

Tambuli

NEWSLETTER

A COMMUNITY OF DISCIPLES ON MISSION

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FOFNJ.ORG

EASTER MESSAGE

LIVING A MERCIFUL LIFE

By Fr. Ed Jocson

On the second anniversary of his election, Pope Francis had announced that the Roman Catholic Church will mark an **extraordinary Holy Year**. He said that this Holy Year will focus on the topic of **MERCY** – one of the most important themes of His papacy.

Mercy is the Lord's most powerful message. We need mercy because we live in an imperfect world. We all know people who have suffered a death in the family, a serious illness, divorce, a job loss, or some other personal tragedy. We have heard shocking stories of violence, oppression, poverty, prejudice, and abuse. And while we cannot stop every bad thing from happening, Pope Francis believes that we can become more merciful in our response to people in need.

In his message for Lent 2015, the Holy Father said that in order to receive what God gives us and make it bear abundant fruit, we need to press beyond the boundaries of the visible Church in two ways. *First*, by uniting ourselves in prayer with the Church in heaven. The saints already joyfully contemplate the fact that, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, they have triumphed once and for all over all indifference, hardness of heart, and hatred. Until this victory of love penetrates the whole world, the saints continue to accompany us on our pilgrim way. *Second*, every Christian community is called to go out of itself and to be engaged in the life of the greater society of which it is a part, especially with the poor and those who are far away. The Church is missionary by her very nature – she is not self-enclosed but sent out to every nation and people.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Alleluia!

My dear friends, Pope Francis invites us all to be more merciful and less rigid towards sinners. He hopes this Jubilee Year, which begins *December 8, 2015* and ends *November 20, 2016*, will be an occasion for the Church – all its members – to rediscover the need to be forgiving and generous. May this Easter 2015 prepare us towards a Holy Year of Mercy and may it begin with our families and communities.

Happy Easter of God's infinite mercy!

(Fr. Ed Jocson is the
Pastor of the St.
Elizabeth of
Hungary Church in
Linden, NJ and the
Spiritual Adviser of
the Family Of Faith
Community.)



Community Conference

On Jan 25, 2015, the Family of Faith held its community conference at St. Elizabeth Lower Church to discuss some issues and tasks concerning community life. There were several speakers and sharers who touched on the many aspects of our life.

Yours truly, spoke of our theme for 2015, "I am the Lord your God, Come Follow Me and Live". I drew attention on the workings of the Holy Spirit, which is a big part of life of a Charismatic people. I touched on the interesting fact that Pope Francis was not initially a fan of Charismatic life, but is now a strong advocate for us.

Nilo Natural spoke of community structure and government. He focused on the composition of the community council and women leadership team, who are primarily leading the direction of the community. He touched on the work-

ing relationship between the council and WLT. He also explained the various services and ministries functioning in community.

Mikmik Farrales showed a grid of members' tithes for all months in 2014 (anonymous, of course!). As good stewards of God's treasure, she highlighted the importance of tithing consistently and faithfully.

Cecil Penson mentioned in his talk that a charismatic community is bestowed a special gift - "grace". God will supply us with His grace to transform our spirits and sustain our community life. He also stressed the importance of the ministry of presence, the gift of self. By simply being there, we can make things happen. Our presence allows us to be active participants in God's glory story. Kuya Cecil also spoke of our timidity in speaking God's prophetic words in community gatherings, an

area of growth for all of us. Lastly, he clarified some concerns about doing personal business with our brothers and sisters. First and foremost, we should always be mindful of the brother or sister's interests before ours.

Ofel Bugarin, a long-time teacher in the Philippines, shared how she sees the way we are raising and teaching our children. She mentioned the countless opportunities that our children are given compared to the students she had the privilege of serving in her school. Tita Ofel emphasized Proverbs 22:6—"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it"

May God continue to bless our work in community. To God be the glory!

- by Eric de Jesus

Children's Day of Dedication

On February 8, 2015 our community gathered for our annual Children's Day of Dedication. We began with Praise and Worship and then started the dedication ceremony.

The children are dedicated to the Lord "to demonstrate our commitment to raise our children in a Christian home and community where he or she can come to know, love, and serve Jesus." We follow Hannah's example on how she offered Samuel to the Lord for giving him to



her. This commitment is made not just by the parents but by each member of the community.

After the ceremony, Tet Guevarra, our CFP Ministry head, gave a presentation of the

ministry's plan for 2015. Rex Poyaoan, our Youth Group minister, came up to give us an update on our Youth

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High School Youth Retreats

Earlier this year, youth in the high school group participated in our annual boys and girls retreats.

The boys' youth retreat was held on Saturday, January 17th, and encouraged the boys to deepen their relationship with God through worship. The retreat enabled the boys to receive talks that would encourage them to build their prayer life. It also gave them the opportunity to share how they are doing with the rest of the boys in their share group and receive prayers and support through each other. During the retreat they were encouraged to write a song together that would not only help them, but also one that they could share with the community.

The boys walked away from the retreat feeling more empowered to worship God through their voices and music. The refrain of the song they wrote is a constant reminder to them (and all of us) to support each other in their commitment to God of "I will follow You".

The girls' youth retreat was held on January 31st, and focused on the girls' identity as "Daughters of God". It gave them the op-



portunity to encourage and honor each other. They bonded and strengthened relationships over crafts, share group and through praying over each other. They received talks on what it means to be a Daughter of God and that encouraged and reminded them of their importance and worth as children of the King. During the retreat they were given the chance to build up each of their sisters in

the Lord and to also grow in their trust with each other as they asked for prayers from the other girls for areas in their life where they are struggling. They walked away renewed in their relationships with each other and feeling more confident that they can count on their sisters in the Lord for prayers and support.

-by Christina Poyaoan

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Group's plans and to formally welcome Lyla Bugarin as the newest member of the group.

Peter Castillo gave a sharing on his experience on the grace and joy of raising children in the Community, and the relevance

of community in the lives of his children.

The children presented an action Dance Number, the Youth girls sang a capella, and the Youth boys led the community in singing the final song. We ended the day with a slideshow of our children providing brief

descriptions of what they like about community.

May God continue to bless our children.

-by Dan Farrales

Men's Breakfast

The FOF men gathered at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Lower Church last January 31st for their first Men's Breakfast of the year. The Men's Breakfast is a quarterly activity for men with the aim of supporting them in their spiritual journey and fostering brotherhood and fellowship. Aside from the sumptuous breakfast, the men are blessed with spiritual nourishment from prayers, spiritual talks, and brotherly support. Fr. Manolo Punzalan of the St. Joseph Church in Maplewood, NJ was the guest speaker. He spoke about the meaning and significance of the Eucharist to men and how they should respond to



it in their own families and community. The men, afterwards, stayed to do some physical workout. Roy Rubio led the brothers into a series of exercises which revved up their metabolism and burned some calories. This physical strengthening was indeed a fitting comple-

ment to the spiritual nourishment the men received from Fr. Manolo's talk.

-by Medel Guevarra



FOF Men's Conference

The Family of Faith hosted a Men's Conference last February 28th. The main theme of the event was "Profile of a Man of God." This was based on the Sword of the Spirit booklet with the same title which focuses on the main areas of responsibilities in the life of a Christian man and how he should deal and handle the vital relationships in his life. The main goal was to help men grow as disciples of Jesus Christ and men of God.

The men were blessed to have three brothers from our sister community – The People of Hope - who gave the main talks of the Conference. James Dill spoke about what it means to be 1) a moral man who honors God and is a witness to Christ, 2) an active member in the community/Church and a ready servant, and 3) a brother to his



brothers. Frank Guido, one of POH's Coordinators, spoke on a Christian man's responsibilities as head of the family, husband, and father. Lastly, Ray Rutz spoke on the importance of personal upkeep and renewal to a man – seeking and gaining wisdom, being a good steward of his body, and putting order in his daily life.

Two brothers from FOF also gave short personal sharings on how they have experienced some of the aspects of being a Godly man. There were group discussions after each talk, group workshop on creating family schedule, and a time when the brothers prayed for one another. Several guests from the parish, friends of the

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Community Development Meeting (Michigan Trip)

On February 6th and 7th, 2015, the Community Development Meeting took place at the Work of Christ Community Center located in East Lansing, Michigan. This year's meeting focused on a number of topics - deliverance, courtship, married women and work, and goals for youth.

The meeting was attended by representatives from different communities: coordinators and senior women leaders from the North American Region, from affiliate member communities to full-member communities of the Sword of the Spirit.

The sessions started on Friday, February 6th at 9 am when everyone gathered together and spent time to praise and worship the Lord. The first presentation was about 'Deliverance', in particular ways of seeking to improve the ministry of deliverance, during and after initiations. This session was particularly helpful in being reminded of this powerful tool to claim someone for the kingdom of God.

For the second session, something was done differently, wherein the full-member communities had a separate session about Special Issues on Court-



ship, while the affiliate and underway member communities attended the presentation on the Revised Status Change Criteria and Women in Community Leadership. Jerry Munk, the head of the Community Building Team of the Sword of the Spirit North American Region, gave a very detailed and clear presentation on the criteria in order for a member community to move forward from one level of membership to the next within the Sword of the Spirit.

On the second day, February 7th, the morning session was attended by leaders from all communities, and spoke about Married Women and Work, and the special role of women in the life of the community. In the afternoon, the full-member

communities again had a separate session in which the topic was Goals for Youth in Different Ages. The affiliate and underway member communities attended a different session which discussed Working with the Missionary Coordinator, followed by a group discussion about Community Building.

The Community Development Meeting is really vital in understanding and embracing our way of life. It is very important to recognize the things that are integral, essential, and important in order to live the community life well and therefore live the Christian life well.

- by Nilo Natural

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brothers, and brothers from the House of the Lord Community in Washington, D.C. attended the whole day event. Overall, the brothers were very much encouraged and inspired by the talks, the group discussions, and

by just being with other brothers. It was a day blessed with fellowship and bonding among the brothers. The event was held at the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Lower Church.

-by Medel Guevarra

Blessed are you, Lord our God, for by your great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.
(Lord's Day Prayers)

Daddy-Daughter Night

The 4th Annual Daddy-Daughter Night was held last March 14, 2015 at the basement of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church. This year, however, is different and bigger in attendance than the past years because this time we announced and opened the event to St. Elizabeth's parishioners. A total of 19 families attended. The evening was opened by Kuya Cecil Penson welcoming the guests followed by a special blessing for fathers and daughters given by Fr. Ed Jocson. Yen Alday emceed and led the party through fun, food, and lots of games. The evening's highlights were the exchange of letters between dad & daughter, and the dads dancing with their daughters at the close of the night. It was a simple yet fun and memorable evening for everyone in attendance. We would like to thank Fr. Ed and Fr. Alex for supporting us in this event.

-by Tet Guevarra



Personal Reflection

“Do not fear: I am with you; Do not be anxious: I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.”
(- Isaiah 41:10 NABRE)

Last week, I and a couple of other brothers attended the Archdiocese of Newark Men's Conference. The theme of the conference is “Be not afraid...He

is with us.”

It was such a humbling experience to see thousands of men coming together to praise and worship God and witness everyone's desire to learn more about Him. These are men from different cultures and different backgrounds, but with the same yearning to honor the Lord.

These were the words that struck me during the talks:

- *Every day, lead someone closer to God.* It led me to reflect on how I am doing in my own family, at work, and in the community.
- *Reclaim Christ every day.* How many times did I grab the

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Women's Event

The first women's event of the year was held last March 28 at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Lower Church. The theme was "Faithfulness: Managing our Time". The event started with a delicious breakfast and a brief praise and worship. The main speaker was Puring Penson. Her talk touched on how the modern world has presented us with many challenges in managing our schedule. She shared many tips on how we can put our lives in good order. Good order is a mark of a spirit-filled person, we need good order to have enough hold of our lives so that we can be faithful and generous disciples. The talk outlined the main areas of responsibilities in our lives and the different categories that will help define our priorities. Is it essential, important or good? Will it be irresponsible if I do not do



this task? These questions will help us set our schedules, priorities and commitments.

After the talk, Corinne Yorobe did a personal sharing about managing her personal and family time. She shared how home schooling her kids has simplified their family schedule and how she uses the rule of good, better, best in deciding how she spends her time wisely. It was touching how she honored her Mom, who was also at

the event, and shared that she is raising her family the way she was brought up.

Finally, we were divided into groups and created an ideal daily schedule. It was fun hearing about the different activities that each person in the group wanted to fit in into the schedule. The event concluded with a brief sharing of their thoughts from a few women and some picture taking.

- by Marita Joson

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opportunity to witness to God's love?

- *We must never give up fighting for souls.* Did I pray for the lost souls?

The conference became a time for me to reflect on my own personal struggles - the times when I was not able to speak the Word of God because I waited too long; the times when I hesitated to approach a brother or sister to share my sense. During one of the talks, the speaker mentioned one of Theodore Roosevelt's famous quotes: "Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how

much you care." I just thought that the Lord is the same way - the Lord cares much more about the love in our hearts than the knowledge we have in our minds.

It was also a time for me to reflect on my purpose here on earth. It gave me an opportunity to revisit the message from the Purpose Driven Life - What Am I Here For?

The Bible says we were planned for God's pleasure, and we bring God pleasure. That is worship.

The Bible says we were formed for a family. That family on earth is called the church. That is fellowship, and that brings

Him pleasure.

The Bible says that we were created to be like Christ, to grow up in Him, to mature. That is called discipleship.

The Bible says that we were shaped for service. We were not put on this earth just to take up space and breathe and die. God wired us in a unique way to make a contribution. That is our ministry.

The fifth reason we were put on this earth is that we were made for a mission.
 To God be honor and glory!

- by Nilo Natural
(Shared during the 3/21 CG)

"TAMBULI" is a Filipino word for horn or trumpet.

About Us

The Family of Faith (FOF) is a Catholic Charismatic Community based in New Jersey, USA. We are a community of lay people (married couples, singles, youth and children) that seeks and actively participates in the Church's mission to the world. We stand and work for: Conversion to Christ and Christian maturity, Love and worship of God, Christian personal relationships and Community, Daily life in Christian character, Commitment to Evangelization, Promotion of Christian unity, and Defense of the Gospel. Through a life of prayer, worship, service and mutual support we seek to bring the light of Christ to the world.

FOF is a member community of Christ the King Association (Association of Catholic Communities) and Sword of the Spirit (Ecumenical Association of Communities).

To know more about us and our various activities, visit our website:

<http://fofnj.org>

Social Media connection:

 <http://facebook.com/fofnj>

 <http://twitter.com/fofnj>

The Family of Faith is a registered 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization.

It calls the people of God for an assembly and prayer. Like the tambuli, our newsletter calls us to gather around God who makes His message known.

"So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of the faith."

Galatians 6:10



"I AM THE LORD,
YOUR GOD,
COME, FOLLOW
ME, AND LIVE."

FAMILY OF FAITH 2015 THEME



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