



## THE LITTLE BOY WHO HATED SCHOOL

-Ruth E. Ortega

Once upon a time, there was a little boy who hated school. No matter what his parents did they could not make him go to school. They bribed him, permitted him to be absent in class for one day, scolded him, threatened him, and even spanked him but none of these worked. When his mother persisted on to ask him why he was antagonistic about school, the boy answered, "I don't care much if you beat me because I have a smaller audience at home but school is no fun. My teacher always humiliates me and everybody thinks I'm a loser." This once upon a time happened in our neighborhood and might be happening in yours.

With this little boy's story, CSLP students, with the guidance of Outer Journey facilitator, Sol Garner Dolojan, organized a symposium in our local community that will strive to address this problem. The symposium's theme, "Bata, Bata Paano Ka Inaaruga?" (Child, Child...How are you being cared for?) summarized the event's main question - our role in rearing and teaching children as we consider their lawful rights. This theme is an adaptation of Lualhati Bautista's novel turned film, "Bata, Bata Paano Ka Ginawa?" (Child, Child... How were you made?) which reveals a symbolic message: "Child, Child...How were you molded to become a mature, grown-up person?" The symposium was hosted at De Joya Elementary School, thanks to the hospitality of the School's Principal, Clarissa Caper. CSLP students invited the school's pupils, their parents, teachers, the Department of Education Pinamalayan District Supervisor Anafe Jarabe, Guinhawa's Barangay Captain Graciano Monton and Barangay Councilors.

The symposium's main speakers included a leader from the Catholic Parish who spoke about Bata sa Mata ng Diyos (A child in God's eyes), three representatives from the Women's desk of Pinamalayan Philippine National Police who spoke on Bata sa Mata ng Batas (A child in the eyes of the law), and CSLP's Psychologist and Guidance Counselor, Antonino Ortega who spoke on Bata sa Kanyang Pagiging Bata (A child in his childhood).

Department of Education Supervisor Jarabe, in her opening remarks, shared about the importance of this symposium as an aid to better communicate with parents about their responsibilities as partners with the school in forming a child's values. She said that in the area of children's rights, teachers, parents, the school and community are often not on the same page. As a result, teachers are now off tangent when it comes to disciplining their students (discipline associated with physical punishment).

During the symposium, the audience was reserved but very attentive while resource speakers verbalized how they learned from each other. A powerful ending brought about tears as CSLP students played out a skit that wrapped up the topic. Tears of realization, tears of guilt, and tears of joy... these tears were a precious sign for those who heard and understood that each one is responsible for the other. And for those of us who saw how each parent held their child closer and tighter as they dispersed to their homes, how teachers sighed at what they witnessed and realized, and how the CSLP community learned from the experience, we were touched and understood the challenges that lay ahead.

Cheryl Broetje, Center for Sharing Co-Director, mentions Jon Schnur in her article. Schnur is an education policy analyst who found out in his study, that the failure or success in America's classrooms (which I believe is universal), especially in its poorest communities did not depend mostly on what kind of home a child came from or whether the school had enough resources. Instead, he concluded, student failure had to do more with the teacher in front of the class. For too many students, school leaders and unions had settled on low expectations from kids living in poverty, which allowed them not to be held accountable, when they continued to fail. Broetje says too many see poverty as the reason for the failure of so many of our children, but are unable or unwilling to consider an even more powerful resource than money and infrastructure that is available to all human being for the asking...that is...Spirit. Spirit is more powerful than knowledge. She goes on to say that the most important work we do is helping people discover what brings them meaning in life.

We are a part of all that we touch, and what seems a small and forgettable gesture or action to us may have a lasting impact on another's life. In that sense, we are all teachers. And what this once upon a time tells us is that we are bridges for all the boys and girls, young men and women who come into our lives - bridges that connect to the dream of God for our society. Filipinos agree with national hero, Jose Rizal, when he says, "The Youth is the Hope of the Fatherland." Behind the youth are their parents, and even more their teachers, with whom they spend most of their days. For this paper, may I add to Rizal, and say, "The Youth, with Selfless Teachers Behind Them, is the Hope of the Fatherland."

Once upon a time there was a little boy who hated school. Sometime later, more young boys and girls emerged to say the same thing with the same reasons. Would they live on to settle for less? Would their spirits be roused to continue the cycle of healing and service? Teachers, help me write the ending to the story.

"People don't care what you know until they know that you care"

## Falling In Love With My Values Class

-Francis Hernandez

Four months ago, we participated in Values Orientation in Classroom Education (VOICE) training. I never imagined that it would permanently impact my life. For me, teaching Values in a classroom setting was a burden, an added task to my loaded schedule. But as I prayed before my debut class, I felt in my heart a genuine desire to touch the lives of children, that is, to exert spiritual influence in their lives.

Our first class seemed awkward, and I was a bit nervous. I deviated a bit from the lesson plan by asking some personal questions. Their simple answers hit me straight – I could relate to them for I too have experienced the same pains as they had– the emotional weakness caused by the death of a parent, the pain of rejection, and the choking effect of having low self-esteem. It dawned on me that the Lord has put me in a perfect place where I could minister out of personal brokenness. But how could I minister to them for only an hour every week? I decided to have a monthly grand birthday celebration, starting in October. Aside from the usual Happy Birthday song, I made hand-written cards for them, gave each of them a box of crayons for their gift, sung to them the popular CSLP Birthday Song 'Ako'y Mayrong Awit', gave them compliments before the class, pronounced blessing through prayer and bought sweetened banana (sinulbot) as a treat for the whole class. It was indeed a nice start of a wonderful ministry, and the children at once felt acceptance and real worth in class.

The next step was by giving encouragement and counselling. It was done directly through motivations during class time, and indirectly when I write personal messages as I return their assignment papers. This also provided an opportunity for me to pray for their specific needs. What the class enjoyed and absorbed well was our practice of giving affirmations, often to seatmates, all grounded to the lessons we try to learn. Hence, 'I love you my brother/sister' has become common affectionate words in our lives.

The highlight and most fulfilling of my experience was when I visited their homes and made friends with their families. The children are delighted that their homes be visited, and some of them serve as my little tour guides. The parents were truly warm, and in short talks we have gained each other's trust by the mutual sharing of experiences and brokenness. The experience of building relationships with the families goes beyond the joy of teaching inside the classroom.

Love begets love. As I express to them acts of love, they too enfold me with a much deeper meaning of love – a love that is simpler, humbler, truer. In the long run, they have loved me more than I have loved them. For me, it was great work and ministry. I tried to tell the students by the cards I gave them of how much they have taught me many things during our time of togetherness, but I doubt if they would fully understand how they have ministered to me. I have improved a lot because of them, an achievement that might be hard to attain by just listening to a classroom teacher. In a sense, as I tried to be a good teacher to them, they have become my 'spiritual instructors' as they have brought me nearer to God. My prayer is that God would continue to bless and take care of them far better than I could possibly do.



## A TRIBUTE TO MY TEACHER

- By Joriel V. Merlin

I have a teacher. And he is not just a teacher but a farmer, a pastor, and a father. He was nothing significant to me at first but later made a profound influence in my life most especially my spiritual journey. Through him, I learned how to love the small things I do. I learned the importance of accomplishing menial chores. At times I get stubborn but he corrects me lovingly. He helped me see life's realities. I consider him the best teacher ever because he taught me in the best way I would learn. Through it all, I learned humility and submission. He taught me personally- not by theory, but by experience. I've lived with him for almost three years. I ate his food, slept in his house, and helped in his farm. He tells me, "Ang tao ay parang halaman. Minsan hindi nagsasalita kung ano ang problema o nararamdaman niya. Makikita mo lamang ito sa mga nangyayari sa buhay niya. A good farmer is sensitive to the needs of plants. So must we be to people." In a sense, we are all farmers.

I am a product of a broken family. As a result, I've searched and longed for intimacy, love, and family. It took me a very long time to find it in the presence of my teacher and his family. Through them, God healed my broken heart. My teacher is my experience with him. Thank you Teacher and Pastor Abraham Latonero!

Are you anybody's favorite teacher?



Joriel "Yel", 23, is the eldest of 10 siblings. His mom was only 15 when he conceived him. At a very young age, he experienced extreme physical and verbal abuse daily. This resulted to deep anger and resentment towards his mother. He was sent to school by his grandmother but later charged all his school expenses and the food he consumed during his stay with her and demanded him to pay by labor. He later wandered alone and ended up working in a supermart for P60 a day. He slept in a dingy room for free, just enough for him to stretch his weary body and used his clothes for pillow. It was at this point where he met Ptr. Abe Latonero (JCCI Pastor) who rescued him from his incredibly depressing life. Yel is grateful that he had the opportunity to become part of CSLP. In here, he learned suffering and pain can be turned to blessing. His question to himself, "What am I required to do now?"

## The Wealth of CSLP

-Ruth E. Ortega



There was a time when we sat down and asked ourselves what wealth makes us and what poverty makes of us, who we would want to be identified with and to what will our lifestyle witness. On our second week of having no money in the fund to buy food for 27 stay-in students, nothing to buy for gas for the stoves, nothing to keep the lawn mower useful, nothing to spend for operational expenses, we gathered at our community time and reflected on what the Lord is requiring us to do about it. Amazing reflections came out. The student monitor for the dining hall initiated that students contribute financially and manually. She found out that the community can survive for long with the small cash and in kind donations from the students, faculty and staff, and the neighborhood. Some neighbors let the students gather vegetables from their backyards. Another volunteered to get banana blossom for viand from the farm in his Christian service area at Banilad, Pinamalayan. When the community learned it was for CSLP, they added more to what he was supposed to take. Jean Vanier says, "In a poor community, there is a lot of mutual help and sharing of goods, as well as help from outside. Poverty becomes a cement of unity." This was an eye opener for the members of the faculty and staff who haven't received their salaries yet.

Another student who is not used to sharing, went to buy coffee and realized that it felt no good to drink alone so she decided to buy for everybody else. She termed it as a "lessening of her greed". This was true for Ate Remy (Academic Dean), who for her love of pets, budgets a certain amount of her income for animal food. When she saw the situation at the dining hall, she sat down with her husband and discussed the matter. She realized she could choose to close her eyes to the needs and cries of others but she cannot neglect the needs of her pets. She concluded she loved her pets more than people. With that, she decided to stop talking about it and start acting. She decided to buy fish for the students. We had a festive lunch that day. Of course she continued to do that after- not neglecting the needs of her pets while attending to the needs of others.

For some reason, our cook did not report for work. The students assigned themselves to do the cooking. It brought so much joy to the community to hear laughter and singing from the dining hall as the students fan the flames from the charcoals that slowly cook the community food, as they do the shredding of the coconut to extract milk, as they slice tomatoes for the fish sauce (bagoong), as they set the table, wash the dishes, do the chores. This is true wealth, something money cannot buy, something we would not have experienced and realized if we would have otherwise been provided with all the material things we needed. We witnessed creativity, oneness, love, sharing, and the inner beauty of each one. Vanier talks of his own experience when he says, "When people love each other, they are content with very little. When we have light and joy in our hearts, we don't need material wealth." It is a wonderful experience to live the theories we are attesting to before we go out and preach it to others. Ultimately, we are truly grateful to the God who created all things, that He is indeed our great provider, and has never fell short in answering to our needs (Philippians 4:19). The community realized what true wealth means and that CSLP is wealthy indeed.



## OUR GOD IS ABLE

-Cliff F. Fonte

**F**inancial Security? As an entity, CSLP don't have such. As many people know, we are not an income-based institution. The fund that enables the operation of CSLP is generated from our faithful partners both local and abroad but still falls short of the intention to stabilize the support of the whole operation. The truth is that this shortage gives us no choice but to utilize other funds like the Trust Fund and Rice Fund to cover for General Fund operation. Swinging back and forth with the words borrowed and paid has actually become customary especially with us in the Accounting Office. On the other hand, our income-generating project which is the Rice Business intended to pursue the goal of being a *self-sustainable institution* is just on its "take-off" stage. For almost a year of working on the rice business, God is continually teaching us to exert more effort in improving performance in the forthcoming sale seasons. We are positive that the God who provided for a self-sustaining project will also provide for a means for us to be able to manage it wisely. Not all of us have other sources of support and some of us are led to think of considering other job opportunities outside CSLP. The temptation is strong to rely on our own solutions but the fear of going outside the circle of God's will eventually redirect us to our true calling. In situations like these we learn to put our hopes only to the One who called us. We learn from Romans 8:25, "But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently".

One common thing that the members of CSLP community have is *the joy of serving* the Lord and the community. Even in unfavorable situations, the power to believe in God's wondrous works and the ability to trust on His unfailing hand keep us moving ahead. It's not just a *step of faith* but a *leap of faith*, for we cannot fathom the depths of God's love for those who are faithfully obeying and joyfully responding to His call. Then we know that it is not just about money or financial security, it is about the contentment and simplicity of *having God* in our lives and the authenticity of the love that we have for each other. As what God had promised in Philippians 4:19, there is peace in us that He will certainly fulfill His promises. He is our God and He is more than able.

## Titit's Prayer

—Ruth Ortega with Francis Hernandez

One of my favorite essays is Elizabeth O'Connor's "Who Hears Prayers?" In the story, two old, mentally ill women dominate the scene - one knelt to pray and the other taunted her - "Get up woman! God don't hear your prayer!" O'Connor then poses the question to herself, "Does God hear her prayer?" "Then I remembered. God is in me and where I am God is. The real question was, Did I hear her prayer? What would it mean to hear her prayer?"

In CSLP's new curriculum, one of our subjects is the "Outer Journey". This is where students are encouraged to go out of our gates and be a part of other communities, listening to people's stories and learning through action and reflection. In fact, as a result of this subject, almost every house in Guinhawa (our local community) has been entered by a CSLP student. We were all struck by the story of our senior student, Francis and his group, after they visited the home of Maritess Ugbac - whom they call Titit. Similar to O'Connor's article, Titit is mentally ill. She has four children - ages 12, 10, 9, and 5. Her husband, age 74, suffered from a stroke in 1995 and since then had a hard time providing for the family. He earns a little money from fishing but spends it mostly on alcohol and gambling as a temporary escape from his destitute life. Titit does the neighbor's laundry and earns Php200 (\$4.80) per week.

Our students noticed Titit's house and how unaccommodating it is for her family. The roof leaks and its one small room doubles as a living room and a bedroom for the couple and three of their children. The house is lopsided because its wood pillars are about to collapse. During the first visits with Titit there was little cheer in her face. We wondered - what would Titit be praying about?

Actually, Titit stopped praying a long time ago - she figured God didn't hear her prayers anyways. But Francis and his group made sure that after every visit they ended with a prayer. It didn't take long until Francis' groupmate, Angie heard Titit's prayer. (Angie and her family lost their house to a fire set by her alcoholic father who later abandoned them. Her eyes are very keen on the need of people for houses.) A week later, the students contributed from their small allowances for house materials and gathered *sasa* leaves for *pawid* (a traditional style roof in the Philippines) from the CSLP farm. CSLP cut down mahogany trees for wood and altogether the community worked as one to replace Titit's house anew. Now, a typical Filipino house (nipa hut) is rising for Titit and her family. Of course it was much more fun doing things WITH them than doing things TO them. Titit's family shared their resources and contributed to the house construction. Her neighbors and relatives once in a while pop in and ask questions. "Will you be requiring Titit to go to Guinhawa Church on Sundays?" We are more convicted of bringing Jesus to the people instead of JUST telling them to come to Jesus. But, still, Titit went to Guinhawa Bible Church the next Sunday. When I saw her, her slightly cheerful face has bloomed to a radiance of joy and freedom. She had a different aura, far from the depressing image she was the last time I saw her. She hasn't returned to church the next Sunday, but our CSLP community continues to help her. Then another question, "Why are you building a house for them for free?" Why? - because God DOES answer prayers! God has all the answers but He doesn't give it all by Himself. We are God's partners, his eyes, ears, hands, and feet!

Amazingly, this act of looking through God's eyes with compassion and love to our neighbors has been contagious.

Guinhawa Bible Church, located eight meters from our CSLP compound, saw how we worked as a community. This caused them to reflect on their role as partners in building God's kingdom. They realized that, what they used to think was impossible, was actually possible. The church has now "left their gates" as well - and they have started building a house for the homeless in their community.

I like the words "contagious community." May it be that the CSLP community, with the love of Christ it has experienced be able to infect love in those who are searching for it in their prayers, and become contagious themselves. God does hear prayers.



TITIT'S OLD HOUSE



AT HOME WITH TITIT

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CSLP STAFF AND FACULTY MEMBERS



SOL GARNER 'PONG' (CSLP Director) and SABINA 'BING' (Registrar) DOLOJAN

- Good health
- Growing love for others
- Wisdom on how to handle community of students and staff



EVELYN 'BEBOT' SALAZAR (Business Manager)

- Additional income for daughter Sherene's school fees



REMEDIOS 'REMY' LINGON (Academic Dean)

- God's wisdom in preparing the daily devotional guide for CSLP family
- Jail ministry of Pili Bible Church: that more inmates will come to know and accept Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour and a life-transforming faith
- Good health for husband Sonny and myself (both are under medication to lower blood sugar and cholesterol level; also recurrent attack of ulcer and vertigo)



ANTONINO 'TON' (Guidance Counselor) and RUTH (staff) ORTEGA

- Good health
- Educational needs of daughters Yvette and Antoinette



CLIFF F. FONTE (Accounting Clerk)

- Good health for family
- Spiritual growth and maturity
- Financial provision for sister Camille's studies
- Laptop for use at work



GLENDAC. SAA (staff)

- Good health, safety for husband Noel who travels to work (Coca-Cola company) everyday
- Financial provision for health exam (thyroid scan) and treatment
- Maintenance medicine for sister Catherine who has diabetes
- Help in accomplishing project for Mother Minda's house renovation



DIOMEDES MINGA (Caretaker/ Maintenance Manager)

- Wisdom in leadership role (Chairman of the Board) at Guinhawa Bible Church
- Good health and financial provision for the family
- Scholarship for daughter Cheryl who plans to study Social Work next year
- Son Nelson's safety and protection while working in Marinduque Province.

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- Strength and wisdom of Business office staff in updating financial records of General Fund, plus Farm and Rice Businesses
  - Php185, 000 deficit for December 2011 (employees' salaries and insurance fees) and this coming year's demands
  - Right person to manage CSLP's Rice Business; one who is knowledgeable about the nature of the business and knows how to help us develop it to sustain the operation of the institution
  - Good harvest
  - Growth of students and the whole community
  - God's provision for school finances

## Students Profile



**Angela Perez, 23-** Angie grew up with an alcoholic father who was also a wife beater. Domestic violence happened almost everyday and Angie and her siblings were a constant witness to it. Her father sold their only source of income, left them and lived in the same area with another woman. Later in his drunkenness, he burned their house leaving them to flee to a nearby place to rent. Angie grew up with great hate for men. She grew up tomboyish and despised ladies who are vulnerable. She tried to build up an image that she is someone who could not be hurt by any man. Angie wanted to study Criminology but was instead led to MBC. In MBC, she felt rejected and compared to others, confirming the low self image she has on herself. Later, she was disciplined and was sent out for 2 years from the campus for inappropriate conduct. She used this time to finish a course in Midwifery with her mom's help. Now she is back in CSLP to witness

transformation of a community and to have the community experience her true self with love and genuine acceptance. Angie's father never came back but she has completely forgiven him and has now opened her heart to loving a Godly man. She is now engaged to Pastor Christopher Sales, a graduate of MBC and SLS 1.



**Albert Perlada, 27-** Abet is the eldest among six siblings. His mom married at the age of 17, his father an alcoholic who treated him harshly. As a result, Abet lived with domestic violence through his foundation years. This drove him to attempt suicide. Later, he got hooked on vices and became a social *problem*. Abet found Christ in the form of the young people's group in the Church in Quezon Province. He was loved and accepted unconditionally despite his lifestyle. He decided he wanted to dedicate himself to the God of the youth group who showed what real love is. Albert is currently handling a church in Banilad, Or. Mindoro, showing authentic love and acceptance not just to church goers but to the Banilad community just as he experienced from his community in Quezon.



**Froilan Bayan, 30-** Pj, as he is known, narrated how at 5 months old, he was about to be sold for Php500 by her biological mother. He was adopted by a lady in Sison, Pangasinan. He was sent to an exclusive school but life at home was very systematic and difficult. He also grew up in Sunday school but lived in fear from her perfectionist mom. PJ became rebellious and was driven away from the home he knew because their church pastor told his mom that an adopted son he is, he will be the one to kill his foster mom someday. He tried to survive with the help of his mother's maid who took him in during the time he was abandoned. PJ ended up in Baguio City during his job hunting. He was welcomed in a house, ministered to by the Cordillera Bible Christian Fellowship until he was exposed at a mission trip in General Santos City. He decided he needed to acquire training as he desired to be a missionary. Pj became a part of CSLP, then MBC, in 2009

where he met his wife Baby Bolivar, MBC graduate. PJ's heart pours out to children who have been abandoned by parents. He dreams of putting up an orphanage someday.



**John Juri Lolong, 19-** Juri is the eldest among 7 siblings. He had a happy childhood until he became aware that his family is not perfect. He felt betrayed, lost feelings of security and developed a high level of mistrust. His pent-up anger manifested in rebellion against his parents and God. He messed up his life to hurt his family. Then he realized he was going nowhere and decided to make the seeds of faith (in God) in him grow. He got his father's blessing to study at CSLP. Juri's favorite bible story is that of Jonah's. He realized he wasted many years in the belly of the "big fish" wandering, wallowing in his helpless situation, hurting people, and getting hurt. As a reborn, Juri's eagerness to develop his relationship with his Maker and want to discern his Savior's dream for him is imminent as he journeys with the community of CSLP.



**Cheryl Minga, 19-** Cheryl testifies God's faithfulness as she relates how she was preserved by the Lord to do a specific mission in bringing about His Kingdom. She experienced rejection at school and abuse from teachers that made her feel unloved and unattractive. She resented her mother having to work in Manila to provide for them, leaving her with three other siblings in the care of their father who also often left the house to work. She dreamt to become a nurse, her parents dreamt for her to become a teacher but later ended up in Mindoro Bible College. She now realizes how her dreams are being fulfilled as she nurses the emotionally ill and teaches children in Sunday School, VOICE, and DVBS. She had traumatic experiences with her uncle but realized this experience as a blessing so that she may learn the value of true forgiveness.

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**FACES OF COMMUNITY**

Nathania Gili Saa, daughter of CSLP staff Glenda, had her 1<sup>st</sup> birthday mission in a school located 300 meters from our compound. We had a short program and distributed spaghetti in packs (obviously the favorite dish of Filipino children) with hotdogs and marshmallows on stick. We gave them time to eat but some used it just sitting in place and staring at others who were consuming their share fast. One boy said he was saving his food to share with seven siblings who were waiting at home. The CSLP community learned much from these kids. That afternoon, these children became our teachers.

The students are assigned to teach VOICE (Values Orientation in Classroom Education) to elementary pupils in the different schools in Mindoro. But along the seashore in Sitio Quezon, Lumambayan is a destitute community with many children. Senior students, Relly and Jean teach the kids here in the absence of a classroom. The children's thirst for love, acceptance, and stories are assuaged with the love of Jesus that Relly's group brings. Some of the young people in this area come to CSLP and play basketball with our students. Some children come on weekdays just to pick ripe guavas from CSLP compound.



**CSLP STUDENT PJ, ASSISTS A YOUNG BOY IN EATING HIS SPAGHETTI. PJ WAS ADOPTED BUT WAS LATER SENT AWAY BY HIS FOSTER MOTHER. HE DREAMS OF PUTTING UP AN ORPHANAGE SOMEDAY.**



**KIDS POSE WITH TEACHER RELLY AFTER A "VOICE" LESSON IN SITIO QUEZON**



**A YOUNG GIRL CLUTCHES ON TO HER STYRO-PACKED SPAGHETTI AS SHE LOOKS ON TO HER FRIEND WHO IS FINISHING HER SHARE FAST. A SIBLING AT HOME WOULD BE HAPPY TO MEET HER**



**TEACHER JEAN PLAYS WITH QUEZON KIDS EVERY WEEKEND**



**THIS YOUNG BOY FIDGETS IN FRONT OF HIS UN-TOUCHED FOOD WHILE WAITING FOR THE OTHERS TO FINISH EATING. HE SAID HE IS EXCITED TO BRING HIS TREAT AS PASALUBONG TO HIS MOTHER.**

**The question is not,  
WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?.  
The question is  
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE  
THAT YOU BELIEVE?"**

**"What we do today– or don't do today– will always have an impact on someone."**

## A Day to Remember

-Cliff Fonte

Another beautiful part of our community life unfolded as the whole CSLP community went out for a day of adventure, relaxation and fun. It is here where God revealed more about each of us and the community as a whole. Our destination was Buktot Beach in Mansalay, about two hours drive from our Guinhawa home. As we neared the beach, fresh breeze of the sea embraced us and we were astonished with the view and realized that the long and winding road trip was worth it. It was relaxing to finally set foot on the fine, cold white sand beach with primitive back-drop and be far from noise, and from the pressures of office work and required assignments. As everyone's mind is set for nothing but fun and companionship, the real person that we are is revealed. Our reactions to what others do or don't do, how loud we laugh, how much food we get for lunch, how we mingle with others, and the way we carry ourselves outside the classroom bares all the natural side of each.

One unforgettable experience is when one student got stung by two sea urchins and with primitive ideas, someone suggested that one has to urinate on the wound as the chemical content would dissolve the 'thorns' left by the sea creature. Without analyzing its seriousness, a male classmate stood up and generously provided the necessary chemical on the foot of the wounded student. Of course it gave no immediate result but we all laugh and admire how sharing of resources is freely practiced in this community! The beauty of being a part of the CSLP community is that even during unguarded moments, we are able to grow as persons and as servants of God because we take time to mirror ourselves through community reflections directed to actions— which is not very easy but we try our best to work on it. I learned that though we are still far from reaching the true meaning of community, I can still be proud of where we are now because I can see how everyone is growing in their relationship with God and others. Being part of CSLP community always involves growth that at times of fun and recreation, there is always something we can learn to help us become more of an authentic community until the outside communities around us see that a "little heaven" here at Guinhawa is very possible and eventually attract them to the Kingdom. The whole day at Buktot Beach in Mansalay is really a day worth to remember.



## CSLP STUDENTS' STORIES OF COMMUNITY



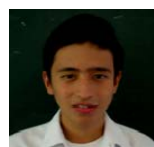
Papunta ako sa CSLP noon at kasalukuyang ako ay nasa Calapan na. Pagdating sa kanto ng Biga, Calapan meron doong isang nanay na Mangyan at may kasamang apat na anak, nakaupo sa kanto at wari'y may hinihintay na sasakyan. Oras na noon para sa pananghalian at habang naghinihintay ng sasakyan, bumili ako ng ice cream at isang malaking tinapay upang sa isip ko ay hindi ako mahirapan sa pagpapabarya ng aking pera. Nakita ko yung mga Mangyan na parang gutom na rin pero wala man lang akong ginawa kahit na yung mga bata ay nakatingin sa akin na kumakain. Hindi ko naman maubos yung pagkain ko at nahihiya naman akong magbigay ng tira kaya kahit malaki pa ay itinapon ko ito sa basurahan. Talagang nabagbag ang kalooban ko nung bumili yung batang Mangyan ng isang tinapay at hati-hati silang lima kabilang yung kanilang nanay. Nakita ko na sa kahit kaunting pagkain ay sama-sama sila at nagbibigayan. Sising-sisi ako sa aking sarili kasi hindi ako naging sensitibo doon. Hinanap ko yung nagtitinda ng ice cream para bilhan sila ngunit wala na. Hindi ko talaga makontrol ang emosyon ko noon at ipinangako na matatanim sa akin ang aral na idinulot noon. <JULIUS F.>



Mayroon akong experience sa bayan kung saan mayroong mag-ina ang nakasabay kong sumakay sa tricycle. Buntis siya at may kasama pang maliit na bata. Nagtanong siya sa akin ng oras, mag-a-ala-una na noon, kakain na sana ako ng binili kong tinapay kasi gutom na ako, pero nakita ko yung anak niya na parang di pa kumakain. Ang ginawa ko ibinigay ko na lang yung tinapay. Noong una, nahihiya pang tanggapin pero tinanggap din. Ang tanong niya, "Kristiyano ka ano?" -<CHERYL M.>



Sa aking pagtuturo ng Values Educaion sa Wawa Elementary School ay damang-dama ko ang pagnanais ng mga bata hindi lamang sa kaalaman pero lalo na ng attention at love. Ako ay nagalalak na kahit sa mga munting premyo ay nabibigyan ko sila ng kasiyahan. Isang paraan kasi iyon na naisip ko na pagpapadama ng love at pagbibigay sa kanila ng atensyon at appreciation sa anumang ginagawa nila. Hindi talaga ako ang nagtuturo sa kanila kundi sila ang mas nagtuturo sa akin. Tinuruan nila akong magmahal sa kapwa ko, abutin ang kanilang pangangailangan at maging sensitibo sa lahat ng pagkakataon. Basta, sila ang Teacher ko! <BECCA D.>



Lubos kong ikinatutuwa ang mga kabataan sa Pili Bible Church dahil hindi nila itinuturing na iba ang mga magkakapatid na mentally handicapped mula sa Aplaya, Pili. Ang makitang sila'y kasali sa mga plano at kasiyahan ng mga kabataan ay lubos kong ikinagagalak. Sa paraang pagtanggap ng ilang kapwa nila kabataan ay isang malaking pagpapala sa akin mismo. Sa bawat tawa nila tumutugon ang Diyos sa una at pinakakailangan nila ng pagpapahalaga at pag-ibig. Marahil hindi sila nakakatanggap ng tama at pantay na pagtrato ng iba, ngunit sa simpleng ngiti ay malaking ambag na sa pagpapadama ng pag-ibig sa kanila. Ang lahat ng bagay ay isinisigaw ko patungkol sa pag-ibig. Mahalin ang Diyos, mahal in ang iba, ganoon din mahal in ang sarili. <VJ G.>