

ISLAND ECHOES

Serving Christ in the Islands of Micronesia and the Philippines



Pacific Missionary Aviation

GOD IS OUR REFUGE: TYPHOON YOYONG STORIES

By Melinda R. Espinosa



COVER: Loading rice for relief distribution

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We whispered a sigh of relief and thanking to God that tropical storm "Nan Madol" passed Yap without damaging the island. We were expressly concerned, as Yap had not yet recovered from Typhoon Sudal.

Our relief was short-lived. The tropical storm became a super-typhoon, renamed "Yoyong" when it struck the Philippines. Rescuers and government agencies battled to reach victims in areas already struggling after typhoon "Winnie" hit them a week ago. Polilio islands and Quezon province were placed once again under Typhoon alert #4, meaning the area would be hit directly and would experience heavy rain and winds exceeding 285 kph. We were very concerned as our mission stations are in this area. Dr. John Escote (our doctor based in Lopez, Quezon) reported that the towns in his area experienced mudslides and flood, rendering many roads impassable as well

as damaging many houses. Many were rendered homeless. In Jomalig Island, our Pastor's house and the multi-purpose center were severely damaged. In Patnanungan Island, the roofs of the Learning Center and Boys and Girls Dorm were blown away. The government does not provide Head Start for young children, and PMA (FMS in the Philippines) has established the Learning Center to provide such service free of charge. The Boys and Girls



**Unloading Rice for Relief,
Thanks to PhilRads**

Dorm is a safe haven, providing a secure and positive environment for teen-agers from other islands within Polilio group, as their respective islands do not have any High School. We provide this facility to deserving children of indigent families in the area, free of charge.

The death toll and the number of people reported missing from both typhoons has now reached over 2,000 – and each day rescuers are finding more bodies.

We are thankful Katakian and Kilogan stations did not suffer much damage. We also thank God for protecting our Hangar and aircraft at the Manila Domestic Airport, which was under Typhoon Alert #2. Most of all we thank God for protecting our mission staff and their families from harm and danger. We flew 4698 kilos of relief good and served 1212 families (each family averaging 4 to 6 members).

Our Partner, CBM (Christoffel Blindenmission) provided funds for food (rice, canned goods, sugar) to immediately help the people. Because of their timely help, we were the first to arrive in the Polilio islands with much needed relief goods – soon after, Christians, churches, and other organizations responded to our call for help and provided us with canned goods, rice, medicines, clothing, blankets – we were so thankful for the generosity of each one displayed during the time of crisis. We also thank God for the immediate response from our friends and partners in the U.S. and Germany – their gifts will go toward the reconstruction of the damaged buildings.

Our presence in the islands brought hope and encouragement to the people — they understood more clearly the message of love we have been sharing with them all this time. Indeed the help extended showed love and compassion in action and this has sent a message to them that they are not alone. That people care. That we love not merely in words but in deeds.

Help for All

By Ptr. John Arancillo
Patnanungan

Nanay Mering Almadrones testified how she experienced God's goodness to her. She was so happy that although she was not a member of the PMF church, she still received relief goods which helped her family. Nanay said, "I am thankful that you remembered me during this time of calamity." We are thankful that we are able to share God's provision with all in need.



Onie, Edna and Roselyn sorting through donated clothes

Mrs. Engay Fernandez testified how God provided for their needs after the typhoon when the relief goods came at the time when her family needed it most. She shared, "Our faith has grown as God manifested Himself as a God of miracles." Please pray that through the gifts received, the people of Patnanungan will realize what a great God we serve and will be drawn to Him.

Showers of Blessing

By Ptr. Mathias Dolauta
Jomalig

Four successive typhoons struck upper Quezon Province and parts of Luzon. Many lives were lost because of the flash floods. Although Jomalig was hit, God's wonderful



Island people come to meet FMS aircraft with Relief goods

protection was upon us.

That week I was meditating on the book of Prophet Haggai 2:1-9. Despite dire predictions of what will come, Haggai encouraged King Zerubbabel not to fear but to be strong in the Lord. What a great assurance of the provision of His presence.

Two weeks later, with two typhoons devastating our island, God's word still resounded in my mind. My family took shelter at my neighbor's house. I was left at the mission house praying together with my young people (A Young Timothy). Although we sustained damage, we were safe.

The PMF Jomalig distributed relief goods to a total of 400 families. People who received the relief were testifying to the goodness of God through the ministry of FMS. There was no rice available on the island. Thank God FMS relief came with rice, noodles, canned goods, sugar & coffee. People were thankful also for our faithful partner CBM who was there and ready to help.

Praise the Lord that because of the distribution of relief goods, we had more than 100 attenders who gathered for Sunday fellowship. At first we thought that probably the following Sunday they would not return. Our faith was put to test. Lo and behold, God brought them back Sunday after Sunday and they even brought friends and family members with them! Church attendance has indeed grown since the typhoon. As the gospel was preached, many have surrendered their lives to the Lord. Now 30 people are candidates to follow the Lord in water baptism and are undergoing baptismal counseling. Praise God for the Showers of Blessing experienced after the Typhoons – indeed He has a mighty way of providing.



Jomalig Parsonage roof damage

Thank You!

By Sis. Luz R. Bergonio
Katakian church member

Shalom!! Blessed be the Lord God of our salvation and His name be exalted.

The roaring sound of the FMS/PMA airplane to the people of Katakian – is like the sound of the pouring out of “Manna” from heaven during the time the Israelites were in the wilderness.

We, the people of this small island are united in sending our warmest gratitude to your kind humanitarian deeds.

THANK YOU and may our good Lord continue to richly bless you both materially and mostly spiritually and that each day your faith in our Lord Jesus Christ will continue to increase.

Love Shown To Us

By Sis. Rowena Guevarra
Katakian church member

I would like to thank the Lord for using FMS as the instrument to provide our needs during the calamity. Though our house was not hit by the Typhoon Yoyong, our

farm and work were really affected. My family and I thank you so much for the relief goods you shared with us. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless and support your ministry. Thank you so much for showing your LOVE to US.



What was left of a house

God's Mighty Provision

By Ptr. Jorie Bonggoyan
Katakian

Praise God for His mighty protection during the four devastating typhoons. The livelihood of the families in the island was greatly affected. Because of the raging waves, the sea weeds (the source of livelihood) were completely washed out. People could not go out for fishing as well. We were so thankful for the relief goods sent to us just in time when the people needed it. I took the opportunity to do some evangelistic Bible Study among those who received relief goods. Praise the Lord many people responded – opened their homes for Bible studies. Our worship attendance averaged 200 people every Sunday, which included our mission outreach. God indeed has a mighty way of providing.



Chief Fred Ranada prepares Relief packs



Transporting relief goods

You Raise Me Up — A Baptism Story

By Mary Ringlen

“Sometimes I get sad, feel down and lonely. But then I remember that when I am weak, Jesus is strong. He promised that He would help me climb all my mountains and that He would be with me through all my stormy seas.” These were the words spoken by Byron, a young man with Down syndrome to introduce the song *You Raise Me Up* in the PMF **Great God** production last Christmas. Tears welled in many of the audience’s eyes as they know Byron Ringlen, and how he has met many challenges over the years...academic, social and more.

Byron is looking forward to his twenty-fourth birthday. He has been a member of the PMF family for over a year. He and his mother, Mary Ringlen, came to our congregation when tragically Byron’s dad decided to leave the family. Byron thought he had a great family and has been very upset with the prospect of a divorce. It has been a difficult year for this young man who is full of dreams and aspiration. He *is* a man with a plan.

Byron loves his PMF family. They have provided the much needed love and support during this difficult time in his life. In January, Pastor Nob Kalau baptized him with other Christians from his PMF family. It was a joyous day. Byron has been very happy as a member of the PMF choir in the last two PMF productions (Easter and Christmas 2004). Memorizing all of the words just as other choir members (he reads at a third grade level) and coming to practices faithfully, his presence and performance has touched many hearts. His spiritual goals this year are to become stronger in his faith, to be more loving and to be happy in all circumstances. Byron is living his love for God and is an inspiration to many as he continues to look to God to “raise him up”.



Byron (middle with Nob Kalau) with baptized PMF members.

EXPERIENCES, EMOTIONS, AND REMEMBRANCES

By Barbara L. Pace

“For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope’.”— Jeremiah 29:11

What would a middle-aged widow on a fixed income have to offer for seven weeks to PMA missionaries serving in Micronesia? She is one who still swims laps three mornings a week to keep mobile after suffering a massive stroke several years ago. And what if you knew she had also endured the devastation of losing her husband tragically? Why would she want to tackle this strenuous 10,000-mile trip, with its poignant memories of an earlier life shared with her husband there? What could she have left to offer to others? Nothing, perhaps nothing at all.

But as Sylvia Kalau noted in their family’s 2005 New Year letter, “Former missionary, Barbara Pace, joined us for three weeks at Christmas. What a big help she was in the office and sharing with groups about God’s healing of her life. She discovered the gift of joy in the midst of a stroke and the loss of husband Harvey. God is truly in control of all of life’s circumstances! Like Peter (the apostle), He simply asks us to keep our focus fixed on Him.”

I did have a wonderful seven-week trip to Micronesia, filled with many experiences, emotions, and remembrances. I spent Thanksgiving on Yap Island, Christmas



Palau - Barbara and Annie del Rosario at a Bible study. After Barbara shared, the group had lots of questions.

on Pohnpei, and welcomed the first days of 2005 on Kosrae Island. My trip also included Palau and Guam. I shared my story of despair and joy with eleven audiences, the largest being a congregation of 600 on Kosrae. I attended many rehearsals and performances of a great Christmas musical in Pohnpei at PMA’s church. The script, written by Nob Kalau, PMA President, included a choir of 90 people from the ages of 4 - 54.

In late November while in Yap I experienced a 120-mile an hour typhoon that hit our small island directly. Fortunately, I was secure with PMA friends Peter and Esther Reichert whose home is a two-story cement block structure. After typhoon clean up, we also had some fun times. I enjoyed kayaking with PMA staffers in the waters off Yap Island a few days later. I attended several Bible studies on different islands. In Palau I watched a Sunday afternoon basketball game—in sweltering heat and humidity—that involved PMA’s Bible study guys. We had encouraged one another just a few days earlier when we had met for an evening Bible Study.

I visited the PMA-sponsored “Kids Klub” on Guam, coordinated by Melinda Espinosa, PMA’s CFO. Hawaii friends had given me dollars to spend in a special way for my trip, and I had shopped for Christmas gifts for the 50 kids. I also showed them an 8-minute video of my skydiving adventure on my June birthday. When the kids started to watch the tape, they saw that we were close to the ocean. One young boy asked if I would land in the ocean or on land. Before I could answer him, another little boy asked, “Did you throw-up, Auntie Barbara?” Laughing, I replied, “No, I was too excited!” We had a great Christmas party with those kids that afternoon!



Guam Kids Klub - Happy with their Christmas Gifts!