



The Life-Changing Magazine

KERYGMA

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Love Is Service

Fight the
Relationship Drift

How to Help OFWs
in Their Finances

OFW

**OVERCOMING FILIPINO
WORRIES**

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AMB. GRACE RELUCIO-PRINCESA

The newly-confirmed Philippine ambassador to the Vatican
opens up about her love for God, our country,
and the Filipinos abroad

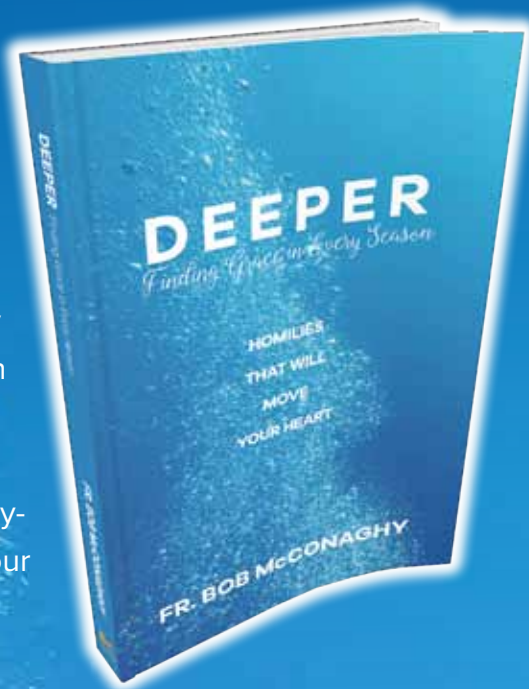
God Wants to Be in Your Every Season

The rituals and traditions that complement our faith can be overwhelming. Or they may seem archaic to others that their response is to become indifferent to these practices and celebrations. That's why this book is a breath of fresh air to those who want to enliven their faith.

Through this soul-kindling collection of homilies, Fr. Bob McConaghy invites us to take God's hand and experience His love and presence in every season of the liturgical year.

Father Bob gives light to theological truths by presenting them in easy-to-digest stories and insights. He gives practical ways to live out your faith during Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas, and the Ordinary Time.

Let your spirit soak in love and grace at every season of the year as you deepen your relationship with the Lord.



"Father Bob has a gift of delivering the truth from a fresh, different perspective. This book will help you embrace the teachings and traditions of our Catholic Church more. As you read these pages, you will find that you want to pray more, fast more, love more".

– Arun Gogna

Bestselling author of *Happy Secrets to an Obedient Life*



Fr. Bob McConaghy is a retired priest from the diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Having retired from active parish ministry for health reasons, he has come back to Manila, Philippines where he has been serving for eight years at Lorenzo Mission Institute Seminary in Guadalupe, Makati City, where he also lives. He is spiritual director to many of the seminarians there. Nowadays, he gives retreats and offers pastoral counseling in Greenbelt Chapel, also in Makati City. He has produced many DVDs and CDs of his seminars.

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Lying Is as Old as the Sun

Today, I'm going to make you feel uncomfortable. Because we'll talk about lying.

I know—all of us have lied.

It's uncomfortable for you because I'm sure you've lied a few times in your life. About your age.

About your waistline. About your love life.

Forgive me, but if my article will sound theoretical, that's because as far as I know, I've never lied in my life. Not when I was a kid. Not when I was teenager. And not when I became an adult.

I have never lied... except right now.

Just kidding.

All of us have lied. Probably me more than others. Lying is as old as the sun. More than four thousand years ago, Aaron, the spokesperson of Moses, lied.

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us."

Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons, and your daughters were wearing, and bring them to me." So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool.

Please note that the Bible said that Aaron made the idol "fashioning it with a tool." Let's continue to read.

When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, he said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such a great sin?"

"Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us.' So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (Exodus 32:1-4, 19, 21-24, NIV)

Aaron said he just threw a bunch of gold jewelry in the fire and voila! Like magic, the calf idol just appeared. Gee whiz. Beats David Copperfield.

Here's the lesson: It's easy to tell the truth when we're not under any pressure. At this point, Aaron was on the hot seat. His brother, Moses, was grilling him.

When we're under a lot of heat, that's when we're tempted to bend the truth.

Remember when I said that there are only two basic emotions—love and fear? Lying comes from fear. Always. We lie because we're afraid. We're afraid of other people's judgment, or other people's rejection, or

other people's criticism—so we embellish the truth. We pretend to be who we are not.


Lying isn't harmless.

Lying is serious. It's the devil's job title. Jesus describes the devil as "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44, NIV).

Chronic lying is a thief that will steal away your freedom. Without truth in your life, you become a slave to your fears. That's why Jesus said, "The truth will set you free" (John 8:31, NIV).

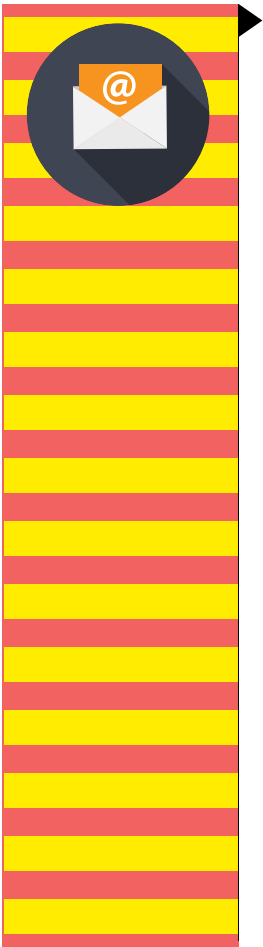
That's why the Bible lumps it with other serious sins: "But cowards, traitors, perverts, murderers, the immoral, those who practice magic, those who worship idols, and all liars—the place for them is the lake burning with fire and sulfur" (Revelations 21:8, GNT).

Today, I want to help you. May I "carefront" you? (That's not in Webster. But it should be. We need to learn the delicate art of confronting people with care.) Ask yourself these hard questions: When do you lie? How do you lie? Are you pretending to be someone you are not? Why are you lying? What are you afraid of?

Today, I pray that God fill our heart with so much of His love, we no longer have to resort to lying and be comfortable with truth. 

May your dreams come true,





Hi, Kerygma! Thank you for inspiring us. Reading your magazine every day helps me to grow closer to God and to know Him better. It also helped me overcome depression. May you continue sharing this gift to other people. More power and God bless!

JC
via Kerygma Books Facebook page

What a life-changing read. I read Rex Mendoza's article and it motivated me to work on my self-improvement without compromising my relationships. Thank you, Kerygma!

Jo Guevera
via www.kerygmfamily.com

You are leading people's lives to submit and glorify God. A big thanks to Kerygma. I am hoping to be part of it someday.

Jamelo Nantes Ricacho
via Kerygma Books Facebook page

I love reading Kerygma. It's a very inspiring magazine.

Antonietta Guadalquiver
via Kerygma Books Facebook page

Thank you for this magazine. God bless your company.

Andre Gere
via www.kerygmfamily.com

Continue to inspire more people through this magazine and its articles.

**Shevilson Villamil
Hermosa**
via www.kerygmfamily.com

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One day, my sister messaged me with an article about an American pastor who hails from a well-known Christian church founded in Australia. He was a guest on a talk show where he was asked point-blank whether abortion was a sin in their church. His reply was, "That's the kind of conversation we would have finding out your story, where you're from, what you believe. I mean, God's the judge... People have to live to their own convictions." The audience broke out in applause.

My sister was asking me for a comment maybe because she knew I had attended conferences of this church in the past.

I answered her, "That's what's hard about being a Christian who's not a Catholic. You interpret issues on your own. There's no one doctrine they all believe in." My answer satisfied her but it also got me to appreciate my Catholic faith more and dig deeper.

We Catholics have the Scripture, Sacred Tradition, and the Magisterium as our source of beliefs while Christians look to the Bible alone as their authority.

A friend explains it this way: Imagine if anyone can take the Philippine Constitution and interpret the law the way they understand it. We'd probably have thousands of versions of what "due process of law" means. Or who will define what "just compensation" is when my private property is taken for public use? That's why we have the Supreme Court enlighten us on the correct interpretation of the law or to make the final decision on any disputes. How do they do it? Partly by looking at the spirit behind the law and



The Benefits of Being Catholic

Take advantage of our rich deposit of faith

the historical application of it.


This is where it gets good to be Catholic. Because we have what's called apostolic succession, which means an unbroken chain of leadership from St. Peter, whom Jesus appointed as the Rock upon which He built His Church (Matthew 16:18), all the way down to our present Pope Francis, the 266th successor to the papacy. (Some say 267th if you count Stephen II in the eighth century who died before he was installed as pope.)

How can Born Again Christians say that everything we believe in has to be in the Bible when Scripture itself says, "There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25)?

Many other things that Jesus taught and did were handed down by word of mouth by the very people who ate with Him, accompanied Him while He was on earth, and witnessed His miracles. This is where Sacred Tradition comes in. That's why St. Paul said, "Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral

statement or by a letter of ours" (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

Where does a non-Catholic Christian turn to determine God's teaching on abortion, euthanasia, in-vitro fertilization, and many other modern conundrums that didn't exist during Jesus' time or were not spoken of in Scripture? Thank God, we Catholics have specific teachings on these issues, and whether we all subscribe to it or not doesn't change God's revealed truth on those matters.

So if I may humbly correct the pastor's answer to the interviewee's question, it should be, "Yes, abortion is a sin in any church that claims to be Christian. Because the Ten Commandments tell us, 'Thou shall not kill.'" 


Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard this rich trust with the help of the holy Spirit that dwells within us. (2 Timothy 1:12-14)

Visit www.rissasingsonkawpeng.com for more of Rissa's inspiring articles. E-mail her at justbreatherissa@gmail.com.

By Rissa Singson Kawpeng



about the cover model



Ambassador Grace Relucio-Princesa has been in the diplomatic services for thirty years now. Aside from having a degree in Foreign Services from the University of the Philippines, Amb. Grace also took a Master in Migration Studies in Miriam College to broaden her knowledge about the industry so she can help her fellow Filipinos more. Her motherly yet courageous service in her previous posts including in Iraq, United Arab Emirates, and Egypt earned her the monikers "Babaylan from Albay" or a Filipina warrior and Nanay Amba.

Aside from her ardent love for the country, she is also very vocal about her love for God. She belongs to three spiritual communities that give her strength and inner peace: Light of Jesus Family, Regina Rosarii Contemplative Association, and Couples for Christ.

In February 2018, Nanay Amba has been confirmed as the new Philippine ambassador to the Holy See. Be inspired on how she lives up to her catchphrase, "OFWs matter, Nanay Amba cares" on page 32.

Photo credits: Daniel Soriano
Hair and Makeup Artist: Keren Talladen



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daily pause **with** Pope Francis

<p>► 1</p> <p>“As we grow in our spiritual lives, we realize how grace comes to us and to others, and must be shared with everyone.”</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>“There is no better medicine to heal so many wounds than a heart capable of mercy.”</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>“All of us are called to commit ourselves to protecting minors in the digital world.”</p> 
<p>7</p> <p>“May every person come to Christ, the Light of Truth, and may the world advance along the path of justice and peace.”</p>	<p>8</p> <p>“A faith that does not trouble us is a troubled faith. A faith that does not make us grow is a faith that needs to grow.”</p>	<p>9</p> <p>“Jesus is our mediator, who reconciles us not only with the Father but also with each other.”</p>
<p>1 3</p> <p>“Christian joy cannot be bought. It comes from faith and from meeting Jesus Christ, who is the reason for our happiness.”</p> 	<p>1 4</p> <p>“Prayer allows us to see one another the way God our Father sees us, and to realize that we are brothers and sisters.”</p>	<p>1 5</p> <p>“I would like to invite everyone to promote a journalism of peace, a journalism created by people for people.”</p>
<p>1 9</p> <p>“The Lord calls you today to travel with Him through the city, your city. He calls you to be His missionary disciple.”</p>	<p>2 0</p> <p><i>“Don't waste time hiding your heart. Fill your life with the Holy Spirit!”</i></p>	<p>2 1</p> <p>“Every life counts: from the beginning to the end, from conception to natural death.”</p> 
<p>“We must not wait to be perfect before responding to the Lord who calls us, but rather open our hearts to His voice.”</p> <p>2 5</p>	<p>2 6</p> <p>“The encounter with God and our brothers and sisters cannot wait just because we are slow or lazy. We are called to that encounter today!”</p>	<p>2 7</p> <p>“If we fail to suffer with those who suffer, we need to question our own humanity.”</p>
		<p>2 8</p> <p>“The more we are rooted in Christ, the more we rediscover interior peace, even in the midst of daily challenges.”</p>

4

"One who is aware of his own wretchedness and lowers his gaze with humility feels God's merciful gaze set upon him."



5

"Jesus wants to be found by those who look for Him. But to look for Him, we have to get up and go out."

6

"A life of faith means wanting to be with the Lord, and that means constantly searching for Him wherever He is."

1 0



"Goodness, together with love, justice, and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day."

1 1

"Through prayer, we can enter into a stable relationship with God, the source of true joy."

1 2

"Here we are, Lord, ashamed of what humanity, made in Your image and likeness, is capable of doing. Remember us in Your mercy."

1 6

"The most radical antidote to the virus of falsehood is purification by the truth."

1 7

"There is no such thing as harmless disinformation; trusting in falsehood can have dire consequences."

1 8

"Prayer that purifies, strengthens, and illuminates our path is like fuel for our journey towards full Christian unity."

2 2

"The Gospel message is a source of joy: a joy that spreads from generation to generation and which we inherit."



2 3

"Listening to religious teaching or learning a doctrine is not enough. What we want is to live as Jesus lived."

2 4



"We pray to God for the courage to ask forgiveness and to learn how to listen to what He is saying to us."



2 9

"A joyful soul is like healthy soil in which life can thrive and produce good fruit."

3 0

"Joy, prayer, and gratitude are three ways that help us live authentically."



► *Organize Your Kitchen for Good Health*



TO INSPIRE YOU TO BE FIT AND HEALTHY, you need to look at your kitchen and follow these useful hacks.

- 1. Clear the kitchen mess** or else you will be pushed to eat more than necessary. A study in 2016 discovered that women in a disorderly kitchen ate more cookies than women in the same kitchen when it was organized.
- 2. Put good food on display.** Arrange your refrigerator shelves in a way that your fruits, vegetables, and other produce will be first to be seen. A study found that women with a visible fruit bowl on the kitchen counter weighed about thirteen pounds less than those without.
- 3. Update your spice cabinet** by throwing away old and expired seasonings and replacing them with new ones. Spices and herbs like curry, ginger, garlic, and rosemary can make vegetables taste more appealing.
- 4. Hang an analog clock**, which makes you more aware of the time, shows how much time has elapsed, and how much you have left. Better time management can give you the extra minutes you need for breakfast, which studies have linked with a lower risk of diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Source: <https://www.realsimple.com/>



Five Don'ts in Writing Your Resume

GOING ON A JOB HUNT THIS MONTH? Make sure you remember the following resume writing tips:

- 1. Don't enumerate tasks but achievements instead.** The bullet points under each job entry shouldn't read like a list of daily tasks. Instead, these must show your accomplishments in each role, how it helped make or save money, solved a problem, improved customer retention, or made the company better.
- 2. Don't forget good quality format and proofreading.** Inconsistent fonts, spacing or formatting, spelling, and grammar mistakes convey a lack of attention to detail and can be annoying to the hiring manager. If you're submitting your resume as an e-mail attachment, make sure it's saved as a PDF so the formatting won't be affected.
- 3. Don't forget to tailor your resume relative to the job.** If the application instructions require you to write specific information in your resume, make sure you include it. Your most relevant achievements must also be near the top of the resume so they'll immediately stand out.
- 4. Don't lie.** "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed" (Luke 8:17).
- 5. Don't put "References upon request" at the end of your resume.** This line used to be standard but it's already considered an unnecessary filler. Employers will assume your references are available so better be prepared.

Source: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/>



Quick Health Tip

Coconut Water

ASIDE FROM BEING A THIRST QUENCHER, coconut water is packed with nutrients that give us health benefits. These include being extremely low in fat so it aids in weight-loss efforts; high fiber concentration so it helps to prevent indigestion and reduces acid reflux; and calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, potassium, and sodium, which are electrolytes that can boost hydration and reduce blood pressure.

Source: <https://www.lifehack.org/>

Saints-at-a-Glance

Saint Beuno

Death: 640

Feast Day: April 21

According to legends, Saint Beuno was a monk in Wales who established his own community and performed numerous miracles. Among these miracles was restoring Saint Winifred's head after she was beheaded. He was also said to be an effective preacher who evangelized much of North Wales and founded a monastery at Clynnog Fawr. He is considered a patron of sick children.

Source: <http://www.catholic.org/>



POPE FRANCIS' FIRST IN-FLIGHT WEDDING

A CONCRETE MANIFESTATION of the saying, "If there's a will, there's a way," happened on January 18, 2018 when Pope Francis officiated the wedding of a flight attendant couple on board a plane in Chile.

The couple, Paula Podest and Carlos Ciufardi, have been together for ten years and were civilly married in 2010. Days before their church wedding, an earthquake destroyed the church where they were to be wed. When Pope Francis found out about this, he offered to lead the ceremony right there, which the couple, despite their shock, eventually accepted.

They tapped the CEO of the airline to be the witness, and the pope requested the cardinals present to draft the license. The handwritten document was signed by one of the cardinals, also a witness.

Ciufardi shared in an interview what Pope Francis said to them: "This is the sacrament the world needs—the sacrament of marriage. Hopefully, this will motivate couples around the world to get married."

Source: <https://cruxnow.com/>



L'Osservatore Romano Vatican Media / Pool Photo via AP

► TURN YOUR PLASTIC INTO ECOBRICKS

ECOBICKS ARE plastic bottles stuffed with nonbiodegradable trash like plastic wrappers, cigarette butts, straws, sachets, and the like. They are used as alternative fillers in constructing walls and fences for classrooms, houses, garden posts, benches, etc.

Canadian artist Russell Maier began this idea while he was staying in the Cordillera Region in 2012. He and other supporters taught the locals how to create and use ecobricks. In 2014, the Global Ecobrick Alliance was founded and the website Ecobricks.org was created. Here in the Philippines, a similar advocacy called The Plastic Solution was founded by Ziggy Gonzales, a Filipino surfer and hostel owner, who got the concept from Ecobricks.org.

Both Ecobricks.org and The Plastic Solution have one aim—to lessen the plastic wastes being thrown everywhere, especially in bodies of water; to save the environment; and to turn trash into something that will benefit a community.

For more information on how to create ecobricks and where they can be dropped off, visit The Plastic Solution Facebook page.



theplasticsolution

Sources:
<https://www.facebook.com/theplasticsolution/>
<https://www.spot.ph/>
<https://www.ecobricks.org/>



The Call to Immeasurable Service: A Lighthouse Gathering



▲ **Faith, fun, and family.** From the talks, the worship, and the team-building activities, the Lighthouse members rekindle their fire to serve and love God and others.

By Krizelle R. Talladen
Photos by Rey de Guzman

Employees, volunteers, and even on-the-job trainees of the different ministries of the Light of Jesus Family—collectively called the Lighthouse—spent the last two days of February this year with a recollection, team building, and general assembly, inspired by the overall theme, "Immeasurable Service." The said activities were held in Chateau Royale Hotel Resort and Spa in Nasugbu, Batangas.

We Have a Big and Immeasurable God
The whole day of February 27 was allotted for the recollection and the Lighthouse employees were blessed to listen to speakers whose talks rekindled their fire of faith and service. There were also group sharing, prayer time, and worship sessions.

The first two talks were given by

Omy and Rosanne Romero, who both reiterated how big and immeasurable God is when it comes to the miracles He can do in one's life. Quoting great stories from the Bible, Rosanne and Omy gave a message of hope that no matter what storm may come, God will fight for His children. He will save them so they can also help others who are going through the same trials.

The Three Must-Dos of a Disciple
After lunch, Tom Lara from The Feast Sydney, began the series of the three things a disciple must do, based on Matthew 16:24 which says, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Tom focused on denying oneself and reminded everyone the values of humility, obedience, and being considerate.

Rissa Singson Kawpeng, editor-



in-chief of Shepherd's Voice Publications (SVP), gave the next talk on taking up one's cross daily as inspired by Luke 9:23, which is another version of the previously mentioned verse. Rissa's talk focused on the three words that summarize Mama Mary's life—*fiat* ("let it be done"), *magnificat* ("my soul magnifies the Lord"), and *stabat* ("at the foot of the cross").

After dinner, Randy Borromeo, vice president of Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television (SVRTV) and district builder of The Feast Makati, gave the last installment of the series—following Jesus. He encouraged everyone to follow Jesus fully, freely, fearlessly, and faithfully.

The first day ended with

all employees recommitting their service to God through the ministry or company they belong to, and extending love to each other by affirmations and embraces.

SOLA and Team Building

The general assembly and team-building activities happened the next day, February 28.


The State of Lighthouse Address (SOLA) was delivered by Hermie Morelos, president of SVRTV and SVP, together with Weng Cequeña, vice president for corporate services.

For the team-building activities, six teams competed among each other through the obstacle course and other games facilitated by a group

from SVRTV. Despite everyone getting dirty, wet, tired, and burned by the heat of the sun, each team was able to complete all the tasks.

For the final goal, everyone, regardless of team, helped to complete a huge tarpaulin puzzle that says "Dedicated to Immeasurable Service, Team Lighthouse."

After the team-building activity, everyone was given free time to swim in the pool, avail of the other facilities in the resort, or to rest before checkout and lunch.

This two-day gathering closed with another round of worship, with everyone thanking God and hoping for a better and stronger Lighthouse team, ready to give immeasurable service and immense love. 

#GiveLoveGiveKerygma

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Be their messenger of hope today.

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12 KERYGMA April 2018 Contact Sarah Discutido, 725-9999 loc 104, 09228147031. Email: subscription@shepherdsvoice.com.ph

I am twenty-five years old, with a very stable career. I'm also an active servant in our faith community. I've been single for five years now, and I bloomed so much during this season. Recently though, I am beginning to like someone in a deeper way. He's been courting me for over a year now. He is kind, generous, and a true man after God's own heart. Many people look up to him as a brother and co-servant. However, my parents don't like him for some reason. I know in my heart that my parents would love this man if they only give him a chance, but they are very firm with their decision. I am torn between following my heart and honoring my parents. I don't want to hurt my parents, but I am very certain that my suitor is a great man. I don't know what to pray for anymore. What should I do?

Tisha

Dear Tisha,

I can feel how you're being torn between following your parents or choosing the man you love. From the way you describe your suitor, he has commendable qualities. You said he has been courting you for over a year so I would presume you've gotten to know him better over that time.

What you need to do now is to identify those reasons why your parents don't like him. You didn't mention anything in particular but I'm sure, if your parents are logical and reasonable, whatever they're objecting to is something that's not superficial. Date them and have a serious heart-to-heart talk to flesh out their objections. It's hard to solve a problem that you can't put your finger on.

For example, if they admit that the reason they don't like your suitor is because they don't think he's good enough for you, ask them in what way. Is it because he doesn't earn enough and they're afraid that he will not be a good provider for your future family? Or is it because he has a lowly position? If you know what the problem is, then you and your suitor can begin to look for solutions.

At some point, it may good to let your suitor know what your parents' objections are so he can have the chance to prove himself to them. Remember that he will also have to win over your family and not just your heart, because when he marries you, he'll "marry" the rest of your family too. Being on good terms with them will help your relationship along.

Unraveling your dilemma starts with getting to the bottom of your parents' objections. Communication is the key.



Rissa Singson Kawpeng

E-mail 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 pastoral carer of the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center. Pastoral caring session by telephone is 24 hours from Monday to Friday, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. Face-to-face session is by appointment. For correspondence pastoral session, e-mail lojpastoralcare@gmail.com, go to www.kerygmfamily.com, or call **(632) 725-999**.

Should I Follow My Heart?



“

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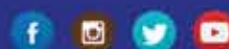


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A FULFILLMENT OF A DREAM WRITTEN ON PAPER

By Barz Lomibao



I learned about The Feast when my mother bought a *Kerygma* magazine. In one of the articles, Bo Sanchez invited people to their prayer meeting. Since I'm from the province, I've never attended one but just watched it on TV. In 2011, I had the chance to attend my first-ever Feast at SM Manila, and it became one of the highlights of my life! From the moment I stepped into The Feast, up to the time I arrived home, I could still feel God's radiating love. From that moment on, the dream of having The Feast in our area began in my heart.

The Birth of Feast Video Dagupan

Our first step was to adopt The Feast atmosphere in our Vicariate Youth Ministry's monthly prayer gathering. That gathering lasted for six years, until God called us to "go into the deep sea."

We had good plans of evangelizing and discipling our youth, but God had a better plan—the best plan. He reminded me of my dream to have a Feast in Dagupan to have a greater catch of "different kinds of fish" for God. I talked to my team, laying down all the cards. We didn't know how to start, because none of us had any contact with the Light of Jesus Family. But as they say, if it is God's work, He will provide. I was introduced to The Feast Video so I sent a message to Aya Corpuz and she positively responded and guided me. On May 2, 2017, on my twenty-ninth birthday, we launched The Feast Video Dagupan at



Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Building, Dagupan City.

The Feast Video Dagupan has Holy Mass, live praise and worship, and a powerful talk by Bo Sanchez on video. We also have Big Days when we invite friends or preachers from different Feasts to give a talk, like Elwin Sabuco of Feast Video Lifestyles, Dwight Castillo of Feast Pacita, and Maymay Salvosa of The Feast SM Manila. As always, we were comfortable with our attendance until I met Noel Tamin, Feast Builder from the Cabanatuan. Through him, God again challenged us to "go deeper in the sea."


The Dream Becoming a Reality

Brother Noel suggested that we split The Feast Video Dagupan into smaller Feast Videos consisting of ten to fifteen people. He also shared that if we want to have a live Feast, it must come from the overflowing Feast Videos and discipleship.

To be honest, it was hard for us to adopt his suggestion. We were afraid that instead of multiplying our attendees, we might lose them. But after days of reflection, we came up with a decision.

In September 2017, we created nine smaller Feast Videos: four Feast Video



Dagupan Youth, three Feast Video Dagupan Singles, Feast Video Dagupan Couples and Feast Video Dagupan Honda. At first, it was hard for us, core servants, and for the attendees, but the Holy Spirit helped us to realize His greater purpose. Last December 17, the dream that just was written on paper became a reality: We launched our first-ever live Feast at Santuario De San Juan Evangelista in Dagupan City. Over a hundred Dagupeños and Pangasinenses gathered together—all of them singing and dancing to worship Jesus. They were blessed by God's message through the powerful preaching of Brother Noel. Together, we hold on to God's promise: "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6, NIV). 

Join the live Feast in Dagupan every third Sunday of the month, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Santuario De San Juan Evangelista, Zamora Street. For other Feast venues and schedules, visit www.lightfam.com.



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Managing T.E.S.

For solo parents, managing T.E.S. must be one of the most important skills we should learn. No, it is not your headache-inducing househelp or the babysitter you need to track on your CCTV. T.E.S. stands for Time, Expectations, and Stress.

Put Your Time in HD

For solo parents who are always pressed for time, giving our best means putting all the love and effort into that chunk of time that we have allotted for a task.

When I say, "Put your time in high definition," I mean that your full focus must be on the task at hand or in the relationship you are nurturing at any particular time. It is not having lunch with your kids and being on the phone talking to your office staff. It is not doing household chores in the middle of writing a report.

Choose Your Excellence

Success gurus tell us we should be excellent in everything that we do, that we should give our one

hundred percent to every task. I bet many of these success gurus are not solo parents. It can be tiring and draining to be excellent all the time. For me, solo parents should learn to choose their excellence—to pick those Shine-Like-a-Star moments wisely.

Have the right expectations. Ask questions like, "Will my children die of neglect if I cook a gourmet dinner only on Sundays instead of every night?" Or, "Will the world stop if I put only the required photos in our weekly newsletter instead of going the extra two hundred miles to include an eight-hundred-word article that was not being asked of me anyway?"

Discern and decide which things need your one hundred percent.

Step Back Before You Stress


"Don't sweat the small stuff" is such a wise adage that I keep going back to it when I'm under pressure. It reminds me not to be anxious about the minutest detail. If I can

By Lella Santiago

let something slide, then I do.

There's another thought that helps me along when faced with stress: Take a step back and view stress from a different perspective. The stressor may not be as big as I thought it was.

"It's just one bit of information out of the 250 million things that happen every second." This is from a "Woman of Worth" retreat I attended. The speaker was talking about the things that are bothering us about our lives. I also learned about Teddy Roosevelt's humility. This great man would look at the stars to remind himself that he is just a small part of the galaxy.

To me, viewing yourself as just a small dot in the universe makes our anxieties just as tiny. In the scale of things, the One who created the universe is so much bigger than the things that worry us. And since He has promised to take care of us, what is there to needlessly stress about, right? 

Lella Santiago authored a book titled *The Happy Solo Kit*, available at www.kerygmabooks.com.



The first day of my college internship at a well-renowned multinational advertising agency was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I recall being in my junior year while studying at one of the top universities in the country and stepping into that creative office with my head held high. Confidence leaked from my demeanor like the scent of irritatingly overwhelming cologne. When I was sent to my temporary manager's cubicle to discuss my objectives for the next four weeks, I was ready with a full list of prepared answers worthy of a Miss Universe title. *"I am here. I know everything. I will work. I will make a difference in this firm. I will save the world and bring world peace."*

My boss took one look at me over her huge pile of work papers and gestured for me to take a seat in a small table across the room, making it quite clear that she was extremely busy. One of her assistants walked past to drop a pair of scissors in front of me and a stack of newspapers. She then gave me one job to do—look for any article in the publication that mentioned one of our clients and cut it out. That was it. No more, no less (if there could actually be any less). So that's what I did. Eight hours a day for an entire week. The fact that I assumed I would be writing press releases or contributing to campaign strategies was suddenly laughable. And then I got angry. *Weren't they aware of what I was capable of? Didn't they know how hard I had been working for my degree? Didn't I deserve more responsibilities than simply cutting pieces of paper?*

"I'm going to open my own advertising agency and work for myself," I blurted out one morning to my mom after I had finished ranting to her. Despite




being silent almost the entire time, she chose that moment to speak up. "If you opened your own business with that kind of attitude, you will fail completely. Your dad served coffee to people at his office every day even if it wasn't part of his job description—not because he thought he couldn't do more but because someone had to do it. And that's the reason why he can afford the tuition for that very school which you think makes you better than everyone else. There was not a single kind of job that he felt was 'beneath him.' As long as it was necessary and it was a service to others, he never hesitated, and that's why he is where he is today."

There's this misconception that there are shortcuts to becoming successful, such as finding a way to make more money by exerting the least amount of effort possible or the expectation of being part of top management immediately upon graduation. Even entrepreneurship can become an excuse for those who are trying to avoid working as an entry-level employee. But the best customer service manager I've met is excellent at his job because he is unafraid

By Eleanore L. Teo

to pick up the phone and help his team answer calls when the lines are ringing nonstop or when they're short on manpower for the day. Because of his experience with actual field work, he has empathy for his people and understands the sacrifices they make to provide quality service to their customers. This creates a significant relationship between management and their employees that is vital for any company to thrive.

If you truly want to become successful in business or in your career, you cannot be fearful of starting from the bottom. You need to embrace it as a chance to educate yourself, build your basic skills, and to learn to appreciate what other members contribute to the organization. Don't forget that success begins when we set aside our pride and is inevitable when we pursue the willingness to work for it. 

Eleanore Teo is the director for marketing and operations at the Caylum Trading Institute. E-mail her at elyo.lee@gmail.com.





Juicing Recipes for Summer

It's summertime once again! Traveling, engaging in outdoor activities, or even just staying at home can be dehydrating this season. Dehydration may cause dizziness, fatigue, and sometimes, heat stroke. So get your family members together and do the following juice recipes to quench your thirst.

Here are a few pointers and instructions:

1. Clean fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Make a water-vinegar wash and/or a water-salt wash where you can soak your vegetables before preparing it.
2. If you don't have a juicer, you can use a blender. After blending your ingredients, pour everything into a clean *katsa* or cheesecloth and squeeze out the juice and strain out the pulp. You can even use a fine wire-mesh strainer to strain the pulp.

3. You can add buko juice or water to the juices if the juice tastes too strong for you.

Immune Boost Juice

Ingredients:

1 handful alfalfa sprouts (or broccoli sprouts)
1 floret broccoli
1 small radish
2 medium carrots
1 small cucumber
1 garlic clove or 1 small *sibuyas* Tagalog

How to Do It:

Prepare your vegetables: Soak the alfalfa sprouts and broccoli in vinegar wash solution; brush, clean, slice the radish, carrots, and cucumber; peel the garlic or *sibuyas* Tagalog. Run the ingredients through your juicer or blender. This is good for one to two glasses.

Relaxing Juice

Ingredients:

1 cucumber
2 celery stalks (trimmed)
3 lettuce leaves

How to Do It:

By Chichi Barba


Prepare the vegetables (wash thoroughly and slice/chop). Push the ingredients into your juicer or blender. This gives one to two glasses.

Tropical Flavors Juice

Ingredients:

2-inch wedge pineapple
1 medium-sized orange or 2 pieces dalandan
1 tablespoon lemon or calamansi

How to Do It:

Wash and peel the fruits, and combine them and the juices in a juicer. Serve (strain if using a blender). This will make approximately 8 ounces (one regular glass). 

Chichi wrote the book, Eat Well, Get Well, available at www.kerygmabooks.com. E-mail her at chichibarba@outlook.com.





Safeguarding Our Family Relationships

By Dina Pecaña

Family is supposed to be our safe haven. Very often, it's the place where we find the deepest heartache," said Iyanla Vanzant, an author and inspirational speaker.

Many of us can relate to this quote. It happens to the best of families—disappointments, misunderstandings, and tragedies abound and bring strong family ties to a breaking point. Apart from these conflicts, there are more threats to the family, as Pope Francis warns us: "The family is also threatened by the growing efforts on the part of some to redefine the very institution of marriage, by relativism, by the culture of ephemeral, by a lack of openness to life" (Message to Families, MOA Arena, January 16, 2015).


In our country, the continuous migration of OFWs to provide a better future for their families have brought more damage than good to the present. How many Filipina mothers work as nannies abroad, taking care of other children while leaving their own kids in the care of relatives? How many nurses and caregivers look after the elderly in different parts of the world while entrusting the care

of their own aging parents to others? Can the family survive amidst these challenging times?

Yes, the family can, by God's anointing grace and with much effort on our part. The first step is to go back to what is essential in every family—relationships, especially between parents and children. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) teaches: "God has willed that, after him, we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God. We are obliged to honor and respect all those whom God, for our good, has vested with His authority" (2197). Gone are the days when only the parents would talk and the children would just listen. The parent-child relationship has evolved and is nourished by communication. But deep and relevant communication starts with mutual respect. A father who chastises a teenage son without hearing his side of the story would most likely end up in a shouting match and rebellion. But children, including adult children, are never justified in answering back, shouting, or disrespecting their parents. The Lord made it clear in the fourth

commandment: "Honor your father and mother." Respect your parents, no matter how imperfect they are. Respect your parents, no matter how incorrigible they are. Respect your parents—because God gave them to you.

Parents, your children will respect you if you also respect them. Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord." While disciplining your children is necessary, being a good example to them in exercising self-discipline and self-control is also needed.

The fourth commandment may be difficult to follow but it is the only one with a promise: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Deuteronomy 5:16). The CCC explains the importance of obeying this commandment: "Respecting this commandment provides, along with spiritual fruits, temporal fruits of peace and prosperity" (2200). And God is faithful to fulfill His promise. So, let us do our best to honor Him by respecting our parents. 



The Lenten season has prompted many of us Catholics to do special activities together with our family members. Come Easter, most of us forget the lessons of Lent and return to our normal routines.

But not for Tina Rodriguez and her family. The blogger behind the website *Truly Rich and Blessed*, which won as the Best Catholic Blog at the Catholic Social Media Awards 2017, shares how she creatively celebrates this season together with her husband and children yearly.

"Our family tries our best to adopt practices that promote liturgical living," she said, "that is, making the liturgy and beauty of our Catholic traditions come alive in our home."

Tina shares her family's Easter activities which you can also do this year and beyond.

For Lent and Holy Week

To prepare for Easter, the Rodriguez family observes the Lenten season and Holy Week by reading Lenten-themed books, praying the Rosary and Stations of the Cross, and doing other activities like the Lenten Sacrifice Jar, where kids place a bean in a jar for every sacrifice that they make.

They also decide on what they will fast from before Lent begins, like gadgets and sweet treats, and look for ways to do the Lenten practice of almsgiving as a family.

During Holy Week, they participate in the different activities at their parish and other places.

For Easter Sunday

It has been an Easter Sunday tradition for the Rodriguez Family to attend the Grand Easter Feast organized by the Light of Jesus Family. They also make sure to read one or two of their Easter-themed books after their family prayers, and greet one another with, "Christ is risen, alleluia!"

By Krizelle R. Talladen

Sometimes, they even feast on a cake that has "Alleluia, Christ Is Risen!" written on it with icing.

For the Rest of the Fifty Days of Easter

Instead of the Easter egg hunt, the Rodriguez family does their annual Easter Treasure Hunt, where the kids look for "treasures" like books, religious items like medals, rosaries, and saint cards, and chocolate Easter eggs.

They also put Easter decorations in their home, read more Easter-themed books, continue to pray the Rosary daily, and sometimes do Easter-themed crafts.

This year, they've started praying the Stations of the Resurrection as described on www.CatholicIcing.com.

"We hope that all of these will help us focus on the beauty of the Easter season, and the joy of Jesus' resurrection," said Tina, who prays the same for every Catholic family. 📖

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The Breadwinner Wins

How God Expedites Our Blessings Through Our Trials

By Nica Masilang

I am the eldest in a brood of three from an OFW family. When we were still very young, whenever my siblings and I would see an airplane flying in the sky, we would always shout out, “Papa! Papa!” as if he could hear us.

Papa worked in Saudi Arabia for many, many years. He only decided to return home to help my mother in the embroidery business that she opened beside our house. By then, I was already in college.

I graduated in Computer Science and a couple of years later, tragedy struck our family. In 2005, the dollar exchange rate soared, affecting the export business of embroidery products. The price of raw materials in the Philippines went up so much that it was no longer competitive in the world market. Our business slowed down until it finally closed.

When our business shut down, I inherited more than a million pesos worth of debt. I was only twenty-two years old then and I was the only one in the family with

a job. Being the eldest, it fell upon my shoulders to be the breadwinner.

Month after month, my salary would go to paying our debts and our daily expenses. As a Computer Science graduate, I love doing Math and so I computed how long it would take me to pay all our debts while I supported my family. Based on my salary then, I would be forty by the time I was done paying. I worried that it might be impossible for me to have a family of my own at that age.

So I looked for extra income. I tutored kids after work and invested my earnings in a piggery in Bulacan. The profit at first was OK. But after three cycles, my pigs died and my capital was depleted.

I looked for other sidelines. Since I was in front of the computer most of the time, I ventured into sales. I tried joining multi-level marketing companies and sold cell phone load. I realized how much effort I must exert to sell but that was OK because I learned a lot from the

"I realized that if I think negatively, negative things will also happen. So I decided to straighten up and be strong, thinking that my family depended on me. I planned on defeating our debt and achieving the dreams in my life."

experience.

In 2008, I was hired by an investment bank in Singapore. I felt very lucky at landing the job, considering I had to earn big-time for our needs. But I wasn't aware that the global recession was also at its peak then. In my first few months there, I heard a lot of tragic stories of OFWs losing their jobs. One whole department of our company with more than a hundred workers were laid off. My coworker on my left and on my right were fired. I was demoralized and scared, thinking that I would be next. I worried even more how I could continue helping my family if I would lose my job.

It came to a point when all I did was pour my time and effort at work to forget my gloom over what was happening around me. To make matters worse, my first-ever boyfriend and I broke up because we were miles apart, and my family was having problems at home. The good luck that I initially felt had befallen me turned into bad luck.

The Bottle of Juice

One night after work, I passed by a store to buy my dinner. There was a pricey bottle of juice that I really liked but would never buy because

I needed to save money. But that night, I was so depressed that I bought one bottle. When I got home, I put my things down and heard something fall. It was the expensive juice I had bought and it spilled on the floor! I was so frustrated because my only reward for myself then was wasted.

That simple experience became the turning point of my life. I realized that if I think negatively, negative things will also happen. So I decided to straighten up and be strong, thinking that my family depended on me. I planned to defeat our debt and achieve the dreams for my life.

I listed my family's daily expenses and told them that I would only send a certain amount so I could save and pay for our debts. With great penny-pinching skills and sacrifice based on the plan that I created, I paid our debt in one year.

The debt that I thought I would fully pay when I turned forty, I was able to pay when I was just twenty-six years old.

Goodbye, Debt! Hello Again, Business!

With our financial



The June Bride.

Nica and her fiancé, whom she met in the TrulyRichClub Superconference, tied the knot in June 2014.

obligation out of the way, I started to research on a business for my family.

I remembered it was my parents' dream to own an apartment rental business. So for three years, I read a lot of blogs, articles, and books on real estate. I also attended webinars and invested in meeting mentors.

Whenever I would go back to the Philippines, I would go around and look for properties for sale or for rent because I wanted to apply what I had been learning. Even as I researched, I also started to save up for the fifty percent down payment of the property I wanted to buy.

At the end of those three years, I bought a house, converted it to a furnished



The Royals of Real Estate. Nica is blessed to have met Platinum Wealth Circle mentor Randy Manaloto (extreme right), and real estate mentors Maves Angeles (extreme left) and Dra. Ruth Ang (second to the right), forming CentroMavens.

boarding house for young professionals, and with my family's help, rented it out. That provided income for my family's daily expenses. Since I was still employed in Singapore, I would help out after working hours in our real estate business doing online marketing and support till three in the morning.

Hello, Light of Jesus! Goodbye, Singapore!

Even though I was able to establish a source of income for my family back in the Philippines, I stayed on in Singapore so I could save up some more for myself and my future family. I wanted to be financially ready when I returned to the Philippines.

Eventually, I found The

Feast in Singapore and got to know more about Light of Jesus Family. I read Bo Sanchez's articles and his inspiring words motivated me to dream big and to create my own life mission.

After four years of working abroad, I decided to become a full-time entrepreneur. In August 2012, I came back to the Philippines for good.

Truly Rich and Truly Loving

In October 2012, I attended the TrulyRichClub Superconference, which brought positive changes in my life. I learned so many things, rubbed elbows with a lot of entrepreneurs, and met my future husband.


After the Superconference, I signed up for the Platinum

Wealth Circle, which made my entrepreneurship life grow and blossom.

I was able to love and provide for my aging parents more, this time by putting up another boarding house whose income provides for their medical needs.

Together with Maves Angeles and Dra. Ruth Ang who are into real estate, I was picked by Randy Manaloto, a Platinum Wealth Circle mentor who is into constructing his own apartment rentals, to form a company called CentroMavens, which helps investors earn passive income through real estate. We construct buildings and operate them as a chain under a new brand of boutique hotel called Nest Nano Suites. Our first location is in Poblacion Makati and this is already sold out. Our second location just had its groundbreaking, which is walking distance to Uptown Mall BGC The Fort.

One thing I realized from everything that I experienced is that when God lets you go through many trials, it means that He's expediting your victory and success.

That's what happened to me. And surely, it can happen to just about anyone. Just don't give up but believe. 



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In the Philippines, there are fourteen million solo parents.

Their spouses are ghosts to their children.

If your parents are Overseas Filipinos Workers or OFWs, I want you to honor their sacrifice. They're working there because of you. Appreciate them. Serve them. Love them.

And if you resent them for not being physically present during the most important events of your life, forgive them.

Here's what's more difficult: If your parent abandoned you, left your family, and chose someone else, you have to decide to move on. You can't get stuck in your anger, or else you let the cycle of abandonment continue down to your children and grandchildren. Forgive the parent who abandoned you. And still honor that person for being your father or mother.

I love the story of my friend Carl. His father left him when he was three years old and Carl lived in abject poverty. His mother worked as a maid for twenty years. Wherever his mother worked, little Carl worked there as well.

When he was six, his mother worked for a home that didn't allow her to bring her son. So she rented a small windowless room—and left little Carl to be alone for twelve hours every day.

But Carl moved on and forgave his father in his heart.


He didn't want his anger to stop him from becoming a success.

Today, he is a successful businessman. He is president and part-owner of three companies. Nothing big, mind you. Two of them are shipping companies and the third is a mining company. (Shucks, I pity him sometimes.)

Most importantly, he's also an amazing father to his three daughters.

My point?

We'll always face struggles with our families. Our parents may have to work abroad to help sustain the family's finances, and in some cases (but hopefully the cycle will stop), there'll be absentee parents. But we can always choose to overcome our concerns. We can choose to move forward. We can choose to break the cycle of hurt, resentment, and unforgiveness.

And we can choose to love our family members—now. 

OFW: Overcoming Filipino Worries

By Bo Sanchez

Special Section

Teaching

Many years ago, I met Alice, a Filipina teacher in Brunei.

She was my host and took care of me while I was there. When I woke up early one morning, I noticed that she was on the phone. But she wasn't speaking.

She explained that it was her beautiful ritual of love to her husband. Years ago, her husband suffered a stroke and he became paralyzed. So she went to Brunei to work for the family.

And what was this ritual of love? Alice would wake up at four in the morning to call her husband. (This was before the days of cell phones and text messages.) But because they could not afford long distance calls, they agreed that the husband would not answer the phone.

Instead, the husband would allow the phone to ring.

And ring.

And ring.

He would allow the love of Alice, symbolized by the ringing, to fill their house and to fill his heart.

For eight years straight, Alice did this beautiful ritual without fail.

Until he finally passed away.

That's what love is.

They're not feelings that come and go.

They're not moods that are here today and gone tomorrow.

Love is simply done, day in and day out.

It was Saint Teresa of Calcutta who said, "Service is a fruit of love."

If you love, you will serve.

For our overseas Filipino brothers and sisters, love is working day in and day out in a foreign land for their loved ones.

At the Light of Jesus Family, we want to support our overseas Filipinos by providing them with what they need to feed their spiritual life.


How?

Through The Feast International.

Love Is Service

By Bo Sanchez

The Feast, our community's weekly prayer gathering, has grown bigger, and we have expanded beyond Philippine borders. Our Feasts abroad are composed of overseas Filipinos and their families who want to share Jesus to the world. There are Feasts in America, Asia Pacific, Oceania, Europe, and the Middle East. Just log on to www.lightfam.com and check out the Feast nearest you. With our borderless community, our love becomes borderless too. Anywhere in the world, we can gather regularly to feast on God's Word and have a home away from home.

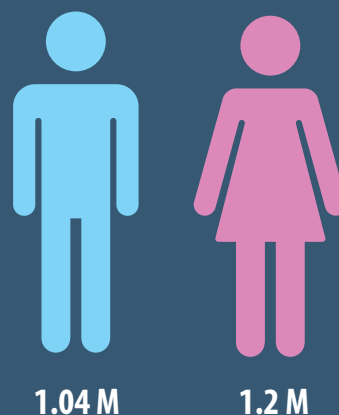
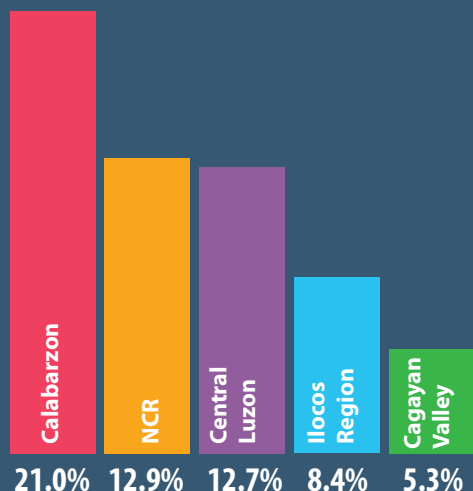
Join us and experience God's love at our gatherings. 



OFWs at a Glance

2.2 million: Number of OFWs who worked abroad at anytime
(from April to September 2016)

WHERE DO MOST OF THEM COME FROM?



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

(Countries with most number of OFWs)



Saudi Arabia (23.8%)



United Arab Emirates (15.9%)



Kuwait (6.4%)



Qatar (6.2%)



Hong Kong and Singapore (5.6%)

TOP OCCUPATIONS



Elementary occupations 34.5%



Service and sales workers 19.0%

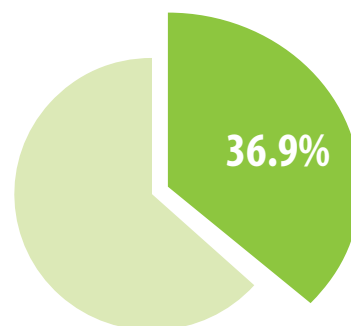
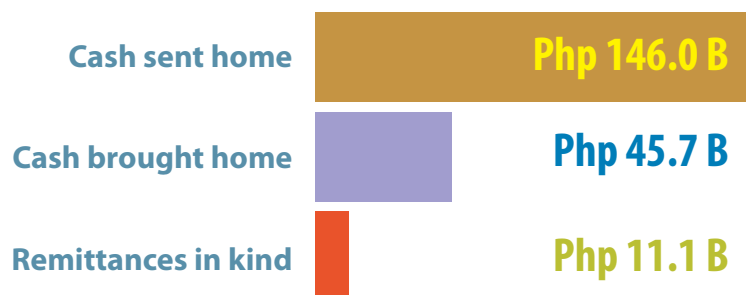


Plant and machine operators and assemblers 12.8%



Craft and related trades workers 11.6%

TOTAL REMITTANCES: 203 BILLION PESOS




able to set aside savings from their cash remittances

Source: <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/survey/labor-and-employment/survey-overseas-filipinos>

Two of my best friends work in Dubai and Singapore, and they always share how difficult it is to be away from home. They missed family reunions, weddings, and other intimate milestones. I knew how much they wanted to celebrate with me when I got engaged last year, but we could only chat our excitement away via Facebook messenger. And when we lost two significant people whom we considered our second parents during the last quarter of 2017, we could only comfort each other through phone calls and video messages. No matter how much we longed to embrace each other, there's no available technology that could bring us together in an instant. There's no substitute to being physically present to one another in times of great sorrow.

But I saw through their faith. Even if they're far from us, their family and friends, my best friends found comfort in God's presence. Thankfully, God's love is too big it can cover the whole world, or the universe for that matter. As long as we rest in His love, we are never truly alone. God's embrace is our constant home wherever we go.

Thus, it is a such a relief to know that there are Filipino faith communities even in foreign lands. These communities have become a place of support, comfort, and empowerment to our overseas Filipino brothers and sisters. In this section, they share how they receive God's love abroad through their respective spiritual families. 



By Maymay R. Salvosa

We knew about the Light of Jesus Family from Bo Sanchez's video on YouTube. We searched on the web and tried to find one in Brisbane. Finally God answered our prayers and we joined our first Light of Jesus (LOJ) meeting on January 11, 2014, and become part of LOJ South Brisbane since then.

We are still here in the community because we can feel the love of God through talks, sharing, and warmth acceptance from our brothers and sisters. Although we come from different nationalities and speak in different languages, the language of love binds us together to serve God more and to love others.

**Ong Family
The Feast South Brisbane**

When our permanent resident visa was granted in 2007, we decided to visit our Charismatic group leader in Zamboanga City, Philippines to seek God regarding our future in Australia. She prayed over us as she encouraged me to open the Bible randomly. I flipped and found the sketch of Peter and other disciples at the shore pulling the net full of fish. She interpreted it to mean that God was calling me to become a fisher of men.

So when we arrived in Brisbane City, I had that message in mind. After months of searching by attending Sunday Masses in different suburbs, there was no sign of any invitation from any religious organization. But one day, we had unexpected visitors in the persons of Tony and Betty Smith. They invited us to our very first prayer meeting in their residence. From thereon, our life completely changed. We became a regular attendee from 2009 onwards. Our friendship with our brothers and sisters in this faith community flourished when we grew in numbers. Later, the household gatherings became The Feast Gathering, which I claim is the happiest place of worship and giving thanks to God for his unconditional love and abundant blessings to my family. Hence, our fellowship for the love of God, love of people and making disciples shall continue, in Jesus' name.

Greg and Edwina Laxamana
The Feast South Brisbane

I enjoyed attending The Feast because the talks tackled all my concerns that I was not aware of before: family, finances, health, and relationships. I felt recharged in The Feast and began to understand where my emptiness was coming from. With the help of many good and sincere people in The Feast, I found myself changing and aiming to dream bigger. I started to love others because of the genuine love I received. I never felt judged; I received understanding. The Feast became my spiritual dwelling—a happy place where I have a spiritual family that corrects, supports, and affirms me. My worries are getting lesser and lesser until I find myself trusting to God everything every day. Before LOJ, I looked at religious communities (and even the church) as a place where hypocrites go to show off holiness and socialize. I was wrong. From being an attendee, I was encouraged to serve as a food ministry member, where I am confidently good at. Joining a Light Group taught me to love, trust, and pray for others and their concerns. I see tireless and selfless individuals serving in The Feast. I feel safe and I feel that I belong. I don't have to pretend to be holy; I can be myself. In The Feast, I have a happier family, a big crowd of cheerleaders, better health, better relationships, and better finances. I have a spiritual family, which I never had before. Qatar became our second home, not because of work but because of the community.

Andrew Elpedes
Light of Jesus Family - Qatar

Being away from my family for a long time is difficult and we know that it is when we become prone to temptation. I know my weaknesses and I know I need help that's why when I was invited to join the Light of Jesus Family through The Feast Doha, I didn't hesitate. True enough, the community was really instrumental in helping me in my difficulties as a first-time OFW. What's great about LOJ is that the topics are very practical. They talk about real applications in our regular, everyday lives. With the LOJ family, through the talks and the Light Group, I became stronger. The community helped me to focus more on my family, my reason for being abroad, to divert our efforts towards fulfilling the dreams God has planted in us. In short, the community helped me to focus on God and to let Him take control of my life.

Now whenever I see some of my friends on Facebook who seem to be struggling, I invite them to attend The Feast in their area so they too can experience being surrounded by people full of God's love and experience the happiness of living a life with God.

On a side note, remember how the Bible tells us that when we focus on God, the things we ask for would be given to us? One of the dreams that my family had that seemed impossible at the time were fulfilled shortly after I joined the community. I believe that it is just the tip of the iceberg as God continues to reveal to us the directions we should take in our life.

Brian Rodriguez
The Feast Doha



*Grace Relucio-Princesa:
How an Ambassador Serves
as a Nation-Healer*

By Maymay R. Salvosa and Rissa Singson Kawpeng

In the span of almost an hour's drive from her home in Quezon City to her office in Roxas Boulevard, Ambassador Grace Princesa, or Nanay (mother) Amba as the OFW community fondly calls her, can reignite your hope for the country with her palpable passion for the Filipino, especially those who are working abroad. She contaminates you with her zeal to serve as she effuses about her experiences, pains, and visions. All these considering she hasn't slept well for a couple of nights because she was sick.

Tears well up in her eyes when she recalls the struggles of our fellow Filipinos in foreign territories. "If only we realize how rich we are as a nation, if only we will remember who we are," she shares, "we will be proud of our identity as Filipinos. Then we won't have to work abroad out of necessity but out of choice."

While on the road, she receives calls and text messages from people from all walks of life for various reasons: pleas asking for the Department of Foreign Affairs' assistance, reminders about her official errands as the assistant secretary of DFA's Legislative Liason Unit, and congratulatory messages for her new assignment as the Philippine ambassador to the Vatican. She extends equal warmth and courtesy towards each person—no matter their stature—without bias or arrogance.

Hope springs in your heart when you witness someone of Nanay Amba's stature—a seasoned servant and a highly respected official—so grounded in her calling to be an ambassador for God and country.

In this special issue of

Kerygma, Nanay Amba shares about her previous posts, current projects, and future hopes for the Filipino migrants.

A Dream to Heal the Sick

It was Grace's childhood dream to be a doctor. She wanted to heal the sick and help their poor neighbors in Bicol. But it was a Math test during her pre-medicine course that dashed her dreams. After she failed, she shifted to Foreign Studies, and the rest is history.

A career diplomat since November 1986, Grace holds the distinction of being the first female Philippine ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). She had also previously served in Chicago as third secretary and vice-consul, then to Abu Dhabi as the first Philippine lady consul. Afterwards, she became charge d'affaires ad interim in Cairo. She volunteered for Iraq as minister and consul general and later on became the acting ambassador who was privileged to lead the evacuation of Filipinos before the outbreak of the U.S.-Iraq War in 2003. From there, she was assigned as minister and consul general to the Philippine Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

With her extensive experience, Grace is more than familiar with the plight of the overseas Filipinos—their aspirations, their struggles, and their agonies. She can personally relate with them.

"Like many of the Filipinos, I also had my fair share of trials," she admits. "I experienced weeping in prayer because I didn't have a single cent to buy milk for my children. Once, I had to lure my children that we were having a picnic in Luneta. The truth was, we didn't have a place to go. We feasted over Skyflakes and *saging na saba* (boiled plantain banana), and spent the night lying on old newspaper. But like Job in the Bible, I didn't question God. I just trusted Him."

"As I reflected about my life, I realized that God allowed me to undergo such painful episodes so I could empathize with the financial pains of our OFWs. That's why when I talk to our countrymen abroad, I can relate with their plight. I understand them. I am grateful to be in a position where I can do something for them."

Accessible and Available Ambassador

But it was her first stint in the UAE that birthed in her a new dream. "The most painful was my stay in the Middle East,



especially overseeing Sarah Balabagan's case," Grace relates. She was serving as a consul in the UAE when Sarah Balabagan, a Filipina domestic helper, killed her employer in self-defense when he attempted to rape her.

Sarah was sentenced to death, but through the personal appeal of the UAE president, the victim's family agreed to drop the execution demand. Sarah was repatriated after serving her prison sentence and paying the blood money using funds provided by concerned Filipinos.

“It opened my eyes to the abuses and violence that our OFWs face for the love of their family. It hurts a lot. (That incident) birthed a dream in my heart. I prayed then, ‘Lord, I want to come back as ambassador to UAE. I want to help more of my fellowmen,’” Grace relates.

God granted her prayer.

When she returned to UAE in 2009 as the Philippine ambassador, she would give her personal cell phone number to *kabayans* (fellow Filipinos) she would meet.

She made herself accessible and available to them for whatever problems they faced. Once, her ringing cell phone woke her up in the wee hours of the morning.

She answered it, thinking it OFWs back home. Grace mourns the breed of feminized migration — out of the current five million labor migrants we have, more than half are women. This means that more and more families are losing their mothers to jobs abroad. Kids are growing up without maternal love and guidance. Husbands are tempted to have affairs, or worse, to abuse their own children. “I’m glad for the modern technology because it’s real time. And I plan to coordinate with telephone companies so that our Babay Kalinga, a migrant Filipino resource center abroad, can have a line to the barangay centers here in the Philippines. Through that, their family,” she says.

The Filipino as Light to the World

She touts the Filipino worker's "TLC— our tender love and care," claiming that this is what sets us apart from other global workers. "OFWs are also cheerful and spiritual, which is shown in their loving nature," she adds, likening the Filipinos to the abaca—which is "strong, resilient, and exceptional."

But those are not the



Only things our people are famous for. Filipinos are known for the 3Fs: faith, family, and friendship. Now, there are additional Fs: fun, food, and Facebook," she quips. Grace goes on to say, "Without the Filipino Christians in the U.S. and Europe, more churches will become museums, bars, and restaurants. But since we are there, we become the service team. We live up to the song, '*Ang buhay ng Kristiyano ay masayang tunay*' (The life of a Christian is truly joyful.) And we share, we give our faith to the foreign families that we serve. We teach them good manners and right conduct. Filipino nannies guide their bosses' kids. That's why we are loved and in demand. The world will be darker without the Filipino faith. We are the light across the globe," she says.

Battling the Problems of Migration

Unfortunately, what the world gains with our economic migration is loss to the families of

***I want to continue being
God's love to others by
assisting and taking care of
the least, the last, the lost,
the hungry, the thirsty.***

OFWs can call their families free of charge. According to my studies, psychologists said that kids who are twelve years old and below need their mothers especially. So at least listening to their parents working abroad once a week can help them build a constant communication, a deeper relationship with each other," she says.

Grace doesn't see an easy solution to the problems brought about by migration. "The action must be multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary. Everyone involved must understand the full migration cycle. It should be explained from the start, at the barangay level. There should be a very strong pre-employment and pre-migration seminar, as well as the post arrival, onsite monitoring, and return reintegration. That's where we need improvement," she explains.

She also mentions the need to address illegal recruitment and to give women options to earn a decent living right here in the Philippines. "Filipino women are willing to stay home for the equivalent of \$200, which is P8,000 to P10,000," she says.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is financial literacy for Filipinos and overseas Filipinos and their families. That is why she's involved with family and financial institutes in migration, among them the Pinoy WISE (Worldwide Initiative for Investment Savings and Entrepreneurship) movement. "It's a financial education program which aims to encourage OFWs and their families to save and invest. It partners with public and private organizations like cooperatives and rural banks.

We train local government units, governors, mayors, teachers, even priests and imams, so we can work together," she explains. They do this to teach OFWs how to handle their money so that they don't have to work abroad all their lives, away from their families. "I hope to see our OFWs being able to save for their future, and that they have already reached their dreams like sending their kids to school until graduation, to have their own home, and even build businesses," she says.

Next Destination: Vatican


On February 21, 2018, the Commission on Appointments confirmed Grace's nomination as Philippine ambassador to the Vatican. It was a sought-after heart's desire that she sees as the Lord's birthday gift to her since she learned of her nomination a few days before she turned sixty-two.

"I want to understand and deepen my faith, in an interfaith manner, at the seat of our faith, the Holy See," Grace shares. "With everything that I've been through, I want to continue being God's love to others by assisting and taking care of the least, the last, the lost, the hungry, the thirsty. I want to help our Lupang Hinirang (Chosen Land) be born in its truest essence by being Her servant and handmaid."

With Nanay Amba's three decades' worth of experiences and expertise, it's easy to see that although she didn't fulfill her childhood dream of being a doctor,

God has granted her dreams in a different way. By being a selfless ambassador for God and country, she is a healer who helps our nation get better by restoring our appreciation of our heritage and identity—one Filipino at a time. She is a healer who gives comfort to a despairing migrant and a maltreated domestic helper. She is a healer who reminds us that we can regain our strength by going back to our roots. She is a healer who treats not only her "patient" but also her patient's family by teaching them how to safeguard their future. Hopefully, the day will come when Filipino families no longer have to be broken because of migration, corruption, or necessity.

When that time comes, our nation will stop bleeding and we can experience the healing prophesied in 2 Chronicles 7:14—

"And if my people, upon whom my name has been pronounced, humble themselves and pray, and seek my presence and turn from their evil ways, I will hear them from heaven and pardon their sins and revive their land." 



Special **S**ection

Teaching


A photograph of a person's torso and arms. They are wearing a white sleeveless top. They are holding a white rectangular sign with both hands. The sign has the words "I QUIT" printed in large, black, sans-serif capital letters. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with some greenery.

I QUIT

QUIT OFTEN TO

By Bo Sanchez

SUCCEED IN LIFE



A couple of years ago, my friend said he was taking up nursing to go abroad to earn for his family. Though he and his wife owned a school, they still couldn't make ends meet. Their school had very few students and many parents weren't paying or were delayed in paying their tuition fees.

So the guy went abroad to work.

After a year, I met him again. He told me something beautiful. It's a line I want you to say often. He said, "Bo, there's got to be another way!"

"What happened?" I asked.

"My kids need me. And I was so lonely out there. I don't want to go abroad again!" he said.

My friend and his wife decided to work on their little school. They did massive marketing and doubled their enrollees. They also did the unthinkable: They raised their tuition fees. (In the past, their tuition fees were very low.)

Today, this couple is happy to report that the school is doing so much better. And wonder of wonders, the parents now pay regularly. Why? Because they were able to reach parents of a higher economic bracket who don't have problems paying tuition fees.

Filipinos think that there's only one path to financial abundance: to go abroad and be an overseas Filipino worker.

But the problem to that path is huge—leaving your children.

Hey, don't solve that problem. Make that problem irrelevant by choosing another path. Yes, there are other paths to financial abundance.

You can be wealthy here in this country!

Are You a Quitter?

But first, let me ask you: Are you a quitter?

I know it sounds shocking.

But I'm serious.

Unless you learn how to quit, you won't reach your dreams.

I don't say that because I read it in a book. I say that from personal experience. I'm successful now because I know when to quit, how to quit, where to quit, and what to quit.

By the way, do you have problems?

Today, I'm going to teach you how to solve your problems by quitting.

Let me give you a hint: Most of the time, the best way to solve your problems is not by solving your problems. The best way to solve your problems is by making them irrelevant.

And the way to do that is to quit.

I hope I've confused you by now.

Let me now tell you my first story: A love story. A tragic love story.

But I'm going to ask a favor. Take note of every time I use these three words in my story: Purpose, Path, and Problem.

Let me define them for you:

- Purpose is the final destination.
- Path is the road going there.
- Problem is the barrier on that road.

Ready?

My love story is about Jenny, a beautiful single woman with many dreams.

Like many single women, her big purpose is to have a happy marriage.

That includes a lovely wedding, romantic dates each week, cuddling in bed every Saturday morning, and hugs under a starlit sky.

One day, Jimboy walks into her world and offers a path to her purpose.

He has good looks. Dresses smart. Speaks well. Has what Filipinos call "arrive." (*May dating.*)

She meets him, likes him, and walks home with her feet on the clouds.

She also has many profound signs from heaven that they're meant for each other:

They're fans of the same celebrities. She's excited. She believes she has found the man of her dreams.

Unfortunately, the dream turned into a nightmare.

The Problem of Jimboy

She discovers that Jimboy is an irresponsible bum.

He always doesn't have money. His wallet is thick, but it's filled with old receipts, discount cards, and an expired driver's license that he can't renew because he has no money.

He hasn't held a steady job for the past five years. When Jenny asks him why, he says he's a free spirit. But since his spirit is still trapped in a physical body that gets hungry three times a day, Jimboy has to borrow money from Jenny.

Jenny also discovers that Jimboy has mixed blood. He's twenty-five percent Filipino, twenty-five percent Chinese, and twenty-five percent alcohol. When she asks why he drinks so much, he says, "When I drink, I fall asleep. When I fall asleep, I don't sin. When I don't sin, I go to heaven. So I drink to go to heaven."

Finally, she also discovers that Jimboy flirts with

anything that moves with a skirt. She finds he has other girlfriends. "In case of emergencies," he laughs.

Let's review the three elements of our story.

Her purpose is a happy marriage.

Her path is Jimboy.

Her problem is his character flaws: being a bum, an alcoholic, and a playboy.

What should Jenny do?

Wouldn't it be so much simpler if she just quit this path and take another?

But from my experience, many women don't. They just keep on trying to solve their problem—in this case—Jimboy's character flaws.

I see two reasons why people don't quit...

1. When You Confuse Purpose and Path

Jenny must see her boyfriend Jimboy as a path.

Just a path, not the purpose.

Because if she's confused between purpose and path, she'll be attached to Jimboy. If Jenny confuses Jimboy to be her purpose, then she'll try to solve the problem of his character flaws head on—by trying to change him.

That may include emotional manipulation, sexual blackmail, dragging him to prayer meetings, forcing him to go to counseling, and driving out demons via exorcism.

Or she may just marry him and hope that marriage will change him.

And that's a huge mistake. Here's the truth: Marriage doesn't change anyone, it simply magnifies what's already there.

But, OK, I admit there are rare exceptions. A few guys do change after their wedding day.

But that's like playing Russian roulette with a gun that can hold a hundred bullets—and ninety-nine are loaded. Do you really want to take that risk?

2. When You Become Unclear With Your Purpose

Emotionally, the Jennys of the world are discombobulated.

They will keep their Jimboys because marriage is no longer their purpose.

For example, if Jenny has a strained relationship with her parents, and her parents told her that Jimboy wasn't good for her, Jenny will keep him as her act of rebellion. In this case, her purpose isn't marriage anymore. It's to get back at Mama and Papa and declare her total independence.

Another example.

If Jenny has a broken self-image and believes—in her subconscious—that she deserves a jerk, then she'll keep him too. Again, the purpose is no longer to get married. The purpose is to inflict self-punishment for being such a terrible person. Even if Jimboy leaves her, Jenny will continue to search for other jerks. She will be a jerk magnet for the rest of her life.

When the purpose is



messed up, our lives are messed up as well.

Sadly, I see this tragedy again and again.

Oh, if only we learn to quit!

But our problem is that we think there's only one path.

So when a problem blocks our way, we try to solve it head on.

We don't understand that sometimes the best way to solve a problem is to make it irrelevant. For example, Jenny can make Jimboy's character flaws irrelevant by simply dumping him—and choosing someone with better husband-potential qualities.

Life will be much simpler. And happier!

Tell Yourself: There's More Than One Path

People don't know how to quit.

I've met wonderful people who've been stuck in dead-end relationships for years—because they don't know how to quit.

I've met great employees who—for the past ten years—have been stuck in a job they don't like, working for a boss they don't like, and receiving a pay they don't like—because they don't know how to quit. (I'm not saying you should quit tomorrow. Apply at another job first before you quit.)

I've met entrepreneurs who've been stuck in a business that doesn't earn much or that isn't in line with their passion—because they don't know how to quit.

I've met people who—for the past ten years—have been stuck in abusive religious groups that kill their spirit—because they don't know how to quit.

Thankfully, my friend from my story above showed me the principle of quitting, then winning.

She showed me how to fill my nets.

Fill Your Nets

One day, Jesus asked Peter to fish. Peter said they've been fishing all day and have caught nothing. But Peter said that he'd still do it.

But Jesus said something curious. He just didn't say to them, "Lower your nets one more time."

He said, "Lower your nets in the deeper water. And lower your nets on the other side of the boat."

In other words, quit the old way of doing things and take another path.

The result? Peter's nets were so full of fish they almost broke. That's abundance.

Friend, do you want your nets to be full? Do you want abundance too?

Don't quit your purpose. Lower your nets still.

But quit *where* you lower your nets.

Quit *when* you lower your nets.

Quit *how* you lower your nets.

Find another path.


Are you going through some problems now?

Ask yourself:

1. What is really my end purpose?

2. Is there another path to this purpose with problems that I can handle?

Then take new paths.

I pray that your nets almost break with your abundant harvest. 

E-mail Bo at bosanchez@kerygmfamily.com.

A Few Tips on How OFWs Can Save and Prepare for Their Future

- 1) Follow the Abundance Formula:
10 percent – tithes
20 percent – savings/
investments/stock market
70 percent – expenses
- 2.) Declare your Freedom Day.
List down all your debts. Write a deadline when you'll be financially free. Read this goal daily, think about it daily, pray for it daily.
- 3) Create new ways of pleasure.
Discover new habits of simple joys. Cut back on the things you can do without. That extra dress. That dinner out. That movie. And get the same amount of joy from free—or almost free pleasures. A picnic in the park. A quiet read in the library. A walk around the neighborhood.
- 4) Schedule your steps to freedom.
Sit down and write how much you can set aside each month to pay your debts. Schedule all payments, starting with high-interest loans first. And if you can, transfer high-interest loans to low-interest loans.
- 5) Don't borrow when you can't afford it—period.



Sana sa tuwing umiinom ka ng alak... habang hinihitit mo ang sigarilyo mo at habang nilulustay mo ang perang pinapadala ko! Sana maisip mo rin kung ilang pagkain ang tiniis kong hindi kainin para lang makapagpadala ako ng malaking pera rito."

This line from Vilma Santos in the 2000 movie *Anak* can send any movie goer into a crying fit in an instant. In the film, Josie, Vilma Santos' character, worked as an overseas Filipino domestic helper. Her employer refused to let her visit the Philippines and kept all the mails addressed to her. Thus, she didn't know that her husband died shortly after she left. Her children resented her because no one was there for them in their grief. When Josie finally returned home with an ample savings for business, she realized she has already become a stranger to her kids. Carla, her eldest daughter played by Claudine Barreto, rebelled against her mother by spending money for her vices. The movie showed how Josie tried to mend her broken relationship with her family so they can move forward together.

Sadly, this has become a common scenario in OFW households. Aside from drifting apart from each other because of distance, many people equate working abroad as a gateway to luxurious living that they tend to overspend. But it has repercussions. Often, the family's failure to save results in the OFW's extended stay abroad not by choice but out of dire need—which may affect their relationship with their loved ones.

And the cycle has to stop.

To help our OFWs, Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative Inc., in partnership with public and private organizations, founded Pinoy WISE (Worldwide Initiative for Investment Savings and Entrepreneurship) in 2012. It's an organization of overseas Filipino workers abroad and their families that aims to promote financial literacy among migrants.

Here's more on Pinoy WISE. 

BE PINOY WISE:

Secure Your Family's Future by Saving for It

Where are the Pinoy WISE international chapters?



United Arab Emirates (UAE)



Qatar



Germany



Singapore



Hong Kong

What does Pinoy WISE do?

Pinoy WISE conducts a ladderized program which includes (but are not limited to):



Family and Income Management Training



Counseling (Investment and Family Counseling)



Entrepreneurship Training

Who are the beneficiaries of Pinoy WISE?



Filipino migrants and their families



Agricultural cooperatives and rural banks

Sources:
www.atikha.org

How to contact Pinoy WISE?



E-mail
oed@atikha.org



Visit
www.atikha.org

<http://www.migration4development.org/en/projects/pinoy-wise-worldwide-initiative-savings-investment-and-entrepreneurship-philippines>

Special Section

Teaching



Fight the Relationship Drift

By Bo Sanchez

Warning: Even if family members live under one roof, with no parent or kids abroad, a home can still feel empty. When family members rarely see each other and are just like bed spacers rushing in and out of the house, it's worse than having someone working overseas. Your loved ones can be so near yet so far. That's why I want to talk about a cruel epidemic that's afflicting our families, our marriages, and our friendships. It's called the "relationship drift."

It's a very devious disease. It's like some cancers. You really don't know you have it until it's fatal. And then it's too late.

That's when a relationship drift becomes "relationship death."

The only solution is to diagnose it early.

But the symptoms of a relationship drift are almost invisible to the naked eye.

Because you're not really fighting each other.

There are no screaming matches. In fact, your home is quiet. Like a convent.

There are no pots and pans flying in the air.

No bloody court cases.

But little by little, your hearts move apart.

Intimacy is gone.

Joy is missing.

In marriage, sex only happens every time Haley's comet passes planet Earth.

You take each other for granted.

One day, you know the disease had run its full course because you wake up one morning no longer caring for the other person.

Let me give you examples of the relationship drift.

The father who no longer has heart-to-heart conversations with his kids. Or the wife who doesn't enjoy her husband's company anymore. Or a couple who talk to each other functionally, not deeply. Or siblings who no longer laugh together, play together, and eat together.

Here's why it happens: We live in a busy world.

Bills need to be paid.

Cars need to be repaired.

Kids need to be fed, vaccinated, and neutered, er, I mean nurtured. (I know of parents who want to administer this little medical procedure to their kids when puberty comes along.)

My point? It's natural that you drift apart.

You don't have to be a bad person for this to happen. You don't have to be Adolf Hitler or The Joker. You don't have to be obnoxious, selfish, or evil to cause the disease called relationship drift.

Let me give you an analogy.

Two people in a relationship are like two little boats floating on the sea.

The problem? There's a current that will slowly pull the two boats apart. Before they know it, the two boats are miles away from each other.

Friend, there's really only one way to fight the drift. You have to paddle!

If you don't want to drift, you'll have to go against the flow and paddle your way to each other. You'll have to work hard, muscle your way, sweat like crazy, and fight to be together.

I believe that the only antidote to the relationship drift is to bond constantly.

If you don't, the effects can be disastrous.

When We Don't Fight Relationship Drift

David Perdue wrote this about "fatherless kids" in America. According to statistics, children from a fatherless home are:

- Five times more likely to commit suicide
- Thirty-two times more likely to run away
- Twenty times more likely to

have behavioral disorders

- Fourteen times more likely to commit rape (this applies to boys)
- Nine times more likely to drop out of high school
- Ten times more likely to abuse chemical substances
- Nine times more likely to end up in a charitable institution
- Twenty times more likely to end up in prison for a long period of time

David Perdue says we either pay now or pay later.

And when you pay later, it always costs more.

My suggestion is to pay now.

Fighting the relationship drift is very difficult. But it's easier paying now than paying later.

Here's how to do it.

Time Management Isn't the Answer

Do you want to spend more time with your family?

Time management is not the solution.

I know a company that charges \$759 per person for their time management seminar. Let me save you \$759 right now and tell you it doesn't work.

These guys will teach you how to become experts in multitasking.

While you shave, mentally plan for your day.

While you drive, record your things-to-do in an MP3 recorder.

While sitting on the throne of life, make your phone calls.

While talking with your boss, floss your teeth.

I don't believe in any of that.

Though I must admit, I'm guilty of trying all of them.

Except for the flossing. (I don't have a boss.) And believe me, these things don't give you more time.

Worse, they take away your peace.

Here's a principle you can take to the bank: Anything that takes away your peace won't work in the long run. Instead of time management, I teach people "biggies management."

What Are Your Biggies?

If you really think about it, you can put everything happening in your life into

two categories: biggies and smallies.

If you manage your biggies, you manage your life.

It's the secret to great success.

What are your biggies?

People who don't know their biggies will be ruled by their smallies. They'll be lost boats in the sea, being pushed and pulled in various directions.

Your biggies consist of the four most important parts of your life:

1. Your family
2. Your health
3. Your mission
4. Your spirit

Everything else are smallies.

If you want to be successful, focus on your biggies.

When you make your weekly schedule, write down the biggies first.

Each of these biggies can be broken down. But today, I'd like to share with you the family biggies that you need to do. These are the powerful ways to paddle against relationship drift.

Are you ready?

Create a List of Untouchables

My romantic date with my wife is an untouchable.

I told her that we'd have a romantic date every Tuesday night unless these three things happen:

- 1) President Trump calls up to consult me on high-level issues such as terrorism, global warming, and nuclear disarmament;
- 2) The pope calls me to discuss some murky theological question that only I can answer (like "Did Adam have a belly button?"); or
- 3) If a comet rams into Earth, burning the entire planet's atmosphere, and human life as we know it ceases to exist.

Aside from those three scenarios, nothing can touch my date with her.

Seriously, there are weeks when I'm traveling and we can't date. But I see to it that when I fly back home, the first thing I do is spend a day with my wife and two boys.

Frankly, I love my romantic dates with my wife. She's my emotional home. She relaxes me. (OK, I confess that one time, I was so relaxed I dozed off



when she was still talking.)

My weekly date with my two boys is an untouchable too.

Friend, the only way to paddle against relationship drift is to create your list of untouchables.

But before you invite your kids to a date, let me tell you how not to do it.

How to Have Dates With Your Kids

One day, a teenage boy approached me and said, "Brother Bo, can you please tell my father to stop having dates with me? I think he got the idea from you."

I later learned what his father did last week.

First, he invited his son to have a burger. But the moment they sat down in the restaurant, the father said, "Son, I want to talk to you about your poor grades."

After a mini-sermon on "study well because I work so hard to pay for your tuition," the father jumps to another sensitive topic. "Your music tastes are terrible," he said to the lad. "It's loud, noisy, and disgusting. I think you should listen more to classical music."

The father goes on to other topics, such as the length of his hair, the late-night phone calls, and the obscene amount of time he spends playing computer games.

Poor kid. He didn't know what was coming that day. He didn't realize he was attending a multitrack conference.

After their meal, the father told him, "Son, I enjoyed our date. Let's do this weekly!"

His son must have had an epileptic seizure right there. Can you imagine going through this torture for the rest of his teenage life? That's when the boy asked me to rescue him from a life of purgatory.

So I called the father and said, "Parental sermons, homilies, lectures, and full-scale multitrack conferences are banned from your dates."

"Why?" the father asked.

"Because the date isn't for you," I said. "It's for your son. You don't have to enjoy it as long as he does." I told him, "Play billiards. Play bowling. Go fishing. Ride bikes together. Anything your boy wants to do."

Let me explain why this is essential.

When the relationship is

close, kids listen. Their hearts are supple and open.

But when there's already a relationship drift between the parents and the kids, their hearts are far apart. So no matter how much the parents shout, their kids don't hear the message.

So the first goal is to bring your hearts close to each other.

How to Bond as a Family

Another untouchable you need to create is a weekly family night.

The goal is to do something fun together.

Rent a movie and cook popcorn for a family movie night at home.

Or take a family walk around the village.

Or play a game together. Monopoly. Pictionary. *Patintero*.

Or read a book out loud.

Or just order pizza and ask everyone to share around the table.

When you do this each week, you're creating memories that will last a lifetime. Life is about moments. And believe me, your grown-up kids will never forget these special bonding moments as a family. It will be their anchor. It will be their source of emotional stability. In the midst of the sea of change around them, they know there are just some things in life that don't change.

Just like their memories of being together as a family.

Two Choices: Drift or Paddle

I can hear you now.


"Bo, this is a lot of hard work! Weekly dates with my wife and kids? My gosh!"

I warned you. It's going to be rough.

But let me repeat what I said at the start: You really only have two choices in life. You either drift or you paddle. You either pay now or pay later.

I've decided to paddle. I've decided to pay now.

Believe me, I'm enjoying the benefits. My relationships are deeply satisfying. Friend, it's your turn.

Start paddling. 

E-mail Bo at bosanchez@kerygmfamily.com.

*Be my partner in advancing God's Kingdom
here on earth!*



Friend, join me and be a
**Kerygma
Ambassador!**

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- ✓ FREE Kerygma Books Affiliate link... and more!

For more details, email us at sales@shepherdsvoice.com.ph, or call us at 725-9999 loc. 107 or 416-3482 and look for Cecille or Christian.

Angels

They're all around us



Have you met an angel? As I write this article, I recall numerous times when I would get seemingly supernatural help in time of need or worry.

For instance, when I was much younger, I fell over the edge of my bed but was miraculously caught by the mosquito net! I got out without fall.

On other occasions, I would be in a quandary looking for something and just when I was about to give up, I'd ask my guardian angel where the item was. Then suddenly, I would be led to look at some place least likely to have the item and, to my surprise, I'd find it there!

Of course, there may be perfectly scientific reasons why these things happen as they do. But the wonderful thing is that they happen at the exact moment we need them. It's great not only to have friends in high places, but also friends

from High Places.

Isn't it amazing that we have angels around us?

Let the Lord dispel the lies of the dark side and may His force destroy every evil foothold in your life, and that of your family and friends. Let the Lord enter anew and empower us all to live a victorious life! One thing I'd like to emphasize is that we are already victors simply because Jesus has done it for us. The devil only attempts to make us forget who we are and what, by grace, we are capable of. All we need to do is acknowledge the love of God for us and grow in our relationship with Him. Remember, we fight the devil, we join God's force, by following Jesus.


And not only that.

If we hear God's call, we can also be angels to

By J Yogawin

one another. An angel is a messenger of God. Let's start bringing good news to each other. Let's be angels to our family and friends—helping, supporting, loving.

Recently, I was cornered by a big guy who handed me a piece of paper: a check! Ha, praise God for those who answer the call to be angels. May we all bear Good News and great blessings to others. As Pope Francis says, "By asking us to become holy in our daily lives, Christ is inviting us to experience in all things His own deep joy and to become a gift of love to all around us."

Now, are you an angel? 

J Yogawin is a certified Gallup strengths coach, NLP practitioner, and the builder of The Wednesday Feast Festival Alabang. Join their weekly prayer gathering at 4th Level Expo Trade Hall, Festival Mall, Alabang, 7:30 p.m. E-mail J at jyogawin@gmail.com.

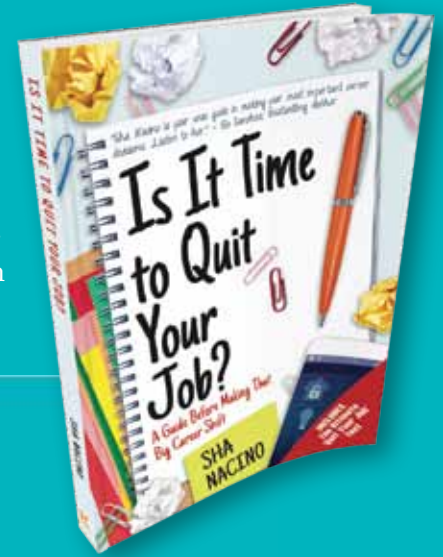


Don't Quit for the Wrong Reasons!

Are you sick and tired of your job? Do you want to quit and do something else? Is your boss giving you an unreasonable amount of stress? Is there too much gossip, politics, and negativity in your workplace? Do you feel unappreciated, overworked, and underpaid? Don't quit just yet!

This book will help you pause and assess if quitting your job now is your best option. Based on her own employee-to-entrepreneur shift, Sha Nacino gives you tips on how to:

- Love your job even if you hate it
- Discover and develop your unique core competency
- Make money without quitting your job yet
- Plan if you've already decided to quit, and many more.



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I welcomed New Year 2017 with a sharp pain in my jaw. I had been feeling this for the past seven days and I thought it was due to tension during my sleep. Finally, I had panoramic X-ray to find out the real cause. The dentist then explained to us that there was a big cyst in my jaw, a serious case that couldn't be operated on in a simple clinic or operating room, so he referred us to another doctor.

Pain and Fear Combined

I went home shocked that I couldn't stop myself from crying out to God. It was probably the first time I cried out with so much fear. I was a graduating student of Lyceum of the Philippines at that time and I was in the middle of my internship. This could mean delaying my graduation and other plans.

But I let God's will prevail, telling Him that if this situation would make me know Him more, let it be. If this situation would make Jesus be known more through my life, let it be.

Days later, my parents and I went to the clinic of the dentist referred to us and he assured us that the operation is not life-threatening. But it must be done immediately because some parts of my jaw bone were already consumed by the cyst. He also told us that the hospital expenses might cost around P150,000.

Another Opinion Plus Prayer

I shared my case to a cousin who just passed the dental board exam. She then discussed it with other

BENIGN EQUALS GRACIOUS:

How God Rescued Me from Pain and Fear



By Alyssa June Bosch

dentists. As we waited for their response, we prayed for healing, favor, and provision. And God proved how faithful He is as He orchestrated everything by sending us to the right people, to the right places, at the right time. My cousin's friend needed a patient for their case study who had exactly my condition. I was amazed by the skills of their professor and how she explained to me the procedure. She said that the cyst was sitting in my jaw probably since I was a child and that there was no time to waste because it was aggressive.

Operation and Worship in Unison

In the morning of January 18, 2017, I underwent biopsy and removal of my two molars in preparation for the operation. I believed that God would do miracles, and all things are possible with Him.

As the dental surgeon and her team performed the removal of the two molars and took a specimen for the biopsy, I worshiped in the dental chair singing in my mind, "Jesus, I will trust You, I will trust you, I know You never fail, I will trust You!"

I almost cried not because of the pain, but


because I knew God was holding my hand throughout the process. While I trusted the doctor and her assistants, I trusted more that God was in control of the operation.

Little did I know, they also removed the impacted wisdom tooth in my jaw and decided to remove the cysts as well. What was supposed to be a P150,000 operation ended up costing P6,000 only. What was supposed to be a two-week rest became a three-day recovery. What seemed to be a big cyst shrunk to a smaller one. My worries about being delayed for my graduation because of internship vanished. The agony of having another operation was finished.

I was really grateful to God for assuring me of His love, for being my strength, my provider, my healer, my salvation. I lost count of how many times He performed miracles in my life! The Lord is so good! All glory and praise belongs to Him! It is finished!

God Shows Off

On January 26, 2017, when I received the results that the mass in my jaw was benign, I thought to myself, "What is His purpose for letting me experience this?" John 9:3, which says, "This happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him," became the answer to my question. I realized how God really loves to show off. He wants to show off His power, His grace, His unfailing love. And how sweet it is to know that another word for benign is "gracious."

Thank You, gracious King, for showing off Your might and Your power! 

I PRAY THAT YOU RECEIVE YOUR MIRACLES IN JESUS' NAME!

I 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, of the Son, and of 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, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



SPECIAL INTENTION FOR THIS MONTH:

Dearest Father, we praise and glorify You. We give You our deepest gratitude for the gift of families. May we nurture our familial relationships with faith, hope, and love.

We lift up to You our brothers and sisters who are working in foreign lands. Protect them. Bless them. Guide them. May they find their home in You. We also pray for their relationships with their family. Strengthen their bond and may You be the center of their relationship. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Praying for you,

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

DO YOU LONG FOR MEANINGFUL SUCCESS IN YOUR CAREER, BUSINESS, AND LEADERSHIP?

"This must-read book tells us that whatever path a person decides to take largely depends on one's resolve."

- Washington Sycip (1921-2017), Founder, SGV & Co.
1967 Management Man of the Year

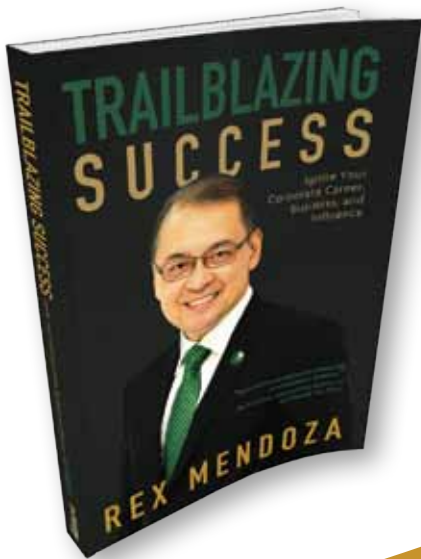
Packed with wisdom and powerful insights, this book will help set you up for success.

Whether you are an employee, executive, entrepreneur, or student, there is a lesson for you to learn. The author is a living testament that you can be all that you set out to be.

From his humble beginnings as an employee and insurance agent, to his rise as CEO of a multinational company, a successful entrepreneur, and a prosperous investor, Rex takes you on his life journey and along the way equips you with the tools you need for your own path to success.

You will also learn leadership lessons that you need as you move from one stage of your career to the next.

Soak in the wealth of insights from this inspiring leader who honors God and is loved by those whose lives he has touched. Follow the best practices that Rex generously shares to catapult you in your career, business, and family life.



Do You Want to Change Your Life and Be Truly Rich?

Don't look for complicated solutions.

This book contains tried and tested truths gained from the school of experience—the best teacher of all.

Dean Pax Lapid and Bo Sanchez have combined forces to give you the lessons you need to learn to succeed in business and in life.

They have distilled over half a century of lessons learned through living, failing, and succeeding. You will save yourself from a lot of unnecessary heartaches when you listen to them. Learn the lesson without having to go through the painful experience.

The simple truths captured in this book have the power to transform your destiny. They will help you become truly rich and abundant when you apply the priceless wisdom contained here.

In this book, you will learn about:

- ✓ The Dreams and Drivers to Success
- ✓ Valuable Nuggets of Financial Wisdom
- ✓ Snippets of Business Success
- ✓ How to Live in Significance and Trust
- ✓ The Pattern of a Miracle

Drink up their stories, their experiences, and their lessons. Their life lists are an invitation for you to create your own. Listen and learn from the teacher and the preacher, and start living a fulfilled life. Be happy, healthy, and wealthy today.

