



## *Thank You Forever!*

TODAY, we give you the last Talk of our life-changing Feast Special Mini-Series: *Thanks-Living*

On October 8, 2023, Bro. John Ben Rodriguez gave us Talk 1: *Grateful Living*

On October 15, Bro. JC Libiran delivered Talk 2: *Generous Living*.

On October 22, Bro. Didoy Lubaton tackled Talk 3: *Greater Living*

Today, October 29, 2023, Bro. Audee Villaraza gives us Talk 4: *Glorious Living*.

We said this exciting Feast Special Mini-Series is our way of saying Thank You-- Thank You to the Lord and to you!

Indeed, Thank You Forever!

May your dreams come true,

**Bo Sanchez**

# Sky Is *Not* the Limit

TODAY, we focus on the story of this paralyzed man. His friends wanted to bring him to Jesus so He could heal the man. But they couldn't because a big crowd had gathered in the house where Jesus was staying. So, they dug a hole through the roof...

Now, with the roof open, the sky is the limit to what the men could do for their paralyzed friend.

Do you have limitations preventing you from achieving what you want in life?

Is there a roof above your head blocking whatever it is you need to have a good life?

The Good News is that the roof can be removed so you are open to the vast sky of provisions, solutions, that you need.

The Better News is the sky is *not* the limit. There is so much more beyond those clouds. There is Someone beyond the sky who gives us not only good but *Glorious Life*.

That's exactly the exciting message we will learn today.

God wants to remove your roof. God wants you to reach Him beyond the sky. Have a glorious Feast.

Thankful Living,

**Audee Villaraza**



**WELCOME**  
to our  
**Feast Special Mini-Series**  
*Thanks-Living*  
**Talk 4:**  
*Glorious Living*



## ***2+2+2+ 2= More!***

IN LAST Sunday's issue, *The Feast Family* presented 12 or a dozen friends – and more.

In this issue, yes, we present four 2s = More!

In his homily in last Sunday's Feast, Fr. Albert Garong presented the issue about the conflict between King Caesar and the Civil Government. Between the two, to whom should you be loyal?, *page 4*.



Last Feast Sunday, Bro. Bo Sanchez and Bro. Didoy Lubaton tackled another issue: being bigger and being smaller—and which between the two equals to *Greater Living*. That's the title of Talk 3 of our Feast Special Mini-Series, *Thanks-Living. Flashback* on *pages 18-35*.

Today, Bro. Audee Villaraza introduces two kinds of roofs—a whole roof and one with a hole. And which between the two can lead you to *Glorious Living*. That's Talk 4 of our mini-series which Bro. Audee introduces on *page 2*.



Also in this issue, meet Lola Sol, a beneficiary of our Anawim Home for Abandoned Elderly, our featured Mercy Ministry this October. Her name means *sunlight*. But there was a time her life dimmed. Light and Darkness—two of life's realities Lola Sol knows only too well. Be inspired by her story, *pages 36-37*.



Yes, we give you four stories about 2s—guaranteed to give you *more* of life's lessons.

All for God's Glory,

**Randy Borromeo**  
Media Ministry  
Executive Director





## ***FLASHBACK!***

**OCTOBER 22, 2023**

### **Holy Mass**



**TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

### **Homily**

**FR. ALBERT GARONG**

on the Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

*Paying the Imperial Tax to Caesar*

Excerpts...

GOOD MORNING, Everyone! Happy Sunday to all of you!

I usually find Sundays great, of course. But especially today. You know why? Because we usually have this Mass at 8:00 a.m. But now, we're having it at 10 o'clock. It's great!

When I woke up, I was like, "Bakit parang marami akong time ngayong umagang ito? -- Why do I have a longer time to rest this morning?"

Because we adjusted the time we start The Feast. Thank you for that.

**4 The FEAST FAMILY October 29, 2023**



## Consistent Message in the Parables

If you've noticed, these past Sundays, we've been hearing about parables-- different parables, different stories. Do you still remember what was the parable last Sunday? *The Parable of the Wedding Banquet*.

So, there is a wedding banquet prepared by a king for his son. He invites some guests but they refuse to attend. Except for one who comes not wearing the proper wedding garment.

That's just one of many parables that we hear-- and in all of these parables, there are two points that are consistent.

First Point: There are people who, one way or another, fail. Guests are invited to the wedding but decline the invitation. In another parable (*Parable of the Vineyard Workers*—Matthew 20:1-16) the workers who worked longer hours complain that those who worked only one hour received the same pay they did. (In the *Parable of Two Sons*—Matthew 21: 28-32), the sons do not do what they said to their father that they would do.

These people always fall short of what's expected of them.

That's always one side of the story.

The other side of the story is that there is always this all-powerful, almighty, authority figure-- a father, a king, a vineyard owner-- who is always generous, always merciful, who forgives the servant who owes a lot of debts, always extra in his care and concern and generosity for his people.

And you know, here in The Feast, we affirm those positive qualities, right? Just the name itself-- *Feast*-- affirms that there is so much abundance of blessings and graces there for grabs-- ready to be received.

You have this prayer every session: "*Today, I receive all of God's love for me...*" It says that there is so much love to be received. It starts with the reality that there's no lack of love in this world. Instead, love overflows here.

But then, the premise is that we say, "*I receive it.*"



## Put God First

So, it seems the effect of the prayer depends on how you receive all this love. That's the clincher, right? There is The Feast, there is an abundance of blessings, and there is a merciful, all-powerful God. If it's as simple as that, then everyone should be happy, everyone should be living in perfect abundance.

But we know that's not true. Because we have to receive the blessing-- and receiving is not as simple as it seems. It's complicated because as much as we value God, as much as we like to receive what this God offers us, there are always other things at the table. Always, there are competing options.

Our Gospel today talks about this dynamic of what is for God and what is for others. And what does Jesus say?

“Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar but give to God what belongs to God.”

So, the question now is how do we receive the blessing? In the midst of a world that has so many other competing voices, and so many other attractive and appetizing options, where do we fit God?

Jesus makes it quite clear. He is saying that ultimately, where does everything go? To God. So, to receive the abundance of God's blessings, the first thing we must do is to put God first in our life. Put God first-- because, honestly, if you look at your life, and even in my life, is God always first?

Or sometimes, we say, “Lord, mamaya na lang ako magdadasal, ha? Kasi may deadline ako ngayon. -- Lord, I will pray later because right now, I have a deadline to beat.”

“Lord, mahal mo naman ako di ba? So, pwede bang two minutes na lang yung prayer ko ngayon. Ang dami kong aasikasuhin eh. --Lord, You love me, don't you? So, may I spend just two minutes in prayer? Because there are errands I have to attend to.”

“Lord, pikit ka muna. May gagawin akong hindi maganda, pero mag-do-donate ako ng malaki mamaya sa simbahan, sa LO (Love Offering).-- Lord, just close your eyes. I'm going to do something bad... But I will give a big donation to the church during the Love Offering.”

Wow. Right? In our decisions, words, and actions, is God first?

“Father, it's so hard to put God first. Because we have so many practical and pragmatic concerns that need our attention...”





## **Put God in Everything**

You who are here. So, you're putting God first, right? I wonder, however, how many of us here are already thinking: "Saan tayo kakain mamaya after ng Feast? Anong papanuorin nating sine?-- Where are we going to eat after the Feast? What movie shall we watch?"

Itong misang ito, kapag nag-extend ng two minutes, galit na kayo kay Father. Bwisit na bwisit na kayo. Kaya one hour 'tong homily ko humanda kayo sa akin.-- This Mass, if it extends

to two minutes, you would be mad, irritated with Father. So, I will extend my homily to one hour...:)

Yeah, but it's true, right? Even as you are here, you are divided, you are partitioned... 30% of your life for the Lord, the rest for other concerns.

So, put God first. We must always remember this: God is not a competing priority. Instead, God is the key. When you put God first, you'll realize that He empowers everything else that is going on in your life—your career, your dating life, your finances, your family life.

You're juggling all these concerns and you include God in those stuff you juggle. Don't! You put God first and you commit to that, and you'll realize that God doesn't compete with your other concerns. He doesn't take away your other plans and ambitions. Instead, He fulfills them, He purifies them, He guides them-- so that you will be directed to the right path. You will see clearer what you really are made for, and what you are really longing for in your heart.

God is like that. He is not another entity. He is the source of all beings. So, put God first.

The Second Point we have to remember: As we put God first, we will also realize that we must put God in everything-- find God in everything because God is in everything.

We said there are many options at a feast, or at the banquet of life. But if you look deeply under all those options, you'll see God is also there. So, you're not really choosing one over the other. Instead, it's a matter of discerning and discovering where God is in all things.

## Use Everything for God's Glory

I love our First Reading today precisely because it tells us this message. The First Reading is about Cyrus, the king-- not of Israel but of the Babylonians. The Babylonians who conquered Israel, held the Israelites hostage, and exiled them to Babylon. The Israelites were held against their will, outside their homeland. Cyrus was the enemy of the people of God.

But what does God tell him through the prophet Isaiah? "You are my anointed one."

Huh? He's the enemy. Why is he the anointed one?

That's particularly weird for them because they were living at a time when they had many gods. So, there was the God of Israel, the God of Babylon... And then they were territorial-- the God of Israel is exclusive to Israel.

But here is Cyrus, living outside of Israel, being told by Israel's God in his territory in Babylon: "You are my anointed one. I am here. My power is also here because I am not just limited to Israel. My power is everywhere. My power, My Presence, My Being is found wherever it is because there are no other Gods than me. Every other god that you worship, they are false gods. They are not real."

I'm emphasizing this because we tend to look at life as if it's this black-and-white thing. God is here, God is not here. This is holy, this is not holy.

But our First Reading says otherwise. You can, if you look hard enough, find God in all things. That's why all things belong to God. He is always there.



### Reading I: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

*<sup>1</sup> Thus says the Lord to my anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I hold, so that I may subjugate the nations before his face, and I may turn the backs of kings, and I may open the doors before him, and so that the gates will not be shut.*

*<sup>4</sup> For the sake of Jacob, my servant, and Israel, my elect, I have even called you by your name. I have taken you up, and you have not known me.<sup>5</sup> I am the Lord, and there is no one else. There is no god beside me. I girded you, and you have not known me.<sup>6</sup> So may those who are from the rising of the sun, and those who are from its setting, know that there is no one beside me. I am the Lord, and there is no other.*





## Separation of Church and State

I'm emphasizing this because we tend to look at life as if it's this black-and-white thing. God is here, God is not here. This is holy, this is not holy.

But our First Reading says otherwise. You can, if you look hard enough, find God in all things. That's why all things belong to God. He is always there.

You can always use your ambitions and your plans to give glory to the Lord. Whatever your passion is-- it may be dancing, it may be, I don't know, vulcanizing, it may be sports. I love coffee and I'm trying to use that for God.

Everything that's good-- not evil itself, of course-- can be used for God's glory.

There's a final point I'd like to bring to our current situation. Yesterday, I baptized a child. I could not hear myself saying the prayers because the nearby Barangay was playing a loud song. I was like, the Barangay must be sponsoring the reception-- it has come ahead of the baptism rites, the party is already going on... You see, it's the Barangay election season... Here we go again... the Barangay getting involved in the baptism event? But isn't it said what belongs to Caesar belongs to Caesar, and what belongs to God belongs to God? Separation of church and state.

We must put God first and find God in everything. That includes how you choose your leaders. That includes when you run as a leader, when you are in a leadership position of influence. It means you have a responsibility to bring back the glory to the Lord.

How you shade those ballots must reflect what you feel-- how you bring glory back to the Lord because that's how we are as Christians...n



## Reading II: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5B

*<sup>1</sup> Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace to you and peace.*

*<sup>2</sup> We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly<sup>3</sup> calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father,<sup>4</sup> knowing, brothers and sisters loved by God, how you were*

*chosen. <sup>5AB</sup> For our gospel did not come to you in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with much conviction.*

## Find God in Everything

Today is the feast of one of the greatest saints of our time: Pope John Paul II, the Great Pope. And what did he do? He's the most traveled pope. He kept on going to different places.

He said, "Holiness is not running away from the world but it is embracing the world and bringing the Gospel and letting the Gospel shine out."

He said whatever are you looking for, at the heart of it, it's always God. The happiness that you seek, the hunger that you feel, the thirst that you have, in each of those is God-- your search for God.

So, hope that in everything we do, we put God first and let's remember God is already there in whatever we do.

It's the same with humans. Going viral today is a video about a group of people from a Protestant church who were mocking people who have gone away from their church. At least, that seems to be the point: It tells us, too, how we deal with people who are different from us.

Do we say, "God is only here in this church...This is the only holy church-- everyone else is condemned."

Again, God, we can find Him in everything... And we must do that... And we can learn that-- if we keep putting God first. May God bless us all.

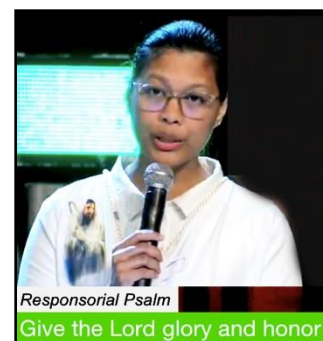


## Responsorial Psalm: Psalms 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10

**R.** (7b) *Give the Lord glory and honor.*

<sup>1</sup> *Sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all you lands.*

<sup>3</sup> *Tell his glory among the nations;  
among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.*





## Welcome!

### **BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:**

Good Morning, Everybody!

Are there people here joining us for the first time?

If that's you, please stand up.

Friends, I'd like to direct your attention to all those standing up.

Come on, clap your hands, make them feel at home! Once upon a time, you were there in their position. And now, they're here.

Welcome to this gigantic family of God! This is a place where you are loved.

Welcome home!

After the session, we'd like you to stick around, and come here in front.

We'd love to meet you and pray for you.

God bless you.

Thank you so much.





## Love Offering

You could've been elsewhere doing something else. You could've stayed home in bed for that extra hour of sleep. And yet, you're here in church. Do you think it's a good decision for you to be here in the Presence of God?

I can say the same thing when it comes to your resources.

You chose to invest in the Kingdom of God by giving to the church. You could've done something else and spent your money on, you know, the iPhone 15. You could spend your money on that new shoe, or that new bag, or that milk tea.

That's the truth. Instead of spending your money on something else, you choose to give to the Kingdom of God. A portion of that goes to giving to the Lord. You know, the Scripture says wherever your treasure is, that's where your heart is.





## Put Your Treasure in God

If you choose to put your treasure in God, your heart is with God. And I praise you for that. I thank you for that.

This is the part where we get to respond to the goodness of the Lord and how He has blessed us this month, how He has blessed us this year.

And how He will continue to bless you for the rest of 2023!



## Help the Feast Mercy Ministries. Help them all.



Anawim Lay Missions Foundation, Inc.



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Jeremiah 33:6-7 Foundation



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# Worship!

## EXHORTATIONS



### **NICO NARVAEZ:**

Good Morning, Feast! Come on, let's worship God today!

You know, of late, everything has been so divided. You know: I stand for this, I agree with this, I agree with that. "I like the kagawad-- council member--but I don't like this chairman."

There is always something to be divided about. But today, my friends, we're all together as one. We're going to gather as one in the Name of Jesus.

Come on! We're not going to think about politics.

We're not going to think about pop culture.

No. Today is about Jesus. And we're gathered as His children today. Amen.

So, we're going to sing as one.

So, I will read from Ephesians 4: *"Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body, one Spirit just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. Listen, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all, in all, and living through all."*

Come on, give Him praise! Thank you, Jesus!

### **TISHA CARO:**

Now church, these aren't just words.

This is our story. This is our truth.

The reason we get to stand today,

the reason we can sing,

we can lift up our hands

is the King of kings.

So, with faith, let's sing again!



**BO SANCHEZ:**

*Father, we proclaim that there is power in this room-- the same power that created the mountains, the hills, the valleys, every planet, and every moon, and every star, and the sun in this universe. The same power that divided the Red Sea! The same power that broke the walls of Jericho! The same power that raised Jesus from the dead! The same power that made the blind see, and made the lame walk, and made the sick heal!*



*The same power that is in this room, the Holy Spirit, the anointed 12 men who preached Your love to this world and built the Church Oh, Lord God, we say Yes to that power that is in this room right now. And we thank You that this power is healing those who need to be healed. The same power raising up, lifting up people right now. We say Yes right now!*

*Everybody around this room, say Yes! Say Yes to the power that is in this room in Jesus' Name. Amen!*

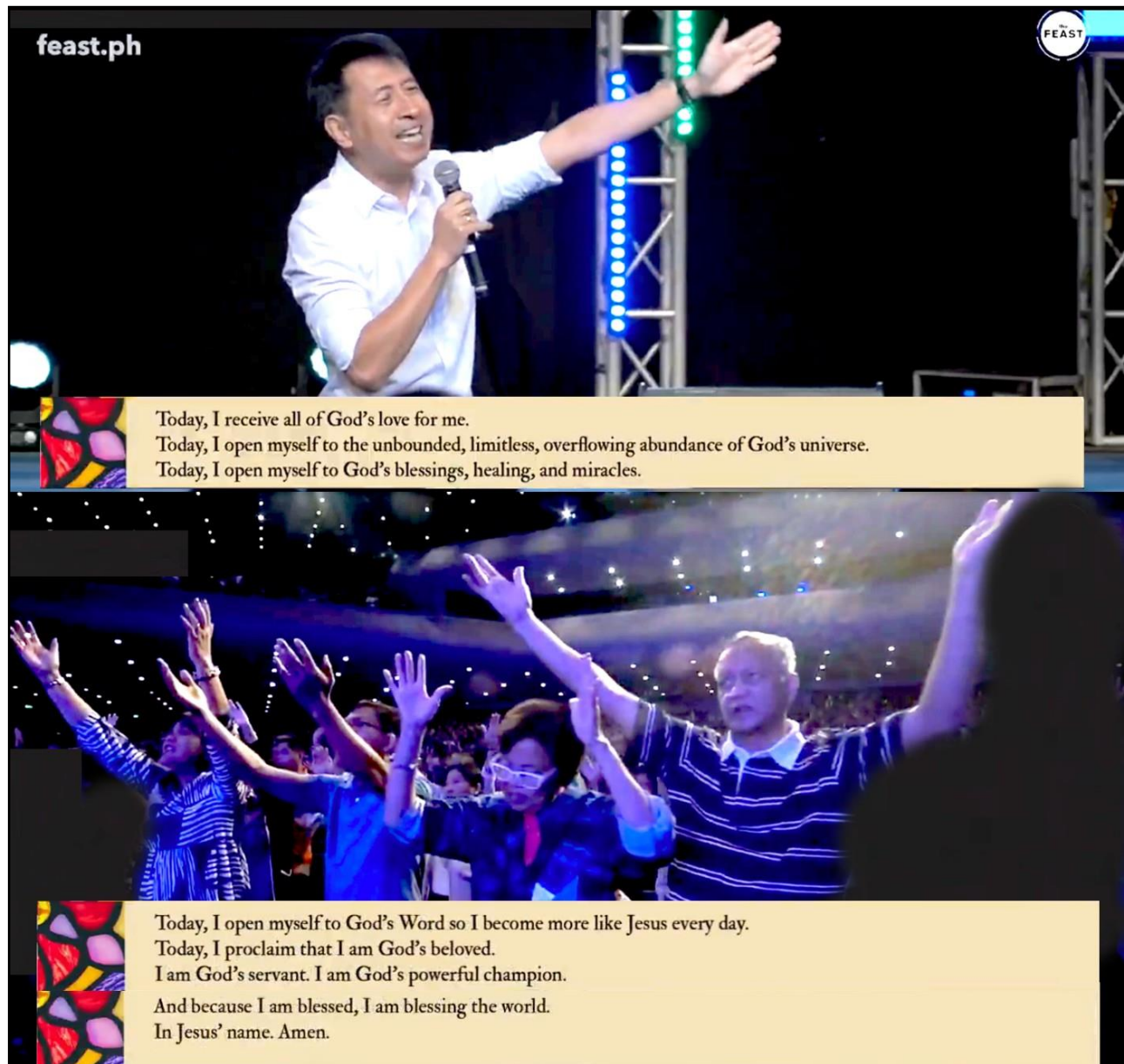








# NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE



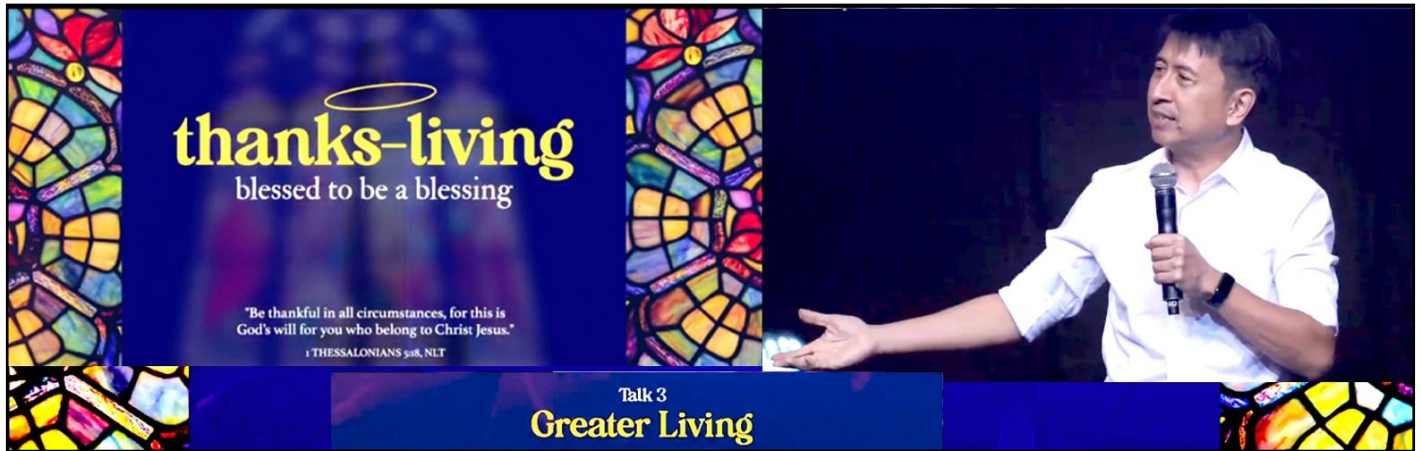
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FEAST

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



## INTRODUCTION

### **BRO. BO SANCHEZ:**

How many of you have ever been rejected even once in your life? You apply for a job-- the company doesn't call you. How many of you applied for a school and the school said you're not worthy? How many of you yung crush mo hindi ka niya crush-- you're not crush of your crush?

I want you to know, I applied for the high school department of Ateneo. I was going into high school, I took the exam. I received a letter and it said, "We regret to inform you..."

I didn't get into Ateneo high school.

I want you to know that I courted a girl when I was single. She rejected me. Maybe you're wondering, "How could anyone reject you?"

But she did.

Why am I telling you that story? Because it's so easy to get that rejection.

You know, it's so easy on social media now. You post something and then your likes are less than the previous likes, than the average likes-- and you say, "What's wrong with me?"

And you compare your likes and your friend's likes. Mas marami sa kanya.-- Your friend has more likes.

It's so easy to feel rejected, to feel down, to feel like a failure, and to carry that rejection as a label hanging around your neck wherever you go: *I'm a failure, I'm a reject. There's something wrong with me.*

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## Have You Been Rejected?

A few days ago, I was invited to speak at the United States embassy and I gave my talk in front of Americans and Filipinos-- everyone working in the consular office.

It was amazing! First time for me to understand the history of the buildings there. OMG! After my talk, they led me to a tour of the place and they told me the history of the places. Do you know that the room where I gave my talk was the exact same room where General Yamashita was tried for his war crimes in 1945? That's how incredible the history of that place was.

But then I realized, I had my own history there. Some 30 years ago, I was a 21-year-old kid applying for a U.S. visa. Denied! That was painful.

Then, I was invited to go to the U.S. to give a talk and I applied again.... People were telling me you will be approved. Denied again! That was even more painful.

But you know, in life, there's something you have to learn:

*Keep on walking.*

Stand up and keep walking. Put your right foot in front of your left foot. And just keep on doing that. Over and over again.

Have you been rejected in your life? Have you failed?

Have you been disappointed?

Are you frustrated with what's happening in your life? You don't understand the struggle that you're in?

There's so much darkness around you, and in your mind, you're asking, "What's wrong with me?"

I'm telling you, right now, you just stand up, pick up yourself, keep on walking, keep on moving, keep on doing the right thing, keep on following Jesus, and keep on trusting Him.

I'll tell you why...







## **God Is Bigger Than Rejection**

Some 30-plus years later, where was I? The one who was denied-- not worth receiving the U.S. visa-- one day, I was a resource speaker at the U.S. embassy. I was in front of diplomats, everyone sitting in front of me... I was shaking hands with these guys.

When I received that letter from Ateneo High School, “We regret to inform you...” I thought ako yung pinakabobo sa buong universe. -- I thought I was the dumbest in the entire universe.

Ten years later, the Ateneo College department invited me to be a professor in Theology-- in College. Ten years ago, not enough, not worthy, not intelligent enough to be a high school student. Ten years later, teach Theology.

Never be defined by rejection, by failure. I’ll tell you why...

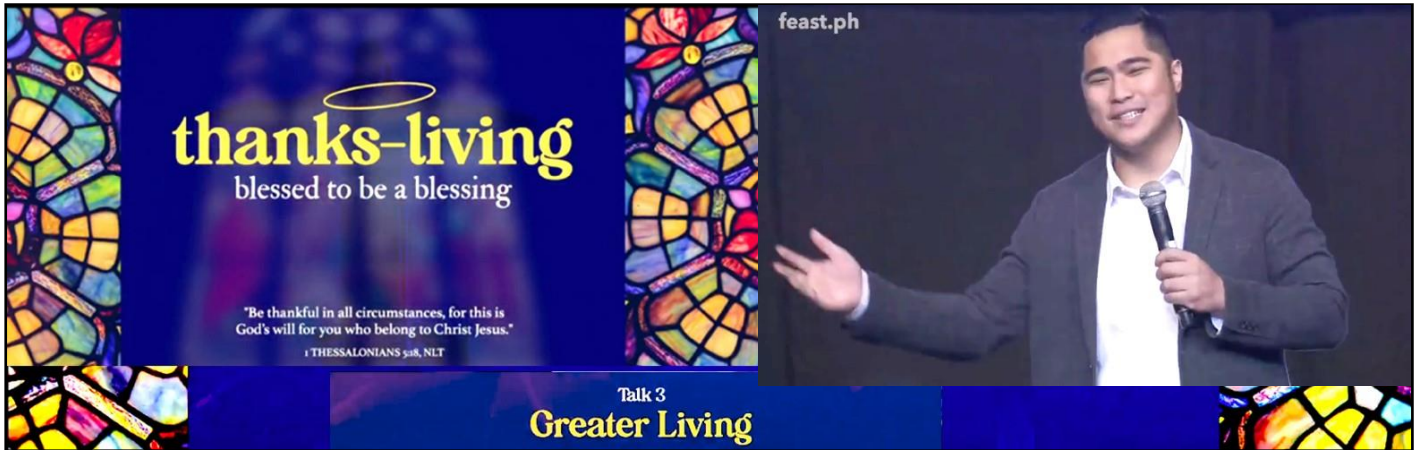
God is bigger than whatever rejection you’re going through. And whatever rejection you’re going through, open up that rejection, there’s a redirection to your greater future, to your brighter future.

By the way, I’m not the preacher in this place. I’m just a Feaster just like you. A few years ago, I stepped down after 40 years of leading the Community and I love it. I love being here every week. If I’m not traveling and going to other Feasts, I’m here. I love worshiping the Lord. I love sitting beside you. And I love listening to God’s Word. And so, today we’re going to be hearing God’s Word.

You know, sometimes I just feel how blessed are we to have a Community like this. How blessed are we! How blessed are we to be a Feaster! And I pray that the Word of God just blesses you today.

We’re blessed by the leaders here. Please welcome the one and only, my doctor, Didoy Lubaton!





**BRO. DIDOY LUBATON:**

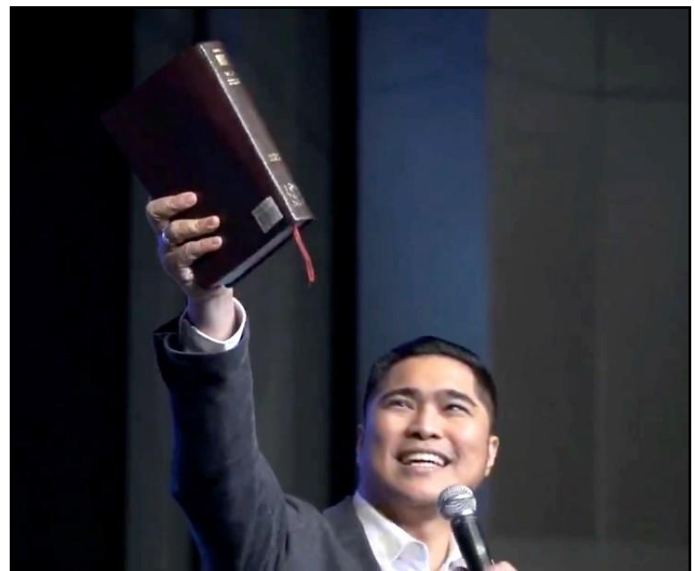
*God is bigger than your rejection.* Powerful, Bro. Bo.

Welcome to our series, *Thanks-Living*. I pray that this powerful series transforms you—the inner you, and you become a transformation agent to the people around you. People out there—people in the offices, in businesses aren't the ones hearing this now. It is you. And God is at work in us.

May I give you an encouragement today to allow Him, let Him be at work in us—give us a spiritual surgery, if you will. That procedure can only happen if you give Him permission to do so. Will you give permission to God today? Amen.

Let's lift this Bible up and let's pray altogether and just sing in honor to the Word of God. Together:

*Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet  
and a Light unto my path.*





Our series talks about different ways we can live.

And today, our talk is about *Greater Living*.

**Greater Living**

What does it mean to be great or to be greater? Is it part of God's plan that we become greater beings?

Greater living. Greater purpose.

Our one big message today is: *Be the bigger person*.

What does it mean to be a bigger person? What does it mean to live a greater life?

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## Two Brothers

Let me tell you a story.

It's the story of an older brother and a younger brother. One day, they were so excited because their mom and their dad came from the United States... And you know, Filipino children love people coming from overseas. Why? Because of the *pasalubong*—a gift or present, a souvenir. They're excited to receive the *pasalubong*.

Then, the mom handed watches to the two brothers. One was brown, shinier, and bigger, one was blue, simpler, and smaller.

Naturally, the bigger brother would get the bigger share. But the younger brother snatched it, ran to the other side of the room, and kept it to himself. And so, the older brother was visibly upset. He was about to confront his younger brother but the mother saw them and without saying a word, motioned to the older brother to *let it go*.

And he stood his ground, tears welling in his eyes, and let it go.

His name is Kuya Aboy-- my older brother.

In our life journey, there are many times that we're going to be tested on how we react to people. What was supposed to be yours, God allowed that others would get it.

And you are like, "Lord naman, bakit siya? Bakit hindi ako?— Why he, not me?"

I thought naisahan ko—outwit, beat—my brother. I did not see him making fuss, nor any backlash from him ever! Up to now, I've never heard a bad word from him.

And I've realized how many times-- as we were growing-- he chose to become the bigger person. Nagparaya, nagbigay—generously giving out. Hindi naman nagpaabuso—but not allowed himself to be abused. Ibang usapan yun, ah.-- That's already a different story, right?

But he *let it go* so that I may have that joy of owning that bigger, shinier, brown watch.

And it's not about the watches anymore. It's the lesson that I want to share with you today...





## What *Becoming Bigger* Means

Becoming the bigger person doesn't mean that you're better than anyone else. Becoming the bigger person means you're choosing to operate from a higher level of consciousness which means that you have kindness, compassion, and understanding. They become your guiding principles. You live for the sake of others. You let others be happy-- even if you're sad. You celebrate other people's wins and they would have better things-- even if your wins are delayed, even if you feel rejected. That is fine.

That is our lesson from our talk today.

It's not an easy talk. You know me-- when I give talks, they're not easy. The lessons are not easy to chew and swallow. But they are life-changing.

And here's the lesson--God's Word for us today:

God says: "This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do my command."

### John 15:12-14 NLT



This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

Today, let's allow God to love us so that we get to love others, not in our own way, but in God's loving way.

Today, we're going to have practical ways to become a bigger person. When we ought to be big-- not to make people feel small-- but because it's the right thing to do. It is God's commandment to love others as He has loved us.

Becoming bigger is not easy, it's not necessarily easier.

Like, driving is hard...Let's see if you can be a bigger person at the parking lot later... Or at the long line at the MRT station-- when one goes ahead of you... If it doesn't go your way, it's hard...

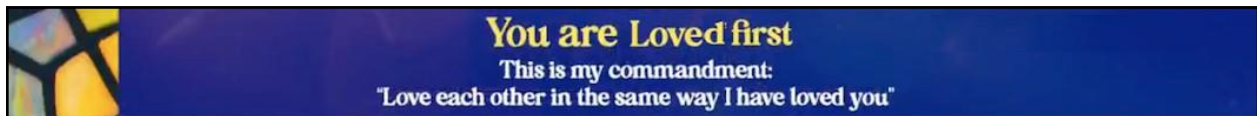


## Three Key Reflections

Today, we become bigger people not because we just want to be big— but because there's a big God in us. There's a big God working in our life, there's a big God lifting us up from where we are now.

We look up to Jesus as an example of one who carried the world, saved the world, and even died on the Cross. He died so that we may live. Are we ready to die so that others may live?

As we proceed, I'm going to give you three key reflections on our key verse:



**First Reflection:** You have to remember that you are loved and that **you are loved first.** "Love each other in the same way I have loved you."

When God calls you to obedience, He blesses you first. He equips you. When He calls you to love, the premise is you are loved first. You will not have less; you will not lose-- because God loved you first.

You are in a position to be generous and to be giving to others-- because you have been given everything that you need. That is the premise.

And just a quick reflection:

How do you feel? How do you know? How is your relationship

with God? Because your relationship matters. The commandment is hard to follow if you do not feel that you are loved by God.

Is your relationship with God secure? You know that you are loved, that you are provided for, and that you are trusting your relationship with Him.

Otherwise, instead of intimacy, you feel so far away, disconnected from God-- afraid of Him.



**How's your relationship with God?**

## Open Your Heart to God

My prayer today is you open your heart, your spirit, and your life to God so that He may fill you up with His love.

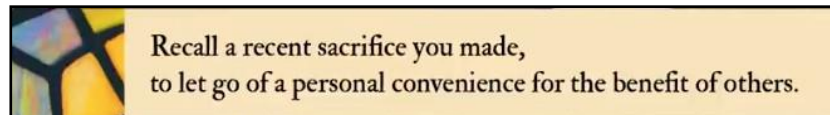
Mahirap mahal in yung taong ayaw magpamahal. Pero mahal na mahal ka ni Lord kung alam mo lang.-- It's difficult someone who does not want to be loved. But the Lord loves you, if you only knew...



**Second Reflection: It's not just about you.** "There is no greater love than this, than to lay down one's life for one's friends."

The secret to a great life is a great love. Jesus laid it out very clearly for us. You want to live a great life? We cannot live just for ourselves. We serve others so that others may live.

A practical reflection:  
Can you remember a recent sacrifice that you



made? You let go of a personal convenience so that others would benefit. I hope you have such a sacrifice. If you haven't yet, make one today. It could be big; it could be small-- but it counts.



**Third Reflection: You belong to God's tribe.** "You are my friends if you do what I command."

Simply, we would be known as Christians if we love like Christ. We would be known not by our achievements, not by how pogi-- handsome--we are. I'm not handsome. Bro. Bo and Bro, Audee are. I'm just tall, dark, and talkative.:)

So, we would be known by how we love one another. When you go into the grocery, when you go into companies, what's the energy? Are they excited that you're there? Or are they afraid?

You know: The electric feeling of you being there inspires them. Or makes them perspire?

We would be known by how we love one another.



## Reflection Question

Our reflection question for us today: Do people get to know Jesus more by the way they know you and your lifestyle? We are sometimes the Gospel, the Bible, that people can read. People just don't open their Bibles anymore. In my younger days, we did. But now, they will just look at you.

Before we proceed, I want to highlight this:

One big enemy of a person trying to become a bigger person

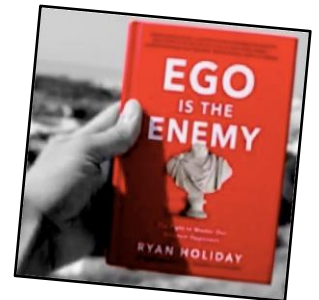
There is one big enemy of a person who's

trying to become a bigger person. There's one big stumbling block I want to highlight and remind us all of today-- and

Do people get to know Jesus more by the way they know you and your lifestyle?

it's not about what you present or do to others. It's your actual self.

Ryan Holiday wrote a book titled *Ego Is the Enemy*. Ego often gets in the way of us becoming the bigger person. It's the part of us that wants to win arguments. It's the part of us that hold on to grudges. It's the part of us that wants to be right at all costs, at the sacrifice of others. When you let go of your ego, you create a space for peace, understanding, and harmony. And it's not an easy choice. It's a humbling experience.



Becoming the bigger person does not necessarily mean being in a higher place. You as a bigger person actually kneel as a servant of others. It's humbling to let go of your pride. It's humbling to be kind to one who opposes you--even if you know you're right. It's humbling to face the consequences-- even if it's not your fault.

Be a bigger person today. Often, our blind spots are what we forget. We make decisions, we act in certain ways because they are comfortable to our ego.

You know, I'm grateful for the caring people around me, in my life, whom I have asked and given permission to show me my blind spots-- when I'm making so many decisions, when I focus on myself, when I am boastful, or when I forget who and what matters most.

I have worked to have great people around me, greater people. So that I would be lifted up with the people around me.

It's a great inner battle that we ought to face. There are so many wars around us but there is a worse battle within you. It's a battle with your ego. And, you know, it's a daily decision to keep your ego grounded not just for others-- but because it's also good for you.



# 5 Practical Ways To Become a Bigger Person



I want to expound on this talk and give you five practical ways to become a bigger person.

This is really good. I like it when I give a talk because it's not just about inspiring you. It's really, you know, what would be my *action* items after this talk because that's who we are as Christians. We're not just getting the Gospel from here (mind) to here (heart). We have to do the Gospel with our hands and feet.

The sacred call is not just within this place. When you get out of that door, do something and follow the Lord.

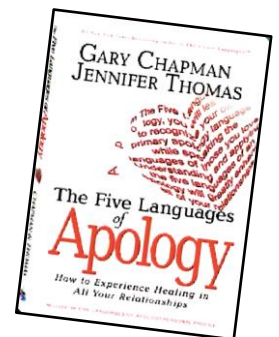
## 1. Give and Receive Forgiveness

One of the most powerful ways to become a bigger person is through forgiveness. When someone wrongs you, it's easy to hold a grudge, anger, or resentment. But by forgiving, you release the heavy burden that anger holds on to you. By forgiving, you release the angry places in your heart and it's good for your body really. It's good for your physical heart, not just for your emotional and spiritual heart.

Forgiveness is not just for the other person. Forgiveness is good for you. It's you freeing yourself from the chains of negativity. It's also a sign that you are becoming a bigger person when you take accountability for your mistakes-- when you learn to say sorry, when you're able to say, "My fault." Apologizing is recognizing the hurt that you caused someone. And you are ready to face the consequences.

*The Five Languages of Apology* presents five sentences that we ought to master. How many times do you seek and give forgiveness? Every day.

Here are the five sentences:



Express regret	<i>"I'm sorry."</i>
Accept responsibility	<i>"I was wrong."</i>
Make restitution	<i>"How can I make it right?"</i>
Plan for change	<i>"I'll take steps to prevent a reoccurrence."</i>
Request forgiveness	<i>"Can you find it in your heart to forgive me?"</i>

## 2.Listen Before You Speak



A bigger person practices emphatic communication. Empathy is a beautiful quality that allows you to put yourself in someone else's shoes, in someone else's place-- and you make an effort to understand their perspective.

Know where they're coming from. It's easier to respond to them with love and with passion. Being the bigger person, showing empathy even when it's challenging.

It's hard to listen even before you speak-- but that is God's design. We have two ears and one mouth for a purpose. We listen more than we speak.

And effective communication is the hallmark of a bigger person. Instead of resorting to shouting, blaming, and name-calling, we can strive to engage in calm, respectful conversations. We seek to understand before seeking to be understood.

It's amazing, guys, how problems can be resolved by having beautiful, meaningful, respectful conversations in family, business deals, corporate, sidelines, gigs. This is very powerful. It's amazing if we have an open mind, an open heart.

Simon Sinek said it powerfully: "There is a difference in listening and waiting for your turn to speak."

Let that sink in for a while.

**"There is a difference between listening  
and waiting for your turn to speak."**

**– Simon Sinek**

### 3. Be Responsive Rather Than Reactive



It is important to recognize the power of choice in how we respond to situations. Reacting is often a knee-jerk-- an impulsive way-- while responding is thoughtful and deliberate. By taking a moment to pause, even in a few seconds, by choosing to pause before you respond, you can be a bigger person in challenging situations. And I'm giving you the power today to be a bigger person. You can choose to respond rather than react.

Today, I want to make it much relevant as well. Very practical. We are in a highly connected world of social media. I was in Dubai this week for a business trip. But I was like, I felt like I was in Manila. Because single thing that's happening all around us, I still got to know. Because we are hyper-connected. And I realized how it shifts our mindset. I was in Dubai but I was not there because my consciousness, my attention is somewhere else.

I love *Reader's Digest*. When I was younger, my mom used to order copies. I love reading the publication. It is now online. And they have an article on *13 Social Media Etiquette Rules You Really Need to Stop Breaking*.



I'm going to distill it into five statements: 1) You can say it online only if you would say it in person; 2) You behave the same way online as you'd behave face-to-face; 3) Stay offline when you're angry; 4) Share responsibly. Avoid oversharing about yourself and others; 5) Just because you can post doesn't mean you should.

You can say it online only if you would say it in person.  
Behave the same way online as you'd behave face to face.  
Stay offline when you are angry.  
Share responsibly (avoid oversharing about self and others)  
Just because you can post doesn't mean you should.



## 4. Lead for Others

Remember that when you choose to become a bigger person, you become a role model for others. Your actions can inspire those around you as you choose kindness and understanding over conflict and negativity. We have the power! We have the power to create a ripple effect of positivity in this world-- if we choose to lead for others-- not to lead above others.

We could become a bigger person because we stand on the shoulders of the people that have gone for us, who have lifted us up. And I'm talking about people who helped us rise to a new level of living.

I want you to take a pause now and think about this opportunity. Remember your leaders, your mentors, your teachers, and other selfless people you know, who you can consider as people who lifted you up.

Today, I take this time to honor our Feast servants-- all the Feast servants and Feast leaders from past to present. You are our co-builders in this household of faith. When God sees your giving, He rewards you.

The Community appreciates you.

We hardly see them-- but they're just all around.





## Living Honorably

I also want to share with you that we have different Mercy Ministries in our Light of Jesus Family. Today, we honor our staff, and volunteers in the different Mercy Ministries of the Light of Jesus Family.

A noble life they live as they lift up the poor, the oppressed, the abandoned, the abused, the sick, and the homeless.

We practice this Ministry not just here, but also in the daily workplaces, in the government, in our businesses. So, today in the workforce, in the corporate business, and government, we try to lead others to honorable and honest work. Not just to keep the product and the services available to people but also to be honest-- to live and work honorably. That is a bigger person thinking and living. You matter. We salute you!

And lastly, to our dear family members, to my Kuya Aboy, to our family members who are alive, and to those who have passed on and made sacrifices so that we could be uplifted—nagparaya-- giving way-- for our benefit, thank you, thank you! We honor you.



## 5. Practice Self Care

Being the bigger person is emotionally toxic, particularly toxic in difficult situations. It's important to practice self-care and self-compassion. Maging mabait ka muna sa sarili mo bago ka maging mabait sa ibang tao.— Be good to yourself first before being good to others.

It's important to recharge so that you can continue to radiate love and understanding to the people around you. We cannot pour from an empty cup. We cannot be bigger for other people when we ourselves are worn out. Take your time to recharge, refresh, renew-- nourish yourself and detoxify so that you can be your best *you*.

We've heard of the saying, "Take care of me so that I can take care of you."

Let me provide you with a bigger insight.

Let's say, "I'll take care of me for you. You'll take care of you for me."

It's a healthier, bigger perspective, a personal response, and accountability. And we also manage our expectations between each other-- and that is a mark of a bigger person.

## Commitment

Let us leave here today with a commitment to be the bigger person—and not just some, but in all aspects of our life. God is not interested in some of you and in some parts of your life. Or become bigger at work or become just bigger in ministry, bigger in my family.

No, no, no. God is interested in all of you. God is crazy in love with you. He wants all of you. He wants a bigger, bigger whole person of you. Not just in some areas of your life.

When we strive together to be bigger, we can recreate our world.

Love than fear. Hope than hate. Peace than chaos.





## A Word of Hope

And as we end, I am offering a word of hope to all of us-- from the Word of God. We are faced with wars, battles in this world. You know that. You know the news. But I also want to acknowledge there are lots of wars and battles within us-- even crazier.

Let this be our divine reassurance. Lord it is hard to be a bigger person. Bigger is not really easier. But this is encouragement for us in 1 John 4:4:

### 1 John 4:4 NIV



You, dear children are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is **GREATER** than the one who is in the world.

As we end this talk, I invite you to look to Jesus.

The kind of love that embraces us, despite our sins, despite our failures, despite our smallness, and feeling of being so little. Don't look to you. Look to Him.

Let God let His love lift you today to bigger heights than ever before.

Leading us to *Greater Living*.



And there is no greater love than this...  
Amen.



## ***Yes!***

Kuya Jesus. He became the bigger person. We sinned. He took the punishment for those sins. We fell. He came and picked us up. We made a lot of mistakes. And He was the One who took the brunt of those mistakes. And he died on He Cross for us.

It is my privilege to lead you into a prayer—a prayer of saying to this

Bigger Brother of ours that we're going to follow Him for the rest of our life. For some of us, it might be the first time that you're going to give your whole life to Jesus. I invite you to do that now.

For most of us, it might be a renewal. Maybe we have fallen. Maybe we have become cold and we've become lukewarm in our love for Him.

Today, I invite you: Renew your love for Jesus.

And give yourself totally to Him. Hallelujah!

If you could just raise your hand as a symbol of openness, say this prayer with me:

*Jesus, I say Yes to Your invitation. Thank You. Thank You for being the Bigger Person. For loving me. Forgiving me. Thank You for dying for me.*

*And so, here I am. I say Yes. I am opening my heart to You. You are my Lord. You are my Savior. And I will follow You for the rest of my life.*

*In Jesus' Name. Amen.*



**THERE IS NO GREATER  
LOVE THAN YOURS**



## MERCY MINISTRIES

*God blesses those who are merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.*

--Matthew 5:7

### *Lola Sol: Longing for the Sunlight*



ON SUNNY DAYS, she stands outside her cottage, looking far away, looking for her only son. For he might just come, visit her, and they would be reconciled...

Her name, *Sol*, means *sunlight*.

And yes, there was a time she lived a bright, sunshiny life. But life would dim and she would be longing for the sunlight...

She was born on November 7, 1946, in Sta. Mesa, Manila, the third in a brood of five.

Her parents saw to it that she'd have a good education. She studied at Burgos Elementary School until Grade 5. Then she transferred to Roosevelt College where she continued her studies-- Grade 6, high school, and college. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education.

She enjoyed good jobs. First, she worked as a nursery teacher at Roosevelt College for two years. Then she transferred to the Municipal Hall of Marikina, working as a licensed inspector. After three years, she transferred to the Assessor Office in Pasig City Hall.

Early on, at the Marikina Municipal Hall, she met Manolo who also worked there. At the time she was working in Pasig, she and Manolo got married.

Manolo didn't want her to work, as his income was enough for them to be well-off and have a comfortable life. So, she resigned from her job and settled to be a wife-- and soon, as a mother, as they were blessed with a son, their only child.

But life would not be that simple-- as they faced a series of trials





## **Four Blows and One Blessing in Disguise**

First, gradually, daily expenses ate up their wealth.

Second, they lost their house. It happened this way...

Manolo got involved in an unfortunate incident. The couple owned a piece of lot which they rent out as parking space. One time, a client rented a space to park two trucks. The client then went to the United States but still continued paying the rent for the parking space. After a while, the two trucks were nowhere to be found. And Manolo was

accused of stealing the trucks. To avoid a legal suit, Manolo and Sol borrowed money from a bank and paid for the trucks. They used their house as collateral for their loan and, unable to pay for the loan, they eventually lost their house.

Third, their son left them.

Even as they struggled to pay the bank loan, they did not inform their son about their problem-- so as not to bother him. He found out about it, anyway, and he felt bad that they did not trust that he could do something to help them.

She recalls, "Our son aired to us his feelings. And as he did, my husband scolded him, telling him something like, our situation was none of his business. And just like that, our son left us, never ever to return."

As if the conflict with their son was not enough, Sol suffered a fourth blow.

One day, she could not find her husband.

She relates, "I went out looking for him-- to no avail. Later, I learned that my husband's relatives, my in-laws, took him and tried to hide him from me-- because they blamed me for losing our wealth."

No house, no family. She stayed with friends – one after another.

This burden would turn out to be a blessing in disguise...

One day, Sol found out her in-laws brought her husband to Anawim. She learned about this because one day, Anawim got in touch with her and told her he already died.

This was on April 27, 2019. So, she went to Anawim to be in the wake of her husband and his burial. Her in-laws were there. They got to talk and by God's grace, they began to understand her situation-- and they were reconciled



### **And Then, the Sunlight...**

Knowing she was already alone, her in-laws arranged that Sol be admitted to Anawim. She began living there on October 17, 2019. In time, she found out her son already has a family of his own and he lives with them somewhere in Bicol. Anawim tried to help her to locate her son.

"But he seemed cold to me. So, to this day, I still don't know where he is," she said, tears welling in her eyes.

So now, she is all alone. She could not even be with her next of kin, her siblings. A sister lives in Canada with her own family. Two brothers had died. She lost contact with a brother for almost 40 years. Of late, Anawim had helped her find him.

"That gives me hope to live," she smiles.

Yes, *hope*. She learned about hope in Anawim

She points out, "I am blessed to be in the best home and best institution for us elderly."

She was referring to a recent award Anawim received as the best non-governmental organization (NGO) in Region IV-A that takes care of the elderly.

She adds, "Indeed, I am simply grateful for the many blessings I've received in Anawim. Anawim provides my basic needs. The personnel, caregivers, social workers, doctors, nurses take good care of me."

What's more, pastoral care, daily Mass, The Feast in Anawim have deepened her faith in God. Especially when life dims, she just follows our Lord Jesus' mandate in her favorite Bible verse: *Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me...* (John 14:1)

Then she goes out, looks far away... And for her, here comes sunlight...

**--Arcie Binohhi**



## **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.

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## 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.



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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](http://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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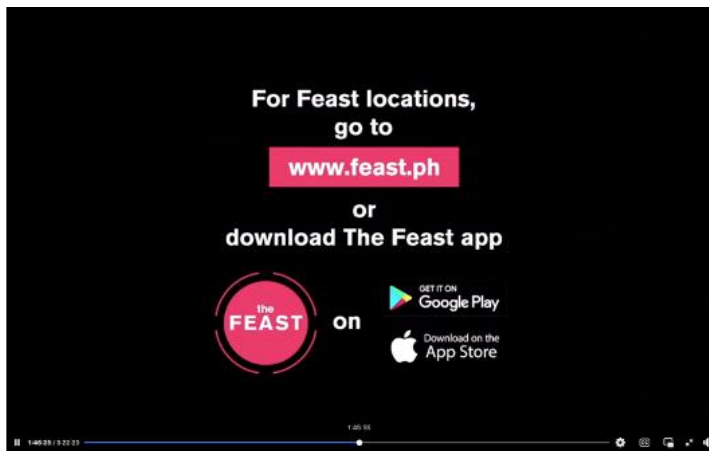
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***Go and make disciples of all men.***

— Matthew 28:19

