioned in our last email update Erik and Michelle Anderson from Wisconsin. They spent nine days with us and had a great time visiting ministry sites, leading children in songs, sharing Bible stories and being an encouragement to us and many others. It was great to have them.

Jacki and Lori Rouleau will be arriving June 10, the daughters of Mary Ann's sister Janna. They will be with us for seven weeks working in various ministries. Pray for them as they learn what missions is about and experience God's goodness among the needy. Mary Ann will be mentoring them and supervising their time.

4. Interns from Bethany College of Missions

Dave Hansen, Micah Boyum and Elle Klein have been with us the last four months learning and seeing a lot as they have participated in many ministries of ACTION and our partners. ACTION missionary Erin Johnson has done a marvelous job overseeing their time with us. Next week Mary Ann, Erin, Dave, Micah and Elle will get away for a few days of debriefing and wrapping up their ministry with us after which the interns depart June 4. We really *enjoy* interns because they are here for a lengthy time, they are learners and seeking God's direction for their lives.

5. Mary Ann's Moody Bible Institute Studies

Speaking of learning, Mary Ann continues to work hard on her MBI coursework. Recently she took a test for Christian Life and Ethics and started Elements of Bible Study. Pray for her that she not only gains more knowledge, but grows in her walk with the Lord but I can testify she is growing as she not only reads her text books but faithfully meets with the Lord each morning, reading her Bible and praying.

6. Purpose and Passion Conference: The Master's Plan for His Church

This is the name of a conference our church, Greenhills Christian Fellowship, will be hosting next Tuesday through Thursday. We will have many local speakers and our main speaker will be Dr. Rick Holland from Grace Community Church in California. We're expecting 1,200 participants from all over the Philippines and I will be leading a work shop on Thursday entitled "Ministry to the Poor" so I would appreciate prayer. http://ransomreport.com/purpose&passion/Conference_Details.html

7. June Camp

We are gearing up for our June 22-25 street children evangelistic camp in which we are expecting 60 campers and 20 workers from partner churches and agencies. We thank God we have the \$2,500 for the camp. As a reminder, we have a camp for street kids July 6-9 and August 10-13 for which we need to trust the Lord for funding. Pray for good preparations, recruitment of campers and that many will genuinely come to Christ and receive the help they need.

8. Field Leadership Transition Update

After having gone through our selection process for the next field director, which was bathed in prayer and evaluation made against ACTION's criteria for leadership, Mike Gingerich has been selected to be my successor. June 4 Mike and his wife Cindy will meet with our Board of Trustees for possible final approval and if this goes through as we expect, he will assume this office August 1. In the meantime I will train and orient Mike as he will have a very steep learning curve. Mary Ann will also be stepping down from her Human Resources Coordinator position July 31 and Carl Loewen who heads up our Honest Hands ministry will assume her position. So our team is handling this managed transition very well. Lord willing, in August or September, Mary Ann and I will get a way for a few days for prayer, evaluation, rest and preparation for our next chapter of service. We need prayer as we seek the Lord for His direction but I can strongly tell you ministry to street children and disaster victims are top priority.

9. Conclusion: the ever tightening grip of the Cross

The other day I read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (ESV), "For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." Paul writes about the ever tightening grip of the love of God upon us displayed at the Cross of Christ. At the Cross we see God's justice and love in which Christ died for our sins and when we really understand the purpose and costliness of the Cross, this leaves us no alternative but to live for Jesus Christ. This is what motivates us as we go about doing good in the name of the Lord and as we have opportunity, share with others about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To God be the glory for the great things He has done and is doing in and through us each and every day.

Sincerely in Christ, your partner and brother,

Jeff

"Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts."
--Is 26:8 NIV

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