



NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 30, 2022



The Problem of Overconfidence

I LOVE confidence.

Confidence is essential to all success.

But no doubt about it, *overconfidence* will kill you. Hubris has destroyed lives, families, churches, businesses, and nations.

And that's what happened to Peter the Apostle.

Overconfidence is seeing only your strengths and not your weaknesses.

It's believing in your own lies about how great you are.

Welcome to our Feast Talk series, *Fulfilled*. Today, we discuss Talk 3 titled *Denied*—about Peter's denial that he is part of Jesus' team—shortly after the Lord is arrested to be crucified.

Today's Feast will be amazing.

Get ready for God to speak to you!

May your dreams come true,

Bo Sanchez



Blessings in Disguise

YES, this issue of *The Feast Family* is about burdens that turn out to be blessings in disguise.

Our founder, Bro. Bo Sanchez, starts with his introduction of the third talk in our new Feast Series, *Fulfilled*. Talk 3 is titled *Denied*—about the burden of Peter the Apostle when sadly he denies that he is in Jesus’ circle, *page 1*.



Fr. Albert Garong’s homily in *The Feast* is based on the Gospel about Jesus being rejected in Nazareth-- which yes, is also a blessing in disguise as this gives the Lord the chance to present the Word of God about His Ministry, *page 3*.

In our *Flashback*, Bro. Bo and Bro. Audee Villaraza tackle Talk 2 of *Fulfilled*, titled *Betrayed*. Yes, how Judas sold Jesus for some pieces of silver.



Again, a blessing in disguise as this betrayal turns out to lead to our priceless salvation, *page 10*.



For our *Mercy Ministries* section, we focus on the Light of Jesus Prison Ministry which marks its 29th Founding Anniversary this month of January, *page 20*.

We who have been reeling under the Coronavirus Quarantines or Lockdowns know how it feels to lose our freedom to go about our many activities. But what we go through is nothing compared with the persons deprived of liberty at the Correctional Institution for Women whose ordeal may be blessings in disguise as they come to know about Jesus through our Ministry—which goes on following an unfortunate trial of Sis. Babes Zambrano. Her story as told by her husband, Bro. Ben, *page 24*.

No, we don’t want trials, sufferings, not this Coronavirus which, as of this writing, is said to be coming out with a new variant.

Hang on—this may be another blessing in disguise.

All for God’s Glory,
Randy Borromeo
Media Ministry
Executive Director





FLASHBACK!

JANUARY 23, 2022

Holy Mass

ALBERT GARONG

on the Gospel: Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Excerpts...



GOOD DAY, everyone!

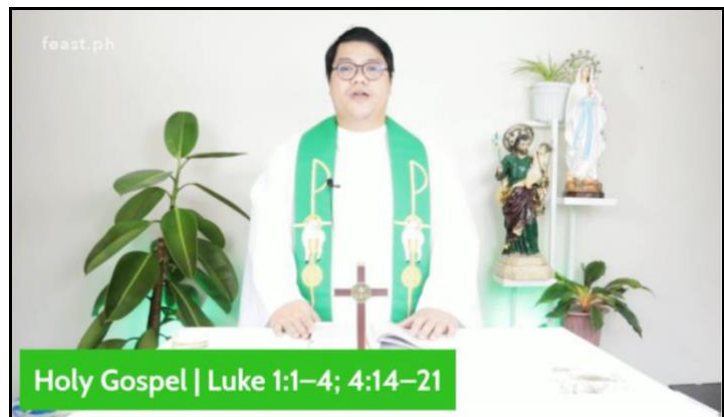
We thank the Lord for giving us another chance to gather together to celebrate the Holy Mass this Sunday.

You know, the other day, I was out in Pangasinan because we had a shooting for projects of our Media Ministries here at Saint Paul's.

We had a long day—at the Hundred Islands-- and after that very long day shoot, where we tried to cram so many things in one day, we prepared to go back to the mainland.

As we prepared to ride into the boat, we were blessed with a wonderful sunset. We knew that there would be a beautiful sunset, of course. We were at the coast and we knew that the time would arrive that the sunset would come. But there was something really astounding about it-- because everything was perfect. I'm sure meteorologists could explain it better. The sunset had so many colors-- from blue to light blue, to purple, to magenta, to yellow, and red.

As the sun was setting, there was this changing colors and so, of course, I had to stop and take a moment to enjoy it. So beautiful, so perfect. Then, because I am a millennial, of course, I had to take some pictures.



So, using my mobile phone, I took a picture of myself-- a *wefie*, with the crew, with my brother seminarians, and the priests who were part of the production team. And, of course, I took pictures of that sunset. I took as many as I could to make sure that I get at least one shot that captures all of it-- all the colors, all the beauty that I was seeing with my own eyes.

And then, I couldn't wait to get back to the mainland where there's Internet, to share the photos on my Instagram, on my Facebook, *para mang-inggit ng kaunti*-- and also to be able to share something beautiful and my reflections about it.

But then when I opened my phone and looked at my photos, I couldn't help being disappointed-- because of the many pictures I took, none of them really captured *the moment*. None of them really got the colors right and none gave me the *feeling* I experienced. So, I ended up not sharing the photos anymore.

I said, "*Parang hindi naman 'yun 'yung na-experience ko.*"

Perhaps, that is the limitation of technology. Maybe, someday, we can get something that will really capture *everything*-- the best cameras that are always evolving year after year.

But something tells me that it's not *technology*. It's not just because the colors weren't represented well. There were other factors that made that moment perfect.

We were alone at the beach, on the islands. There were not many people around because it was a weekday, Pandemic time. Also, we just finished aware shooting-- we were all tired and frustrated and we could barely enjoy each other anymore because, as anyone who has done any kind of production would know, things never go the way they should go-- batteries run out, technical problems arise. So, we were all just stressed out.

And when we were about to end the day, we were given this beautiful sunset as if God was smiling at us and giving us a small reward for trying to do our best for the Ministry-- and nothing could ever capture the entire experience of wonder at that moment.

Perhaps, it may be also the limitation of all kinds of media we used to capture the moment. Except one. The one medium that doesn't have that limitation is the Bible itself.





Today, we celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God. It is a new celebration in the Catholic church-- only two years old. Pope Francis instituted the celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God so that we can have a special day dedicated to really studying, understanding, appreciating, and experiencing the Power of the Word of God. Because it is indeed incredibly powerful and it is incredibly unique.

The first lines of the Gospel of Luke say that he's trying to compile his own narrative so that he can preserve these teachings, these actions, and these ministries for future generations. But I don't think Luke understood what he was getting himself involved in because the sacred Scripture, as I said, isn't just a record of events. It doesn't just give us data, it doesn't just give us a record of what happened.

It's something more than that. It is the Living Word of God. And when we say it is *inspired*, when we say that it is *sacred*, what we mean is that these words, this sacred text, have the power to let anyone encounter the Person of Jesus Christ. Anyone who has a humble heart, and who genuinely seeks the truth-- they don't even have to know particularly that they are searching for Jesus or for God or for the Trinity or for the Church. Anyone who reads the Bible with humility and desire for truth will find God, will find Jesus waiting to be encountered.

Such is the Power of the Word of God. It is a privilege and a unique way for us to meet Jesus Christ.

For sure, there are many other ways that we can encounter God.

I felt God as I gazed at that sunset -- powerfully. But meeting God in His Scripture is altogether different because it actually brings you there-- to Him.

I hope you've had this moment--that when you read the Bible and you contemplate on God's Word, you would feel the person of Jesus Christ Himself is there with you-- as if you were there with the apostles, as if you were there with Mary Magdalene, with the adulterous, with the lame person, with the blind-- everyone whom Jesus touched. Because that is the Power of the Word of God. It seems to bring you *there*, it seems to bring your Presence *there* so that the same faith born from these personal encounters with Jesus Christ when He walked on the Earth 2,000 years ago, the same faith born in the apostles, and everyone He touched-- even the centurions and everybody else-- would be born in your heart.

That is its Power and that is its Beauty-- the Word of God is so powerful that it builds you up. What I love about the Readings today is not just the Gospel but what the First and Second readings say.

In the First Reading, we see the Israelites have been defeated for many years. Jerusalem is destroyed, the temple is destroyed. They are allowed by their conquerors to go back and rebuild their homeland. They start building the temple first of all, and then they start to rebuild their country, their identity. And how do they do it?



1st Reading – Nehemiah 8:2-4A, 5-6, 8-10

² *Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, which consisted of men, women, and those children old enough to understand.*

³ *Standing at one end of the open place that was before the Water Gate, he read out of the book from*

daybreak till midday, in the presence of the men, the women, and those children old enough to understand; and all the people listened attentively to the book of the law...

⁸ *Ezra read plainly from the book of the law of God, interpreting it so that all could understand what was read.*

The Israelites don't go to architects, engineers, politicians, or urban planners. They start building by listening to the Torah, to the Word of God, to the Law.

That is how you rebuild anything you found destroyed. You put it on a great foundation-- and that is God's Word. That is what marks the rebuilding of the Israelites-- what reconstitute their nation, their culture, their religion. They build up their homeland on the Word of God.

The Second Reading from the letter of Paul speaks about the nature of the Church, and how we are all under one Community, serving Jesus Christ-- but with many ministries.

2nd Reading – 1 Corinthians 12:12-30

Brothers and sisters:

¹² *As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.*

¹³ *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.*

¹⁴ *Now the body is not a single part, but many...*

²⁶ *If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.*

²⁷ *Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it.*

²⁸ *Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues.*



What these two readings are telling us is that the Word and the Church always come together, don't they? We are not the same as our Protestant brothers and sisters whom we love and respect. But for them, they say what matters is *Sola Scriptura* -- only what is in Scripture. Only what is explicitly in the Bible. If it's not there, then it's not from God. That's how I understand what they are saying, and we respect that.

But for us Catholics, that's not the case. We hope to understand well our faith because many times I hear Catholics ask the same thing: "Is that in the Bible?"

But all is not really what is explicitly on the Word of God. The inspiration comes from the Spirit in the Word and in the Church-- because they are essentially together. They are one revelation in these two main ways: Word and Church. Church means our traditions, how we have grown in history, what has expanded based on what happened on those inspired events when Jesus Christ came.

As Catholics, we don't say *Sola Scriptura*. Neither do we say Bible first and then in the next second, we say *No*. We say the Bible and the Church, they are revelatory-- they both give us God's message.

And so, I hope that when we read the Bible, we are empowered and we *build up*. And I hope that we also turn to the Bible when we need power, when we need encouragement when we need building up-- because what lies here again is the Person of Jesus Christ Himself.

If we feel that we are bored, if we feel that we are not getting anything from it, remember that it's not just a book that you are reading. It is a Person you are interacting with.

That person wants to know you, wants to be with you, wants to reflect with you, enrich you, and grow with you. So, if you feel that you are bored or tired of it all, ask the Person on the other end to help you out and give you the power to understand and to listen, and to expand your mind and your heart.

Worship!

EXHORTATION

RYAN NABUS

Good day Brothers and Sisters!

We hope and pray that you are well and safe wherever you are right now.

Before we go into Worship, I just want to share with you a passage that's giving me hope during this time, and it comes from

Romans 10:12-13 which says that we have the same God who gives generously to all who call on Him—for everyone who calls upon the Name Lord will be saved. And so we're going to do that today. We're going to sing about the Name above every other name. We're going to lift His Name on this online space that we're sharing right now and we're going to declare the Power that is in that Name.

We hope that you can sing with us wherever you are and declare the wonderful Name of Jesus!







FLASHBACK!

JANUARY 23, 2022

Talk

FULFILLED



TODAY, I'd like to preach the message, *God wants you to eat and drink His love.*

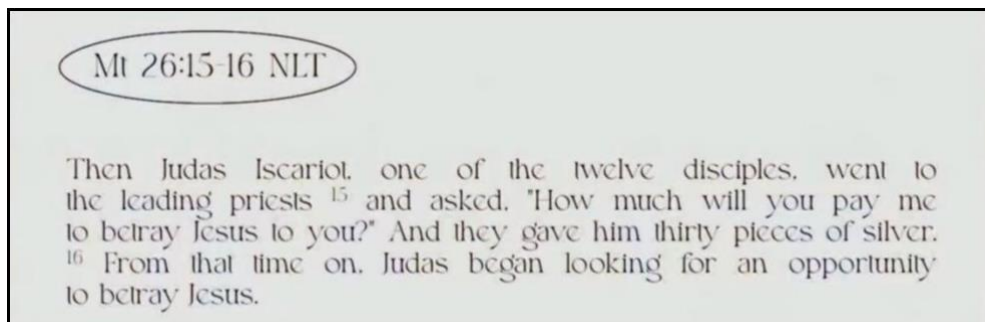
For the past two years, we've been unpacking the Gospel of Matthew.

God wants you
to eat and drink
His love.

Today, we arrive at the
start of the climax:

The last meal of Jesus
with His disciples
before He dies.

Everything we read so far led to this point in the story:



Two Stories

Matthew juxtaposes or placed two opposing stories side by side. One is a story of devotion, the other a story of deception. Last week, we read the story of Mary of Bethany who loved Jesus so much, she anointed Him with extravagant perfume.



One is a story of devotion,
the other a story of deception.

But in today's story, Judas exchanged Jesus for 30 denarii. How much is that? A denarius is a daily wage in ancient times. So, in modern Philippines, 30 denarii would be about P15,000. Yes, Judas sold Jesus for the price of an entry-level mobile phone.

Lesson? Wise people give up everything to follow Jesus; Foolish people give up Jesus for loose change.

Perhaps Matthew wants us to ask ourselves: Are you Mary or are you Judas? Do you give up everything for Jesus? Or do you give up Jesus for what turns out to be nothing?

I know I become Judas when I give up Jesus for my pride. Or my lust. Or my greed.

A friend of mine hooked up with the wrong girl. He knew from day one she was bad news. This person was not going to bring him closer to God. But he was very attracted to her. And so, he gave up Jesus for her.

Two years later, he came to me a broken man, regretting his choice.

Remember this Truth: The 30 denarii are not worth it.

Don't exchange Jesus. Period.

LESSON

Wise people give up everything to follow Jesus.
Foolish people give up Jesus for loose change.

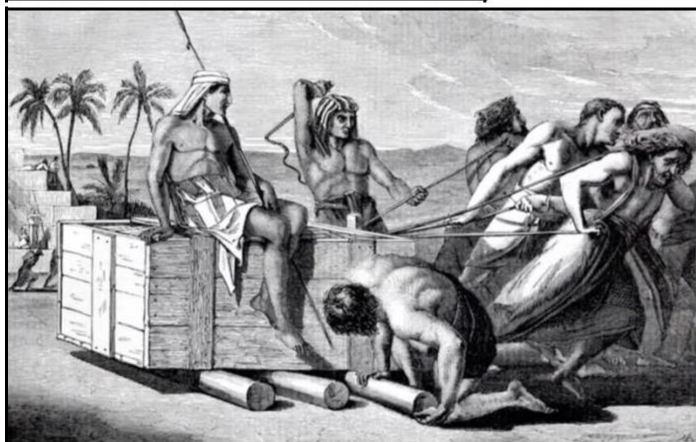
Jesus Died on the Passover—Here's Why

Let's go to the core story of today's reading: The Passover Meal.



Mt 26:17-19 NLT

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal for you?"¹⁵ "As you go into the city," he told them, "you will see a certain man. Tell him, 'The Teacher says: My time has come, and I will eat the Passover meal with my disciples at your house.'"¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus told them and prepared the Passover meal there.



The Festival of Unleavened Bread is another name for Passover.

A little explanation of a Passover meal: Passover is the biggest feast of the Jews because it's their origin story. Once upon a time, they were a bunch of slaves in Egypt, suffering under the cruelty of Pharaoh. But God rescued them and made them a great nation.

In the reading, it gives you this sense that Jesus planned their Passover meal very well. Including the fact that it was done one day earlier.

This is clearer in the Gospel of John, but even in Matthew, when he said, ***"On the first day of the Festival"***. Bible scholars believe that this was the sunset of the previous day. Because that's how Jews counted their days. It always starts at sunset. Why celebrate it one day earlier? Jesus knew that by this time tomorrow, He'd already been hanging on a dirty cross.

My point? **Jesus died exactly on the feast of Passover.**

Because He wanted to tie these two events together—what God did in the first Passover, and what God will do through His death, is the same--but much, much greater.

God Is Vulnerable to You

Let's go on:

Mt 26:20-24 NLT

When it was evening Jesus sat down at the table with the Twelve. ²¹ While they were eating he said, 'I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.' ²² Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, 'Am I the one, Lord?' ²³ He replied, 'One of you who has just eaten from this bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!'



Question:

Have you ever been betrayed before?

If an acquaintance betrays you, it doesn't hurt as much. But if it's a really close friend, it hurts deeply.

Jesus must have been hurt deeply by the betrayal of Judas. He was part of the 12, His inner circle-- someone He worked, traveled, and lived with for three long years.

Fact: Our deepest wounds come from people we love. Because we drop our defenses only with the people we trust.

Why do we have the power to hurt God?

I have always wondered why we have the power to hurt God.

Now I know. When God relates with us, He drops His defenses.

He becomes vulnerable.

When God relates with us, He drops His defenses.

He brings us into His inner circle and trusts us with His heart.

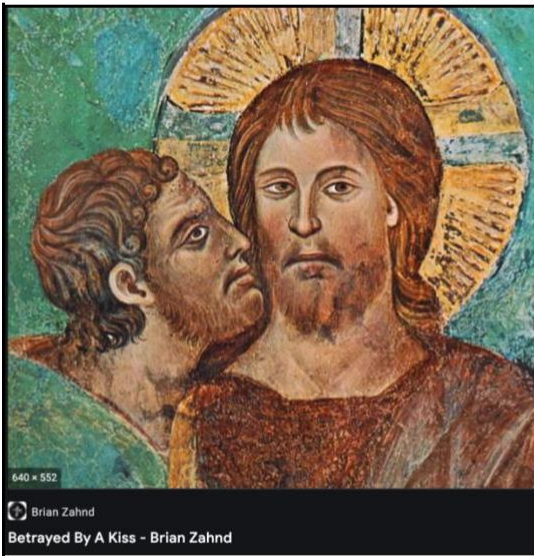
He brings us into His inner circle and trusts us with His heart.

Is Jesus Simply a Teacher?

We continue:

Mt 26:25 NLT

Judas, the one who would betray him, also asked, "Rabbi, am I the one?" And Jesus told him, "You have said it."



Judas called Him Rabbi.

This is the first time in Matthew a disciple called Jesus Rabbi.

Every other time, disciples called Him Lord.

Only outsiders called Him Rabbi.

Perhaps, this is Matthew's question:
Will you simply listen to Him?
Or will you obey Him?



Teaching Made Edible

Jesus was going to die.
In Matthew, He predicted it three times. But His disciples were still confused.

Why should He die?
How will His death benefit anyone?

For obvious reasons,
they wanted Jesus alive. They needed Him alive and powerful, so He can oust the Romans. They couldn't fathom why He had to die.

May I insert this truth?
We don't understand it, either.



Mt 26:26-30 NLT

²⁶ As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take this and eat it, for this is my body."²⁷ And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it,²⁸ for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many."²⁹ Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."³⁰ Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Even to this day, if you ask a Catholic, "How does the death of Jesus save you?"

Many will stutter and repeat lessons they heard from their religion classes.

How we wish Jesus wrote a book to explain it all: *The Doctrine of My Death and Why It's Good for You*-- Written by Jesus Christ.

Or since He's God anyway, Jesus could have recorded a video of Himself giving a theological discussion of salvation. If not a video, a podcast would have been fantastic too.

But here's what happened.

Jesus didn't write a book to explain His death; He gave them a meal.

The meal was the explanation of His death.

Jesus didn't write a book to explain His death. He gave them a meal.

The Most Photographed Dinner in the World

Let me describe to you what happened in that Passover meal.

We may not know the details, but we have a broad idea because the ritual was passed on from generation to generation.

I want you to imagine the disciples with Jesus, not seated in a straight line like in Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* painting which was how banquets were done in Leonardo da Vinci's time...



...but as how they ate in that part of the world 2000 years ago, lying on their side, propping themselves with their elbows on a shallow table.



The Passover meal had four cups of wine, each cup moving the ceremony from one part to the next. So, the cups were the structure of the meal.

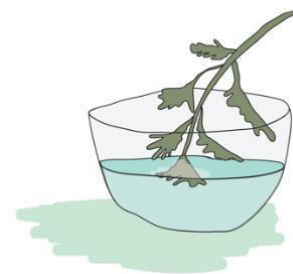
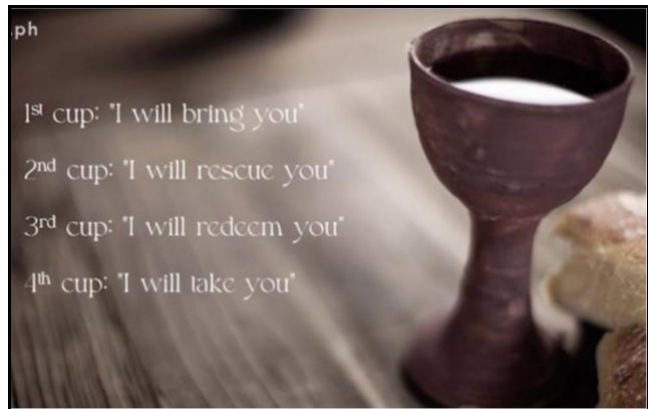
Each time, the father of the family said the customary blessing, “Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the world, who has created the fruit of the vine.”

Throughout the meal, there would be rituals like *karpas*, which is the dipping of vegetables in saltwater—saltwater being a symbol of their bitter tears; they also ate the maror or the bitter herb, symbolizing the pain and bitterness of their slavery.

After the second cup, there’s a little drama.

The youngest person in the family would ask the oldest person, “Why are we doing this?”

And the elder would retell the story of the cruelty they suffered under Pharaoh’s rule and how God stood up to Egypt with the nine plagues: water turning to blood, frogs, lice, flies, livestock pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness. Plus a 10th: the killing of firstborn children.



He would then say that on the night of their escape, every firstborn in Egypt would die. But the Israelites were saved by the blood of a lamb. God told them to kill a lamb and place its blood on the doorposts of their houses. When they do that, death will “pass over” their houses and not touch them.

Note: This was a pure gift. Because God did not just protect the most religious Israelites. He protected everyone who trusted Him.

This was their origin story that Jews would remind themselves of again and again every year.

But in the middle of the Passover meal, Jesus does something shocking...

This Is Awful

Jesus takes unleavened bread.

Why unleavened? Because the Jews were in a hurry that night, they had no time to wait for the yeast to make the loaves rise. They were in a hurry because they were going to escape from Egypt that night.

Jesus takes the bread and blesses it, but He says something very disturbing.

He says, "This is my Body."

As Catholics, we hear it in the Mass so often, we don't realize how awful that sounds.



Jesus says.
"This is my body."



Bread is beaten, pounded, kneaded, rolled, and placed in a hot oven.

Imagine if I said, "Hey, this cookie is my body. I made it with my flesh. Please enjoy."

Yuck. That's horrible.

But what is bread but something that's beaten, pounded, kneaded, rolled, and placed in a hot oven? Just a few hours after the meal, that was what was going to happen to the body of Jesus.

Yes, Jesus was going to die.

But bread also means life. Bread nourishes you. In the same way, Jesus' death nourishes you.

Then Jesus takes the cup, and He shakes them up again by saying something horrific.

He says, "This is my blood."

Who in his right mind would want to drink His blood?

But this was not just any blood-- this was the blood of the covenant. He was using the same language from the first Passover, where the lamb's blood became the symbol of God's protection.

In the same way that God rescued Israel from slavery to Pharaoh, Jesus rescued you from your slavery to sin.

But wait . . . Where is the lamb?

Jesus says.
"This is my blood."



In the same way that God rescued Israel from slavery to Pharaoh, Jesus rescued you from your slavery to sin.

The Missing Lamb

The strangest thing is that when the Gospels retell the Passover meal, there was no mention of the lamb. But if you're a Jew, this is very strange.

That's as strange as the story of Fr. Erik Santos, priest presider in LOJ Masses in the early 2000...

Fr. Erik said he was born in a poor family in Tondo. One day, it was his birthday.

And his mother asked him to blow the candle, saying, "Anak, bago mo i-blow ang candle, mag-wish ka."

And little Erik made a wish and blew the candle.

The mother asked him, "Anak, ano ang wish mo?"

"Ang wish ko," little Erik said, "sa susunod na birthday ko, sana hindi lang kandila... sana may birthday cake na ako."

In the same way that a birthday needs a cake, Passover needs a lamb. But when Jesus celebrated the Passover meal, there was no lamb.

The apostles must have been whispering to each other, "Gee, are our donations so low, we can't afford to buy a lamb?"

But there was no lamb on the table because Jesus was already the Lamb of God. As gross as this may sound, the host was also the food. In just a few hours, Jesus was going to die. So that spiritual death will "pass over" us.

Through The Meal, You Won't Just Understand It...

I repeat: Jesus could have explained His death logically. Intellectually. Rationally. Using 7 bullet points with 18 footnotes. He didn't. Instead, He fed people with a special meal that was already woven in the heart of the Jewish people for two thousand years. For every Jew, it meant freedom. Deliverance. God's favor. But Jesus reshapes the meaning of the meal by inserting Himself as the sacrificial Lamb.

God doesn't just want you to understand His love; Through the Mass, God wants you to eat and drink His love.

My dear friend, every time you celebrate Mass (even if it's online), see yourself as one of the disciples. Sit around the table of the Last Meal. See Jesus at the head of that table.

And hear Him say, "This is My Body; This is My Blood."

Yes, Jesus invites you to the greatest meal that will last forever.

Dear friend, God is madly in love with you.

He loves you so much, He fought for you to the point of death.

Respond to His love today!



God doesn't just want you
to understand His love.
Through the Mass,
God wants you
to eat and drink
His love.



MERCY MINISTRIES

LIGHT OF JESUS PRISON MINISTRY YEAR 29

Quarantine! Lockdown!



THIS month, January 2022, our Light of Jesus Prison Ministry serving the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) marks its 29th Founding Anniversary.

With the Coronavirus Pandemic still ongoing, CIW follows Quarantine protocols, if not totally in Lockdown, limiting, if not altogether banning visits in the CIW. So, we could not cover the anniversary event.

So, here, we honor the Light of Jesus Prison Ministry by re-posting our story in *The Feast Family* April 2, 2020 issue.

Giving Dignity to Women in a Loong Quarantine



PRISON! With the ongoing Coronavirus Community Quarantine—Enhanced, Extreme, or both— in many parts of the world, we do know now how it feels to be incarcerated.

To arrest the spread of this horrible virus, the government ordered us to stay home for an entire month— March 15 to April 14, 2020 (which has extended to 2021 and up to this writing!)

And not a few are crying out disappointment, desperation, distress— to the point that this

imprisonment seems to be a worse curse than the virus itself.

If we're feeling utter despair over this ordeal, it is then timely that we visit the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila.

For our Quarantine is absolutely nothing compared with time served in prison.

Operated by the Bureau of Corrections, CIW was established on February 14, 1931, to be a prison for women who used to be held at the Old Bilibid Prison.

In the '90s, the Light of Jesus Family organized the LOJ Prison Ministry led by Bro. Roy Pasimio in light of the promise in Matthew 25:31-46 where our Lord Jesus enumerated ways that one may enter His Kingdom:

“Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to me.”

And the Lord added that if we do these to the least of our brethren, we would have done them for Him.

And so, members of our LOJ Prison Ministry have been going to prisons since 1993 to conduct prayer meetings, nourishing the participants with soul-invigorating Worship, life-changing talks on God's Word, and much-needed pastoral care— all giving them hope of a new life of dignity once they have served their time.

Inspiration



Today, Bro. Hermie Morelos (*extreme left*), is now the head of our LOJ Mercy Ministries which include the LOJ Prison Ministry for whom he recently led a retreat for the servant leaders centering on the theme *Fearless*.

Fearless, indeed, are our servant leaders as they endeavor to give hope for our beneficiaries. Such as our two model beneficiaries cum leaders—
Sis. Babes Zambrano (*left*) and Sis. Beth Corral (*center*), both of whom served time at the Correctional Institution

for Women (CIW) for some offense but undaunted, they have moved on, their trial turning out to be a blessing in disguise for them and the people they now inspire.

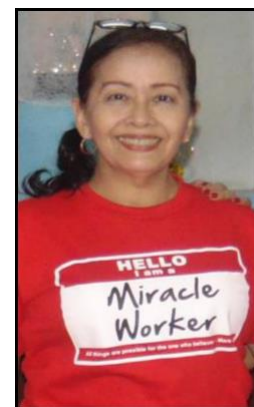
Babes held LOJ prayer meetings in CIW.

Beth joined the prayer meetings held by the LOJ Prison Ministry and eventually experienced spiritual renewal.

Babes and Beth continue to support the Ministry.

Babes serves as adviser of the LOJ Prison Ministry, while Beth serves as assistant Prison Ministry head.

Babes and Beth are serving as well in other LOJ Ministries—
Babes as spiritual adviser of our Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly, and Beth, who once served as staff at the Lighthouse, the headquarters of our Light of Jesus Family, now serves in the Intercessory Ministry and as moderator-lector at the Taytay, Rizal, branch of The Feast, our weekly faith gathering.



Sis. Miriam Reyna (*right*) took over as head of the Prison Ministry. She also serves at the Feast Makati Legaspi as connector in the Warmth Ministry as well as in the Pastoral Care/Pray-Over Ministry.

Recently, Bro. Jon Escoto took over as head of the Prison Ministry.



Merry Love

A much-awaited festivity mounted by our LOJ Prison Ministry is the Christmas-Valentine Party. Since CIW is busy with Yuletide events in December up to January, the LOJ Prison Ministry has been celebrating Christmas in February, making the event a Merry-Love festivity.



FLASHBACK, from top: LOJ Prison Ministry 2017 Christmas-Valentine Party-- as

T-shirt of Sis Babes says, the Ministry members “feeling God and feeling good”; Sis. Miriam giving soul-nourishing talk and distributing gifts.



2020 CHRISTMAS-VALENTINE. LOJ Prison Ministry members gesture what it is all about...It’s all about Love... God’s Unconditional Love for His people, especially those isolated, imprisoned, quarantined even... *Photos by Dave Apalla*

If the Son sets you free, you will be freed indeed.

— John 8:36



BLESSINGS

At the End of the Rainbow

By BEN ZAMBRANO

LOOKING through a glass of stored memories, my wife, Babes, clearly saw an image of a woman in some distant past.

In 1992, Babes was given a 12-year sentence at the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) for an anomaly at the office she worked for. Suddenly, our world dimmed. Babes was devastated, to say the least. She found comfort only from family and brethren in the Light of Jesus, her faith community who stood by her throughout her ordeal.

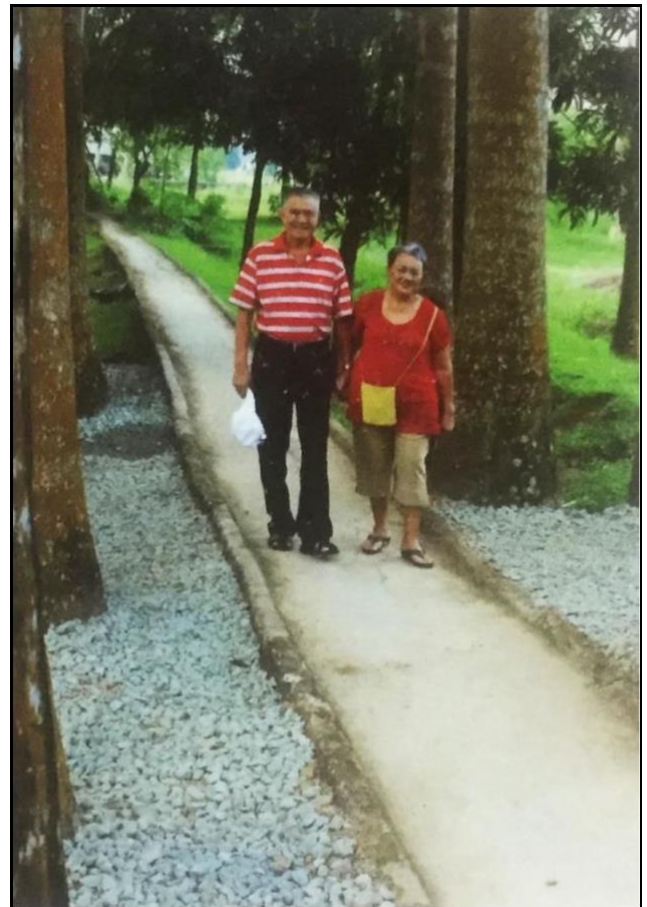
Yet, she couldn't help feeling betrayed and abandoned by the people she thought would defend her in court. But one day, someone came to ease her pain. The young lady came all the way from her hometown down south to ask for Babes's forgiveness.

"Manang Babes, I am sorry," she started, her voice quivering. I really wanted to help you, but I was powerless..."

"Sssh..." Babes hushed her.

"Manang Babes, I would like to hear it from you. Will you forgive me?" Without hesitation, Babes said, "I forgive you with all my heart." They hugged and cried uncontrollably.

Later, Babes told me, "I had never felt God's love so intensely."





Forgiveness is the key which opens the door of resentment and bitterness in our heart for cleansing. By shedding His blood on the cross, Jesus took away our sin. To this day, He forgives our transgressions, as we read in Hebrews 10:17: “Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more.”

On June 30, 1998, Babes was released from CIW by virtue of an executive clemency.

As the gate of the institution swung open, Babes shouted, “I am free!”

Only those who have been imprisoned know that freedom has such great meaning.

Babes and I served in various ministries in the Light of Jesus Family until Bo Sanchez beckoned us to live in the Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly and lead its Spiritual Formation Ministry for the elderly as well as the personnel of Anawim. *Above*, Bro. Bo with us in Anawim.

During the Anawim Foundation Day celebration on June 29, 2012, a sister from the Light of Jesus Family approached Babes and asked her, “Babes, are you happy at Anawim?”

Babes smiled and said, “Of course. We’re happy here at Anawim. At the end of the rainbow, at the end of our journey, Someone is waiting for us. And that Someone is Jesus Himself.”

Editor’s Note: After a long, devoted service for the Lord, Bro. Ben Zambrano passed away on November 29, 2012. *Anawim Herald* published his story in its January-March 2013 issue marking Anawim’s 9th Founding Anniversary.

It’s your turn! Share your blessings and be a blessing to others to glorify God. Email now your story to library2819@gmail.com



Thank You!

The Feast Family, now organized as the **Feast Mercy Ministries**, is a spin-off ministry of the Light of Jesus Family founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez, earlier named as Kerygma Family, a unique online, non-physical, borderless, international community of friends who support each other's personal growth.

Partner beneficiaries of the Feast Mercy Ministries flourish because of your generous support. Thank you for being with us. We pray that you find your daily source of inspiration from the resources that we send to you. We pray too that you may consider giving to The Feast Family. No gift is too small.

Thank you very much in advance for your gift. Our prayer is that God will continue to reward you as you give.

FOR EXISTING DONORS:

Thank you for the Love. Your monthly donation helps us continue extending support to our Light of Jesus spin-off organizations, including our partner beneficiaries. Your gift will sustain our operations and, we hope, help us reach out to the persons our Lord has called us to make disciples and give them renewed hope.

Be a Feast Family member. Write or call us. Now.

Email Address: jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com

Website: <https://kerygmfamily.com>

Telephone Numbers: 8725-9999/ Fax 725-1230

Our Partner Beneficiaries

Email Address: mercyministries@feast.ph Website: www.feastmercyministries.com

Jeremiah 33 Foundation is a shelter for girls particularly victims of sexual abuse.



Grace To Be Born is a halfway home for pregnant women in crisis.



He Cares Mission provides shelter for street children.

Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation gives scholarships to poor students.



Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer provides financial assistance and pastoral care for indigent cancer patients.

The Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center ministers to those who are emotionally and spiritually wounded.



H.A.I.L. MARY is acronym for Healthcare Assistance for Indigents and Lepers of Mary, adopting the Blessed Mother as the patroness of its mission to eradicate leprosy in Abra within 8–10 years.



The Light of Jesus Disaster Recovery Ministry provides evacuation assistance, relief goods, financial aid, and other needs of calamity victims.

LIGHT OF JESUS FAMILY
DISASTER RECOVERY MINISTRY

The Light of Jesus Prison Ministry brings Jesus to the Correctional Institution for Women to give them hope for a new life of dignity.



Anawim Lay Missions Foundation provides a home for poor elderly who have been abandoned by their family and have nowhere else to go.

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**FAMILY
ONLINE
NEWSMAGAZINE**

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Go and make disciples of all men.

— Matthew 28:19