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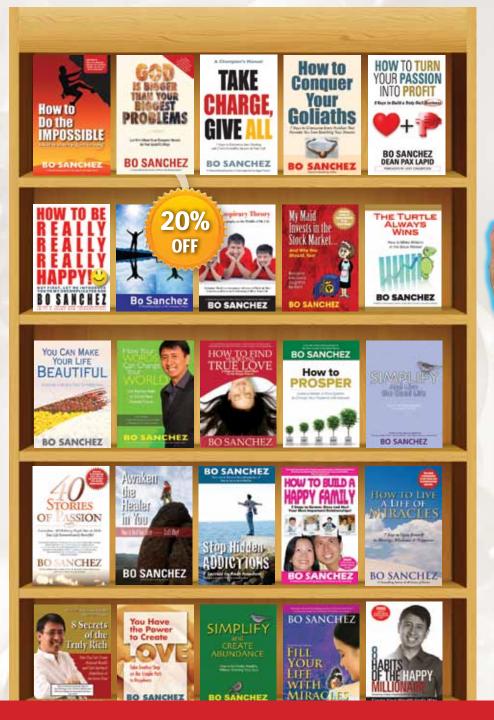




POPE FRANCIS AND THE CHURCH: NEW WINE FOR US?

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n old couple in their nineties were getting very forgetful.

One day, while watching TV, the husband stood up to go to the kitchen.

The wife said, "Where are you going?" The husband replied, "To the kitchen."

"Can you give me a bowl of ice cream?" "Sure," the man said.

"And can you put some bananas in it? But I think you need to write it down. You might forget."

The husband shook his head, "Of course not. You want a bowl of ice cream with bananas."

"And if it's not too much to ask, can you crush some peanuts and sprinkle it on top?"

"Sure."

"But I think you really need to write it down or you'll forget."

He became irritated. "I'll remember! You want a bowl of ice cream with bananas and nuts!"

He went and disappeared in the kitchen.

When he came back, he handed her a plate of scrambled eggs and sliced bread. The wife looked at the plate and said, "My gosh. You forgot the ketchup!"

l have a dream.

Ask my wife about it and she'll tell you that I'm crazy about this dream. I tell her my dream all the time.

I want to grow old with her.

I believe God designed our friendships to last forever.

When you grow old, you'll realize that life is about relationships.

Your body will weaken.

Your mind will forget.

Your eyesight will dim.

Your hearing will become faint.

Your house will decay. Your car will rust.

Your bank account will shrink.

But there's one thing that can still keep growing:

your love for one another.

Everything else will grow old except your love.

May your dreams come true,



# Will You Be As Old As This?

By Bo Sanchez

# Mailroom

I accidentally saw a December 2006 issue of Kerygma magazine while I was about to build a fire for barbecue. Funny how God finds ways to reach out to hungry souls like me. I was so touched by what I read in Rissa Kawpeng's article "Something's Gotta Give" (Growing Up at Thirtysomething), especially how the Lord has always provided for her every need. That issue touched me in a lot of ways. I hope that I can join your company and let me grow in my Catholic faith. I'm wondering if I can join your group. Please let me know. Thanks.

#### Hubert M. Via Facebook

(Hubert, you can always join KerygmaFamily. Just log on to www. kerygmafamily.com and be nourished in your spiritual life. You can also join our Feasts weekly. For schedules, please call Annie Mesias at 725-9999 local 122 - Ed.)

Kerygma was one of the magazines given to us by our school. But to me, it is more than a magazine. It's an inspiring instrument from God.

> Alma Credo Negros Oriental

I am one of the many who have been inspired by Kerygma. Each insight, teaching article or story written in it has an extraordinary power to influence every reader. It has broadened my perspective in life. Most especially, reading Kerygma magazine never fails to lighten up whatever it is that deeply troubles my heart.

May the good Lord continue to bless you!

Melai Butuan City

I was just sitting on my sofa and then I saw the March 2013 issue of Kerygma magazine that I bought the other day. So I read it, particularly the article "The Purpose of Pain" by Bo Sanchez. It brought me to tears because that article enlightened my worried mind, my longing heart, and my unanswered prayers.

Thank You, Lord, and thank you, Kerygma!

Niña Via Text I was 17 years old when I first read Kerygma. That time, I was in San Pedro, Laguna, working as an allaround housemaid for the reason that I had to earn money for my mother and siblings' daily needs because we don't have a father anymore. Sometimes I feel so tired of doing household chores and began to ask God why He let me suffer that way.

One morning, I read the cover of Kerygma and became curious about it. I got hooked on it and continue to read your magazine until now. God has blessed me through your magazine. All the whys in my mind have been answered through the inspiring life stories that I read in Kerygma.

Kerygma really changed my perspective in life. It helped me to become positive always and be faithful to God all the time.

Thank you so much, Kerygma, for inspiring me and a lot of people. God bless and more power!

Glaiza Romero Lapu-lapu City, Cebu

Thank you, Kerygma, for always inspiring us, especially teenagers like me. I've been reading your mag since I was 12 years old. I am now 14.

I am so blessed every time I read the stories in your mag. I hope that you will continue to inspire more people.

Stephanie Sanglay Bislig City, Surigao del Sur

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Just Breathe

By Rissa Singson-Kawpeng

# Omniscient Love

Could you still love even if you knew everything?

heard a story about three preachers who were out on a boat fishing. It was an opportunity for them to bond, so one of them proposed, "Why don't we share one secret sin or struggle we're guilty of and pray for each other?"

The first one said, "My problem is gambling. When I'm not in the pulpit, I hie myself to a casino and gamble away." The other two preachers gasped but promised, "We'll pray for you, brother."

The next preacher confessed, "My greatest struggle is that I love designer stuff. Because of that, I sometimes dip my hand into the church collections and use it for shopping." The other two preachers gasped but promised, "We'll pray for you, brother."

It was the third preacher's turn but he just kept silent. The first preacher coaxed him, "It's OK, brother, your secret is safe with us." Still, the third preacher kept his mouth shut. "C'mon, we shared our struggle with you, now it's your turn," said the second preacher.

Finally, the third preacher spoke, "Actually, my greatest struggle is gossiping... and I can't wait to get off this boat and talk about what I just heard!"

Now let me ask you: If you knew that the person you were about to disclose your secret is a tattle-tale, would you still tell him your faults?

Husbands, if you knew that your wife would turn out to be a lousy cook, a nagging woman, and an unattractive slob in midlife, would you still have married her? When she was your girlfriend, she had a figure of a Coca-Cola bottle. Now, years into the marriage, she's a Coke *litro*. Or worse, Coke in cans.

Wives, if you knew that your husband would cheat on you, have a child with another woman, drive you to depression, and leave you a BMW (broken, mutilated and wounded), would you have married him? You fell in love with him because he looked like Tom Cruise in *Top Gun*. Now, all he has to show for is his top gone.

It's hard to love someone when you know everything bad about him and the heartache he'll cause you in the future.

That's why I marvel at God's love for us.

Think of it: He's omniscient. Because He is all-knowing, He knows every sin, every infidelity, every betrayal we will commit even before we were born. *And yet He loved us*.

His love also did the impossible. It made Him forget our sins. How can a God who knows all things forget anything? Unthinkable!

But Isaiah 43:25 says, "It is I, I, who wipe out, for my own sake, your offenses; your sins I remember no more."

I had a taste of this nature of God during one confession

with our spiritual director, Fr. Steve Tynan. I began, "Sorry, Father, for I have sinned. My sins are the same as when I confessed to you last time."

I had been confessing regularly to Fr. Steve so he knew what was going on in my life. So I was surprised by his reply.

"I don't remember it," he said. "And even if I do, I'm not allowed to remember it."

Wow, if a mere mortal was capable of this compassionate love, what more this God that we worship?

All the more I realize that we've barely scratched the surface of His love.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

Email me at justbreatherissa@gmail.com, subscribe to my Facebook updates, or visit my website rissasingsonkawpeng.com.

#### What to Expect This Month:

I used to be a shopaholic and a mall rat in my younger days. Now, I only go to the mall when I need to buy something. Besides, I've discovered an easier and more convenient way to shop: online. Believe it or not, for the last couple of years, I did my Christmas shopping right from my laptop. And that's why I've been working to make our books easily available online as well.

> You don't have to leave home, commute or pay for parking to go to the bookstore to get our books. We'll even deliver to your doorstep for free (for a minimum purchase of P300 within Metro Manila)! So check out our new and improved website at shepherdsvoice.com.ph now!

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# Join the Force. Change the World Be a Kerygma Shepherd Today.

YES! I'm interested in becoming a Kerygma Shepherd. I commit myself to spread God's Word by distributing Kerygma magazine every month.

Hi,

I'm Sarah!

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TESTIMONIES	24 God Set Me Free from My Drug Addiction30 Stepping Out into the Light	ABOUT OUR COVER MODEL Our cover model for this month, Michaela Loren M. Reyes, has been a Feaster since the late 1990s when The Feast was still being held at Camp Aguinaldo. Growing up as part of the Light of Jesus Family, especially with the <i>kuyas</i> and <i>ates</i> in YMPACT, helped Mikki navigate her adolescent years with ease. She credits the community for helping shape her into who she is now. Mikki is a graduate of Psychology from the Ateneo de Manila University and currently enrolled in the same university for her Masters in Education major in Basic Education		
COLUMNS	<ul> <li>3 Just Breathe Omniscient Love</li> <li>34 Seasons Helping Tweeners Make Sense of Adolescence</li> <li>35 Faith @ Work Get Promoted</li> <li>37 K Preacher What Are Temptations For?</li> </ul>	for her Masters in Education, major in Basic Education Teaching. She has always wanted to be a teacher. And not only does Mikki use her skills and passion for kids in her job as a preschool teacher, but also as a young servant of the Feast Ortigas's Awesome Kids Ministry. Being surrounded by kids six days a week makes Mikki smile and light-hearted even when she's stressed out or sad. Quite athletic, Mikki has been a fencer and a swimmer since she was 12 years old. She's always eager to try out new sports such as surfing, boxing and wake boarding. Mikki's parents, Fides and Ferdie, are active servants at The Feast Ortigas.		
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chairman of the board and publisher BO SANCHEZ • editor-in-chief and production manager RISSA SINGSON-KAWPENG • managing editor TESS V. ATIENZA • creative director MIKE CORTES • graphics director REY DE GUZMAN • assistant layout designer LEAH KIM RECTO • staff writer MARJORIE ANN DUTERTE • contributing writers JUDITH CONCEPCION, BELLA ESTRELLA, ALVIN FABELLA, DINA PECAÑA, EMERALD SY CHAN, JOY SOSOBAN-ROA • photographer DANIEL SORIANO • columnists MICHELE ALIGNAY, BISHOP TED BACANI, JR., ARIEL DRIZ, VIC ESPAÑOL • sales and marketing manager JOSEPH MARTINEZ • administration and finance manager WENG CEQUEÑA

KERYGMA. A Greek word meaning Proclamation of the Gospel. It is a Catholic inspirational magazine. It aims to be an evangelistic tool to all nations, providing Scriptural, practical and orthodox teachings to Catholics, particularly those in the Catholic Renewal, as an alternative to present-day magazines. It is also committed to fostering the renewal and unity of the whole Christian people. Philippine copyright Shepherd's Voice Publications, Inc. 2013. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without permission. KERYGMA is published monthly by Shepherd's Voice Publications, Inc., whose editorial and business offices are located at 60 Chicago St., Cubao, 1109 Quezon City. Tel. Nos.: 725-9999, 411-7874, 725-1190. Fax: 727-5615 Email: editsvp@shepherdsvoice.com.ph. Website: www. shepherdsvoice.com.ph

## New You Tips for personal development

### CAREER What Do Successful People Do Before Breakfast?

**Type** ost successful people are morning people, not because they were born to be but they choose to be. Jesus woke up before dawn to pray to the Father, to get direction and power to do His mission.

Successful people win their mornings. They turn high-value tasks into morning rituals. You, too, can make over your mornings. Begin by taking the following steps:

- 1. **Track your time.** How do you use your time throughout the week? Usually the solution to morning problems lies at other times of the day. Know exactly how you're spending your time, track it for a week, and observe patterns.
- 2. Picture your perfect morning. What would a great morning look like for you? Maybe you would like a hearty family breakfast and then time to focus on a long-term project. Most successful people use their time before 9 a.m. to pray, read and exercise. If you wait until the end of the day to do meaningful but not urgent things like these, it probably won't happen.
- **3.** Think through logistics. Map out a morning schedule. What time would you have to get up and what time do you need to go to bed in order to make this schedule work?
- 4. Build the habit. Turning a desire into a ritual requires a lot of initial willpower. You may find enough motivation to move mountains at 5:30 a.m., but then, at around day 13, you begin to waver, and your bed will start to seem pretty enticing. What should you do? Start slowly. Go to bed 15 minutes earlier and wake up 15 minutes earlier for a few days until this new schedule seems doable.

Building a new habit takes effort. Choose one new habit at a time and put all your energy into making this activity a habit before you try something else. Keep track of how you're doing for at least 30 days. HEALTH Foods That Keep Your Eyes Healthy

yes are the windows to your soul. They allow us to see the wonder and beauty of God's creation. It is only right to take care of them, as they are one of God's precious gifts to us — the gift of sight. Aside from orange-colored fruits and vegetables, which promote eye health because they contain betacarotene, you can also eat the following foods that are good for your eyes:

- 1. Leafy greens. Packed with lutein and zeaxanthin, green leaves have antioxidants, which lower the risk of developing macular degeneration and cataracts.
- **2. Eggs.** The yolk is a prime source of lutein and zeaxanthin plus zinc, which lessens the risk of macular degeneration.
- **3. Citrus and berries.** These fruits are powerhouses of vitamin C, which has been shown to reduce the risk of developing macular degeneration and cataracts.
- **4. Almonds.** Filled with vitamin E, this nut slows down macular degeneration. An ounce or a handful of almonds provides about half of your daily dose of vitamin E.
- 5. Fatty Fish. Tuna, salmon, mackerel, anchovies and trout are rich in DHA, which is a fatty acid found in your retina. Low levels of DHA have been linked to dry eye syndrome.

Source: http://health.yahoo.net

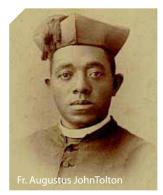
Source: http://www.success.com

*amias,* scientifically called *averrhoa bilimbi* or sorrel tree in English, bears a yellow-green fruit that is used for cooking and traditional medicine. *Kamias* contains protein, fiber, calcium, iron, phosphorus, as well as trace amounts of other minerals. It can be made into a paste and applied topically to itchy or swollen skin or skin affected by bug bites. In Malay medicine, an infusion of the fruit and leaves is created to cure a cough, and is given as tonic to women after giving birth. This infusion is also used on pimples, hypertension, dizziness and diabetes. In Indonesia, the *kamias* fruit is used as remedy for fevers, inflammation, rectal bleeding, boils and other conditions. The flowers of the *kamias* are also used as treatment for toothaches.

Source: http://www.livestrong.com



#### A Novena for the African American Community



The novena for the spiritual welfare of the African American community is a special time of prayer for the Catholic faithful to call on the intercession of Father Augustus Tolton, a Servant of God. The novena prayer is made for his intercession to God for the following needs of the black community: for spiritual anchoring, moral formation,

for the stability and strength of marriages and families, for peace, good education and gainful economic opportunities, for the end of abortion, for more Catholic evangelists and for more vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life.

Augustine John Tolton was born on April 1, 1854 and died on July 9, 1897. He was born into slavery in Missouri and was baptized Catholic. He became the first African Roman Catholic priest in the United States, ordained in Rome on Easter Sunday in 1886 at the Cathedral-Archbasilica of St. John Lateran. He first served at his home parish in Quincy, Illinois with great success and was later assigned to Chicago, where he built St. Monica's Catholic Church, starting a parish for African Catholics.

In a speech given at the First Black Congress in Washington, DC in 1889, he said, "The Catholic Church deplores double slavery — that of the mind and that of the body. She endeavors to free us of both. I was a poor slave boy, but the priests of the Church did not disdain me. It was through the influence of them that I became what I am." He is up for canonization for his heroic virtues. He visited the sick daily even at the risk of getting sick himself in an age when antibiotics had not been discovered.

The novena, approved and blessed by Bishop Joseph Perry on October 22, 2012, can be found here: http://www. davidlgray.info/blog/2012/10/novena-to-fr-augustus-tolton.

# Siargao Is Top Island Destination for 2013

iargao Island in Surigao del Norte is being improved as a

prime tourism destination in the Philippines. The government allocated P110 million to upgrade the terminal, fencing and runway of the island's Sayak airport, and P752 million to construct more roads, including access roads to sites where the international surfing and game fishing

competitions are held every year. Siargao has made its mark in the world map as the Surfing Capital of the Philippines. The Siargao International Surfing Cup held every September attracts international surfers and local athletes. Last year, the champion was Filipino surfer Piso Alcala.

Aside from its famous waves, Siargao is also getting known for its white-sand beaches and islets, rich marine resources, mangroves, coves, caves, and schools of jellyfish. The warmth and hospitality of Filipinos living in the island contribute to making it a world class tourist destination.

Hong Kong's *Travel+Leisure Southeast Asia* magazine included Siargao on its list of "8 Ultimate Islands" in the Asia-Pacific while *Conde Nast Traveller* in the United Kingdom included Siargao in its list of "Top 10 Destinations to Watch in 2013."

Siargao was also named one of the best surf spots in the world by CNNGo, featuring Siargao's Cloud 9 among the top 10 surf destinations of the world.

Source: http://ph.news.yahoo.com

Source: http://www.davidlgray.info/blog

#### St. Elizabeth of Portugal

Born and Died: 1271, Aljaferia, Zaragoza, Spain - 1326, Estremoz, Portugal

E lizabeth was a princess born in Zaragoza, Spain, to the King of Aragon. She was very beautiful and lovable. When she was 12 years old, she was given in marriage to Denis, King of Portugal, with whom she had two children.

Elizabeth was a very devout Catholic and went to Mass every day. Her prayers and patience led to the conversion of her husband. She was called peacemaker because of her gift for solving disputes. When her husband was dying of illness, she never left his side except to go to Mass. When he died, she entered the Third Order of St. Francis and retired to a convent of the Poor Clares. She was a model of kindness towards the poor and a successful peacemaker between members of her family and between nations. She found the strength to carry her crosses by attending daily Mass. Her feast day is on July 4.

Sources: A Year with the Saints by Don Bosco Press and http://www.catholic.org/saints





# Real Stuff



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irstitwasPopeBenedictXVIannouncing his resignation, something that hasn't been done by a pontiff in 600 years. Then came the flurry of activities in preparation for the election of a new pope, which almost coincided with the most important and one of the busiest times of the Church, the Holy Week.

And then the white smoke emitted from the Vatican...

It has been months of change upon change.

The world quickly learned about the 266th pope, previously Cardinal Jorge Maria Bergoglio of Buenos Aires. The first pope from the Americas, the first Jesuit pope, and the first pope to use the name Francis, Pope Francis's lifestyle even as a cardinal hearkened to the time of the beloved saint, Francis of Assisi, and his love for Lady Poverty. Cardinal Bergoglio lived in a simple apartment instead of the Cardinal's Palace, cooked his own meals, and commuted by bus.

Just after his election, Pope Francis declined the traditional papal red cape trimmed with ermine that previous popes had worn on ceremonial occasions. He also chose not to wear the usual red shoes worn by popes. Pope Francis has chosen not to live in the papal apartment in the Apostolic Palace, preferring instead to live in the humbler Vatican guesthouse, Saint Martha's House.

Besides all that, the Pope has given his security aides a lot of headaches by turning up somewhere when he wants to: visiting an ailing priest just after he was elected pope, going by the side of the church before he says Mass in order to greet visitors, and calling other people by phone personally.

#### Going Back to the Spirit of Being Church

Perhaps what most shocked traditionalists so far was Pope Francis' Holy Thursday activity when he decided to wash

# In the **News**

**Pope Francis and the Church:** 

# 'New Wine' for Us All?

#### **By Joy Sosoban-Roa**

and kiss the feet of 12 juvenile offenders instead of priests, which was the usual practice. This was done in a youth detention center instead of a big cathedral. And of the 12, two of them were women, one a Serbian Muslim and the other an Italian Catholic.

According to canon lawyer Edward Peters, adviser to the Holy See's top court, what the Pope did broke canon law, though "no divine directive." "What he does do, I fear, is set a questionable example," added Peters.

Fr. Rudy Horst, priest and teacher and an SVD missionary in the Philippines, wrote otherwise. He said, "More important than the gender is the symbolic message or spirit of the ritual. That is what Jesus wanted to demonstrate: serve each other, whether that 'other' is male or female, healthy or sick, young or old."

At the time of this writing, Pope Francis just announced the formation of an eight-strong panel of cardinals from all parts of the world who are to advise him on governance and reform of the Church. With this move, Pope Francis is implementing what the Second Vatican Council has long endorsed — collegiality. This is the idea that the Church's pastoral leaders should have a role in its overall governance.

According to Italian church historian Alberto Melloni, what the Pope has done is the "most important step in the history of the church for the past 10 centuries."

Fr. Steve Tynan, spiritual director of the Light of Jesus Family, said that Pope Francis is not and will not challenge any doctrinal or moral teaching because he is like Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. So there is nothing to worry about. He added, "It is the charism of the Gospel that is immutable. The structures by which we celebrate and proclaim and minister our faith are always in need of renewal."

#### **Welcoming New Wine**

Fr. Rudy sums up the changes that Pope Francis has done. "The election of Pope Francis surprised many. His return to simplicity was 'new wine' that needed 'new wineskins.' Using 'new wineskins' does not mean throwing away tradition. What is good and precious must be preserved but what is outdated has to go. The history of the Church is rich with examples of God's moving power ("new wine"), and resistance by people who do not want to change. Therefore, we must be open to God's 'new wine' whenever it is poured out, even if it is difficult for us to change."

Are we seeing "new wine" being poured into the Church? Let us pray and heed the call of the times.

# Dear K



## Can I Receive Communion Daily Even If I Have Venial Sin?

I am a regular Sunday Mass goer and I find myself being more drawn now to the beauty of the Holy Eucharist. So I have been going to Mass on most weekdays aside from our regular Sunday Mass obligation.

I would like to ask if it is OK to receive communion every time I go to Mass? I am concerned because I know that receiving communion is a very sacred act and I learned that one must be in a state of grace to receive it. I want to ask if it's OK to receive it every day even if I'm aware that I commit venial sin daily, too?

Thank you very much in advance for enlightening me.

#### Dear Lady in the Pew,

I am very glad to read that you are drawn to the beauty of the Holy Eucharist and would like to receive the Lord every day. Unfortunately, so many take the Eucharist, the greatest gift of God's love, for granted.

You are right that we should be in a state of grace when we receive Holy Communion. But knowing our human weakness, the Church teaches that even with venial sins we can approach the Lord in the Eucharist. Not only that, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (no. 1394) even says that Holy Communion is one way to be cleansed, as it "wipes away venial sins."

Just make an act of contrition before you receive the Lord.

May your faith be strengthened by receiving the Lord daily.

Fr. Rudy

Lady in the Pew

When Fr. Rudy Horst came to the Philippines in 1984, he was first assigned to the Immaculate Conception Parish in Cubao. It was here where he came in contact with the still young Light of Jesus Community. In 1990, he moved to Christ the King Mission Seminary where he now serves as head spiritual director of the seminarians and teaches Religious Education. He also teaches Holy Scriptures at the Maryhill School of Theology and the Divine Word School of Theology in Tagaytay.



Email your questions to editsvp@shepherdsvoice.com.ph. Or if you need to talk to someone, call (632) 726-4709 or 726-6728 to contact a Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center's counselor. Telephone counseling is 24 hours from Monday to Friday, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. Face-to-face counseling is by appointment. For correspondence counseling, email lojcounseling@yahoo.com or go to www. kerygmafamily.com.

#### Or Call (632) 725-9999

Pregnant? Confused? Abortion is not the answer. Contact Grace to Be Born at 0917-816-4700 or email reylindo.ortega@gmail.com.

You may also contact Pro-life Philippines at (632) 733-7027.



I am here working in Cebu while my family is in Mindanao. I asked my wife to live with me here, but she did not want to. She just wanted our children to be with me. I discovered through Facebook that she has an affair. She denied it at first, but later on admitted it. She said she was confused and wanted to think things over on her own while our kids live with me. We both came from a broken family and we had promised each other before we got married that we won't let it happen to us, but history seems to be repeating itself.

What should I do? I have forgiven her, but how do I restore our marriage? Should I move back to Mindanao? But I do not have work there. Please enlighten me. Thank you.

Noel

Vic Español is one of the elders of the Light of Jesus Family. At present, he is the Feast Builder and preacher in the Ortigas Feast every Monday at 7:30 p.m. at Cinema 4, Robinsons Galleria, Ortigas Center, as well as the Sunday Ortigas Feast at 10:00 a.m. in the same venue. Vic and his wife, Ditas, train the counselors of the LOJ Pastoral Care Center. Vic is a retired executive of a multinational life insurance company.



## How Can We Restore Our Marriage?

#### Dear Noel,

Thank you for your courage in coming out to share your struggles and seek help for them.

I can imagine how deeply hurt you are. I must admit that this is a very difficult situation for any man to be in. I admire how you have forgiven your wife for what she has done.

Now, it is time to move on with your life.

I believe that husbands and wives must stay together to make their marriage work. Being away from each other makes anyone vulnerable to falling into temptations. And that's what happened to her. If she truly loves you, she must be willing to stay with you.

I sense that you are deeply committed to this marriage. I believe your wife must be committed, too. You have forgiven her, but has your wife asked for forgiveness from you for what she has done? You did not mention this in your letter. Has she vowed not to do it again? What did she mean when she said that she wanted "to think things over on her own"?

You may also have to look into the reasons why she committed that affair. Does she have some needs that long to be satisfied? They say that it always takes two to tango. Look at yourself also and find out where you have failed her.

These are the things that you need to find answers to. The two of you must sit down and do an honest-togoodness, heart-to-heart dialogue. Seek a Christian marriage counselor to guide and help you sort out and fix your differences. (You may want to get in touch with the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center. Contact details are on the opposite page.) If you want to restore your marriage, the two of you must be committed to it.

I pray that the Holy Spirit guide and enlighten both you.

Vic

# K Fam insider

SUMMER MEANS OUTREACH, INASAL AND HALO-HALO

> By Ems Sy Chan Photos by Irene Sampalucia and Ems Sy Chan

ore than 350 street children, accompanied by their families from the different areas (Mindanao Avenue, Looban, Sauyo, NIA, Tala and Vasra) in Quezon City, marched down to the He Cares Center and the nearby basketball court on March 23, 2013.

They went not only for the weekly feeding program but to avail of the medical and dental services offered by the generous sponsors of the Makati Feast Outreach Ministry led by Cristina Gegalao and Ronalyn Landoy. Volunteer nurses, doctors, medical team of the army, dentists, servants and He Cares staff worked hard to make the event a success. Joe Dean Sola and Daryl Tamon of He Cares supervised the whole-day affair. For most children, it was their first time to have their teeth checked and/or extracted, blood pressure taken, height and weight measured, or to go under the knife (literally). Barefoot children were also blessed with a pair of slippers and a lot of freebies.

The highlight of the event was the rite of passage, or circumcision, for young boys. An eight-year-old boy even sported a brave front in front of his peers, but when female adults asked him if the procedure hurt, he nodded without qualms. What best time to heal the wounds from circumcision than during summer when there are no pressures from school activities or teasing from the peers.

Small children cried after having their teeth extracted. One of them refused to continue even though there was still a small tooth left to be extracted. He just kept on crying. It took two dentists to convince him to finish with the extraction. They patiently explained to him the procedure and the apparatus to be used until he relented. The small tooth finally came out! While waiting for their turn, the other children and their families were either fed in the He Cares Center, watched videos, given coloring materials, or entertained in the basketball court by some brave people who showcased their talents in singing and dancing. Accenture Moves also graced the event with their vibrant energy.

Aside from the medical-dental mission, summer is a great opportunity to raise some funds for the *Balik-Hanapbuhay* (Back-to-Livelihood) Program of He Cares through the Burning Coals Project of the mothers last March. A hundred families will benefit from the project because of the 10 grillers used to make chicken *inasal*. To ensure that the taste of the chicken *inasal* will be consistently and distinctly llonggo, *Nanay* Eli Bantes will marinate the chicken while the other mothers will cook them. Each *inasal* is priced at only P59.75.

To beat the summer heat, the He Cares Household also decided to sell *halo-halo* (a mixture of tapioca, jackfruit, beans, banana and *pinipig* in crushed ice with sugar and milk) for a measly price of P12. The proceeds goes to the expenses of the He Cares Household.

Summer is always fruitful at the He Cares Center. If you feel that God is calling you to spend time with and serve the street children, visit their center at 9 Mines Street Barangay Vasra, Quezon City. You may also contact Joe Dean or Ardis Sola at telephone numbers (632) 928-8910 and 346-5851, or by email at hecaresfoundation@ gmail.com.







# UNBOUNDED

#### **Grand Easter Feast 2013**

#### By Bella Estrella Photos by Arlene Batislaong and Dave Apalla



nbounded is the love of our God! Take away the restrictions, and let Christ escape."

Thus said Fr. Steve Tynan, MGL, in his homily at the Grand Easter Feast 2013. He continued, "Jesus is bound within us, bound within the walls in Church, bound in our devotions. The Lord has not been allowed to go out. Jesus should be everywhere in the world, but He can't unless we carry Him."

#### A Place of Miracles

The Feast is the prayer gathering of the Light of Jesus Family that is held in various places in the Philippines and in other parts of the world.

Dubbed as a place of miracles, or the happiest place on Earth, The Feast has continued to attract more and more people each week. Conversions keep taking place.

Every year, the different Feasts gather on Easter Sunday to celebrate the biggest event in Christendom, Jesus' resurrection from the dead. This year's celebration was held at the SMX Convention Center at the Mall of Asia in Pasay City. More than 15,000 people came.

Last year, 13,000 people gathered at the ground floor of the same venue for the Grand Easter Feast. This year, as the number of Feasts increased, additional function rooms at the second level were opened and, true to expectations, these were filled with happy and free people.

#### **Freedom Is Our Destiny**

Bo Sanchez, preacher and founder of the Light of Jesus Family, declared that we have been called to freedom — freedom from shackles of the past, bad habits, debts, unruly emotions, wounds in the heart, unforgiveness, mediocrity, and other chains that bind us. And God wants us to be free from all these and to live an abundant life.

Testifying to the truth of Bo's statements, three people, freed from a dark and difficult past, stood on stage to share their stories and how they were spiritually, emotionally and physically set free by serving the Lord, through a Catholic Life in the Spirit Seminar, and even through circumstances within prison walls.

Bo declared further, "All suffering is temporary. All victory is permanent. Do whatever you can, but at the end of the day, be still and know that there is God."







# visit www.shepherdsvoice.com.ph





From May to July, as we celebrate Mother's and Father's Days and Bo's birthday, avail of 20% discount on all books purchased online. The Gollayan Sisters having a grand time in Paris after a benefit concert in Monaco, France.

# It Happened

# The Family That Sings Together Gives Glory to God

By The Gollayan Sisters with Linda Cercado as told to Ems Sy Chan



hey look like stairs)," I (Linda) thought to myself as I looked at my six children. I smiled as I thought of how my husband, Dominador, and I raised them without having permanent jobs. moved We from place to place — Santiago

and Cabatuan in Isabela, then Tuguegarao in Cagayan, then to Manila — in the hope of finding a better life.

Poverty forced my husband to buy and sell bottles and newspapers in a pushcart along the stretch of Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City. He had to endure the scorching heat of the sun just to put food on the table for our family of eight. I had to sell Tupperware, Natasha fashion wear and beauty products to relatives, friends, neighbors and strangers to help meet our household needs and to augment my husband's income. With our combined hard work, we managed to send our five daughters and son to





singing contests, such as IBC 13's *Star for a Night*, RPN 9's *Batang Kampeon* (where she reached the grand finals, with Charice Pempengco as her co-contender), and ABS-CBN's *High Ka Diva*. Seeing how her talent could help her go places, we sent her to formal training at the Cecilian Voice Training Center, through the help of my sister, Gina Koyama. Whatever Almira learned at the center, she shared with her younger sisters. Every time they competed in town fiestas, Almira joined in the singing contests while the younger three joined the dance contests.

In 2002, when Almira sang at her cousin's wedding, my sister, Sally Lazario, thought of forming a singing group among my four

children. She called the group The Cercado Sisters, composed of Almira, Irene, Mylene and Celina.

#### The Cercado Sisters: The Sisters Who Sing Together

We, The Cercado Sisters, started singing professionally four years after the group was formed. We sang in birthdays, weddings and concerts to help augment our school tuition fees and allowances. Even though we already joined more than a handful of competitions, we still get nervous every time we go on stage. To calm our nerves, we always pray before and after our performances. Seeing a huge crowd still makes our legs turn to jelly, but once we get hold of the microphone and sing the first few lines of our songs, everything flows smoothly. We just enjoy ourselves by singing, dancing and entertaining people. The audience and judges love us for our stage presence, confidence and outfits made by our mom's own sweat and blood — and a lot of sleepless nights.

#### **The Road to Success**

The road to success and fame is not an easy one to tread. A very memorable experience happened in 2004. We were in Tuguegarao when we watched *Eat Bulaga's* "FamJam," a singing contest for families. We had no money to pay for our fare from Tuguegarao to Manila, so we sang in a cockpit just to raise P3,000 to P4,000 for our fare. We always look back to that experience because it inspires us to soar to greater heights. We ended up second place in that contest.

The producer of the show believed in us and brought us to Hollywood in 2006 to represent our country in WCOPA (World Championships of Performing Arts), an Olympics for the talents around the world. We had our first taste of fame when we were chosen as grand champions in the vocal group division. With God's grace, we won 16 gold medals in four categories, namely pop, gospel, original works and Broadway. Even though we didn't take home a monetary reward, the prestige was enough to boost our confidence.

We continued joining singing contests and talent shows left and right: TV 5's *Talentadong Pinoy: Make It or Break It*, GMA's *Protégé* to name two. But always, we didn't make it to the finals. There came a point when we just wanted to give everything up because we were not being recognized in our country.

school. 0 u r firstborn, Elvie, а registered nurse, works as a staff at the Philippine Heart Center. We first some saw singing potential in our second daughter, Almira. While growing up, she ioined

In October 20, 2012, we decided to give it another shot and joined ABS-CBN's *Show Time Bida-Kapamilya*. We just enjoyed the whole journey until we made it to the grand finals.

A week before the grand finals, we heard the talk, "Don't Focus on the Pain, Focus on the Prize," at The Feast in Quezon City. We remembered the pain we had gone through in our career, but we decided to surrender everything to God.

So, on competition night, we gave our 101 percent and got the perfect score of 10 from the judges of the show and the crowd gave us a standing ovation. We managed to snag the grand prize of P1 million, which we used to buy a car for our use and to pay off our debts. A brand new car was a huge blessing because we had a number of bad experiences riding taxis. Also, every time we performed, our father couldn't watch us because we couldn't all fit in a cab. Now, our father gets to watch our performances.

A highlight of our singing career is our Monaco, France experience. There, we performed in a benefit concert for the street children of Iraq. The show was produced by Pentium Fund Foundation and we got to meet royalties and traveled almost half of Europe.

#### **Balancing Act**

In spite of monetizing our talents at an early age, we managed to be scholars at the Technological Institute of the Philippines in Quezon City. We tried hard to maintain a balance between our emerging singing career and the demands of our studies. We will be forever grateful to our professors and the dean who were very considerate in accommodating us in college. With the help of great mentors, such as Mr. Renato Hebron, The Company's Madam Annie Quinto, and Dean Montet Acoymo of the UP College of Music, we got to hone our God-given talents in music.

#### **Giving Back to God**

In December 2009, we sang at a company's Christmas party and got noticed by one of its employees, Zon Landrio. The following month, Zon introduced us to The Quezon City Feast, where she serves. We immediately noticed how different The Feast is from the Masses that we attended in the past. It is so alive.

From the time we entered the Bureau of Soils building, where the QC Feast is



being held, we felt welcomed. It was like a glimpse of heaven. We served for a while in the music ministry as quartets until our mom decided that it would be better to give others a chance to shine. We enjoy being Feast attendees more than performers on Sundays.

The following year, we served the Lord by offering our talent in singing and dancing in the Kerygma Conference at the PICC. We performed in the Inner Healing, Singles and Youth streams. Bo Sanchez is one of our idols. He inspires us so much through his preaching; it was like God speaking to us through him. Our lives have never been the same again after we experienced The Feast and the Kerygma Conference.

Our performance last March 31, 2013 at the Grand Easter Feast was an answered prayer for us because it has been our dream to perform to thousands of people and to inspire them.

#### **Gollayan: Grace of God**

After winning in *Show Time*, where we competed with our mother's aunt and two uncles from the Gollayan clan, we decided to change the name of our group. We now call ourselves The Gollayan Sisters, after our maternal grandfather, who's actually the musician in the family and who passed on the genes of musical intelligence to us. Gollayan actually means "grace of God."

Our big win in *Show Time* opened the door for us. We became the regular backup singers of our idol, Sarah Geronimo, in *Sarah G Live*. And with the grace of God, we were chosen as one of the representatives again for WCOPA 2013 in Hollywood for the senior division. By the time this article is published, we will be in that competition as The Gollayan Sisters and praying to emerge as the Grand Performer of the World.

We may have changed our group name, but our mission remains the same: to sing for the glory of God.

Photos in this spread show The Gollayan Sisters in the different performances and competitions they have joined through the years, both here and abroad.



# "I USED TO THINK YOU NEEDED SPECIAL SKILLS TO GET INTO THE STOCK MARKET."

# **COL** PROVED THAT ANYONE Could do IT- including me.

As a new mom, I want to be with my daughter as much as possible. After all, every minute can be a milestone. COL taught me how to secure my family's financial future while being there for them, too.

Their timely market outlooks and research allow us to make sound decisions about where to put our money. We feel like we know more about the business world and the stock market. Now we can monitor our investments ourselves and still have time for each other.

Mikki and Nina Cuenca, 30 with daughter Maya, 2



## Special Section Introduction

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an, I love this incredible topic! Most of you know that for many long years,

even when I was already a preacher, I was battling a hidden demon in my life. A war was raging inside me.

Because I was molested as a child and consequently got addicted to pornography, I was living in shame. I was living in total rejection of myself.

It was only when I began to accept God's unconditional love for me — despite my sinfulness and failures — that I started winning in my battle.

Yes, dear friends, you can win your own wars, too.

It doesn't matter what your addiction or sin is.

It doesn't matter if the world rejects you and condemns you.

There's hope.

You only have to hold on to the other end of the rope and allow yourself to be pulled up by the Lord.

In His great love for you, He will do everything to make you come to Him.

Will you allow Him? **K** 

# HOW TO WIN OVER AILY TEMPTATIONS

# **Special** Section

# Victory Is an Inside Job

Fight Your Temptations from Within

**By Bo Sanchez** 

#### o you fall into sin?

Have you ever fought temptation and lost?

I'm asking these questions because, uh, I can't relate. Sin is very foreign to me. In fact, I always ask my friends, "Can you describe what it feels like to sin? Because, frankly, I've never experienced it."

Well, OK, I do admit I have *one* little, tiny, itsy, bitsy weakness.

I lie.

OK, no more jokes. If you have sinned against God, then keep reading. Because I am one of the greatest sinners. Name a sin, and 99 percent of the time, I've done it. (I haven't killed anyone. At least, I don't remember.)

I write to you as one fellow sinner to another. I share with you the lessons I've learned while I was stuck in the muck of sin.

Yes, your preacher is bruised, broken and bandaged — but still blessed by the mercy of God.

Here's the big thing I realized. When I find myself trapped in my habitual sins, it's because I was fighting in the wrong arena.

I was fighting outside me when the battle was inside me.

No wonder I was losing!

We think temptation is as an external problem. It's not. It's an internal problem. Because all these external temptations are almost powerless if they didn't have allies working within me.

Here's my big message for you: Victory is an inside job.

By the way, failure is an inside job, too.

#### The Fight Is Within You

My mother lived during the Japanese war.

And she has all sorts of crazy stories to tell.

One of them was that before the war began, she said there were Japanese vendors selling their stuff on the streets of Manila. But when the Japanese army attacked the Philippines, these Japanese vendors who were dressed very simply — turned out to be high-ranking officers of the Japanese army.

It's like the story of the Trojan horse.

For 10 years, the Greeks were trying to conquer the city of Troy, but with very little success. The city of Troy was impregnable, with high thick walls and a massive gate that the Greek soldiers couldn't destroy, no matter how hard they tried.

But one day, the Trojans (the people who live in Troy) saw the Greek soldiers sail away. And realized that the Greeks left behind a giant wooden horse.

The Trojans brought the horse into their city as a trophy of war. They didn't know that the Greeks just pretended to sail away. And that inside the wooden horse were Greek soldiers, hiding.

That night, when the Trojans were asleep, the Greek soldiers came out of hiding and opened the gates of the city — welcoming the returning Greek soldiers. They marched in and destroyed the city of Troy.

Read carefully: You fall not because of the strong temptation outside you but because of the weak situation inside you.

The temptation shouldn't have been powerful.

But someone opened the gate.

Who is that someone?

Your Trojan Horse.

This Trojan Horse is the greatest, most potent, most deadly weapon of the devil.

#### The Greatest Weapon of the Devil

One day in hell, there was an annual conference attended by all the devils in the world. The theme of the conference was, "Our Greatest Weapon Against God's People."

The first speaker — a high-ranking devil — stood on stage and announced, "There is no debate about this. Our greatest weapon against God's people is lust!"

All his listeners applauded. He explained, "Even presidents, priests and preachers are totally defenseless against lust!" And the entire crowd roared in agreement.

The second speaker came up. Wearing a black tuxedo with a thick gold ring on every finger, he declared, "The first speaker is stupid. Don't listen to him. Because our greatest weapon is greed!"

The audience drank in his every word. He said, "Imagine the billions of people who are suffering today because of our assistants on planet Earth — greedy politicians!" And the whole assembly screamed, "Yehey!"

The third speaker climbed the platform amidst the sound of blasting trumpets. He wore a royal red robe and a golden crown. With extreme arrogance, he shouted, "The first two speakers told you a bunch of crap. Don't listen to those ignoramuses. Because our greatest weapon is..." and he clenched his fist in the air, "pride!"

The entire hall thundered with applause. He screamed, "Every war in the history of mankind was caused by pride!"

Finally, the last speaker of the conference stood up. And when they saw him, the room became deathly quiet. Because everyone knew who he was. He was the devil that brought the most number of souls away from God.

He wore a simple black robe. He spoke quietly. He said, "There is something more powerful than lust and greed and pride. In fact, I compare lust, greed and pride to wooden toy slingshots. And I compare our greatest weapon to a nuclear bomb. Because with our greatest weapon, you can multiply the power of lust, greed, and pride by a million times." By this time, all the devils in the hall were shouting at the top of their lungs, "What is it? What is our greatest weapon?"

He waved his hand to silence the crowd.

He whispered, "Our greatest weapon is... self-rejection."

#### When External Spiritual Activity Isn't Enough

Self-rejection is the Trojan Horse of temptation. It opens the gate of your soul to temptation. That's why you lose the battle.

I speak with authority because this was my experience.

Decades ago, I couldn't kick the habit of pornography. For years, no matter how I tried, I couldn't get out of its deathly grip. All my energies and time were being consumed by this addiction.

At that time, I asked my religious leaders, "How can I fight temptation? It's so overwhelming."

And these spiritual people would give me pat, canned answers. They'd say, "You need to pray more," or "You need to memorize the Bible more,"

or "You need to attend more prayer meetings," or "You need to avoid the situations that lead you to sin."

> All these words were great stuff. But at that time, I was shocked

when they didn't work on me. I still fell into sin. Repeatedly. I was still trapped as ever. I told myself, "Hey, I doubled my prayer time. Why did I fall? Gosh, there must be really something wrong with me!" Here's why these activities failed: Because all these good pieces of advice were telling me to focus on the fight "outside" me. "Add spiritual activities, like adding ammunition, and you'll win."

Soon, their words of advice added to my frustration, which made me sin even more.

How? First of all, I *already* hated myself for falling into sin again and again. And now, I had a brand new reason to hate myself. Because I promised to pray more and memorize the Bible more — and I failed to do them, too!

This vicious cycle of self-rejection led to more sin.

#### The Anatomy of Habitual Sin

Let me tell you something that very few people will tell you.

Behind every sin is a cry for love.

Your greatest and deepest need is to be loved. Blessed Mother Teresa said, "The greatest poverty is the poverty of being unloved."

When you don't fill this great hunger for love, you scramble and grab anything that will quiet this hunger.

So you look for a replacement. A painkiller. An anesthetic.

That narcotic is sin.

Because the pleasure of sin is the pirated version of the pleasure of being loved.

The problem with the fake version is that it will never truly satisfy your deepest hunger. Instead, it will increase your need. What used to satisfy no longer satisfies. Over time, you'll need to increase the dose of the narcotic.

A porn addict starts looking for unnatural sex. A gambler starts gambling with higher amounts of money. An adulterer starts searching for more partners.

Drugs. Alcohol. Sex. Gambling. Materialism. Food addiction. Approval addiction. At the core of all addictions, they're all the same: It's a desperate need for love.

Let me give you another analogy.

#### Love Is Expensive

In many streets of Metro Manila, you'll see rugby boys. It's a heart-wrenching sight. I cry whenever I see them. Little boys — as young as six years old — sniff rugby on the sidewalk, looking at the world with glazed eyes.

These kids are hungry for food. But because food is expensive and rugby is cheap, they go for the drug. To forget their hunger, they sniff the brain-shrinking, neuron-burning chemical adhesive.

But people who have habitual sins are in the exact same boat.

We're hungry for love. *But love is expensive and sin is cheap.* So we go for our habitual sin to deaden the inner pain of our hunger for love.

I repeat: Love is expensive.

Believe me. It's not easy to love yourself. To value yourself. To forgive yourself. To accept yourself. It's easier to sin than to do the hard work of loving yourself the way God loves you.

#### How Will You Know If You've Got a Trojan Horse?

There are three signs to know if there's a Trojan Horse in you.

First, you don't love yourself. You reject you. You hate you. You don't accept who you are. You don't celebrate you.

Second, your most important relationships are dysfunctional. You don't receive love from your closest relationships. Even if there are people around you who truly love you, you can't see this nor receive this love.

Third, you worship a "rejecting" God. A legalistic, cruel, judgmental God. So you don't receive love from God as well.

Unless you heal this inner wound and start learning to love yourself the way God loves you, you'll never be able to win over temptation.

Let me give you the first step that you need to do to fight the battle within.

#### **Receive God's Unconditional Love Now**

Let me repeat: The pleasure of sin is the pirated version of the pleasure of being loved.

Do you want to experience the pleasure of being loved?

Receive God's unconditional love today! Take your cue from God.

ake your cue nom Gou

Don't focus on your badness; focus on your goodness.

Don't hate yourself. Don't reject yourself. Or this self-rejection will cause you to sin even more.

He loves you more than you can ever imagine. Have you sinned? Have you fallen?

God doesn't look at what you did wrong.

God looks at what you did right.

God doesn't focus on your failures.

God focuses on your future.

In your eyes, you're bruised, bandaged and broken. In God's eyes, you're beautiful, beloved and blessed.

The Bible says, "But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you" (Romans 8:5, 11).

What is God saying here? He says, "Don't focus on your sinful nature. Focus instead on your spiritual nature. Can you imagine? My own Spirit is in you!"

In other words, focus on the good.

This is a mind-blowing truth. That the same awesome power that created every atom, molecule, pebble, leaf, tree, valley, ocean, mountain, planet, sun, star, and galaxy — yes, the most powerful force in the universe — is in you.

And that most powerful force — the Holy Spirit — is love.

Email me at bosanchez@keryqmafamily.com.

#### **BO'S ACTION STEPS**

- 1. Identify your temptations.
- 2. Look within and see what's causing you to give in to those temptations.
- Set aside a special time with God, through prayer or even a retreat, and receive God's unconditional love for you. See how your image of God transforms your relationships — with yourself, with God Himself, with your family, friends and significant persons in your life.



## Special Section Testimony

# God Set Me Free from My Drug Addiction

By Glenn Tongos as told to Alvin Fabella



hud, thud, thud!

The knock on the door was followed by a man's voice: "Room service!"

I was reaching for the doorknob when five men suddenly barged into our room. They immediately searched the area. Then they discovered the illegal substance that belonged to my female companion. Everything happened so fast! The next thing I knew, my companion and I were being arrested.

It was October 1989 when that terrifying event happened in an apartelle somewhere in Cubao. I was with a woman with whom I had an ongoing illicit affair for almost a year.

That was my third arrest in a span of two years. The police brought me to the Quezon City Jail where I was imprisoned.

I had been an illegal drug user since I was a teenager. Being arrested for illegal drugs was not something new. My life had been a vicious cycle of drug-related problems. When will my addiction and troubles end?

#### How I Got Hooked to Drugs

I first used marijuana back in 1969 when I was 17 years old. I used other illegal drugs that included LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), uppers, downers and heroin. I experienced my first drug-related arrest five years later. My friends and I were caught for taking an illegal drug called Seconal. I spent two weeks in prison at Camp Crame, but they released me after I led them to my supplier.

My imprisonment did not stop me from using illegal drugs. I started taking cough syrup with Codein in 1975. I was already married then but I kept this secret from my wife. I consumed two bottles a day so I bought in bulk (around 144 bottles) from drug stores or medical representatives. Money was not a concern since I was managing the family business. I kept my stock hidden in our office premises. My chronic addiction met some hindrance when I started to lose my suppliers in 1984. They either ran out of stock or they wouldn't sell to me anymore. I experienced withdrawal symptoms whenever I missed my daily dose. These symptoms include abdominal cramps, cold sweat, LBM and vomiting. There was a time when I was rushed to the hospital because of the extreme symptoms I had.

Due to lack of supply, I forced myself to stop my drug dependence so I can avoid the withdrawal symptoms. I decreased my intake from two bottles to three tablespoons per day. My approach worked as I eventually got rid of the symptoms that year. I thought I was completely free from my addiction to illegal substance.

#### A Hard Habit to Break

I remained "clean" for the next four years.

But one day, a childhood friend dropped by our shop to borrow money. When he paid me back, he brought something else aside from cash. He introduced me to shabu (methamphetamine). He assured me that shabu doesn't have withdrawal symptoms like Codein cough syrup. That was enough to convince me to go back to my old bad habit.

I participated in shabu sessions in various places. Sometimes I didn't go home. I also started selling shabu so I can augment my income and maintain my habit. I became negligent of my family and business. My life was falling apart.

I got arrested three months after I first tried shabu. I was released after three days for unknown reasons. My next arrest happened when some corrupt policemen wanted to set me up for their own personal gain. I was eventually released since there was a need for further investigation.

I had an illicit affair with another woman who was also an addict. She was my companion when the policemen raided our room in the apartelle. I didn't have any illegal substance on me during the arrest. Unfortunately, the police discovered illegal drugs in the possession of my partner. They charged and imprisoned me but they released my partner. To this day, I still don't understand why they let her go even if she was the one who had the illegal substance. The reaction of my family added to my burden. My father was furious. He asked my wife if she wanted to leave me and even volunteered to get a lawyer if needed. My wife and children started to disown me. I felt alone.

#### I Thought Rehabilitation Was Enough

During my first court hearing, my father personally requested the judge to put me on a drug rehabilitation program. The request was granted. I was escorted to the NBI Rehabilitation Center in Tagaytay the following month.

My wife would commute from our home in Marikina to the center every weekend. She would check how I was doing and she also paid the center for my personal expenses. After six months of drug rehabilitation, the judge sentenced me to a four-year probation. I can leave the rehab center but I was required to report to the court every first week of the month.

Four months into my probation, I visited my old friends who were still into drugs. They asked me to try it again and I obliged. Our secret meetings happened for the next three months right after my monthly court visits. But in December, I wasn't able to go home because I spent the whole evening with my friends. I can still remember what my wife said when I got home the following morning: *"Ayan ka na naman!"* (You are at it again!)

What she said made me feel guilty. Then after a week, I heard that one of my drug addict friends was killed somewhere in Cavite. The news jolted me. I could have been with him at that time. I could have been dead too.

#### God Gave Me the Real Rehabilitation

I made a decision to stop visiting my "friends." My younger sister called to offer me a job at a construction project in Makati. I kept myself busy with work until the project was completed in 1992. Since then, I found myself doing nothing and I stayed home.

One day, a neighbor invited me to join the Knights of Columbus. I told my neighbor that I would prefer something designed for married couples. That was my excuse since their group was for men only. I thought my excuse worked. I was surprised when I got another invitation to join a Christian Life Program (CLP) for couples the following day. This time I had no excuse.

I was a passive participant until I heard the sixth talk on "Loving Your Neighbor." I felt that the speaker was talking to me directly as he presented the topic. His words bothered me.

"If you love someone, you will not make him or her undergo pain."

"Your first neighbor is your wife, children and your family."

I realized how much pain I gave my family all this time. I was selfish. I ignored how they felt. So I made a decision to change my ways. My wife and I completed the 12-session seminar, then

we joined the Familia Community.

#### God Changed Me and Set Me Free

Since I didn't have work and stayed home, I served my family by doing household chores and acting as the family driver. I also found myself serving our community in various capacities. In December 2007, we found ourselves



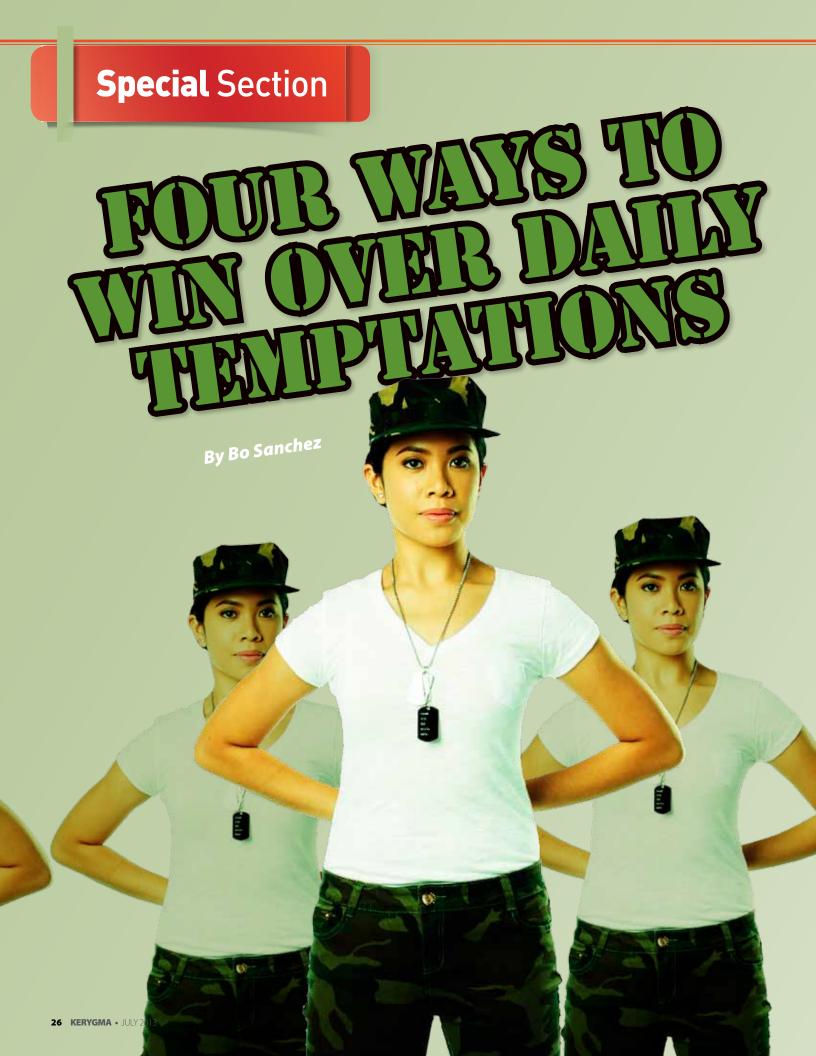
Glenn and his wife, Dee, now happily serve the Lord through their community.

in a dilemma. It had been three months since my wife retired and both of us didn't have work. She expressed her concern about us not having a stable source of income. I boldly declared to her that God will never neglect our needs.

A few days later, I received a call from someone, inviting me to bid for the building maintenance of a major water services company. I was not familiar with the scope of work required, yet I believed that God would take care of everything. He indeed brought me certain individuals familiar with the required work. I registered a new company and got all the necessary info to prepare my bid offer. I submitted our company's offer and we won! By January, only a few weeks after I got the phone call, our company was already handling the building maintenance for our newfound customer. Our contract is up to 2015. God is truly faithful!

God rehabilitated not only my addiction but all areas of my life as well. As one of my favorite Bible verses says, "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

Truly, God loves me and He has set me free! 🖾



n the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, some villagers practice a unique form of logging. If a tree is too large to be felled with an ax, the natives cut it down by yelling at it. Woodsmen with special powers creep up on a tree at dawn and suddenly scream at it at the top of their lungs. They continue this for 30 days. What happens is that it will much easier to cut the tree down. The theory is that the hollering kills the spirit of the tree. According to the villagers, it always works.

Is this legend true?

I don't know. But this I know for sure: If you yell at a person, you kill the spirit of that person. And it will be easier to cut him down.

When I was sinning and giving in to temptation, I'd yell at myself in anger and in shame. I didn't know it, but I was killing my spirit. And the weaker I got, the more I sinned. It was a vicious cycle.

I believe that you must really love yourself to change.

If you want to win over temptation, you have to heal your relationship with yourself. Jesus said, "A kingdom divided unto itself cannot stand." In other words, can a country win a war if it's divided within? Of course not.

In order to fight the bad outside you, you have to befriend the good in you. You have to celebrate your goodness.

Here are four ways you can win over your temptations:

#### 1. Focus on God's Love

Sin will make you focus on your sin and on your guilt.

God, on the contrary, will make you focus on His love.

You cannot do anything that will decrease or increase His love for you.

That is shocking to many people. They think that if they do something good, God will love them. And if they do something bad, God doesn't love them.

That's not true.

God loves you no matter what you do. His love remains constant. If you've sinned, focus on His love — because that love will change you.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

— Psalm 103:11-12

I always tell people: When you give in to temptation again and again and again, it means that you're searching for love. Love is the only thing that can heal you.

When you love yourself, you will no longer destroy yourself with drugs.

When you love yourself, you will no longer degrade yourself to receive a bribe.

When you love yourself, you will no longer dirty yourself by watching porn.

#### 2. Focus on Your Inner Greatness

Sin will make you focus on your weaknesses and addictions. What is sin? It is anything that makes you become less than who you really are.

Many people focus on their weaknesses. But, as I have stressed

in past articles and in my books, what you focus on grows. If you always label yourself as weak, you will always be weak.

Here's an analogy.

Within us is an eagle and a wolf in a battle.

One side is the soaring eagle. Everything the eagle stands for is good and true and beautiful, and it soars above the clouds.

The other side is the howling wolf. That raging, howling wolf represents the worst that's in us. He eats upon our downfalls and justifies himself by his presence in the pack.

Who wins this great battle?

The one we feed.

A day will come when the eagle will be so huge, so powerful, because we keep feeding it.

And a day will come when the wolf will die. Because we have not fed it, not focused on it, not energized it. When will it die? When we enter heaven.

So feed the eagle, not the wolf. How? By focusing on the eagle in you.

It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to stand on the heights. He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You give me your shield of victory, and your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great.

- Psalm 18:32-35

#### 3. Focus on Your Future

Sin wants you to be stuck in your past. Many people focus on their repeated failures. But again, what you focus on grows.

If you keep rehearsing in your mind your failures, you will continue to fail.

Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O Lord.

— Psalm 25:5-7

Don't focus on your past — focus on your dream!

There was a time I was just focused on defeating my bondages to pornography.

And for years, I couldn't break it.

Until I focused on my dreams!

When I became busy working on my dreams, I

looked at myself in a new way.

I began to believe in myself.

I began to appreciate my strength.

And I was freed from my bondages.

#### 4. Focus on Others

Sin wants you to be obsessed on yourself. Why?

There are two kinds of sins, and only one of them gets all the attention.

Commission and omission.

The sin of omission is much graver than many sins of commission.

So many good people are obsessed over themselves, they forget the needs of others.

A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So, too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."

— Luke 10:30-35

Why did the priest and the Levite not help? They were thinking of themselves.

They believe that holiness is all about rituals, prayers, attending church, reading the Bible, and having the right labels.

The Samaritan helped the beaten man because he focused on the other person.

What will God do to you if you're praying, reading the Bible, wearing your scapulars — yet 77 percent of the poor are lying on the street? How can you tell God, "Lord, I didn't smoke, didn't drink, didn't gamble, didn't read pornography — and therefore I was a good boy," when you didn't do anything for the poor people around you?

You can't love God if you don't love the poor.

#### **Establish Your Why**

But there's a second reason why loving yourself is crucial to fighting temptation: You don't have enough "why" to fight.

The Bible says, "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood" (Hebrews 12:4).

Are you willing to die in your fight against temptation?

Many people aren't willing to fight to the end. There's not enough fight in us. That's why we lose.

Why?

Because we don't have a reason to fight.

There's no fuel. There's no fire. There's no fight!

If you don't love yourself, you won't fight. If you don't love your freedom, you won't fight. If you don't love your future, you won't fight.

If you study men who have gone in the battlefield and fought to the death, you'll realize that they have a burning "why" in their soul.

Without this "why," you won't bother going to battle.

Will you fight this temptation?

Here's the truth: You will only fight temptation to the degree that you value yourself. If you don't value yourself, you won't fight.

This is why I said that the greatest weapon of the devil isn't lust, or greed, or pride, but self-rejection. This is the Trojan Horse that opens the gate of our souls to temptation.

To get rid of self-rejection, you need self-acceptance. To explain this, let me tell you the love story of Brad and Angelina (Note: any similarities to actual persons or events is purely coincidental).

#### How Many Cows Are You Worth?

In a small remote village many moons ago, there lived a people with a peculiar custom. When a man wanted to marry a woman, he had to give a dowry to the father of the bride. Now many cultures had this custom. But what was peculiar was the fact that the dowry had to be a cow.

You see, cows were prized possession in this village. And according to local custom, the man must give one to ten cows as dowry, depending on how beautiful the girl was.

In this village, there was a young man named Brad who fell in love with a young maiden named Angelina. He wanted to marry her. So, after many months of courtship, he finally arranged for a meeting with her father.

On that fateful day, Brad was nervous but ready. With sweaty palms and shaking knees, he knocked on the door of her home. Her family was waiting inside. Actually, her entire clan was waiting inside. All 67 people crammed into this little house.

The mother of Angelina opened the door and invited Brad to come in. As was the custom, in the center of the room were two chairs prepared. The father of Angelina was already seated in one of them. He motioned for Brad to take the other seat.

Brad cleared his throat and announced, "Sir, I'd like to ask for the hand of your daughter Angelina in marriage."

The father nodded his head and said, "Yes, I give you my blessing."

The young man then asked the next big question, "Sir, can we talk about dowry?"

It is here that I wish to give you a little background.

Angelina was kind, loving, sweet and intelligent. But she wasn't physically beautiful. Her eyes were too large. Her mouth was too wide. Her lips were too thick. (I repeat: Any similarities to actual persons, events or circumstances are purely coincidental.)

Because of this, the women of the clan already agreed that Angelina was worth one cow. They reached this consensus not on that day, not even weeks or months before, but years ago — as Angelina was growing up as a little girl among them.

So, back to the story. The father said, "All I ask is that you give me one cow for my daughter." Nods of agreement spread across the room.

Brad frowned. He shook his head and with a firm voice said, "Sir, with due respect, I shall not give you one cow for your daughter. She isn't worthy of one cow."

The father stood up. With anger, he said, "Young man,

how dare you insult my family! How dare you insult my daughter!"

Brad momentarily looked at Angelina (who, at that point, was about to break down in tears), smiled at her, and said, "Sir, for your lovely daughter, I shall give you 10 cows."

There was another loud gasp in the room. All the relatives whispered to each other, "This guy is crazy."

The father didn't know what to say as well. For a moment, he spoke gibberish. "1... but... how should I say this... Young man, this is tradition. Aren't you paying too much?"

Brad smiled, "Sir, Angelina isn't only beautiful. She is the definition of beauty. Angelina is worth more than the highest price a man can ever pay."

A few days later, the 10 cows were given and the wedding took place. And the happy couple walked to their new home.

As the years passed, something magical happened to Angelina. Her physical appearance changed. Her face became more radiant. More alluring. More lovely. Soon, she became the most beautiful woman in the village.

Let me tell you how this happened.

#### Women Carry This Value in Their Minds Forever

Women in that village — for the rest of their lives — would carry their "dowry value" in their minds. They would see themselves through that lens — even if they got married 20 or 30 years ago. And others would also see them through that lens.

The village seamstress? She's a three-cow wife.

The wife of the doctor? She's a four-cow wife.

But only Angelina was a 10-cow wife.

So she smiled, talked, dressed and took care of herself like a 10-cow wife. And everyone in the village saw her as a 10-cow wife!

What's my point?

Your behavior flows from your belief.

Because Angelina believed she was a 10-cow wife, she acted like one. Soon, her physical body transformed, too.

A lot of people try to change their lives by changing behavior. Generally, it doesn't work. Because they think the battle is on the outside. It's not. Victory and failure are inside jobs.

Here's the truth: You don't change your life by changing behavior. You change your life by changing your beliefs. Once you change your beliefs, you change your behavior. Because behavior flows from beliefs.

#### Your Belief Flows from Another Person's Belief

Brad believed in Angelina. He believed in her value. *And she caught this belief*.

For the longest time, she believed she was a one-cow woman. But someone walked into her life with a totally different belief. This guy believed that she was a 10-cow wife.

Because Brad believed in her value, Angelina experienced a transformation. New behavior flowed out of her new belief.

Belief is like a virus. It's not taught, it's caught. No amount of lectures or reading will make you believe in your own value. There has to be the presence of *another person* who believes in your value — and he infects you with that belief. Belief comes from belief. The only way to believe in your own value is to witness someone else believe in your own value.

This is the role of every parent. To announce to your child, "I believe in you so much." Parents, you need to say this by your actions, not just by your words. By the amount of time you spend with your kids. By the way you look at them, talk to them, and love them. Kids can see in your eyes whether you believe in their value or not.

When parents don't do this, children grow up searching for someone to believe in them. And this is where they fall to bad company.

We need to be re-parented. In my vocabulary, this is discipleship. (This is what we're trying to do in my spiritual community, the Light of Jesus Family.)

Friend, you're like Angelina — because God paid for you with the highest price possible. He gave Himself on the cross.

God values you so much. Once you "get it," you don't want to sin.

The Bible said, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet" (Matthew 7:6).

Why do we live with swine? Why do we act like swine? Because we believe we're swine.

Why can't we stop sinning? Because we believe that's who we are. But if you believe that you're a child of God, you won't stay with the swine.

I believe miracles happen when someone loves you — and you receive that love.

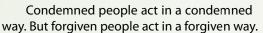
I believe this because it happened to me. For many years, I hated myself. I just didn't see myself as a one-cow person. I saw myself as a oneworm person. I was ashamed of myself. I was ashamed that I even existed.

This belief came from a trauma that happened to me as a child — when I was molested. And it worsened when I wallowed in my addictions. But every time I fell in my addictions and hated myself even more, God came and wrapped His arms around me.

God kept whispering to my ear, "I love you. I accept you. I celebrate you." The Bible verse that echoed in my heart was, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

God is like my second religion teacher. When I failed, He'd come up to me with a big smile on his face and say, "I believe in you. You can do better. Take the exam again."

God is the God of the second chance. And the third chance. And the fourth chance....



Slowly, I saw myself differently. I saw myself the way God saw me. And I changed.

Allow God to love you today.

Email me at bosanchez@kerygmafamily.com.

## Special Section Testimony

# Stepping Out into the Light How A VICTIM OF INCEST BROKE THE BONDS OF HER ADDICTION

An Anonymous Sharing as told to Judith Concepcion t was one of those nights again. I was crying, screaming trembling and my heart was racing. I woke up from another violent dream where I killed my brother, some monsters and other scary characters. Sometimes I would have five nightmares in a night, mostly bloody, so I didn't sleep at times.

The nightmares started when I was 30 years old and this went on for a year. This was triggered when my sisterin-law revealed that my father was sexually harassing her. Painful memories of my childhood trauma came flooding back.

#### **Innocence Lost**

My father started molesting me when I was five. This stopped when he went abroad but, unfortunately, my eldest brother also molested me. I was the only girl in the family. The molestations happened more than once.

Because of this, I hated God and questioned Him a lot. I was angry with myself because I felt powerless to prevent the abuses. I hated and dreaded men in general. I didn't get involved in intimate relationships since I felt uncomfortable around men. My self-esteem plummeted. I even blamed myself that it was my fault why I got molested. But the greatest effect the molestation had on me was when I became addicted to masturbation.

I was seven years old when I started to masturbate. As a child, I wasn't aware that it is a sin. I thought it was just a part of life, a stage that everyone passes through. The act became a habit, then later slid into addiction. I read porn magazines, and engaged in cyber and phone sex with married men.

I masturbated not only to gratify myself but as a means to escape my anxieties. I used it to feel bad and guilty as a way of punishing myself. My addiction went on for 27 years.

#### **Renewal of Faith**

I was born a Catholic but was not raised as one. When I got employed as a writer and researcher in a parish church, my immediate supervisor suggested that I consult a priest to know more about the Catholic faith. After the priest reviewed the faith with me, giving me a sort of a refresher course, I got re-baptized and was confirmed in the Catholic Church.

My priest friend and mentor cherished the sacraments so much that his influence rubbed off on me. I fell in love with the sacraments especially the Eucharist. Learning that I couldn't receive Holy Communion under a state of mortal sin, I resolved to break the habit. I needed to be worthy to receive Jesus present in the Holy Host. For me, attending Mass without receiving communion was incomplete and useless. The sacrament of reconciliation helped a lot in pulling me away from the danger of falling into further sin.

#### **Steps Toward Liberation**

It took me two decades before I began to search for the answers on how to stop my addiction. I took practical steps that helped me win over my daily temptations and combat that bondage.

First, I started taking care of my physical health. I slept well, ate fruits and my favorite dishes, listened to my favorite music, and did a lot of walking as an exercise and to rechannel my energy. I did all these to avoid stress that can make me slip into it again.

Second, I began taking care of my emotional health. I hang out with positive and warm people. I surround myself with mentors. I pamper myself and give myself tangible and "spiritual" rewards. Last Christmas, I gave myself simple "me" gifts like listening to good music, watching nice movies, and hanging out with God.

Third, I nourish my spiritual health. I attend daily Mass, visit the Lord in the adoration chapel, and recite Bible verses that speak about my real worth before God.

Lastly, I bank on a strong support system: friends who are like family to me, who love me despite my weaknesses, and to whom I can open up about anything without fear of being judged. When tempted, I text my closest friends so they could pray for me. I bring my evil desire out into the light so it would lose or at least lessen its power over me.

Whenever I fall, I go to Mass. I also pat myself as if to say, "I forgive you." I also tell myself, "I love you," before sleeping and upon waking up, right after I say, "I love you, Lord." It may sound corny but it works wonders for me. I also open myself to the Holy Spirit's leading on what other steps I should take. Most of my ideas just come to mind usually when I'm before the Blessed Sacrament.

Breaking the habit was initially a big struggle for me but later, the lust lost its hold on me. It didn't satisfy me anymore because something infinite had consumed my heart that there was no more room for it.

#### Healing Came

My journey to healing began when I attended an inner healing retreat. Through this retreat, I understood myself better and realized that I'm deeply loved by God. I learned that the best way I can love God is to just allow Him to love me, which I still have to learn.

Healing is a developmental process toward wholeness, and by God's grace, I already surpassed a lot in my journey. I still get tempted and fall, but I do it as rarely as twice a year since 2011, and when it happens, it is in its mildest form.

Last year, I died to myself a lot. I mailed a letter to my father who was in the province as my way of honoring and forgiving him. This was my gift to him. For my brother, I visit him and spend time with him. Forgiving both of them even if they didn't ask for my forgiveness was all worth it. It was liberating and made me healthier. It brought me peace, though there are times I still process the effects of my past when it comes to my self-esteem.

Looking back, I believe that it wasn't so much through my own efforts that I was able to break the habit but through the sacraments, the help of the Holy Spirit, and most especially God's love. His love conquers all.

Before, I thought I was a dirty rag. Now, I see myself as God's beloved daughter. Life is beautiful when viewed from the heart of God because there, I am deeply loved.

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- 1. Lucky winners will be drawn. A participant can only win once per draw.
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- A notification letter via registered mail will be sent to winners for confirmation and will be published in the March 2014 issue of Kerygma. Instructions on where to claim the prize will be detailed in the letter via registered mail.
- 4. Winner for the pilgrimage will secure his/her own passport.
- 5. Prizes are transferable but not convertible to cash.
- 6. Winners for trips shall shoulder all the taxes and documentations related to the trip, and the 20% tax for prizes exceeding P10,000.
- Prizes must be claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification, except the trip to Holy Land which the winner needs to coordinate until January 23, 2014.
- 8. Prizes unclaimed will be forfeited in favor of SVP with prior DTI approval.

- 9. Claiming of prizes. The Winners shall claim their prizes at the Shepherd's Voice office at 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City. Winners must present the notification letter, claim stub and a valid ID with photo and signature (e.g. driver's license, company ID or passport). Winners may send a representative on their behalf provided they present the following:
  - a. Letter of authorization from winner
  - b. Proper identification
  - c. Letter sent by SVP and claim stub
- 10. The promo organizer's decision is final with the concurrence of DTI Representative.
- 11. All SVP employees are not eligible to join the raffle promo including their relatives up to the third degree of consanguinity or affinity.
- 12. A DTI Representative will be on hand to witness the draw on January 5, 2014, 10:30am at the PICC during The FEAST.
- 13. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1459 Series of 2013.

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**THIS SERVES AS YOUR RAFFLE COUPON.** All entries must be signed and mailed to us.



weeners are boys and girls in their growth spurts. Their friends, not their parents, start to become their authorities. They are suddenly conscious about many things. No longer babies, they are at the awkward "inbetween" stage of being kids and teens (usually 8 to 12 years old), formally called pre-adolescence.

I hear parents of big kids complaining how they find it hard to understand their child when puberty kicks in, more so when they become teenagers. In truth, experts noted that the pre-adolescent stage is an opportune time for parent and child to forge better

relationships and communication.

#### **Real Teens Speak**

In a focus group discussion I had with high school students, I asked them when and where they learned about puberty changes and what sex is about. They pointed that it was discussed in their fifth grade health topic, which includes puberty changes and the girl's reproductive system. Though they had sexuality talks in school, only a handful of them discussed these matters with their parents. When they asked their parents about such, some got angry, many were defensive and others joked about it. Only a few were open and welcoming. If we fail to satisfy

our kids' quest for knowledge about their bodies and sexuality, where will they go to look for the right information?

#### Laying the Magic Foundation

Instead of taking them for granted, take advantage of the tween stage as magical time. The established relationship between you and your tween would be the anchor for pep talks and discussion about the anticipated raging adolescent changes — physical, emotional, social, including sexual.

> Many parents have asked, "Why do I need to discuss these with my child? My parents didn't talk about it and I grew up OK." Things have changed. Old practices do not work with the new blood we are raising. We do not want our kids to

get inappropriate information from peers or multimedia influences.

But what does sexuality have to do with adolescent changes? A lot! It is the essence of the changes as tweens grow to be teens, then teens mature into adults. It explains the teens' need for identity, peers and romance. It becomes the integrating element of the body, the emotions, the relationships and the spirit. It is God's gift He gives only to humans. This alone echoes the significance of the parents' role in helping their children understand these matters.

#### **Preparing for the Storm**

Puberty encompasses a multitude of changes. The obvious physical changes are taught in school and can be read in books. The emotional changes pertain to high-low emotional fluctuations, being "moody" or "e-mo." Charge this to the hormones affecting the teens, topped with their growing personal awareness and social pressures. Social changes happen as they need to "belong" to a peer group and with teens' budding relations with the opposite sex. Stringing these will later bring out the teenager's establishment of identity.

Just like a little bird emerging out of its nest, we can appreciate the pre-adolescent's beauty if we parents are one with our tween in learning, understanding and embracing the changes before them. We can help them navigate through the rough changes of adolescence with our wisdom, openness, understanding and unconditional support. We can't guarantee a breezy flight but we can hold on to the thought that we have done our part in preparing and arming our pre-teens with the knowledge and values they would carry in the flight ahead.

Michele S. Alignay is a registered guidance counselor, a resource speaker, a PhD student, a mom to two kids, a wife, and a passionate servant on child, family and relationship matters. She holds private counseling practice, an associate of the Love Institute, and a consultant of some schools and centers. You may email her at ichel.alignay@gmail.com.

## Faith @ Work

# **Get Promoted**

**By Ariel B. Driz** 

o when are you going to be a manager?" I asked a young team leader I was coaching. He was stunned by my question.

"But sir, I just got promoted," protested the young professional. "I don't think it can happen that fast. After all, it took three years for me to reach this level," he continued.

When getting a promotion, people assume that one would receive a piece of paper from their human resources department that would say: "You are promoted from supervisor to manager."

This would also mean an increase in pay — and then, life is grand! If you are waiting for this type of promotion, my "young Padawan" has a valid reaction. A position upgrade of this type would need three

things to happen:

1. An "official opening" for the managerial position;

 2. A budget allocated for said promotion;
 3. A perception from top management that you are ready for it.

If you notice, all three are not really within his control. This could be frustrating for him — and for most.

When I was young and foolish, I would think, "I hope that one day, I would get my chance." I would work hard, prove to management that I'm good, play my cards right, and pray hard so that my chance would come.

> Today, I propose a different paradigm, a point of view that I recently realized (after all these years!). Ask yourself these questions:

Why not be promotion-ready instead?

When are you going to be manager-ready — a leader in heart, mind and skill?

Don't wait for your time. Now is your chance to really get a promotion.

Setting this type of target goes beyond having a "goal to be manager." It means that one is committed to grow, regardless of circumstance, regardless of titles, regardless of what happens in the company hierarchy.

Most successful executives I know acted the role long before they received that announcement from HR.

The corporations and teams of today need formal and informal leaders, role models, and efficient executives who would show the way. Organizations need mature individuals who would see the big picture, be passionate, be skillful, and make sound decisions — with or without official designation.

With this insight, I offer the three Cs as you decide to get promoted:

\* Commit to excellence and to your organization's success: Give it your all.

\* Competence: Work hard to get better, not to prove you're better.

\* Care for people: People skill is probably the most important skill you will need as a manager.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

— Colossians 3:23-24

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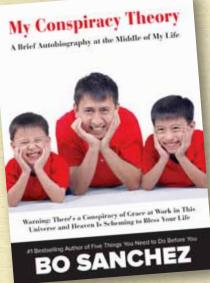


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# Life does not begin at 40.

It begins when you say yes to God's reckless love.



Bo said yes and his life was never the same again. Say yes, too, and experience the conspiracy of grace!

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# K Preacher

What Are Temptations For?

**By Vic Español** 

atching tuna is a lucrative endeavor. The result can be very rewarding. It is said that Japanese businessmen would pay as much as US\$50,000 in 2007 for a "nice blue fin." And all it takes is a sharp hook, a strong line, and some bait.

In the United States, Coast Guards are very strict in their regulations, warning people about the dangers of tuna fishing in the deep sea. Fishermen often ignore this warning and would

set out into the ocean in their small boats to catch tuna. They underestimate the power and the strength of the fish they are trying to catch.

Reports had it that a 19-foot boat, Christi Anne, was overturned while struggling to haul down a big tuna. That same day, a 27-foot boat, Basic Instinct, capsized while also catching this fish. On another instance, a 600-pound tuna pulled down a bigger boat deep into the sea.

> This is what temptation does to our lives. The temptation presents itself in a very attractive and alluring manner. It looks harmless and we think we can deal with it and handle it through our own power. But sometimes we are caught by surprise on how powerful it can become. Before we know it, we succumb to it. When we do, we realize its ugly and shameful effects.

> > Temptations have a purpose in God's plan for our lives. Even Jesus went through temptations during His earthly life. And we cannot be exempt from such. I believe that God allows temptations to enable us to recognize our weaknesses.

Many times in my life, l experience falling into the same temptation over

and over again. But there is that sincere desire in me to overcome my fallen nature and my weaknesses. I know, though, that I cannot do it by myself. I need help. I need God.

This brings me to the second purpose of temptation — to acknowledge our dependence on God. By ourselves, we cannot overcome temptation. We need God's help. When we come before our God on our knees, we also grow in humility — because we realize that we cannot rely on our strength. We need God. We need His grace.

I always pray every night before I sleep and part of my evening prayer is the examination of my conscience. Whenever I realize that I have overcome the many temptations around me that day, I feel a sense of tremendous peace and unexplainable joy in my heart. Tears even begin to roll down my cheek.

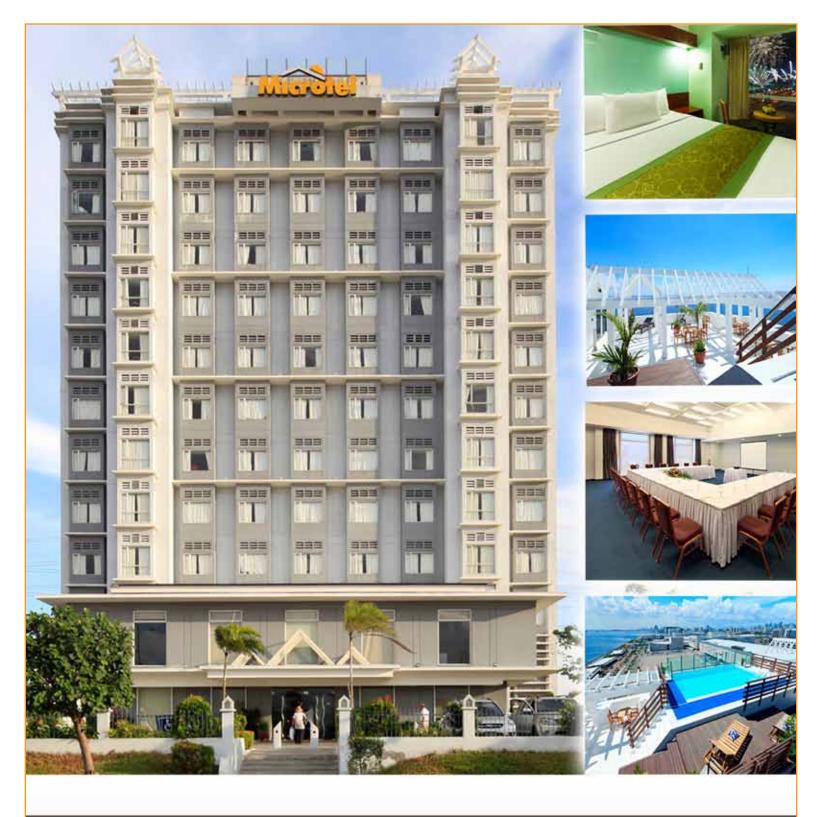
Deep in my heart, I know I have made God happy that day.

Then, I fall asleep — like a little child. 📧

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)

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Vic Español is the Feast builder of The Ortigas Feast. He preaches in its Sunday 10:00 a.m. and Monday 7:30 p.m. sessions. He and his wife, Ditas, train the counselors of the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center.





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Leslie is now enjoying her work in a buidling Dubai.



By Leslie Cahanap as told to Judith Concepcion



hen I was young, I dreamed of traveling around the world for fun and enjoyment. But when my mom passed away on December 1, 2004, she left our family financial with obligations and

commitments. My motivation for going abroad changed from pleasure-seeking to working. I was jobless then, so I was worried how we'd be able to survive. Being the eldest, I felt responsible to be the breadwinner. Though I was able to find a local job a month after my mom's death, my income was not enough for my family's needs. After several years, I actively sought employment abroad — a long and tiring search for the right opportunity.

#### **A Changed Mentality**

My best friend, Caren, invited me to The Feast in Valle Verde in August 2007. Seeing how her life had changed, I was encouraged to attend. My first time at The Feast was an overwhelming experience. I felt happy, super blessed and inspired. Since then, I attended The Feast regularly.

My financial worries plagued me every day, but The Feast helped change my perspective in life. I began to worry less, believing that nothing is impossible if I would just step out of my comfort zone. Bo Sanchez's talks on abundance and financial freedom taught me how to be practical in using my money. I was able to invest in the stock market through COL Financial. And I was encouraged again to pursue my dream of working abroad so I could give my family a better life.

# One Last **Story**

# Worth the Wait

#### **Message from a Paper Airplane**

In 2009, Caren and I started applying for foreign work through different agencies. On that same year, Caren was hired. When I learned that there was a Feast in Dubai, the more I persevered in finding a job there. One of my prayers was that there must be a Feast in the country where I'd work. But after almost three years, I got tired of waiting. I accepted the fact that maybe it wasn't God's will for me. So I engaged in selling health products to augment my salary. But selling was not my cup of tea, so I didn't do well.

In October 2011, Bo started the "Happytudes" series. After his first talk, "Be Open," Bo threw plastic balls to the audience. One landed near my feet. I picked it up and read the word written on it: "Perseverance." I took it as God's message to me to persevere in selling and conquer my fear of public speaking.

The following Sunday, Bo's talk was entitled "Be Hopeful." My desire to work abroad was rekindled. After the talk, strips of colored papers were released from a net hanging from the ceiling. I was far from the area where the papers fell. But I felt something hit my back — a paper airplane — and it landed on my seat. I was clueless where it came from. I didn't notice any other airplanes in the area. This time the word "Healing" was written on it. I wondered what that meant.

The following week, everything happened so quickly. I received a call from the employment agency, was interviewed by the employer, and got hired. The message from the paper airplane suddenly made sense to me. The airplane signified that I'd be going abroad, and "healing" meant that I'd be healed of the emotional pain of waiting for the opportunity to come.

#### The Blessings of Waiting

Looking back, I realized that God did not answer my prayers right away as His way of preparing me for His big blessings. He didn't only provide me with a job related to my profession; He also blessed me with a salary that's more than what I asked for in prayer. And to top it all, my rest day fell on the schedule of The Feast — another answered prayer.

My job allows me to regularly send money to Manila to cover a lot of expenses, including my dad's medical needs. I am grateful that I have a well-paying job that enables me to provide for my family and still have some left for my own savings.

Waiting taught me how to be more patient and strong, which I needed in order to survive in a foreign country. Besides, I also have my spiritual family that has become my source of strength and inspiration.

My dream of going abroad has come to pass. When we patiently wait on the Lord, everything just falls into place.

# Point of Contact

## I pray that you receive your miracles in Jesus' name!

#### by Bo Sanchez

PRAY THAT GOD LIFT YOUR TRIALS, heal your diseases, bless your problems and direct you to the path He wants you to take. I pray that God remove your fears and give you the courage to surrender your burdens to Him.

So place your hand over my hand, and let's pray with trust,

together with our prayer team of intercessors praying for you right now...

## This page is our Point of Contact, our spiritual connection.

Say after me...

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, I surrender to You my worries and anxieties. I surrender to You my needs, my problems, my trials. I place them all in Your big hands. And I open myself to all that You want to give to me. On this day, I say yes to Your love, to Your blessings, to Your healing, to Your miracles. And Lord, specifically, I ask for the following miracles for my life...

I believe that You answer my prayer in the best way possible! And I thank You in advance for the perfect answers to my prayers. I also ask for the special intercession of Mama Mary. I pray all this in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen!



#### SPECIAL INTENTION FOR THIS MONTH:

Bless the readers of *Kerygma*, Lord. We all live in a world that is filled with temptations. Many of us fight the temptations outside, not knowing that the bigger temptation lies within us — our tendency to reject ourselves. Help us, Lord, to recognize our own weaknesses so that we may fight them from within. Grant us the grace to embrace Your love for us, to love ourselves, to love others, because it is only in doing so that we can be victorious over our daily temptations. I pray all these in Jesus' name. Amen.

Praying for you,



Email your prayer requests to me at bosanchez@kerygmafamily.com or write to me at Shepherd's Voice Publications, #60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109.