

NEWSLETTER PHILIPPINES

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Saying 'good-bye'...

by Glen Knight

We have so often, through more than two decades of missionary work in the Philippines, had to say 'good-bye' to loved ones. That is typical especially among those who work in places far from home and the better part of wisdom is to prepare for the possibility of never seeing some again. This is a reality that has to be faced when leaving home but more often than not, there is a happy reunion when once work is done and the home port, regained. Paula and I have known that for a long time. Looking back, it has been our habit to always say, 'good-bye' to each other when facing separation during extended periods of work. Given such a habit, it became easier time after time to express but nonetheless meaningful. Couched within those words "good-bye" for us were always expressions of love, deeply rooted in our mutual faith in Christ and prayers for safe passage...and hope to return.

On April 11, last, Paula and I said our final 'good-bye' as she slipped away from this earthly harbor to join heaven's fleet. How we miss her. How we loved her. But there is One in heaven who loved her and needed her more than we, so we have given her up to Him, confident of His care and her rejoicing in the presence of the angels.



Paula was in her element before the choir of the Philippine Missionary Baptist Seminary-Asia Institute of Theology. This photo was taken on our concert night, March 5, 2014. Within exactly one week she was hospitalized in General Santos City, suffering from a rare blood bacteria. She died thirty-two days later in our home city, Davao, Philippines.

"Couched within those words 'good-bye' for us were always expressions of love, deeply rooted in our mutual faith in Christ and prayers for safe passage...and hope to return."



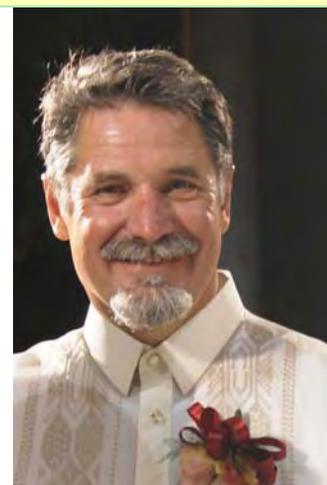
This photo of Paula was from Thanksgiving Day, 2013 on our family farm near Lobelville, Tennessee.

The work continues...

Glen Knight

Continuing the work of two life-times is naturally the thing I have chosen to do. As has been observed by those who knew Paula well and for that matter, know our work together, she would absolutely encourage me to go on. Therefore, I will go on inasmuch as since the time we began this ministry, there has never been a 'plan-B.' The work we began together must move ahead with all dispatch. What we believe with regard to the Christian hope is real...of this there is just no doubt.

The photo at the right was taken on the evening of our 2014 Annual Commencement Exercises at the Philippine Missionary Baptist Seminary. While Paula lay in the hospital in Davao City, we were busy sending off another set of young men and women who had completed their four-years of seminary training. And, so it goes...just as she would want.



REMOTE ISLAND MINISTRIES VBS...



Teaching the children to pray is such a vital aspect of any of our work. Here, three of the girls in Bethany take time out from their activities to spend time in prayer.



Vacation Bible School among the people in the village of Bethany, Cape San Augustin, southern Mindanao, has, through the last few years, been a tremendous blessing both to the children and their parents and also to us. During the month of May our RIM Team, under the leadership of Pastor Nelmar Sumatra ventured once again to the village to aid our resident pastor, Charles Tablo in conducting the week-long event. The following photographs show scenes of the classes and other activities. I want to express my thanks to our team members who have done such a tremendous job serving the people of Bethany once again.

“...Looking back through the years, it hasn't been long since there was no gospel witness in the village...”



Children love to read the stories of the Bible and learn of God's love. Looking back through the years, it hasn't been long since there was no gospel witness in the village. Now an entirely new generation is coming on with the blessing of understanding the promises of the God's Word and the joy of knowing Jesus Christ as Savior. Marked improvements in life and life styles are seen in many ways here in this village!

Our RIM Team consisted of Pastor Nelmar Sumatra, his wife Rezel and son JJ, Pastor Jonathan Dela Cerna and his wife Nene, Mark Robles, Marelou Polison, and Pastor Charles Tablo. The photo at the right shows one of the classes for the adults and Pastor Sumatra teaching. In the background can be seen another of the classes, this one for some of the children. In many places throughout this village, Bible studies and activities are going on simultaneously. Attendance exceeded 200 at week's end.



Pastors Nelmar Sumatra, Jonathan Dela Cerna and Mark Robles are explaining the process of set-up and use of the new ceramic water filters that will be vital resources to the people for clean water.

“...I'm going to change the world', she said jokingly, not realizing the potential she holds within her to do just that. I have often considered that positive attitudes with eyes wide-awake and hearts fully opened and minds set on following the Lord, can indeed, make such differences. And the time to begin doing so is in youth.” —from a conversation with my daughter, Juliana Knight, Memoirs of a Missionary

More scenes of VBS...

Glen Knight



The photo to the left shows a wider view of the village with its coconut trees, nipa and bamboo houses and, of course, the basketball court in the center. Our RIM Team conducted Bible School here and also in Pundaguitan, a village just north of Bethany. Here, you can see the parade of students, their parents and the workers which marked the beginning of each day's activities.

Take a look here at the ladies of Bethany as they spend time each day, preparing the food that was served during the Bible School. Such cooperation among the adult members of the church in the village makes the work easier for our team members and the food is always delicious and well made! We are so grateful for their dedication. You can see the bandanas on their heads which state the theme for the week, "Sonlight Express"...a great program that was a lot of fun for all the participants from Bethany and Impog.



The photograph below shows one of the children's classes being led by Pastor Johathan Dela Cerna. You can see the coral beds beneath the mangrove trees where the class has gathered giving an indication of the low-lying situation of this tiny fishing village. The mangrove forms a protective barrier between the sea and the village homes. Herein is a good illustration of how knowledge of God's Word in the hearts of these children will form a protective hedge about them as they grow to mature adults.



"...in their places there are no cell phones, neither complications of computers and various gadgets thought among the rest of the world to be necessary, whose children play with cobbled and simple toys, whose homes are rooted into the dirt..."

—excerpt from FB post, May 23, 2014, Glen Knight, Missionary to Oceanic Asia



The child above is holding one of the many hygiene kits given out in her village during the week of Bible School. One can imagine the benefit of having this kind of gift often given by our teams. The kit includes a bar of soap, a toothbrush and tooth paste, a wash cloth and a hair brush or comb. Many of you perhaps help each year by donating the supplies and then assembling them...thank you so much!

"...the mangrove forms a protective barrier between the sea and the village homes. Herein is a good illustration of how knowledge of God's Word in the hearts of these children will form a protective hedge as they grow..."



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RIM Nativa, astern.

...Reaching people on the edge!



The missionary sailing ship, RIM Nativa sails out of the harbor of Davao City, Philippines under full sail in light winds. With the vessel complete, the horizon awaits our return to the Islands. Juli and I will be making our home aboard the ship and continuing the work among remote islands.

Closing thoughts...

Glen Knight

There is never a case when everything has been done that can be done and neither is there a time when giving up is the best option. For those who trust in the Lord and who labor in gospel work, there is ever the time to look up and to have strength renewed...to find joy in sorrow and peace for the days ahead. Juli and I are holding flight reservations in hand now for our return to the Port of Davao on July 28. We are eager to get back to our island home and the people we love so dearly. We will be missing our family and friends stateside, but the work calls us abroad and opportunities the Good Lord has opened to us stagger the imagination! We love you for your care and encouragement. Offerings given to aid us with medical and funeral costs have humbled us and for this, we will be forever grateful. As we go, we desire your prayer and we promise you our faithfulness!



“Knowing when to sail and when not is a thing learned by experience and it isn’t true that sailing cannot be undertaken if wind and sea conditions aren’t optimal. The fact is that there are times when sailing is necessary...period. I have known that those who await the ‘good’ conditions usually wait long at the quay while opportunities for work are wasted. And the decision to sail or not isn’t always tied to weather and sea state...as in some cases, it is a matter of the heart.” —GK, Memoirs...