



MUSTARD SEED DISCIPLESHIP VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

ACTION International Ministries, Philippines

Prayer Update: November 8, 2010

Dear praying friend...

It is again the start of a new week here in the Philippines. The students have all returned and are getting ready to get at their studies again. Yesterday five of our students joined me in traveling up north to the province of Bulacan, to celebrate the 18th birthday of another of our students. We left early in the morning and returned just after 6pm. We attended church, then spent a few hours at the student's home having lunch and doing karaoke singing. We passed through a heavy downpour just north of Manila and consumed 10 bottles of water on the way. We are all very tired today but so happy that we had the opportunity to share this important day with the student and her family.

Here is some other news about us for praise and prayer!

STUDENTS CONTINUE TO BREAK RECORDS!

We still have 10 students with just one week to go until Evaluation Week for term 3. This is a great blessing for us to still have all 10 students who entered the program. We continue to have opportunities to impact their lives with the word of God. Some still have some past concerns to deal with but all seem to have teachable hearts and want to live lives for God. A great joy!

TYPHOON JUAN (MEGI) HIT THE NORTHERN PHILIPPINES:

In my last letter, I mentioned that the latest typhoon was heading for us and would hit the northern end of the country. Well, it did. Before it came ashore it was moving quite slowly and therefore built up strength to a Cat 5 typhoon. Because it was moving so slowly, when it hit, it stayed around for a long time before heading out into the China Sea. In the province of Isabella all of the rice fields were destroyed. Vegetable crops were also heavily damaged. After leaving the country it ran into a High Pressure area over China so for a few days it didn't go anywhere, bringing more rain to the Eastern part of the country. The people are still recovering from the storm.

ELECTIONS AND NOV 1 HOLIDAY:

The barangay elections came and went without much incidence in our area. We do have a new captain in our barangay and some of the counselors are new to the position as well. Please pray for them as they take office and lead our area over the next three years.

November 1, All Souls Day, was wet and cold. For all of those who braved the rain, it was a very wet day at the cemetery. I'm not sure if the crowds were as big this year as in years past. The fast food kiosks that set up shop outside the various cemeteries did a very good business. Yes, people bought McDonald's and headed into the memorial parks to sit with their relatives.

SADNESS AS WELL THIS TIME:

The last two weeks have had their share of difficulties. All have hit me quite hard.

Two weeks ago we received word that a former short term missionary, just 30, passed away from a serious viral infection. Praise spent time with us here at 2nd Mile sharing her joy of life and love of the

Lord with us. We heard that she was attending a conference here in Asia, arrived back in the States and not too long after was admitted to hospital. A few hours later, she passed away.

In our barangay there is a large lot that is owned by a bank. The bank put in place a guard to watch over the property. He is married, with three children and another on the way. Last week in the early morning his body was found on our bridge. He had been stabbed. There are rumors about who did it, not someone from our area. Not too long before his death, he had come to the local church and even attended the ladies Bible study. It was there that he prayed to accept Christ. Please pray for the family.

Also last week, a very dear friend of mine, Alta Tanis, passed away after a long battle with cancer. She and her husband Jess let me stay with them many years ago when I was just beginning my deputation. And many times afterward, they always had a bed for me when I was passing through on furlough. She and Jess served many years with InterAct Ministries working with First Nations people in the Cariboo-Chilcotin area of British Columbia, Canada. She loved the Lord mightily and shared Jesus with all she met through her love and care and laughter. She will be greatly missed by me and by all who knew her.

FURLOUGH PLANS IN THE MAKING!

Yes, I have begun to make plans for coming home this next year, sometime in mid March 2011. I can already see that I will be spending lots of time driving and seeing many friends and supporters. There have been lots of changes since I was home in 2008. I will be in need of new places to spend a night or two along the way. A letter should be in your mailboxes soon with more details of my plans.

PRAISE:

1. Celebration of Mona's 18th birthday!
2. That we weren't affected much by the recent typhoon.
3. We have reached the end of Term 3 and still have all students doing well.

PRAYERS:

1. Students will continue to be focused on their studies.
2. For the family of Praise Goh, after her recent passing.
3. For the family of Alta Tanis, after her recent passing.
4. For the family of the guard in our area, after his recent passing.
5. Plans for furlough March 2011

Prayer Update: November 23, 2010

Dear praying friend...

Well, Christmas is definitely on its way!! The poinsettia just outside my front door is beginning to turn red. A sure sign that it is almost Christmas. And today, at the grocery store, the small mandarin oranges, called kiatt-kiatt, were on sale. Yes, it is almost Christmas!! The season of Advent is almost upon us...announcing the coming of the Saviour. I have my candles ready for the advent wreath. O come, O come Emmanuel! Halleluyah, He has come! At times in the midst of all the 'busy' that this time of year brings, we need to stop and remember and send up praises that our Salvation and Redemption have come!

Thank you for your prayers about the following items for me and for Mustard Seed!

WHAT CAN I SAY, THEY DID IT AGAIN!

Last week was Evaluation Week for term 3. We were wondering if this group would again pass their exams and move into Term 4. Well, they did. HURRAY!! There were some weak areas that will continue to be addressed – sewing speed, memory verses, equivalent fractions, and others. But we were glad to see all their faces back yesterday morning for the start of the final section of the program.

BUT LAST WEEK WASN'T ALL JOY AND LAUGHTER:

My Monday morning began as most Mondays begin, off to the dorm to take funds for the week, clean bed sheets, a sack of rice, and whatever else is needed for the week. When I arrived I knew that something

was up but didn't know just what it was. I was only at the dorm for a few minutes when I was called into the room of the dorm moms. There was one of our students sitting with one of the dorm moms, and the student was crying. She shared her story...a few weeks ago, her father lost his job so there hasn't been much money, if any, coming into the family for a while. There are 7 people in the family and one of the older brothers has a wife. The mom has been becoming more and more frustrated with their situation. Monday she was angry with two younger children and was hitting them with a piece of wood. Our student stepped in to make her stop and the mom's anger was turned on her daughter. She took a bolo, a very big and sharp knife and caught her on the back of the leg just below the knee, all the while saying, 'Get out, why are you here? Don't come home anymore.' Our student got her things and left. I contacted our social worker, and the pastor of the church she attends. Last Sunday, the pastor and his wife met with the family and things are much better. PLEASE continue to pray for this family and our student. They all need a deeper dependence on the Lord.

BUSY HANDS MAKES A GREAT SHOWING AT RECENT TEAM MEETINGS:

If you don't know, Mustard Seed has a small product making ministry called Busy Hands. We are able to give work for three of our graduates making product to sell. We began back in September to sew Christmas items to sell – potholders, table runners, Christmas stockings, draw string wrapper bags, and more. At our team meeting in October we did well. Last week was our November team meeting and all of the product that we took with us was sold! Yes, we sold out! And we received a number of orders. Our girls are back at work this week, making product to take to our ACTION Christmas party on Dec 11. We are looking at other areas that we can expand this ministry, perhaps next year a bazaar or a local restaurant gift shop. Pray for us as we look at these possibilities. (I will be bringing a lot of the MS/BH product home on furlough next year!)

FURLOUGH PLANS GOING AHEAD:

Please pray as I continue to make plans for coming home. We have three new power point presentations that I will be able to share while I am home. I would love to share at a ladies' lunch, Bible study, youth group, evening tea and coffee in homes, etc. This time as well I will be collecting items to send back to the Philippines. I am looking forward to seeing as many as I can on my time at home.

PRAISE:

1. All students passed into Term 4!

PRAYERS:

1. Students will continue to be focused on their studies.
2. That our students will learn to care and love each other; this has been an ongoing concern.
3. Plans for furlough March 2011
4. For the family of our student going through difficult times.
5. Guidance and wisdom for our students as they prepare for their futures.

Thank you for your continued prayers for me and for the ministry of Mustard Seed.

Blessings,

Barbara Burchert
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