

reachbulletin

MAY 2024 | VOL. 32 NO. 1 | RESOURCES EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY HORIZONS

VISION

The gospel and God's Kingdom, actively and freely permeating all levels of society in a holistic and contextualized manner.

MISSION

To develop disciples of Jesus Christ as whole persons and promote a contextualized holistic Christian discipleship in the developing world.

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Equipping people to become complete in Christ

Rebuilding Broken Walls:

Lessons from Nehemiah's Faithful Leadership

Message by Ed and Oyay Jimenez

The annual retreat, held via Zoom on January 13, 2024, was facilitated by Ed and Oyay Jimenez. Here's a summary of Nehemiah's task and the faith lessons his life brings:

Nehemiah, a Jew and cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia, felt burdened upon learning that the walls and city gates of Jerusalem, where his brothers and sisters lived, lay in ruins. He earnestly prayed for God to move the king's heart to allow him to travel to Jerusalem with the goal of leading and motivating the Israelites to rebuild the walls. His request was granted, and he received provisions from the king for his mission.

With conviction, skilled workers joined their resources and used various strategies to rebuild the walls and city gates. Despite opposition and threats, Nehemiah's leadership and his desire to encourage teamwork and trust in God's faithfulness enabled the mission's success. ***The walls, which had been destroyed for nearly a century and a half, were rebuilt in just 52 days.***

As Ed and Oyay concluded their sharing, they encouraged reflection on what we can learn from Nehemiah's relationship with God and how it applies to our lives today. Their insights refreshed and encouraged the REACH family for the challenges of 2024.

Nehemiah's mission, strategies, teamwork, and success highlight four faith lessons:

1. **The power of fervent prayer:**

Nehemiah's heartfelt prayers, fasting, and pleading for God's blessing and favor pleased God and translated his desires into action.

2. Trust in God's promises: Nehemiah found strength in God's enduring covenant and shared God's word with the Israelites, helping them remain confident and focused amidst challenges.

3. Effective persuasion and teamwork: Nehemiah united the Israelites and inspired them to work together wholeheartedly, resulting in successful rebuilding.

4. Perseverance: Nehemiah's steadfast leadership and hard work, along with the dedication of his team, exemplify the importance of perseverance in achieving goals.

REACH Leadership Retreat Challenge!

Message by Jerry C. Francisco

One of the most rewarding experiences whenever we visit different ministry areas is having personal time with key leaders. There's mutual encouragement as we share updates on personal, family, career and especially ministry concerns. Common ministry issues that come up in conversation are the following:

- The transition in leadership and accountability,
- REACH ministry to recapture and maintain teachings on discipleship,
- Corporate commitment and ministry project,
- Balance teachings on discipleship, mission, and transformational development,
- Need for pastoral care ministry.

Based on the situations in the ministry areas, the National Discipleship Team prayed and settled on “Rebuilding relationships and strengthening passion for discipling,” for the 2024 Annual Retreat theme from the Book of Nehemiah.

In order to achieve the rebuilding process of our ministry we need to address the following:

- Improve corporate accountability and commitment,
- Revive passion and vision for discipling,
- Strengthen corporate family relationship and fellowship, and
- Focus on grace and prayer as mode of operation .

When they hired me in 1992 as an office staff, it was the turning point of my life. It was a dream come true for me to serve God through the REACH organization. And I want to share with you my personal motto that has been developed over the years while serving in the ministry so that I can enjoy my work despite the difficulties and challenges in whatever capacity that the top leadership wants me to do.

Let's Do It!

Commitment to the organization means commitment to its leaders and most of all to God.

- Expect the unexpected!
- If it's your idea, you do it!
- Focus on God not on people!

Acts 2:42 (NIV) states “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Let's Move On!

Commitment to Christ is defined by commitment to fellow Christians.

- Reconnect
- Restore
- Revive

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

John 15:13 (NIV)

Reflection Question:

How is our intimate relationship with God?

REACH Cebu Empowers Youth with Monthly Fellowships and Workshops on Faith and Relationships

by Dynna Golez

In an effort to foster spiritual growth and promote healthy relationships among young individuals, REACH Cebu continues its mission by organizing regular monthly fellowships and workshops. These gatherings serve as platforms for engaging discussions, enlightening talks, and practical guidance on various aspects of faith and life.

January: Understanding the Gospel

Kicking off the year, REACH Cebu welcomed Lito Ouano as the speaker for January's fellowship. Ouano delved into the essence of the Gospel, emphasizing Christ's sacrifice, burial, and resurrection as the core message. Around 30 to 40 youth actively participated, and discovered ways to deepen their understanding of the Gospel and strategizing on how to share it with others.

February: Nurturing Healthy Relationships

Moving into February, REACH Cebu focused on nurturing healthy relationships among the youth. They held a discussion led by Ronald and Dynna Golez on the principles of courtship. With over 50 to 60 attendees, questions poured in during the Question and Answer session, addressing concerns about relationships with non-Christians, managing emotions, and handling emotional blackmail.

The month concluded with a heartfelt pledge of purity, symbolized by the distribution of white handkerchiefs, signifying the commitment of the youth to uphold purity and honor the sanctity of marriage.



Additionally, on the last week of February, they held an intimate workshop on biblical principles of marriage, facilitated once again by Ronald and Dynna. Couples from Heaven Harvest Church gathered to explore common marital challenges and effective solutions, emphasizing the importance of God at the center of marriage and the principles of unity, leaving, cleaving, and commitment.



March: Embracing the Biblical Meaning of Love

As March unfolded, Lito Ouano returned to delve into the biblical meaning of love. Encouraging attendees to show love despite hostility, Ouano's message resonated with around 30 to 40 youth. Following the talk, the youth engaged in small group discussions, sharing personal experiences of facing antagonism and presenting skits depicting these encounters.

Through these monthly fellowships and workshops, REACH Cebu continues to empower youth, equipping them with spiritual insights and practical wisdom to navigate life's challenges and cultivate meaningful relationships rooted in faith and love.





REACH Los Baños: a Decade of Spreading Faith at the UPLB February Fair

Since 2013, REACH Los Baños has upheld a cherished tradition: hosting an evangelism night on the Friday of the week-long UPLB February Fair. While the campus swells with visitors indulging in rides, food, and concerts, the members share the gospel in pairs or groups. REACH LB alumni often return to join the activity. This year, the event was held on February 16, 2024.

Over the years, the nature of the outreach has evolved. What began with distributing chocolates has transformed into distributing pens and even $\frac{1}{4}$ yellow pads, each accompanied by a sticker featuring the verse 1 John 4:19 – “We love because he first loved us” – and information about the REACH LB ministry.

During the evangelism night, participants are typically grouped into teams of 2-3 people. Armed with their outreach materials, they walk around the campus, engaging with fellow students and visitors in conversations about faith. It's not uncommon to encounter other Christian groups undertaking similar activities, fostering a sense of camaraderie and unity in purpose.

After the event, the team gathers to share stories and insights from their interactions. These reflections reinforce the impact of their efforts and inspire continued dedication to spreading the gospel. For many, sharing their faith on campus is deeply rewarding, highlighting the significance of outreach in nurturing spiritual growth and community engagement.

REACH Los Baños continues to uphold its tradition of evangelism night during the February Fair. Through the members' commitment to sharing the message of love and grace, the ministry embodies the essence of faith in action, enriching the campus community and beyond.

REACH Capiz Alumni Reunite for Festive Get-Together and Pre-Christmas Celebration

by Angelie Magcanam



In a heartwarming reunion, alumni of Capiz State University (CapSU) main campus came together for a joyous get-together and Christmas party on December 23, 2023, at the Dadivas Residence in Mejorada Subdivision. The event aimed to reconnect graduates, regardless of their current locations, fostering camaraderie and spreading holiday cheer.

Among the attendees were CapSU alumni including Aaron Paul Caacbay, Christian dela Cruz, Reymart Bagioso, Erica Cataluña, and Angelie Magcanam, along with members of the Dadivas family, Jerry and Alma Francisco, the Life Goal family, and young individuals affiliated with the local church, totaling around 30 participants.

Reflecting on the gathering, Aaron Paul Caacbay shared, *“It was short but a sweet moment. My heart was full of bliss having had the chance to see and meet my brothers and sisters in Christ again. There's a special warmth that will embrace you even after not seeing each other for a very long time and it makes you feel like everything was just from yesterday. It was very nice to see familiar faces but it was amazing to see the youngbloods eager to work and spread the word of God. I'm really glad to have attended this gathering and I'm looking forward for more gatherings to come.”*

The event, though informal, included various activities typical of Filipino family reunions and Christmas celebrations. Attendees engaged in games, enjoyed a lively videoke session, savored a delicious dinner, participated in a raffle, and shared informal stories to catch up with each other's lives.

While no formal message was delivered, the spirit of camaraderie and shared memories served as a testament to the bonds forged during their time at CapSU. The gathering provided a meaningful opportunity for alumni to reconnect, reminisce, and strengthen their friendships as they embarked on new journeys beyond Roxas City.



Resting in His Grace: A Testimony of God's Provision and Faithfulness

by Mary Jane Garro

My journey is a testament to the unwavering faithfulness of God in my life. From my early years in elementary school, the REACH Ministry in Cabagan has been my family, guiding me towards spiritual growth and understanding. It was through this ministry that I encountered the transformative power of God's Word, igniting a fire within me to know Him more deeply.

Entering college at Isabela State University (ISU) in Cabagan Campus in 2019 marked a challenging chapter in my life. Yet, rooted in my faith in God as my provider, I turned to Him in earnest prayer, trusting in His promise to provide for my needs. In a beautiful display of His faithfulness, God answered my prayers through the compassionate hearts of Miss Mercy Beltran and Miss Virginia Manguba, whom I affectionately call aunties, members of the REACH Ministry. Their offer of a scholarship, designed to support deserving students like myself, was a divine provision that lifted the weight of financial worry from my shoulders.

The scholarship, coupled with the generous assistance of Ms. Jo Ann Ray through the Christian Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative, became a lifeline, covering my basic necessities and easing the financial strain of pursuing my education. Gratitude floods my heart for the elders of the REACH Ministry in Cabagan, whose selflessness and dedication to uplifting the less fortunate have been a beacon of hope in my darkest moments.

As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded of God's steadfast promise in Exodus 14:14, "He will fight for us; we need only to be still." In moments of doubt and fear, Philippians 4:13 has been my solace, affirming that through Christ, I can overcome any obstacle.

In August 2023, I finally graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from ISU. Every step of the way, from walking the halls of my university to the culmination of my studies, I have witnessed God's hand in guiding, providing, and ultimately, carrying me through. All glory and honor belong to Him alone.

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an imaginative
use of resources
in the extension
of the gospel

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Disciplemaking in the Developing World

REACH Ministries is developing disciples of Jesus Christ as whole persons in the context of the developing world. Specifically, it seeks to maximize the growth of disciples and disciple-makers in the face of complex social and economic environments in the developing world. Toward this end, REACH is committed to the following: the whole person; indigenous leadership styles; the poor; and disciplemaking through—staff development; ministry enhancement; socio-economic development; high school and collegiate outreach; developing contextualized materials; and practicing godly administration and management.