

Newsletter Philippines

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“We are fully committed to pressing ourselves and our ship into the work, trusting God’s faithfulness and praying for his grace.”



Our summer volunteer worker, Jon Penn from Victory Baptist Church, Sherwood, Arkansas USA (our sending church) is doing such a great job over the two months of his service aboard the ship. The photo shows Jon with two friends he met at the church in Mati City. We’re proud of this young man!

The Long Awaited Days at Sea

Glen Knight

Good ships and seaworthy aren’t intended to be kept in safe anchorages for they are made to voyage...to cross oceans and to venture to distant shores...to discover...to learn...to share. So with that in mind and heart, there’s no time like the present to let go the bow lines and weigh anchor and set sail!

On July 4, 2015 the missionary sailing ship, RIM Nativa departed the Port of Davao bound for Eastern Visayas in the Philippines. Watching the weather prior to our departure we were aware of two typhoons that were sweeping the Pacific east of Mindanao but with judicious planning we believed we could sail up the eastern coastline between the storms, taking advantage of the southwesterly wind flows. What we hadn’t counted on was the terrible sea conditions getting out of the Gulf of Davao! We have known the notorious reputation the Gulf has and have navigated through it often but never until this crossing had I seen such a rage on its surface! We slogged it though for a full twenty-three hours until rounding Cape San Augustin and out into the Pacific Ocean. From the Cape to Pujada Bay at Mati City, the passage was fast with wind and current astern. It almost seems that

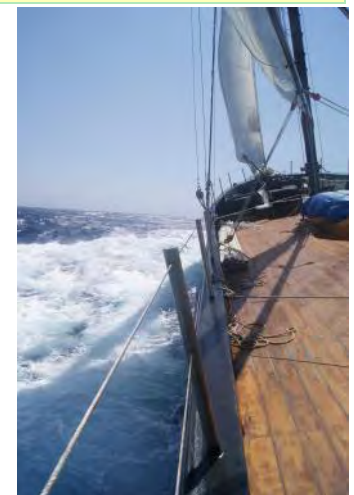


Davao didn’t want to let us go and we had to fight for every nautical mile we laid distant to the City. I believe our resolve is tested through hardship and that pause is given for commitment to be confirmed when the way gets hard. We sailed with hearts on the Lord and eyes on the horizon and very often, teeth gritted. But the reward of departure would soon be known in the onward journey.

The photo above shows the ship under full sail, making way along the Philippine Trench, eastern Mindanao, the Pacific Ocean. Only God knows the journey that lies ahead. We are fully committed to pressing ourselves and our ship into the work, trusting God’s faithfulness and praying for His grace. Thank you for helping us!

Ship’s Log: Sailing the Trench!

The Philippine Trench is the third deepest sea in the world at around seven miles deep. It’s difficult to imagine so much water beneath our keel but in the photo to the right, we are sailing the length of the Trench as it passes the island of Mindanao, the Philippines. The wonder of God’s creation never ceases to amaze me! The clear blue of the ocean’s surface and the sky overhead remind me of God’s goodness but when I think about the depths of this trench and it’s cold darkness, I am reminded of the depths of sin and how people need deliverance from it. And that deliverance can only come by God’s grace in Jesus Christ. That is the best reason for us to sail...and in sailing, to reach people on the edge who need what God has provided. We will therefore, go on to the farthest points possible and quickly. Our next call would be at La Januza Island, a remote and tiny island in the easternmost part of the Visayas region.





The youngster here was so curious to see and learn about the strange visitors who had come to his church! We shared the word of the Lord with him and his family.

“We ministered to his fifty crewmen, gave them Bibles and had time for some brief Bible study and prayer. This is one of the objectives of Remote Island Ministries...”



A mother and small child in the village of Mam-on, La Januza Island, off Siargo in eastern Visayas. We enjoyed such a wonderful day with these simple and humble people. See article on facing page.

The hand outstretched...

There are ways and means to help people and all are worthy of the effort made. Hands reach out so often either to give or to receive. Consider the outstretched hand...it is human...it is humble. Whether to lend strength or to give a simple gift, God has given us hands to help others and in so doing, we emulate the hands of God reaching out to us all.

In a real sense, we are your hands reaching out to people you cannot reach. Through your prayers and your gifts we are able to go and to give and you have a share in the effort. The children pictured here are some of the kids in Mati City, our first port of call on this voyage. Those to the right are wearing some



of the little dresses made by the ladies of Goldsby Baptist Church, Goldsby, Oklahoma. There are more than 200 of these which will be given to children along our way. Thank you so much ladies for your loving gift! And thank you Pastor Fred Greening for your love of the Filipino people and the work of Remote Island Ministries!

From Mati City on Pujada Bay, Eastern Mindanao we sailed on to Bislig Bay, a long trip of nearly twenty-four hours. We left behind the friends we had made in Mati and Pastor Nicolas Acuna, my long-time friend, promising to one day come again to visit. Many thanks go to Pastor Acuna and the church for their love offering that has helped speed us on our journey. Please pray for the work in Mati and around Pujada Bay.

En route to Bislig Bay with 24 knot winds and a difficult head current, we broke our mainsail boom and bent the mizzen. The experience was actually good for us, teaching us to reef earlier than we did! And while in Bislig making repairs, we had an opportunity to minister to many people. The men in the photo to the right are three of those people. Uloy, in the green shirt and his son John were great helpers to us in many ways aiding us in purchasing fuel and other things needed for the next leg of our journey. The man on the left is the captain of the F/B Kingver next to us at the wharf. We ministered to his fifty crewmen, gave them Bibles and had time for some brief Bible study and prayer. This is one of the objectives of Remote Island Ministries— to minister to crewmen on boats in harbors and to harbor personnel where we make port. We have promised to visit their fishing port again at some point in the future. We know we will always have friends among the people here!



“The alarms worked as we had planned and with such sound and light as would frighten anyone caught by surprise in the darkness. And what we knew would eventually happen did in fact happen while at anchor off Surigao City, Mindanao Island. The night watch detected a swimmer near the ship as we lay a half-mile off the city pier in the bay...much too far for a casual fisherman swimming at 2:00 AM. Thief!!! Alert!!! All hands on Deck!!! And suddenly the daring pirate who had clambered onto our stair covered before us offering excuses for being unlawfully aboard the missionary ship. In the distance his companions could be seen, silently waiting in the darkness.” —Memoirs, Glen Knight

Mission Survey: La Januza Island, Eastern Visayas

The tiny island is hardly noticeable on a map and is unnamed except on sea charts. We found La Januza Island on our Raymarine map software. Demographics from 2007 indicated around 582 residents. Today that number has dropped to 300. The houses in the photo to the right are the type lived in on the whole island. There is electricity from a solar panel and battery and only few lights. There is no water well on the island.



The island receives no aid from the government. There are no schools and only one dilapidated church where no priest or pastor comes any more. The people were surprised when we dropped anchor off their island and came ashore. Our interest in them is spiritual and physical so aside from sharing the Word of the Lord with them, we were able to give many hygiene kits, clothing, flip flops and Visayan New Testaments. I preached among them twice and all were happy to hear.

Take a look at the photo to the right. This is the single water source on La Januza Island. It measures about 30" square and is nearly 36" deep. The water that was in it was as deep as my hand, only...about six inches. That supplies the trickle that flows through a PVC pipe down to the village and fills a tank. I asked about aid from outside sources, either the government or NGOs but there has been nothing and in the aftermath of typhoon Yolanda and others since then, no one visited this island to see how they were affected. I am afraid that will be the case in most places we visit inasmuch as we are aiming at the most difficult and far-flung islands for evangelism and humanitarian aid. This is the first of many across a vast area of the central Philippines. We are planning to drop back to La Januza in the months ahead unless there is an emergency need to return in case of disaster that brings us back sooner. Our contact there is George Bastillo.



George showed me a different and much better water flow from the mountain spring and expressed a desire to build a new cistern there. The photo to the left shows the natural crevasse in the rock where water pools. The need to catch it and pipe it down to the village can be served by building the larger cistern. So we purchased cement and other supplies for it in Dapa Town, Siargo Island. George and the men in the village will do the work. It is obvious that having a deep well would be the best thing for the village of Mam-on but the mountain spring nearby will serve them, provided they can harness enough of it before the water runs off. The cost of this project was just under \$400.00...a small price to pay for such a great blessing to 300 people!

"Far away from things familiar and understood at a glance, one seems to pay closer attention to what comes and goes and observes them with keener senses, struggling at times to truly understand and more than that, to accept and to adjust to what is normal when normal seems so different. And to make a lifetime of such interactions for the gospel's sake is what happens with a missionary and his family. Changes are such that sometimes he fits and sometimes he doesn't and perhaps no one but God truly understands." —Memoirs, G. Knight



These girls are some of the many kids in Mam-on village, La Januza Island. They received clothing, hygiene kits, flip flops and Visayan Bibles.

"The cost of this project was just under \$400.00 ...a small price to pay for such a great blessing to 300 people!"



The stainless steel tank here is a 200 liter tank that is filled by the trickle of water from the cistern up on the side of the hill. Once the new cistern is built, the better flow will fill it much more quickly.

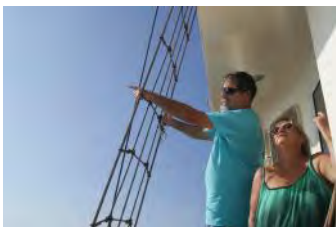
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The bridge of RIM Nativa gives a good view of all that is around us as we sail. And with such a view we imagine what there is out there to be found and who there is waiting for our arrival. I am thankful for all that has passed in my life and excited for what remains. Summer and I will carry on to the farthest points possible, sharing God's Word with all we find. Please pray for us and thanks for your help!

...Reaching people on the edge!



Sunset over the Pacific Ocean off Mindanao as the missionary ship made way northward. After stormy days at sea, God blessed us with good sailing conditions...a reward for trusting him and setting forth on the journey of His bidding.

Closing thoughts...

Glen Knight

They watched for a long time as we pushed off their beach and began the mile-long shallow water crossing to our ship waiting beyond the reef. These people with friendly faces and longing eyes wondered of other places and people who lay along our voyaging route and whether or not we might ever return to their island. They were glad for our coming and in an instant, sad that we would leave them behind. Such is the situation of most islands we visit. But to return is on our minds for the beauty of La Januza Island is hard to describe and more than that, the needs of the people pull at our hearts. We have considered that where there is one such place and these kinds of people, there are hundreds of others. Thus we pray and we sail...and look back, often.



"I had heard of such places in the sea where islands are sinking but it had not become so obvious to me until lately when visiting an island in Dinagat Sound. All around one can see a fringing reef but something seems strange about it...foundations of buildings, old and long since reclaimed by the sea, remain as silent testimony of what is happening. The subductive crustal plates of the Philippines are sliding beneath those of the Pacific Ocean and in such manner are literally dragging islands along. And what is most interesting about the whole affair is that people live their lives on these islands as if there is no need for alarm and have no plans of relocation. It seems to me that disaster is lurking everywhere. And this reminds me of the spiritual need of humanity, drawn closer to eternity with no sense of alarm."