



**NEWSLETTER**  
**July 17, 2022**

MOST of you know my backstory. I've been a missionary for 43 years. But for the first 18, I had a distorted theology of money. I didn't like money because it was a bad thing.

Deliberately, I remained poor. And I was proud I was poor. Because I believed it was the only way to be close to God.

But during those 18 years of self-imposed poverty, my heart was torn. Because daily, I had co-missionaries who were married and were in dire need. Whenever they told me their money woes, I felt my heart was going through a grinder.

I cried, "This can't be God's plan for His children."

Because the pain was just too much, it moved me to think of "heretical" thoughts. For the first time in my life, I began to entertain a fantasy in my mind: "*What if I earn as much as I can so I can help as much as I can?*"

And slowly, my finances changed.

Friend, before I continue, let me be very clear: Money is a blessing, but Blessing is so much bigger than money. I believe *our biggest blessing is Life with the Blesser. And He designed blessings for you to scatter them.*

If you don't, the blessing may become a curse.

We'll explore all this today. Have an amazing Feast today!



***You're Blessed  
To Be a Blessing***

May your dreams come true,

**Bo Sanchez**



## *A Hand To Hold...When Tears Fall*

A HAND to hold is what you need when troubles, fears, anxieties reduce you to tears.

Like the hand of a Good Samaritan, topic of the Gospel in the Sunday Mass at The Feast.

But what if the one extending his hand to you is just about to deceive you? Fr. Paolo Asprer gives pointers on how to handle the situation, *page 3*.

Giving a hand to those in need may bring a handful of problems. But, our founder, Bro. Bo Sanchez, says *You're Blessed To Be a Blesser*, theme of today's Feast talk.



Intro on *page 1*.

Oh, well, hands do come handy when you have to wipe away your tears—like Bro. Bo and Bro. Didoy Lubaton seem to be doing in these photos taken when they struggled through last Sunday's Feast talk -- about why and how we make God cry, *pages 15-28*.



A hand to hold is what the emotionally and spiritually wounded need—those our Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center ministers to. Here's Part 3 of our series on this Ministry, with sharing by Sis. Michele Alignay, Pastoral Care director, and another pastoral carer, *pages 29-35*

Okay. This issue is not just about sad tears. Sis. Marowe Sanchez may be just happy she had a hanky ready when tears of joy touched her eyes as Feasters greeted her and hubby



Bo Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary, *page 11*. And Birthday Boy Bro. Adrian Panganiban also stifling happy tears? Someone hold his hands, *page 14*.



Glory,

**Randy Borromeo**  
Media Ministry  
Executive Director

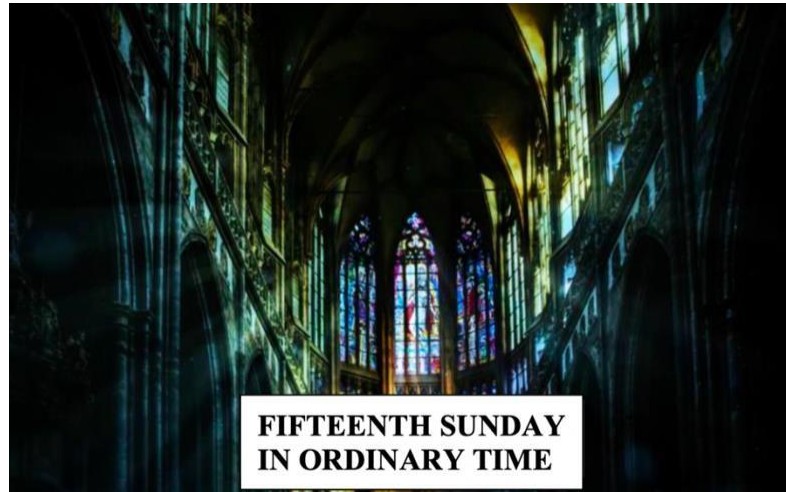




# FLASHBACK!

JULY 10, 2022

## Holy Mass



### **FR. PAOLO ASPRER**

on the Gospel: Luke 10: 25-37

*The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

Excerpts...

IT'S so nice for me to be back here after being away for more than a month for a special mission in Italy for our general chapter. We elected our new government officials in our congregation and we planned for the next six years for our community.

So, before I left for Rome, I made sure that I had a two-way ticket para makabalik pa ako ng Pilipinas—so I can still go back to the Philippines to be with you, Feasters. Thank you for the welcome.

In our Gospel reading for today, we heard one of the most well-loved and well-known stories of our Lord Jesus Christ—the Parable of the Good Samaritan. And we can relate so much with the story.

There is a good Samaritan in all of us. There is that good Samaritan around us. One way or another, we are a good Samaritan to our neighbor, and we've been recipients of the kindness, the charity of the good Samaritans around us.



## Who Is a Holy Person?

The Gospel story illustrates that love for God and love for neighbor—that’s the ultimate criterion for holiness. Sino nga ba ang isang taong banal? Who, indeed, is a holy person? A holy person, according to our Gospel, loves God, loves neighbor as he loves himself.

Of course, such love must begin with oneself. We cannot give what we don’t have. Love of God and love of neighbor—they are inseparable.

Yung pagmamahal natin sa Diyos na hindi natin nakikita, namamalas yun sa ating pagmamahal at paglilingkod sa ating kapwa na ating nakakasalamuha araw araw. – Our love for God which may not be visible is manifested through our love and service for our fellowmen we encounter every day.

The vertical and the horizontal love of our faith—love of God, love of neighbor-- should be concrete. It should be inclusive, unconditional. But of course, it’s a torture from our Lord.

Sometimes, we see the commandments of God as something imposed on us from outside. But our First Reading tells us that this law of love for God and neighbor is something within us, something inscribed by God Himself in our heart. So, we have that natural inclination to be a good Samaritan to our fellow neighbor because it is something planted by God Himself in our heart.

### Reading I: Deuteronomy 30:10-14

*Moses said to the people:*

<sup>10</sup> *“If only you would heed the voice of the LORD, your God, and keep his commandments and statutes that are written in this book of the law, when you return to the LORD, your God, with all your heart and all your soul.*

<sup>11</sup> *“For this command that I enjoin on you today is not too mysterious and remote for you.*

<sup>12</sup> *It is not up in the sky, that you should say, ‘Who will go up in the sky to get it for us and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?’*

<sup>13</sup> *Nor is it across the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea to get it for us and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?’<sup>14</sup> No, it is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out.”*





## The Gospel Characters

Of course, *talaga namang mahirap maging* good Samaritan.-- It's really difficult to be a good Samaritan. Most especially nowadays, right?

And we have our Lord Jesus, in the Second Reading, who is the true, Good Samaritan who will really sustain this desire to grow in charity and service to one another.

It's good to ask ourselves, my dear Feasters, *kanino tayo nakakarelata sa mga characters sa* story? --With whom do we relate among the characters in the story?

There are four characters in the of the story: a Jewish traveler, a Jewish priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan. Who are we in these four characters? Or perhaps, the four characters in the story are present in all of us.

### No. 1 Character

The Jewish traveler. It is said that life is a journey. Life is a pilgrimage —many lessons to learn, problems to solve, surprises to behold. Life is a journey. Sometimes, our journey is easy going. Sometimes a lot of twists and turns. Sometimes a lot of surprises. Our life here on Earth is messy but again, it's also laden with wonders and miracles. But the traveler in the Reading today was robbed, was beaten, was left half dead. It only means that we live in a violent world. We live in a wounded world. A wounding world.

### Reading II: Colossians 1:15-20



*15 Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

*16 For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him*

*17 He is before all things, and in him, all things hold together.*

*18 He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be preeminent.*

*19 For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell,*

*20 and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross through him, whether those on earth or those in heaven.*



## Who To Blame?

Gaano man natin protektahan ang ating sarili, masusugatan at masusugatan tayo.—No matter how much we protect ourself, somehow, we would still be wounded.

And then we ask, why is that traveler on such road?

You know, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho at that time was in Jerusalem. Nobody would risk to travel there alone. If you would travel on that road you should have company. Perhaps that traveler is a hard working merchant, businessman. Or, on the other hand, he's also a full **hearty** character.

Commentators say if there's someone to be blamed in that incident, it's the traveler himself—because he is simply there on that road.

There are times in our life that whoever we are now, it's really a consequence of our decisions. One of the qualities of a mature person is he takes responsibility for his actions. We don't blame God, our parents, or other people—we take responsibility for our own actions.

That traveler tells us that we should be strong enough, resilient enough to bounce back from the various challenges of life. One way or another, there is a God-sent creature from the heavens who will help us.

## No. 2 Character

The second character in the Gospel story, we'll put together as the priest and the Levite-- because they are both people of the temple, of the church.

In our initial response, we would say, "Oh my, the priest doesn't have a heart!"

At the same time, a Levite is a servant of the temple, so we would say, "Walang puso, taong simbahan pa naman.—Heartless. To think he's a man of the church. "

But of course, we have to take note of the context. The priest and the Levite are bound by the purification laws. If you're going to touch a dead person or someone who will die soon, you would be rendered unclean not only for days. But for the entire week, you are considered ritually impure and so, you cannot do your duty to worship in the temple.

For example, if Bro. Bo met the Jewish traveler who's half dead. And if he's going to help the man, definitely his one-week schedule would be cancelled.

Maybe, the priest is thinking, "Kawawa naman yung mga tao doon sa temple, naghihintay sa akin.--Pity the people waiting for me in the temple. So, I'll just simply pass by." This priest and Levite also might be thinking for their safety.



## **We Cannot Judge**

You know my dear friends, we cannot judge the priest and the Levite. They are good people. They only have their priorities straight. Purity is more important for them-- more than the call of the moment which is charity.

We cannot not simply judge people from what's on the outside, from the options they have to choose. Most especially, we don't know the options they have to choose from.

So, these priest and Levite, they are not bad people. They only have their priorities clear. But of course, we are called to go beyond laws, to go beyond what the letter of Paul points out about rules and regulations...

Christianity, above all, is not simply about following the rules and regulations. It's, above all, relationship— with God and our neighbor.

Last month, my fellow priest, my superior, also visited our brothers in our Spain Community. So, we rode a train from Madrid to Barcelona. When we were about to exit Barcelona, a Filipino approached us, limping and stuttering.

He asked, “Pilipino kayo, no?—Are you Filipinos?”

He told us his story—he asked for help because he lost his job, there is a family to provide for...

My fellow priest asked him, “Taga saan ka ba sa Pilipinas? Where do you live in the Philippines?”

Surprise! The guy lives in the same province where my superior lives. So, my superior asked the guy where exactly in the province he lives. The guy mentioned a place—which doesn't exist in that province.

But of course, we listened to our instinct and offered him a little help.

He said, “Give it to me, so I can send it to my family in the Philippines.”

Sometimes, we think that if we help, baka maloko lamang tayo... Maabuso lamang tayo—we might just be gyped, deceived, or abused.

Pero ang tunay na pagtulong—true charity-- is unconditional.

If there is a mistake in our life that we can say we're proud of, that's being generous and pagiging mabuting tao. Kahit alam nating niloloko na tayo...being a good person, even if we know we are already being fooled. Because there is no such thing as excess in goodness, in charity.

My superior said, “Sige, ibigay mo na lamang yung tulong kahit na niloloko tayo—Okay, just give the money to him, even if he's just fooling us.”

And the moment the guy received our help, his feet straightened up and he ran away.



## **Dignity in Sacrifice**

There's dignity in sacrifice. A fellow countryman living abroad. Sometimes, it's better to be kind rather than to be always right.

Maybe what we're doing is right. We're avoiding to make a mistake—but in avoiding it, we are not being kind to our neighbors anymore.

It's good to be always right in your speech, in your discussions and arguments, but it's not enough. Sometimes, in being righteous, we lose our heart—we become ruthless, merciless to our neighbor.

## **No. 3 Character**

And finally the Samaritan.

You know, for the Jews, the Samaritans are their archenemies. They are what we call heretics, impure people, half-breed people. But again, surprisingly, this Samaritan, who knew nothing about the law, he was the one who fulfilled the very spirit of the law—charity.

Sometimes, what we know about the law of God stays only in our mind -- not in our heart. And it's not translated in our relationships, in our decisions. This Samaritan is truly a model of charity.

In helping others, we have to take the risk. For love to be real, it must hurt, it must cost big, it must empty us of our self. We must be willing to take the risk.

It is often said, "Love until it hurts."

Let's revise this to: "Love until it hurts no more."

That is what love is all about. It must empty us of our self. It must be concrete, found in the small things. Love is in the small things.

The Samaritan wiped the wound of the traveler, he carried the man in his horse or donkey, brought him to an inn, and requested the keeper to take care of the man. That's what love is all about. It's very costly. It's in the small things that we do for our beloved.

My dear friends, as we proceed in this Eucharistic celebration, we are reminded once again that at the twilight or sunset of our life, there is only one standard, one question we must answer: Have we loved?

And it's not just simply love for the lovable, but love also for the unlovable—for the last, the least, the lost, the little ones of our family, of our society, of our community. Amen.



# Worship!

## EXHORTATIONS



**ADRIAN PANGANIBAN:** Thank you, sisters and brothers for being here with us.

Truly, God is a God of Surprises. He surprises us with so many blessings, so many miracles, so many healings.

Who among us are ready to catch God's fresh, new blessings today? So, if you're ready for them, come on, let's catch God's blessings today.

And we are also blessed that we are still alive today. So, let's make a joyful noise, Everyone!



**PAULINE GUEVARRA:** Let's lift our praises to Jesus! Don't stop! We're not going to stop! We're going to continue to worship the Name above all names—the beautiful, the wonderful, the powerful Name and His name is Jesus...

Come, worship with us. Together, we're going to give the glory back to the Name that rolled out the stone of the grave, to the Name that moved mountains, the Name that calmed the seas, to the Name that saved us from our sins.

So, we're going to come together and make this song our prayer as we make the greatest sign of His love: In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.





## Birthday Special!



LAUGHTER to the max as he gets a floral cake.

Tears of Joy as she receives fresh flowers.

Hey, it is a wonderful time to be one with The Feast Family this Sunday, July 10. As a family, we're celebrating the birthday of Bro. Bo Sanchez, on July 11, and Sis. Marowe's birthday July 3.

And it's also their wedding anniversary on July 11!

*Here are our Feast Builders' happy, loving greetings:*

**ANTHONY VALENZUELA:** Bro. Bo, more than the leadership, more than the amazing things that you have done through the years, we are thankful, I am personally thankful, for the gift of your friendship, for the gift of brotherhood. I remember when you called me at a much bigger level, I can't believe how God has been using you ever since in my life.

Happy Birthday, Bro. Bo!

**ADRIAN PANGANIBAN:** Bro. Bo, you are an inspiration to all of us, and thank you for continuously blessing our life. And Sis. Marowe, you are really a sister to me. You're not just a friend. You're not just a leader. But for us you are family. Thank you for being our home and our family as well.

Happy, Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!



**AUDEE VILLARAZA:** To Bro. Bo and Sis. Marowe:  
Your marriage has always been about sharing with people. Not many know this, but you held your wedding rites in a basketball court and the reception was potluck (Light of Jesus members bringing all sorts of food). That's their marriage-- all about people sharing and giving.

So, we wanted to do something special for you today. We asked attendees to bring pandesal (local bread) and we prepared unlimited coffee. We're calling it *Bo's Kape*, because *Bo's Coffee* is already a trademark. And we're going to share pandesal and coffee with everybody here after the session.

I also want to honor everybody who brought a little something—you brought your love, you brought pandesal to share with everyone. And I want to thank our servants for preparing the pandesal and the coffee for distribution. They have been here since early morning just so we can bring the love to this couple.

Bro. Bo and Sis. Marowe, we honor you and we love you.  
Thank you for inspiring all of us

**ALVIN BARCELONA:** On behalf of The Feast Bay Area District, the Feast Provincial, and actually the entire Feast Family, we greet Bro. Bo and Sis. Marowe Happy Anniversary!

We want you to know that your marriage continues to be a blessing and inspiration, a model to all of us. And we pray that your love for each other will continue to grow deeper and stronger by the day, up to forever.

And to Bro. Bo Sanchez who has blessed millions—literally millions—of people around the world, aren't we are just so privileged that we can see him and hear him and be with him in person. He has blessed us not only by his preaching, by his teaching, by his seminars, and books. He has blessed us by who he is – by his friendship and love for all of us.

So, we pray, Bro. Bo, that God continues to pour out His blessings of health, of strength, of wisdom, and of so much love that you so generously share to all of us.

Bro. Bo, Maligayang, Maligayang Pagbati sa Iyong Kaarawan!  
Mahal na mahal ka namin.





**DIDOY LUBATON:** As a Family, we bless you, Bro. Bo, Sis Marowe.

Thank You, God, for the gift of life. You've created them wonderfully, beautifully, purposefully. And yes, they are living as You have created them. We pray, Lord, that You bless them some more that they may continue to be a blessing so much more to all of us-- our extended families and the whole wide world.

We also know they have needs, they have desires, they have dreams. Grant these to them in Your Perfect Way, on Your Terfect time. Extend these blessings to their families, to their loved ones, to the people they cherish the most.

And we thank You, Lord, for You've always been good, and we're claiming not just good but greater, best blessings yet for them.

In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen

**BO SANCHEZ:** Thank you so much guys. Thank you for all your love.



## Birthday Special!

**DIDOY LUBATON:** We save one of the best for last.

Today is the birthday of our dear, beloved BROTHER ADRIAN PANGANIBAN!

Bro. Adrian, on behalf of The Feast Family, we honor you. Idol ka namin. You are our idol-- we want to be like you.

Thank you for blessing us with your love, your sincerity, throughout the years. You're a real human being-- and you get him as he is. No pretenses. Super appreciate your being a true friend to us all.

On behalf of the Feasters, we say: "We love you!"



**AUDEE VILLARAZA:** We pray for you, Bro. Adrian:

Father in Heaven, we declare all the good stuff that You can give to our Bro. Adrian.

We believe that You have great, amazing plans for his life. And while we don't know what those plans are, it doesn't matter, because we believe they're going to be good-- because You are a good God.

So, Lord, we set in motion this declaration that blessings move ahead of him, believing that You have already orchestrated all these blessings. We pray for healing, for mercy, for love, and for abundance in every sense of that word. And we walk in victory, already believing those promises will be fulfilled.

This is our prayer, in the mighty Name of Jesus.. Amen and Amen.

# Talk



## Talk 2



**BO SANCHEZ:** The Word I want to share with you today consists of three words. These powerful words:

*Your God Weeps.*

Three words. Three words that I hope will be a dagger that will pierce through subconscious pictures of God in your mind.

Maybe not everybody, but some of you-- you have embedded subconscious images of a God that is aloof, that is sitting on a throne in the distance. Maybe with a permanent skull on the face—a displeasure, a repulsion. God is someone who is displeased.

And yet we have here three words that we dug from a story in *Genesis*—a story that we all know. How many of you have heard of, know of, read about, listened to the story of *Noah's Ark*? Most of you.



## A Parenting Story

Let me begin with a story.

Year 2007. I met a man who would change my life forever. He is today my financial mentor. His name: Edward Lee.

One of the most, if not the best, stock market trader-investors this country has ever known—a very, very successful business owner.

He called me up, asked me to have lunch with him.

He changed my financial life. But what surprised me in our first lunch, I learned something very important-- about parenting.

We were eating in this really expensive restaurant – he was paying.

And then he began by saying, “Bro. Bo, I was born not in a rich family. My mother is a schoolteacher, my father, he’s a door-to-door salesman. And that’s why I believe that every Filipino can be rich.”

And so he began with that statement and I loved it. I really did.

Then he said, “By the way, I was a very bad student. I was failing in school all my life. Do you know, Bro. Bo, that I was so bad in school, I never finished college. I got kicked out.”

At that moment, a waiter comes along while we were eating. I figured-- you know, this was an expensive restaurant-- that this waiter had a college degree. And here, in front of me, was someone who did not, and he’s a billionaire. So, I was curious. I wanted to know how did that happen...

And he went on, saying, “You know, I was such a bad student. I was in grade school, I was this overweight kid, always sweating. Every day at class, I would sit at the back – to sleep. There were two doors in the classroom—one at the back—and my mother, being a teacher in that same school, every day, she would go to the back, through the back door, go to me, see me sleeping, pull me out. Then, because I was, you know, soaking wet with sweat, she would wipe the sweat off my back, and she would put powder on my back, and then send we back to the classroom. And I would sleep again.”







## His Mother Weeps

I was wondering, like, how would his parents react to Edward?

So, I said, “You really gave your parents a difficult time.”

And he said, “I gave them hell. It’s like I was lazy. I didn’t like to go to school. I just didn’t. I was failing in most of my subjects.”

I said, “Did they get angry at you? Did they scold you? Did they shout at you?”

His answer stunned me.

He said, “My mother cried. My mother never shouted, never screamed, never scolded. I just saw her tears. And she would tell me, ‘Anak, hindi ka bobo. Son, you’re not dumb. Anak, magaling ka. You are sharp. Anak, mahal kita. I love you.’”

You know, just that.

And he said, “It would happen so often that when my report card comes, and it’s filled with red failing marks, you know my mother would just sit down in front of me and start crying, saying ‘Anak, hindi ka bobo. You are not dumb. Anak, magaling ka. You are sharp. I believe in you.’”

The father would say the same thing over and over again.

And then, my mentor told me, “I am who I am because of the unconditional love of my parents. This was the one ingredient that made me successful in life.”

Wow. As you listen to my story today, you might be saying to yourself, “Bro. Bo, hindi ganyan ang magulang ko. My parents are not like that. Total opposite. They were the ones who told me, ‘Stupid.’ They were the ones who told me ‘Bobo.’ ‘Dumb.’ They were the ones who told me, ‘Walang kuwenta ang buhay mo.’ ‘Your life is useless.’”

I know Fr. Paolo was talking about that a while ago. We live in a broken, wounded, wounding world. And yet I am here to tell you the news that there is a God who weeps for you. There is a God who believes in you. That when you fail, He weeps.



## Human Progress

Today, we will be talking about *Noah's Ark*. But before we do, just to pick up from where we came from: Cain kills Abel. Cain is banished—the way Adam and Eve are banished from Eden. And then what happens, according to the Bible, is that Cain founds a city – builds a city.

Now, I want you to know that when Cain built the city, the Bible also says that there was human progress.



For example, for the first time, they were able to raise livestock. They were no longer hunters and gatherers.

They were able to play musical instruments.



They were able to live in tents – no longer made of stones and wood but now iron and brass.

So, these were giant leaps of technology during that time—as big as the invention of a car, or the invention of the Internet, or the invention of mobile phone, or the invention of toilet paper.





## Flood of Evil

And so, what happened was, there was so much human progress.

But the book of *Genesis* says there was also the progress of evil and corruption. So much evil, so much corruption, to the point – you know there was this guy, a descendant of Cain, his name was Lamech and he was someone who would sing poems about murder-- celebrating murder, saying that he would kill without remorse. He would be proud to say, “I am worse than my ancestor Cain.”

Let’s read Genesis 6:5 where it talks about so much evil in the world:

**Genesis 6:5 NLT**

**The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.**

Meaning to say, before there was a flood of water, there was a flood of evil in the world.

Now, the problem, when you think about Noah and *Noah’s Ark*, is the same problem that people have with *Jonah*.

Before *Genesis*, we talked about *Jonah*. And we were saying that people saw the story of *Jonah* as a children’s story. There’s this big fish, Jonah was swallowed by the fish. It’s like a children’s story. We explained in the talk series on *Jonah* that it’s not.

It’s more complex and profound.



**NOAH’S ARK IS NOT  
A BEDTIME CHILDREN’S STORY.**

It’s the same with the story of *Noah’s Ark*. *Noah’s Ark* seems like a cartoon. I mean, think about it: a boat load of animals – floating zoo.

But I’ve got an announcement: *Noah’s Ark* was written for adults— not for children.

And it has a very serious message.





"SIN IS NEVER A PRIVATE AFFAIR."

BECAUSE SIN AFFECTS EVERYONE—

- 1 THROUGH CONSEQUENCE
- 2 THROUGH INFLUENCE

## Consequence and Influence

One of the major messages of *Noah's Ark* is that sin is not a private affair. Because sin affects everyone—through *consequence* and *influence*.

What do I mean by *consequence*? Let me make it graphic:

Let's say Brutus steals the ATM card of Popeye, figures out the PIN, and then withdraws P200, 000.00 of the hard-earned money of Popeye, goes to Timbuktu, splurges, and lives like a king for a few days.

The police catches up, catches Brutus, puts him in jail.

**Questions:** Who did the crime? Brutus. Is he suffering consequences because of the wrongdoing? Yes.

**Question:** Is he the only one suffering? No.

Popeye, who earned P200,000, all of a sudden has no money. Is he the only one suffering? No.

Wimpy also-- because Popeye cannot treat him with hamburgers. Olive Oyl also-- Popeye cannot give her flowers because the P200,000 is gone.

So, that's what you call *consequence*. There are consequences to a wrongdoing. It does not make only you suffer-- because of your sin—it makes other people suffer—because of your sin.

And then there's the whole idea of *influence*. For example, Bluto, the brother of Brutus, gets encouraged and inspired by his brother's misdeed—and follows suit.

My dear friends, when you live in a culture – a bad culture-- do you know what happens? Bad becomes the norm.

When there are enough persons doing bad stuff, people will say, "That's normal... I think that's the way we should live our life."

So, this is what you call influence.

Sin is serious. This is the message of *Noah's Ark*.

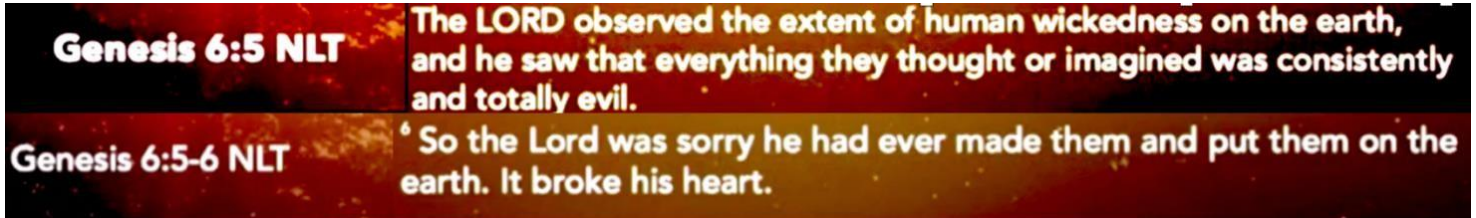
Sin destroys lives.



SIN IS SERIOUS.  
IT DESTROYS LIVES.

## God's Response

Let's read that verse we just read a while ago – but this time we ask the question: How does God respond to the evil around?



Why did it break His heart? Because the people who were supposed to be carriers of *blessings* have become carriers of *curse*. And when you think about that, God's reaction to evil was not anger—but sorrow. Now, that is surprising. Because when you think about *Noah's Ark*, it's almost like, Ah, God got angry, and tadaaah: flood. Destroy the Earth. God is a God with a stick. God is a God with a whip. And He becomes Incredible Hulk. He just can't take it anymore. There is so much evil in the world, and He just Grrraah! Bang! Bang!

It's not like that in the Bible. It's not in *Genesis*. God responds not in anger. But His heart is broken.

I'm reminded of my mentor and his story-- when he told me about how his parents responded to his wrongdoing.

His parents were just crying, saying, "Edward, you're better than this. You're better than this."

No screaming, no shouting. His whole life growing up – just parents who would have a broken heart and who would weep.

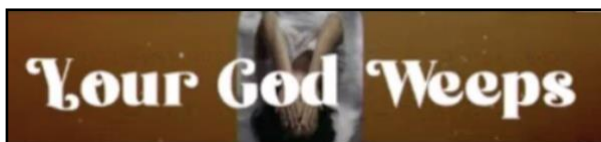
He was changed not by the anger. Not by the annoyance. Not by the irritation of his parents. He was changed by their tears.



WHAT CHANGED MY FRIEND WAS NOT HIS PARENTS' ANGER  
BUT THEIR TEARS.

And my dear friends, that is what will change your life.

Because God, He weeps for you.



## God Is Not in a Bad Mood

**DIDOY LUBATON:** God weeps for you.  
I couldn't even imagine—but He does.

*Noah's Ark*—beautiful, happy story, with animals. But what we do here at The Feast, we try to dig deep and understand what it means, and how everything is all connected.

And so, this *Noah's Ark* story is not the only Great Flood story in the cultures of the world. There were many.

One example is the *Epic of Atrahasis*. It tells of a hero who was saved from a flood by building a boat. Sounds similar? But in this story, one of their gods wiped out humanity not because people were bad-- but because people got too many and too noisy.

One of the gods got annoyed, threw a tantrum, and said, "I'll just wipe out everything and start again."

That's not our God. That's not who He is.

There were many Great Flood stories, and the author of the *Genesis* story knew the readers were familiar with these stories. Noah's story is telling us that Yahweh, God, is different from all the other gods in those ancient cultures. God doesn't destroy just because He wants to. We destroy ourselves. It's not because God is wrathful and He's in a bad mood.

Yeah, in Noah's story, people—we-- got so bad... When God sees His children destroying each other, He doesn't just go on a rampage and just kill everybody. The fact that there is a number—how many days did the flood last? 40. It means that we have a calculating God. He has a calculated move.

So, let me ask this question: Is God really cruel?

Let me go to Genesis 6:7:



**Is God Cruel?**

**Genesis 6:7 NLT**

**"And the Lord said, 'I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—**

**Genesis 6:7 NLT**

**all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.'"**

This verse is all that it takes to say that God is a mass-murderer and He is a very cruel God. Wait, wait, wait...

We are teaching in The Feast: How could a loving God become that cruel? Well, He is not. And you got to understand ancient stories, ancient culture, ancient context. Do not just do this out of context.



## Two Answers

So, we have that question: Is God cruel? Reading from *Genesis*, we get two answers.

### **No. 1: Stop reading this story with modern eyes.**

Because this was written in ancient culture. These are ancient texts. So, we cannot apply our modern understanding in the ancient culture and ancient text.

### **No. 2: Stop reading it literally.**

The author never meant this to be read literally, and again, ancient culture, ancient authors, ancient categories, ancient *context*.

And it must be read from an ancient *perspective*.

One example: Modern people don't like the word *judgment*. If someone passes a judgment, or if you felt you are judged, it's usually in the negative context—it's punitive and cruel. But you got to understand, in the ancient culture, *judgment* is actually good—because they believe that the judge is good. They saw God's judgment as very good.

So, let's continue reading: Genesis 6:8-9:

### **Genesis 6:8-9 NLT**

But Noah found favor with the Lord. <sup>9</sup>This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God.

Righteous. I want you to pin that thought of Noah being one of the righteous ones. Because that means a lot as we go to other chapters. Let me push on the story: After Noah goes into the Ark with the animals—two-by-two—how does it happen? It's not meant to be taken literally. Imagine: how many animals?

If you're a zoologist, you'd say, can all those animals fit in one ark?

It's not meant to be taken literally.

So, the flood story starts in Chapter 7:

### **Genesis 7:11-12 NLT**

<sup>11</sup>When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. <sup>12</sup>The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights."

There is rain. Yes. But do you know that there's another one? Another source of the water. Where is that? Underground. The *Genesis* author describes it that way—it's a very weird way—but yes, there were waters below, and there were waters above. And the waters from above and below met and trashed and wiped out everything.



## Back to Creation

Do you remember, we discussed that two weeks ago: it's a strange thing. But the authors were recalling, hyperlinking it to the Creation story.

What Day was that?

In Chapter 1:6 God says:

**Genesis 1: 6 NLT**

**"Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth."**

You know what's happening in the *Noah's Ark* story? In the Creation, the separation of the waters above and below. In *Noah's Ark* story, when the Great Flood happened, it was a *de*-Creation story. Remember, that before God created anything, there was already *something*. And what was that? The chaotic waters. Chaos was already there. So, when God created the world, He brought *order* into the chaos. But then people rebelled – people didn't like that order. Chaos happened. Chaos came rushing back.

Some believe that when we sin, God comes with a big stick and, "Mm, Whip!"

That's not what we're trying to say. It's not the picture from *Genesis*. When we sin, God steps back and allows chaos to return: "You didn't like my design? You are going out of the design?" Then the chaos returns.

Going back to the title of our series, you got to remember: God gives us a choice between a curse, or a blessing. God allows us to choose between order or chaos. And this is the absolute scary truth: What do you want? What do you choose: Order? Or Chaos?

**GOD GIVES US THE CHOICE  
BETWEEN BLESSING AND CURSE;  
BETWEEN ORDER OR CHAOS.**

The choice will prevail. Reflect on that. What are the fruits of your life now? Order or chaos? Happiness or sadness? Hope or desperation? What choices have you been making?

C. S. Lewis said it so well:

**C.S. LEWIS**

**"There are only two kinds of people in the end: Those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'**



## Consequences

I remember when I was in high school, I failed. Miserably—in Technology and Home Economics. 74 – my first ever and the last ever failing grade. And that was the grading time that I did not pass two out of three projects. I did not do my job or I did not study. I did not pass the projects. I was playing PlayStation. I was playing with friends. That’s why I got that grade. And it hurt my mom.

That is the natural consequence of not studying.

I am a doctor, and some patients ask me, “Why am I sick? Is God punishing me?”

And sometimes, my role is just telling them, “That is the natural consequence of you not taking care of yourself—of dishonoring your body. So, can you choose better now?”

Some people come to me, asking me, “Why am I depressed?”

Sometimes, it is also because of a natural consequence of our decisions – or even indecisions. There is some toxicity or deficiency that we caused ourselves. Of course, there are those that we did not cause. But ultimately, our life is greatly influenced by our choices. Are we choosing order? Are we choosing chaos?

In conclusion to this Noah story, we see that there is a rainbow, a promise of God. But actually, if you dig deep, the conclusion, it’s different. It was nice, yes. But there’s something that we’d like to discuss here.

After the flood waters receded, Noah steps off the boat. And Noah offers a sacrifice and God promises that He won’t curse the ground again. And He tells Noah and his family to be fruitful and multiply—to become the new carriers of His blessing to the world.

When was the last time that there was sacrifice in the *Genesis* story? It was during the time of Cain and Abel. And God did not accept Cain’s sacrifice. But here, we see God accepted the sacrifice of Noah—like He accepted Abel’s sacrifice. Whooo, that’s so cool. But what happens next?



## Disturbing

Further into the text, it's very disappointing. And many preachers wouldn't preach this part of the story because it's so disturbing.

Let's read:



**Genesis 9:20-23 NLT**

"After the flood, Noah began to cultivate the ground, and he planted a vineyard. <sup>21</sup> One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent.

**Genesis 9:20-23 NLT**

<sup>22</sup> Ham, the father of Canaan, saw that his father was naked and went outside and told his brothers.

**Genesis 9:20-23 NLT**

<sup>23</sup> Then Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, and backed into the tent to cover their father. As they did this, they looked the other way so they would not see him naked."

Sometimes, it's so hard to understand this passage until you understand how Biblical authors use the hyperlinks. The *Genesis* writer was hyperlinking Noah's fall to the fall of Adam and Eve.

FIRST, NOAH PLANTS A VINEYARD, WHICH WAS LIKE A NEW GARDEN OF EDEN.

SECOND, JUST LIKE ADAM AND EVE, NOAH CONSUMED OF THE FRUIT OF HIS GARDEN.

Just like Adam and Eve, Noah consumed the fruit of his garden—and too much. He became drunk. Something happened-- what exactly, we're not very sure. In the ancient context, it means a lot—which we do not have time to discuss here.

But here's what we're trying to say: The *Genesis* author was saying Noah was just like Adam. You know, he's not the promised victor who will crush the Serpent's head.

**NOAH WAS NOT THE PROMISED VICTOR WHO WILL CRUSH THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT.**

## New Creation, New Life

As Jesus followers, we believe that Jesus, like Noah, was a righteous man. Jesus was sent by the Father to save mankind. But Jesus was not exactly like Noah.

Let me explain:

Noah was a righteous one. He was saved. And the rest of the guilty received judgment. Yes?

Jesus is *the* righteous one. He received the judgment – so that the guilty can be saved. Wow.



Noah was riding on a tree—a wooden boat—above the chaotic waters. Like the new Eden. And he and his family were saved. Yeah?

But Jesus was crucified on a tree.

And that is the fulfillment of our faith. That ushers in the New Creation reality that we are in. That Jesus offers us New Creation, New Life, New Choices.

Andy Patson, the theologian, says it so beautifully:

**"The flood was violent, but it wasn't the work of a violent God. Rather, this God took on flesh and died a violent death at the hands of violent men, a death that became the very means he would use to save his enemies..."**

ANDY PATTON, THEOLOGIAN

We appreciate our Bible more, the context, and we're just starting. It's beautiful that we get to discuss this in The Feast. It's a dream, actually, that we get to understand some more, and we will grow together in our faith. Amen.

## God Gets Hurt, too

As we end, I want you to look at the heart of God in this story. He is all powerful, immovable, immutable. He created everything. And in the story of the incarnation of Jesus, He relates to us, and He allows Himself to be moved. He willingly enters into our world. He is not a God high above the Heavens, just waiting for you to scramble, to suffer, to drown in your sin, and shame, and guilt.

No.

Our God offers you a New Life. And He got crucified on a tree so that we may live. And how are we appreciating that life? How are we living that life now? Are we honoring God?

I know some of us, as we worship, we have a very hard time picturing that God weeps for us. When we are so far away from Him, God weeps for us.

Maybe because of our experience with our parents or people in authority, we always thought of punishment. We always thought of shouting, berating, condemning.

But as we worship now, remember that your God is different. He weeps with us when we make stupid choices. He gets hurt too. He weeps with you when there is destruction happening in your life. Or you have caused destruction to others too. When we take matters into our hands and we suffer because of those decisions, He weeps with us. I just realized how far we are from the Lord.

Today, God weeps for you. And He's welcoming you back home. Welcome home. God loves you still. So, return. Come back to Him with all your heart.

So, don't let fear or anything keep you apart from Him. And that is the New Creation reality that we are in. Return to Him. God weeps for you.

And you know what that means?

He is with you—in your suffering, in your pain, in your hurting. But also God is with you in your rejoicing, in your striving, in your hoping. So now, come and relate to your God. If you will it, go to a posture of worship. This is that time to connect with your God. Give your heart to God. Trust in Him. Cooperate with His grace. Believe, trust, hope!





## MERCY MINISTRIES

*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. –Jeremiah 29:11*

### LIGHT OF JESUS PASTORAL CARE Part 3

## *Passion and Purpose*

By **MICHELE ALIGNAY**

Director, Light of Jesus Pastoral Care



THIS is Sis. Ichel Aligneday of Pastoral Care. I’m also called Doc Michele Aligneday. I’m married for almost—will be turning 20 years this year. I have two children, the eldest 15 years old, and the youngest, 12. They’ll be hitting their teen years this 2022.

So, as I’ve said, I’m married for almost 20 years. My husband Koots and I met at the Singles for Christ community way back 1999. We started as friends until

we became boyfriend-girlfriend. At Singles for Christ, we were blessed to have the passion to serve God. And by God’s grace, this has become our mission to this day.

My father-in-law used to work at the Lighthouse, the headquarters of the Light of Jesus Family, the faith community founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez (*right*). So, my husband’s parents actually belong to the LOJ Family.

The Lighthouse is also the headquarters of LOJ’s media arm, the Shepherd’s Voice Publications. So, I was also a regular reader of *Kerygma*, SVP’s inspirational magazine.

That’s why I came to know more about the Light of Jesus Community.



## Clear Direction

Koots and I belong to another faith community but we also attend LOJ's The Feast, its weekly faith gathering. We first attended The Feast at the Teatro Aguinaldo at Camp Aguinaldo, Cubao, Quezon City.



We have also been attending the Kerygma Conference, now called The Feast Conference, LOJ's inspirational learning event. Even though we are part of another community, we will always see The Feast and The Feast Conference as our extension.

At The Feast, Bro. Bo now and then advised that your work should be your purpose. You should pursue your passion. Passion and purpose should go together and you serve the Lord through the work.

By profession, I am a guidance counselor. I earned a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Psychology So, after college,

I started working as a guidance counselor. Then, after one year

of working, I started pursuing my Master's degree in Family Psychology and Education at Miriam College.



So, ever since, I've really regard myself as having a clear direction. From 1999 to the year 2010, I worked as a full-time guidance counselor. I also worked with children and families. I worked with premier exclusive schools. I worked for Catholic schools.

I call the years 1999 to 2010 as the first decade of my life's mission.

Side by side with my job, I actively served with Koots, then my boyfriend, in Singles for Christ. And eventually, when we got married, in Couples for Christ.

I finished my Master's course in 2008-- while my firstborn was then already two years old. So, my first decade consisted of simultaneous blessings—my studies, Community service, and eventually marriage and raising a family.

In my second decade-- from 2010 onwards—a big change.

In 2009, I gave birth to my second child, my second daughter.

In 2010, I gave up full-time work because I believed this was such a special and unique stage for me being a mother, being with my family.

I said to myself, “Bakit naalagaan ko yung ibang tao, but not my kids? Why am I taking care of other people's children, but not my kids?”

## Temporary Solution

Leaving my job was a temporary solution. I was already a licensed guidance counselor then, so even there were days that I questioned, “Am I really called for this?”—in 2010, I started *flexible work*— I call it that. I started writing in a mom’s magazine, a parenting magazine, and also the newly established Smart Parenting website.

I also started giving talks in Community gatherings. The first group that trusted me really was my Assumption Family in Antipolo, where I was part of a group giving talks on parenting. I handled talks on sexuality for teenagers.

At that time, I already had my Master’s degree in Family Psychology and my license as a guidance counselor.

I didn’t have a full-time job, nor a fixed career because I gave much-needed time to my children. But I always told myself, “I already have my competencies, hindi ako mawawalan. Hindi ako mawawalan kasi nasa akin na, yun eh. I won’t lose my passion, because I already have these two competencies. I just need to focus on enjoying my children at those ages.”

And I did. It’s one of the best decisions that I have ever made in my life.

Fast forward, I got one project after another. In 2012, I started working on my doctorate degree—Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). In 2013, while starting on my Ph.D., I was working on a book too.

The following year, 2013, saw a lot of breakthroughs for us. I was just doing this flexible job, but I had one project after another.

The year 2013 was the year I had my first book. I was the co-author of *Growing Up Wired: Raising Pinoy Kids in the Digital Age*.

It was also the time I started writing for *Kerygma* magazine, now called *The Feast* magazine. I was also serving as a private counselor for clients referred by friends and my children’s pediatrician. I also started teaching in the Psychology Department of Miriam College.

In 2013, I started attending The Feast at Valle Verde.

To this day, low and behold, I thank God that I have big, credible, and noteworthy corporate projects. And because of my Ph.D., I am now teaching courses for Master and Doctorate degrees.

And Koots and I still serve at The Feast in Ortigas.



## Pastoral Care

One of the services that I actually gave up was private counseling --because it was taking too much of my time and inner resources. But eventually, the Lord had His way of putting me back to how everything started.

Last year, in about October, I was invited by Sis. Ditas Español, then director of the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center, to serve in this Ministry.

I've known Tita Ditas because of the Jewels Conference, LOJ's inspirational learning event for single women. The Feast Ortigas usually sponsors a Jewels Conference and I would often attend, or serve as a speaker. I've also been part of its core group—so, you know, I get to interact with Tita Ditas. Once, I was even invited to grace the public offering of the services of the Pastoral Community.

One day, Tita Ditas invited me to a meeting. She asked how am I, what's going on in my life, what am I doing-- and then she dropped *that* question. She asked if I could be part of the Pastoral Care-- by taking her place as a director because she was due to retire by the following year.

I said, "Tita, ang laki po nito. Napakalaking responsibility. This is such a big responsibility. I have to pray about it."

I really felt that I needed to go in a really deep discernment about this. I asked for a month to think about it all.

This was the time of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID) Pandemic, and we were undergoing lockdowns—Level 1, then Level 2—to prevent the spread of the disease. The following day, after Tita Ditas talked to me, you know, *hindi talaga ako mapakali*—I so felt a sense of unease. During the morning Mass I attended, I was really crying. I didn't know why. Maybe because I was asked to take part in a bigger mission, much bigger than myself.

For some reason that day, I talked to three important people in my life. I talked with one of my closest friends, Sis. Joy Cabrillas, who's serving in our other Mercy Ministry, the Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly.

She said, "Sis, it's really that there are times when we are called to a mission. Ibe-bless ka naman ni Lord. God will bless you."

I was thinking then, "How about my time for my secular work?"

Pero, sabi ko, si Lord din naman magbibigay ng projects ko, di ba? Siya rin yung magbibigay ng mga kliyente ko. Bakit hindi ko gagawin yung purpose niya para sa akin? – I said to myself, isn't it the Lord is the one giving me my projects, my clients? Why don't I fulfill His purpose for me?"





## **Yes!**

The second person I talked with was my mentor in Mirriam College who has seen me through my Master's degree days and up to this day. She's like a mother to me.

She told me, "Ichel, I cannot see and I don't see you as an administrator in the academe. But I see you there in that position... That's who you are. You are prepared for that."

Pastoral Care is very aligned with my mission. That's what she said to me.

And then I talked with one Tita who's so close to me and Tita Ditas.

She said, "*Si Ditas, kapag nakapagsabi ng isang bagay, napag-discernan na niya 'yan. So, matagal ka nang pinagdadasal niyan... Yan ang mission statement mo, eh.* – Ditas, when she tells you something, she had already discerned about it. So, it's been a long time since she prayed for it. That's your mission statement."

Looking back, in 2016, I was already ready to give up my doctoral dissertation because it was so difficult. I was like, maybe the Lord will still bless me even if I don't have this Ph.D.

But in prayer, I kind of heard the Lord telling me, "Yung Ph.D. mo, hindi para sa iyo yan. Para sa trabaho mo yan. Instrumento lang kita.—Your Ph.D. is not for you. It's for your work. You are just my instrument in My mission."

That was way back in December 2016. So, I graduated in 2018. And then came 2021-- the Lord told me the same thing.

One day in October, I gave Tita Ditas my "Yes!"

What I like about Pastoral Care is it is a community with well-trained volunteers, with dedication in the mission, knowing that it's not an easy job, especially because there are too many individuals suffering emotional and spiritual wounds.

Yes, I'm here in this Ministry immersing myself, aligning services, seeing how we can improve our operations, and seeing how we can support more as pastoral carers.

This is something I know that the Lord has called me to do.



**SUPPORT THE LIGHT OF JESUS  
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## BLESSINGS

### *My Pastoral Carer* By NARUTO

BECAUSE Pastoral Care deals with sensitive sharing, we keep details of our service under strict confidentiality. Like our name. So, I write my sharing under the pseudonym Naruto.

I cannot really remember when I was able to join the Light of Jesus Pastoral Care--but it was somewhere around 2006 to 2010.

As to how I joined, well, I am a tutor, and I needed to help my out-of-school youth students in dealing with their problems. So, I attended a seminar on Basic Counseling. There, I learned about the LOJ Pastoral Care and I became a member. And there, I found out about The Feast and also joined the faith gathering.

Whenever I attend The Feast, I always serve as a pastoral carer.

#### **Challenges**

In this Ministry, I faced two challenges.

First, the financial aspect. I was aware that in this Ministry, you're like a missionary. No good enough monetary compensation. You receive only an allowance.

Second, handling a client who goes through healing and overall life transformation— through a very slow process. Honestly, I'm an impatient person. And I feel distressed seeing my clients distraught over their problems.

Third, trying to help a client even at times when I, too, am going through a crisis.



## Lessons

How I was able to overcome these challenges?

Well, regarding the finances, I learned that God is really a great provider.

I had a job where I earned a five-digit income. Would you believe, that since I've been serving in Pastoral Care, I've been able to save more money than my five-digit income, and invest more in some businesses?

Truly, we serve the God of abundance. God opened my eyes and my mind as to how to give, and save, and invest.

Now, about the second problem-- dealing with clients going through healing and change in a slow process: I have simply developed patience. I've learned to calm down whenever I see these clients upset, struggling miserably, through the healing process that they want so badly.

I've been able to humbly empathize with them. Patience, humility, empathy, and keeping calm have helped me to think straight rather than feel stressed when clients seem helpless.

About my third problem -- helping clients while I'm also struggling through my own crisis-- I've found out I am not alone in this dire situation.

You see, some of my clients actually are in the exact same situation. So, I've been able to feel what they feel, and give them advice --without telling them about my own personal distress.

I've realized I've always been self-reliant and self-sufficient, forgetting that I also need to take it easy and take care of myself.

So here, God has taught me about self-care -- which starts with learning about humility. To humbly surrender my concerns to Him, and rely on Him to take care of me while I take care of others.

That's what Pastoral Care is all about.

Thank You, Lord, my one, true Pastoral Carer.





**FAMILY**

## **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.

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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.

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Union Bank Savings Account no. 00-206-000940-1 Tektite Branch

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# **FAMILY ONLINE NEWSMAGAZINE**

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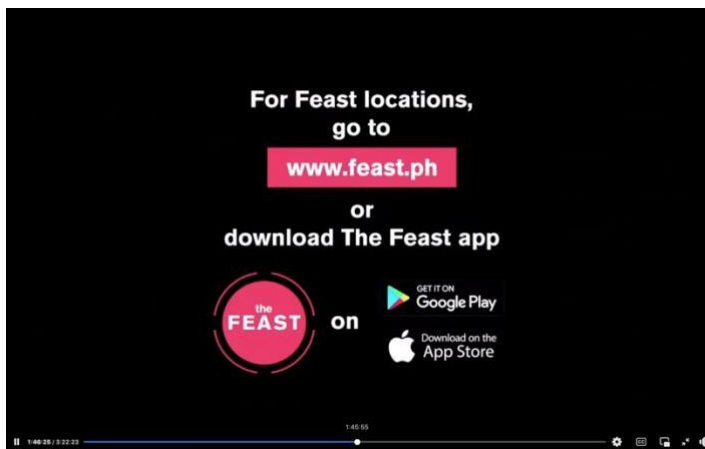
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***Go and make disciples of all men.***

— Matthew 28:19