



## *‘Papa, Can I Trust You?’*

SO many fathers have abandoned their families—either emotionally, or financially, or spiritually, or even physically.

In the United States, more than 1 in 4 children live without a father at home.

In the Philippines, 18% of children live with only their mothers, while 7% are raised by other people, mostly their grandparents.

Harvard Professor David Blankenhorn, author of *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem*, says, “A growing number of American children have no relationship with their fathers... When you can’t or don’t trust the first important man in your life, trusting others later on, especially those in authority, becomes harder and less likely to occur...”

The heart of every child cries out, “Papa, can I trust you?”

This is one reason some have a hard time relating to God as Father. In a previous talk, we said parents are our first picture of God. This also includes aunts, uncles, Ates, Kuyas, and leaders.

Tragically, some kids get a distorted picture of God. That’s why some think God is judgmental, cynical, and punitive-- because their parents and elders are judgmental, cynical, and punitive.

If you have a father who does not mirror God’s Love for you, there’s only one path to healing I know—and that’s what we’ll talk about today.

Have a healing Feast today!  
May your dreams come true,

**Bo Sanchez**



**WELCOME**  
**to our ongoing Talk series:**  
***UNDER ONE ROOF***  
***Living in Blessed***  
***and Broken Families***  
**Talk 4:**  
***One Father, Many Children***



## Stars!

YES, this issue of *The FEAST FAMILY* is all about the Grand Feast last Sunday, August 18, 2024.

As the poster shows, five star Feast Builders preached the talk of our ongoing series, *UNDER ONE ROOF*, Talk 3: *Beautiful and Burdened Marriages*.



As in our usual Grand Feasts, the talk came first before the Holy Mass, the highlight of the Grand Feast with celebrant Rev. Fr. Albert Garong delivering a profound Homily. Rev. Fr. Bob McConaghy served as concelebrant assisted by Rev. Fr. Anthony Mary John Javier.



Yes, it was a *Grand Feast* as the all-star cast included more star preachers, *from extreme left*: Bro. John Ben Rodriguez, Bro. Philip Sumera tackled the first three

messages of the Feast Talk; Bro. Didoy Lubaton led the Group Sharing before the Mass; and Bro. JC Libiran shared the Love Offering message.

For our Mercy Ministries section, be very blessed by Lolo Fidel Abrenica Nombre.

Yes, it's *Grand* really because the Superstar is our Lord Jesus who actually makes our every Feast and our every day *Grand* with His unconditional love and mercy for all of us.

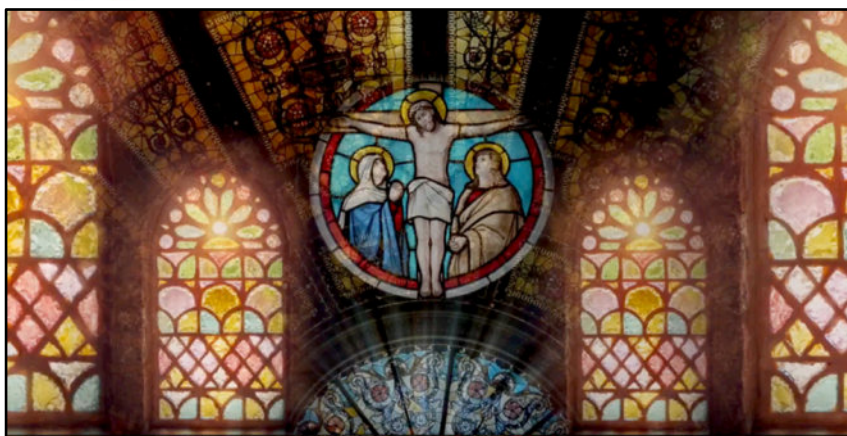


All for God's Glory,

**Randy Borromeo**  
Media Ministry  
Executive Director



## Holy Mass



**TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

## Homily

**REV. FR. ALBERT GARONG**  
on the Gospel John 6:51-58

Excerpts:

GOOD MORNING, Everyone! It's been four weeks now since our Gospel has been about Jesus as the Bread of Life. All that talk of bread is making me hungry. Who among you here is hungry? Most of us are hungry.

Reflecting on hunger, I remember this well-known quote: "Give a man a fish and he will live for a day. Teach a man how to fish, he will live for a lifetime."

It makes perfect sense. It has a lot of wisdom. It teaches us about looking for long-term solutions that empower people and not make them dependent. Amen to that!

One time, I was on Facebook. I saw this comment about that quote, and it says, "Why not both?"

If you try to teach a hungry person, it'll be impossible. When you were still a student, have you ever tried to study with an empty stomach? Isn't it that before you open a book, you would have eaten Lucky Me Pancit Canton, Mie Goreng (Indonesian noodles), Sky Flakes biscuits, or juice? You need to be full before you can learn.



**Concelebrant:**  
**REV. FR. BOB McCONAGHY**



**Assisted by:**  
**REV. FR. ANTHONY  
MARY JOHN JAVIER, SSP**

## The Bread, The Eucharist, The Church

The point is that you can't teach a hungry person. You must feed him first. I think that Jesus understood that very well.

Look at how He did His ministry -- always teaching but also always feeding. Jesus knew that no matter how life-changing His words were, the people couldn't receive the message if they were hungry.

Jesus fed their physical or gastronomic hunger. But more than that, He healed their ailments. He gave them attention, love, and respect.

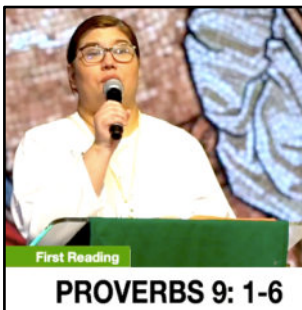
When we talk about hunger, it's not just about the physical--but the spiritual, emotional, and moral hunger as well. Every time Jesus was with people, He made sure He gave all of that. He gave the truth but always with love -- because love is always our deeper hunger. Jesus wanted to make sure that everyone knew that He was there as the Bread of Life from Heaven to feed everyone's hunger.

Jesus was saying, "If you come to me, you will be filled."

Here's the thing though. We have been talking about the Bread of Life for the past four weeks. When you hear the message, it rightfully points to the Eucharist with Jesus' Flesh and Blood, really, truly present-- the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ.

But not just that. When we talk about the Body of Christ, it is the Eucharist, yes-- but it is also the home built around that Eucharist. It's the Church. The Church is the Body of Christ.

The First Reading talks about how wisdom builds a house wherein everyone hungry will find food.



### First Reading: Proverbs 9:1-6

*1 Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven columns; 2 she has dressed her meat, mixed her wine, yes, she has spread her table. 3 She has sent out her maidens; she calls from the heights out over the city: 4 "Let whoever is simple turn in here; to him who lacks understanding, I say, 5 Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed! 6 Forsake foolishness that you may live; advance in the way of understanding."*

## How We Teach

All our Second Readings for the past Sundays have been about Church relations. Paul reminding us that we must be loving each other.

The feeding of the hungry, that is God's project. It's not just the Eucharist. It's the whole Church. Other than the Eucharist, there are seven Sacraments. Each one of them is meant to feed you at different points in your life. There is Confession, Anointing of the Sick.

They are all there.

God feeds the hungry in all the traditions of the Church-- in our music and our art. Most important, through all our members.

In the past four weeks of discourse about the Bread of Life, I hope you understand that Jesus is talking about you, me, and the people around you. We, as Christians, are supposed to be the Bread of Life that will fill the world's hunger whenever the people come to us.

But most of the time, the problem is between the teaching and the feeding. We focus more on the *teaching*, and we don't like the *feeding*.

The Olympics 2024 was just recently concluded. We're so blessed with our great achievements that they almost make us forget what happened in the opening which was quite hurtful and difficult to watch.

In this age of social media, the aftermath is that we will all quarrel. I saw many Christians-- Catholics-- responding to that rightly with truth but there was no love and there was no charity. How could people listen?

When people undermine and attack our faith and when they go after Jesus, that's just their hunger acting up. They have tried to fill their hunger with things that turned out empty, but they couldn't accept that--so they're attacking the Real Food.



### Second Reading: Ephesians 5:15–20

*15 Brothers and sisters: Watch carefully how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise, 16 making the most of the opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore, do not continue in ignorance, but try to understand what is the will of the Lord. 18 And do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing to the Lord in your hearts, 20 giving thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.*



## Feed Before Teach

Our job is not just to teach them but to feed them. Feed them first. Love them first. Listen to them first. Make them feel who they really are -- as God's beloved children who are worthy of love and respect. They're just hungry. Before you engage in a heated debate with them, consider that love may just be what they need.

We are the bread that is supposed to give that to them. Unfortunately, we fail that test all the time. Let's not go too far. Let's look at what happens here.

For example, you entered a church. You looked at your seatmate and wondered why she was there, or why was she wearing a sleeveless top.

That person was just about to eat but you pushed her away already. Let her eat first.

As Christians, we trust that it is in the feeding and in the loving where the teaching and the transforming happen. Let them come to Jesus and be filled with the love of the people who are in His house. In this cold world, *church* should be the one place where hungry people go and be guaranteed that they will come out of this well-fed with love. We trust that that love will do the teaching and the transforming. There is only one Teacher and it's Jesus. Let's bring them to Him with our love.

But the problem is that we, the supposed Bread of Life, are also malnourished -- not physically but spiritually and emotionally.



### **Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7**

#### **R: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.**

*2 I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth. 3 Let my soul glory in the Lord; the lowly will hear me and be glad. (R) 4 Glorify the Lord with me, let us together extol his name. 5 I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. (R) 6 Look to him that you may be radiant with joy, and your faces may not blush with shame. 7 When the poor one called out, the Lord heard, and from all his distress he saved him.*

## Feed and Feed Well

We, Christians, are good at underestimating how dependent we are on God's grace. Jesus gave us the entire buffet but when we eat, we do it in small portions. There are a lot of ways such as the Eucharist, Sacraments, Word of God, and Community. But we don't take advantage of them because we feel that we are strong and independent. Some of us would just hear Mass on Sundays and we think that's enough. So, when people come to you and are hungry for love, they receive nothing. If ever they receive anything, it runs out easily.



My dear Christian Brothers and Sisters, God gave us abundant food. So, feed and feast! Don't underestimate your need for God because no one outgrows that. The longer that you go on this journey with Jesus, the more you need to feed and the more you have to eat.

The Good News is that Jesus is assuring us that the food is more than enough. It is always available for anyone who wants to eat.

Let me end with a simple story.

Two weeks ago, I was at the Youth Ministry's Camp Calye in another district. We were supposed to do Confession from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to be followed by a Mass.

I sat down at 3:00 p.m. because the earlier program adjusted. By the time that the last penitent stood, it was 10:30 p.m. Of course, there was a dinner break.

When we priests see a long line for Confession, we have two reactions.

The first one is we say, "Ugh! The line is long."

But before we even finish that thought, we say, "Wow! The line is long!"

There are plenty who hunger for God's love. One of those penitents came to me and said something deeply personal about himself.

He said, "Father, I know the Church teaches that we are loved, and we are welcome here. But I've always found it hard to believe. The church people I know have not made me feel welcome in their church."

He looked at me and said, "Father, I'm here now. You are a priest. Please look me in the eye and tell me that I belong, I am loved, and that I am a child of God."

Friends, many people are hungry for God's love. The answer is in the Eucharist and in each of you. Feed and feed well so that you can go out and be Bread of Life to the world. Amen.

# Worship!

## **SIS. REGINE VILORIA:**

As we prepare to worship even more. Let me ask you: Who came here with challenges? Raise your hands. Almost everyone, right?

Maybe a health problem or an emotional problem. Maybe you're tired. Maybe you're overwhelmed. It's hard to worship when we're in pain, right? And sometimes, we find ourselves asking, "Why, Jesus? Why me?"

And as we prepare to worship, I invite you, Brothers and Sisters, to change that question from "Why me?" to "Where do You want me to go, Jesus?"

And maybe, with that shift, our sadness will turn into joy. Our bitterness will turn into gratitude. And our questions will turn into praise. Amen.

So, if you are ready to invite Jesus, into your life and declare His sovereignty, I invite you to sing with us.



## **BRO. JAY-R DELA CRUZ:**

Welcome home!  
Shout your praise!  
Worship!





**BRO. BO SANCHEZ:**

We want to pray today. We want to ask God for His grace and His power in our lives.

You know, if Jesus is the center, you know what's going to happen? The weak will become strong. Those who are discouraged will be encouraged. Those who are doubting will have resolve.

I want you to believe in that right now. I want you to say this prayer with me:

*Jesus, bless me now. Come, bless me now. Let Your power flow.  
In Jesus' Name.*

Let's sing that song again and worship Him, Everybody. Come on.



Give the Lord a big hand. Love Him today. I want you to put your arms around somebody beside you. Tell that person, "God is here today."

Let's give a big hand to our Worship Team. Thank you so much guys. Wonderful Beautiful.

How many of you were in the Jewels Conference yesterday? That was amazing. You know the Presence of God was there. Those women who were not with us yesterday, please promise that you will be with us next year. You know, just join us. It was an explosion of grace, an extravaganza of grace and mercy. It was just absolutely wild. I love yesterday.



## Talk INTRODUCTION



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

We've been talking about family this past few weeks and we will continue to talk about family. We're somewhere in the mid-point. And my prayer is that families -- you know, we're all families, in some ways are wounded and broken, disagree. And Agree, disagree?

And that's why we come to Jesus. Because He is the One who can heal our families.

You know, last Sunday, I was with Feast Ground Zero. What do I mean? I visited the 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first Feast we've ever had. It was the 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Feast Valle Verde where it all started. And it's amazing.

Today, we've spread hundreds of Feasts, unverified report, 800 Feasts all over the world in 30 countries. But it all started in that Feast in Valle Verde.

And today we continue to share the love of God.

So, the series is not just about family. It's about God's family. And in God's family, there are those who are married and there are those who are single.

All who are married, raise your hand. Today is your day. We are going to specifically talk about married life. Those of you who are single, raise your hand. They sound happier, right? And we also include the widows, widowers, and the separated in this group.

In God's family, you have married people, and you have single people. I just want to say this to single people. Do not be pressured in our marriage-oriented world. Do not be pressured to get married. There is no such thing as a single person who is with God that is incomplete. Every single person, whether young or old, please know this: if you are with God, you are absolutely complete. Because God's family needs single people. God's family includes married people and single people. So, I just want to leave that note as we start today.

We will hear now from Bro. John Ben Rodriguez and Bro. Philip Sumera.

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# Talk



## **BRO. JOHN BEN 'JB' RODRIGUEZ:**

Good morning, Everyone. My name is John Ben Rodriguez. I'm the Builder of Feast Binondo. Since this is a spiritual family, I can be vulnerable. I think that is one of our gifts.

To be honest, if there is something I struggle with to this day, it is envy. I easily get envious. Sometimes, it's difficult for me to scroll on social media because I tend to compare myself with what others are achieving.

Of late, I've been asking the Lord where my envy is coming from. There were hints that God was pointing me-- to my family of origin.

To those of you who don't know it yet, I came from a broken family. We were the second or the third family of my Dad. There was this very vivid experience that I had when I was in grade school. My classmates and I were comparing our IDs. Normally, the names of our parents are on the back of our IDs. When one classmate looked at my ID, he asked why my father's surname was not the same as that of my mother.

I told him, "I don't know. Is it supposed to be the same?"

Back then, I didn't know that married people should have the same surname. That started me to compare myself with others. Young as I was, I noticed that there was something different with my setup. That envy grew and grew over time because I was always comparing myself with others.

By God's grace, when I was in college, I found a spiritual youth group. But honestly, when I started attending the prayer meetings every week, the envy grew even more. Why? Because I got exposed to better family setups. I met students there who were serving along with their parents who were married. It made me more envious.

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## My Identity

Growing up, comparing myself with others was a challenge. At the prayer meetings, we were taught the Psalms verses 139:13-14: *I have formed you in your mother's womb. I have knit you. You were fearfully and wonderfully made.*

But I would ask God, "Lord, does this apply to me? How can You knit me in my mother's womb when my existence started from a sin?"

I was groping with that fact. I was groping with my entire identity. I would wonder, "Is my existence correct if my roots were wrong?"

But by God's grace, I kept on attending the prayer meetings even if I was always envious. I just felt God speaking to me loudly in one of our prayer meetings during our Worship song.

He told me, *"You cannot comprehend how good my plan is. You cannot comprehend how things work out. But I want you to trust Me."*

I remember on that day that I just surrendered to God.

I told Him: "Lord, beginning today, I won't feel envious anymore. I know where I came from. I don't know how you would fix my family, but I trust you."

In the succeeding prayer meetings, my envy started to subside. I began appreciating that I'm loved by God.

Little did I know that six months later, one of my greatest prayers would be answered. It has always been my dream to have a family picture. That same year, the first family of my Dad accepted and acknowledged me.

I celebrated Christmas Eve with them.

This is my first family picture. >

I was then 18 years old.



## My Family

I thought that was just it. But God is good. When I got married, my entire family was there. My siblings from my father's side and my mother's side were present.



Today, I'm happy to announce that I now have my family picture with my wife and my kid.

I was envious of ideal families probably because God planted a desire in my heart to build an ideal family with Him.

I know your situation may be different or may not be ideal. But that is God's invitation to you. Healing can happen in your family. His grace can be sufficient. You may not understand it but He has a beautiful plan.

Today, by God's grace and love, I'm happy to announce that the generational sin of broken families ends with me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.



**BRO. PHILIP SUMERA:**

My name is Philip Sumera and I'm one of the Builders of Feast Manila.

How many of you grew up idolizing your father? How many of you would agree with me when I say that each family has their own story?

My family is not exempted.



Here is our old picture. We seemed happy but it was just a mask. I found out that my Dad had an affair. For someone like me who highly idolizes his father, my perfect image of him was shattered.

Before that, my Dad would always be the hero in my stories. But when I learned of my Dad's affair, he suddenly became the antagonist in my stories.

## Anger... Then Amends

Please forgive me for saying this but I want to be honest...

I was angry and broken by what happened. Because of that, I lost my way. I got hooked on vices except for gambling and drugs. But honestly, I almost tried drugs. I was already in a pot session. The shabu was in front of me but I couldn't reach it--maybe because I was drunk.

I hated my family, not just my Dad. I hated my family because they hid his affair from me. They were pretending that we were still okay, but we were rotting already. At that time, my family was dead to me. I wasn't listening to them. I wasn't respecting them.

They weren't aware that I stopped going to school. I would ask for my tuition, but I would use it for my vices. When they had nothing to give me, I would steal money to sustain my vices.

One day, my sister invited me for lunch. I agreed because it was free.

While we were eating, my sister said, "Lep, we need to talk. We have a problem."

I interrupted her by saying, "You guys are the problem. We don't need to talk about it!"

Then my sister said, "Dad has cancer."

It hit me. My life flashed before me. It brought me back to my senses.

I asked myself, "What am I doing to myself and to my family?"

Back then, I was also an altar server. But I felt that God forgot about my family. I hated God. I used expletives when calling Him.

I was the black sheep of the family. But upon learning of my Dad's condition, I looked for a church. At the foot of the Cross, I begged God to forgive me and to take me back. I asked Him to extend my father's life so I could mend our relationship.

True enough, I got my life back on track. I went back to studying. By God's grace, I was able to graduate. I was able to work.



## Black Sheep... Then Shepherd

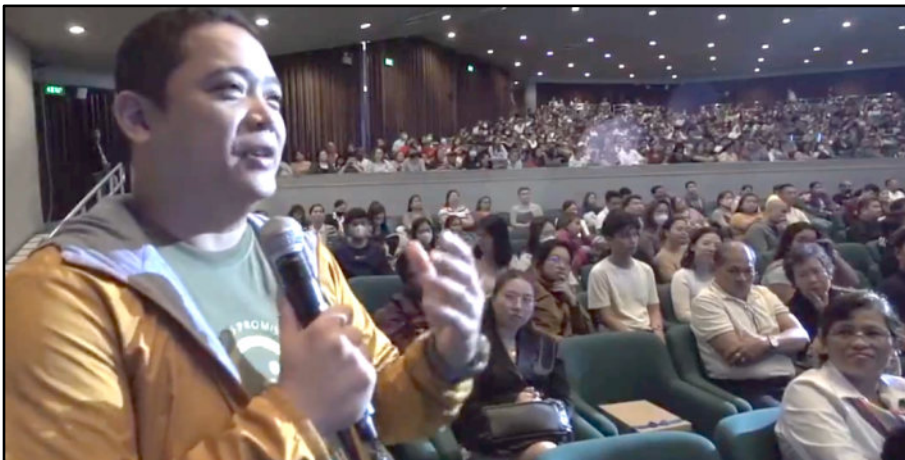
Fast forward, cancer got the better of my Dad. One time, while he was lying in bed, skin and bones, I came to him and apologized.

I said, "Dad, I'm really sorry about what happened. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to give you the condominium you liked. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to buy you the car you liked. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to bring you to Los Angeles to watch the Lakers play at the NBA. I wasn't able to give you anything except resentment."

I was so blown away by the response of my father that until now, it's still etched in my heart.

With all his strength, he tried to embrace me. He said, "Son, I'm proud of you. I wronged you. I'm sorry."

At that moment, I would like to believe that God was telling me those words. God is also a father.



I was once the black sheep of the family. But now, I have been called to shepherd young sheep in our Feast.

I guide them to the Lord by sharing my story.



Just like JB, I now have my little family. I thank God for giving me an imperfect Dad because I learned something. I don't want to promise that I'll never be like my father but with God's grace and with the help of our Community, I will be different. Just like JB, the generational sin of broken families ends with me.

The message of this series is beautiful. God can use your broken family to be a blessing to other families.

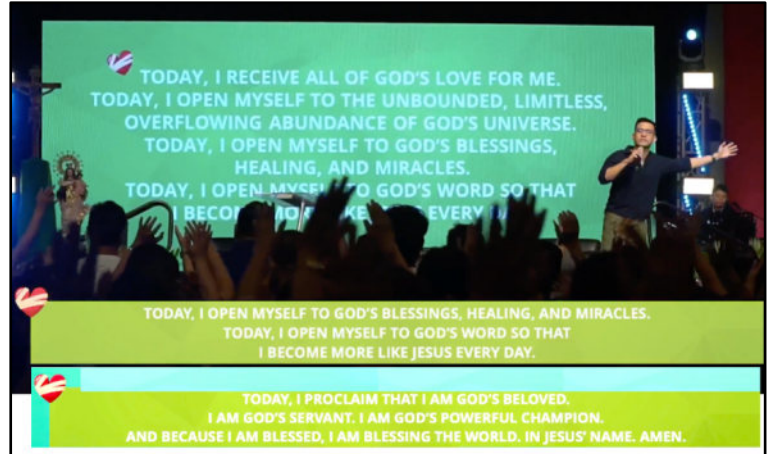


# NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE

## **BRO. AUDIE VILLARAZA:**

Let's pray our favorite prayer here at The Feast.

Lift your hands in the air and say this with me:



Everybody, lift your hands and join me in giving reverence to the Word of God:



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



**BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:**

Who among you came with your family here today? May I ask you to tell your family member: “I’m grateful for you.”

You better mean it. Say, “I’m blessed by you.”

I want to give everybody a fair warning before I read the Word.

The message that we’ll talk about is very difficult. It’ll not be easy for some of you to hear and much more for us to preach to you.

If you think that Talk 1 and Talk 2 were like a walk in the park, Talk 3 is more like a walk in Jurassic Park. It will unearth and unleash some pre-historic wounds of your life. Maybe some of you might even have questions after the talk.

But if you lean on God, ask His guidance, and ask the Holy Spirit to move into this place to receive His Word with love and humility, I guarantee you that it’ll change the way you think about your family life.

We’re reading a passage from Matthew 1:18-20, 24-25. It’s a story about the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

*18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about[a]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet[b] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[c] because he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”[d] (which means “God with us”). 24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*

## Stages of Marriage

How many of you, when you read the Bible, like to put yourself in the situation and imagine that you're there?

That's how I do it when I read the Bible.

From time to time, you'll stumble upon a word that is not familiar to you. One word that I noticed while reading the passage is the word *betrothed*.

Maybe you've heard of it but do you actually use that? We don't use it, right? It's an ancient word. In Jesus' time, it was a word that was widely used.

Let me explain this...

There are two stages of marriage that we know now:

### STAGE 1: ENGAGEMENT

This is where the proposal and the acceptance happen. This also includes the preparation for the wedding.

### STAGE 2: WEDDING

When the groom and bride come before God, He acts as the witness, and He unifies the couple.



In the time of Jesus, there was a middle stage called *Betrothal*. It was in between our Stages 1 and 2:

**STAGE 1: ENGAGEMENT**  
**STAGE 2: BETROTHAL**  
**STAGE 3: WEDDING**



Betrothal would last for at least a year. People believed that during this time, the man and woman were already husband and wife-- even if they were not yet living together as a wedded couple.

Here's what makes it more interesting. St. Matthew says that when Mama Mary got pregnant, it was at the time of the *Betrothal*.



## How God Sees Marriage

In the past two weeks, we'd been saying that Jesus was born into a family.

**JESUS WAS BORN INTO A FAMILY**

Because that's how God would bless the world. He wants Jesus to be born into your family.

But just to give you a little evidence that Jesus was also born *into* a marriage, it says in Matthew 1: 18 to 20:

**JESUS WAS BORN INTO A MARRIAGE**



**MATTHEW 1:18-20, 24-25 NABRE**

**"WHEN HIS MOTHER MARY WAS BETROTHED TO JOSEPH, BUT BEFORE THEY LIVED TOGETHER, SHE WAS FOUND WITH CHILD THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. JOSEPH HER HUSBAND, SINCE HE WAS A RIGHTEOUS MAN, YET UNWILLING TO EXPOSE HER TO SHAME, DECIDED TO DIVORCE HER QUIETLY.**

Question: If they weren't married yet, why the need to divorce? All that Joseph needed to do was call off the wedding. But no. In their eyes, they were already

God sees the family as important because it will bless the world. But here's how we get deeper. Jesus, the Son of God, the One He would say "This is my beloved Son... Who is highly favored, that if you want to go to Me, you have to go through Him..." This Jesus Christ was born into a marriage...

What is my point? God will use marriage to bring Jesus into your life. God sees marriage as important. I pray that you realize how important marriage is.

Close your eyes now. Put your hand on your chest. Say this with me:

*"Jesus, I need this message. I need Your Word. I want to be transformed today by Your love and by Your wisdom. So, speak. Your servant is listening. In Jesus' Name. Amen."*

One more time, let's sing:

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



Everybody, please welcome my brother in Christ, Tony Valenzuela, onstage. Give him some love.



**BRO. TONY VALENZUELA:**

God wants to give you this one big message:

**God is writing a new story for your life**

I pray that you hold that in your heart as we talk about families and marriages.

**5 MESSAGES ABOUT FAMILY**

Today, we want to share with you five messages about family. I will share the first three messages. Later, Doc Ryan Capitulo will share the fourth message, and Bro. Alvin Barcelona will come with the fifth message.

**1 JESUS WANTS TO BE BORN IN YOUR MARRIAGE**

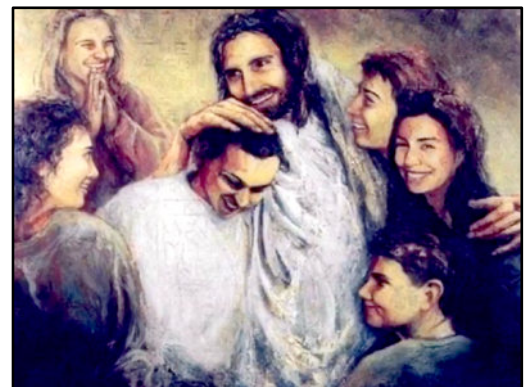
Jesus wants to be born in your family -- not just every Sunday and not just when you

pray the Rosary. Jesus wants to be born in your relationships, in your work, and in your education.

Jesus wants to be born in everything that you do in life.

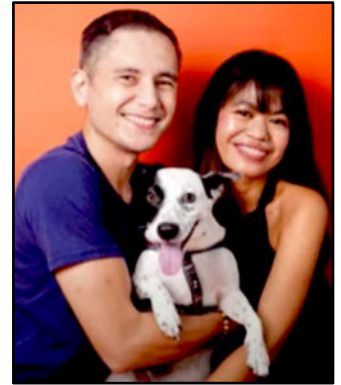
I'm not against the tenet *Put Jesus first*-- because it's right that He should be the primary. But it's a different perspective to know that God doesn't just want to be the first. He wants to be the center.

Make Jesus the Center.



**2**  
**A MARRIED COUPLE  
IS ALREADY  
A COMPLETE FAMILY**

I'd like to introduce Meanne, my ex-girlfriend of eight years and now my wife of nine years. She is from Tuguegarao. She was raised by her grandmother. She went to Manila to study college and stayed with her mom in Tondo.



I never realized that she would be my wife someday. Initially, I wanted to be a priest so I entered a seminary. But God had other plans. I left the seminary. Don't ask me why because it's a long story. I should create a separate talk for it.

When we got married, I already had everything set-- including having children. I wanted twins. During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID) Pandemic, we worked to have a baby. The Pandemic was a good time to have a baby since we were all at home.

Meanne got pregnant but this first pregnancy didn't push through. We had our second pregnancy--but it also failed. Same with our third pregnancy. We were losing hope to the point it was breaking our spirits.

We asked God, "Do you still want us to have a family? Why did we have to get married in the first place if we can't have kids?"

We got pregnant for the fourth time. We were hopeful because, in Meanne's womb, the baby's heartbeat was very strong at 10 weeks.

But as I was sitting there while my wife was having an ultrasound, the doctor came out and told me, "Anthony, sorry but we lost your baby."

It was our fourth miscarriage.

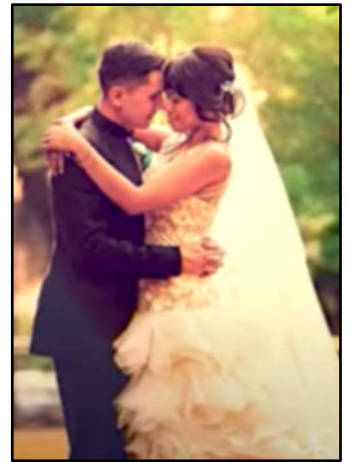
After that, we asked the Lord again, "What are your plans for us? Do You still want us to serve?"

We felt incomplete because our dreams were not being fulfilled at the time we wanted them to.

But today, we continue to serve at The Feast and we continue to connect with our leaders, friends, and family. And we've realized that we already have a family.

We may not have kids yet on Earth, but we have four kids in Heaven praying for us. We look forward to the day that we see them face-to-face.

Here's a message I want to share: If you have God in your marriage and in your family, you're already whole. You just have to be open to God for Him to come into your life. He is the center.





I'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the Light of Jesus Family Lux Retreat for couples.

Meanne and I attended a Lux Retreat and we were blessed. Because the Retreat reinforced that we have to bring God into our marriage, into our family, to see that we're already complete. Even if we went through four miscarriages.

The question now is: "Lord, what do you want us to do?"

The more we keep serving, the more we keep opening ourselves to others around us, we've realized that this Community is our family. The Feast is family.

Our loved ones and friends supporting us are family.



**3**  
**EVERY MARRIAGE  
NEEDS GOD'S MIRACLES**

**Married life even as a vocation  
is already hard and a struggle  
on its own.**



Married life even as a vocation is already hard and a struggle on its own. Whether you choose married life, religious life, or single life, nothing comes easy. Each has its process. That's why it's called a vocation because God is calling you to join His Cross-bearing in this life.

But here's the thing. Even Joseph and Mary went through struggles. We thought that just because they were the Holy Family, everything was smooth sailing for them. But no. Jesus came at a time when Israel was in turmoil.

But when a crisis happens, sometimes the very people who were supposed to be your biggest allies become your biggest enemies.

I'd been to Nazareth. It's a small town. During Jesus' time, Nazareth was a small town that had about 20 to 50 families.

I could imagine that if there was a rumor, it would reach all ears. Imagine what people would say if they heard that Mary was pregnant while still not living with Joseph.

They would probably hate Mary and sympathize with Joseph.

**MATTHEW 1:18 NABRE**  
**"BUT BEFORE THEY LIVED TOGETHER,  
SHE WAS FOUND WITH CHILD..."**



## God Knows What You Need

While the people meant well, it was so easy to create and spread stories even they didn't know the whole story.

Worse, they were going through a difficult time. Imagine, along with the gossips, Herod ordered the killing of babies who were two years old and younger.

Backstory: Herod, King of Judea, found out about baby Jesus being called King of Jews. Fearing he would be dethroned, Herod wanted to kill the baby. So, he sent three kings to find out where Jesus was. The magi found Jesus with His parents. Knowing Herod's plan, the magi, however, did not go back to Herod. Furious, Herod ordered the killing of all children under two years old.

To keep Jesus safe, Joseph and Mary escaped, bringing Jesus to Egypt which was outside the dominion of Herod.

But Joseph received a message in his dream:

### MATTHEW 2:13 NABRE

"THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO JOSEPH IN A DREAM AND SAID, "RISE, TAKE THE CHILD AND HIS MOTHER, FLEE TO EGYPT, AND STAY THERE UNTIL I TELL YOU. HEROD IS GOING TO SEARCH FOR THE CHILD TO DESTROY HIM."

From the start, we know that Joseph and Mary already had God in their family.

Dear Friends, God provides for our family's needs before we know we need them. Hold on to that. If you think you're in a rough pat(h) right now, God knows what you need even before you approach Him.

To continue our Talk, welcome Doc Ryan Capitulo (Builder, Feast Manila, who's a Medical Doctor in Obstetrics and Gynecology).



### MATTHEW 2:16 NABRE

"WHEN HEROD REALIZED THAT HE HAD BEEN DECEIVED BY THE MAGI, HE BECAME FURIOUS. HE ORDERED THE MASSACRE OF ALL THE BOYS IN BETHLEHEM AND ITS VICINITY TWO YEARS OLD AND UNDER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TIME HE HAD ASCERTAINED FROM THE MAGI."

The Lord's provision was timely.

It was a chaotic time, but God came into the picture.

**GOD PROVIDES FOR  
OUR FAMILY'S NEEDS  
BEFORE WE KNOW  
WE NEED THEM.**



**BRO. RYAN CAPITULO:**

**4**  
**GOD WANTS YOUR FAMILY TO BE STRONG AND WHOLE**

Good morning, my dear Feast Family!

Okay, our fourth message for each one of you today is this: God wants your family to be strong and whole-- solid, intact.

Because God knows that when families break, the whole of society breaks. Sadly, we are seeing so many signs of families that are not strong and not whole. Let me share with you three signs.

**THREE SIGNS FAMILIES ARE WEAK**

**SIGN 1**  
**INCREASING BROKEN HOMES**

**GLOBALLY, 30% TO 50% OF MARRIAGES FAIL**  
**FROM 2015 TO 2020, 200,000 MARRIED COUPLES IN THE PHILIPPINES SEPARATED**

Globally, 30% to 50% of marriages fail. From 2015 to 2020, 200,000 married couples in the Philippines separated.

Don't get me wrong, some couples should separate especially if there is abuse involved. If you are part of a broken family, I assure you that God is so much bigger than your brokenness. God is much more powerful than statistics.

Bro. Alvin Barcelona, Bro. JB Rodriguez, and Bro. Adrian Panganiban all came from broken families-- but we can see in each one's life, the power of God is at work. Now, they are blessing many families with their service to our church.

**SIGN 2**  
**DECREASING MARRIAGES**

**15%** OF THE POPULATION  
OF THE PHILIPPINES  
ARE LIVE-IN COUPLES



According to our Philippine Statistics Authority, 15% of our population are live-in couples. Even in my practice as an OB-GYN, I would see a couple of pregnant women who are not married and who would tell me that they are living-in with their partner. Of course, I encourage them to get married if they love each other, especially now that they are having a baby.

Sometimes, I am tempted to give them a discount if they get married. I haven't tried it yet.

I was happy that two weeks ago, I had this patient who came back to me for her regular pre-natal check-up.

She told me, "Doc, I have a surprise for you. My partner and I got married! We had a simple church wedding. We were inspired by what you said."



Here at The Feast, we had attendees and some servants who were living-in together for many years. But when they had a deeper relationship with God, they got to know Jesus more deeply, they were inspired to get married in church. They realized that marriage is a covenant between the husband and wife, and God.

Also, separation is three times higher for cohabitating couples than married couples.

SEPARATION IS **3X** HIGHER  
FOR COHABITATING COUPLES  
THAN MARRIED COUPLES.

## SIGN 3 LEGALIZING ABORTION

This is something close to my heart. For me, abortion is one of the greatest injustices in the world. I consider it a huge blessing that abortion is illegal in the Philippines.

Whenever I attend medical or pro-life conferences abroad, many people praise our country for not allowing abortion.

In the United States where abortion is allowed, almost 3,000 abortions are performed every single day.



In Europe, over 90% of unborn children diagnosed with Down Syndrome are aborted.





**BRO. ALVIN BARCELONA:**

**5**  
**GOD SEES YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM LIKE A MARRIAGE**

This talk speaks about how God works through marriage between a man and a woman. But real talk: Families go through problems.

**LACK OF COMMITMENT**

As mentioned by Doc Ryan earlier, the basic problem of each family is lack of commitment.

That's why during weddings, couples declare their commitment.

Experts say that the first seven years of marriage are crucial. That's why the term *seven-year itch*.

But that was back then. Now, it seems that it has been reduced to *seven-month itch* or *seven-day itch*.

During the honeymoon period, the wife always waits for the husband to come home. Once the husband is home, the wife welcomes him and hands him his slippers while their dog barks on the side. A few years into the marriage, the dog is the one welcoming the husband while the wife is the one barking.



## Three Stages of Marriage

Trials happen in marriages. Why? This is where commitment comes in. I learned from Bro. Bo Sanchez that marriages come in three stages:

1. Honeymoon: This is the phase where everything is rosy.
2. Reality: This is the stage where you go through conflicts.



3. Maturity: This is when you make a commitment based on decisions--not based on feelings.

In marriage, we will learn that it's not all about feelings but about decisions. There are days when you're super in love with your spouse and there are days when you're not.

Marriage is like your job. Even if you don't feel like going to work, you will do so because it's your commitment.

In Psychology, it's called Dream. But make no mistake: That dream will go through Disillusionment. Ultimately, you will then come to a Decision if you will continue with it or not.

Our spiritual life also goes through stages:

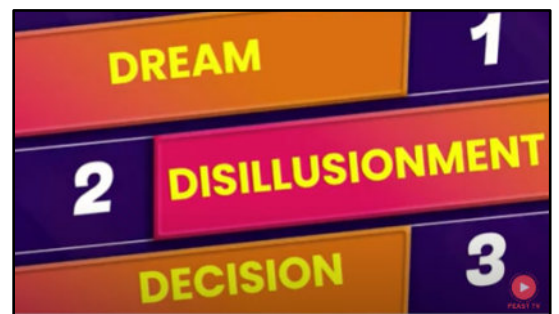
1. Joyful = Christmas
2. Sorrowful = Good Friday
3. Glorious = Easter Sunday

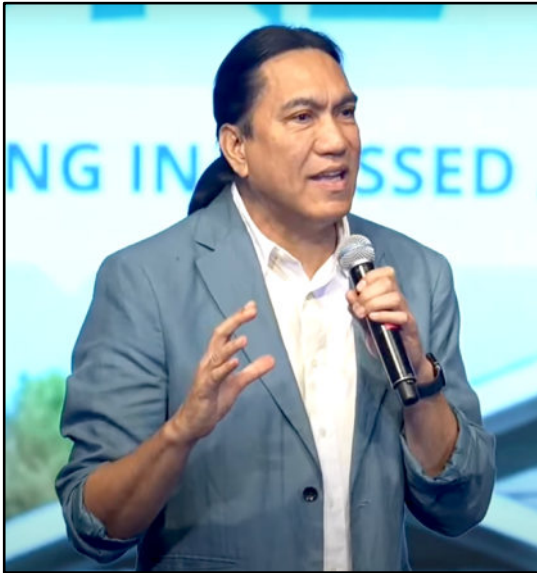
You cannot reach the Glorious stage without experiencing the Sorrowful stage first.

Some people, however, go through Joyful to Sorrowful but never reach Glorious. They stay in the Sorrowful stage.

You have to win the Sorrowful stage to taste the Glorious stage.

If you're in the Sorrowful stage, you must decide to go through thick and thin-- because the Lord has a plan for you. Something good will happen to you.





## GOD USED MARRIAGE TO DESCRIBE HIS LOVE FOR US.

There is forever in God because He sees our relationship with Him like a marriage. God used marriage to describe His love for us. In the Bible, there are plenty of analogies about God's love for us.

The story of Hosea is one such example. Hosea was a prophet, and He was asked by God to marry Gomer, a prostitute. Gomer continued to be unfaithful even if they were married already. Despite that, God would always tell Hosea to bring Gomer back home.

This shows that even if Israel was unfaithful to God, He was faithful to Israel. That's why God wants our relationships to have faithfulness and commitment.

The married life has always been God's template.

The book of *Genesis* started with a married couple: Adam and Eve. Even if they disobeyed God, He never gave up on them. When Adam and Eve had children, God continued to be with them even if they disobeyed Him.



In the last book of the Bible, *Revelation*, God calls Himself the bridegroom and the Church as His bride.

*Revelation* also says that one day, the bridegroom and the bride will be united in peace.



## The First Miracle

Marriage is so important that even the first miracle of Jesus happened at a wedding in Cana where He turned water into wine:

JOHN 2:1-3 NLT

THE NEXT DAY THERE WAS A WEDDING CELEBRATION IN THE VILLAGE OF CANA IN GALILEE. JESUS' MOTHER WAS THERE, AND JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE ALSO INVITED TO THE CELEBRATION. THE WINE SUPPLY RAN OUT DURING THE FESTIVITIES, SO JESUS' MOTHER TOLD HIM, "THEY HAVE NO MORE WINE."

In marriage, the husband and the wife will go through droughts. Your funds will run out. Your health will fail. Your emotions will dry out.

But when you go through droughts, you don't give up. During the wedding in Cana, the wedded couple ran out of wine. How were they able to have wine? What was their secret? It was Jesus and His mother, Mary. So, what is the secret when you feel drained? Go to Mama Mary. Go to Jesus. The supply will come back.

IF YOU WANT MIRACLES TO HAPPEN IN YOUR FAMILY, INVITE JESUS, AND MARY, AND HIS CHURCH TO BE GUESTS IN YOUR HOME.

JOHN 2:6-8 NLT

"STANDING NEARBY WERE SIX STONE WATER JARS, USED FOR JEWISH CEREMONIAL WASHING. EACH COULD HOLD TWENTY TO THIRTY GALLONS. JESUS TOLD THE SERVANTS, "FILL THE JARS WITH WATER." WHEN THE JARS HAD BEEN FILLED, HE SAID, "NOW DIP SOME OUT, AND TAKE IT TO THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES." SO THE SERVANTS FOLLOWED HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

JOHN 2:9-10 NLT

WHEN THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES TASTED THE WATER THAT WAS NOW WINE, NOT KNOWING WHERE IT HAD COME FROM (THOUGH, OF COURSE, THE SERVANTS KNEW), HE CALLED THE BRIDEGROOM OVER. "A HOST ALWAYS SERVES THE BEST WINE FIRST," HE SAID. "THEN, WHEN EVERYONE HAS HAD A LOT TO DRINK, HE BRINGS OUT THE LESS EXPENSIVE WINE. BUT YOU HAVE KEPT THE BEST UNTIL NOW!"

In the old days, the best wine was brought out first during celebrations. When the best wines had been fully consumed and the guests would still like to drink, the host would bring out the less expensive wines. They're so drunk they won't notice the wine was the cheap kind.

In this particular wedding, however, the master of ceremonies commended the bridegroom for bringing out the best wine until the end. What the master of ceremonies didn't know was that the wine came from Jesus.

Married couples thought that their wedding and their honeymoon were the best years of their lives already. And the succeeding years are already drab.

That's not true.

When you feel that you have nothing left in you, go to Jesus. You'll be surprised that the best is yet to come in your marriage, in your family, in your health, and in your finances.

The best days are not behind you. They are in front of you.



## YOUR MARRIAGE IS DESIGNED TO BE A MANGER FOR JESUS.



In this picture, you see a married couple, and between them is Jesus. You've heard the story of Joseph and Mary. It was not a walk in the park-- but they were able to survive. Why? Because Jesus was in their center.

***If you're married, make Jesus the center.***

***If you're a solo Mom or solo Dad, make Jesus the center.***

***If you're a widow or widower, make Jesus the center.***

***If you're a single or celibate, make Jesus the center.***

With Jesus, it'll be complete.  
Strong, powerful, and happy.  
Let's put Jesus at the center of our family,  
of our homes, of our marriages, and of our lives. Amen.



## MAKE JESUS THE CENTER.

# Love Offering

**BRO. JC LIBIRAN:**

*It's all about You, Jesus.*

Everybody, give Your glory and praise to God as we make Him the center of our lives. I want you to tell the people around you: "God is writing your story. God is writing the story of your family."

We just want to give you some announcements (details in *The Feast Bulletin*) as we also prepare for our best gift to God because as we all know, friends, whatever we give, it's covering our expenses here, our Feast Bay Area District especially when we have this Grand Feast. And we know as well that when we give, it's also supporting our Mercy Ministries.



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

ARAGUAN LAY MINISTRIES FOUNDATION, INC. | GRACE IN A BOX INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION AND MINISTRY | THE CARES FOUNDATION: STREET CHILDREN CARE CENTER | JERUSALEM 22&7 FOUNDATION | PUPUNGGY PANGKOP SOLUTIONS FOUNDATION, INC.

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Make sure you write your Prayer Requests and Thanksgiving for Answered Prayers on your Love Offering envelope.

Bring your Offering before God. Bring before God your family and prayers for your family-- just as I bring my family to Him.



Say this prayer after me:  
*Lord, Thank You  
for blessing me. Thank You  
for blessing us. Bless me more.  
Bless us more so that we can  
love more.  
In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.  
Give your best to God today.*



**BRO. DIDOY LUBATON:**

Thank you, Bro. JC.

Whenever we receive a learning when we get to experience something, we would like to give you that opportunity to digest it, to bounce it off to one another.

I'd like to invite you to form a group of two or three and share about experience today.

Do you have a family picture on your phone? Show it to your seatmate and ask each other: What are your hopes and dreams for your family?

Let us pray for your dreams for your family:

*In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Father in Heaven, we pray for our spiritual family gathered here today as we share hopes and dreams.*



*We've learned so much about marriage, family, and how You want to be born into our family again and again.*

*And as we put You in our center, we also offer to You our hopes and our dreams. In Your perfect time, in Your perfect will, we surrender all of these to You. If these are for us, please grant them to us. And not, within Your plan, I'm sure we trust You, Lord, that You have something better for us.*

*We pray for each other for perseverance, for hope, for breakthroughs in our family. We pray Lord that You provide for us, give us Your healing, Your strength, and all Your spiritual favor to come to our families. We trust in You and we Thank You. And as we prepare to receive You through the Holy Eucharist, we open up our hearts, our lives, our everything to You.*

*Take Your throne. Take Your place in our lives.*

*We trust in You and we Thank You. This is our united prayer In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.*



## MERCY MINISTRIES

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

--Matthew 5:7

### *Never Alone*

By **FIDEL ABRENICA NOMBRE**

I AM Fidel, born April 20, 1955, in Manila.  
So, I am now 70 years old.

I am a college undergraduate with a course in Hotel and Restaurant Management at the University of the East. I did not finish my studies because of financial problems. Besides, I was too excited to have a job because I was eager to help my parents.

But that dream hardly came true. Unfortunately, my father suffered from hypertension and diabetes, among other ailments. He passed on before I could fully serve him. Sadly, after several years, my mother also suffered from the same illnesses as my father did, and she eventually passed away too.

My relatives are now living abroad. So, I am living alone now. I preferred to be alone. I decided not to get married and to this day, I enjoy my life as a bachelor.

I wanted to be alone-- but I would soon realize that all my life, I've never been alone.

I have had a string of jobs. I worked as a checker in a brokerage for six months and then became a room boy or bellboy at the Regent of Manila Hotel. But my income was not enough for my needs.

So, I decided to work abroad. I worked in a catering agency, providing services to events in some regions of Saudi Arabia. Although I was financially stable at that time, my life was still full of loneliness.

With that, I decided to come back home to the Philippines.

When I returned, I rented a house in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal, and worked as a waiter at Harrison Plaza Hotel. But the Coronavirus Disease (COVID) Pandemic happened in 2020, and the restaurant decided to lay off workers. Unfortunately, I was one of them.



The FEAST FAMILY August 25, 2024 35

## My New Family

During the Pandemic, I decided to stay in my rented house. I was able to survive at that time because of my savings and my good neighbors.

Fortunately, in the early months of 2023, I was given a chance to work as a cook in Tapsilogan (serving a combination of tapa or dried beef, egg, and garlic fried rice) at Barangay San Rafael, which is a short-distance from my home.

Yet, around June 2023, I experienced a cloudy area in my eyes, later diagnosed as cataracts. A few months later, I could hardly see, so I decided to quit my job.

The house I rented was in a several-story building near a river. Worried that the place was not safe for me, my friends and neighbors suggested to refer my situation to our Barangay to find a better residence for me. I agreed.

By God's amazing grace, one of the officials of Barangay San Rafael, Serafin 'Tatay Apen' Garibay, used to serve in Anawim Lay Mission Foundation Inc.

He referred me to Anawim. Anawim admitted me on October 27, 2023.

I am deeply grateful that I've since received blessings in Anawim. Two of the best:

1. I enjoy a secure life-- a home in a comfortable cottage.
2. Medical care. With Anawim's help, on April 20, 2024, I underwent cataract surgery and it went well. Finally, I can see clearly again.

A priceless blessing is I feel the love of God through the unconditional caring of the Anawim leaders and personnel and my co-elderly-- all of them now my new family.

With them and our Amazing God, I'm never alone.

Here, I learned my favorite Bible verse, where Jesus healed a blind man, Luke 18: 42:

*Jesus said to him, "**Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.**"*





## **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 to 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](mailto:jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com)

Website: <https://kerygmfamily.com>

## 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](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  
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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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**Founder:** Bo Sanchez

**Mercy Ministries Chairman**  
Hermie Morelos

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Cynthia U. Santiago

**Chief Photographer**  
Edmundo L. Santiago

**Feast International  
Region Head**  
Vic Español

**Editorial Assistant**  
Laarni A. Uy

**Multimedia Staff**  
Ronaldo Antonio U. Santiago  
Dylan Anthony A. Santiago

**Media Ministries Head**  
Randy Borromeo

**Contributors**  
The Feast Builders

**Finance Officer**  
Rowena Cequeña

**Publication Consultant**  
Chelle S. Crisanto

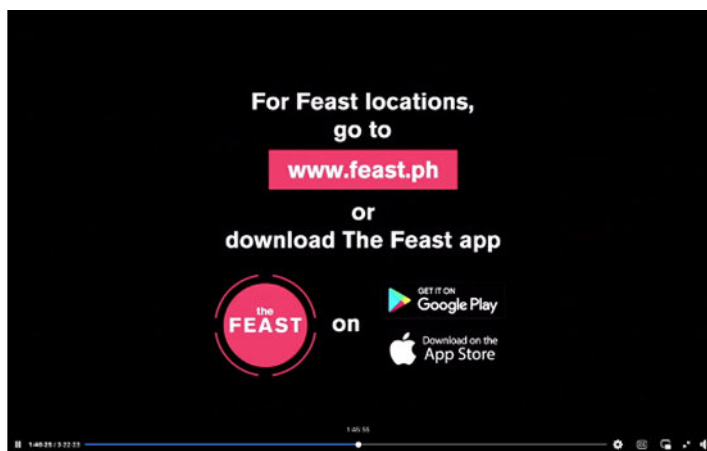
**Human Resources Manager**  
Erika Ventura



**Shepherd's Voice**  
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For comments, article contributions, write or call us:  
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Landline phone numbers: 8725-9999, Fax 725-1230  
Mobile phone: 0998-953-0657

***Go and make disciples of all men.***  
— Matthew 28:19

