

NEWSLETTER PHILIPPINES

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"Embracing the culture of other people and making it ones own typically produces a kind of change that is never reversed."

Understanding a Missionary

by Glen Knight

Admittedly, we're a strange lot. And this conclusion of mine doesn't come altogether from having been called such through the years. It's a reality born of personal experience. The fact is, "strange" is hardly an apt description for the most of us. "Uniquely strange" is probably a better fit. After all, who in his right mind would want to do what we do? Another missionary.

A missionary is adaptable to just about every circumstance, and when I say "adaptable" it is usually not a temporary adaptation but a permanent one. Embracing the culture of other people and making it ones own typically produces a kind of change that is never reversed. Questions like, "Why are you different?" or, "Why do you talk that way?" or simply, "What's wrong with you?" are so often asked. Another one that is a favorite of mine is: "How much longer are you going to **do** that?" How are these answered? Well, most are not, except for the last one—being a missionary is not something that one "does." It's what a person is. To understand a missionary, (a little) read on...

A missionary is able to see what a lot of people cannot see. The word "impossible" is not in his vocabulary. He is passionate in his work and not easily nauseated. Yep...that's right. He is able to do, out of necessity, things that he never learned to do before. A missionary seldom "prays"—he's usually in a continual conversation with God. A missionary understands danger and is unavoidably familiar with physical illness but neither of these can deter him. To the contrary, they may well pro-



duce a determination of service that couldn't be, otherwise. A missionary is not an armed warrior but he is a warrior nonetheless. He faces with courage whatever he encounters knowing his God is great and his cause is just. A missionary is not easily discouraged but I must say that there is one thing that discourages most of us—it is when family and friends back home care little about the work that has consumed our very beings and in fact, to some extent, despise us for it. Missionaries usually don't find it difficult to say, "good-bye" knowing the joy of multiplied thousands of "hellos" out there, somewhere. You see, all in all, missionaries know perhaps better than most, the transient nature of life in our world and the urgency of doing what needs to be done—now.

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Most missionaries sooner or later find it necessary to defend themselves against those who would destroy their work and reputations. The sad thing is that more often than not, a missionary is in an indefensible position. Geography plays into that inasmuch as many are very far from the sources of antagonism. The faithful missionaries carry on giving little heed, knowing the proof of ministry is in its product, usually over long periods of time.

Missionaries are people too and people need money to survive. It has been the experience of most that survivability at times, seems doubtful. Life is often day by day. (The apostle Paul said something about that in Philippians 4.) The truth be known, that's the same lifestyle of the people who are the targets of a missionary's work. "Indigenous" has many applications.

Do you have family members who are missionaries? Don't despise them for their work. Rather, love and encourage them. Listen to them when they talk of their experiences. Visit them. You will never understand your missionary loved ones otherwise.

Does your church sponsor a missionary? Honor that man and his family with kindness. They are doing for you what you cannot do yourself. Defend him and share with him. Give him and his family the opportunity to tell you in person what joys and sorrows, successes and failures are a part of every-day life. Don't be critical and overbearing and remember, no one knows better than the missionary himself, how to get the job done.



The missionary vessel, **RIM Nativa** docked at Sta. Ana Pier, Davao City, Philippines. The boat has served well during the April-May VBS season among the remote islands of the Gulf of Davao. She will soon head again to Balut Island for continued work on the building.



Paula onboard *Nativa* in late February, 2011.

“Thirteen families made up the population, clinging to the rocks of a distant cape, despairing and without hope.”



Pastor Robert Phillips of Parkway Baptist Church, Longview, TX onboard *Nativa*, February 2011.



Some of the VBS team members coming ashore at Pigsapawan, a new outpost for Remote Island Ministries.

VBS at Bethany

Glen Knight

When we first visited the place that is now called *Bethany* it was a very different place. Drunkenness, gambling and drugs were common and for the most part, children were left to fend for themselves. The village is literally at the far end of the peninsula...the place of last resort for a desperate lot of people. Concealed by mangrove trees, thirteen families made up the population, clinging to the rocks of a distant cape, despairing and without hope.

When the gospel arrived in 2007 things took a dramatic turn. All twenty-eight adults in the village prayed to receive Christ as Savior. The gambling and drunkenness disappeared and songs about Jesus began to reverberate through the jungle around them. Children and



adults alike began to learn from God's Word. A small chapel was built and a house for a pastor. A septic tank and a water well were installed and Pastor Randy Emban took up the ministry to these people and those of surrounding villages.

One of the great wonders of God's grace was lately seen in *Bethany* when our Remote Island Ministries team under the leadership of Pastor Nelmar Sumatra returned to conduct Vacation Bible School in late May. The photos above and to the left show the record attendance of 350 children and adults during VBS! Many thanks go to the team members as well as to Capt'n Rex Ancajas and our able crew of the missionary vessel, *RIM Nativa*.

A New Outpost for Remote Island Ministries

Among the many places *Nativa* has dropped anchor during the past five years is the coastal area of Governor Generoso Province along the southeastern shore of the Gulf of Davao. This is an area that has proved productive from Monserrat near Sigaboy town all the way to Cape San Augustin. Our early visits here yielded good evangelistic results especially in Tamban. The village of Pigsapawan was the site of one of the Remote Island Ministries VBS projects in recent weeks. In this very first effort of ministry here, there were 120 children and adults present for the VBS classes. Many churches have been established in past years through our Vacation Bible School ministries, reminding us again of the need for a continued, adequate supply of materials for all age groups.



The photo above shows the RIM team members ashore at Pigsapawan. Many thanks go to each of these very capable workers and to our RIM Assistant Director, Pastor Nelmar Sumatra. According to Pastor Nelmar, the opportunities for expansion of the ministry here are great.

“I don't know who named them swells. There's nothing swell about them. They should have named them anfuls.” —Hugo Vihlen

The Schooner *MSV Nativa II*

MSV NATIVA II



The drawing above is of the *MSV Nativa II* with a modified sail plan and slightly modified hull profile. We have shortened her bow sprit and repositioned her masts. We have also added a boom to the headsail and opted for a standard mainsail rather than the gaff rig. The gaff-rigged foresail has been shortened at the boom and heightened. It will not carry a topsail. An additional headsail can be set on the forestay at the bow. The simplified sail plan will help with the management of the vessel under sail and reduce the cost of construction. I have also given her profile more curvature at the midline. The vessel still measures 36 meters (118.5 feet) on deck.

During this design phase additional changes are subject to be made to create a more balanced rig. Be sure to follow as we post updated information on this exciting project!

A special word of thanks...

Glen Knight

I recently enjoyed a very special two days in Newport, Rhode Island with new-found friends Tom Lemaire, Peter Garcia and Oakley James. Thanks to our fellow church member, Jeff Lemaire, Tom's brother, the time spent in Newport, although brief, was extremely beneficial for the continued planning of our new missionary ship, *Nativa II*. Tom has suggested several changes in our sail plan that will simplify both the equipment and handling of the vessel. We were also able to visit some schooners and see first-hand what he is talking about. Photographs taken of ship's tackle are invaluable to me in preparing additional drawings for the rigging of our new schooner. Thanks Jeff and thanks Newport guys for your help and friendship!

"The brooding darkness punctuated fears we could not suppress having trekked upward beneath the jungle canopy to the summit of the low hill at the center of the island, too far from the boat and fully exposed to nature's fury. The clattering leaves of the coconut palms in the stiff breeze soon gave way to a howling rush of whines and groans as trees bore against each other, bending, breaking, crashing to the ground. Rain in torrents such as cannot be seen but in these latitudes pelted us, in a moment coursing in rapid streams, the trails we attempted to navigate. Seeking shelter among the natives whose nipa huts barely withstood the violence of the storm, we discovered an opportunity only God could have made to speak the gospel among those eager to hear it. God of all nature—God of the human heart gives time and place, always, to those who will go and to those who will hear that Jesus Saves!" —G. Knight, Memoirs



A beautiful schooner of 70' LOA presses the winds of Naraganset Bay, Newport, RI. The sail plan of this vessel is favorable for *Nativa II*.



Peter Garcia, Newport, RI has been a great help to me providing transportation in the area while on my visit.



Tom Lemaire, sailing his boat *Quatro* in Newport Harbor, Newport, RI, May 13, 2011. Yes, I was onboard!

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Onboard *RIM Nativa*, our faithful friend and fellow servant, Pastor Jun Abay, Bacolod City, Philippines. He is sent out by Timberlakes Baptist Church, Woodlands, TX.

...Reaching people on the edge!



The historic Lightship Nantucket in Newport Harbor, Newport, RI, May 13, 2011.

Closing Thought: The Hazards of Service Glen Knight

Historic lightships, such as the one pictured above, are a great part of American maritime history. They would typically be the first and last sights seen by wayfaring seamen when approaching or departing the continent. The one bearing the name "Nantucket" indicates her assigned station to guard the dangerous Nantucket Shoals. It actually comes from a succession of vessels with the same name and purpose dating back to the early 19th Century. The lightship served a unique purpose, as she signaled with both light and sound, the dangers any passing vessel would encounter in an area where there was no lighthouse. The men manning the lightship braved the elements of nature, placing themselves in harm's way that others might not fall victim to shipwreck. Sadly, sometimes those they sought to save from disaster became the greatest hazard to lightship service as they would be rammed by a vessel honed in on their beacon and bell that didn't turn away quickly enough. Interestingly, the lightship also served as a coastal watch in times of war from the Revolutionary to WWII.

I am reminded in this, of the Christian's service. Each has a purpose and a station assigned by the Lord. Whether thrust into the greatest of dangers in storm and conflict, or on the front lines of evangelism in difficult environments, or serving in peaceful, familiar situations, all are necessary and important to the overall goal of winning our world for Christ. But there are hazards associated with service no matter the station. We face the hazards of loneliness, discouragement and fear. There is the hazard of disappointment. Fatigue can be a great hazard and on the other end of that spectrum, laziness, likewise. Losing sight of the mission forms a great hazard. Oddly, busyness sometimes takes the place of the real business at hand. And then the servant sometimes gets "rammed" by the very people who are the objects of his greatest interest by misunderstanding, gossip and false witness. But as with the lightship, so with the servant of Christ: the gospel light must shine and the sounds of salvation must be heard. So what then? We man the stations until other orders are given.

"What can be said of the sea is that it is neither kind nor cruel. It is unpretentious and honest. Its beauty is observed both in calm and storm as it draws men away and drives them home again. For all that and more...much, much more, the sea is always...the sea." —G. Knight, Memoirs