



FAMILY
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

Not Like Ursula's Spell

TODAY, we'll talk about the curses in *Deuteronomy*.

And just in case you're asking, Nope, they're *not* like Ursula's spell on *Little Mermaid*. (See backgrounder, page 2).

Nor are these curses lightning rods thrown at us by a vengeful God. They're not Divine Retribution.

God does *not* say, "Aha! Because you didn't obey me, you'll get my belt!"

My personal belief: God doesn't need to punish us-- because sin is its own punishment. *God simply respects our decision to do things our way.* If we choose to live apart from Him, He'll allow it. He'll remove His Presence from our life. When He does, we humans sink back into pre-creation chaos described in Genesis 1.

Blessing is creation. Curse is de-creation.

In the Bible, *a curse is God allowing the bad consequences of our bad decisions, in the hope that we change our ways.*

May we indeed change and return to the Lord!

Have a beautiful Feast today.

May your dreams come true,

Bo Sanchez



WELCOME
to Talk 7
of our Feast Series,
Dear Prodigals,
our study of the
Book of *Deuteronomy*.

FEAST Teaching Series: *Dear Prodigals*
September 17, 2023

Talk 7: *Create Your Destiny*

BACKGROUNDER

Ursula's Spell

POSEIDON, the Sea God, has two children: Triton and Ursula. Poseidon dies and Triton and Ursula inherit powers to rule the sea together.

But Ursula, a sea witch, wants to be the sole monarch of the sea. So, she sets to grab the power from Triton. To do so, she plans to "own" Triton's daughter Ariel-- and then eventually get rid of her.

The chance for this to happen is when Ariel falls in love with Eric, a human prince. But Eric and Ariel can't get married because Ariel is a mermaid-- half human-half fish. And so, she wants to become fully human.

With her magic power, Ursula grants Ariel's wish to be human— for three days only. And then after three days, she will become permanently human if she gets Eric to kiss her.

But if that happens, Ursula can no longer own Ariel. So, Ursula casts a spell on Ariel, making Ariel forget that she needs true love's kiss to stay human forever.

Eric, however, manages to kill Ursula. So, with her gone, Triton remains King of the Sea. Ariel is transformed into human, and she and Eric get married.

And, as fairy tales go, they must have lived happily ever after.



LETTERS

Where Are They?

“AM I my brother’s keeper?”

That’s from Genesis 4:9—Cain’s arrogant response when God asked him where was his brother Abel who, God already knew, Cain killed.

Fr. Paolo Asprer pointed out, yes, we are our brethren’s keepers as he discussed the Gospel last Sunday Feast, particularly correcting our loved ones when they are committing a mistake, or going far away from God (Matthew 18: 15-20), *page 4*.



Our founder, Bro. Bo Sanchez, points out that even as we are responsible for one another, God does respect our every decision—even choosing to live apart from Him. Yes, you may *Create Your Destiny*. That’s Talk 7 of our Feast series *Dear Prodigals*. Bro. Bo’s introduction is on *page 1*.

God is indeed totally for us. Particularly, *God Sides with the Little Ones*. That was Talk 6 of our Feast series discussed by Bro. Audee Villaraza and Bro. Didoy Lubaton last Sunday. *Flashback* starts on *page 17*.



Aside from the little ones, God so cares for us big ones -- those growing old--that He inspired Sis. Rissa Kawpeng to write this must-read book, *Age Well*, *page 11*.



God is for us, and so we are for Him by obeying His mandate for us to be our brothers’ keepers. One way we do that is through The Feast Little Acts of Love. Be inspired with the story of Sis. Mary, one of our donors for Feasters and non-Feasters struggling through the recent series of typhoons that hit our land, *page 32*.

May we always have a ready, sufficient answer when God asks us where are our brethren.

All for God’s Glory,

Randy Borromeo
Media Ministry
Executive Director





FLASHBACK!
SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

Holy Mass



TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Homily

FR. PAOLO ASPRER

on the Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

Dealing with Sin in the Church

GOOD MORNING, Sisters and Brothers in Christ! Peace and blessings to Everyone!

One of the most challenging but perhaps the most loving tests in human relationships, and even in our Christian mission, is fraternal correction. Ang pagtutuwid sa isang minamahal na nagkakamali.--Correcting a loved one who is committing a mistake.

We know that we need correction-- as we say, "No man is an island." We need one another. We are keepers of our brothers and sisters. That is what true love is all about.

True love is not simply tender-- it is tough. True love is not just consoling, does not only console or comfort us. But true, real, authentic love challenges us, and confronts us. When we love someone, we will bring him to the truth, we will bring him to God.

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Fraternal Correction

You know, when I was a little boy, I had this strict disciplinarian grandfather. Many times, Paolo was whipped with the grandfather's belt.

And my grandfather would tell me, “You know, someday you would thank me for that.”

Now, as an adult, I realize that true love is not simply tender -- it's tough. Fraternal correction is challenging but necessary.

In our First Reading, just like the prophet Ezekiel, we are called to reflect on love. Love is to will the good of the beloved.

Like the prophet Ezekiel, we are called to be a watchman or a sentinel in the house of Israel. That is the role of the prophet. Your role is to speak the truth, to be a watchman-- not to condemn the other person but to lead him to the truth, to guide him to the truth.

The Responsorial Psalm says, “If today you hear His voice, God's voice, harden not your hearts.”

We know that the truth coming from God, indeed, is often painful. It's inconvenient. But the truth coming from God, yes, it would hurt our heart but eventually, in the long run, it would heal, it would liberate our soul.

In our Second Reading, in his letter, Saint Paul says that the fulfillment of love is obedience to the commandments.

Love is something concrete, not abstract. Love is not simply a feeling, or emotion -- but it is a choice. It is a decision.

Our Gospel according to Matthew gives practical advice on fraternal correction. Love— it's not just a single moment. Love is a process. Love is a journey.



Reading I: Ezekiel 33: 7-9

“Now, son of man, I am making you a watchman for the people of Israel. Therefore, listen to what I say and warn them for me. ⁸ If I announce that some wicked people are sure to die and you fail to tell them to change their ways, then they will die in their sins, and I will hold you responsible for their deaths. ⁹ But if you warn them to repent and they don't repent, they will die in their sins, but you will have saved yourself.

Practical Steps

Jesus says these are the practical steps to Fraternal Correction:



First: If one commits a mistake, first talk to him in private.

You know, that's a challenge. You were the one hurt yet you are the one to reconcile with the person who hurt you.



Second: Call two or three witnesses.



Third: Bring the matter to the Church, to the Community.

Sometimes, you have to undergo legal procedures.



Fourth: Penalties are necessary. This is not to exclude the person but to teach the person a lesson.

Three Points for Reflection

My dear friends, in fraternal correction, here are three points for reflection: First, purpose. Second, prudence. Third, prayer.

1. Purpose. The goal of fraternal correction is not condemnation of the person, but the goal is charity. Charity, not condemnation. Relationship, not ruin. Healing, not hurt.

If that is clear to you, then no matter how painful it is, you know that to correct your beloved, you have to tell them the truth.

What is the opposite of love?

You know, I have this good friend who said, “Father, meet my husband. He is my best *frienemy* (friend and enemy). I love him many times, but there are also times I hate him. Can love and hate coexist?”

Yes, perhaps. Sometimes, you're saying "I hate you." But you still have that concern for the person.

Perhaps, love and hate can coexist. But love and indifference cannot. That is, when you no longer care for the person. You no longer feel concerned for the person. I would like to believe that the opposite of love is not hate. It is indifference—apathy.

You know, it's easy to go from love to hate and then hate to love. But love to indifference, that is something painful for both sides. Yung naging complete stranger yung minamahal mo. Your loved one has become a complete stranger.



Reading II: Romans 13: 8-10

⁸ Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God’s law. ⁹ For the commandments say, “You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.”^[a] These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”^[b]
¹⁰ Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.

2. Prudence. There is always the right time, right place, right manner, right intention, and right way to correct a beloved. Not pointing fingers, not harping on past faults, not shaming or humiliating the person.

As my friend told me, “You know Father, I can't understand my husband. When he's angry, I appease him. When I am angry, he's also angry.”

There's always a proper way, proper manner, in correcting a loved one.

3. Prayer. And finally, this is not only human effort to correct a beloved, an erring beloved.

We need prayer. We need the spirit of truth. Love and truth are inseparable. Love can only flourish in the truth. Truth is vital, but without love, it is fatal.

Truth is necessary but without love, it is something hurtful.

My dear friends, we pray for the spirit of truth. We pray for the spirit of charity. We pray for the spirit of courage. We pray for the spirit of compassion as we fulfill this necessary task of fraternal correction.

We need one another. You know, the devil or the enemy works best on us when we are alone.

And so, we pray that our love would not only be tender but our love would also be tender and tough. Tender and truthful. Amen.



Responsorial Psalm – Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

¹ Come, let us sing to the LORD!

Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.

² Let us come to him with thanksgiving.

⁶ Come, let us worship and bow down.

Let us kneel before the LORD our maker,

⁷ for he is our God.

⁸ The LORD says, “Don't harden your hearts as Israel did at Meribah, as they did at Massah in the wilderness.

⁹ For there your ancestors tested and tried my patience, even though they saw everything I did.



BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:

Let's give the Lord a big hand, Everybody! Come on! If you're happy to be here, give me a shout! Hallelujah! Can you do me a favor? Greet as many people as you can and say, "It's good to be here with you!"

Welcome to the Feast! May I see the hands of all the people who are joining us for the first time today? We want to honor you. Let's clap our hands for our guests!

Thank you for being here.

My name is Audee Villaraza, I am one of your servant leaders here at The Feast. But I'd love to tell you that once upon a time, we were *you* in this Community and we were welcomed by everybody. And so, with gratitude in our heart we welcome you into this Family. Everybody say, "Welcome home!"

Thank you so much! You can take your seats. After the session is done, please stick around, okay? We're going to give you a gift and we're going to pray for you.

Good News

I am so excited and so happy that starting today, we have an Awesome Kids Ministry for four-year-old to six-year-old children. It's at the Elizalde Hall today.



We still have the Children's Room as well, right beside Elizalde Hall for those parents who have children younger than four years old or maybe even older than six years old. You may still bring them as well there in the children's play area. You can attend The Feast there as well because we'll have a screen for you so you can watch the Talk.

So, you can do that every Sunday here at The Feast because we want to make you feel comfortable and we want you to partake in the Feast wisdom.



You know, we have been doing this for quite some time -- that we have been changing our venues here and there because we're trying out new things. I want you to know that next Sunday (September 17, 2023) we're going to be back in at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) for two regular sessions. One at 9:00 A.M. and then one at 2:00 P.M. So, tell your friends, tell your families, if you are a Feast goer, please help us spread the word!

And final announcement: The Feast Conference! We launched it last Sunday. You may buy your tickets at the lobby, and be ready for this upcoming conference that we're going to have this coming November.

Now, I'd like to invite somebody here onstage as she is launching her new book. She is somebody I look up to

greatly because of her wisdom, her passion, and her love for the Lord. She's a best-selling author and you must already know her.

Please, Everybody, welcome Sis. Rizza Singson-Kawpeng

TICKET PRICES	
REGULAR	P2,200
PREMIUM	P3,700
YOUTH	starts at P500
ONLINE	P1,250

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW AT THE LOBBY

Book Launch

SIS. RISSA SINGSON-KAWPENG:



Hello! I'm happy to be here!
Audee, thanks for having me!
It's been a while! Hi, everybody!
Great to see you!

You know, when I was young, I would look at old people and I would see them -- you know, their wrinkly skin and their sagging arms and their wrinkles on their face, and I would tell myself, "Ayokong tumanda!— I don't want to grow old!"

But then as I look around, I hardly see adults who don't look old. Except those who died early-- like Princess Diana-- she's forever young, right? And Marilyn Monroe and Kobe Bryant.

But then, I don't want to die young. So, what's the solution?

You know, I discovered that we all have to learn how to *age well*. When we think about growing old, we think of having a retirement fund, right? We prepare for our senior years by making sure we have enough funds-- you know, so that we'll have money to last us for the rest of our life. My parents had retirement funds. But I realized it was not the only thing that they had to prepare for.

Because you also have to prepare your body. You know, you can have money but it's not much if you don't have a strong body as you age.

Also, you have to prepare your mind.

My mom had Alzheimer's at the age 60. Imagine so young. And I'm not far from that age. In a few years I'll be 60. My mom started manifesting symptoms of Alzheimer's at such a young age. She had the money, and she had a healthy body, but her mind was not healthy.

So, as I began getting near my senior years, I started praying about this. And I know the Lord led me to a concept called *Age Well*.

Looking for the Fountain of Youth?

You know, people the whole world are looking for that fountain of youth. Everybody wants to stay young.

But what the Lord led me to was *Age Well*-- a reservoir of things that we need to put aside so that when we are old, we have something to draw from. So, not just money, but your body as well.

I inherited my mom's weak knees. As early as 10 years ago, I've been working out my knees so I would strengthen them. And knowing that my mom had Alzheimer's, I'm doing things to keep my mind and my body active.

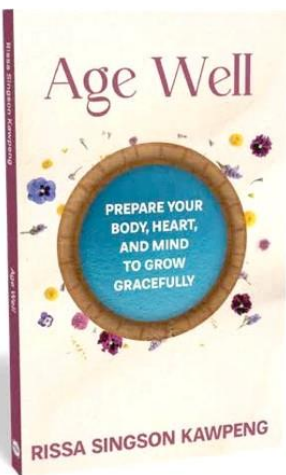
And, of course, here at The Feast, we're blessed to learn about how to be truly rich and prepare for our financial life as we age.

So, all those are here in my newest book!

This is the journey that I will go through. This is my 10th book. Most of my books are written from experience-- like when I was dating and when I got married.

But this one is something that I will go through until the end of my life.

So, I want to take all of us on a journey because I have research here that says that when you grow old in a community that has a positive outlook on aging, your life becomes longer. So, we want to build that kind of community here at The Feast-- that we will be known as people who live long. We live to be a hundred because it takes a community to have that outlook.



And you know what?

I noticed this is a book that people buy not just for themselves. I've been signing books-- 10 books, 20 books, a hundred books-- because people want to give copies to their friends because they want to live long and live well together with their loved ones.

So, I'm launching this book here at The Feast. I'll be at the lobby signing books. I hope to see you there.

Love Offering

When we talk about preparing for our future, if you think about it, our life here on Earth is really just a drop in the bucket-- as against Eternity.

One time, my husband – he’s Chinese-- and I went to a wake of a Chinese. And as I was looking, I saw paper mache of a car, boat, house.

I asked my husband, “Why do they have those?”

He said, “Oh, after the dead is buried, they will burn those items.”

I asked, “Why?”

He said, “Because they want those items to go ahead of the person to Heaven, so that when he gets there, he will already have a house, a boat, a car.”

I said, “But he can’t bring those to Heaven...”

“He’s Chinese. The Chinese always find ways...”

Ha-ha!

And I said, “If you believe in the Lord, indeed, you’ll have a way...”



You know, this is just an envelope. But I really believe that if we want to send our riches to Heaven, let’s send them ahead of us. We can’t really bring our earthly treasure there but Jesus says you can use your earthly treasure to invest in heavenly treasure. And this (Love Offering) is one way that we do that.

So, I hope you give generously. Give to invest in your Eternity. So, raise your Love Offering envelopes to God.

Lord, we thank You for this opportunity, this chance to pay forward to Eternity the blessings that you've given us. We ask Lord that You bless the generous heart of each one, the faith of each one. I know not everybody here has the means to put something in this envelope. But out of faith they do it. And so, Lord, I pray that You

may bless all of us who give generously even way beyond what we can afford—since we know and we believe that You are a God who will out-do us in whatever we do, especially in giving. And we praise and thank You for all these. In Jesus’ Name. Amen!

A large crowd of people is shown from a low angle, many holding up white envelopes. The scene is dimly lit with blue and purple stage lighting. At the bottom of the image is a white banner with three rows of giving information. Each row starts with a red envelope icon and the text 'Ways to Give' in a cursive font. The first row is for BDO, the second for UnionBank, and the third for GCash. The banner also includes the website www.TheFeastPICAM.com/Commit and a small icon of a person at the bottom right.

Ways to Give Light of Jesus Family Mega Manila, Inc. 003970143807 BDO

Ways to Give The Builder of the Light of Jesus Family Mega Manila Feast Bay Area, Inc. 000-4000-24846 UnionBank

Ways to Give For GCash, Debit & Credit Card Giving visit: GCash www.TheFeastPICAM.com/Commit

Worship!

EXHORTATION

BRO. ZACH PE:

Good morning, Feast!

Today's Gospel in Matthew 18:20 says:

“If there are two or three gathered in My name, there I am in their midst.”

Can you take a look around? Can you feel the Presence of God in this place?

What more if we are 10, if we are 20, 50, or over a hundred-- like today!

Can you feel the Presence of God here today?

So, whether you are here or you're watching online, we're going to worship God-- because we are never alone! God is in our midst!

So, let every voice, every soul, and all creation worship Him today! Come on!



SIS. NORREN RODRIGUEZ:

Lord, we thank You for your goodness and faithfulness. We thank You for your great love and care for us. We thank You for Your mercy and grace. We thank You for Your amazing power and work in our life. And we thank You that You're always with us. You will never leave us.

Brothers and sisters, I invite everyone to sing this song.





**YOUR MIGHTY NAME
JESUS YOUR NAME IS SALVATION**

GOD OF MY PRESENT AND FUTURE

UNBOUNDED BY TIME



**MY HEART IN YOUR HANDS
THE SAME HAND
THAT CRAFTED THE HEAVENS**



**WHILE I HAVE BREATH
WHILE I HAVE LIFE
I'LL SING UNTIL**



**I SING TO YOU
FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE**



**WITH ALL I AM
AND ALL I HAVE**



**LET EVERY VOICE
SING OF YOUR PRAISES FOREVER**



HALLELUJAH



**WITH EVERYTHING
I'LL LIFT MY
HALLELUJAH**



**LET EVERY BREATH
DECLARE ALL YOUR GLORY AND POWER**



THE FEAST BAY AREA WORSHIP

ALL CREATION SING

FEAST WORSHIP
WORDS & MUSIC BY: ARIEN POLUMBARIT
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COLL #7200431

NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE



Today, I receive all of God's love for me.
Today, I open myself to the unbounded, limitless, overflowing abundance of God's universe.
Today, I open myself to God's blessings, healing, and miracles.

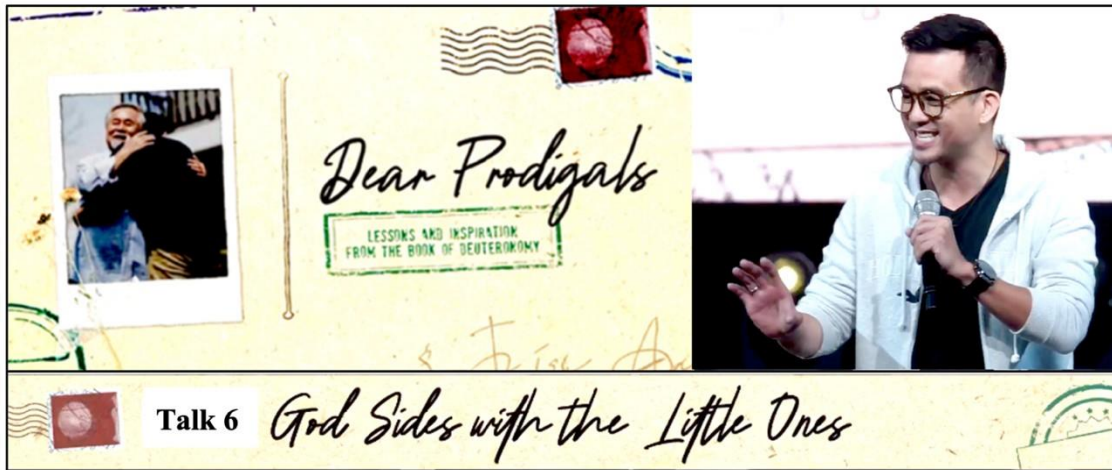


Today, I open myself to God's Word so I become more like Jesus every day.
Today, I proclaim that I am God's Beloved.
I am God's Servant. I am God's Powerful Champion.



And because I am blessed,
I am blessing the world.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

Talk



BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:

Today, I want to give you a little reading that God placed over my heart this week. This is a Gospel Reading that I reflected on last Tuesday or Wednesday.

This is from Luke 14:38 and the heading of the Gospel Reading says *Jesus heals many people.*

Let me read the Verse to you:

³⁸ After leaving the synagogue that day, Jesus went to Simon's home, where he found Simon's mother-in-law very sick with a high fever. "Please heal her," everyone begged. ³⁹ Standing at her bedside, he rebuked the fever and it left her. And she got up at once and prepared a meal for them.

LUKE 14:
38-39 NLT

I pray whoever is sick right now that Jesus would put His hand over you and that He would rebuke that sickness and you would get up on your feet and be healed in that moment.

And then in Verse 40, it says:

⁴⁰ As the sun went down that evening, people throughout the village brought sick family members to Jesus. No matter what their diseases were, the touch of his hand healed every one.

LUKE 14:
40-41 NLT

But because they knew he was the Messiah, He rebuked them and refused to let them speak.

And then something happens. This is the most important part for me--Verse 42:

⁴² Early the next morning Jesus went out to an isolated place. The crowds searched everywhere for him, and when they finally found him, they begged him not to leave them. ⁴³ But he replied, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other town, too, because that is why I was sent."

LUKE 14:
42-43 NLT

A Tragedy

So, He continued to travel around preaching in synagogues throughout Judea.

Let me explain this moment for you.

I had a friend in college and she was one of my closest friends-- growing up throughout college, we were very close.

She's the kind of person who loves life and who's easy to be around with. Do you know anyone like that? Friends like that? That's the kind of person that she was. She loved her life and for four years we were in the same group—we were barkada.

And then we graduated from college and I never saw her again. Never heard anything about her. Back then social media was not very prevalent yet.

You can probably imagine how old I am based on that.

Then, a year after college, the group, the barkada, we were all shocked to hear the news that she took her life-- she took her own life. She jumped from a 12-story building and that killed her instantly.

We were at her wake and there we realized not one of us knew exactly what was going on in her life. We were all shocked! I mean nobody knew. Nobody expected something like that to happen.

This incident made me realize that it's possible that you could be close to some people yet never really know who they are, or what they're thinking, and what they're feeling.

Can you look at the person beside you? If that person is close to you, I want you to know that you don't really know that person -- because that person is full of thoughts and emotions. And I want you to challenge yourself to really get to know that person.

But here's the message of the Gospel: Jesus was healing people left and right. He healed Peter's mother-in-law privately. He healed some people publicly.

And yet, when Jesus was about to leave, they said, "Jesus, no, you cannot leave! There are still so many people who are sick. There are still so many problems. There are still people who are blind, lepers, and deaf you need to heal! All of these sicknesses."

But you know what, Jesus said? He said, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns too-- that is why I was sent."

How many of you need a miracle in your life? All of us.



Jesus Came Not To Perform Miracles

You know, all throughout my life, I would always approach Jesus for a miracle: “You know, Jesus, there's this bill that needs to be paid. My kids are sick. A couple, my friends, their marriage is failing. I need a miracle to show up in my life.”

That's a good prayer.

But here's one thing that I realized when I was reflecting on this: Jesus came into this world. He performed miracles, He healed people left and right, but the greatest shocker that I found out is that the reason Jesus came was not to perform miracles-- but to preach a message.

What was the message? It was the message about the Kingdom of God.

So, here's the simplified message to everybody: You pray for miracles, that's good. But I want you to know that more than just praying about miracles, I pray that you hear the message of God about this Kingdom that He's building.

Because to me, that's more important-- that there is this Kingdom that He is building. A Kingdom like no other. A kingdom for people who are abused, people who have been outcasts, people who are meek, people who are peacemakers.

This is what the Kingdom of Jesus is all about: People who feel like they are not always the first one in line, know that you're first in the Kingdom of Jesus.

Jesus says, “Blessed are those who are peacemakers, blessed are those who are who are poor in spirit.” Because they're the VIPs of this Kingdom.

So, what is the message? Pray for a miracle, but more than just praying for a miracle, pray that you know the heart of Jesus. Because think about it: When you truly know the heart of God, everything becomes a miracle.

What do I mean by that? Even if I don't get my prayer answered, even if I don't get the promotion that I've been praying for, even if I don't get the baby that we've been praying for, or that healing to the sickness that I've been praying for right now, it's okay-- because I understand God's heart, because I know God's heart, I know that things will be okay.

That's the Good News that Jesus is saying-- that more than just performing about a miracle, Jesus is preaching that there is this Kingdom where the little ones are the VIPs.





DIDOY LUBATON:

Our message for today, one big message, is this:
God sides with the little ones.

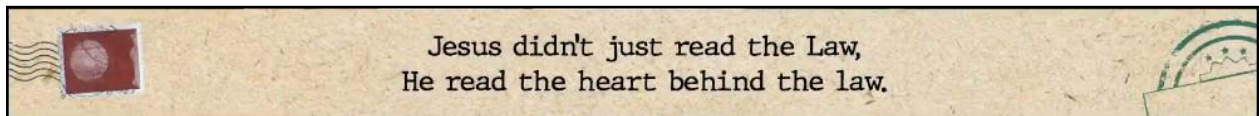
God Sides with the Little Ones

It's such a reassuring thought. But actually, in our society now, we want to be top dogs.

We want to be right up there. We want to be in control. We want to be in authority. We all are trying to do that. We all want to be on top of our companies, our businesses. You know, on top of the food chain-- and that's our earthly pursuit.

But if you want to get to know God's Heart, God is telling us: He sides with the little ones. He likes the underdogs.

He sides with those who are oppressed, the judged, the criticized, the lowly, and the poor. Because for Jesus, He did not just read the law. Jesus had the heart behind the law.



In our Talk series, we're going to see a lot of laws in the book of *Deuteronomy*. So many laws. Some practical, some deep, some heat up in the hand.

But you will never go far and that you will never go wrong if you do not just look at the letter of the law, but look at the Spirit of the law. Look at the heart of the law giver. And laws are not meant for us to have a rigid life, for us to be, you know, boxed up. No!

The laws are for our freedom. Because the heart of the Father, the heart of Jesus, wants you to be free, wants you to live a full, meaningful, powerful life—not just for you.

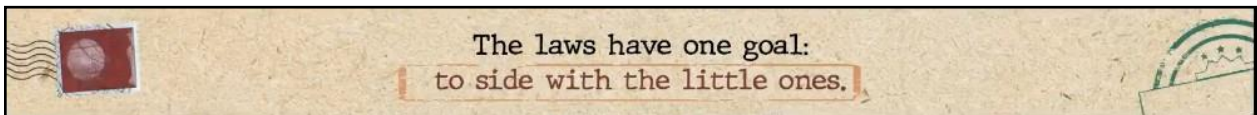
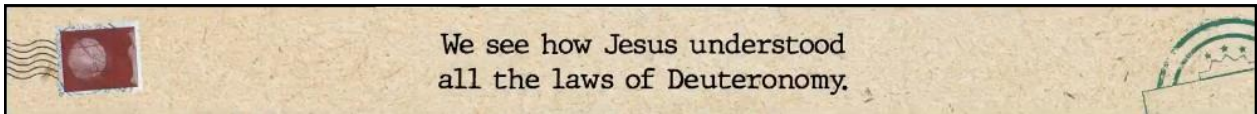
Here's the hint: The laws are not just for you. They are also for the people around you.



Practice Spiritual Humility

Today we will see how Jesus understood *Deuteronomy*. We're going to read big chapters, breathe through some chapters, and we're going to pick the thoughts and the feelings of the Father for us.

Because the laws have one goal: to side with the little ones, to take care of the little ones.



And so, I want to practice spiritual humility with you today.

Sometimes, we need to be reminded that we are the little ones. If you've come here, you feel so little, you feel so poor in physical, financial or even poor in spirit, if you're hurting, if you're doubting, if you feel abused, if you feel oppressed-- come to God's heart today.

And we are talking about just you and God. Today, we'll be reminded that God's heart is in your heart, and it's in my heart. And you know what that means?

We don't have to be little alone. We pull each other up, we build each other up, we protect each other, we care for each other. And that's a beautiful community just like the Israelites—God's chosen people. We are God's chosen people.

And we are learning about the heart of the Father and again, to take care of the little ones. If you feel like you are the little one, listen up. Because God's heart is for you and the people you think of. These are the people who I've identified in my life-- aside from me. I see some people I recognize that they are little ones also in my network, in my life. This is also for them. But foremost, it is for you-- because God wants to change your heart, and for you to be closer to Him.



'Irrelevant' Laws

Let me read the Word, from Deuteronomy 26:

"Then you must declare in the presence of the LORD your God, 'I have taken the sacred gift from my house and have given it to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows, just as you commanded me...'"

DEUT 26:
13 NLT

His heart is for the Levites, foreigners, orphans...

I pray that as we go through ugh this Talk, you will be closer to God's heart-- you will see how the Father sees. And we welcome all the prodigals, in Jesus' Name.

We're going to study and breeze through the chapters of *Deuteronomy*. And if you're going to ask me what's it all about—it's about a bunch of laws, long list of laws, practical ones.

If you just read this Chapter as it is, sometimes, you're going to get confused.

Sometimes, you'll see this doesn't apply here and now.

You might be saying, "This is not relevant to me anymore."

For example, Deuteronomy 25:4 says, *Do not muzzle an ox while it is shredding out the grain.*

There's no ox here in the Philippines. "Ex" only...☺

"Do not muzzle the ox while it's shredding the grain." What does that mean?

Remember, during that ancient time, the Israelites were in an agricultural society—it was high for cattle, for grain.

Not disturbing an ox may be just trivial. But actually, the heart of that commandment is to care for your animals because the animals give you livelihood. And if they give you livelihood, they give you Life. The law honors the commandment of God which is, "Thou shall not kill."

So, actually, the laws are broadly grouped in the order of the Ten Commandments.



The laws were broadly grouped
in the order of the Ten Commandments.

That's the chapter that we're unpacking now.

And again (as we said in the previous talk), *Deuteronomy is wisdom literature*. It is not like, you know, this is the law, follow it to the letter.

No. Remember that this was written 3,000 plus years ago-- for a particular group of people with a specific context.



Practical Laws

For example, here's one more practical principle: Deuteronomy 23 gives a practical law on how to do a “number two” while you’re at camp: *“Designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself as part of your equipment you, have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself dig a hole and cover up your excrement.”*

Backgrounder: To the modern society today, this is common sense. But for thousands of years, this wasn’t common at all. Some 200 years ago, in many cities of civilized Europe, people threw human feces everywhere—on streets, alleys, canals, rivers, vacant lots, and open fields. As a result, they spread diseases and even caused epidemics that killed thousands.

That’s because they did not know yet about the Germ Theory—that certain diseases are caused by microorganisms (like in the poops) – too small to be seen except through a microscope.

And you know, the microscope was discovered only in 1668 by Antonie van Leeuwenhoek. And only thereafter that the Germ Theory was developed by Louis Pasteur, Joseph Lister, and Robert Koch in the 1860s.

But during the epidemics throughout the centuries, the Jewish communities did not suffer that large extent of sickness in their community and in their family.

You know why? Not because they knew about germs, but because of their religious rituals. Because of the *Deuteronomy* laws. They had lots of rituals about hand washing. They had rituals about caring for the body, and even this trivial commandment to bury your poop. They also quarantined people with contagious diseases, as instructed in the Bible 3000 years ago. There were a lot of epidemics, but Jewish communities, they were following God's laws which protected not just one person -- it protected everyone.

At the core of these laws was they wanted to live in a community that cared for each other.

God's Heart is not just for one. God's Heart is for everyone. So, maybe you've come here wanting to have a Feast and enjoying, you know, the beautiful celebration with Father Paolo. And then there's a bonus-- to see Sis. Rissa Kawpeng. Buy her book today. And then there's Audee, and then there's this Talk and Worship time.

The point here today is it is not just about you, but it is you with the rest of the Community. You attend The Feast today, and tomorrow, bring The Feast experience to your community. You be the light of the world as God called us to be in our Light of Jesus Family.

LAWS MANIFESTING GOD'S HEART

So, I'm going to enumerate some Bible passages, some commandments, and how they point out God's Heart.



1 SHARE YOUR HARVEST WITH THE HUNGRY

We have heard in the previous talks the law of gleaning.
From Deuteronomy 24:19:

"When you are harvesting your crops and forget to bring in a bundle of grain from your field, don't go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigners, orphans, and widows. Then the Lord your God will bless you in all you do."

DEUT 24:
19 MLT

The orphans, the foreigners, the widows, especially in their context, especially in their time, they were considered to be poor because they had no property. Especially the widows, the orphans no longer had household income when they lost their primary provider—spouse, parents. They were God's poor.

And the commandment tells us: "Huwag kang gahaman.-- Don't be greedy." Leave something for them to harvest as well. Don't harvest everything because there will be people who will also benefit from your harvest.

Because in the world's scoreboard, we're always looking for our personal gain, we always want to secure ourselves. We want to be rich, and getting richer every day. That is good. But that world gain is not just for you. God's Heart says it's also for the little ones who don't have anything.

**IN GOD'S KINGDOM,
YOU CANNOT GET RICH ALONE.**

God's scoreboard is communal game. It's not just for your personal good. It's for everybody's good. In God's Kingdom, you cannot get rich alone. God has a plan for you and for your family. And maybe some of you would become cycle breakers in your family. You will be the first one who will be debt-free, or will have a wholesome family. Maybe it will be you who will raise in a better way, whatever you call it, the children. Yes.

But sometimes, the ego has a tendency to claim, "Ako yan. Ako yan! Me. Me."

But remember, God's Heart, it's not just for your gain. God's Heart is for our communal gain. It's for everybody's gain. You cannot and you will not be happy to be rich alone.

Practical Principles

That's why we have this Community.

You know, the other day and yesterday, there was this Lux Couple's Retreat held by the LOJ Couples Ministry. Finally, we did it after the Coronavirus Disease (COVID) Pandemic. There were 23 couples: a lot of couples less than five years old married; 10 couples married 15 years and up.

I was so happy to be there and to give a talk. The Retreat was so beautiful. You know why? Because they learned relationship lessons, there will be groups, and there will be couples who will be fighting for marriages. We're not just alone. We're a lot of people doing that. We're trying to do it at our best and together, we'll be happier.

Practical principles of sharing harvests: If you want to feed the hungry, share to the group. For corporates, you know, share the recognition with your team members. If you're a person in authority-- you're a manager, a supervisor-- practice what I learned from my mentors: the Elevator Principle.

You ride the elevator and the elevator will bring you to high--up, up, up-- levels. But the elevator does not just go up. What does the elevator do? It also goes down.

Once you've experienced what it is to be on top, once you've experienced a certain level of influence, leadership position, you go down to a different level, a lower level, and then bring someone with you as you go up again.

If you're a business owner, give opportunities for your other business owner friends. And even if you don't know that person, just do good. He's also a Filipino, a human being, a child of God.

There was this week, when I was invited to give a corporate talk.

And I was like, I could always just say, "Sorry, I'm not available."

But I realized, oh, this was an opportunity (to share the honor with another corporate manager). You know what I did?

I asked the organizer, "May I refer Bro. Audee Villaraza...? The opportunity could have stopped with me. I would have not gained anything-- but my friend could have. You know, leave the opportunities for some other people. As well as bring opportunities to them.

That's one transmutation of this principle of "sharing your harvest."





2

PROTECT YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

So, let's dive in from Deuteronomy 22, read it together with me:

"If you see your neighbor's ox or sheep or goat wandering away, don't ignore your responsibility. Take it back to its owner. If its owner does not live nearby or you don't know who the owner is, take it to your place and keep it until the owner comes looking for it. Then you must return it.

DEUT 22:
1-3 NLT



Don't ignore your responsibility. This is us becoming responsible not just for our own things but for the property of the loved ones around us, even our friends, even the neighbor who may be living far away.

Would you be comfortable: you left your iPhone 13 or 14 in this session hall. Are you confident enough that if you lost it here in this session hall, it will be given back to you?

What is the law giving us? It's giving us a literation of the seventh commandment: "Do not steal."

And you do not just act on it-- do not just steal. You have a personal responsibility to the persons around you. Care for the property of the other people around you.

A practical example: Leave the bathroom clean for the next person to use.

Here, I am guilty: If you drive within your lane and you do not swerve, you're also protecting the other people around you.

So, there's the Heart of God saying, "Magmahalan kayo.—Love one another." Not just in words but also in action-- and especially during the times when it's hard to do so. Especially when property is at stake-- when, "Hindi naman akin yan. --Anyway, it's not mine..."

Walang sinuman ang nabubuhay para sa sarili lamang. Walang sinuman ang namamatay para sa sarili lamang. Tayong lahat ay may pananagutan sa isa't isa. Tayong lahat ay tinipon ng Diyos na kapiling Niya. — No one lives for one's self. No one dies for one's self. We are responsible for each other. God draws us together to be with Him.

Please, imagine a world where your neighbor cares for your stuff because he or she cares for you. Imagine a world when your neighbor cares for your well-being.

Talk to your mother, your father you quarreled with. Honor your mother and your father.

3 RESCUE THE ABUSED

In *Deuteronomy*, you'll read about slavery.

Please remember that this is a part written in a particular society, in a particular time, in a particular context.

Some people would ask: Why didn't God just ban slavery?

Answer: *Deuteronomy* was working with the ugly reality of our broken, fallen, and messed up world.

The laws limited the worst tendencies of human beings to do evil. And as we said in the previous Talk 5, it was damage control.

So, here's the Bible passage about the abused and taking care of the abuse.

Deuteronomy 23:15-16:



"If slaves should escape from their masters and take refuge with you, you must not hand them over to their masters. Let them live among you in any town they choose, and do not oppress them."

DEUT 23:
15-16 MLT

And you see, the context there is maybe the person was being maltreated by the master. Maybe the person was having a hard time. It's not right, and the commandment is that everyone gets protected.

Please take care of the abused. How do you apply this now?

When someone asks for your help, listen first before you deny-- and maybe if there's any power in you that you get to help, please help that person.

Let me clarify: Sometimes, the help is also tough love. Not necessarily all the time-- because we're going to be empowering the abusers if we just seem to be mild-hearted. No. Sometimes, tough love is the solution.

But the practical principle, ask yourself after this stuff: "Do I recognize anybody in my company, in my team, in my family who is abused? If there is anything in my power to help them, to care for them, I would."

And you know, my family and I saw this with my parents... That we have a good house for seven children. And yet, we still have enough space for those people who come to our house seeking some shelter.

Some people stay for days, some stay for weeks. And a few who stayed for months. It could have been their fault. It could have been the fault of the society. They could have lost their job...

But it will always be good.

In God's goodness, it will always be good when there will be caring people who will welcome and provide shelter for those who may be feeling abused.

4 CARE FOR POOR BORROWERS

You will see it in *Deuteronomy* that God cares for even the borrowers.
Deuteronomy 24:6 says:

"It is wrong to take a set of millstones, or even just the upper millstone, as security for a loan, for the owner uses it to make a living."

DEUT
24:6 NLT

Maybe you've been asking, what is a millstone? It is used to grind the grain from the harvest so the grain becomes food. So, the law is saying do not get even the millstone that the person could be using for food. It's protecting the borrower as well.



Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 24:12-13 says:

"If your neighbor is poor and gives you his cloak as security for a loan, do not keep the cloak overnight. Return the cloak to its owner by sunset so he can stay warm through the night and bless you, and the Lord your God will count you as righteous."

DEUT 24:
12-13 NLT

In Tagalog, "Huwag kang mang-api-- don't oppress-- even if it's in your right to do so." Be a good person. Show some mercy, and you will be shown mercy.

It's like the Father's Heart telling us: "Child, feel the suffering of your siblings and do something about it."

Even the borrowers are cared for. Imagine that community and society. Those in position of power-- the ones who are lending-- even if you have all the right to do so, instead of trying to be right, you can choose to be kind.

How do we apply this law in our life? Don't incur debts. And if someone borrowed from you, think of how you can ask for his payment. Do it with a kind heart. If the person cannot pay, ask God for the payment—for sure, He will return to you what the person borrowed.

5

HOLD A PARTY WHERE THE LEAST ARE WELCOME

In Deuteronomy, we encounter again the law of tithing-- offering, giving to the Community. We think that it is us giving to God. It is true. But because we're giving to God, what God does with our giving is He gives it back to us a thousand-fold.

So, look at Deuteronomy 26: 10-11:



"Then place the produce before the Lord your God, and bow to the ground in worship before him. Afterward you may go and celebrate because of all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household. Remember to include the Levites and the foreigners living among you in the celebration."

DEUT 26:
10-11 MLT

Our faith, our practice as Christians, is that when we harvest, we put a portion in a basket and we give it to worship, we give it to Church, we give it to God. Because God is doing something with it.

So, your tithing feeds the Community. It is not just to honor God. Because by honoring God with our first fruits, we get to do this: we get to build Feasts.

You know, I'm a product of the Community's kindness. There was a time when our family was in trouble-- when my dad was going through dialysis three times a week. It was so hard because I was in med school and some of our brothers and sisters were already, you know, supposed to be in graduate school but they skipped, they just worked in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) this and that.

It was a hard time, but you know what, the faith community where my parents were members at the time, the Bukas Loob sa Diyos, gave us some sort of allowance just for us to get by.

I like a community where we're all giving so we are able to help those in need. And thanks be to God, we get to share our resources with the Levites, the poor, the oppressed.

We get to help beneficiaries of our Mercy Ministries: The Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly; Grace To Be Born (for unwed pregnant women in crisis); He Cares Mission for street children... It's because there is an entire Community, a large Community that you are part of, that gets to help those in need.

The FEAST FAMILY September 17, 2023 29

Co-Creators

Let me continue:

"Then you must declare in the presence of the LORD your God, 'I have taken the sacred gift from my house and have given it to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows, just as you commanded me...'"

DEUT 26:
13 MLT

"Then you must declare in the presence of the Lord your God I have taken the sacred gift from my house and have given it to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows just as you have commanded me. I have not violated or forgotten any of your commands. I have obeyed the Lord my God and have done everything you have commanded me."



You cannot say that you have done everything that God has commanded you if you do not include the little ones, if you do not feed the poor, if you do not help that person who is abused and oppressed. You cannot tell God that "I have done everything that You have commanded," if you do not care for the poor.

God's poor, the Levites, the widows, those representatives of the poor ones in our communities.

God calls us to be His partners in co-creating Heaven-- Eden here and now. You are not just a mere creature existing in God's creation. No.

**GOD CALLS US TO BE HIS PARTNERS
IN CO-CREATING EDEN HERE AND NOW.**

God is telling us, "You co-create with me." Create Heaven in the midst of this world. You bring to others that heavenly gift, you bring that beautiful experience of love, peace, kindness, and joy.

Hey, in this dark world, you, the Light of Jesus Family, The Feast community, your role is to feed people. Still shine light through the dark times of the oppressed, of the hurting, of the sick.

In Heaven, Eden includes my neighbor too -- especially the suffering.



This Is Us

Last week, we launched the Feast Conference and I met someone who told me “I bought tickets already.”

I said, “Oh, congratulations. Thank you for supporting the Feast Conference!”

And he said, “Doc, help me pray. Help me pray because this ticket is for someone I don't know yet but I'm buying this one because I know God wants me to buy this one for someone that I don't know yet.”

And that is a sign for me-- that is a sign that we are becoming a Community of generous people, a Community of not just looking after your own seat, but looking if are there people who don't have seats. The Community is not just here. You know, there are people watching online. I know of people who are bedridden-- they cannot come here but they are here, they have been here supporting us all the time, giving all the time.

There are parents, the young parents, the first ones, first second-year of having a baby. The sound system here is too loud for the babies, but the parents still come.

We now have a kids' area because we still welcome them to The Feast where the young kids can play. Parents or guardians can attend The Feast there as well because we are streaming The Feast online and we have a screen in the room for you so you can watch the Talk, the Mass. I've asked our Eucharistic ministers to bring the Communion there. We do that.

Why?

Because this is us, this is God's Community. This is you and me.



MERCY MINISTRIES

If go be for us, who can be against us?

--Romans 8:31

The FEAST LITTLE ACTS OF LOVE PART 4

Not Typhoon Ineng...

YES, if Jesus is for us, who can be against us?

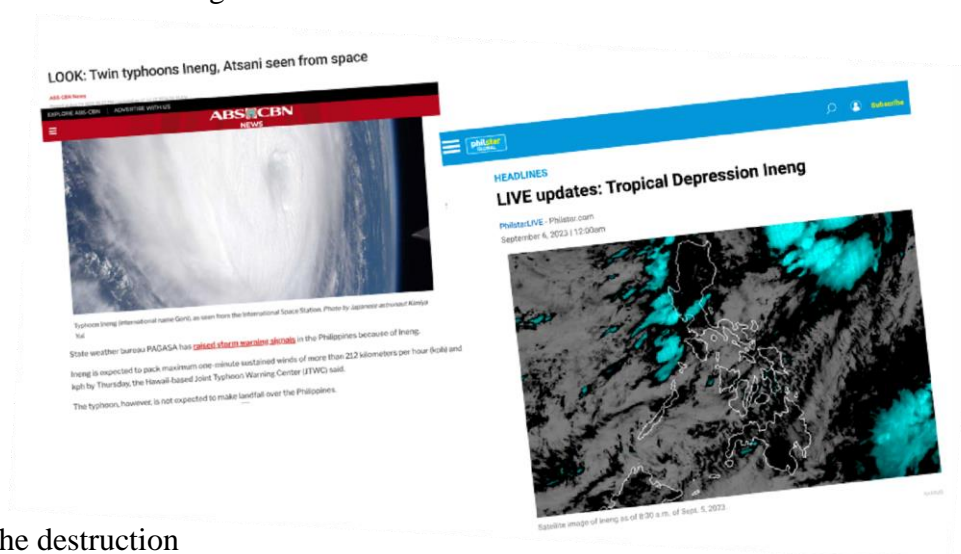
In the same vein, if God is for us, *what* can be against us?

Not calamities. That's the solid claim in faith of our Light of Jesus Disaster Recovery Ministry now we call The Feast Little Acts of Love.

After Typhoons Egay, Falcon, Goring, the Ministry braced up for Typhoon Goni or what we know here in the Philippines as Typhoon Ineng.

Goni, at its highest wind speed of 213 km/h, was a tropical cyclone --strong winds, thunderstorms, heavy rains, and squalls—sudden, sharp wind speed lasting minutes. Coming August 13, Goni passed through the Marianas Islands, Guam, the Philippine Sea, Rukyu Islands, moved on to Japan August 23, and crossed Russia and China August 25-30. Along its path, Goni killed 74 people and left P\$1.05 billion in damage.

According to online news reports, as it passed through the Philippine Sea, Typhoon Ineng turned into a powerful tropical cyclone—strong winds, thunderstorms, heavy rains, squalls— sudden, sharp wind speed lasting minutes. Across northern Luzon, Ineng dropped intense precipitation — rain exceeding what is normal—strengthening the *habagat* or southwest wind, which resulted in deadly landslides, flooded fields, and the destruction of thousands of houses.



Who Are for Us

The typhoons come and go, but bottom line, we have come to realize they can't really be against us. Because God has blessed us with people who are *for us*. Like our donors. Here, we honor one donor who humbly requested that we withhold her name. So, let's just call her here as Sis. Mary.

Sis. Mary lives in Calasiao, one of the towns frequently flooded.

She has become a donor of LOJ following an intense spiritual awakening.

She said she was a regular church-goer but not involved in any spiritual community

Then she got to know about our Light of Jesus Family through the *Kerygma* magazine, now called *The Feast*, and books of Bro. Bo Sanchez.

At the onslaught of Typhoon Ondoy in 2009, Bro. Bo encouraged our Community leaders to form a Ministry to help members in times of calamities.



Thus was the establishment of the LOJ Disaster Recovery Ministry now we call The Feast Little Acts of Love. Today's leaders, *from left*: Bro. Hermie Morelos, chairman; and Bro. Marvin Tan, executive director.

In LOJ in 2019, Sis. Mary came to get acquainted with Bro. Barz Lomibao (*right*), head of The Feast Little Acts-Dagupan, who did not waste a second to invite her to join The Feast Dagupan.

She now regularly attends Feast Dagupan's gathering at Goring's Pancit Malabon restaurant in Dagupan every Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

And she promptly began to serve in a couple of LOJ Ministries.

Learning about the needs of The Feast Little Acts of Love Ministry, she has contributed *Little Acts of Love*: cash, clothes, and toiletries.

But as we've always known, God would not be out-given.

Yes, Sis. Mary has received grace upon grace.

"Spiritual family, friendship, spiritual, financial blessings," she happily enumerates.

Indeed, Jesus goes before us anywhere we go, and so, no one or not a thing can be against us.

That's how the Lord has blessed Sis. Mary and all of us to enable us to extend to His people Little Acts of Love.

Philippines

Typhoon Ineng's worth of damages in Ilocos Norte rise to Php1.8 billion

News and Press Release • Source: [Govt. Philippines](#) • Posted: 27 Aug 2015 • Originally published: 27 Aug 2015 •
Origin: [View original](#)

LAOAG CITY, Ilocos Norte, Aug. 27, 2015 (PIA) -- (UPDATE) The estimated worth of damages to agriculture and infrastructures caused by Typhoon Ineng in Ilocos Norte has ballooned to P1.8- billion.

As of August 27, the report from the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management and Resiliency Council (PDRMRC) showed that the cost of damage to infrastructures was Php1, 719, 588, 373.74 while damage to agriculture and fishery was posted at Php89, 907, 579.06.

"Hundreds of millions are needed to restore our damaged agriculture and infrastructures caused by Typhoon Ineng in the province," said Governor Imee R. Marcos.

Primary country: [Philippines](#)

Source: [Government of the Philippines](#)

Disaster: [Philippines: Floods and Landslide - Jun 2015](#)

Format:





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, The Feast Family is 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 Mercy Ministries. 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 minor girls particularly victims of sexual abuse.



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



He Cares Mission
provides shelter and pastoral care for street children.

Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation
grants scholarships to indigent 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.

CHOOSE HOW YOU WANT TO GIVE

1. Donate ONLINE (through credit card) Go to www.kerygmfamily.com and click 'DONATE' box Paypal I US Donations.

2. Pick Up from Your House or Office (Metro Manila Only) Cash or Checks Address Checks to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. 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.

3. Mail 12 Post-Dated Checks to Our Office for US and CANADA: Address Checks to Kerygma Family, 848 Rainbow Blvd # 1937, Las Vegas, NV 89107. For Other Countries/Philippines: Address Check to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and mail (registered mail) to Shepherd's Voice, 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109

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FAMILY ONLINE NEWSMAGAZINE

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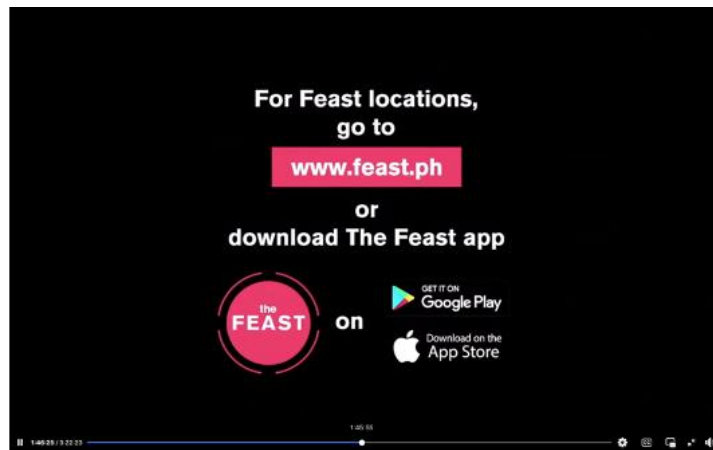
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Go and make disciples of all men.

— Matthew 28:19

