

Tambuli

A PUBLICATION OF THE FAMILY OF FAITH
COMMUNITY (NJ USA)



FOF CELEBRATES 29 YEARS!

PERSONAL SHARING BY CECIL PENSON
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Happy 29th Anniversary, brothers and sisters; family and friends!

Events like anniversary celebrations remind us of Psalm 118:24, "this is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." Today is special. More than just another day, today we celebrate God's faithfulness and continued presence in the Family of Faith Community.

In 1993, 28 men and women decided to gather for the first time at the home of Ateng's brother and surely God blessed their time together. They had so much fun and there was a clamor to meet regularly to praise God and to fellowship. I was blessed to be a part of that group. We enjoyed each other's company every time we meet but we also experienced birthing pains when brothers and sisters started bickering why we are gathering and even about making plans to meet regularly. It caused misunderstandings. When the time came for us to ask the Lord for a name for our group, God gave us Galatians 6:10, "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." Despite the differences we were having, God blessed us with unity of mind to accept unanimously the name, Family of Faith, as His gift to us.

The following year, 1994, we scheduled a day of recollection in our parish hall to ask the Lord for a vision of how He wants the FOF to be in the year 2000. But at the last minute the pastor of our parish informed me that we could no longer use the parish facility. We pushed through with the DOR at our pizzeria, which we converted into a conference room - we were creative, and we had food aplenty. We praised and worshipped our Lord and implored Him to speak to us. The Lord rewarded the sisters and brothers with a clear message that the FOF was going to be formed into a covenant community. The message came strong which included the need to form a leadership team to pursue the vision

We really did not know what to do but God sent us men and women to help us grow to become a covenant community even before the words "covenant community" was even revealed to us. We met Gus and Mely Marquez (LNP & POH) in the 1990s who introduced us to Felix Militante (founding member of POH) who connected us to the coordinators of POH and who convinced us to serve in the Couples for Christ. In 1993 Vic Gutierrez (Senior Head Coordinator-LNP) came to NJ and offered to help us. He introduced us to the elements of a Christian community and made sure we understood it well. Kuya Vic never ever suggested for us to become a community but urged us to always pray and listen to what God is speaking to us. In the year 2000, Fr. Benedict Worry welcomed us to St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish after years of moving around 7 different parishes. Fr. Alex Cruz became our first spiritual adviser. In the early 2000, Eli Lademora came to us as our missionary coordinator to help us transition to becoming formally a SOS community. Kuya Eli as the representative of the SOS-Asian Region, turned over 3 communities, namely, the FOF, Tahanan ng Panginoon of Washington DC and Families for Christ of Dallas TX to Bob Tedesco who was then the president of SOS-NAR in a Tripartite Conference we hosted in the POCONOS. Bob Tedesco became our next missionary coordinator who years later turned us over to Jeff Smith and later to Marty Buganski who now is our Outside Coordinator.

I want to emphasize three things, *first*: Before we celebrated our 25th year anniversary we had a DOR to help prepare us for this momentous time in our community life. Brother Jude of the Brotherhood of Hope gave a talk that reminded us to always remember and be grateful for the men and women who carried us on their shoulder and helped us to become the community that we are today. If we cannot be grateful for these people, how can we ever become grateful to our God who sent them to us? The names that I mentioned are but a few of those that God brought to us. There are dozens more that you could probably recall. In your prayers, please ask the Lord to bless them and given the chance, call and thank them for their contribution to the FOF. Now, please look around you, at all those beautiful faces, and you will find a brother or a sister who may at one time, or another contributed to making you a better version of yourself or maybe one or two who extended to you a random act of kindness or maybe prayed for you at a time you needed it the most or maybe offered a shoulder to cry on or that someone listened emphatically as you vent out some emotions from your heart. Sisters and brothers, please, before the day is over walk over to that person or persons and express your gratitude to them and thank them for the goodness they extended to you and then give them a high five or a fist bump.

Secondly: Galatians 6:10 should be very important to all of us since our name came from these verses. "So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, but especially to those who

belong to the family of faith." The call to us as a community is to take advantage of every opportunity to do good and be helpful to all people, but especially to those who are of the Family of Faith - your brothers and sisters in Christ. The word "especially" is used for emphasis. "Especially" is defined as "particularly" or "to a greater degree;" "extraordinarily" or "specifically." It should make sense then for all of us that to belong to FOF we also need to be intentional, be, to a greater degree, extraordinarily and specifically be good and helpful to one another. Anything less does not make it. Even having lots of good intentions do not count. It is only the "doing good" that matters. Doing good includes being a mirror to one another giving honest feedbacks, giving corrections and offering a different perspective on issues. That would require dialogue – a chance to have a conversation.

Thirdly: Let us pray for and support our leaders. Our leaders are our hope to make our mission and vision a reality. Also, our leaders will make it a reality for our community to experience anew the power of the Holy Spirit as envisioned for communities by Dave Hughes, president of SOS-NAR. He said, and I quote, "My overall conviction in the Lord is that he is preparing us for a season of awakening, revival, a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in these days...to our own lives, to enliven our prayer times and prayer meetings." "Now...an encouraging word for us personally—there's plenty of deadness in us too: Dead idols that capture our hearts; Dead relationships that need restoring; Enshackling, ensnaring sins; Preach the gospel to those who are dead in their sins; Dead hopes, dead vision. Take heart, Jesus told us in the gospel of John that when he pours out the spirit, he pours it out without measure—there will be enough to go around. But when the Spirit is poured out, make no mistake, it is poured out to take that which is dead and make it alive."

Let us pray for:

-the casting of the fire: "One of the things that the Judgement of God is meant to do is to reveal the true nature of things. The fire will reveal the underlying nature. So too the Judgment of God in this sense reveals: The poverty of our self-reliance—we've got this! —no you don't, you're not that good." "So, when the Holy Spirit comes, when an awakening begins, when revival comes, part of what happens is the revelation of the judgement of God, an expression of his mercy to shake us and turn us while there is still time."

-the breaking of the dams: "We don't need more philosophical arguments; we need the gospel to do what only it can do: break through the dams and liberate those held captive to become sons and daughters of God." We must keep our eyes open to recognize those among us who are held captive by sin, or captive by pride or by greed or by pretense. It is easier to speak the truth now rather than making excuses later. Let us be instruments for change to break free those who are in bondage and in denial. We strive to win trust by being honest with each other and let us protect that trust. Let us do good and do what is right the first time.

-the rising of the tide: "In the SOS we are responding to a prophetic call to return to a greater reliance on the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit. For some, like me, there is an element of repentance involved. It's timely and profound and personal." The renewal, awakening and revival of our community starts with the renewal, awakening and revival of our hearts.

The Holy Spirit is coming to shake us, cast fire upon us, break our dams and raise the tide! Are you ready for it? Let us all, brothers and sisters, praise and thank God for He gave us each other to face it together in unity and be renewed together. Amen!

HAPPY 29TH ANNIVERSARY!



POG 24th Annual Summer Camp

July 24 - 30

Theme: Fear Not

Sharing from Kyra Yorobe

This year's POG Summer Camp was my first time serving as a junior counselor, although I had been there many times as a camper. When I was a camper, my junior counselors impacted me a lot. All of my junior counselors were so cool and so friendly, and they were a big part of my experience in camp. They gave me such a wonderful experience as a camper, so I wanted to also give that experience to the campers in my cabin. Therefore, I put a lot of pressure on myself to be like my junior counselors in the past. I was comparing myself to them and also to the other counselors, so the first few days were hard because I thought everything was put on me. I was also worried about the Gathering for Christ. The junior counselors helped the head and assistant counselors in praying over the campers to receive the Holy Spirit, and I had never prayed over anyone in that way before. I was worried about all the right words to say, and I really wanted the campers to be impacted by the Holy Spirit. And again, I was putting everything on myself, and I thought that it was up to me to impact the girls. But God reminded me that these are His daughters. These are His children. He loves them and He will reveal Himself to them. And because He loves them and wants to reveal Himself to them, He will give me the right words. He has everything in His hands. When the Gathering for Christ came, all my worries about the right words to say were irrelevant. I feel like the words and the prayers just flowed out freely. I didn't really need to think about anything, but the Lord just gave me the words. After all the campers were prayed over, there was some extra time, so my cabin prayed over me. While I was being prayed over, I just felt God's tremendous love for me. He was telling me, "See? There's nothing to worry about. All your worries, I will take care of them. If I love you this much, what is there to fear? If I love you this much, why do you have to worry about anything?" And that goes for everything. If the Lord loves us so much, what is there to fear? **He will take care of us.**



Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."



Sharing from Pier Bugarin

Before POG, I treated my faith as a school subject and just saw it as something I had to do and get over with.

The highlight of the camp was Gathering for Christ. The Gathering for Christ is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and for receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I asked for the gifts of patience and boldness. When everyone started praying over me, I felt the Holy Spirit coming into me and I heard God calling me. It was then I realized that God is more than something to get over with but, rather a loving Father who cares and looks out for me. This changed my outlook on God for the better. I started sharing about the words that God had told me. I started lifting up my hands during praise and worship. I started speaking more during my bible study. I started praying more. I am confident that God will always be with me when I sleep, when I work, and when I play.

I thank God for transforming my heart, I thank Mama and Papa for allowing me to go to POG, and I thank all of you for praying for me.

A summer camp experience like no other

Sharing from Shelly Bugarin

This year was the first time I served as a staff member at POG. I've been to the camp before but because I wasn't a camper, I was expecting a very different experience this time around. During the few weeks before camp started, I was already worrying about my responsibilities like possibly cleaning the bathrooms or dealing with frustrating kids. Thankfully, I was given no bathroom cleanups so, God answered my prayers there. I was mainly worried about being a good example to the campers especially in terms of my faith. I felt lacking and I didn't trust myself as a good example of what a "holy person" is. Despite my anxieties about serving, I was reminded to "fear not", like the theme verse says, "So do not fear, for I am with you".

On the very first day, there was a staff meeting and praise and worship. I felt that was God's response to my worries. One of the staff members encouraged us to allow God to take control and use whatever we offer in order to best serve the campers. So, I allowed that prayer and encouragement to carry me throughout the week.

Although I entered the camp still feeling nervous, I was surprised with great amount of joy. Mainly, I found joy in watching how God transformed the campers throughout the week which took place the most during praise and worship sessions. It became my favorite part of camp for a very different reason. Since I was a staff member, I was placed at the very back of the room. While singing, I found myself closing my eyes and slowly taking small steps back. I suddenly heard a voice tell me "Open your eyes", and there I saw all the children lined-up and praising the Lord. I think seeing that physical picture of people coming together to worship truly showed me how God is working throughout their lives. It was even more beautiful to see more and more hands raised, children singing louder, and some even jumping and dancing as the week went on. I especially noticed a difference after the Gathering for Christ. Seeing how the Holy Spirit impacted them, impacted me as well, and I was encouraged not to fear when praising God!

So, while I was preoccupied with being a good example and holy enough to serve as a staff member, the Lord taught me the importance of taking a step back. Taking a step back and witnessing God's work clearly gave me joy. I found joy in serving knowing that God is in control.

I want to thank my parents for helping me and encouraging me to serve at POG this year, and I thank you for all your prayers. Thank you!



Mother-Daughter Paint and Munch Event

Another great event hosted by the Children's Formation Program held last September 10 at the St. Cecilia Church Basement. Tote bags, paint and paint brushes were all provided on each table for mothers and daughters to do their own tote bag design. Everyone came up with a masterpiece! After the painting,

everyone enjoyed munching on White Castle burgers.

Thank you, CFP team, for giving the community the opportunity to build precious moments with our daughters, mothers and fellow sisters.



SEPTEMBER 10, 2022
ST. CECILIA CHURCH BASEMENT

FORGIVENESS

Shared by Mikmik Farrales from a nun in the Philippines when they attended a couple's retreat last year.



This is an excellent reminder on how and why we should be prodigal in forgiving anyone who had offended us – and even our own self.

“Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.” – Nelson Mandela That quote from Mandela has helped me many a time. Knowing that holding a grudge toward another can be more harm to myself than to the person I am upset with and behooves me to move past resentment to a more compassionate stance.

Forgiveness is a virtue of the warrior spirit. It’s like taking a giant weight off your shoulders and the other person doesn’t necessarily have to change, say “thank you,” or otherwise. It’s no one’s duty but your own to clear out negative feelings and resentment, and your body-mind will thank you.

**HELP WASH AWAY THE
SENT TO A MORE LOVING,
ER AND JOYFUL LIFE.**

1. I am free from the prison of resentment.
2. Resentment replicates old turmoil and I choose my life to be drama free.
3. I do not confuse people from my past with people in the present.
4. I acknowledge my faults and forgive myself completely.
5. I make peace (inside) with anyone who has done wrong.
6. Forgiveness is a gift to myself.
7. I follow the principle of “live and let live.”
8. My parents did the best they could. I forgive them for any wrong that they unknowingly did and forgive myself for holding a grudge against them.
9. When I forgive myself, it becomes easier to forgive others.
10. Forgiveness gives me a fresh start and a clean slate.
11. I forgive to stop the negative karmic cycle in my life.
12. Each day is filled with new possibilities.
13. Today is the first day of the rest of my life.
14. The past is done. I now live in the present.
15. I am the architect of my future.
16. I am a pioneer of the future and not a prisoner of the past.
17. I am forgiving, loving, gentle and kind to everyone.
18. I lay down the heavy weight of doubt, shame, guilt, embarrassment and self-hate.
19. Intention is my catalyst for my ideal future.
20. I am capable of moving beyond my own mistakes.
21. I am able to heal from the hurt of my past.
22. I am worthy of all the compassion and kindness in the world.
23. I forgive myself one day at a time.
24. I release the pain of anger and rage from my body.
25. I release my past and forgive my participation in it.
26. I accept my past and learn from it.
27. I practice understanding and compassion.
28. I did the best I could at the time with what I knew.
29. I have the courage to heal any wound.
30. I will treat myself with love and respect.
31. I love myself and all that I am.
32. I go with the flow.
33. I grow more patient and understanding of others by forgiving myself.
34. I cease all self-judgement and self-sabotage.
35. I the energy of love and forgiveness to surround me.
36. I grow stronger and better every day.
37. I forgive so that I can have inner peace.
38. I can only help others by forgiving myself.
39. Understanding is the highest form of love.
40. Old, negative patterns no longer hold me back. I let them go with ease.
41. I forgive everyone in my past for all perceived wrongs. I send them loving energy and wash it out of my aura.
42. All is love.

WORD GIFTS

Prophetic Words from our Community Gatherings



Isaiah 43:1

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you O Jacob,
He who formed you, O Israel:
Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

And the Lord is further saying,
My people, I have formed you, I have created you, you are Mine.
My people, I called you, the Family of Faith, you are My people.
Taste and see My goodness. Taste and see My faithfulness. It is there you
will find new strength to hear My call. Let your faith, let your life radiate My
light. Let your faith and life, brightens your vision. Says the Lord.

My people you are Mine.

I sense that the Lord is saying: My people: Today, I come to you, I hold both your shoulders, look into your eyes, and I say, Be enflamed! Be on fire for Me! Stir into flame the gifts I have given you. Use all that you have to bring My people to Me. Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from Me. Bear your share of hardship. God further asks us: Are we bearing our share of hardship for the spread of His love? How much difficulty and suffering are we carrying FOR the sake of bringing souls to Him? Or are we relying on our brothers and sisters to do the bulk of the work? It's time to pick up our share. If our lives are too comfortable, and centered on ourselves, our pleasures and convenience, we are not following in His footsteps. We need to act now and carry out God's plans in our lives and in the lives of others. He has given us everything we need to do. He assures us: He will strengthen us.



This is a reading taken from the 2nd reading today. 2 Timothy Beloved, I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have thru the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a Spirit of cowardice but rather of power of love and self control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony of our Lord, nor of me a prisoner for His sake. But bear your share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God. Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard this rich trust with the help of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. Brothers and sisters, I sense that as a body, as a community, we are reminded again of the love and works of the Holy Spirit that is within us. Should we feel disillusioned, discouraged, disappointed or have given up the fight, remember these words - the gift of God, the gift of His Holy Spirit is within us, is with us. Together as a community, let's tap into the power that God has in us and stir into flame the gift of God.

Theme for 2022

Be courageous. Expand your tent
and your descendants will possess
nations.

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 - swordofthespirit.net (Ecumenical Association of Christian Communities)

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

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

<http://fofnj.org>

Our Mission and Vision

OUR **MISSION** IS TO LIVE A LIFE OF PRAYER AND HOLINESS, TAKE ON THE WAYS OF GOD AND BECOME WITNESSES OF GOD'S LOVE TO OTHERS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO LOVE AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER AND THE GREATER CHURCH.

OUR **VISION** IS TO BE A CATHOLIC COVENANT COMMUNITY WITH A COMMON WAY OF LIFE THAT EXPRESSES GOD'S TRUTH AND WORD IN ACTION.



OUR **LOGO** IS A PICTURE OF WHAT WE ARE AS COMMUNITY:

A FAMILY EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE A LIGHT IN THE WORLD.

OUR **NAME** WAS INSPIRED BY ST. PAUL'S WORDS IN GALATIANS 6:10:

"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."