

*The Life-Changing Magazine*

**KERYGMA**

No. 338 Vol. 29

JUNE 2018

**God Will Fight  
the Battle for You**

**Is Your Cup Full?**

**It Is Well**

**A Week of  
Cashless Living**

# FACING THE BULLIES

ISSN 01170-7710



9 770117 771001

Philippines P100  
US \$8.14  
AUS \$8.14  
Euro 5.07  
UK 4.49  
CDN \$7.95  
SING \$9.42  
HK \$51.83  
RUPIAH 103,000

***RAF DIONISIO***

A once-bullied child now uses his pain to inspire and empower the youth to stand tall and be brave.

# Do You Think Your Children Are Too Entitled?

The first generation makes the money. The second generation spends it. By the third generation, there's nothing left. It's the same classic story that we've heard before and we can't help but ask—why do many accomplished entrepreneurs find it easier to build a business than to raise their children to become independently successful?

This book is for those wondering why their children are lazy and reckless with their money. This is for the children who wonder why they're being labeled as lazy and self-indulgent. And this is for those who are close to success and have the time to prepare their children for what's to come.

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## God Is a Planner

God is not only a Master Designer, He's also a Master Planner.

The Bible says, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).

Think about that. God has already prepared in advance the good works you're going to do. It's all planned out.

One day, I was walking in a mall when an entire family went out of the restaurant to greet me. They were celebrating their mother's birthday. And the mother began to cry and said, "Brother Bo, you won't believe this. This morning, I asked God for a birthday gift. I asked if you could pray over for me. Obviously, I didn't know how that would happen. And here you are!" So right there in the middle of the mall, we had a mini-Feast.

Tell me. What are the odds that we would meet that day? To pull that off, too many coincidences had to happen, and a Master Planner was behind it all.

Every day, God has already lined up all the good works you're supposed to do—all you have to do is walk into them.

Let me tell you a story from my youth.

This happened some twenty-seven years ago—when I was a poor missionary, living day by day.

One day, I discovered I only had P9,000 left in my savings, tucked safely in my desk drawer. Aside from that, I had P700 in my wallet. That was it. My entire net worth. The total sum of my wealth!

At about 9:00 a.m., a friend called up and told me that her daughter was in the hospital, and that she needed P9,000, pronto!

I closed my eyes and asked God what to do. And as clear as daylight, I felt He told me in my heart, "Give it to her."

So I told my friend as cheerfully as I could, "Pick up your money here," hiding my anxiety. At the back of my mind, I was already imagining the morbid consequences of my decision. Living with only P700 in my wallet meant not eating my favorite pizza.

A few minutes later, a woman barged through our front door, weeping, and told me about her family problems. It ended with her very nervous plea, "Bo, can you give me P500?" (She was not a friend but an acquaintance—and I knew this was not a faker or a con artist.)

I started laughing. "Not P700?"

She shook her head, baffled at my question. I pulled out my wallet and gave her P500. When you have a very thin wallet, that simple act was very difficult to do!

But as I did that, a small crumpled, folded-up paper popped out of my wallet. I picked it up and couldn't believe my eyes: It was another P500!

Where in the world did that come from? Suddenly, I felt God was telling me it was "miracle" time.

In my excitement, I wanted to get my P9,000 ready to be given away. (Who knows what will pop out as I did that?)

I went to my room and grabbed the wad of paper bills from my drawer—and shoved it into an envelope. But before sealing it, I thought of recounting the cash.

I counted, "One thousand...two thousand...three thousand... four thousand..." I began to cry when I counted, "ten thousand... eleven thousand... twelve thousand... thirteen thousand... fourteen thousand... fifteen thousand!"

To this day, I don't know where that extra money came from. Perhaps I counted it wrong the first time.

But whatever reason, it really didn't matter. What I knew was God was telling me a very simple message, a message that I still bring in my heart to this day: "When I give, God will take care of me."

I knelt down and said, "Thank You, Lord. You still want me to eat pizza."

Today, I'm running a few businesses, and so my miracles are different: God prospers my businesses so that I can give more.

Here's my suggestion: Just say, "God, use me!" Don't think of doing something big or dramatic. Don't say, "I will build world peace." You're not in a Miss Universe contest.

Just respond to the pain that's in front of you. Someone needs a hug. Give him that hug. Someone needs a listening ear. Give him that listening ear.

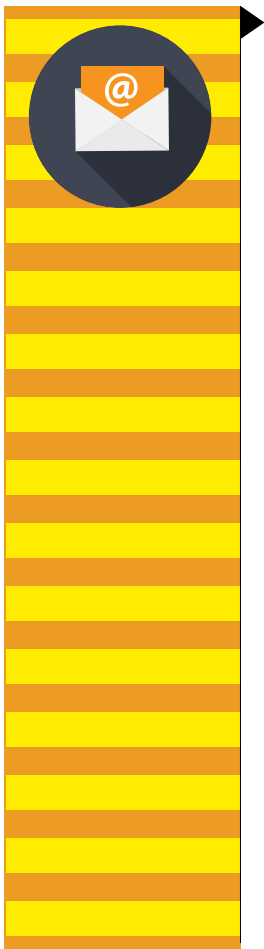
*Just do small acts of love.* To your parents. To your children. To your spouse. To your siblings. To your friends. Even to strangers.

Walk into the good works that you are supposed to do. 

May your dreams come true,

Bo





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

**Jamelo Nantes Ricacho**  
via **Kerygma Books Facebook Page**

*I am so excited to read inspirational articles from you. God bless.*

**Cathy Arenas**  
via **www.kerygmabooks.com**

*Weeks ago, I happened to be in a coffee house with old magazines. Luckily, I got a magazine where Rissa Kawpeng's Just Breathe article was published.*

*I already forgot the title of her article but its message is unforgettable. Her concept of the word "Church" is superb. I believe her, she's unquestionably correct. It's beautifully explained.*

*Thank you, Rissa, for your article.*

**Randy Romilo**  
via **e-mail**

*Thank you, Kerygma, for your "You Are Loved" issue. I have so many insecurities and worries before, but the articles and stories touched my soul. I did not have an instant change of heart, but after reading the magazine, I felt worthy and loved indeed—the first in a long, long time. It's as if someone embraced me and assured me that regardless of how I see myself, I am special in God's eyes.*

*My heartfelt thanks to your staff, Kerygma! Keep bringing God's love to the world. God bless.*

**Leah Javier**  
via **e-mail**

*This is a life-changing magazine. Good insights and inspiring stories. Thank you!*

**Marlon G.**  
via **www.kerygmabooks.com**

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It's interesting how we can own so much yet really need so little.

I remember when I went to the U.S. in 1998 with members of our community for a two-week vacation, but I ended up staying all summer to study.

San Francisco was the last leg of our trip. As our return flight neared, my best friend got this crazy idea of staying behind to take a summer course. She wouldn't be allowed by her parents to stay by herself so I was the natural choice to be her companion. That meant I get to study too. Since she was a layout artist of our magazine and I was a writer for it, she took a graphic design course while I applied for magazine writing.

Imagine, we went to America with clothes good for only two weeks. So I was amazed that I could live out of a suitcase for two months. That's when I realized that we could really do without everything we had left back home.

Today, decades later, I get those same realizations more often.

I live in an airy house with more than enough room for its number of occupants. Yet everything that matters to me can fit snugly on a single mattress on the floor.

Yup, that's what my family does when they leave me all alone on the king-size bed in our room, while my husband, Chris, and my two girls sleep sardine-style in a tangle of legs and arms on the *kutson* on the floor. (They like it there because that's where the air con blows straight at them.)

And then I get that realization again right now, onboard the



## When It All Comes Down to the Essentials

*We really don't need much*

Airbus 380-800 en route to our summer vacation. This is the biggest commercial aircraft man has ever made—a wide-body, double-deck plane that can seat over five hundred passengers. Yet the people who matter most to me fit side by side, albeit a little uncomfortably, on row 45, seats D to G.

It's a reminder to me that in life, we really don't need much. Yet God blesses us with such abundance that can often make us lose sight of what's essential.

It's not His fault. He blesses us with much for our enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17) and surplus to share with others. But our greedy nature never knows when to say enough. So we crave for way beyond what we need, exchanging the essential and eternal for what's frivolous and fleeting.

That's why I try—as hard as I can—to open my eyes and appreciate every little blessing in the midst of this flood of favor. But at the same time, I try not to lose sight of the things that really matter.


I thank God for trips abroad. For cruises and

By Rissa Singson Kawpeng

airplane rides. For a comfortable home and a privileged life. For household helps and SUVs. For paychecks and nest eggs.

But more than these, I thank Him for the stuff in my life that money can never afford.

Love. Family. Togetherness. Faith. Generosity. Gratitude. Insight. Wisdom. Virtue.

When it all comes down to the essentials, very little really matters. 

*So we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are visible are temporal [just brief and fleeting], but the things which are invisible are everlasting and imperishable. (2 Corinthians 4:18, AMP)*

Read more of Rissa's inspiring articles at [www.rissasingsonkawpeng.com](http://www.rissasingsonkawpeng.com). E-mail Rissa at [justbreatherissa@gmail.com](mailto:justbreatherissa@gmail.com) or follow her on Facebook.

Rissa's outfit courtesy of Elite Garments/FREEWAY



## about the cover model

Raf Dionisio is the cofounder of Make a Difference (MAD) Travel, a social enterprise that works with marginalized communities in the Philippines to create fun, authentic, and meaningful travel experiences through sustainable social tourism ([www.madtravel.org](http://www.madtravel.org)). He is also the president of AVD Builders, a company doing sustainable construction, acoustics, and environmental technologies. He also cofounded the Circle Hostel, a chain of budget friendly eco-hostels in the Philippines ([www.thecirclehostel.com](http://www.thecirclehostel.com)) that promotes surfing and community-based tourism. Raf is also involved in other environmental efforts such as The Plastic Solution that aims to reduce single use plastic and promote sustainability. His MAD Travel and the Circle Hostel teams were recognized by the 15th Ten Accomplished Youth Organizations (TAYO) Awards.

Raf is the eldest child of family counselors and regular *Kerygma* magazine columnists, Dr. Allan and Ms. Maribel Dionisio. On page 40, read about how he overcame the effects of bullying in his childhood and became the man that he is now.

Photos by Daniel Soriano  
Grooming by Keren Talladen





June 2018

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# daily pause **with** Pope Francis

**1**

“Are you in a position of authority? Be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain.”

**2**



“Jesus made Himself like the grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies to give life. Our hope springs from that love-filled life.”



**3**

“What would happen to us if God did not always give us the chance to start over again?”



**7**

“If we encounter Jesus and our brothers and sisters every day, our hearts will not dwell in the past or the future. They will live in God’s present moment, in peace with everyone.”

**8**

“Today, God is still searching for hearts like Mary’s, hearts that are ready to trust in Him completely.”

**9**

“God covers us with His mercy, He enfolds us in Christ, so that we can become instruments of His goodness.”

**1 3**

“Like the Good Samaritan, let us take care of those who are sick and suffering!”

**1 4**

“Living the encounter with Jesus means allowing yourself to be turned inside out by grace every day.”

**1 5**

“The Word of God is a light in the darkness. It helps us face our difficulties without fear.”

**1 9**

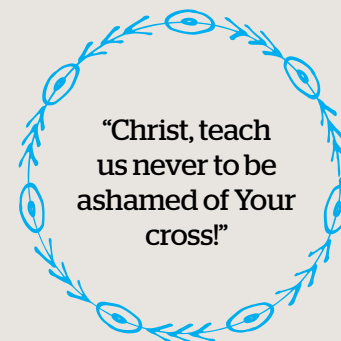
“Now is the time to be reconciled with God. Staying on the path of evil is only a source of sadness.”

**2 0**



“Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church.”

**2 1**



“Christ, teach us never to be ashamed of Your cross!”

**2 5**

“To defend the earth and to safeguard water is to protect life.”

**2 6**

“Nobody can be discarded, because we are all vulnerable. Each one of us is a treasure whom God allows to grow in his or her own way.”

**2 7**

“As we listen to the aspirations of young people, may we catch a glimpse of the world that lies ahead, and of the roads the Church is called to travel.”

**2 8**

“In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we find our way back to the Lord, and rediscover the meaning of life.”



4

“When we allow Jesus to enter our lives, we discover the secret to keeping alive the flame of our spiritual life.”

5

“The Lord calls each of us to holiness; [He calls] you too.”

6

“I wish to repropose the call to holiness: ‘Rejoice and be glad.’”

1 0

“Love is the only invincible weapon, because it has the power to disarm the forces of evil.”



1 1

“If we dedicate more time to prayer, our hearts will reveal the lies with which we deceive ourselves, and we will find true consolation in God.”

1 2



“Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus.”



1 6

“May Christ, who conquered the darkness of sin and death, grant us peace in our days.”



1 7

“Anyone who turns away from the Cross, turns away from the Resurrection.”

1 8

“Jesus changes our sins into forgiveness and our fears into trust. In His cross, our hope is reborn again and again.”

2 2

“Please, let us fight together against the crime of human exploitation, which continues to cause unspeakable suffering.”

2 3

“Dear young people, never get tired of being instruments of peace and joy among your peers!”

2 4



“The Word of God invites us to connect our ears to our hearts, and our hearts to our hands, in order to do good deeds.”



2 9

“With so much to do, we often neglect what is really important: our spiritual lives and our relationship with God. So let’s stop and take time to pray!”



3 0

“If sometimes the flame of charity seems to die in our hearts, it never dies in the heart of God!”





## BACK-UP TIPS FOR THE BACK

**BACK PAIN** is a physical problem that everyone experiences. Whether studying or working, it is difficult to concentrate once we feel our spine aching. To prevent this, follow these helpful suggestions:

- 1. Exercise regularly.** Maintaining a fit body is the best way to avoid back pain. Add exercises like walking and swimming to your routine to develop the abdomen and back muscles, thus lessening the stress on the back.
- 2. Practice good posture.** Slouching is a big no-no. When sitting, always keep both feet rested on the floor. Choose a chair that has a low-back support. Leave the back pocket free from wallet or cell phone when sitting to reduce the pressure on the lower back.
- 3. Do physical tasks properly.** When lifting heavy objects, do not bend over from the waist. Keep your back straight as you squat and bend your knees. If possible, opt to push the object. Alternate heavy and light actions, and avoid unnecessary movements that may cause injury to your back.

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

## NEW WAYS TO DECLUTTER YOUR HOME

**CLEAN YOUR PLACE,** clear your mind."

We see this in posters, office boards, and social media feeds all the time. But decluttering always seems a daunting task for many. Common reasons: it is time consuming, tiring, and once left undone, it's challenging to get the momentum back again.

But finding a bigger reason to declutter—and sticking to it—can make a big difference. Plus, it may be worth it to try new ways to clean up your place.

Here are some creative decluttering methods:

- 1. KonMari method.** Sort out your things per category, not by room. Hold each item and feel if it answers the question, "Does it spark joy?"
- 2. Take on the 12-12-12 Challenge.** This can be a fun family bonding. List down twelve items to dispose, twelve items to give away, and twelve items to return to their proper location.
- 3. Project 333.** Minimalist blogger Courtney Carver introduced Project 333 to help people declutter their cabinets. For three months, she challenges people to use thirty-three articles of clothing only.



## Quick Health Tip

### Kale

Kale is a dark, leafy vegetable which is part of the cabbage family. It contains folate that is essential for brain development. It also has an omega-3 fatty acid called alpha-Linolenic that lowers cholesterol and prevents heart attack. The lutein and zeaxanthin content of kale guards the body against muscle degeneration and cataracts.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com>

## Saints-at-a-Glance

### Saint Eskill

**Feast Day: June 12**

St. Eskill was an English missionary to Sweden and a companion of St. Sigfrid. In Sweden, he became the bishop of Strangnas and evangelized the whole of Sodermanland County. He was stoned to death by order of the pagan King Sweyn, when the bishop denounced a pagan festival.

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



### FR. JAVIER OLIVERA AND SISTER MARIE DE LA SAGESSE

from Argentina have an interesting story to tell. They were already engaged to be married when they were called to religious life and they couldn't be any happier in saying "yes" to God.

The two met when they were nineteen.

And after a conversation about virginity until marriage, Javier was amazed by how Trinidad Maria Guiomar, Sr. Marie's baptismal name, defended her faith intelligently. They started dating while pursuing their respective law degrees in different universities. They got engaged when they were twenty-one and decided to get married after college.

However, after taking Trinidad's older brother to the seminary and spending days visiting their friends in the seminary and convent, the engaged couple felt something different. They thought it was crazy to consider being a religious, but they found themselves admitting to each other about their vocation concerns.

But they didn't rush. They looked for a spiritual adviser to help them discern as they continued with their law studies.

After graduation, they entered the religious life. In 2008, Javier was ordained as a priest, and Trinidad made her final vows as Sr. Marie de la Sagesse.

Sr. Marie said, "I consider it a special grace that both of us were called almost at the same time. So kind and thoughtful of Divine Providence, who doesn't miss a detail. And what I really appreciate is that we're still friends and not just us, but our families too."

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/>



## LEAF PLATES, TRAYS, AND BOWLS, ANYONE?

In the Philippines, people use banana leaves when there is a boodle fight or as an alternative plate lining to paper and plastic.

In Germany, a company named Leaf Republic has used twenty-first century technology to design an environment-friendly alternative to paper plates—leaf plates.

Each plate consists of three layers: the top layer is made of compressed East Asian leaves; the middle layer is sturdy paper made from leaves; and the bottom is another layer of compressed leaves. The best part is that it biodegrades in just four weeks or twenty-eight days when composted.

Leaf Republic also created other tableware such as bowls and trays which can be used as packaging materials for food. Visit [www.leaf-republic.com](http://www.leaf-republic.com) for more details.



Sources: <https://www.facebook.com/stateofthecarte/>; [www.leaf-republic.com](http://www.leaf-republic.com)



# My Seven Years at

He Cares  
Mission  
Street Children Caring Ce

▲  
**Seventh heaven.** Daryl overflows with joy and thanksgiving for serving in He Cares for seven years.

**By Daryl Tamon**

**M**ay 1, 2018 marked my seventh year anniversary as a full-time missionary at He Cares Mission, a foundation for street children in Quezon City, one of the mercy ministries supported by Light of Jesus Family.

It was in 2010 when my caring group head first took me to He Cares. I felt burdened when I learned about the lives of the

wounded kids to the point that I would just stare blankly at a corner. I began to volunteer at the center.

I was then working as an accountant for Shepherd's Voice Publications (SVP) and was also undergoing the Radical Training Course for young male leaders of The Feast. I was free every Saturday so I pledged to go to He Cares. I would be drained and tired after serving but I would go home fulfilled. That was my life



for eleven months.

One day, Joe Dean Sola, the founder of He Cares, asked me if I want to be a part-time volunteer in the foundation. I discerned it well but my mentor told me that it would be hard to be an accountant by day and missionary at night. I had to choose only one.

So I did another round of prayer, fasting, and reading the Scriptures to know what God's will was. Then my Radical

Training coach, Obet Cabrillas, dropped by our office and randomly told me that the deepest desires of your heart is the will of God in your life. I was surprised. Although I consider him my mentor, I didn't immediately believe him.

I searched for more wisdom. I went to confession in the chapel of a mall. I asked the priest how I would know if I have a calling. He said that I would only know if I try it out. If I didn't, nothing would happen.

So on March 15, 2011, after one year of working in SVP, I resigned. And on May 1, 2011, I started to serve full-time at He Cares.

#### **Challenges Ahead**

I must say it's very challenging to deal with the poor. Before we can introduce Jesus to them, we must first fill them with their basic needs. If we don't satisfy them, they will say that we are just using the poor.

Another challenge in dealing with street children are the times when some of them escape from the shelter. We have to search for them the way the good shepherd looks for the lost sheep in Jesus' parable. At the same time, we need to journey with them, taking into consideration their different personalities.

The worst that happened in my experience was the death of one of the kids under our care. He was an 11-year-old boy who had an ear infection which reached his brain. Those were challenging times. But through prayer and sincere service, we continue with the mission.

#### **Biggest Blessings**

It has been fulfilling for me to see all our kids in He Cares getting baptized in the Catholic Church and receiving the Holy

Spirit through the Life in the Spirit Seminar. It has also been my joy to assist their parents' church weddings because some of them have not yet received the sacrament of matrimony.

God has also brought me twice to Australia to raise funds for He Cares. It didn't feel like mission work at all because I enjoyed visiting many places there.

This September, I will reap one of my biggest blessings yet as I marry my girlfriend.

So many good things have happened to me these past seven years of service. As the years go by, I am all the more convinced that my assignment is to bring the Good News to the poor and to the wounded children in our society.

No matter where I am, I continue to do His mission for me. 

**F**or more information on He Cares and the other mercy ministries supported by the Light of Jesus Family, visit [www.lightfam.com](http://www.lightfam.com) or call 725-9999.



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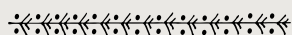


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and leading stores nationwide.



*My parents have been married for twenty-eight years now and I can say that they have raised me and my younger brother well. We live a comfortable life and both of them are retiring in two years' time. However, I noticed that for the past few years, they started to treat each other a bit colder than they used to. They would shout at each other at the slightest offense, fight over small financial matters and can withstand not talking to each other for a couple of days.*

*Is this normal for their age or marital stage? My mom even remarked once that it's fine if they decided to separate since both my brother and I have already graduated. It hurts me to see them drifting apart and minding their personal matters on their own. How can we help them keep their marriage alive? They seem to not care about us as much as they did before because we're grown-ups now. What can we do to save our family from breaking apart?*

**Lyda E.**

E-mail your questions to [editsvp@shepherdsvoice.com.ph](mailto: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](mailto:lojpastoralcare@gmail.com), go to [www.kerygmfamily.com](http://www.kerygmfamily.com), or call (632) 725-999.**

## How Can I Save My Parents' Relationship?

**Dear Lyda,**

Your concern for your parents' marriage is admirable. It is every child's desire to see their parents loving and caring for each other and keeping their marriage intact.

From what you have narrated about your parents' relationship toward each other, it seems that they have unresolved conflicts. These conflicts may have been long standing and they have been keeping these things to themselves. I think these have reached a stage when they can no longer contain these unresolved conflicts that they have resorted to those hurting acts that you have mentioned in your letter. I believe it will be best that you seriously appeal to them to seek a good marriage counselor. Talk to each one of them and let them know what you and your brother feel about what is going on in their marriage, that both of you hope and desire that their marriage will work out well, and that marriage counseling will help them resolve whatever issues they may have against each other. In a situation like this, a trained marriage counselor will be capable of providing an objective understanding and assessment of their case. The Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center's counselors can help them in this regard. I am praying for them.

**Bro. Vic**



Vic Español is one of the elders of Light of Jesus Family. At present, he is the Feast Builder and preacher of The Feast Ortigas every Monday at 7:30 p.m. and every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. at The Feast Center, Robinson's Galleria. Vic and his wife, Ditas, train the pastoral carers of the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center. Vic is a retired executive of a multinational life insurance company.

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**T**here's a quote that says, "When someone you love dies, and you're not expecting it, you don't lose them all at once; you lose them in pieces over a long time." That's how I felt for many years. Dealing with grief at my young age was difficult.

I lost my beloved uncle in his fight with leukemia when I was five years old. After two months, days before my sixth birthday, I lost my father in an accident. The following month, I lost another uncle. My young mind didn't know how to handle that kind of grief. I cried every night asking God why my father died, why I couldn't be with him, and why I could no longer see and hug him. I wished that when I wake up in the morning he'd be by my side, tapping my head, asking me to take a bath.

**A Mother's Love**

My mom worked hard to send me and my sister to school. She sacrificed many things to fulfill her duties as a mother and a father to us. She thought of working in the city to earn more money, but I begged her to stay because I didn't want to live without her. I was so selfish that time. I didn't want her to marry again. She focused on taking care of us.

We studied hard, brought home awards from different competitions, and strove to be the best daughters. My mother taught me so many things in life. Little by little, I accepted life without my father.

On July 10, 2007, I trembled when I saw blood gushing from my mother's mouth. She was hardly breathing. I saw her fake a smile just to calm me. I rushed her to the hospital and begged the doctors to save my mom. They told me that if they pulled off the oxygen, she would die and my mother was aware of that. Thinking that I would lose her any minute ripped my heart into pieces. I was ready to trade my life for her. I was desperate. I cried so



**Broken Vessel**

By Joan Brimon

hard begging her not to give up, telling her how much I wanted to spend my entire life with her, how much I love her.

I didn't know if she heard all of it. I pulled myself together and held her. I witnessed her slowly closing her eyes and dying in my arms. The next thing I knew, I was wearing a black dress, mourning for her.

**Losing Purpose**

In a blink of an eye, I lost everything that kept me excited every day, the reason why I kept fighting and moving forward. I shut out other people. I would smile but it didn't reach in my eyes. I didn't pray and go to church. I stopped asking God why I had to go through endless grieving. I found myself on the seashore waiting for my mom to come back as if she just went to the city to buy something for us. I would read all her letters for me and cry silently at night. I lost grip of myself. Pain made me blind and deaf to God's blessings.

A year after my mother's death, God reminded me of His death on Calvary just to save me. He held my hands as I slowly walked out of the darkness. He listened as I opened my heart to Him again. He told me that I have to be strong for my sister because He knew it was harder for her, and I was the only one who could


support her through the healing process. He helped me regain my purpose, to move forward and make my dreams come true.

**Embracing Others**

God prodded me to attend The Feast Manila Love Life Retreat Batch 9 on March 25, 2017. As we sang "Broken Vessels" by Hillsong, I told myself that this song was my life story. My tears fell. Those were tears of joy for graduating after many years of grieving. I finally let go of all the pain and I am fully healed.

I've learned to live without my parents but they are always part of my life. Whenever I miss them, I look up and tell God that I am blessed to have them. I saw my grieving process as an evolutionary one. Loss enriched my life in challenging, unexpected, and even beautiful ways. My scars prove that I can win even in the toughest battles. God uses my pain to journey with others, especially in the community.

This year marks my father's twenty-first death anniversary and my mother's eleventh. Through these years, I started to open myself again and shared my story to other people.

Today, my heart is naked and unashamed of its scars. If you have scars, it means you have overcome your struggles. 

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## TESTIMONIALS...

 Vernie O. Velasquez, Ph.D. Stress related diseases (severe body pains, migraine, toxic goiter, heart failure, osteoporosis, blurred vision, premature aging)	 Renato U. Paragas, M.D. Fractured Right Patella	 Lisa A. Ungab, RND Severe Allergy (Anaphylaxis) Easy labor for Middle-aged Pregnancy	 Angie Daquis Obesity	 Rev. Fr. Philip Francis R. Bersabe Hypertension	 Ana Uriarte Blood Dyscrasia
 Darren Duke Diabetes	 Al-Jinason P. Hanagip Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)	 Richard L. Bellaza Chronic Sinusitis Nasal Polyps	 Johnny Samiento Hemorrhoids	 Florentio N. Caccam III Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever & Scrotal Hemia	 Jocelyn C. Basalan Abscess, Aclia
 Ferdinand Y. Domingo Diabetes	 Jerold Jim R. Legan Diabetes	 Michael A. Ungab Epilepsy	 Mary Jane Obligado Kidney Stones	 Engr. Victor P. Romero Diabetes and Parasite	 Pura C. Cristobal Hypertension & UTI
 Benny Bocato Hypertension	 Sherry Abad Extracortical Mass	 Rat. Chief Insp. Merly Rosero Lymphoma	 Joyce Tajares Nephrotic Syndrome	 Sean Nigel Marfanosa Bartolome Acute Glomerulonephritis	 Damaso Mendez San Juan Gouty Arthritis
 Katharyn Frianele Myoma & Infertility	 John Alfred Daquis-Galapo Ear Infection & Fractured Left Arm	 Marites Petallo Brain Tumor	 Baby Gem Frianele Congenital Heart Disease / Scrotal Hemia	 Micael Velasquez Infertility for 9 years	 Robinson Pin Migraine, heart problem, arthritis, blurred vision, vertigo, back pains
 John Albert Patron Primary Koch's Infection	 Michelle C. Opalla Fibroadenoma, left breast	 Violeta R. Rosas Cellulitis, Right Foot	 Niño O. Paquibot UTI	 Janmor L. Morales Bronchial Asthma	 Apolinario Masanding Rheumatic Heart Disease w/ impending Heart failure
 Richard P. Miranda Aortic/Inferior Wall Ischemia; Endocervical polyp	 Myrna Marcelino Myocardial infarct				

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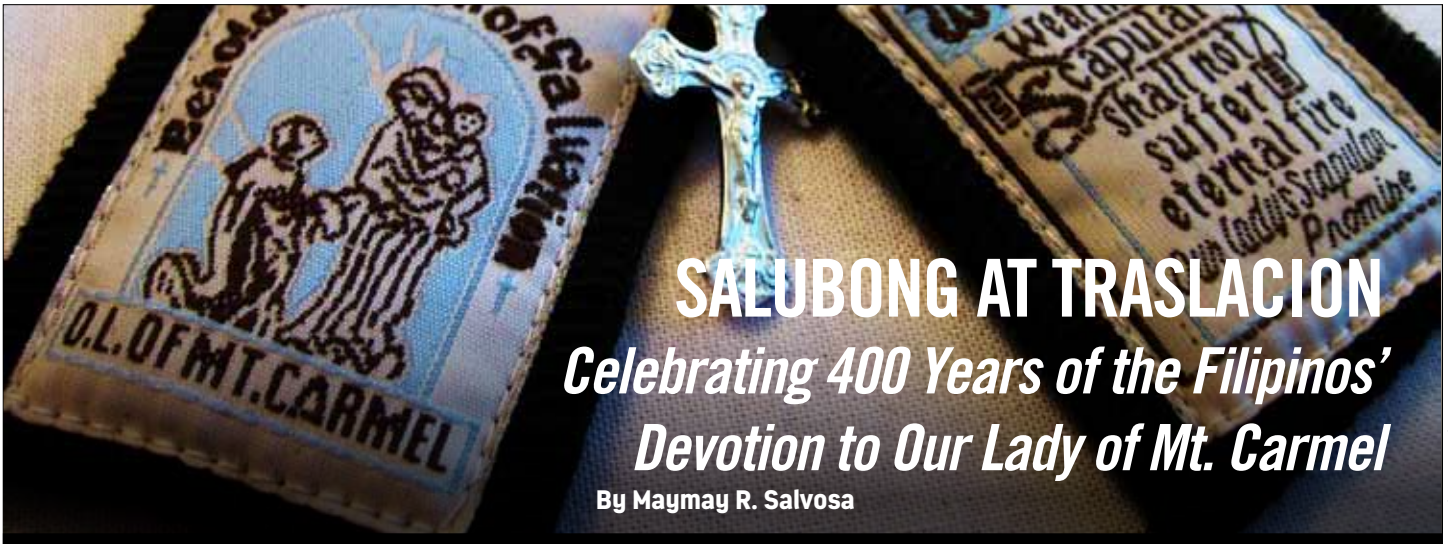
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# SALUBONG AT TRASLACION

## *Celebrating 400 Years of the Filipinos' Devotion to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel*

By Maymay R. Salvosa

sacerdotus.wordpress.com

**O**n May 4, 2018, approximately ten thousand devotees of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel flocked to the Quirino Grandstand to celebrate the fourth centenary of the arrival of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's image to the Philippines.

Since the historic arrival of the image to the Philippine soil, the devotion to her keeps growing through the years.

And for a good reason.

### **The Promise of the Scapular**

The devotion to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel originated in 1251.

St. Simon Stock, then superior general of the religious Carmelite order, sought for help and protection from the Blessed Virgin Mary because of persecution. The Blessed Mother appeared to him, holding a scapular, and told him, "Take, beloved son, this scapular of thy Order as a badge of my confraternity, and for thee and for all Carmelites, a sign of grace. Whoever dies in this garment will not suffer everlasting fire. It is a sign of salvation, a safeguard in dangers, a pledge of peace and of the covenant."

These lines are written on the scapular that devotees wear up to this day. Originally, the size of a scapular reaches from the shoulder to almost the ground. Over the years, the Church has minimized its size to make it easier to wear.

### **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in the Philippines**


Missionaries from the Order of Augustinian Recollects brought the image from Mexico to the Philippines in 1618. It was first housed at San Juan de Bautista de Bagumbayan Church in Luneta, and was later enshrined in San Sebastian Church in Quiapo in 1621.

### **Faith and Festivities**

The traslacion on May 4 highlighted the "Salubong" of the Black Nazarene and the image of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel at the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene or Quiapo Church.

Devotees started coming as early as two in the morning. At 6 a.m., incoming Philippine Ambassador to the Vatican Grace Princesa and Mexican Ambassador to the Philippines Gerardo Lozano went to the Philippine Coast Guard premises to grace the event. A fluvial procession along Manila Bay was held to reenact the coming of the image of Our Lady in the country. Davao Archbishop Romulo Valles, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

(CBCP) president, presided the Mass at the Quirino Grandstand after the procession.

Despite his absence, Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle's message was shared to the faithful towards the end of the Mass. A part of his message reads, "*Sana tumahimik ang mga baril at pagtangis at mapalitan ng katahimikang dulot ng totoong kapayapaan.*" 

### **A PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL**

O most beautiful Flower of Mount Carmel, Fruitful Vine, Splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me this my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart, to succour me in this necessity; there are none that can withstand your power.

O, show me herein you are my Mother, O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. (Say three times)

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands. (Say three times)



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# Is Your Cup Full?

By Michele Alignay, PhD

**R**alph Waldo Emerson said, “Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops yourself.”

In family life, expressing our love and service is inevitable. We are called to pour perfume on others, to fill their cup, even their plate, with the gift of ourselves.

Yet many times, we overlook where our drive to serve comes from. Our relationship with ourselves and with our Creator is the basis from which all our relationships are anchored.

How is your service and love cup? Is it full or running empty? Moms like me get way too cranky when there’s a lot of demands at home. Dads get tired too so they tend to distance themselves sometimes. Any adult—married or single—has a responsibility to care for the person whom they often take for granted: the self!

When we serve, what we give others should be the spillover of our full cup. The

filling comes from our love and relationship with God and how we love ourselves. It is not selfish. We want to be full of God’s love for ourselves because we want to love more and give more to others.

So here are some realistic ways you can fill your cup—your mind, body, and spirit.

**Pause.** If you are physically tired, don’t feel guilty to pause. Skip cooking a meal, or skip your to-do lists. Your physical rest is more important. As much as you want the best for your family, letting go of some things that are not a matter of life and death, can really do wonders. Taking a pause can help not just your body, but it can also declutter your emotions. It can clear your mind and give you a sense of being refreshed.

**Move.** Prioritize these three important things: sleep, exercise, and good diet.


I started yoga four years ago when I began feeling lethargic as early as 4 p.m. I took time off about twice or thrice a week to take classes. My motivation is I want to feel good, strong, and healthy to keep up with my two growing kids. It did wonders for my body, health, and well-being. Sleeping early, exercising and eating healthier options should be done deliberately.

**Retreat.** Yes, retreat. Take a step back. You need a time for

yourself only. See what works for you and do it consistently and mindfully. It may be a morning Mass, a quiet time at home, eating comfort food by yourself in a café, walking in the village, or just staring at the sky outside. We need these nothing or “alone” moments to connect with ourselves.

I like going to a coffee shop, just writing my to-dos and reflections while having my favorite cup of coffee. I feel on top of my life. I read my Bible reflections. It clears my thoughts and I feel I have more to give. This kind of retreat literally fills my cup.

So let go of the guilt. To serve more and love more, you need to have an overflowing cup of love from within you and our God.

Enjoy the pause, the move, and the retreat so you can be more empowered to serve! 



*Michele Alignay, PhD, recently completed her doctorate in Family Studies. She is the author of Family Goals: Embracing the Imperfections of Family Life, which won as the Best Book in Family Life in the Cardinal Sin Catholic Book Awards 2017. E-mail Michele at [ichel.alignay@gmail.com](mailto:ichel.alignay@gmail.com).*

In preparation for our family's Easter vacation to Beijing, China this year, I did some extensive research on dining spots and cultural sights that we could include in our itinerary. Many clicks later, I found myself watching a video about how majority of the Chinese locals no longer carry physical bills but have adopted a cashless society—one that utilizes e-payment transactions and online banking. The process is quite simple and usually centers around four main steps:

1. Download a payment application to your mobile phone.
2. Fund your e-payment account by either exchanging cash for credits through various outlets or link your credit card to your account and use it to charge all your expenses directly.
3. All merchants that accept e-payment services will show you a QR code that you can scan using your application.
4. After scanning, type in the exact amount that you would like to pay to the merchant, and by the click of a button, you're done.

I was so intrigued that I tested this cashless way of life here in Manila for a week. I was well-aware that Jack Ma of Alibaba teamed up with Globe Telecom's G-Cash system last year and since it was offering a ten percent rebate on all purchases until the end of March 2018, I immediately downloaded the application and signed up. To be fair, I also downloaded PayMaya (formerly Smart e-Money) and headed to the nearest convenience store in my office to fund both accounts over the counter. Armed with just my phone and a functioning data mobile plan that kept me online, the experience opened my eyes to newfound possibilities.



## A Week of Cashless Living

### **It's far more convenient than I expected.**

No more fumbling into my bag for my wallet, counting change, or signing charge slips. Transactions were quick and easy to complete and I was amazed at how many local merchants were already accepting e-payment services. I used my phone to pay my Grab driver, purchase stuff at well-known stores, and eat meals at some of my favorite restaurants without going through the usual lengthy billing process. When I got sick in the middle of the week, it was a pleasant surprise to find out that the leading pharmacy in Manila also had a cashless payment option.

### **It increases protection against theft.**

Every payment application requires security verification such as entering a PIN, a password, or scanning your fingerprint before you can access the account or transfer funds. Thieves can steal a real wallet and take the cash but if your phone is ever lost or stolen, the funds stashed in your e-wallet should remain safe.


### **All transactions are recorded.**

Being able to track all your expenses is a huge bonus and will certainly help in managing your finances. This is also useful if you need to show proof

of unsolicited payments made through your account or if you can't remember what you spent your money on.

### **Take advantage of the promotions**

The e-payment services in the Philippines are offering huge rebates and discounts to encourage more people to use their apps. If I use my G-Cash funds, the system would issue a ten percent rebate in additional credits to my e-wallet. So if I spent P500 on a shirt using the system, I would receive P50 back into my account within one to two days. Other prominent merchants offer a thirty percent rebate system, so it's important to avail of these benefits before they expire.

As with anything, nothing is fail-safe or risk-free. But as the world shifts into the digital landscape, we must also keep ourselves informed of the progress being made. There are multiple capabilities that these new technologies have to offer and convenience combined with more cost-efficient means of spending is something we can certainly benefit from in the long run. 

*Eleanore Teo is the director for marketing and operations at the Caylum Trading Institute. She authored a book titled, Raising Heirs, available at [www.kerygmabooks.com](http://www.kerygmabooks.com). E-mail her at [elyo.lee@gmail.com](mailto:elyo.lee@gmail.com).*

By Eleanore Lee Teo





# Get Your Vitamin B

**H**ave you ever wondered why your doctors prescribe or ask you to take Vitamin B complex? Let me share with you what Vitamin B complex is. Vitamin B complex is the eight B Vitamins: B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B7, B9, B12.

Vitamin B complex plays an important role in keeping our bodies running like well-oiled machines. This essential nutrient helps convert our food into fuel allowing us to stay energized throughout the day.

Here's a tip for you: You can get your daily dose of Vitamin B complex the natural way by eating food that are rich in Vitamin B.

**Vitamin B1 (Thiamine).** The anti-stress vitamin. It has the ability to protect the immune system.

**Get it from:** Whole grains, peanuts, beans, spinach, and kale.

**Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin).** It works as an antioxidant to help fight free radicals.

**Get it from:** Almonds, wild rice, milk, yogurt, eggs, spinach, and soybeans.

**Vitamin B3 (Niacin).** Boosts the good cholesterol.

**Get it from:** Eggs, beans, and green vegetables.

**Vitamin B5 (Pantothenic Acid).** Helps in breaking down fats and carbs for energy.

**Get it from:** Avocados, yogurt, eggs, meat, and legumes.

**Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine).** Helps in getting good sleep and better mood.

**Get it from:** Chicken, turkey, tuna, salmon, lentils, sunflower seeds, cheese, brown rice, and carrots.

**Vitamin B7 (Biotin).** The beauty vitamin. It gives you healthy hair, skin, and nails.

By Dr. Didoy Lubaton

**Get it from:** Barley, fish, potatoes, cauliflower, egg yolks, and nuts.

**Vitamin B9 (Folate).** Helps keep depression at bay and prevent memory loss.

**Get it from:** Dark leafy greens, asparagus, beets, salmon, roots vegetables, milk, and beans.

**Vitamin B12.** Helps your body produce DNA and red blood cells, supports your immune system, and encourages healthy nerve function.

**Get it from:** Fish (sardines), shellfish, dairy, eggs, beef, and pork.

If you eat a well-balanced meal, chances are you are getting enough Vitamin B. It all boils down to being mindful and taking in the good food for you.

Happy eating! 🍴

*Dr. Didoy Lubaton is the builder of The Feast Mall of Asia. He wrote the book, Don't Let Them Lose You, available at [www.kerygmabooks.com](http://www.kerygmabooks.com). E-mail him at [didoymd@gmail.com](mailto:didoymd@gmail.com).*



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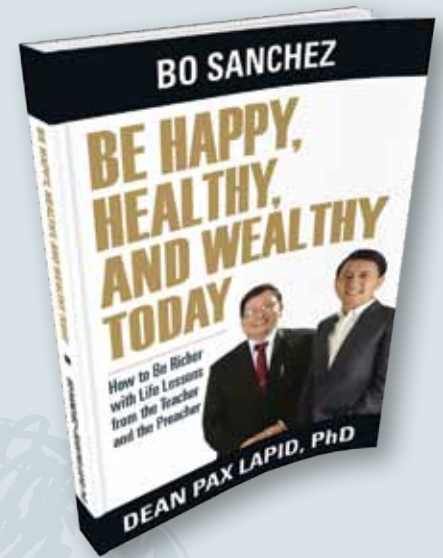
They have distilled over half a century of lessons learned through living, failing, and succeeding. You will save yourself from a lot of unnecessary heartaches when you listen to them. Learn the lesson without having to go through the painful experience.

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- ✓ 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.





**D**o you celebrate name days in your family? A name day is the feast of one's patron saint or the saint whom a person is named after. This tradition started during the Middle Ages and has been widely practiced in both Catholic and Orthodox communities, especially in Europe and Latin America. In these places, name days are even more important than birthdays, and most of these celebrations are spent at home and with the family.

**Some Notable Name Days**

November 4 is the name day of St. John Paul II because it is also the feast of St. Charles Borromeo. What's the connection between him and St. Charles? The former pope's real name, Karol, is the Polish form of Charles. And because of that, the Vatican offices consider November 4 as a holiday.

Boys and girls who are named after St. Charles and its variants—Carl, Karl, Carlos, Carlo, Carla, Carol, Cheryl, Carlotta, Caroline, Carolyn, and Lottie—celebrate with the symbols of a bishop, a rope, an altar, a cardinal's hat, or a chalice and a host reflected in their cakes, sweets, and other party treats.

December 6 or 19 is also a notable name day because of St. Nicholas, whose name and its variants are relatively famous in many parts of Europe and Latin America. During celebrations, St. Nicholas recipes (available online) are prepared, and the decorations feature a St. Nicholas figure with his symbols—anchor and three gold balls or coins.



# Name Day Celebrations with the Family

By **Krizelle R. Talladen**

**Families Celebrating Name Days**

Kim Cameron-Smith wrote in her blog in *Intentional Catholic Parenting* that August is her family's "name day month" because all her four children's patron saints fall in the said month: Lydia (August 3), Dominic (August 8), Claire (August 11), and Aidan (August 31).


Kim shared in a post, "Creating a tradition of celebrating a child's patron saint not only provides an opportunity to teach our kids a thing or two about a great soul, but we also show them the delight of our faith."

Kim uses the symbols related to the saints when celebrating the name days of her children. For example, since St. Lydia was a seller of purple cloth, they always use a purple table cloth when her daughter, Lydia, celebrates her name day. They also pray the prayer to the saint, and read an age-appropriate story book on the saint's life.

Tina Rodriguez, a homeschool mom and blogger at *Truly Rich and Blessed* that won Best Catholic Blog in the Catholic Social Media Awards 2017, shared how their name day celebration includes a time for prayer also, feasting on a cake, and reading a book or watching a video on the lives of the featured saint. They also sing, "Happy Name Day to You" instead of "Happy Birthday."

Jopaw Villarosa, a Filipino based in Malaysia, shared how he and his siblings were encouraged by their parents when they were growing up to attend Mass on the feast of the saints they were named after. Since his full name is Joseph Paul, he would go to Mass on the feasts of St. Joseph and St. Paul. If we Catholics attend Mass during our birthdays, why not on our name days as well?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "Everyone's name is sacred. The name is the icon of the person. It demands respect as a sign of the dignity of the one who bears it" (#2158).

More than the material aspect of the name day festivities, may we remember how to live our lives in accordance to God's will, just how the saints did. 

Sources:  
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<https://www.catholicculture.org/>  
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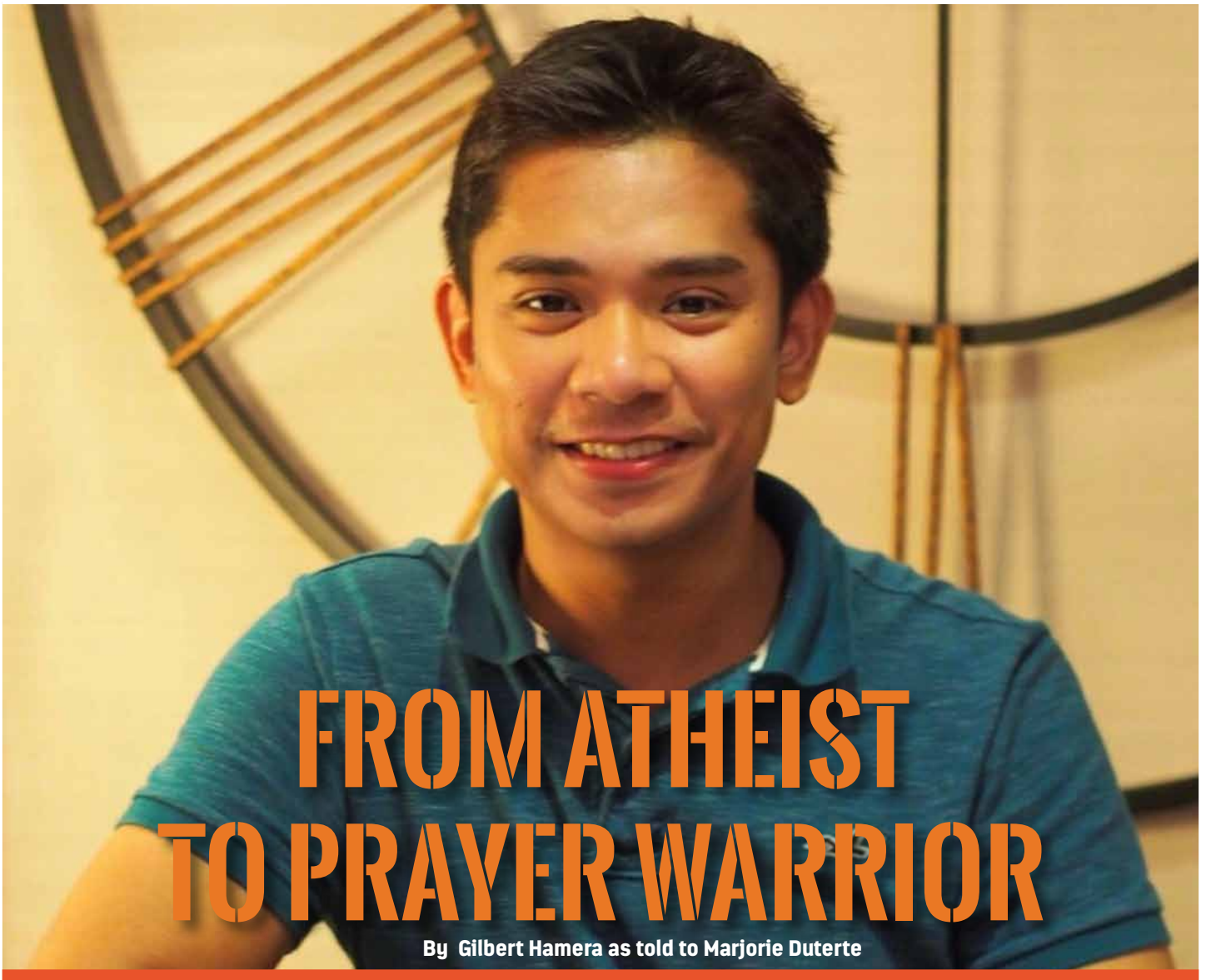


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# FROM ATHEIST TO PRAYER WARRIOR

By Gilbert Hamera as told to Marjorie Duterte

**I**t had been a long time since I last went to confession—when I was a teen during my confirmation. Because of my many sins, I had planned to filter them and reduce them to only two. I felt shy telling my sins to the priest. But as I entered the Adoration Chapel, it hit me. This was the moment I had been waiting for—a chance to start anew. Why would I hold back? When I went to the confessional and saw the priest waiting for me there, I broke down.

## **First Encounters**

I grew up an only child. I did not know my father because he died from a car accident while I was

still inside my mother's womb. My mama did not have any religion then but her friends convinced her to get me baptized as a Catholic. I was born on Christmas day of 1982 but I did not go to church and Sunday Mass.

Growing up in a poor family in Zambales, I found myself without a college to go to. Out of desperation, I ran towards the church during our senior high school graduation. That's where I first talked to God. I told Him, "I do not know if You are real, but I don't have anyone to turn to but You. I don't know what will happen in the future." It was my first memorable prayer.

After a few days, an aunt who lived in the U.S.

who had not been in touch with us for the past seven years called. Mama told her that I had graduated high school and was about to go to college. My aunt said, "I will go home to the Philippines and support his studies." I wanted to take Chemical Engineering but we couldn't afford it. But with my aunt's financial support I took the entrance exams at the last minute. I passed and went to St. Louis University in Baguio.

### **My On and Off Relationship with God**

In college, I would only run to church whenever I encountered difficulties in school, or when I felt lonely. I did not go to church on Sundays.

I became proud as I gained more knowledge. I joined atheist friends and agreed that everything could be explained by science. I became an atheist and trusted in my own knowledge.

I debated with friends and told them that there is no God. My relationship with Him was too shallow that it was easy for me to give Him up.

### **God Remained Faithful**

Before I graduated from college, a post in our school bulletin board caught my attention: the national competition for Bayer's Young Environmental

Envoys. The winner would be sent to Germany for a study trip. I felt a voice whisper to me, "Go ahead and join." I submitted an entry and won, not knowing that the program would lead me to a special family.

The head of the Bayer program was a Filipina named Dorothy Claro. She was a quiet and faithful follower of Christ. I was happy that she went with us. She was like a grandmother to me.

I was told to visit the chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Paris. What I saw surprised me. I remembered an incident one summer break when I went home to Zambales and only had ten pesos in my pocket.

I went to the other town to pawn my watch, but the pawnshop didn't accept my watch. I had to walk for four hours to get home. Halfway to our town, I saw a grotto of Mary. I told her, "*Malayo pa po ako. Please give me strength.*" When I walked a few steps, I felt a nudge to check my pocket again. There was a crumpled twenty-peso bill inside! I was shocked. I knew I didn't have money.

**Gilbert's superhero.** Gilbert with the person who raised him up despite all the challenges—his mom.



Fast forward to that small chapel in Paris. It was the same image of Mary that I saw when I first encountered her that fateful day in Subic. I realized that she had been watching over me and praying for me. I cried because I remembered how I joined debates against Mary. I apologized to her. I understood why the Lord loves her. When I find it hard to pray, I know that she is interceding for me.

### **The Prodigal Son Returns**

One day, a Bayer alumnus shared that he got a job in Singapore after only a month. I was convinced to try that opportunity and went to Singapore in 2007.

I did not tell Miss Dorothy, who was based in Singapore as an expat, that I was there. When she found out, she offered the vacant room in her house while I looked for a job. She adopted me like a family member, and her husband and children became my friends too. They were Opus Dei members. She counseled me that the blessings would come faster if I went to confession, that our

sins were like umbrellas that prevented God's blessings from reaching us. "If you go to confession and reconcile with God, you will receive His graces without limit," she said.

I cried when I went to confession. The priest talked to me like a father to a son. I felt like I was picked up from the mud. I felt Him speak through the priest when he said, "I've been watching you and had been waiting for you to come back." Then the priest embraced me. That moment of grace left a deep mark on my heart and mind. I thank God for that miracle that made me new.

Soon after, a company offered me a job. When I only had two dollars left, I was called into the office and was given my salary in an envelope. It was the first time I held such an amount. I felt God's hand intervene in the critical moments of my life. Special moments like these deepen my relationship with Him.

### **Becoming a Prayer Warrior**

I joined Singles for Christ in 2010. Being with the community magnified the presence of God as I saw how He also works in the lives of my brothers and sisters. I joined the intercessory ministry

because I felt called to be there. Eventually, I led the ministry. We would pray for the petitions and thanksgivings of the whole community during our monthly prayer intercession. It takes a minimum of three hours to pray for all the members while kneeling down in front of the Blessed Sacrament. We do it for the brother or sister like how Jesus Christ did it for us. If we can't handle the prayer concern, we refer to the priest and he includes the intentions during Mass.

### **Jobless in Singapore**


While leading the intercessory ministry, I lost my job.

Fortunately, I was already a permanent resident in Singapore. I believed it was also a moment of grace. The more stressed and worried I was, the more I relied on God. I used that opportunity to intensify my prayers even more. I thank God that He gave me more time to serve our community. I had no work but God used me for His purpose. Since I was praying

for others, I forgot my own problem. I went to Mass daily and I got busy with community service for two years while doing insurance work. My money was just enough for rent and food. The challenges made me stronger as a prayer warrior for God.

In 2014, I decided to give up my permanent residency when I couldn't sustain myself in Singapore anymore. I already said goodbye to my chapter head, but God had something prepared for me again. A company suddenly called me and was in a hurry to hire me. I felt God tell me, "Stay." Indeed, He continues to rescue me in desperate moments.

Through all the trials and blessings, I have learned to pray to God from my heart. I learned that He is wonderful to talk to. I know that He listens even to the silent words that I utter.

When I say the rosary, I offer one bead for thanksgiving or petition, at the same time I reflect on the mysteries. It changes me. With every intercession, I become more connected to God, and I can feel that He is using my mouth to pray, praise, and plead. Prayer reminds me that I am a child of God and that I have a Father in heaven who cares about me. 



Chapter head. Gilbert now leads a community chapter in Singapore.

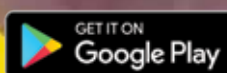
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# FACING THE BULLIES

By Bo Sanchez

**L**et me tell you a story.

Few years ago, I attended my twenty-fifth alumni homecoming.

It was great catching up with old friends. We were all bigger, balder, and bumpier in various parts of our body.

But what gave me the heebie-jeebies was walking through my old school building. I was overwhelmed with a flood of not-so-happy memories. I realized how much I didn't like school.

You see, I was a very insecure kid.

I was very shy. I was introverted. I had pimples. I was so thin, they called me *tipaklong* (grasshopper). For Filipinos, my nose was large, so they called it a grand piano hanging on my face.

And some classmates bullied me. They called me names. They pushed me around. They forced me to do errands. And they made me their lifetime supply of pad paper.

In youth lingo, I was a loser with a capital L.

I felt that all my classmates were so confident, so large, so outgoing, and so happy. They loved school.

And so I asked myself this disturbing question: *What is*

*wrong with me?* Hundreds of times a day, I would ask myself this question. And for years, this question was my constant refrain: What is wrong with me?

Many people today, who are being bashed online, bullied at school, or ignored totally by those around them, ask the same thing: What is wrong with me?

Why is bullying taking place? Why is it easy for other people who hide behind their social media accounts to demean others? What happened to us?

To those who feel inferior, excluded, and unworthy because of bullying, this issue is for you.

To the family members who don't know how to help their loved ones face the pain caused by cyber trolls and one-sided stories, this issue is for you.

To the hurting people who are hurting others because they don't know how to cope with their pain, this issue is for you.

I've been a victim of bullying but thank God, twenty-five years later, I know God has healed me. How do I know? Because I don't ask that cynical question as often anymore. That's why I want to help you move forward, too.

Turn the page and be healed. 



# Special Section

Teaching

# GOD WILL FIGHT YOUR BATTLES FOR YOU



By Bo Sanchez



**W**hen I was a kid, I was really thin.

If you think I'm thin now, you should have seen me when I was ten years old. I was so thin, if I wanted to vanish, all I had to do was stand sideways—and you could barely see me.

And I wasn't only thin, I was short too. I know that today, I'm tall, dark, and humble. But back then, I was one of the smallest guys in class.

And listen. I wasn't only thin, I wasn't only short, I was also ugly. (I know that's a bit difficult to imagine now.) Believe me, I looked like an alien. I had a humongous nose on a small face.

Being thin, short, and ugly was a perfect recipe for being bullied in class.

The bullies would call me names, push me around, steal my sandwich, confiscate my pad paper, kick my bag, order me to serve them... And at that time, all I could do was smile and say, "He, he, he," I mean, what could a small, thin, ugly guy do?

But I had one consolation. The bullies who bullied me were smaller bullies. The bully of bullies, his name was Jesse, didn't mind me. Perhaps he thought I was small fry, that I wasn't worth the effort.

Everyone called Jesse the Man of Steel. The other bullies were made of wood but only Jesse was made of iron.

Jesse was two feet taller than any other kid in class. While all the boys in the class were still desperately trying to grow body hair, Jesse already looked like a gorilla.

You see, Jesse was three years older than all of us. Because he kept failing and repeating the school year. But one morning, it happened.

### **'I'll Take Care of You'**

While I was reading in my seat minding my own business, Jesse walked up towards me. He shoved his Religion notebook in front of me and said gruffly, "Eugenio," that's my real name, "do my homework for me." What could I say in front of the Man of Steel? "He, he, he. OK."

A little background: I had very poor grades in school. My Math was 72. My Filipino was 72. My Science was 72. But my Religion grade was 95. Even when I was a kid, God already knew I was going to be a preacher.

And then out of the blue, Jesse popped a question. He pointed to the smaller bullies at the back of the class and said, "Are these boys giving you trouble?"

I said, "Well, I really wanted to beat them up, but I was afraid I might hurt someone, so I decided not to."

Jesse smirked. He said, "If they're giving you trouble, I'll take care of them. *Ako bahala sa 'yo.*" He then walked away.

I didn't think much about what he said.

The next day, I found out he was serious.

### **'If You Pick a Fight with Him, You Pick a Fight with Me'**

When I walked into my classroom, the smaller bullies were already waiting for me. Because I was their morning entertainment. They started calling me names, pushing me around, opening my lunch box to steal my sandwich. And then Jesse walked into the crowd.

Immediately, the smaller bullies gave way. Some of them probably wondered what Jesse would do to me. Some of them had a sneaky grin on their faces,

thinking, "This is the day you die, Bo. Jesse is after you."

But they all got the shock of their life when Jesse put his arm around me and said in his big, deep voice, "Eugenio is my friend. If you pick a fight with him, you pick a fight with me."

He then looked at the smaller bullies, who now quietly walked away like dried leaves blown by the wind.

For that entire year, the bullies never bothered me again.

I tell you that story because there are many bullies in your life right now. Bullies of debt. Sickness. Conflicts. Lack. Disappointment. Big problems telling you that you're finished. That there's no hope for you.

Here's God's message to you: Don't focus on the bullies.

You've got a Jesse in your life, and His name is Jesus.

He's not just a Man of Steel, He's a Man of God.

And He says to you today, "I'll take care of you."

He tells the bullies around you, "If you pick a fight with My child, you pick a fight with Me."

This is the message of the Cross. *Jesus fought for you until death. He fought against the bully that wanted to rob you of your victory.*

Remember who you are in God's eyes—His child, loved and worthy.

Trolls may lie about you, but don't let them make you forget who you really are. 

# BIGGER THAN BULLIES

## Bullying in the Philippines

By Maymay R. Salvosa



782

cases of reported cyberbullying to Philippine National Police-Anti Cybercrime Group (ACG) in 2016

cases of reported online threats in 2016, which is 96.22 percent higher than 2015's 106 cases

208



20%

of Filipino students (ages 11-18) were victims of cyberbullying in 2014 based on a survey conducted by Cyberbullying Research Center

cases of bullying in both private and public schools were recorded in 2014 (actual number could be higher but was not reported out of fear)

6,363



10627

Republic Act No. 10627 or Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 mandates all elementary and secondary schools "to adopt policies to address the existence of bullying in their respective institutions."

While these alarming statistics show that bullies are gaining in number, there is still something that we can do, especially when we find ourselves under fire by cyberbullying.

## How to Deal with Cyberbullying

**Cyberbullying** is defined by House Bill 5718 as “acts of cruelty committed using the Internet or any form of electronic media or technology that has the effect of stripping one’s dignity or causing reasonable fear or physical or emotional harm, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Repeatedly sending offensive, rude and insulting message;
- b) Distributing derogatory information about the victim;
- c) Posting or sending offensive photos of the victim, whether these are digitally altered or not, or were taken with or without consent, with the intention to humiliate and embarrass the victim;
- d) Breaking into an email, social networking or any electronic account and using the victim’s virtual identity to send, upload or distribute embarrassing materials to or about others;
- e) Sharing the victim’s personal information or any embarrassing information, or tricking the victim into revealing personal or embarrassing information and sharing it to others; and
- f) Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or engaging in online activities that cause fear on the victim’s safety.”

House Bill 5718 is also known as the “Anti Cyber-Bullying Act of 2015”. It aims to penalize people who abuse their freedom in social media to defame others. The bill also encourages netizens to be more responsible about what they post.

In an article published by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines news website,



family life specialist Dr. Michele Alignay advised the victims of cyber bullying to do three things:

- Stop. Refrain from responding to the bully.
- Block. Don’t give the bully another chance to hurt you. Block him/her from the social media platform where he/she engages with you.
- Tell. Inform your parents, guardians, or school authorities about the incident so they can take proper action.

Aside from these action steps, victims should also seek professional counseling if needed. It is important to save a screenshot of the conversation/cyber attack since every post can be edited or deleted immediately. If the offender is guilty, victims can seek refuge in Article 2176 of the Civil Code. It states that the offender is liable to the subject for damages done. Further, employees who commit cyberlibel or spread malicious news against his colleagues can be subject for termination.



Sources:  
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*From Bullied to Blessed*  
*How God Brought Me Back to His Love*

By Eloiza Bedaña

**I** remember myself as a confident, smart, and independent child when I was in preschool. I would always choose the front seat in our class and raise my hand for recitation. I even gave a graduation speech in front of many people. I was the joy of our family. Life was easy and beautiful. Until I experienced bullying.

### **Grade School Was Not Cool**

When I entered grade school, I was bullied by my classmates, school bus mates, and even a friend. They mocked me, laughed at what I wore, my shoes, and my bag.

On top of that, they laughed at my appearance because I'm half-Chinese. They called me different names. They didn't accept who I was. I was an alien to them. They made me feel that I was different from them. They said words that really hurt my feelings.

One of my schoolmates also hurt me physically while we were on the school bus. And even the only person who I treated as a good friend left me for another friend. There were other acts of bullying that I experienced during those times.

I didn't understand why they did that to me and why they didn't like me. It stirred up questions and doubts about myself.

I wanted to tell my parents about it but I opted not to because they were busy working for our family. They were also busy arguing and fighting with each other.

I grew up witnessing my Papa getting drunk every night, which would cause their fights. Their never-ending

physical, emotional, and verbal quarrels almost led to my parents' separation.

### **I Lost the Positive Me**

Because of what was happening at home, I thought I was not given the proper attention and care. At school, I was being bullied and at home, it was a war zone. It created in me the feeling of unworthiness. I felt unloved and I was full of insecurities and shame about myself. I thought I was ugly and not valuable.

At some point, I became a people pleaser. I'd bend over backwards just to get on people's good side. It was exhausting—I didn't know who to trust and I couldn't even trust myself. So I chose to be alone.

The confident, smart, and active child changed a lot. From extrovert, I became an introvert. I became afraid to make mistakes and to take risks. I believed all the lies in the world as if they were the truth. I even wished that I would disappear because no one would notice when I was gone. I was just a nobody. I felt deep sadness and emptiness within me. I really hated myself. And I thought of ending my life.

### **God's Love Flowed**

My healing journey began when my elder sister invited me to attend the Oasis of Love Catholic Community Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) in 2010. Many things happened at first that were hindering us from joining. We prayed that if it was God's will for us, He would make a way. And it happened. It was God's divine appointment for us to attend.

In that two-day retreat, I met God for the first time in a very personal and intimate way. It was an answered prayer because I kept on seeking for something and I found it. I found my Creator.

He lovingly said, "My child, you are beautiful, you are loved, you are worthy. I loved you first. I created everything for you so that you may live an abundant life. You are my greatest masterpiece."

I cried throughout the retreat. He was all I needed all along. I'm not a nobody anymore. I am God's wonderfully made daughter. I am God's child. His greatest possession. This is my true identity. And from there, I began to love myself as He loves me.


### **Community Life Enriches Me and My Family**

Since the LSS, I became an active member of Oasis of Love. My elder sister and I invited Papa, Mama, and our siblings to attend the different activities of the community, especially the Marriage Encounter for our parents. We believed that the grace and blessings of the Lord should not just flow through me and my elder sister, but must be shared to every member of our family.

Our family is not perfect as other people say. We are wounded people who are a work in progress, an ordinary family trying to be more loving and caring through God's grace.

My healing flourished as time went by. I eventually forgave myself, those who bullied me, and most especially my dad. God's endless mercy and compassion flows into my heart. One of the biggest parts of my healing is through my real friends and mentors—Happy Tribe and Happy Together Group—whom God sent to show His tangible love for me.

God's greatest blessing to our family was our parents' church wedding after twenty-seven years of togetherness. It was sponsored by the community's Marriage Encounter Ministry.

I thank God for all the struggles and challenges we faced and overcame because He was always there to stand and fight for us. We have no assurance of what lies ahead of us, but we do know that the Lord is always present, for He said He would never leave nor forsake us. No matter what happens, He will always bring us back to His love. 

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# Special **S**ection

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Teaching



# ON BULLYING

By Maribel Dionisio

**T**he Gospel of Luke tells us to love our enemies. “Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:29, NIV).

That’s quite a tall order! Imagine being bullied and attacked relentlessly. God encourages us to remain peaceful in spite of this, and to turn the other cheek. In today’s world, it’s ludicrous to think about turning the other cheek, yet that is what God commands.

Perhaps God had a vision of peace and the disuse of violence in resolving problems. My interpretation is that there is a time and place for everything like violence, fighting, etc. (see Ecclesiastes 3) but I believe that for the most part, God wants us to resolve issues peacefully.

Bullying has become a hot topic in recent years as its effects can be very detrimental to anyone involved in it—whether it’s the bully or the bullied. We may be inclined to resort to undiplomatic ways of dealing with the issue, especially if it’s us or a loved one being bullied, but Jesus calls us to love our enemies.

Bullying can be defined as the act of using strength or power to inflict pain or to intimidate others who may be classified as “weaker” (perhaps physically, emotionally, psychologically, or in terms of mental toughness). It is the selective, uninvited, intentional, often repetitive oppression of one person by another person or group. These days, verbal harassment, heavy teasing, and name-calling can be classified somewhat as bullying. Some synonyms for the word “bullying” include tyrannizing, harassing, tormenting, dominating, pushing around, and badgering.

Perhaps bullies are somehow misunderstood. Despite being at odds with each other, the bully and the bullied actually have one big thing in common: they both have a low sense of self-worth and self-esteem—much lower than what is healthy. They are usually both insecure about something, and both may also have poor modeling at home from their parents.

At times, it is the parent/s who “bully” the child by belittling or putting down the child at home. For the would-be bully, this negative relationship

between child and parent makes the child more susceptible to passing on the bullying to his/her peers. The bullied, on the other hand, may develop a very negative self-image of him/herself based on how he/she is treated at home and brings this to school, becoming easy prey for bullies who quickly sense insecurity and passivity.

In summation, why are there bullies? I offer five pointers:

- A lack of self-confidence
- The attempt to prove him/herself (to parents or relatives with high expectations)
- Envy
- Entitlement
- Poor role models at home.

And what makes a child a bully’s target?

- It may be because a child is physically different (fat, small, thin, etc.)
- The child’s kindness may be perceived as weakness
- Envy
- Insecurity.

Sometimes bullying can happen within the context of the family itself. In most families, there is one child who is confident and there is one who is, on the other extreme, insecure. It is the parents’ role to identify the needs of each child and to make a plan to meet the need and/or strengthen the child in his/her weak area. Identifying needs while they are very young and still in school makes it easier to work on the child.

In our case, we noticed that our eldest son, Raf, was teasing younger brother Dav so often. He would start fighting Dav even when Dav was not provoking Raf. We noticed this insecurity of Raf when he was seven and Dav was five years old. It took us up to age twelve to build Raf’s confidence, which in turn meant less fighting with Dav. Today, Raf, who is thirty-one years old, and Dav, who is thirty, are good friends. The sibling rivalry is gone. Both are confident, and they care for each other.

We worked on Raf’s insecurity. He loved sports and he played some basketball, but he did not want to attend classes to be a better player. He wanted to be around my husband, Allan, and I a lot, so we started our plan to make him feel confident with that setup.



Here are some things we did to help Raf become a more confident kid:

**1. We would catch him doing good.**

No matter how small his contribution was, we affirm him every day. We would tell him lines like, “Raf, thanks for finishing your food,” or “Raf, I’m glad you are done with your English homework,” or “Raf, we love it that you enjoy playing with Dav” (even if this was only for five minutes).

**2. We would show confidence in him and his abilities.**

We used lines like: “Knowing you, Raf, you can play basketball really well,” or “I know that’s a rough math problem, but I’m sure you will be able to work it out.”

**3. We acknowledged his contributions and looked for something he was good at.**

Raf started coming with me to share in parenting talks when he was seven years old. He turned out to be quite effective in talking in front of large crowds. We acknowledged this with positive lines like: “Raf, your sharing in our talk was very inspiring for parents!” He became confident about this, and he later started calling himself the “speaker of the house.”

**4. We recognized effort.**

We would say lines like: “You are improving in your interaction with Dav... I see you are playing Lego games with him,” even if it was just for a while. However small the contribution or effort was, we made sure to catch him doing

it and hailing or positively reinforcing his good behavior profusely.

Over the years (yes, it takes years!), we were able to build and strengthen Raf’s self-worth. Don’t give up, stay encouraged, and start today, regardless of the age of your child or teen. Build their self-worth. A confident child and teen can handle life’s challenges and will stay along the right path because he/she does not need to prove anything. He/she will want to do well in life.

Today, Raf is a very busy and creative entrepreneur, filled with confidence that he uses to run his businesses and serve others in his environmental and community development advocacies. Our efforts as parents helped Raf. He likes saying to us, “Thanks for helping





me overcome my insecurities. Thank you for having confidence in me.”

Allan and I are so happy we had the information and skills to help our son Raf build his self-worth then. A healthy self-worth is an important ingredient in being happy in life and in relationships.

Both our sons Raf and Dav went through a stage of being bullied or teased. You'd think they'd be bullied by kids bigger and physically more powerful than them, but quite the opposite happened! Both their bullies were physically smaller than them. It's just that perhaps our sons projected such a meek persona about them when they were kids, that they became easy targets. The bullies knew they would not hit back.


As parents, we may want to intervene and tell off the bully or talk to the bully's parents. And this may be in some extreme cases (death threats perhaps or intense violence and the like). But in life, Mommy or Daddy won't be around all the time to protect their children. Our kids will definitely meet other bullies in the future, without us by their side. In situations when our children can't handle themselves, we should provide the skills to handle bullying and we can coach them on what to do.

Help them gain self-confidence. Develop their skills and talents. If they know what they're good at and project a healthy sense of self-worth, they will not be the target of bullies. Help them achieve or do something that bullies respect.

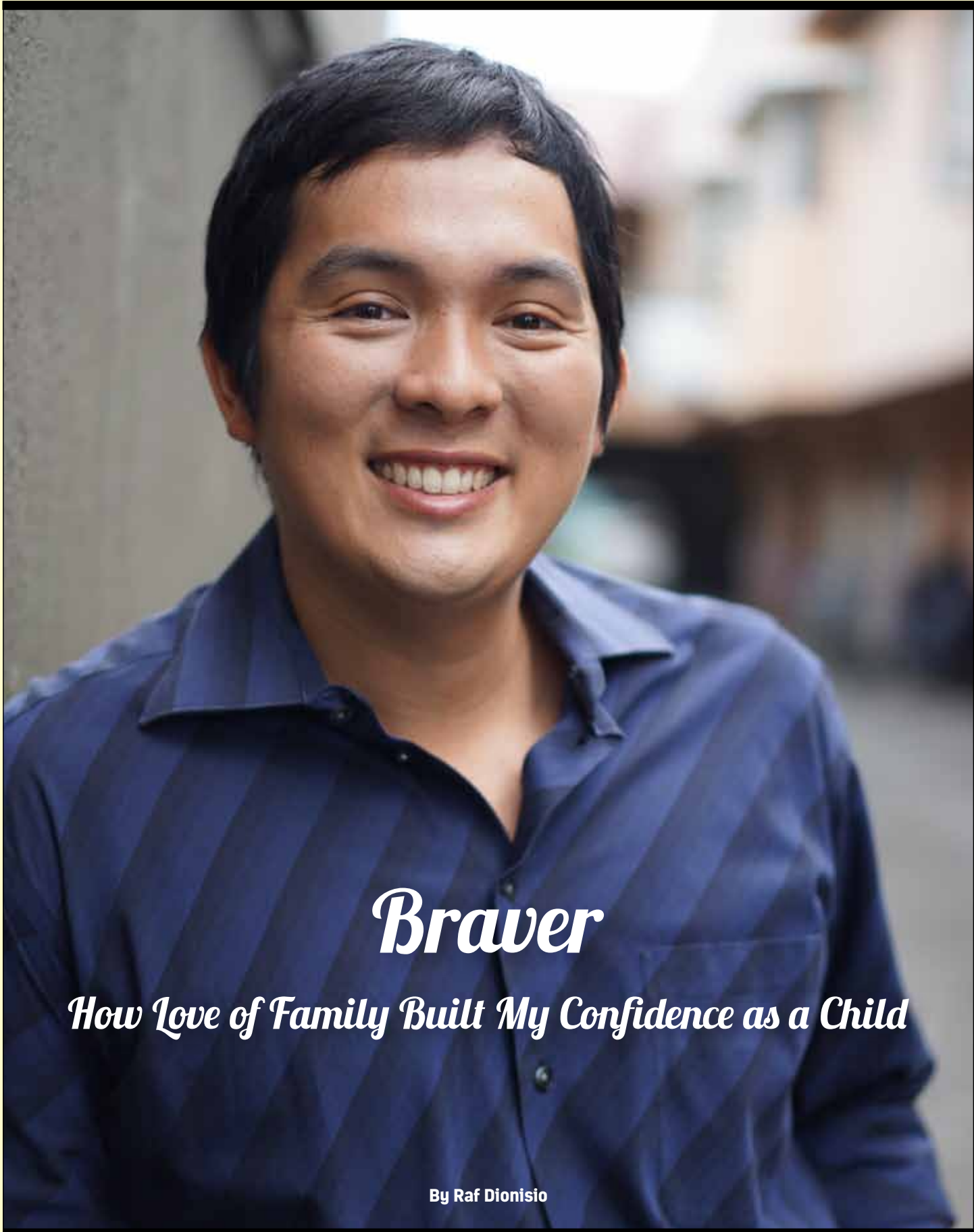
Also, teach them the value

of ignoring. Ignoring the bully adds less fuel to the fire of teasing or bullying, because the bully delights in getting a reaction from the bullied.

If things get intense and nothing seems to work, perhaps telling persons in authority in school may be in order.

Fighting back should be the very last option. We don't want to teach our kids that violence or undiplomatic ways of dealing with problems is the way to go. We want to teach our kids to handle things civilly, peacefully, and maturely. Fighting back is merited only by the most extreme of cases. 

*Maribel Dionisio and her husband, Allan, are both graduates of the Family Ministry course from the Loyola School of Theology of the Ateneo de Manila University. They are sought-after speakers and resource persons at workshops, radio and television programs on parenting, marriage, and family.*



# *Brauer*

*How Love of Family Built My Confidence as a Child*

By Raf Dionisio

**B**ullying was a large part of my life. I grew up as a tall, overweight boy who was active but not into sports. This made me a subject of ridicule by many smaller boys who often called me fat. This happened regularly starting when I was seven years old. I weighed ninety pounds back then, and by twelve, was already 180 pounds.

I remember the bus ride when all the boys, younger and older than me, would tease me about my weight. I cried a couple of times and was never able to ignore the ridicule that I went through for forty minutes each morning and/or afternoon. My younger brother, David, stood up for me one time, telling the bullies to stop, but it only encouraged them even more because they saw my weakness.

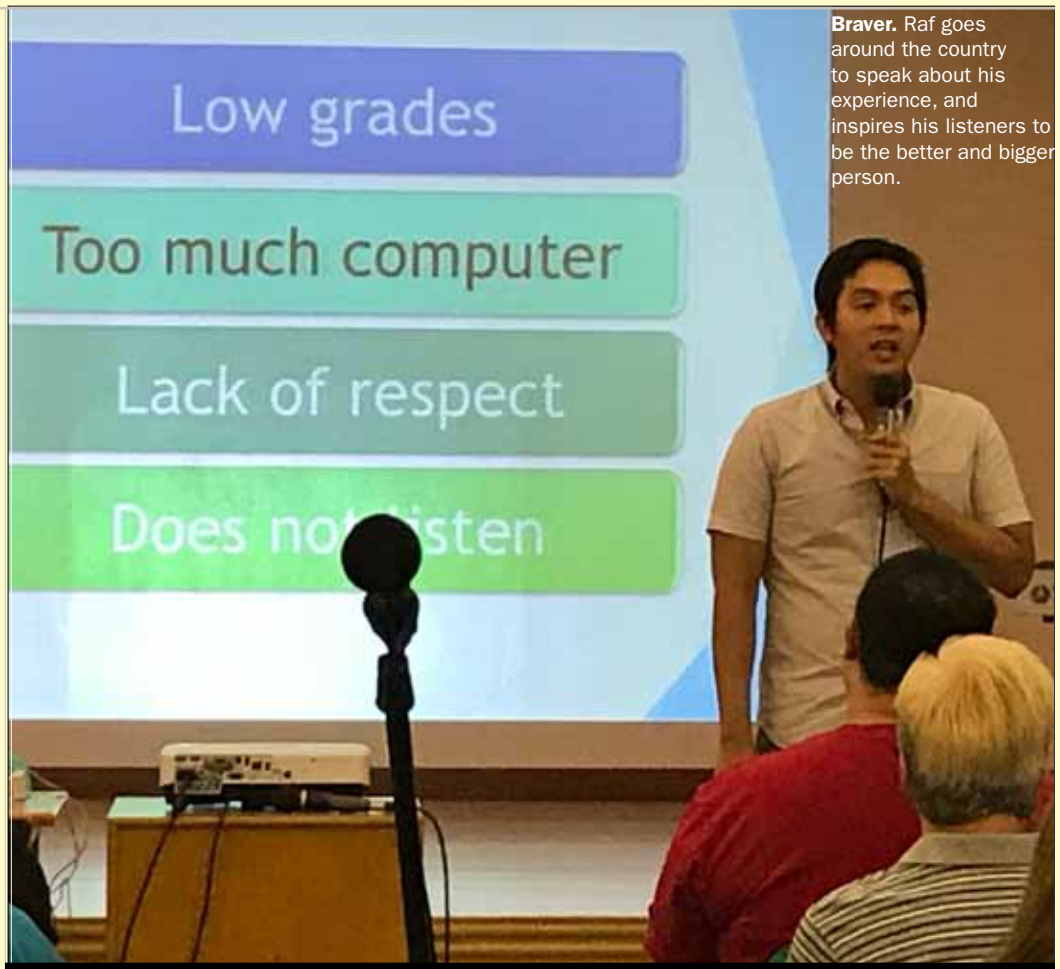
### **My Parents' Help**

My experiences as a child might have been a downward spiral for me, but my parents helped build my confidence to stand up to these bullies. These bullies later on became friends when they saw that I would fight back.

As time passed, the scars faded, but I always remembered what it felt like to be the fat kid who was an average student and liked to stay indoors to watch TV and play board games.

My parents pushed me out of my comfort zone to do outdoor sports—camping, hiking, trekking, plus football and basketball. These activities helped me develop my body and my confidence.

As I got better in sports, I lost more weight and gained more confidence. Soon I noticed that the bullies would no longer attack but befriend me or even be intimidated.



**Braver.** Raf goes around the country to speak about his experience, and inspires his listeners to be the better and bigger person.

### **Paying Forward My Family's Love**

My confidence grew out of other people's belief in me. My parents guided me, slowly but surely, towards developing my talents in numbers, public speaking, people skills, and the outdoors.

I believe that the gift given to me should be paid forward and so I often share my trust and belief in others, especially those who are small or insecure. I know what it was like to be in their position.

Today, I am doing things I never thought I could do, thanks to my parents who believed in me.


I'm working on a reforestation project with Aeta communities and come up with livelihood programs for them. I co-manage the Circle Hostel and do tours around the country through MAD Travel. I manage over fifty people and this has brought me back

to the lesson of confidence I picked up from my childhood bullying.

Working with those who have little like the indigenous Aetas has shown me that more than resources or education, they need people to believe in them, to guide them in their path towards personal growth. I have learned that to take care of the environment (and my customers), I need to take care of the community and my people.

Looking back, I think that kids naturally try to push boundaries, so bullying will probably happen regularly. But the parents' role to guide their kids, develop confidence, and understand the situation is what truly matters.

Bullies are often just as insecure as the bullied, maybe even more. That's why guidance is a must for both sides.

For this, I am beyond grateful for the gift of my family. It's a love we should extend not just to blood relatives but to our neighbors as well. 

# 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.

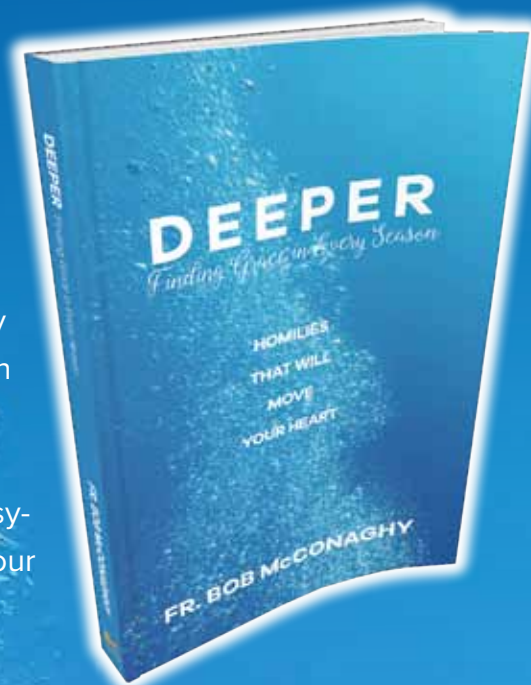
Through this soul-kindling collection of homilies, Fr. Bob McConaghy invites us to take God's hand and experience His love and presence in every season of the liturgical year.

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.

**KERYGMA  
BOOKS**

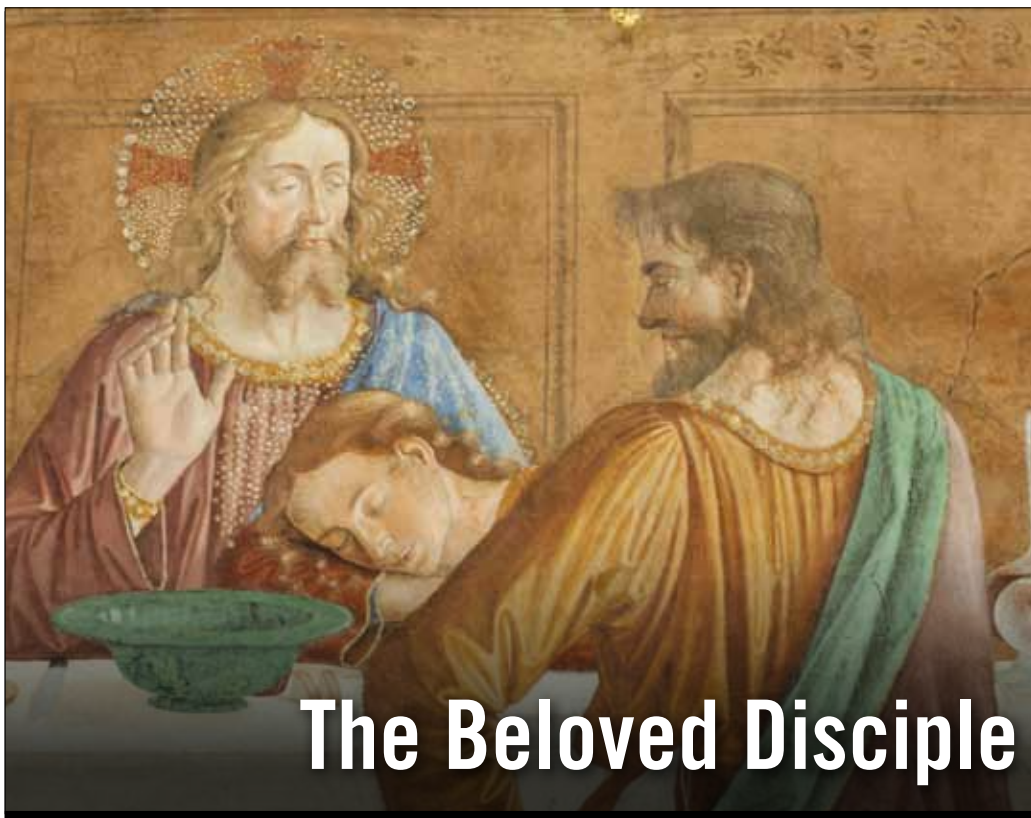
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or log on to [www.kerygmabooks.com](http://www.kerygmabooks.com)

Whoever does not take up his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." The disciples must have been unsettled on hearing Jesus say these words. It was another hard saying in radical contrast to conventional wisdom, like the *bread of life discourse* that resulted in many of their fellow disciples abandoning Him. The Twelve chose to remain since they believed that Christ spoke the words of eternal life (cf John 6:68).

Yet at the moment of the Cross, they deserted Jesus, fearful for their lives—all except the *beloved disciple* who bravely stood by the foot of the cross, denying himself the security of seclusion to be with his Teacher and Friend.

Christian Tradition identifies the beloved disciple as John, Apostle and Evangelist. The fourth Gospel describes him as the disciple whom Jesus loved; who had rested his head on Christ's bosom during the Last Supper (John 13:23); first to believe in the resurrection (John 20:8) and first likewise to recognize the Risen Christ in the miraculous catch of fish at Lake Genesareth (John 21:7). More significantly, he accompanies the Blessed Mother during her hour of greatest anguish at the foot of the Cross; there they were bequeathed to one another in the Savior's last will and testament (John 19:26-27)—Mary, the first disciple becomes his Mother.

Interestingly, the opening verse in John's Gospel is similar to that of Genesis: "*In the beginning...*" This was intended by the author for the narrative conveys the new creation. After Christ's cross and resurrection, the new creation comes into being in the Church born at Pentecost. Hereon each of the baptized who lives by Christ's precepts is a *beloved disciple*.



## The Beloved Disciple


John represented us at the foot of the Cross, the model to be emulated by all. Cued from the Gospel, today's *blessed disciple* whom Jesus loves abides by His Most Sacred Heart. Nourished by the sacraments, he lives the gospel detached from worldly allurements, insulated from immorality, discerns the Risen Lord's presence in every situation unperturbed by the prospect of suffering, and acknowledges Mary as his personal Mother.

For two thousand years, the redemptive value of suffering symbolized by the Cross had been stressed by the Church. Christ conquered suffering and death with His Cross. The faithful too, conquer evil when their own crosses are united with Christ's cross. It is a paradox of the faith that what used to symbolize suffering and death became a sign of victory! Like St. Paul the *beloved* can say, "I can only boast in the cross."

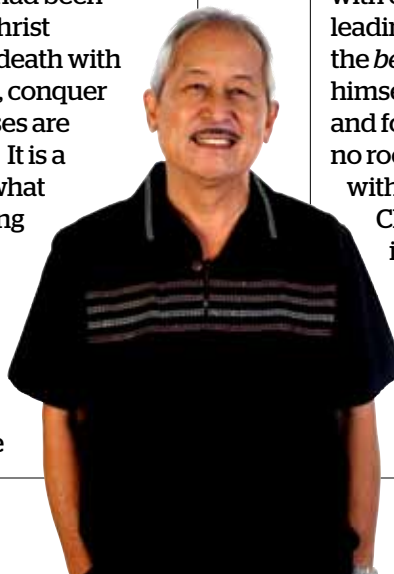
The modern world we live in today shuns the

By Ed de Vera

cross. Multitudes are seduced daily with enticements of wealth, power, pleasure, and prestige. Many among the youth find dabbling in unsound doctrine, the occult, and isms alien to the faith chic. Relativism and the culture of death hold sway over the politics of the age while every sector of society seems to wage an undeclared war against the Church.

As the world brims over with every insidious lure leading many away and astray, the *beloved disciple* denies himself, takes up the Cross, and follows Christ. He leaves no room for compromise with anything at odds with Christian morality. His cross is his best reminder that although he is in this world, he should not of this world. 

E-mail Ed at [catholicsoul@gmail.com](mailto:catholicsoul@gmail.com).



Is your promotion and salary raise long overdue?

Are other people advancing, getting married, having kids, and generally happier than you?

Are you dealing with insecurity today?

Maybe your life didn't pan out as you dreamed. Or your Prince Charming turned out to be the Hulk. Or you feel that God is sleeping on the job and you hate yourself for not being as talented or good-looking as the people around you.

I'm sure that all of us have encountered a moment of deep insecurity and unworthiness at one point in our lives.

American pastor Steven Furtick said, "The reason we struggle with insecurity is because we compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel."

Can you keep a secret? I'll share with you my spectacular failures. Just keep this between us, OK?

JPaul's Flops:

- Academic failures (too many to mention)
- Almost got fired due to poor work performance
- Financial debt
- Fluidlite Photo and Video (failed business #1)
- Mindanao Farm (failed business #2)
- Food stall business (failed business #3)
- Victim of sexual molestation
- Problems with family and friends
- Heartbreaks and failed relationships

Today, as I connect the dots, I realize that all my failures were instrumental for my breakthrough. One reason is I end up clinging to God more



when I'm going through a season of failure.

God loves His children so much that He won't allow failure to be our identity. He'll find a way to bring us forward.

If you're wondering why your life is not moving forward or why you're not experiencing breakthroughs, it could be because you haven't failed enough yet. Today, I want you to be more open to fail so that you can live more.

I invite you to connect the dots of your life. Think about your most painful experiences and heartbreaks. What breakthroughs did you experience after?

Thank God for His goodness and the truth that He never forsakes us. In Jeremiah 31:3, God says, "I have loved you, O my people, with an everlasting love; with loving-kindness I have drawn you to me."

Let me tell you the story of Horatio Spafford.

Horatio is a leader in his church, a good father, and a successful lawyer.


As his family was

By JPaul Hernandez

preparing for a vacation, he asked his wife and children to go a day ahead of him because he had some work to finish. After a few hours, he found out that the ship carrying his family was hit by another vessel and sank. His wife survived but their four children drowned. His heart was so broken that he didn't know what to do.

At the peak of his brokenness, God embraced him. He got a piece of paper and wrote the words, "It is well." He realized that no matter how hard life is, all is well because God is with him.

The words became a hymn that has been sung for more than two hundred years. It's a song that you can sing when you are in great trouble and pain. Hope in God and say, "It is well."

Friends, combat your problems by declaring, "It is well." 

JPaul Hernandez is the builder of *The Feast Greenhills*. He wrote two bestsellers, *A Young Man's Manual* and *How Underdogs Can Become Overcomers*, available at [www.kerygmabooks.com](http://www.kerygmabooks.com). E-mail him at [jpaulmh@yahoo.com](mailto:jpaulmh@yahoo.com).



**SUBSCRIBE NOW!**

# KERYGMA MISSION PARTNER 2018

## 28<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY RAFFLE PROMO



Subscribe to Kerygma magazine and get a chance to win exciting prizes this 2018!

- Subscribe to Kerygma from March 1, 2018 to Dec 31, 2018.
- The number of raffle entry a subscriber gets depend on the following type of subscription:
  - Regular KMP- P800.00: 1 Raffle entry
  - Silver KMP- P2,500.00: 3 Raffle entries
  - Gold KMP- P5,500.00: 6 Raffle entries
  - Platinum KMP- P10,000.00: 10 Raffle entries
- To subscribe, tear off the subscription form from the magazine that will serve as your raffle coupon, fill out with your complete name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, mode of payment, affix signature, and mail to or drop at:

Shepherds Voice Publications Inc., #60 Chicago St. Cubao Quezon City

Deadline of submission of entries date and time		Raffle draw date, time and venue	Coverage date to qualify on the raffle	Prize	No. of Winners
Minor draw	July 2, 2018, Monday, 6PM	July 16, 2018, Monday, #60 Chicago Street, Cubao, QC	March 1, 2018 to July 2, 2018	Fujifilm X-A10 Mirrorless Camera	1
Minor draw	October 15, 2018, Monday, 6PM	October 29, 2018, Monday, #60 Chicago Street, Cubao, QC	July 3, 2018 to October 15, 2018	(5) Kerygma Conference 2017 VIP Tickets	1
Minor draw	December 31, 2018, Monday, 6PM	January 13, 2019, Sunday, 11:45AM The Feast Bay Area, Vicente Sotto Street, Pasay City	October 16, 2018 to December 31, 2018	Devant 32" Smart TV (32LTV800)	1
Grand draw	December 31, 2018, Monday, 6PM	January 13, 2019, Sunday, 11:45AM The Feast Bay Area, Vicente Sotto Street, Pasay City	March 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018	Trip to Holy Land Pilgrimage	1

### Grand Prize: 1 Winner Holy Land Pilgrimage

- Entries received from **March 1, 2018 until December 31, 2018** qualify for the Trip to Holy Land promo. A DTI representative will be invited to witness the grand and minor raffle draw on **January 13, 2019, Sunday, 11:45AM** at The Feast Bay Area, Vicente Sotto Street, Pasay City.
- Holy Land Pilgrimage Prize inclusions: Round trip Airfare from NAAIA to Libson Airport – Libson Airport to NAAIA, meals on full board basis, hotel accommodation for 10 days and 9 nights with breakfast. Exclusive of travel tax.
- All new and regular subscribers are required to have a passport valid until 2020, travel documents, taxes and other related documents.

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#### (1) Winner of Fujifilm X-A10 Mirrorless Camera

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- Kerygma Conference 2018 is on November 22-25, 2018 at the SMX Convention Center.

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Per DTI FTEB Permit No. 3783, Series of 2018.

- REGULAR 1 YEAR SUBS: P800.00**
- INTERNATIONAL 1 YR SUBS: P 5, 000.00**
- KMP SILVER 1 YEAR SUBS: P 2, 500**
- KMP GOLD 1 YEAR SUBS: P 5, 500 with FREE LOJ Coffee Table Book**
- KMP PLATINUM 1 YEAR: P10, 000 with FREE KMP Mercy Package**

Please fill out customer information correctly to ensure accurate delivery.

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NOW!**

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### Guidelines:

- A participant can only win once. Subscriber who won the minor prize is not eligible on the other minor & grand draw. Non-winning entries after minor draw can still win the grand prize.
  - A notification letter via registered mail will sent to winners for confirmation. Instructions on where to claim the prize will be detailed in the letter via registered mail. For GMA and provincial winners, the sponsor will not cover the transportation fee going to the travel agency and NAIA upon departure to Pilgrimage. SVP Sales staff will coordinate and instruct the grand prize winner all the necessary details and inclusions of the trip to Holy Land before endorsing to sponsor travel agency.
  - The winner of the trip to **Holy Land Pilgrimage** will secure his/her own passport.
  - Prizes are transferrable but not convertible to cash.
  - The winner of the trip to **Holy Land Pilgrimage** shall shoulder all the taxes and documentations related to the trip, and the 20 percent tax for prizes exceeding P10,000.
  - Validity of international trips is within 6 months from issuance.
  - Prizes must be claimed w/in 60 days from receipt of notification.
  - Prizes unclaimed will be forfeited in favor of SVP with prior DTI approval.
- a. Winners shall claim their prizes at the Shepherds Voice office at 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City. Winners must present the notification letter, official receipt of subscription, claim stub with control number & valid ID with photo (e.g. driver's license, Company ID or passport).
- b. Winners may send a representative on their behalf provided they present letter of authorization from the winner, proper identification / any valid ID with photo (e.g. driver's license, Company ID or passport), letter sent by SVP & official receipt of subscription payment and claim stub with control number.

- The promo organizer's decision is final with the concurrence of the DTI.
- All SVP employees are not eligible to join the raffle promo including their relatives up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of consanguinity or affinity.
- For GMA winners, they can claim their minor or grand prize at #60 Chicago Street, Cubao, Quezon City; For Provincial winner of minor prize, he/she can claim the KCON2017 tickets upon agreement between SVP and his/her preferred method of transaction. . The winner shall shoulder 20% tax on prizes exceeding 10,000.

### THERE'S MORE!

Kerygma Mission Partner Mercy Package:

- Platinum Kerygma Mission Partners (donation of P10, 000.00 and above) are automatically entitled to Coffee with Bo and a sponsored Breakfast with Father Bob Mcconaghy.
- KMP Mercy Package includes a Kerygma Books package worth P500.00, The Light of Jesus Coffee Table Book, Coffee with Bo and/or a sponsored Breakfast with Father Bob Mcconaghy.
- New or renewing subscribers from March 1 to March 31, 2018 are qualified for Coffee with Bo promo. While April 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018 new or renewing subscribers are qualified for Breakfast with Bob promo.
- Coffee with Bo & breakfast with Bob schedules will depend on the availability of Bro. Bo Sanchez & Father Bob Mcconaghy.
- Call 725-9999 and look for Sarah for more details.

Per DTI FTEB Permit No. 3783, Series of 2018.



# FAITHFUL, FAITHFUL FATHER

God answered  
my prayers  
and more

By Donna May Santiago



**Beyond blessed.**

Donna stands as a testimony that God is always faithful—even if we don't understand His ways at first.

I was tempted not to go to Mass today. It's raining and the cold wind blows, though the church is just one tram ride away from where I stay. I'm in Switzerland for an official business trip, and I wonder if I would understand the Mass.

My conscience prevailed so I go to church. It turns out that the Mass is in English. Praise God! By the end of the celebration, my tears are flowing and I'm overwhelmed with gratitude.

I suddenly remember where I was three years ago. I was jobless for three months. Our family was in chaos. I had no savings or investments at all. I was fully dependent on my parents—again. I was single and the way I handled my quarter-life crisis pushed men away.

I was twenty-two, an unemployed certified public accountant, and rock

bottom kicked in. Thank God for The Feast and great friends. They convinced me that the deeper you fall, the higher you bounce. I held on to their words.

So I started to proclaim my yearly declaration—a resolution about what I will work on and focus all my energy upon.


It started with #Restore2015, then #Increase2016, #Build2017, and #Celebrate2018.

I was amazed that my declarations came to life! But I know it wasn't just because of my efforts. I believe that majority of it was God's work. He blessed me with my heart's desires.

Today, I don't just have a job—I am working for an international humanitarian organization, which

feels like heaven for someone like me. It's an answered prayer! It's God's way to bring me to Europe, another dream come true. I can't believe that my work and mission can be one. It's fun!

What's more, God has blessed and entrusted me to start a family soon, not just with any man, but with the one whom I used to point out when I pray, "Lord, please give me someone like him." God gave me exactly what I prayed for and more.

And by the grace of God, I am now investing, and have learned to pay God's generosity forward. 

# 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:**

Heavenly Father, we give You all the praise and glory. Thank You for being our refuge especially when we feel that we are alone, left behind, and unappreciated. We lift up to You our brothers and sisters who live in fear because of other people's judgments. Be their strength and comfort. May Your unconditional love be our driving force to face life. In the mighty name of Jesus, we claim healing of hearts. Amen.

Praying for you,

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

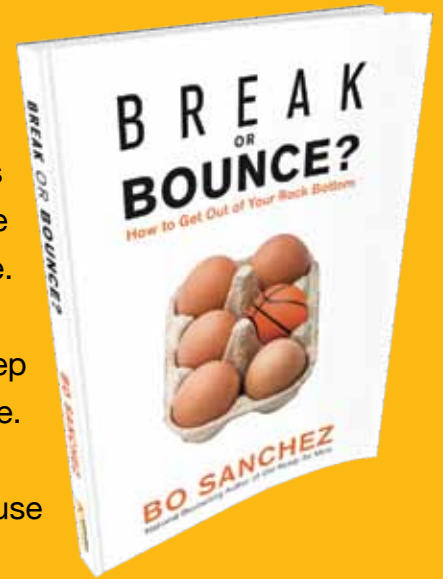
# 'The Harder I Fall, The Higher I Fly.'

Have you failed? Have you fallen on hard times? Are you going through your toughest struggles? Are you walking through your darkest days?

This amazing book is the answer to your prayers. Because every page is brimming with powerful encouragement from Bo Sanchez, a leader whose words—for the past forty years—have changed the lives of countless people.

In every chapter, he gives you a massive dose of inspiration so you can keep moving forward—until your storm ends and a new morning rises in your life.

Through the message you hold in your hands, you'll receive the power to use your biggest problems to leapfrog to your biggest victory.



For orders, call 725-9999 local 101-108  
or log on to [www.kerygmabooks.com](http://www.kerygmabooks.com)

# 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*

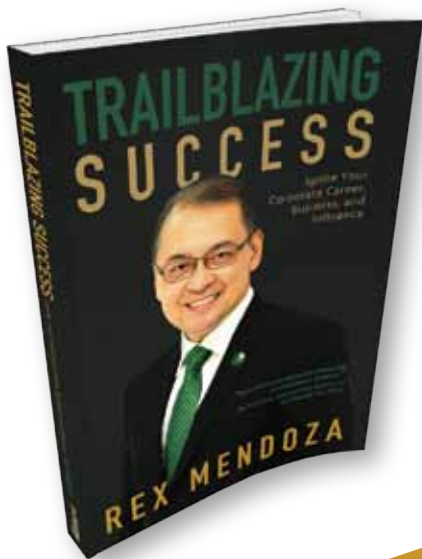
Packed with wisdom and powerful insights, this book will help set you up for success.

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.



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