

# reachbulletin

april 2021 vol. 29 no. 1 | resources employment and community horizons

## **Vision:**

The gospel and God's Kingdom, actively and freely permeating all levels of society in a holistic and contextualized manner.

## **Mission:**

To develop disciples of Jesus Christ as whole persons and promote a contextualized holistic Christian discipleship in the developing world.

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**Equipping People to Become Complete in Christ**

# A Home for REACH:

## A Story of God's Faithfulness

For more than 40 years, REACH carried out God's calling to make disciples. In 2003, REACH embarked on a program to finally build its own home and meet the needs of a growing ministry. Uncertainties abounded and hurdles laid in the pathway. However, the ministry trusted in God's unlimited capacity and resources.

The building program started as a dream of the Metro Manila ministry. Members longed to provide better accommodations to visitors. In the beginning, local members started collecting P100 from each planning team member each month.

Later, Metro Manila brought the need for a better facility to the Board of Trustees. The Board agreed that 49 Chico St. was no longer adequate as a national office, local ministry center, training apartment, and guest house. They voted to elevate the local project into a national effort.

The initial plan called for a five-story building to house income-generating businesses, the national ministry and cooperative offices, training apartments, guest rooms, and a conference area.

In response, the Oplan Bayanihan fund drive launched on May 3, 2003 in Silang, Cavite during the national conference, *Growing to Multiply*. REACH founder, Gene Tabor, presented paper-mache figures of a carabao to each ministry area as a symbolic piggy bank in the fund-raising effort.

Kuya Fred Liongoren proclaimed, "Work is made light by many hands. Bayanihan! The time for the bahay kubo is finished, lets now transfer to a bigger building."

His wife, Norma Liongoren, chaired the first building committee. The committee included Tina Brooks and Ed and Oyay Jimenez. They challenged members to step out in faith and see how God would provide.



A paper-mache carabao symbolized a piggy bank in the early fund-raising efforts.

### Lanzones Property

Talks began in 2004 with the Gozon family regarding the donation of a property at 23 Lanzones St., Proj. 2. Members of the Gozon family had previously attended a Bible study with Norma Liongoren and Alma Francisco.

A lease signed on December 19, 2006 with the Gozon Foundation allowed REACH to use the property for 25 years, renewable for another 25 years to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Funds raised up to that point were used to rehabilitate the dilapidated structure.



REACH's new home provides space for the REACH national office as well as the Resources Development Cooperative office.

A new fund-raising effort began in April 2007 called the 10-in-1 Fund Drive. The aim was to raise P10 million in one year. The launching occurred during the REACH National Leadership Conference (April 28-May 1) in Maryhill Retreat Center in Taytay, Rizal.

During the conference, Carolina Nanay Gozon received a memento of appreciation, painted by Kuya Fred, for her support of REACH's disciple-making.

God also providentially provided other means to build a home for REACH. Over the years, friends had donated property to the ministry.

Mrs. Rosario Sandejas (President and owner of Sta Fe Realty, Inc.) donated the Masili lot in Calamba, Laguna in 1983. Re-titling the lot began in 2005. Executive Officer, Daisy Miguel, oversaw the effort with the footwork of Jun Pedroso, and the help from Lakas Angkan's Luming Arzadon. By God's grace, they completed the challenging process. However, it would take years to sell the property to raise funds for construction.

In the meantime, a fund-raising letter with a brochure sought the

partnership of alumni and friends of the ministry. All gifts were 100% tax deductible. This was possible due to REACH's Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC) accreditation as a donee institution.

Renovation of the Lanzones structure followed a ground-breaking ceremony held March 29, 2009, during a Metro Manila fellowship. Students also took part in the fund-raising. They could pledge for the cost of hollow blocks, while professionals could pledge for the cost of a half or a square meter.

By 2012, the new fellowship center opened at the Lanzones property. Monthly fellowships, conferences, youth programs, and community outreaches soon followed.

### Bignay Property

However, certain limitations remained when using donated property. So REACH continued dreaming of building its own home. Additional pressure to find a permanent home came in 2015. Owners of the Chico property, which REACH rented for almost 40 years, informed the ministry of their plan to sell the property.

But surprises to the ministry did not catch God off guard.

In 2018, former Executive Officer, Mario Garcia, now living in New Zealand, offered to sell their family property at 7 Bignay St., Proj. 2. The ministry agreed to the offer.

Funds continued to be solicited and the Masili property finally sold after several attempts.

Parties signed the deed of sale for the Bignay lot on October 2018, followed by the transferring of the certificate of title at the Land Registration Authority on January 15, 2019.

Dr. Oyay Jimenez served as the



The new office provides more space.

focal person for the new campaign for the construction phase. In the meantime, the Same family sold the Chico property and the REACH office operations transferred temporarily to 23 Lanzones in late 2019.

In the second half of 2019, REACH hired a contractor for the first phase of construction at Bignay St. It included a one story-structure with a mezzanine.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic struck, and the government declared a lockdown on March 15, 2020. Once again, man's surprise was no challenge to God. Construction of the new national center continued as much as possible under the shifting quarantine regulations. By God's grace, despite the economic impact of the pandemic, REACH continued to receive gifts for the construction locally and from abroad. Fund-raising efforts by Becky Jimenez and Jo Ann



The Gene and Helen Tabor Board Room is located in the mezzanine.

Ray in the U.S. as well as support by Reach Ministries International (RMI) were very much appreciated.

The contract price for construction amounted to P3,385,057.43, payable in five tranches. At the beginning of 2020, REACH had a little under



(L.) The roof deck can be used for ministry activities or a place to pray. It will become the second floor as others floors are added in the future. (R.) Kitchen.



(L.) Book rack. (R.) Reception area.

P1,000,000.00, lacking over two-thirds of the needed funds.

But praise the LORD for His faithfulness. God guided REACH through the many challenges (financial, weather, and other pandemic-related issues) to complete the project. Those touched by God continued to give to the effort. That included the initial contract price for a basic unpainted structure, and finally the needed finishings, security, and supplementary works to fulfill the multifunction-purpose of the facility.

By January 2021, the first phase concluded, and payments made. January 7, 2021 marked the turnover of the completed facility to REACH.

The building includes offices for REACH and Resources Development Cooperative on the ground floor, and a boardroom in the mezzanine. Other features include a kitchen, and three sets of comfort rooms on the various levels. A roof deck provides space for other activities. The fenced garage area accommodates three vehicles and three more fit behind the other ve-

hicles if the gate is open. The ministry looks forward to adding other floors for a conference room and dormitories as funds become available.

REACH invites you to give thanks and praise to God for His generous provision in making a home for REACH. ■

Photos by Kim Cabatingan and the office staff.

## Virtual Annual Retreat

# Reset and Restart in the Age of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic put an end of many of the usual ways of life: social interactions, church life, educational systems, economic activities, politics, and many more. Are these harbingers of the last days?

REACH leaders held their annual retreat on February 6. The Zoom app, enabled leaders from around the country to meet virtually and discuss how Christians should live in this emerging new normal.

Ed and Dr. Oyay Jimenez facilitated the gathering titled *The World-Wide Reset and Our Wise Restart* based on 1 Peter 4:7-11. National Discipleship Team Leader, Jerry Francisco, gave the final challenge.

Today, non-believers scoff at Christ's eventual return (2 Peter 3:3). But the Bible teaches the Lord is not slow but patient. He wishes for all to repent. That creates a paradox for Christians. How do we live for today yet prepare for Christ's return?

### World-Wide Reset, A Harbinger of the End Times?

The Davos Economic Forum gathered world leaders from various sectors in Singapore on January 25-29, 2021 to reset the clock for world activities. They suggested:

- Formation of a one-world economic system to handle the financial response to the corona virus and its political ramifications.
- Replacing traditional capitalism with more socialistic policies and government intervention.
- Klaus Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum, said all aspects of our societies and economies need revamping, from education to social contracts and working conditions.



As the world resets as the pandemic nears an end, how should Christians live out their lives.

### Telling Signs from 2020

- COVID-19 ushered in a Surveillance State with *contact tracing*.
- The Abraham Accords signed on Sept. 15, 2020 established diplomatic and trade relations between Israel and key Arab states. And several countries now recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.
- Attacks on Christians and churches increased.
- Key Christian personalities left the faith and sound biblical preaching faded with the rise of experience and emotion where new revelation takes importance

over the plain text of the Bible (New Apostolic Reformation).

- We see the rise of a strong delusion in the call to abolish police forces and the increasing numbers of the youth who think the Holocaust is a myth.
- The increasing lawlessness and the decline of morality undermine absolutes that serve as anchors for law and living in a Post-Truth Age.
- A longing for a Savior is leading more people to turn to Christ, especially among unreached peoples.

### Conclusion

Should we wait on a hilltop for Christ's second coming or live fearful of future troubles? Ed and Oyay encouraged people to stay engaged by confronting the falsehoods and fear pervading the world. By His grace, we need to focus on the truth that God is sovereign and loving; and that love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). Instead, we should adopt an attitude of eager expectation, as we await His coming (1 John 3:2,3).

### Reflection Questions

- Am I living with the end time in view? How am I doing this in concrete ways?
- What should my attitude be with the seeming unfolding of end times prophecies at present?
- How can I balance the tension between making long-term plans as if I'll live forever and conducting my daily life as if today will be my last day? ■

## Virtual Annual Retreat

# Our Wise Restart: How Should We Then Live?

**D**o you want to smile at the future? Proverbs 31:25 says we can if we know and trust God. After all, God knows and controls the future, therefore, we can fully believe everything the Bible says will occur.

### How Should We Then Live?

The apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 4:7-11 to be self-controlled, sober-minded, and loving. To help us remember and apply that message, Ed and Oyay shared three Hs—*Heart, Head, and Hands*.

The **HEART** includes our passions and desires. To have self-control is to have a firm grip on our passions and desires. The opposite is to be impulsive, or swayed by fluctuating emotions.

Proverbs 29:11 says it well, “A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.”

The **HEAD** involves our thinking and judgement. To be sober-minded, is to have sound thoughts, unclouded by substances and false perceptions that make us out of touch with reality.

Ed and Oyay pointed out that the injunction to be sober in v. 7 precedes “watching unto prayer” (being spiritually alert and awake).

The **HANDS** are the means we translate our will into concrete action, such as loving others, showing hospitality, and serving one another (vs. 8-11).

Love is a choice we make that leads to action. It strengthens unity and fellowship within the body of Christ. However, Ed and Oyay pointed out that love doesn’t condone sin. It confronts it lovingly.



### Conclusion

**W**e find ourselves in challenging times as the world resets because of the global pandemic. The usual ways of carrying out life came to a halt. Now we are on the threshold of restarting life under a new normal in the shadow of Christ’s imminent

second coming. But we don’t need to be at a loss. God will give us the ability to be self-controlled, sober-minded, and loving — for His glory!

### Reflection Questions:

1. Are Christians too caught up with Christ’s coming or not enough? Why do you say so?
2. How can we properly “cover” sin without condoning it?
3. Are you aware of your gifts? To what extent are you using these to serve others?
4. Have you ever experienced burning out in doing Kingdom activities? If yes, how did you overcome it? If no, what enabled you to avoid it? ■

## Spiritual Health Protocols: Three Keys For Dealing with Burn Out in Ministry

**J**erry Francisco closed the retreat. He shared his personal restart after a bout of ministry burn out. He said, if we lose our passion, we need to pursue God, persevere in prayer, and endure our daily cross. In the process, God will heal and make us salt and light.

### Pursuing God

**W**e need to admit our wicked ways to God (2 Chronicles 7:14) and turn away from them. We also surrender concerns that sidetrack us, trusting that He will provide (Matthew 6:33). This enables us to seek first his king-



dom by loving God and others (the Great Commandment) and sharing the gospel and making disciples (the Great Commission). The basis is spending time in God’s Word. Jerry asked, “Do we still enjoy time in the Word?”

### Persevere in Prayer

**P**rayer is part of our spiritual armor. We are invited to fellowship with

God and prayer is the way we accept His invitation. It is even more important to keep connected to God in these last days. So we should remain alert and sober so we can pray (1 Peter 4:7).

### Endure the Cross

**J**esus said his disciples will deny themselves and take up their cross to follow him (Matthew 16:24). This

is how we find our life. Jerry also reminded the group that God gifted each of us to serve. He said most of the people God used in the Bible were ordinary men and women. Despite our insecurities, when we accept God’s agenda, He enables and equips us to serve Him through His strength.

So, to restart, come to Jesus. He will minister in a deeper way right

where we are. If we’ve lost our passion, “God will pour out His healing so we can move on in our lives to be the salt and light, especially in this time.”

“When are you going to give your life to Jesus?” ■

## Worthy of Praise!



*Nars Lozada had a lump the size of a clenched fist, calling for a immediate surgery. But thanks to prayer, the doctor only found a growth the size of a corn kernel during the operation.*

**L**ess than a week before February ended in 2020, my husband, Nars, had bouts of vomiting for two days. When he finally agreed to be taken to the hospital, the doctors suspected blockage in his digestive system.

by Tess Lozada

Our doctor friend, aware of his medical history, suspected intestinal adhesions since he once had an appendectomy. With the possibility of surgery, Nars and I decided to have it in Midsayap Community Doctors Hospital in Midsayap, Cotabato, where a surgeon friend practiced.

When Nars vomited again, after several days of no vomiting, his doctor pushed through with a CT Scan to rule out other possibilities. The result

was grim — they discovered a lump as big as a clenched fist. The doctor’s face communicated deep concern.

We discussed our options: surgery, then perhaps chemotherapy, or radiation. It was all unexpected. I prayed, “Lord, please don’t let it be very serious. After all, Nars’ family on his mother’s side has a history of cancer.

Faced with the possibility of something beyond my control, the ultimate recourse was to trust completely in the God I had been trusting for so long already; to the God who,

to the best of my recollection, had not failed me yet.

Amazingly, my mind and heart were at peace. I believe it was because I knew our heavenly Father controls everything in His mighty hands, and the Lord Jesus Christ is with us in the situation we found ourselves in.

The surgery took place on March 6, 2020. While Nars was still in the recovery room, a nurse who attended him in the operating room came in excitedly with these words: “Grabe ang operasyong ito. We did not see what we were looking for!” The doctor couldn’t find the lump the CT Scan revealed.

What they found was a growth as small as a corn kernel! It was truly amazing! When Nars’ doctor came into his room, he announced the same excellent news. Halleluiah!

We both declared that God did a wonderful miracle in response to the constant prayers of His children. We cannot express in words our gratitude to the Great God who accomplished the impossible for us!

On Monday, December 14, 2020, Nars celebrated his 66th birthday, in the pink of health and strength. ■

**GOD IS WORTHY TO BE PRAISED!**

## 2020: A Year for Growing in Faith

by Cynthia Ubiña

The year 2020 was challenging, but the best year for growing in faith. It started with a blow. My father fell and was rushed to the hospital, fighting for his life until God finally took him the first week of January 2020

### God's Perfect Timing

I realized it was God's perfect timing because I was still at home in the Philippines and there was no COVID-19 yet. The timing enabled us to visit him in the hospital and for friends and relatives to travel to attend his burial.

Had he died during the lockdowns, I wouldn't have been able to go home. That would be more painful. I could also return to Cambodia without the hassle of swab tests and all the COVID-19 protocols. Thank you, Lord, for your perfect timing!

Then COVID-19 came. There were lockdowns and home stays. Some people lost jobs and loved ones lived in fear and uncertainty. However, I didn't lose hope that God would fulfill His promises to those who love and trust Him.

### A Year of Trials

We had our share of trials in this pandemic. During the first month of the lockdown, I had loose bowel movement for eight days with four days being the worst and two nights with fever.

Some people tell me I had the symptoms of COVID-19. I self-medicated myself with natural medicine and vitamins because I have allergies with medicine. I cried to God for His mercy. Indeed, He was faithful and healed me.

A cobra snake also bit Tom, my youngest brother. There was no

available anti-venom in their place and in nearby provinces. He did not receive any antigen for 17 hours. His entire body grew numb and his vision blurred. Although he started to say goodbye to his wife, he felt God would heal him since God already allowed him to survive the four-hour period when the venom should be fatal.

Again, God, in His perfect timing, arranged the delivery of the anti-venom. Although the hospital had placed the order much earlier, the pandemic delayed delivery. Even before the cobra bit him, the anti-venom was already on its way to Batac, an eight-hour travel by land from Manila.

Later, my nephew, JD, caught COVID-19. He was 14 hours away from home and taken to a quarantine facility for isolation. God took care of him, and he recovered. He experienced God's love and goodness, and grew deeper in His faith and passion for God.

Typhoons, and the worst flooding so far, covered our town and put our house under water. I wanted to be home, to just be with them...but I couldn't. As I entrusted everything to our Sovereign, powerful, and loving Father, He gave me His peace that passes all understanding.

So I moved on and joyfully did the things God entrusted to me amid the pandemic with total dependence on Him. All the more, the situation brought me to my knees. This is the best way I know to fight my battles.



Light in a Dark World

Who would have thought that this pandemic would trouble us this long? Yet, like the time before Jesus came to earth, His people were experiencing darkness and despair. People were waiting for the promised Savior. They could have lost hope "But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son..." (Galatians 4:4). God knows the perfect time to rescue humanity.

It will be in our time today... God, in His perfect timing will cast away this corona virus. And His Name will be made known and magnified. He will remove all our fears of the unknown and restore back our lost hopes, lost joys, lost jobs, and lost dreams, etc.

Let's continue to hope for a brighter 2021, despite all our uncertainties. Let the light of Jesus that is in us shine. May the darkness in the world be brightened so people will see the HOPE and the LOVE that Jesus is freely giving to us. He is our

*Immanuel.* God is with us (Isaiah 7:14)! He is here and He is good! Like the Psalmist in Psalm 27 said, I want to say confidently that "I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

What did 2020 produce in me? It produced a greater knowledge of God; a deepened relationship with Him, with my family, and others; a stronger faith; and courage to face life's adversities and unknowns. By trusting Him, I gained assurance that having Jesus in me is enough! I developed more compassion for the lost, and valued the important things in life.

### Thanksgiving

There are many things to thank God for. Thanks to technology, I had more time with my family, even if virtual. We meet regularly online for Bible Study, prayer time, and updating. I can connect online with friends I haven't seen for a long time. The Word of God is spreading to a



(Left) Cynthia's housemates. (Right) There were several opportunities to share the gospel with friends and classmates of Cynthia's housemates.

wider audience through social media. I joined webinars and learned from other Christian leaders, and gained new friends.

My niece, Naomi, was able to travel to Taiwan to pursue her PhD just a day before the lockdown (God's perfect timing again).

God blessed me with a new church that warmly welcomed me and where I could partner to further God's Kingdom.

I'm still alive, healthy, and able to adjust to the new normal way of living.

When I got sick, I discovered I had concerned friends who prayed for me. I received a lot of medical advice from non-medical people. Thanks!

COVID infection was not severe here in Cambodia hence, we were free to roam around but of course with necessary precautions. However, there were no age restrictions.

The economy was greatly affected, but God in His faithfulness continued providing for my needs and enabled me to help other

Filipinos when they lost their jobs. Through this effort, some of us created a prayer group that faithfully meets once a week.

Ministry continued. The lockdown couldn't stop God's work and the spread of His Word. During the pandemic, He gave me the opportunity to share the gospel with three classmates of one of my housemates when they stayed in our apartment to take their online exams. All of them believed in Jesus and prayed to receive Him.

Again, during our Christmas celebration, my former housemates invited their unbelieving friends to join us. Two of them believed in the story of Jesus and prayed to receive Him as their personal Savior and Lord. Finally, the children in the village didn't forget Jesus after months of not meeting.

Through the trials of 2020, God showed his faithfulness, love, and enabling power. Praise God! ■

# Butuan Ministry Distributes Rice to Needy Families

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the REACH Butuan ministry gave relief goods in Brgy. Libertad, Butuan City. Former ministry intern, Anita Schmidt, made the community service possible. The distribution took place on January 31.

Forty-eight selected families received eight kilos of rice. Students of the REACH-Caraga State University ministry, alumni, and the core team helped with the distribution. In addition, the team imparted a word of prayer to the families who received food packs.

Anita is a former ministry intern in 2007. She raised funds with the help of friends who are also members of REACH and church friends in the United States. Anita



*Eight kilos of rice were distributed to 48 families.*



now lives in Florida, USA.

God bless those who participated.  
To God be the Glory! ■



*(Top) REACH members pray over the families receiving the rice. (Bottom) Rice was packed for 48 families.*

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an imaginative  
use of resources  
in the extension  
of the gospel

reach

## Disciplemaking in the Developing World

REACH Ministries is developing disciples of Jesus Christ as whole persons in the context of the developing world. Specifically, it seeks to maximize the growth of disciples and disciple-makers in the face of complex social and economic environments in the developing world. Toward this end, REACH is committed to the following: the whole person; indigenous leadership styles; the poor; and infiltrative disciplemaking through—staff development; ministry enhancement; socio-economic development; high school and collegiate outreach; developing contextualized materials; and practicing godly administration and management.