



NEWSLETTER
August 14, 2022

Are You Experiencing an 'Exile'?



EXILE is when you don't like where you are.

You don't like your situation. Your relationship. Your workplace. Perhaps it's too difficult. Too tough. Too worldly. Too toxic.

Maybe you're there because you made a bad decision. You blame your sin or stupidity for being there.

OR you blame others. They made bad decisions for you and you're forced to be where you are. And you don't like it. You hate it there. But it seems like you have no choice.

But today, I invite you to declare: "The Lord is with me."

If the Lord is with you, no matter where you are, you will flourish.

My suggestion: *Ask God if this foreign territory is your mission field.* And if so, ask God to use you in this place, to prosper others, and in the process, prosper you.

Have a life-empowering Feast today!

May your dreams come true,

Bo Sanchez



LETTERS

Promises, Promises!

“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock; for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.”-- Luke 12:32

In The Feast last Sunday, Fr. Mark Demanuele focused on God fulfilling His promises: the Israelites freed from slavery in Egypt; Abraham becoming father of nations. And the best of the best, granting us not only freedom, not only power, but His very Kingdom, *page 3*.



We will be in the Kingdom not only when we get to Heaven—if ever. In today’s Feast Talk, our founder, Bro. Bo Sanchez, focuses on another promise of God—that He is already with us—wherever we are, whatever our situation is, *page 1*.



But sometimes, we don’t see His blessings because we take matters into our own hands, to win over our battles. Bro. Bo and Bro. Didoy Lubaton remind us to *Let God Win*—topic of their talk in The Feast last Sunday. *Flashback* starts on *page 10*.



One who well knows about God fulfilling His promises is Bro. Joe Dean Sola, founder of He Cares Mission, a spin-off Mercy Ministry of our Light of Jesus Family. He Cares Mission has been blessed with a farmland which Bro. Joe Dean named, well, Promised Land, *page 27*.



This story is very inspiring. Promise.

Glory,
Randy Borromeo
Media Ministry
Executive Director





FLASHBACK!

AUGUST 7, 2022

Holy Mass



**NINETEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FR. MARK DEMANUELE,
Priest Presider
on the Gospel: Luke 12:32-48
Watchfulness

Edited Excerpts...

THE Readings of today help us to understand a bit more about the Gospel.

Let me start with the first two readings.

I don't know about you, but for me, memories are important. You remember something beautiful that happened maybe years ago, maybe when you were still young-- and these are beautiful memories that lift up your spirit.

The First Reading from the book of *Wisdom* speaks about the Exodus of the people of God. This kept the people going because it reminded them that they are the chosen people of God, the children of God, and that God made a promise to them—that they will enter the Promise Land.

The Second Reading from *Hebrews* reminds us of the faith of Abraham.

These memories help the people to entrust themselves to God. Why? Because God is faithful to them, isn't it?



Memories of God’s Faithfulness

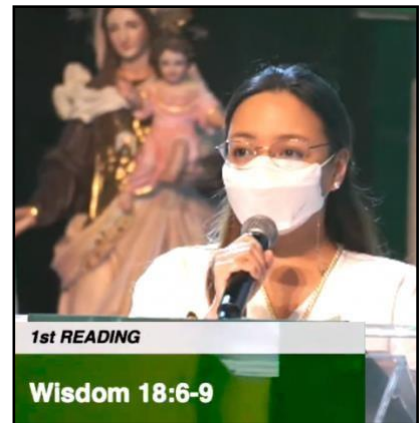
In the First Reading, we read that God was faithful to the people. He kept His promise and they entered the Promise Land.

The Second Reading is about God's promise to Abraham-- that he will become a father of a whole nation. The promise was also fulfilled.

So, I’m sure when the people of God read these, they lighten up with good memories —the memories of the faithfulness of God.

Reading I: Wisdom 18:6-9

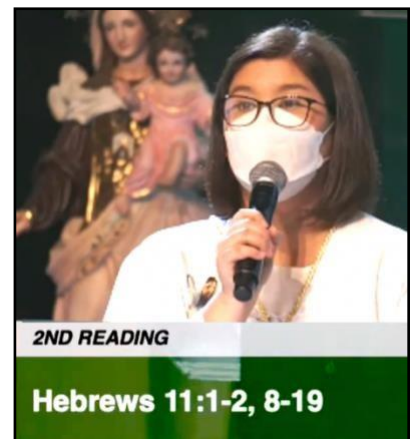
The night of the pass over was known beforehand to our fathers, that, with sure knowledge of the oaths in which they put their faith, they might have courage. Your people awaited the salvation of the just and the destruction of their foes. For when you punished our adversaries, in this you glorified us whom you had summoned. For in secret the holy children of the good were offering sacrifice and putting into effect with one accord the divine institution.



Reading II: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

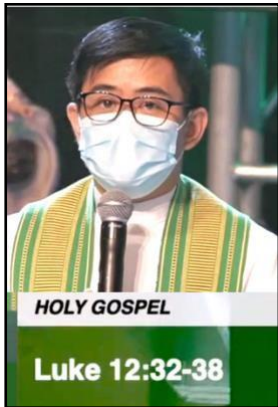
Brothers and sisters: Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen. Because of it the ancients were well attested. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith he sojourned in the promised land as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs of the same promise; for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and maker is God.

By faith he received power to generate, even though he was past the normal age — and Sarah herself was sterile— for he thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy. So it was that there came forth from one man, himself as good as dead, descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands on the seashore...



A Gospel So Important to Us

For us, however, we have the Gospel of today--- which is so long but so beautiful. It starts with something which is very important to each one of us today. It starts with a positive note, inviting us to engage ourselves as the children of God-- with our Father.



FR. MICO DELLERA

from the Diocese of Capiz
Concelebrant

Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like who

await their master’s return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. “Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.”

Then Peter said, “Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?”

And the Lord replied, “Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant in charge of all his property.

“But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant’s master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish the servant severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

“That servant who knew his master’s will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master’s will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.”



What Is Our Role?

As Jesus says to the disciples-- the same to you and me: *“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock; for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.”*

Isn't this another promise?

So, when we are kind of under the weather, when we feel down, when we feel spiritually empty, let us remember that we are called -- like the people of God in the First and Second Readings-- to remember that God was faithful to His chosen people and He will be faithful to each one of us too. This is a promise— a promise not to be afraid-- for He will be delighted to help us enter into His Kingdom.

Between these Readings, there are two important virtues: *hope* in God which in turn helps us to *trust* God. And these two will help empower us, increasing our faith in God—that God is faithful to His people -- and will be faithful to me personally, to each one of you, personally.

Hope and trust are like beacons of light that cast away our doubts. So, when we come into a situation of doubt, do not be afraid.

Doubt is there to help me, to reach out for my memories and remember how God was faithful to me in my life -- who's telling me, “You, my little flock, you, my little friend... my dear one, my child, do not be afraid. I'm with you and I will help you to enter into My Kingdom.”

Now, in this Gospel there's one more point that's very important: God, Jesus, doing His part in giving us hope-- He's an entrusted God, so I can turn to Him.

But what's my role? What am I supposed to do? The role is very important. We are the stewards in today's world.

Not --as He told us-- to make treasure for myself, not to be a selfish person and put a treasure in my heart which can be easily stolen or be emptied. He told us to be a steward of the Lord and to work in the field of the Lord.

So that what the Lord started, I am there to help Him continue His work.

So, we are called to be good stewards. How are we going to be good stewards?

The Lord today explains to us about being vigilant, waiting. It's not very easy to wait. I don't know how to. Sometimes, when I'm at the red light with all the motorcycles going in front of me... sorry that's me. It's not easy to wait. We want to move on as much as possible.



Reach Out to Others

When we are waiting, think: Is Jesus telling me to look up and wait for the fruit to fall in my mouth? No. Do your part. Be a good disciple. Listen to God and believe that He is really going to help you remember how much He loves you. You are told to be a good steward by opening your eyes and looking at the needs of the people around you.

So, why be vigilant? Why wait? If I'm going to wait to do something extraordinary-- it will never happen. Like, I hope nobody will have to die for the other person. Maybe that's the ultimate way how we love-- to be truly good stewards for each other. No. He is telling us to love each other in simple ways every day.

So, while you are waiting, you are reaching out to your brothers and sisters. How? In your family, you are called to do chores. If you're a husband or you're a wife, you have your own chores—do them with love. When you're going to work, don't be moody. I know sometimes—I'm one of them—we're very moody in the morning. You don't like to be near me sometimes. But I'm being a good steward if I try to overcome being moody and remember that the Lord is asking me to smile at the persons next to me, to look at them and say, “Magandang umaga, kumusta?” If you're doing just those little things, you are reaching out to that person, you're being a good steward.

So, we are waiting—waiting actively. No matter what we do, we do it with love, we do it with joy, we do it with the spirit of God in us: “I can't do it on my own. I need God.”

Start the day with a very simple prayer before you go out-- reach out to the Lord. Read something from the Scriptures so that it reminds you of God being faithful to you-- and that helps you to be a good steward of the Lord every moment in your life.

And yes, God wants us to be very active, alert, and immersed in the work of the Kingdom... So that we know what the Lord is asking of us.

We are the shareholders of the Kingdom and as the shareholders, we are called to always be vigilant, to look at the needs of people, and able to realize: that God's work is my work today. Amen.

Worship!

EXHORTATIONS



VANYA CASTOR: Psalms 47 says, “Clap your hands, all people! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!”

God hears us. He doesn’t just like hearing from us. He delights in hearing our worship.

So now, I invite you to lift your hands a little higher and sing out a little louder-- because God is here and God hears. Let’s go! He deserves all the glory. He is worthy of our time, our praises, our songs-- apart everything. And even

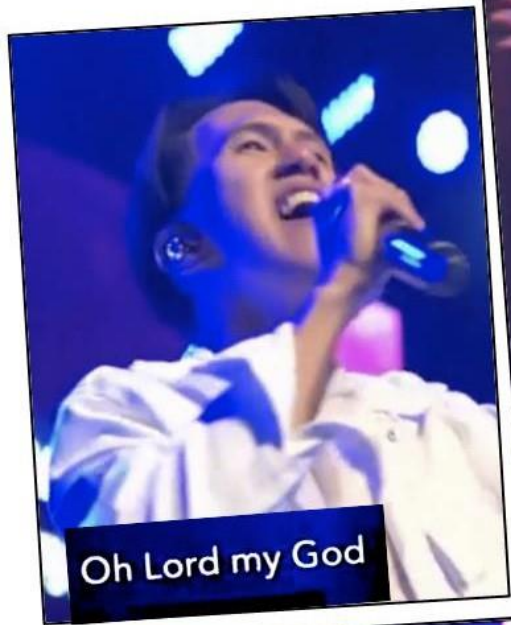
though we sing all our praises, He doesn’t need it because He’s already God. He’s already God!

But our God is a God who gives. He’s a God who heals us, a God who provides for us. He’s a God who cares for us.

So, we’re going to continue to sing about that today.



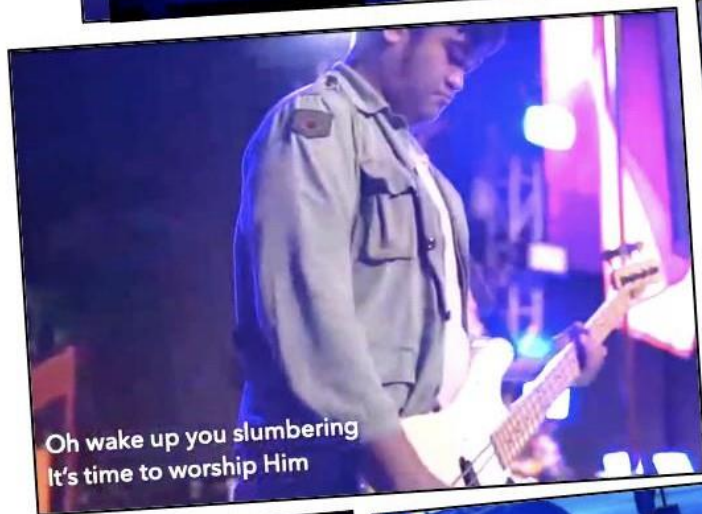
DIDOY LUBATON: Father God, we’ve come as a family before You. Some of us Lord were hurt in the past. Some of us are struggling in the present, and some of us are worried about the future. All across the seasons, all across the time, You are our God. Some of us, Lord, are feeling unworthy, some of us are feeling too proud. But there’s nothing that You cannot break. There’s nothing that You cannot build. Right here, right now, we want You. You, Lord, our God. No one else. Nothing else. So, we cry out to You-- dear Abba, our Father, in whom we trust. Our God who turns our burdens into blessings, our pain into purpose.



Oh Lord my God



Awake my soul and sing
Sing His praise aloud



Oh wake up you slumbering
It's time to worship Him



How great is Your name



You are God who provides
God who heals



You will always be faithful
and able and good



Sing His praise aloud

Talk



Talk 7:



BO SANCHEZ: When I was 17 years old— not too long ago— I met, for the first time, one of the biggest spiritual mentors in my life. His name: Mike Joseph. And Mike Joseph looks like Saddam Hussein. I would travel with him and every time we would travel, he would always have a difficult time with



Immigration. We would be lined up and the Immigration officer would just spot him, pull him aside— so we needed an extra hour because they would bring him to an ante-room for some questioning.

He's in heaven now and for the first time in his life, he has no problems with Immigration.

He holds a very special place in my heart.

Courting Style

Mike Joseph— spiritual giant, a man who founded many, many ministries, really close to God.

As a 17-year-old kid, I came up to him, and I said, “Mike, can you be my spiritual mentor?”

And he said, “Yes.”

I was so delighted. We sat down together for the first time, and he started asking me questions— about me, what I was doing.

And then he popped this question: “Bo, do you have a girlfriend?”

I smiled, and I said, “Yes! Just a few days ago, it was my birthday, and she said, ‘Yes!’”

I told him the cute story of how it happened:

She was a member of our Community, was a member of the Music Ministry, I had a crush on her.

And a few days before my birthday, I said, “Can we meet in the Pink Sisters’ Chapel* to pray?”

Style!

So, she agreed. And on my birthday, at the appointed time, we met.

And her first question was, “Where are the others?”

I said, “Just the two of us.”

I escorted her into the chapel, we knelt, I held her hand, and then I prayed:

Lord, thank You, for this beautiful relationship that we are entering into.

Thank You for Your blessing. Amen.

You know, my eyes were closed, but I knew that she was staring at me with her eyes bulging out, her jaw on the floor.

And then after I said *Amen*, she said, “What just happened?”

I said, “We’re now boyfriend and girlfriend.”

For some reason, she did not object. *Style!*



*The Pink Sisters is a society of contemplative nuns known as Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters with a convent in Tagaytay City. The order was founded in Steyl, Holland, in 1896 by Saint Arnold Janssen who chose the color pink for the sisters’ habits because, in the words of Sister Mary Amatrix, “the rose-colored garment symbolizes the glowing love for the Holy Spirit.”

Calling...

So, I was telling the story to Mike. And Mike Joseph was just laughing and laughing, and then he tells me something unexpected.

He said, “Bo, I have a suggestion. At this age, at this season of your life, having an exclusive relationship will shrink your world— at a time when you should be expanding it. At this age, you should be learning new skills, developing your craft, shaping your character, traveling, meeting new people, having many friends, serving God, growing your spiritual life. That’s where you are. So, my suggestion is to give up your girlfriend— for the Lord.”

I was there, and I was looking at him, and I was listening, and I was nodding, “Uhhh, yeah, right, hmmm... Thank you, Mike. Thank you so much.”

I left the room and I told myself, “I will never talk to that guy again... How dare he say that! Hello, he does not understand my *fellings*.”

Right? Common, you know... And so, I did not really go back to Mike Joseph. But then what he said was going to happen, happened.



...And a Call



A few days after, or a few weeks after, my girlfriend called me up. And I said, “Hi! How are you?”
“Fine.”

That was the first time I realized how to discern female vocabulary. *Fine* does not mean *fine*. Right?

I said, “What’s wrong?”

She said, “You did not call me up yesterday. In fact, you did not call me up the other day. In fact, you did not call me the other day before the other day.”



And I said, “Why? What happened? What’s wrong?”

And she said, “Hello, you’re my boyfriend.”



“S-s-so?”

For the first time, I realized, at 17 years old, that I had to call up a girlfriend every day. And little by little, my world was shrinking... I want you to know, fast forward to the story, four years later, we broke up. *Four* years later. That’s when we realized we were both immature. We broke up...

What God Wants



(After we broke up) guess what I did...

I went back to Mike Joseph and I said, “Mike, I’m back. I did what you told me.”

A little bit late. Mike was just laughing and laughing. And then we continued our spiritual mentorship.

But I want to thank God... Because after that, I had this long period of being single, and it was true-- my world began to expand... I did so many things together with my friends. We built ministries together— we built two big ministries:

our publication ministry which became the biggest publishing ministry in the Philippines; we built Anawim for the abandoned elderly.

During that season, it was an amazing time for me. And I want you to know something. Now, 40 years later, I want to thank God that episode of my life happened really, really early. Why? Because I learned early enough that if God wants something from you, you do not resist. You do not fight. You do not wrestle with Him.

You say, “Okay Lord, Your will be done.”

By the way, please don’t get me wrong. Let me balance the equation here. It’s not that I did not learn anything from my first romantic relationship. I did. I did learn lots.

All I am saying is this: In my desire to get the blessing that I want — which was a girlfriend— God could not give me the blessing *He* wanted to give me — my maturity.

You see, when God says, “Give up this,” He wants to give you something better.





I DON'T HAVE TO CHASE AFTER MY ABUNDANCE—
HIS ABUNDANCE CHASES AFTER ME.

Very Early Lesson

So, I learned a lesson, very early, and for the rest of my life, I would always remember that lesson.

That when God comes to me and God says, “Give up your pride, give up your ambition, give up your money,” more and more I’ve come to say, “Okay, Lord, I’m gonna trust You.”

And I have become less stubborn. Instead of wrestling for my blessing, I made a decision that I’m going to serve others, I’m going to trust God that He’s going to give me the best.

INSTEAD OF WRESTLING FOR MY BLESSING,
I SERVE OTHERS AND **TRUST GOD WILL GIVE ME THE BEST.**

You know that story was 40 years ago, so, I’m going to give you a recent one. Same theme. I’m an entrepreneur now-- for the past 20 years.

God asked me to do something that was very unique—for an entrepreneur. In every transaction I will get into, God told me this: “Don’t make it fair.”

That’s very difficult for an entrepreneur. In every transaction that I would enter into, I felt God was telling me, “Don’t make it fair. Make it unfair to you.”

In Tagalog, “Dapat lugi ka.”

Okay. And so, my staff should have more. My customers should have more. Ako, dapat lugi.

I want you to know that when you do that, you’re not going to be rich right away. But then I realized that I may not be a billionaire tomorrow. But you know what, I’ll probably be the happiest entrepreneur around.

And I’ll end with this line: I have learned that I do not have to chase after my abundance because His abundance chases after me. I don’t have to insist. I don’t have to find a way to grab the blessing. No.

What God is saying is: “You don’t have to go and get it and step on other people’s toes. No. You just trust me. Trust me, and my abundance will chase after you.”



DIDOY LUBATON: I would like to preach the message *Let God Win*. Does that mean I forget my dreams? Does that mean I forget what I want to achieve? Does that mean I have to let go of my girlfriend-- or of my wife?

No. Got to let God win.

Jacob's Wrestling Match--1

We're going to talk about wrestling today. Today, we're going to see the wrestling match, the grappling match between the character Jacob and his brother Esau. Jacob was grappling so much, wrestling so much with Esau.

Let's see the timeline of Jacob's wrestling career. You have to remember, all his life, Jacob was wrestling for a blessing.

What a hard life it would be if you're always wrestling for a blessing. There's an alternative. In short, if you let God win, you will have the blessing.

But let me explain...

Jacob was fighting for the blessing. On his own terms—not on God's terms. That's why he was having problems.

And if do things on your own terms, in the process, you hurt the people around you. And even you hurt yourself.

So, first, Jacob was wrestling with his twin brother Esau. Even when he was still in the womb of his mother, he was grappling with the heel of Esau. He wanted to be the first to come out. He wrestled for the birthright, getting it through a bowl of beans. There was a trickery that happened so that he got the birthright from Esau. And later, Jacob hijacked the blessing from Isaac, his father, who was going to bestow the blessing on Esau. And Jacob got it. It could have been all good right after. But no. When Esau learned about Jacob cheating on him again, he grew a great hatred for him. And he wanted to kill his twin brother.

These are ancient times, ancient context—don't do that today.



IT'S POSSIBLE TO GET WHAT YOU WANT
AND NOT WANT WHAT YOU GOT—
BECAUSE YOU GOT IT THE WRONG WAY.

A Lesson from Jacob's Story

When there is a threat against your life, Fight, Flight, or Freeze is the usual stress response. (I'm a doctor, so I know).

Hearing that there was a threat against his life—from his own twin brother— Jacob chose to flee. Flight was his defense mechanism. And he was able to run away. He ran to his uncle Laban.

How sad and ironic. Remember, Jacob, he went to grab the birthright. He went to grab the blessing-- he grappled for the blessing, wrestled for the blessing. And yes, he got it. But did he enjoy the blessing? Never. He never enjoyed it. Because he was always on the run from Esau's wrath. He did not have it right.

My friend, here's a good lesson: In life, it is possible to get what you want and not want what you got-- because you got it the wrong way. You got the money but you're not happy—because you got it the wrong way. You got the girl, you got the boy, but somewhere along the line, it doesn't feel right—because something wrong happened along the way. And sometimes, blessing becomes our curse because of how we got it.

I want you to reflect on that, please. The only way to truly enjoy a blessing is to receive it according to God's ways, and according to God's time.

THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY ENJOY A BLESSING IS
TO RECEIVE IT ACCORDING TO GOD'S WAY AND GOD'S TIME.

We want to submit to God's sovereignty.

We want to let Him win.



GOD WILL ALLOW YOU TO GET A TASTE OF YOUR OWN POISON
TO WAKE YOU UP FROM THE EVIL YOU'RE DOING.

Jacob's Wrestling Match--2

You think Jacob is done wrestling with Esau, his brother. No. He faces more wrestling opponents. And one, I mentioned his name earlier, is Laban. His uncle becomes his father-in-law. Here's the story:

Jacob falls in love with a woman named Rachel—the daughter of Laban. He asks Laban for her hand in marriage. And Laban agrees *but* – that's how the world works, sometimes there's always a *but*—in return, he asks Jacob for a dowry. A very expensive dowry. He asks Jacob to work for him for seven long years—so that he can have Rachel.

“Because of love I will do anything for love,” Jacob says.

Jacob agrees with Laban's term. Seven years! Some people cannot work in a company for even a year or two. Reality check.

But Jacob, out of his love for Rachel, he says Yes!

And so, after working for Laban for seven long years, he is ready to claim his prize. But something goes wrong. Here's the text, from Genesis 29: 22-23:

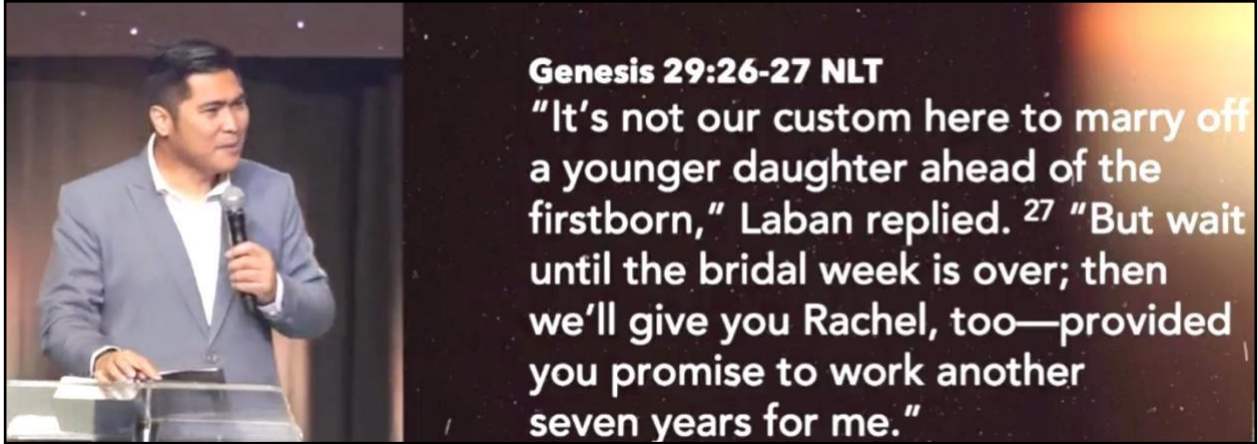
During ancient times, brides wore veils – so you trust that's the person you really intended to marry.

But there was deception. The swindler was swindled. It was a prank. The prankster got pranked. He met his match. Oh, how ironic. Wrestling match. Remember how Jacob disguised himself to deceive his father, Isaac. This time, it was Laban who disguised his daughter Leah to pretend that she was Rachel. And Jacob got a dose of his own medicine.

Have you ever met your match? Do you sometimes get a dose of your own medicine? Take a look. There are still parallels from the ancient times with what's happening today. But the story is not done yet. Still full of ups and downs and wrestling matches ...

Genesis 29:22-23, 25 NLT

“So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood and prepared a wedding feast. ²³ But that night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her...



But I want you to take a pause. Does it still ring true to your life – our preaching comes from the truth, from the word of the Lord. The truth is still relevant and still present even up to this time.

This is a family of angry wrestlers. Laban was not done yet. He wasn't done scheming on Jacob—as we read in Genesis 29: 26-27 NLT.

That's a technicality and Laban used that to manipulate Jacob. He must be a very good worker. He must be a very high performer. Yeah? He must be a very cherished person in the industry of that place-- but Laban was scheming enough, cunning enough to say, "Come work for me for another seven years."

And what did Jacob do? He did—because of love. He did—he worked for Laban for another seven years. So, he worked a total of— $7 + 7 = 14$ years.

Again, in that ancient culture, having multiple wives was allowed. In the next 20 years, Jacob and his father-in-law Laban, they would continue to deceive each other, wrestle with one another in many, many ways – what a horrible relationship.

By the way, this is not to be taken literally. *Genesis* is not a historical book—it's not history. It's a literary piece—it's literature. Don't take it literally. Read it not literally, but literarily.

So, let's dive in, break down the story into pieces, and let's get its essence – not word for word... As if it wasn't bad enough, Jacob had four wives and all these wives were quarreling with one another. You know, who would be the matriarch, who would be the No. 1 love. And these wives even competed about how many babies they can produce. Horrible. It was hard. It was crazy. We just came from Abraham two weeks ago, and now we are talking about Jacob. You know, the Bible characters keep on getting worse and worse. Just like you and me—sometimes we can relate ...



God Is Not Done Yet

Ending is Jacob would have 12 sons. And they too-- those 12 sons-- kept fighting one another. And this is no surprise. From whom else would they inherit such behavior? The father, the in-law. There was so much scheming. There was so much deception. And there was so much fighting – but nobody's winning.

Where did all these conflicts start? Where did this fighting start? It was from Jacob's failure to trust God. He kept seizing the blessing – at the expense of others. He kept on having his own way—and not letting God have *His* way.

That's the problem. We reap what we sow. When we take matters into our own hands, we hurt ourselves and, in the process, we hurt other people too. Sometimes, God will allow you to get a taste of your own poison—to wake you up from the evil that you're doing. But trust God's heart. God is still good. God is still in charge.

Despite all these family feuds, wrestling matches within the family, even amid this toxicity, God formed the family into a nation. He chose the nation of Israel – out of this family mess— and the 12 sons of Jacob became the 12 tribes of Israel.

I want to preach *hope* today. The *hope* is even if you are in a mess, God is working through you, with you, and in you. God is working in you, through the good, the bad, and the ugly, to fulfill His purpose in your life. He's not done with you yet. Difficulty? You let God win. He has a plan for you. Remember that.

Maybe this is one person's take-home today. You've come here messed up. You've come here sinful. But you take home *hope* with you. That even in the wrestling matches of life, you end up winning. How? You let God win.





Genesis 32:24-25 NLT

"...a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. ²⁵When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket.

Jacob's Wrestling Match--3

So, finally: Jacob submits. But not right away. There was one more adversary. We were talking about Jacob with Esau, Jacob with Laban. But today, here, Jacob faces another match. As we continue with this story, this time, there was no trickery. Jacob met the Truth. And this is one of the strangest stories in the Bible-- from Genesis 32:24-25 (*above*).

Who is this man? What does this wrestling match mean? At the end of the day, this person would be God Himself. Jacob wrestles with God. *Wild*. In our terms, it is like the grandest wrestling match of all time. What was this wrestling mean?

Again, it's literature—not to be taken literally.

What does this wrestling mean? It's not easy to deal with God. His purpose is for us to be fully alive, to live the life that He has promised. But remember that in our short-sightedness, we want something else—apart from God's plan. And that destroys us and the people around us. And so, when we do not get our way, we fight God. That's how problematic we are. We fight the source of the blessing. We try to free ourselves from God and force to have our own way—even if it hurts us in the process. In Tagalog, *pumipiglas kasi tayó*.

I'm a father of kids five and three years old—Hailey and Hosea. And I'm a father who just allows the kids to run around, be free.

Sometimes when I see they are in danger, I would call them, "Hailey, Hosea, wait... do not go there."

And sometimes, I would see the kids, "WaaaAhh,"

They get hurt despite my warnings.



SOMETIMES, GOD HAS TO BREAK US
WHERE WE ARE STRONGEST
SO THAT WE LEARN TO TRUST HIM.

The Way We Are

That's just who we are. Sometimes, we're not that mature yet—enough. We're children of God, anyway. And what a patient Father we still have.

If we weren't sinners, if we didn't want to have our own way—apart from God's way—we wouldn't have to wrestle. We would dance with the Lord. And we would walk in harmony with Him. But because we're sinners, we fail. It's already there – plan of God, God's way. If we just follow, we will win. But we're losing because we're fighting. In Tagalog, nagmamarunong tayo. Nilalabanan natin Siya. Pumipiglas tayo. Kaya tayo natatalo.

Today, I'm encouraging you: Let God win. Stop fighting. Because when we fight, we end up getting wounded, and we also hurt the people around us. Not because of God. But because we do it to ourselves. In our stubbornness, we get hurt. Sometimes, God has to do something extreme just to get our attention.

Remember this: Sometimes, God has to break us where we are strongest so that we learn to trust him.

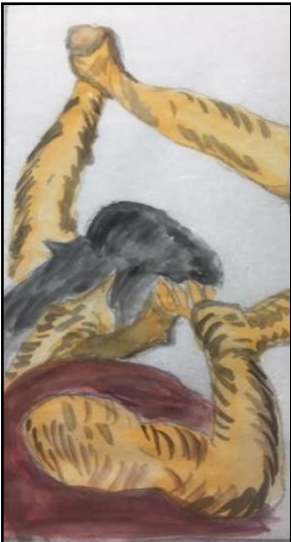
Jacob doesn't want God to win. In that wrestling match, he keeps fighting God—even until the break of dawn.

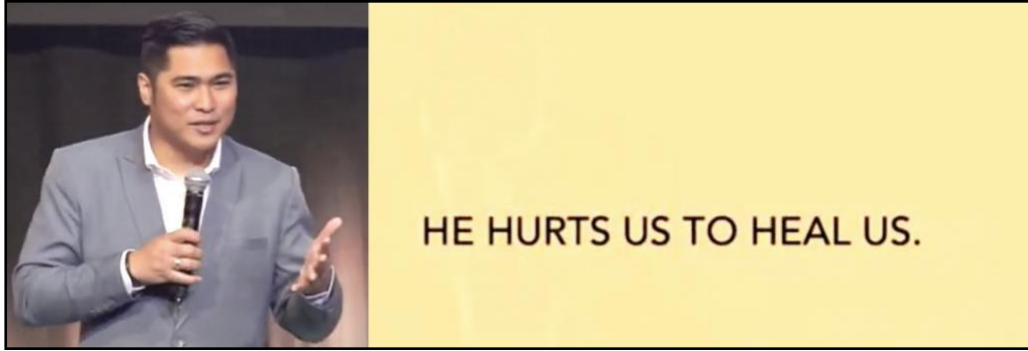
So, God does this:

Genesis 32:25 NLT
When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket.

Why? Again, it's literature, don't take it literally.

Can a man unhinge a hip from its socket?





Wrestling Is Healing

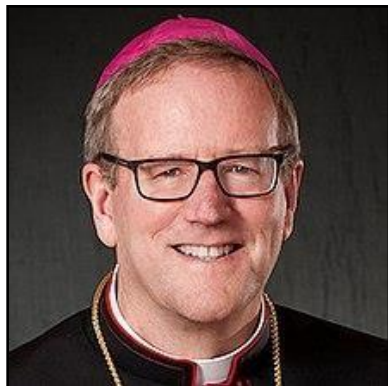
This is very important for our understanding: Bible scholars would believe that God hit Jacob on the groin which is within the area of the hip. Because that's the biological source of his fruitfulness. The seed of the man comes from the groin -- and it got hurt. Because it wasn't doing well for him.

BECAUSE OF JACOB'S LACK OF TRUST AND ALWAYS TAKING MATTERS INTO HIS HANDS, GOD WOUNDED HIM IN THE PLACE WHERE HE CAN GENERATE HIS OWN BLESSING.

And sometimes, again, God breaks us where we are strongest—so we can eventually listen to Him. Because we're hurting ourselves so that we can learn to trust Him.

I want you to think this way: Sometimes, sin —it's so deeply ingrained in us, in our lifestyle, that God has to do some spiritual surgery. And yes, it hurts.

I'm a doctor-- I've done some surgeries. I've seen some surgeries done. Surgeries—minor and small—they leave scars, right? Surgeries are expensive, yes? But if you do not do the surgery, the whole being, the whole body may fail and get hurt. And that's why, sometimes, God allows us to get hurt because God wants to heal us. He allows the hurting because His purpose is for our healing.



Jacob's wrestling match with God was God healing him – and blessing him again. Jacob ends up with a limp.

Bishop Robert Barron, American prelate of the Catholic Church who serves as auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, said, "*A holy person is someone who has a limp from a struggle with God.*"



Wrestling... Or Dancing?

I want to give an illustration:

I was born in 1986. So, I grew up in the '90s. During that period, the trend was ballroom dancing. In parties, there were ballroom dancing clubs—there were parties at home, various places. It was common at that time to have dance instructors—or DIs.

If you really know me, you know that I don't know how to dance. My left foot cannot align with my right.

So, imagine, when my mom and my dad would encourage me, “Go ahead Didoy, try to dance,” I was like, “Whaaat?”

I tried. And this is a wrestling match with the Dance Instructor. She was saying, “Do this... And her hands were so strong, and I was really fighting, and I was stumbling – because we were doing that simple Cha-cha, and I couldn't get it.

I was hurting myself.

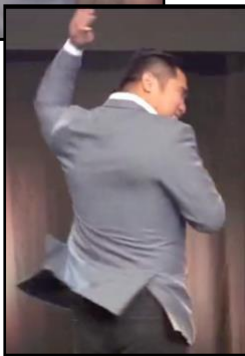
And she said something beautiful that I'll never forget. She said something like, “Didoy, sumunod ka lang. Huwag kang lumaban. Didoy, huwag mo nang labanan. Sundan mo na lang.

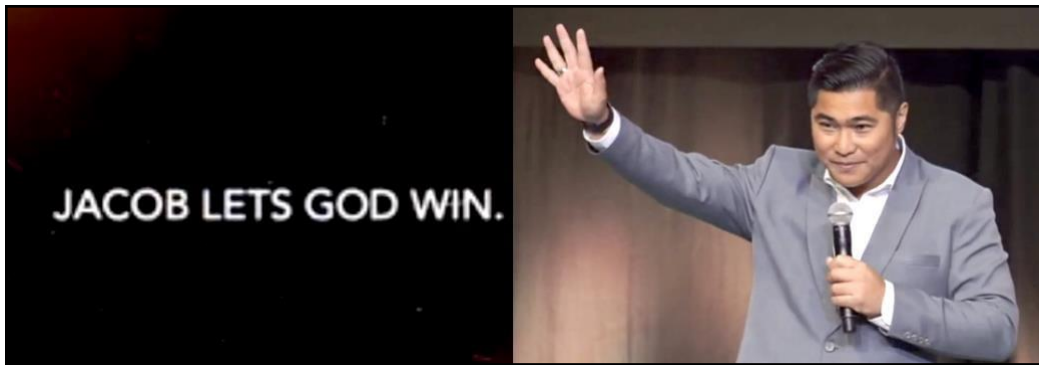
In English, “Didoy, don't fight me. Flow with me.”

So, I started trusting that she would not let me fall, and I trusted her maneuvers. I realized I did not want to be instructed, but I had to-- so that I could eventually learn how to dance.

Wow! It felt so good. Yeah.

I'll do anything to preach the Word of the Lord.





Surrender

Let's stop the wrestling match now.

Stop fighting. Start flowing—with God. We need to tap up. In a wrestling match, it ends when someone taps out. It's okay to tap out. It's like waving the white flag in surrender: "I want to stop the battle. Let's stop the war. Let's sign the peace agreement. I'm tapping out."

And at the end of this wrestling match, Jacob taps out. He does it in a very, very unique way. Jacob realizes that he is wrestling with God and he seeks a blessing from Him. Not from anyone else. So, here's the Word, from Verses 26-29:

Genesis 32:26-29 NLT

Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!" But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." ²⁷ "What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob." ²⁸ "Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him.

Genesis 32:26-29 NLT

"From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won." ²⁹ "Please tell me your name," Jacob said. "Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there."

A very colorful life. Too many wrestling matches. Jacob must be so weary. After all the wrestling matches, so many heartaches. If you really go through the text, you'll note: So hard life! And yet at the end, a nation was born out of him.

Jacob lets God win.

Jacob submits, taps out, and says, "You are God who provides. You're a God who heals. Oh, I'll let You win."



Wrestling with the Blesser

By asking God for His blessing, Jacob says, “I’m now willing to trust You, God. And I want to receive the blessing from You. The blessing will not come from me, anymore. I will not carve out my own blessing.”

He wrestled with the Blesser.

So, God blesses him and changes his name. God renames *Jacob* which meant *Heal Grabber* or *Deceiver*, to *Israel* which means *One Who Struggled with God—and Wins*.

When you let God win, you win too.

That’s it. You let God win, so that you win too. His win is your win. Because He is *for* you—*not against* you. He builds you up than breaks you down. You got to trust Him.

Start dancing with Him. Start dancing rather than struggling and wrestling with Him. He wants to prosper you.

My dear friend, do you still have some strongholds in your life? Pride, unforgiveness, selfishness. Today, we say “Lord, I surrender these to you. I Let you win. I cannot win this battle all by myself. I cannot do it on my own.”

Maybe you’re struggling in your business, in your workplace, in your career, in your relationship, in your finances... Let God win.

Do not fall into breaking the integrity just so you can cheat your way out and get that money, get that fame, that fortune, get that status. And yet, you do not enjoy it. It reeks more havoc in your life. Stop pretending that you are winning. Start trusting and you let God win so that you may win.

**INSTEAD OF TAKING MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS,
SURRENDER MATTERS TO GOD’S HANDS.
AND HE WILL MAKE A WAY FOR YOU.**

The Wounded Wins

Again, when you let God win, in the end, you win too. Is there something that God asks you and you got reminded today to surrender, to let go, and let God—to release, so God can give you His peace?

Two weeks ago, we talked about Abraham—very sinful man and yet God blessed the nations because of him. And if we thought that Abraham was so bad, now we realize that his grandson, Jacob, was worse.

I want you to see how God is. Know who God is. In generation upon generation, worsening of the generations, God could have abandoned Jacob and the whole family. But He

is a promise keeper. Remember that. God is a promise keeper.

God could have just walked away from giving you the blessing. *Sobra ka na.* You're too much. But in the story of Jacob, instead of abandoning him, God wrestles with him.

Do you feel that God is wrestling with you? It's because God is not abandoning you. He wants you. He's not done with you yet. And sometimes, it hurts. Because God wants you to heal. God will never give up on you. That is why Jesus came. Instead of leaving us, God, Jesus, became man to wrestle with our sin and strangle death on the Cross.

Like Jacob, Jesus is the wounded One. But unlike Jacob who got wounded because of *his* sins, Jesus was wounded because of *our* sins. What a God we serve! What a loving God! Wow.

Let's come into prayer. I want you to have that moment with Jesus right now. Come to Jesus now. All these years, God has been grabbing you.

Lord, many, many years I've been wrestling with You. And you could have just abandoned me. You could have just left me to die and get ruined. But here today, I remember that you are grabbing me—even if I want to run away from you. All these years, I've been wrestling with you. Today, I'm going to stop fighting You. I want to flow with You, Lord. I finally tap out and surrender. You win, Lord. You win. You win. Amen.





MERCY MINISTRIES

For all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. –Genesis 13:15

HE CARES MISSION PART 1

The Promised Land

THE Promised Land is a sprawling farmland of He Cares Mission, our Mercy Ministry taking care of indigent children, especially street children.

The farmland's name reminds us of the biblical Promised Land — the land God gave to Abram.

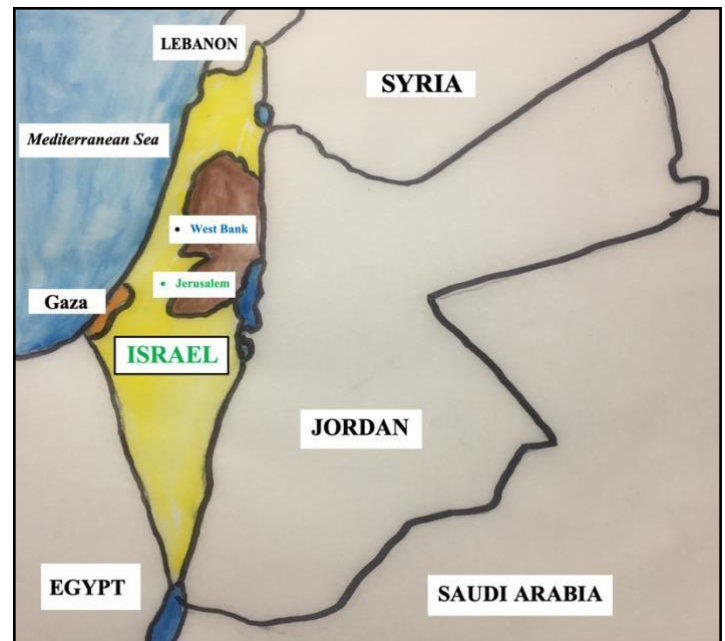
The name *Abram* is from a Hebrew word meaning *exalted father*.

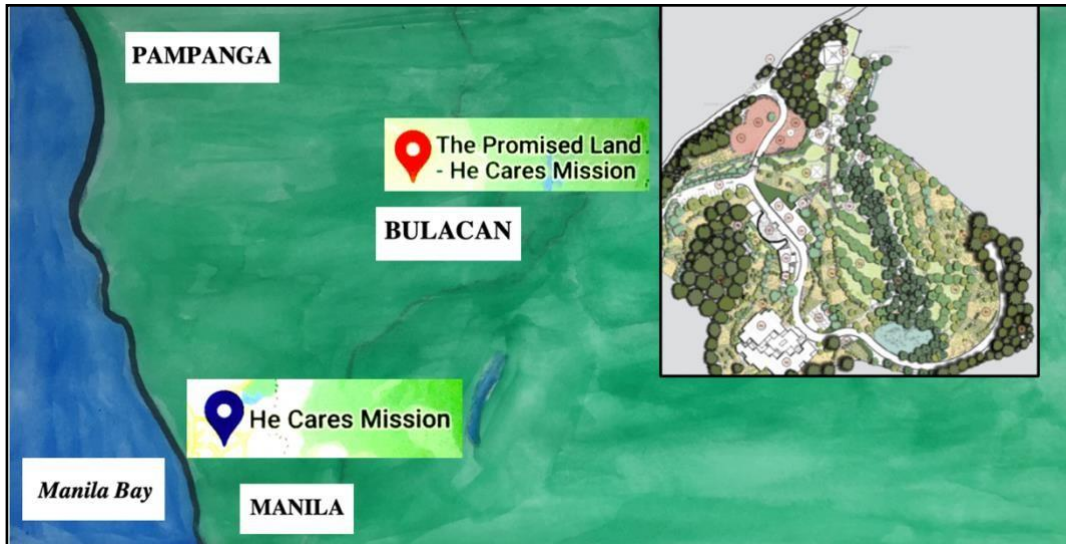
In *Genesis*, the first book of the Bible, we read that Abram, because of his steadfast faith in God, was exalted — treasured and honored by God. God changed the name of Abram to *Abraham* which means *father of nations*. Because that was God would make him. And the promise would be fulfilled through Abraham's grandson, Jacob. At first, Jacob wrestled with God's will about his destiny—but soon, in faith, he surrendered to God. Jacob let God win, to prevail and be in control over his life.

Thus, Jacob was renamed *Israel*— which in Hebrew means *let God prevail*.

True to His Word, God would grant the land He promised Abraham to his descendants. This land would be Canaan, located in the territory of the Southern Levant -- historically, the region along the eastern Mediterranean shores-- which is now known to include modern-day Israel.

And yes, the descendants would be God's chosen people, the Israelites.





Starting with a Promise

Yes, just like the biblical Promised Land, He Cares' Promised Land started well, with a promise—but with a twist.

He Cares Mission's Promised Land is a 5.3-hectare farm land in San Rafael, Bulacan-- which He Cares was able to procure through friend's donations.

Abraham's Promised Land took over 400 years to be fulfilled. He Cares' Promised Land counts a three-decade period to materialize.

In 1995, Bro. Joe Dean Sola, devoted member of our Light of Jesus Family, saw two street children near the waiting shed outside his house. They looked hungry.

Bro. Joe Dean happened to have P20 in his pocket — so, he bought two pieces of bread and two bottles of soda for the children.

He then promised the children, “From this day forward, you will never go hungry again.”

Since then, not only two but hundreds of street children have never gone hungry. Because, yes, Jesus cares enough to inspire Bro. Joe Dean to establish He Cares Mission. *Above, right*, Bro. Joe Dean with his wife Ardis, also a devoted LOJ member, a corporate executive sharing her management skills in building He Cares and the Promised Land.



Sustainable Programs

By God’s grace, Bro. Joe Dean has been fulfilling his promise to those two kids, as the Promised Land has transformed into a sustainable farm project providing the needs of the children, their families, and even residents of the local community.

- Food for street children given through He Cares’ weekly feeding program, as well as food provisions for the local community



- Shelter for the poorest of the poor.
Above, houses under construction.

• Livelihood programs to give poor families a source of regular income. He Cares’ farm is now producing eggs for its feeding programs and extra eggs for sale. Direct beneficiaries are the marginalized in the community.



Planting Time



Bro. Joe Dean with He Cares children: “Thank you for the donor of these avocado seedlings. We’re going to plant these —to add to the fruit bearing trees that we already have here in the Promised Land. If you have a fruit bearing tree in your surroundings or if you want to donate seedlings or organic fertilizers, please do so.”



- Sanctuary for those who want to experience God's Presence.
This year, He Cares is building a church in the Promised Land.
Excavation for the church foundation has started.

Promise: Little Means a Lot

PARTNER WITH US
CALL NOW
BRO. JOE DEAN SOLA
 09176543699

The Promised Land needs a little from you for it to mean a lot to those in need.

Help continue developing the Promised Land, one small plot of land at a time

Kindly deposit donations here:

BPI Peso SA | Account No. 1953-1184-71

BPI US Dollar SA | Account No. 1954-0240-55

GCash | Ardis Sola - 0917 629 9374

Kindly email proof of donation to hecares.adm@gmail.com with the subject line "Promised Land Financial Support" to receive an official receipt.

--With reporting by Cybill P. Bayto



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

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.

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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(Metro Manila Only) Cash or Checks Address Checks to Shepherds

Voice Radio and Television Foundation and call Joy at (+632) 725 -9999 loc 112 or text (+63) 922-828-9890 and we'll pick them up from your home or office.

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Go and make disciples of all men.

— Matthew 28:19