



## The Spirituality Behind Stewardship

### June 5, 2009 Community Celebration Teaching

Our Community Celebration featured the formal launching of the long awaited Magis Deo 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Book entitled *COMPANIONS*, and an inspiring presentation on the Magis Deo Community. Our guest speaker and mass celebrant was Fr. Bobby Yap, S.J., the Provincial Treasurer of the Society of Jesus. Our mass celebration started at 9:30 pm and in lieu of the homily for the gospel reading, Fr. Bobby delivered a teaching on stewardship.

Fr. Bobby started by telling the story of a young man who wanted to buy a Lexus, his dream car. The man went to a Franciscan and asked, “Father, please pray a novena so I can buy a Lexus.” The priest replied, “Yes, yes, of course I’ll pray a novena... but what is a Lexus?” So the man, disappointed, went to seek the help of a Dominican at UST. “Father, please pray a novena so I can buy a Lexus,” said the young man. “Yes, yes, of course... but what is a Lexus?” asked the priest. In despair, the young man

decided to go to a Jesuit at the Ateneo. “Father, please pray a novena for me so I can buy a Lexus.” The Jesuit replied, “Of course I’ll pray for you...



Fr. Bobby Yap, SJ

**but what is a novena?”** The point of the story, of course, is that Ignatian prayer helps us know God and discern God’s will, not turn Him into Santa Claus.

We learned a lot about stewardship in the past, but more often than not what was presented to us were the economics and technical detail or the theology giving

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**We remember ...**

**We celebrate ...**

**We believe!**

“It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents - except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets...”

This first line of a Victorian novel aptly describes the night of our community celebration on June 5. No amount of eggs and money sent to Sta. Clara by the organizers could stop the downpour that caused a horrendous end-to-end traffic jam on EDSA.

But the Multi-Purpose Hall at Lay Force was brightly lit, made festive with colored banners. More than a hundred Magis Deo members came to REMEMBER, CELEBRATE and BELIEVE. They braved the rain and

traffic jam to watch for the first time the Magis Deo Audio Visual Presentation, to witness the launching of the Magis Deo Commemorative Book, to listen to the teaching on Stewardship by Fr. Bobby Yap, SJ, and to celebrate the Holy Eucharist as a community.

As early as 6:30 pm a number of Magis Deo members were already at the canteen, hungrily waiting for solid

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Levy & Roxanne introduce the audio visual presentation of Magis' 20 years



Fr. Bobby on stewardship



Eli, favorite and perennial emcee



Nina Yuson, one of the founders of Magis Deo

## June 5 Community Celebration

July celebrants



Commemorative T-shirts are given to the first 50 early birds



Ubos na ang XXL... so kung sabay kong isuot ang Medium and Large shirts ... XXL na rin!



### The Spirituality ... continued from page 1

us the reasons for it. Fr. Bobby opted to talk about the spiritual aspect of Stewardship. At this point, let me re-echo his insights.

What motivates and inspires us to become a good steward? What moves our heart to become a good steward and caretaker of material possessions? What is the spirit behind Stewardship?

In our practice of Ignatian prayer, we always begin with a GRACE THAT WE ASK FOR. We ask for the grace of not just an ordinary kind of knowledge, but of a deep interior knowledge of God's love for us. When we know just how much God loves us, our hearts are filled with GRATITUDE for all the gifts He gives us, and we find ourselves moved to LOVE and SERVE the Lord in response.

The triple dynamics or movement of St. Ignatius' spirituality always begins with PERCEPTION. We must be able to perceive the goodness and the

generosity of the Lord. We should not only learn to deeply feel and appreciate these gifts but also relish and savor them in our hearts. Everything that we have in our life – possessions, family, experiences with people and events, all comfort in life – are GIFTS FROM GOD. These are given by God out of His love. They are not given because we are so good and we worked for them. After all God's gifts are created for everyone in the spirit of His boundless charity.

In our moments of meditation, we could spend hours in prayer just counting our blessings and graces. Suddenly we realize that God not only gives us gifts but is also PRESENT IN THE GIFTS THEMSELVES. Through them He manifests His love for us. And it is a gift to see that God is not only present in the gift but is laboring in it. He is working, continually creating and recreating in the gifts mentioned above. We must, as St. Ignatius said, "SEE

THE GIFTS AND THE GIVER." This is not a "head" knowledge of these things, but a knowledge of the heart.

Seeing all these on the level of our hearts, we are moved to FEELINGS – the feelings of GRATITUDE and THANKSGIVING. Gratitude because God loves us so much that He is constantly giving us so many gifts in our life. GRATITUDE is defined as the vision that sees LIFE as a gift. As we see these gifts, gratitude will change and transform us and eventually INSPIRE US TO LOVE AND SERVE. St. Ignatius said LOVE will always awaken love. When we know that God loves us so much then we cannot help but respond with love. GRATITUDE IS THE ECHO OF GRACE because when our hearts are touched by grace, there is an echo reverberating that evokes gratitude, reverence and love. Therefore, gratitude should not only be the heart of St. Ignatius' spirituality but also the HEART OF CHRISTIANITY.

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**T**oday we commemorate the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, given for us, not only in the Eucharist, but all the way to His crucifixion, death, and resurrection.

“While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, gave it to them, and said, ‘Take it; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many.’” (Mk. 14: 22-24).

Thus, when you and I humbly choose to receive the Eucharist in Holy

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## Spirituality of Body and Blood

Sunday Homily - June 24, 2009  
Ruben M. Tanseco, SJ

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Communion, it is not only for our own personal sanctification and salvation. It is our personal commitment to likewise give ourselves as bread and wine for others, all the way to the end, until there is no more to give. And all this is for the sake of LOVE. My body and blood, for others. As it was with Christ, so it is with each one of us who are His beloved disciples.

**SITUATIONER.** But our situation as a nation so very far from that. The giant gap between the haves and the have-nots is the very opposite of what we are commemorating today in our liturgy. The widespread social injustice and moral corruption in our country is precisely what Christ condemned and sacrificed His very life for.

Take this family from Payatas. The husband is a tricycle driver and earns so very little from day to day. The wife knows how to sew for a living, but they cannot afford to buy even a second-hand sewing machine. And they have ten children. Yes, ten! The family sleeps in

one, little room with hardly any walls but rags and “tolda.” How many Filipino families are living below and way below the poverty line? Throughout the past decades and even centuries, our economic and political powers-that-be have not really committed themselves to the meaning of the Eucharist - the Body and Blood of Christ for others - and yet many, if not most, receive Holy Communion regularly!

The other scandalous violation of the spirituality of the Body and Blood in our society today is the widespread desecration of human: **CHALLENGE/MISSION.** God keeps giving us the opportunity to be agents of change on two levels of SSS.

Stewardship, Simplicity, Sharing. Against the current culture of materialistic, consumerist narcissism is the alternative Christian lifestyle of stewardship, which leads to simplicity, which in turn leads to sharing. We are not the owners of our own lives, time, talents, and treasures. We are simply God’s stewards, and as such, must render ourselves trustworthy, as St. Paul reminds us (1 Cor. 4: 1-2). This humble realization cannot but lead us to a more simple lifestyle, so that as a consequence, there will be more of our time, talents, and treasures that we can share with others.

On the national level, there is an urgent call for social justice through institutional reforms toward a more equitable distribution of God’s resources :è from land, to housing, to family living wage, to food and clothing, to education, to humane work and employment, etc. Among the middle-class, upper-middle-class, and rich sectors of our society, the only way they can live the Eucharist is through the alternative lifestyle described above. No less than a spirituality of the Body and Blood of Christ. Gawad Kalinga and other socially-oriented organizations are truly a major breakthrough in this regard.

Side by side with this is the Moral Force Movement, initiated by Chief



Justice Reynato Puno, acting as a private citizen. The formal national launch and summit will be on August 31, 2009. Its mission-vision: “The Moral Force Movement is a social movement that aims to instill values of integrity, social responsibility and love of country among the Filipino people through education and service-oriented programs in which Filipinos from various sectors and faiths can participate.” Its priority concern right now is the 2010 national and local elections, through a voter’s education program on transformational leaders who will transcend self-interest for the common good.

Sensuality, Sexuality, Spirituality. This is the second SSS in the spirituality of the Body and Blood of Christ that is so urgently needed in our country today. What is God’s design for the sex act between man and woman? By its very nature, it is meant for husband and wife who are committed to each other in total and unconditional love, which naturally involves procreation. The couple are no less than co-creators of life with the Creator. Love and life are the God-designed meaning of sexual intercourse. At the height of sexual pleasure, each spouse experiences a self-abandonment to the other, and this is what M. Scott Peck describes as a mystical experience. God’s presence in each spouse.

Our congressmen and senators should pass into law an urgently needed anti-pornography bill and answer to God for any further neglect or delay in this regard.

## EDITORIAL

## Our response to the current political climate

During the last Pastoral Council meeting, the Council reflected on the newsletter article and teaching on poverty and corruption. We are aware of sinful structures in our midst, some of us may even unwittingly abet it, while others consciously take the effort to fight corruption despite the inconvenience and difficulty in conducting one's business. Although these actions are laudable, we felt that it was not enough to fight corruption at the individual level. There is an urgent need to be involved in something bigger.

Fr. Ruben Tanseco, SJ responded by exhorting the council to be involved in the MORAL FORCE MOVEMENT (MFM). The MFM is a "social movement that envisions a just, humane, prosperous and genuinely democratic Philippine society. It aims to instill the moral values of integrity, social responsibility and love of country among the Filipino people through the Filipino people through education and service-oriented programs in which Filipinos

from various sectors and faiths can participate. One of its objectives is to move the public to vote in the 2010 elections for transformational leaders in order to give greater strength to the electoral reform sector."

Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno is the convenor of MFM's core group of well-respected individuals from various sectors in society. The core group includes Ambassador Henrietta T. De Villa, who happens to be Fr. Ruben's contact, Dr. Milwida Guevara, a former Undersecretary of Finance, and Msgr. Gerardo O. Santos, President of CEAP.

The MFM is seen to be a positive, constructive, non-partisan, multi-sectoral and, most of all, a unifying interfaith force. The Magis Deo Pastoral Council believes that it is a movement that the community could whole-heartedly support given our dissatisfaction with the current political maneuvers and prevailing moral climate in the country.

Talking about the political landscape, some of our members have asked what

the Council's stand is vis-à-vis the House of Representatives' holding of a Constitutional Assembly (Con-Ass) to change the constitution. Also in its last meeting, the Council has decided to adopt the stand of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines against Con-Ass. Magis Deo members are urged to participate in activities organized by the CBCP.

It is important to be discerning in these critical times. We need to confirm our own individual discernment in prayer and heed the advice of our Spiritual Director and our Church hierarchy, which in our case is the CBCP.

Let us continue to observe the signs of the times in prayer and discern our actions as individuals and as a community, mindful of our call to be loving stewards, including, and especially in the arena of politics and the moral environment of the country God gave us to love.

*Tina Mossesgeld, Council Chair*

*We remember ... continued from page 1*

food as they contemplated cases of bottled water brought by early birds from the North Sector. Fortunately, their efforts for coming early were rewarded with complimentary Magis Deo 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary t-shirts provided by Mon and Alice Go through the courtesy of Levy and Roxanne Espiritu, fundraising committee heads. And the food did make it before the program, much, much earlier than Fr. Bobby.

At 7:30 there was still no sign of Fr. Bobby. He called to say he was stuck in traffic near Ortigas! But there was a full night ahead – plenty of time for Fr. Bobby to catch up. So everyone settled down as emcee Eli Prieto started the program with an inspirational video made by the Magis Youth on their summer camp experience. He acknowledged the presence of Nina Yuson and her son Zak. It was the late Joey Yuson, together with his wife



Nina, Fr. Ruben Tanseco, SJ, and a few other couples, who founded Magis Deo more than twenty years ago.

Tina Mossesgeld made the monthly Pastoral Council report of major community activities in the past month which include:

- the big turnout at the Suyuan Reunion at GK Multinational attended by 17 Suyuan graduates and 21 Magis Deo members as facilitators,
- the summer outing where 90 plus members and their families enjoyed many fun activities such as the adobo cooking contest, kite making contest, etc.,
- 34 Magis Deo shepherds and other leaders attended the talk on "Best practices on how to keep your members active" by Ms. Carmela Caringal from Couples for Christ for Family Life at the

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## COUNCIL CORNER

Regie & Daisy de Guzman  
Chair - Scholarship Committee  
Council Overseer - Outreach Ministry

# Magis Deo's core value of sharing – Preferential options for the poor

At one of the Pastoral Council meetings in 2006, Fr. Ruben Tanseco challenged Magis Deo to help provide educational opportunities for the poor. The Pastoral Council responded to this call and established the Magis Deo Scholarship Program, managed by the Outreach Ministry. This program provides vocational or technical education to poor deserving children in our identified mission areas. It links Magis Deo and these communities, translating opportunities for community building into actual service to benefit the poor.

The Scholarship Program has the following objectives:

1. To provide Magis members the opportunities for involvement in community development not only through their financial, but also moral and spiritual support;
2. To be witnesses to the Church's concern for the poor by providing deserving individuals access to education;
3. To enhance the grantee's self-esteem and self-reliance;
4. To provide opportunities for the grantees to appreciate and apply concepts of service and social responsibility in their respective communities.

Who are qualified to apply for the scholarship?

Applicants should come from our community's mission areas; are children of Suyuan graduates, or children of Magis members. The scholarship committee makes recommendations based on the potential and capability of the grantee to pursue studies – his/her 4th year high school report card must have a final general average grade of at least 83% – and priority assessment of financial need by evaluating the family's income (not more than P150,000 a year) in relation to the family's basic needs.

The scholarship is renewed every semester provided the grantee remains

qualified academically; i.e., he/she must maintain a semestral grade average of at least 83% with no failing final grade in any subject. The grantee should participate in the activities of Magis Deo community as needed, or when invited by the Ministry/ies concerned. A must for them to attend is the monthly Community Celebration. Interaction with other grantees is desired and designed to develop among them desirable spiritual, social and nationalistic values.

The parents of the grantees are called to an orientation which promotes healthy and responsive home-community partnership. This effort is concerned with enlisting parent cooperation and support in the educational and formation process, and gaining better understanding of students' needs in the academic and non-academic areas. Semestral-end dialogue with the scholar and parents is conducted whenever needed.

Our scholars enjoy the following benefits: tuition and miscellaneous fees, text books, school supplies, uniforms and monthly transportation allowance.

The Scholarship Program has already produced four graduates of two-year courses:

1. Bernadette Sabinay (Payatas), SY 2006-2008, Diploma in Computer Secretarial at University of Rizal System, Rodriguez, Rizal.
2. Mark Jayson Pergis (Pateros), SY 2006-2008, Computer Science Technology at InfoTech Institute of Science and Technology, Pasig City. (personally sponsored by Fr. Ruben Tanseco)
3. Ma. Dana Ferrer (Payatas), SY 2007-2009, Diploma in Computer Science at Datamex Institute of Computer Technology, Fairview, Quezon City.
4. Riza Menil (Payatas), SY 2007-2009, Diploma in Computer Science at Datamex Institute of Computer Technology, Novaliches, Quezon City.

At present, our community fund is supporting two scholars:

1. Ma. Melissa Padillon (Payatas), SY 2008-2010, Diploma in Business Information Management at Asian Institute of Computer Studies (AICS), Quezon City.
2. Janine Mae delos Santos (Payatas), SY 2009-2011, Diploma in Computer Secretarial at University of Rizal System, Rodriguez, Rizal.

Mark Jayson Pergis and Bernadette Sabinay are thankful for the opportunity to continue their studies to full 4-year courses. Mark is sponsored by Jun Sison of Corinthians BCGG while Bernadette is sponsored by another Magis member.

Mary Norvilex Porte of Payatas and John Mark Retardo are fortunate scholars – from the start, their sponsors offered them four-year college courses. Mary, financed by a Magis member, is taking up BS in Accountancy at NCBA, Fairview, Quezon City. She is now in her 3<sup>rd</sup> year. John, financed by Jun Sison, is in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year pursuing a BS in Information Technology at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasig.

This school year's total beneficiaries could have totaled seven (7) had Rency Castañarez (Payatas) continued his scholarship with us. Last year he enrolled as a BS Architecture freshman at the Technological University of the Philippines (Manila), sponsored by an anonymous Magis Deo donor. Starting this school year, Rency and his siblings are scholars of his father's employer.

While our community maintains a fund to sustain this scholarship program through special fund drives, donations from generous members and other individuals and support groups are accepted or solicited to augment the fund. Those who want to sponsor a scholar and provide our poor deserving brothers and sisters access to education, may get in touch with Lito & Jet Quimel and Regie & Daisy de Guzman of the Outreach Ministry.

## AFTER THOUGHTS

Zarah Gagatiga, Mt. Olivet BCGG

In 2007 Domeng and I, along with our eldest, Nico, attended the Family Encounter Weekend (FEW). Nico was only ten years old then. As a married couple, we were new members of the Magis Deo Community. We had not yet attended the LSS or the SDR. We were still “bagets” in the Marriage Encounter Ministry. Nevertheless, we took the



*Gagatiga Family*

opportunity and opened ourselves to whatever grace God would give us at the FEW.

Looking back, the FEW we had was not a feel-good experience. Well, we had our moments, but to me, I saw more of my flaws and imperfections as



*Aldomovar Family*

a mother. The typical Catholic, I was ridden with guilt. I was very disappointed with myself. If there was a grace I received that weekend, it was the acceptance of my mistakes and limitations. This awareness enabled me to prioritize what matters to my family more. This is not to say, however, that our family life has been perfect since



*Beltran Family*

the FEW. In fact, the challenge to set things right has been greater.

I think that’s how the conversion process works. Change takes time. It does not happen overnight. It is important to reflect upon the events of daily life to listen and see God’s will and design. Often, this is hard to know and discern. Yet, I keep the faith and hold

## Families are Living Miracles

on to hope. I often pray that one day, like a miracle, I will discover how beautifully God has transformed my family and me.

Just recently, I witnessed miracles in my family and in others too. The three of us (four actually since we brought our youngest, Zoe, as well) went back to the BLD Covenant House in Dasmariñas, Cavite for this year’s FEW as an auxiliary family. Our task was to help carry out a successful FEW for the six families who participated. Along with Teng and Gaya Antonio, and Ed and Sol Macalalad, we assisted Tito Eli and Tita Edith Prieto during the weekend of June 12, 13 and 14, 2009.

At this weekend, I saw my son’s willingness to lead the group in the community singing. He sings in the school choir, but leading a congregation is not in his level of confidence. Perhaps

he has matured. Maybe he gained confidence knowing that his father was beside him playing the accompaniment on his guitar. Or better still, it is the time given by God for him to sing and make a joyful noise.

Domeng is naturally shy and soft-spoken in a crowd. He does not easily open up to people. That weekend, he was game. He joked around to ease my



*Ilagan Family*

anxiety and reached out to the auxiliary team and participants of the FEW who needed help. Likewise, he bonded with Nico during song practice.

Zoe, who at eight is always seeking recognition, found her place during



*Dimanalata Family*

community singing time. Sitting beside his brother she sang along and held the rainmaker. This made her feel very much a part of the family. For the first time, she was introduced to the Magis Deo community through the FEW. She only knew about Magis Deo from our stories and the couples in our BCGG who visit when we have prayer meetings at home.

As for myself, I chose to stay behind the scenes, to sit back in the

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Cruz Family

shadows and to watch my children and husband let their light shine. I have basked in superficial glory in years past. That weekend, I reveled in silent work and cherished the quiet joys of service.

It was definitely a weekend of miracles. I listened to my son's almost pitch perfect voice. I saw my husband's unfolding. I felt my daughter's delight at simply being with her family and the bigger community. Best of all, the blessings that each family received that weekend was very much palpable in their smiles, their hugs and their demeanor. Once at home, I got a text message from one of the participants saying, "Salamat sa tulong ninyo, nabuo ulit ang aming pamilya." To this I replied back, "Salamat rin, dahil nabuo rin ang sa akin."

I am very much grateful to God who gave me a family. Despite myself, I am



Quintos Family

compelled to care and to love them the best way I can.

Zarah made a photo-video of the FEW. You can view/access it at <http://thecoffeegoddess.multiply.com/video/item/53>

- RCD

#### *We remember ... continued from page 4*

Shepherds and Sharers' quarterly meeting at the Santuario de San Antonio. Many of our practices in Magis Deo were affirmed, such as holding regular small group and sector meetings and fellowships. Other practices need to be strengthened such as more personal and closer shepherding of members.

- 15 Magis youth had a summer camp at Pililla, Laguna.

The much-awaited audio-visual presentation (AVP) came next. Levy and Roxanne Espiritu installed a large screen for this purpose. The AVP highlights Magis Deo's journey as an apostolic community, a community of couples and families for others.

From its beginnings in the weeks leading to the EDSA I revolution, Magis Deo has transformed the lives of many couples, families and communities not only by conducting the Marriage Encounter Weekends and its one-day version, the Suyuan, for low-income groups, but also through its timely and wholehearted response to national calamities, political events and the needs of poor communities.

Magis Deo's mission to be a community for others, and the story of how this mission is being carried out

through its programs was articulated very well in the AVP by Fr. Ruben Tanseco, Ike and Josie Llamas, (M.E. Ministry Heads), Lito and Jet Quimel (Outreach Ministry Heads) and Cathy Rafael (Suyuan Head). While the AVP is designed primarily to inform our current and prospective donors about Magis Deo, it also made us feel proud to be a part of this community. Nina and Zak Yuson's presence made the moment more poignant as those who were there from the beginning remembered Joey, and other companions who had gone on before us.

As a teaser for the July 4 release of the Magis Deo Commemorative Book entitled Companions, Tony Narciso presented the various features of the book. As each feature was revealed on powerpoint, the audience responded with appreciative "oohs" and "aahs." Together with the AVP, the book is an excellent tool for making all our members know, understand and appreciate what Magis Deo is all about.

The presentations were done and so were the announcements of coming activities, but Fr. Bobby still had not arrived (per the latest text update, he was then going through the Shaw underpass). We assured him we would

wait since we had nowhere to go anyway. Traffic outside San Carlos had locked us in as surely as he was locked out. The indomitable Eli Prieto quickly filled the gap - a video of "Britain's Got Talent" finalist Susan Boyle. Somehow he also managed to link Susan Boyle's glorious feat with the theme of the evening.

Jane Aldeguer bravely offered to start a round of games to keep us entertained when Fr. Bobby finally arrived at 9:10 pm. He had been on the road for more than three hours. He was tired but eager to start the Mass and give his talk. His impassioned talk on stewardship was simple and yet profound and moved many of us (see separate article).

As we moved out of Lay Force at around 10:30 pm, the rains had stopped but EDSA was still jammed. For some the night continued on to late dinners at The Fort or Rockwell. Others inched their way through traffic, anxious to get home. But wherever they went, the feeling must have stayed - it was good to be in Magis Deo and God was delighted with us.

*Tina Mossesgeld  
Council Chair, Cana BCGG*



A bright and sunny Sunday morning welcomed Magis Deo members at the Ipil Pavilion of the La Mesa Eco Park last May 17 for the annual Magis Summer Picnic. Several days earlier, no one was sure if the weather would cooperate because from May 11 to 15 rains poured heavily over Metro Manila, flooding many parts of the Metropolis. Needless to say, God blessed the community on that day with beautiful weather, allowing us to proceed with and enjoy the planned activities for the picnic.

As early as 7 am, families started to arrive wearing their designated colors - the South Sector in blue, the North Sector in red, and the Central Sector donned white. As in previous outdoor gatherings, members of the organizing committee came in yellow tops.

The celebration started with Mika Isabella Cruz guiding the community in the singing of Lupang Hinirang, after which Monchito Mossesgeld led the group in calling upon God to bless the occasion. With much enthusiasm, Eli Prieto gave his opening remarks to formally welcome the members and signal the commencement of the Summer Picnic.

This year's picnic highlighted three interesting events - the much "prepared for" Pinaka-Delicious Chicken Adobo Cooking Challenge, a Nail Art Clinic, and the "tough" Kite Making Contest.

The Adobo Challenge had each sector fielding a team with at least 6 members, defying the old adage "too many cooks spoil the adobo, er, the broth." I can't recall a Magis contest in the past where the participants were so serious and engrossed yet so boisterous while preparing their respective "extensively researched" adobo recipes. Every team member gave away his/her secret adobo formula to ensure that the group's entry would be the most nutritious, most presentable and most delicious Chicken Adobo.

While the newly discovered chefs of Magis were busy creating their concoctions, the Nail Art Clinic and the Kite Making Contest were simultaneously held.

Ate Mhy of the Parada household gathered several Magis ladies and girl teens and showed them various ways and techniques to design their fingernails. After the interesting demonstration,

participants started to decorate their own nails with gusto.

With most of the girls and moms busy with their adobos and nails, the boys and their dads teamed up to design and create their kites for the 3rd contest of the day. Squeezing their imagination, the boys teamed up (with an exception: one of the teams was joined by an Ate) and expressed their creativity as they

## The Sun Shines Inside The Magis Deo

Henry Cruz and

slowly but surely constructed their kites, using the traditional materials - bamboo strips, papel de japon, gawgaw paste, etc.

Before 12 noon, all the entries for the three contests were completed. The three adobo "samplers" were presented side by side on a table and were taste-tested by a panel of judges composed of Vicky Brillantes, Leo Soliman and Ellen Coronel. After the judges finished their taste and visual appreciation of the adobo dishes, the community shared a







chicken galore lunch, topped by a dessert of bottomless “dirty” ice cream.

Soon after everyone had his/her fill, sector teams were called to participate in two fun games – the “toothpick relay” and the “ice cream-pakwan-softdrinks relay” (otherwise known as the “diabetes relay”). The North Sector proved their prowess by placing first in both games.

## Be a Mini “Rainforest” Summer Picnic

by Leony Parada

The team of Tony Vistan, his daughter and son won first place in the kite making contest, with Joey Suarez and son Johan, and Ramie Santos with sons Miggy and Enzo coming in as first and second runners-up respectively. The Nail Art clinic saw Tina Pestaño, Ate Laila and Mika Isabella Cruz, in that order, receiving 1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards for their beautifully manicured nails. The much awaited outcome of the hotly contested Delicious Chicken Adobo

Challenge was the last to be announced. The “Chicken Adobo sa Gata” of the Central Sector won the discriminating taste of the judges and emerged as the Most Delicious Chicken Adobo in the first season of the contest, over the North Sector’s “Chicken Adobo Day and Night” and the South Sector’s “Chicken Adobo Flakes.” The Central Sector chefs were Mimi Santos, Anne Naldo, Agnes Tumaneng, Edna Pestaño and Benny Vistan.

Also awarded during the celebration were the following: Psalm 46-Samaritans BCGG and Central Sector with most number of BCGG and Sector attendees, respectively; the Cruz family as early birds, and Regie de Guzman as the most senior attendee.

With an overflow of prizes, almost everyone went home with a prize. But the best prizes everyone received during that day were God’s gifts of friendship, nature, family, fun, laughter, camaraderie and community.

*The Summer Picnic Committee was headed by Leony & Mia Parada. Special thanks to the following for their support in making the event a success: Miles & Evelyn San Pedro, Leo Soliman, Apin Llamas, Miny Parada, Gelo Tumaneng and Ferdie Cruz.*



## Magis Deo Commemorates our 20th Year

The task given to us to put together a commemorative book celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Magis Deo has been rewarding. Many thanks to the members who generously shared their experiences of what Magis Deo has done for them, and what they in turn, have done to share those gifts. The ComBook marks not only a milestone, but also the first comprehensive effort to document our ways of proceeding as a community, the Audio-Visual Presentation (AVP) introduces who and what we are as a community.

Production of both the ComBook and the AVP turned out to be a Magis family affair. Citrus Productions, which produced the AVR, is an outfit headed by Marc and Teret Pison, Flor's and Tony's son and daughter-in-law. Marc and Teret had the pleasure of discovering what Magis Deo meant to Tony and Flor. Both took the Discovery Weekend, a pre-Cana program of the MEFP, before they married and we teased them many times about taking the ME. Fr. Ruben gave us many pictures from his albums.

Javie Bengzon is the grandson of Monchet and Mary-Lou Albert. He and Denise Alibudbud have also taken their Discovery Weekend. They had many opportunities to talk about Magis Deo and the Spiritual Exercises with their grandparents in the course of the work for the ComBook. Serving as editorial consultants and writers through their outfit Saddle Stitched: Concepts in Print,

Inc., they now know Magis Deo very well. Their colleague, Jason Ligot, M.D., took care of layout and design. See more of their collaborations on [www.saddlestitched.com](http://www.saddlestitched.com). Art work for the cover was executed by Edgar Torres; it speaks for us.

The Magis Editorial team is headed by Flor Pison and supported by Joy Uy-Tioco and Tina and Monchito Mossesgeld. Together we conceptualized the book, sourced the material, wrote, edited, appealed for articles and photographs, tracked down misplaced articles and photographs. All submitted sharings were published but drastically edited so we could accommodate all. We decided to use spiral binding because new pages can be easily added. It reminds us that the ComBook is not a prescription, but a description of God's work in progress. Time and future experiences will change the expression of the Magis Deo Vision.

To the shepherds who provided the BCGG write-ups and photos and sharings, thank you. We hope this will inspire more members to write and share their own stories of journeying. Ministry and Pastoral Council write-ups were prepared by Roxanne Espiritu, Jo and Ike Llamas, Joy Uy-Tioco, Ted Concepcion, Malu Panlilio, Evelyn San Pedro, Daisy de Guzman and Jet Quimel. The Mossesgelds updated our Vision/Mission, "Our Beginnings" and "Couple and Family

Spirituality" in Chapter 1. The ComBook would have been a less pleasurable read without the photograph collections of Ferdie Cruz and Anchit Chua Chiacio. The Eslavas helped Flor sift through numerous photos and files in the Magis archives.

A full, year-by-year history, researched and written by Flor, was too long to include and will be given to the Publications Committee for the website. Likewise the text of "Couple and Family Spirituality" by Fr. Ruben Tanseco. Several rich but lengthy stories of personal spiritual journeys which were printed as a single page may also be published more fully in the website.

Much appreciated is our faithful Jane at the Magis Deo office who emailed raw data out at the beep of a text. Lia Pison, true Magis daughter, helped with the editing. Busy, busy Tina Mossesgeld and Maricel Suarez pitched in whenever and wherever they were needed. And dear Flor, chief researcher, writer, editor-in-chief. Leaders all, they willingly marched the extra mile when crunch time called for foot soldiers. And of course, the Espiritus who began it all.

We thank you all for the privilege of celebrating with you and the community. Needless to say the lapses and errors are all ours, we beg your kind understanding and pardon.

*The Team,*

*Flor and Joy and Tina and Monchito*

### *The Spirituality ...continued from page 2*

So when we have the interior knowledge of God's gifts and are moved to be grateful for it, this motivates us to love and to serve. We SERVE not out of duty, fear of punishment or because we are obligated to; we serve and become stewards because of LOVE, GRATITUDE and THANKSGIVING. As stewards, we are not the absolute owner of these things that we have in life and therefore we cannot exploit and abuse

these gifts. We become the caretaker who acts responsibly but at the end we will be held accountable to our Lord.

STEWARDSHIP also involves SHARING the gifts we possess, especially with those who are underprivileged and in need. In ACTS 2:44, we are called to do the same, just as the early Christians did.

A LOVE OFFERING is the community's way of sharing our gifts and material possessions born out of our interior

knowledge of God's love and gratitude for the gifts. This is the means to support the Magis Deo community, to sustain its existence and to serve the needy through our outreach programs. So if we want to be a GOOD STEWARD, we act out of gratitude and thanksgiving for the gifts that we have received by sharing them with our brothers and sisters in need.

*Gene N. Bañez*

*Head, Finance Committee*

*Agnes Dei BCGG*

## SCENES AND SIGNS OF FAITH

Clyde D. Abapo, Jeremiah BCGG

### 3 G's of God

God is good. God is great. God is generous. These are the qualities of God that touched the lives of the following people.

**Egay and Zeny Francisco** – At the Suyuan reunion, they were just one of the many couples in GK Aya Village who shared about a simple and real life marital relationship. Both have previous failed live-in relationships. Egay is a landscape contractor, while Zeny is a plain housewife. Their old house was typical of an improvised shelter which gets flooded when rain comes. Early in their marriage, the relationship was quite smooth, but when the economic crisis set in and jobs became scarce, conflicts and tensions became daily occurrences. One positive thing about Egay is that when Zeny erupts, he would find sanctuary at a nearest church. *Doon binuhos niya ang lahat ng problema at sama ng loob.* Later, he would be consoled and experience peace of mind. After an hour, Zeny would have calmed down and would straighten things out with him. This was the situation until they were given a unit in GK. The house was truly a blessing and made a difference in their lives. Zeny said that she has changed a lot and would be expecting their first baby soon.

**Atty. Vic Perez** – Vic is a dear friend. He is the loving husband of Annie, friend of my wife Pachotte in her PNB days. In the mid-80's, the couple migrated to the US. Annie got a good-paying job while Vic established a promising and successful law firm. Vic admits that he is not a religious person, but for some good reasons, they joined BLD Community in the US. Life was not all roses because Annie got down with the big C. Through almost a year of suffering, Annie never showed uncomfortable pain to inconvenience her

husband. Before her death in 2006, she even surprised Vic of the various investments and financial assets she acquired in her lifetime, not to mention real properties. Knowing these assets and investments were hard-earned acquisitions, they must be preserved and well taken-care of. Administration of their real properties was an important thing to do. At any rate, the death of Annie did not deter Vic to be more active at BLD. He continued Annie's feeding program in the Philippines. Also, one important activity in the community is the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Not to miss the opportunity, Vic joined the tour. The package included the



retracing of the flight of Moses from Egypt to the Promised Land. The most interesting part was his experience in a souvenir shop in Jerusalem. While listening to the owner, an icon displayed at the top portion of the shelf caught his attention. The icon seemed to be staring and saying something to him. He felt it was just his imagination but he found himself crying, feeling cold and restless. He went out to refresh and relax. He came back a few minutes later, looked at the icon again, and the icon was also looking at him, saying "Be a good man." Vic could not understand his feeling but his immediate reaction was to ask for the price of the souvenir icon. US\$400 was too expensive but he didn't hesitate to buy it. The following day as they were attending Holy Mass at one of the sacred places, an exact replica of the icon he bought stood at the altar. He couldn't believe his eyes. Today the icon of Jesus Christ has a special place in his condo unit in Los Angeles. They talk to each other and the message is always about helping the poor. True enough, with his financial resources and

real properties, Vic's projects and long-term commitments are directed to benefit the poor.

**Fr. John Sanchez** – He is our new parish priest. I like his homily because he incorporates theological learning with his personal reflection about the Gospel reading. In last Sunday's mass, he shared an experience about the greatness and generosity of God. During his ordination, he didn't have money to spend for his vestments and reception. Days prior to the date, his father was down with a kidney disease and had to be hospitalized and therefore whatever savings he and his siblings had went to medicines and hospitalization. The decision to proceed with the ordination ceremony was a discerning prayer. The total amount needed was P75,000. In his prayer he said, "Lord, my priesthood is not for me but for Your glory. *Kung gusto mo akong makapagbigay-serbisyo sa kapwa, may paraan.*" From his cell phone, he scanned the list of friends and possible benefactors for his ordination. One lady he called responded with a P50,000 check but was honestly returned by Father

because the amount he asked was only P15,000. The lady must have misheard the correct amount, so she gladly replaced the check but insinuated that she could give more. A few others pitched in until he was able to accumulate P24,000 for the vestments. Reception did not pose any problems because guests and friends handed

envelopes containing cash more than enough to defray the expenses involved. The blessings were overwhelming.

In our case, we just finished and shipped out our export order last May. We turned down two tempting purchase orders because of high risk and heavy financial exposure. We don't expect any movement up until the next show in October. However, small packets of blessings from domestic sales have kept us busy and afloat for the past months. God truly works in mysterious ways.

GOD  
has Done  
an Ama  
ZING!  
THING!

## Finding Magis Deo:

The Journey of our Marriage and the Value of the Marriage Encounter Weekend

Butch and Joey Vargas, ME 94

Our journey to the Marriage Encounter Weekend and Magis Deo is a long one. Joey and I had separate careers and thought that our marriage was "*just fine as it is.*" I was living a married single life - I worked hard and played hard, and anything in between (which wasn't much) was for my wife and family. Trials came into our marriage and these brought me the hard realization that I have hurt the woman I chose to love the rest of my life, and the relationships with my in-laws, parents, sisters and friends.

Joey was strong. She was decisive in keeping our marriage. Seeing that, I, too, resolved to be steadfast to the marital vows we exchanged 14 years ago.

When we agreed to attend the ME Weekend in August 2008, Joey thought I acceded to the invite as a "no choice" gesture because she asked me not to get her any birthday gift, and that my present for her was to say "Yes!" to attend the Weekend. Little did she know that at that time, I was already seeking a community where we could be with couples who value their marriage and family.

Since we now work in the same company, we decided to take a much deserved short break. Our travel to the BLD Covenant House was a challenge. Cavite is more known to me in places like Southwoods, Eagle Ridge, Sherwood, Orchard, *but not BLD Covenant House!* We got stuck in SLEX traffic and it was already dusk when we got to the vicinity of Dasmariñas. Joey and I agreed that if we couldn't find BLD or were too late for the Weekend, we would return home with the notion that, "*Hey, we tried!*" We finally saw a sign pointing to BLD and got there. "*Maybe it's God's Plan to attend after all!*"

We were met at BLD by Tito Ike and Tita Josie, whom we later found out to be the head honchos of the ME Ministry. At the registration counter we were met and assisted by Art and Grace Santos and Marty and Aggie Escalona. I was a tad uneasy because I could not fathom the friendliness, warmth and welcome of

people unknown to me. Had I not known that BLD was a retreat house, I was surely going to get a hefty bill after the Weekend because such VIP treatment comes at a price!

The Weekend was enriching, inspirational and encouraging. The presentations and sharings of Fr. Ruben Tanseco, SJ, Team Couples Ike and Josie Llamas and Ramie and Mimi Santos, were our awakening that the situation Joey and I were in was redeemable, and if we open



ME Batch 94, now sponsors and auxiliaries for ME Batch 97, with Shepherds Charley & Jay Ng Sy and John & Glo Boren

our hearts to God and allow Him to maneuver, we would live our married lives in God's design.

Waking up Sunday morning after an extended Saturday session, we were eager to listen to the remaining sessions at the same time raring to begin a new life and make amends with each other and the people whom we had hurt. At noon we were surprised to see Tito Ike and Tita Josie sitting with us - later to find out that we were appointed Coordinators. Joey and I had apprehensions because we felt we didn't have the time, but we said "Yes" with reservations.

The biggest surprise of Sunday came when the Magis Community came in, singing beautiful Tagalog *kundimans* in the *Harana!* Tony and Bambi Narciso who recruited us made the effort to bring our daughter Patricia! This was simply AWESOME! On that day I said to myself, "This is where Joey and I belong" - a statement that Joey confirmed, too.



Our post-Weekend activities ensued with the coordinators and a few batch mates. Our shepherds Charley and Jay Ng Sy and John and Glo Boren were very warm and welcoming. Joey and I attended the Couple's Night where we understood the magnitude of the Magis Community! Being neophytes, we were again warmly welcomed by couples at the venue. A Magis Deo trait which, to this day, overwhelms and awes us!

Joey and I continued to communicate with our ME 94 batch mates, sending emails and text messages of forthcoming Magis activities and writing summaries of these events. We ensured that every batch mate, attending or not, was informed. This was our Apostleship to Batch 94, eventually shared by the Coordinators and other couples in our Batch.

In one of our post weekend reunions, our shepherds informed us that our Batch will sponsor the Weekend for Batch 97 to be held on 19 to 21 June at BLD. We were anxious about the processes; but our shepherds allayed these.

Our reunion group now became the auxiliaries group, namely Mads and Julie Bugayong, Rico and Terry Lim, Dennis and Peaches Plaza, Ricky and Gi Valencia and Joey and I. We focused on recruitment, which we found to be the *most daunting hurdle*. The opening of the school year and the Global Financial Crisis were the reasons recruiting was difficult. We appealed to the Community for help, which subsequently came in the form of couples' names and material donations. We also ran to our families, friends, workmates for recruits, placed announcements in MRT stations, radio plugs, posters in our respective Parishes, even *Facebook shoutouts* - but NOTHING. We turned to prayers and this was when we realized that whatever number of participants we got for the Weekend is not

our number but God's. Then the numbers started to improve until we reached 14 couples by midnight of June 19.

A month before the MEW, while Joey and I were having dinner with our mothers on Mothers' Day, I lost consciousness. I was hospitalized for 4 days and had a battery of neuro and cardiologic tests. This hospitalization gave me respite from my hectic work schedule. Most important, the doctors gave me a "clean bill of health." I told Joey it was God's way of telling me I should focus on Him for the MEW and not on other pursuits; that I should give it my ALL because He has given me good health.

The days and nights leading to the MEW were long and arduous. The auxiliaries had day jobs and we met with our shepherds, Tita Josie and Tito Ike in the evenings, rehearsing songs and piecing together a unique MEW game plan. Upon reaching home, we would continue our MEW tasks way past midnight. What was surprising was, we still managed to wake up early the following morning, full of energy, well rested and focused on the new day's tasks.

On the week of the MEW, the auxies monitored the weather since June is typically monsoon season. *Lo and behold*, there were Low Pressure Areas that could hit during the MEW. We prayed for good weather and safe journey for all participants, team couples, Fr. Allan, auxiliaries and others.

We woke up in the morning of 19 June to a fine, sunny Friday. *Were our prayers heeded?* Never did it cross our minds that the sunny Friday was coincidental but simply God wanting a significant and meaningful MEW.

All auxiliaries arrived at BLD in the early afternoon and immediately began setting up the place. Registration started at 3:30 pm and extended 'til midnight when one couple arrived after mistakenly driving to Tagaytay.

The moment we began singing *Welcome* and *This is the Day* accompanied by Claro Santos and Eli Prieto, we knew this was the real thing - the beginning and the end of the nights of practice and planning. As we settled for the night, Joey and I couldn't help but ask while reminiscing on our own MEW

experience, "*How can couples from varied demographics and geographics have a unified intention of attending a Marriage Encounter Weekend?*" The answer is simply, "it's God's Hand at work."

On Saturday, starting at 6 a.m. with Rico knocking at our door and clanging the wake up bell, we put the long day to motion - Ricky worked on the directory as if imposing self-exile; John and Dennis displaying Fil-Am friendship as they printed certificates and other documentation; Gi preparing the banquet area and snack table (not to mention that Jay, Glo, and Marivic brought more than enough food for everyone); Peaches, Julie, Terry, Gi and Joey alternating at the Conference Rooms, balancing accounts, keeping vigil, whilst Charley and Jay were ready for any



*ME Batch 97 with Fr. Allan Abuan and Team Couples Cesar & Marivic Pareja and Mhon & Jacqui Buenaflor*

shortstop activities. Edith Prieto and Linda Santos likewise lent a hand. I managed to sit in a few sessions to listen to Fr. Allan and Team Couples Cesar and Marivic Pareja and Mhon and Jacqui Buenaflor. There I saw myself in the husbands attending the MEW - a husband in transition for the better.

We planned a romantic garden dinner for the couples - dinner by candlelight with red rose centerpieces, set under the stars with romantic melodies in the background.

As the couples walked into the garden to Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*, the shepherds and auxiliaries stood on the sides clapping. After dinner Marivic Pareja emceed a kissing game, and two couples adjudged the most creative kissers got gift certificates from Hotel Sofitel. All couples received a bottle of well known scents. Now, how romantic is that!

As the participants continued with the evening sessions with Fr. Allan, the auxiliaries "double-timed" preparing the

garden for Reconciliation Night. When the participants settled in their rooms, the auxiliaries started collating the directory. We were amazed at our level of energy and enthusiasm since it was already in the early hours of Sunday morning when we finished. We had the energy to think logically and stay on our feet multitasking - more than what we could expect from ourselves on regular days. Furthermore, notwithstanding our sheer lack in number, events and situations fell in the right places at the right time.

Sunday was another fine sunny day. Tita Cathy Rafael brought fresh long-stemmed red roses for the Renewal of Vows. Fr. Allan proceeded with the Sessions, Holy Mass, Renewal of Vows and the Graduation. We were awed by the

openness of the couples as they read their "Dear God" letters during the Homily, and their willingness to accept their appointment as Coordinators.

Satisfied with the outcome of the MEW, Joey and I felt rather empty since our roles as auxiliaries for ME

Batch 97 was over and done - a feeling shared by fellow auxiliaries.

Would we do it again? A resounding YES!

Could we do it again? Maybe not, because future batches are waiting in line.

Where there shortcomings and obstacles? Yes!

Could we have done better? No, because this is how God wanted us to do it for Him.

We all found fulfilment knowing that there are new couples who found the "magic" of the ME Weekend and that the MEW torch has been passed on successfully. With the MEWs in good hands, more couples will be with us in the Community.

In this writing Joey and I wanted to share our journey into the ME Weekend, how we "gelled" with couples in our batch; and as couples and as a batch, are finding our Community in Magis Deo. Couple Power in action!

Truly, marriages are made in Heaven! And a Marriage Encounter Weekend is God's Hand working through Magis Deo.

## SPIRITUAL TIDBITS AND HUMOR

Rey Mella, Council / Cana BCGG

## Choices ... the road I have taken

During our recent prayer meetings, we were reminded about the four S's of our Ignatian Spirituality, most specially on stewardship. Likewise, I am personally reminded about simplicity and continuing to live a simple and frugal life. Sometimes, when I have some extra money, I deviate from my simplicity. But, really, I am a simple person and try to live simply as much as possible especially where my personal lifestyle is concerned. I pay for a cheap haircut at a cheap barber shop, not in an expensive salon. I wear a simple polo barong daily which is boring but allows me not to spend on new clothes. I buy and wear simple white underwear, have all white hankies and all black socks. With the same black socks, I don't worry about pairing problems. Seems boring and lacking in style, but this simplifies my life and reduces my expenses. I buy expensive but durable shoes every 3 years; saves me more money from buying every year. I don't wear a watch anymore since I have a PDA and a company-issued mobile phone and laptop which tell me the time all the time. For like 3 of 5 days in a week, I bring my own home-cooked food to the office and not have to go out and spend for lunch; saves me time also. These are a matter of personal choices. And I enable myself to stay consistent with my drive for simplicity.

A few months back, in his homily at the Annual Maundy Thursday Lenten Recollection mass, Fr. Tanseco encouraged "his" disciples to offer our feet to the Lord and to pray to let Him take us where He wants us to go; where He wills us to go. Reminds me of what Lewis Carroll said, "*If you don't know where you are going, any road will lead you there.*"

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The American poet Robert Frost also had a lot to say about making the right choices, and taking the right road of life. To quote the last 3 lines of Frost's poem, *The Road Not Taken*:

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

The poem reminds me about the road I have taken and that is the road with the Lord. I wish I could have done this all my life and not just in my more mature years. But then again, God has His ways and His own sense of timing.

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In this time and age, time has become a much more valued commodity and has become harder and harder to find. Perhaps, more than money, time is a more valuable resource. We want to make more money so we can buy time. We are busy in many things and are always in a race to accomplish several things all at one time. The term multi-tasking has become predominantly a daily exercise. When we do things, we oftentimes lack focus. I speak for myself, of course.

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So, in practicing time management, I try to save time by combining activities that allow me to do what I value and what I have decided as a priority all at the same time. As an example, I have put a high value to my family and my health. To be practical, I exercise and play table tennis with my family. I love my son and also love basketball. So, I read updates on the NBA with my son, who loves the sport as well and spend time discussing things about the sport with him.

I love to coach my people but have to attend many meetings. So, I share stories and coach my people during the meetings. In challenging my team to go to the next level of performance, at our recent general meeting with our supervisors and engineers I quoted the same last stanza of Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken* and inspired them to make the right choices.

When I tried to become a businessman, I made sure my wife was involved in my business as well. So, I

was able to earn a living, develop myself as an entrepreneur while also spending a lot of time with my wife.

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In the same manner, being with the community, I have been blessed with the combined opportunity of increasing the level of my spirituality and doing this with my wife. I value real friendship, and being with the community has also provided me a much bigger network of friends, real friends, who also share the same passion for spirituality and goal of being Christ-like as I have.

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One day, an employee was absent from work. The following day, his supervisor asked him what happened. He said, "I was actually driving to work and I made a wrong turn. And, I just decided to keep going."

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A group of scientists developed a way to create life out of dirt - just like God did. They invited God to the unveiling of their accomplishment, and God shows up.

God says, "Go ahead; let me see what you can do."

And one of the scientists reaches down to pick up a handful of dirt.

Whereupon God says, "Oh, no, no! You get your own dirt!"

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A man worked hard, became financially successful and was so proud of all his achievements in life. He told his wife to put all of his money in the coffin when he died so that he could take it and enjoy it in heaven.

When he died, at the end of the funeral, his wife carefully placed a huge box in the casket right beside him.

Her best friend came up to her and said, "Mary, you didn't actually do what he told you to do, did you?"

"Well, yes," Mary said. "You know, it was his last request; and I needed to honor it."

"So you put all of his money in that box?"

"Yes," Mary said, "I wrote him a check."

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# Kay Domeng, Kahit Ayaw Niya

Zarah Gagatiga, Mt. Olivet BCGG

Siguro hindi mo na natatandaan  
Ang "date" natin sa may tabing ilog  
Hindi naman kase official date yun  
Dahil nagkayayaan lang tayong kumain  
Matapos manood ng Noli Me Tangere  
Sa Metropolitan Theatre

Ang akala ko nga  
Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious ang lugar –

Isang kainan sa may tabing ilog  
Masarap ang pagkain, may ambiance  
At affordable, siempre  
Umasa naman ako na avant-garde ang  
dating  
Kase kilala na kita na kakaiba  
Alam ko na ang taste mo noon pa  
At kahit malayo sa taste ko, gets ko naman

Yun pala, isang pipitsuging karinderya  
Sa may terminal ng bus katabi ng post office  
Malapit sa ilog Pasig  
Sa Lawton ang ibinida mo sa akin  
In fairness, masarap naman ang pagkain  
At mura nga  
Napabuntunghininga na lamang ako

Gusto kong malaman mo  
Ngayong nagdiriwang tayo ng ating  
wedding anniversary  
Na ang unofficial date nating iyon sa may  
tabing ilog  
Sa karinderya na pipitsugin  
Kung saan kumakain ang mga drayber at  
kundoktor ng bus  
Ay maituturing kong isa sa mga  
unforgettable moments with you

Ngayon ko lang naalala kung gaano  
kaganda ang hapong iyon  
Tahimik tayong kumakain  
Nakatanaw sa ilog Pasig  
Kulay sepia ang tubig sa paglubog ng araw  
Ang natatandaan ko pa  
Ay ang mga ngiti mo na may halong  
pagbibiro at kapilyuhan

Paglipas ng labingtatlong taon  
Atsaka ko lang narealize  
Ang kahalagahan ng katahimikan  
Na makikita ko at mapapakingan ang  
sarili doon  
Na mayroon pala akong mamimina na  
kayamanan

At mahuhukay sa pananahimik  
At higit sa lahat, natututo na akong makinig  
Pagkat alam ko na rin kung paano manahimik

Isang dosena at isang taon na tayong  
magkasama  
At ito ang naaalala ko sa araw ng ating pag-  
iisang dibdib

Dapat may regalo ako sa iyo  
Pero ayaw mong gumastos pa o maghanda  
man lang  
Request mo sa akin na umuwi ng maaga  
mula sa trabaho  
Para sa simpleng hapunan  
Pagkatapos, manonood na lang tayo ng TV  
o lumang DVDs  
Makikipaglaro kay Nico at Zoe  
Magkukwentuhan, magtatawanan at  
magpapasalamat  
Sa Maykapal dahil binigyan pa tayo  
Ng isang dapi't hapon ng katahimikan

*Zarah wrote this poem for Domeng on  
June 1, 2009, their 13<sup>th</sup> wedding  
anniversary. – RCD*

## July Birthday Celebrants

|    |                       |                      |
|----|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 2  | Mary-Lou Albert       | Isaiah 66-Ignatians  |
|    | Julie Torres          | Philippians          |
|    | Edna Pestaño          | Psalms 46-Samaritans |
| 4  | Felix Brawner         | Sirach               |
| 6  | Laney Ricohermoso     | Kapatiran Kay Kristo |
| 7  | Tony Narciso          | CIA/Wisdom           |
|    | Grace Santos          | Thessalonians        |
|    | Joy Rago              | Agnus Dei            |
| 8  | Celia Echivaria       | Exodus               |
|    | Raymund Martin        | ME Class 95          |
| 10 | Vic Reyes             | CIA/Wisdom           |
|    | Mars Cuevas           | ME Class 91          |
| 11 | Olive Ng              | ME Class 86          |
|    | Pio Echivaria         | Exodus               |
| 13 | Leo Dumlaog           | Isaiah 66-Ignatians  |
| 15 | Jet Quimel            | Exodus               |
|    | Elma Martinez         | ME Class 95          |
| 17 | Resty Tongol          | ME Class 90          |
| 18 | Arnel Isip            | Corinthians          |
| 19 | Dolly Llamas          | Philippians          |
|    | Percy Garcia          | Mt. Olivet           |
| 22 | Benny Vistan          | Psalms 46-Samaritans |
| 23 | Ed Macalalad          | Mt. Olivet           |
|    | Grace Catangay        | ME Class 92          |
| 25 | Doy Dizon             | Arch. Gabriel        |
| 26 | Carlos Pizarro        | Corinthians          |
| 29 | Bernie Isip           | Corinthians          |
| 30 | Bobby Alvarado        | ME Class 95          |
|    | Lando Natividad       | ME Class 95          |
| 31 | Feast of St. Ignatius |                      |
|    | Josephine Guzman      | Beatitudes           |
|    | Ian Alon              | ME Class 92          |

## July Anniversary Celebrants

|    |                            |                      |
|----|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 2  | Pete & Elo Nabong          | Thessalonians        |
| 4  | Jojo & Jane Aldeguer       | Mustard Seed         |
|    | Jimmy & Fatima Umali       | Exodus               |
| 10 | John & Glo Boren           | Agnus Dei            |
|    | Dennis & Joy Rago          | Agnus Dei            |
|    | Gary & Krissy Jamora       | ME Class 92          |
| 11 | Claro & Linda Santos       | Agnus Dei            |
|    | Dewey & Chona Chua         | Jeremiah             |
|    | Vicente & Victoria Babaran | Magnificat           |
| 16 | Lando & Shon Natividad     | ME Class 95          |
| 18 | Ed & Tatic Castillo        | Cana                 |
| 21 | Bing & Vikki Brillantes    | Cana                 |
| 22 | Tony & Benny Vistan        | Psalms 46-Samaritans |
| 27 | Manolet & Suni Rodriguez   | Micah 6:8            |
| 28 | Mon & Elma Martinez        | ME Class 95          |
| 31 | Doy & Becky Dizon          | Arch. Gabriel        |
|    | Dodo & Jon Sta. Maria      | ME Class 90          |

# Magis

Official Publication of the Magis Deo Community

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**2009 Calendar of Activities**

| <b>July</b>      | <b>Activity / Event</b>   | <b>Venue</b>  | <b>Sponsor(s) / Contact(s)</b>  |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| 04 Sat           | Community Celebration 4pm-7:30pm                                      | San Carlos Lay Formation Center<br>Chapel – 2nd Floor             | Outreach Ministry; South Sector<br>Corinthians, CIA/Wisdom, Exodus<br>MEFP 426-4206         |
| 04-05            | Shepherding Seminar 2 (Free)  | CEFAM   | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 05               | Mid-year Planning 8:30am-5pm  | CLC Building  | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 08               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 11-12            | Shepherding Seminar 1 (Free)  | CEFAM   | Cesar Pareja 0922-8727352   |
| 12               | Bowling Tournament  | E-Lanes, Ortigas Avenue, San Juan City                            | Mon/Alice Go 444-3520   |
| 14               | North Sector Meeting 7pm  | Cathy Rafael or Marcia Balderas Residence                         | Anchit/Sally Chua Chiacio 807-8493  |
| 16               | South Sector Meeting 7pm  | TBA   | Joy Uy-Tioco 0917-8166745   |
| 17-19            | AIR 1 (Annual Ignatian Retreat 1)                                     | Sacred Heart Novitiate  | Suni Rodriguez 0917-9274750<br>MEFP 426-4206  |
| 25-26            | Shepherding Seminar 2 (Free)  | CEFAM   | MEFP 426-4206   |
| <b>August</b>    |   |   |   |
| 01-02            | Shepherding Seminar 1 (Free)  | CEFAM   | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 04               | Sector & Ministry Heads Meeting 5                                     | San Carlos Lay Formation Center<br>Chapel – 2nd Floor             | Praxis Ministry; Central Sector<br>Cana, Jeremiah<br>MEFP 426-4206                          |
| 07               | Community Celebration   | CEFAM   | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 08-09            | Shepherding Seminar 2 (Free)  | CEFAM   | Anchit/Sally Chua Chiacio 807-8493  |
| 11               | South Sector Meeting 7pm  | TBA   | Mon/Alice Go 444-3520   |
| 11               | North Sector Meeting 7pm  | Cathy Rafael or Marcia Balderas Residence                         | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 12               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | Clyde/Pachot Abapo<br>838-8553/0922-8098768   |
| 15               | Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS)                                      | God's Love Catholic Prayer Community<br>New Manila                | Ted/Susan Concepcion 724-8019<br>Philip/Malu Panlilio 632-6598<br>Ike/Josie Llamas 821-0639 |
| 15-16            | Prayer Deepening Workshop<br>8am-5pm                                  | San Carlos Lay Formation Center<br>Multi Purpose Hall – 3rd Floor | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 21-23            | MEW (ME Class 98) P3,200/couple<br>(Fr. Ruben Tanseco)                | BLD Covenant House, Dasmariñas, Cavite                            | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 22-23            | Shepherding Seminar 1 (Free)  | CEFAM   | Fr. Ruben Tanseco   |
| 29-30            | Shepherding Seminar 2 (Free)  | CEFAM   |   |
| 31               | Launch: Moral Force Movement  | FEU Auditorium  |   |
| <b>September</b> |   |   |   |
| 01               | Shepherds & Ministry Heads Meeting 3                                  | Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish Office                           | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 04-06            | ME 2 (P3,000/couple) – Fr. Tanseco                                    | St. Scholastica's, Tagaytay                                       | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 05 Sat           | Community Celebration 4pm-7:30pm                                      | San Carlos Lay Formation Center<br>Chapel – 2nd Floor             | MEM; North Sector<br>Philippians, Mt. Olivet<br>Anchit/Sally Chua Chiacio 807-8493          |
| 08               | South Sector Meeting 7pm  | TBA   | Mon/Alice Go 444-3520   |
| 08               | North Sector Meeting 7pm  | Cathy Rafael or Marcia Balderas Residence                         | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 09               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | Leo Soliman 0927-2782383  |
| 10               | Jun Sison Cup   | Philippine Navy Club  | Ting Yupangco<br>MEFP 426-4206  |
| 11-13            | Spiritual Deepening Retreat (SDR)<br>P3,500/couple, P1,800/individual | Canossa Retreat House, Tagaytay                                   |   |
| 19               | Couples' Night  | TBA   | Apin Llamas 0919-8545248  |
| 26-27            | Shepherding Seminar 1 (Free)  | CEFAM   | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 29               | Sector & Ministry Heads Meeting 6                                     | Magis Deo Office  | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| <b>October</b>   |   |   |   |
| 02               | Community Celebration   | San Carlos Lay Formation Center<br>Chapel – 2nd Floor             | SSFM; South Sector<br>Mustard Seed, Agnus Dei<br>Anchit/Sally Chua Chiacio 807-8493         |
| 06               | South Sector Meeting 7pm  | TBA   | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 07               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | Mon/Alice Go 444-3520   |
| 13               | North Sector Meeting 7pm  | Cathy Rafael or Marcia Balderas Residence                         | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 24-25            | CPPJ Seminar – P500/person  | CEFAM   |   |
| <b>November</b>  |   |   |   |
| 03               | Sector & Ministry Heads Meeting 7                                     | Magis Deo Office  | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 07 Sat           | Community Recollection and<br>Election of Pastoral Council            | TBA   | COMELEC   |
| 07               | MEFP Festival of Songs  | AFP Theater, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.                                 | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 10               | South Sector Meeting 7pm  | TBA   | Anchit/Sally Chua Chiacio 807-8493  |
| 10               | North Sector Meeting 7pm  | Cathy Rafael or Marcia Balderas Residence                         | Mon/Alice Go 444-3520   |
| 11               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | Magis Deo 426-4206  |
| 14-15            | Team Training Seminar   | CEFAM   | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 20-22            | MEW (ME Class 99) P3,200/couple                                       | BLD Covenant House, Dasmariñas, Cavite                            | Ike/Josie Llamas 821-0639   |
| 21               | Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS)                                      | God's Love Catholic Prayer Community<br>New Manila                | Clyde/Pachot Abapo<br>838-8553/0922-8098768   |
| 23               | Fr. Ruben Tanseco's Birthday  |   |   |
| TBA              | Thanksgiving Dinner   | TBA   | Joy Uy-Tioco 0917-8166745   |
| <b>December</b>  |   |   |   |
| 06               | Family Day  | TBA   | Joy Rago 0919-6577961<br>Jay Ng Sy 0929-9619091   |
| 09               | Council Meeting   | Magis Deo Office  | Magis Deo 426-7191  |
| 11-13            | Spiritual Deepening Retreat (SDR)<br>P3,500/couple, P1,800/individual | Canossa Retreat House, Tagaytay                                   | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 20               | MEFP Gift Giving  | Tala Leprosarium  | MEFP 426-4206   |
| 25               | Birthday of Jesus   |   |   |