

## The Netherlands, September 2009

### Warm Welcome

At early dawn, my parents and some members of my home front committee were waiting for me at Schiphol Airport. The temperature was not too low and soon lovely sunlight broke through. Cows were grazing calmly in sonorous meadows, a windmill a long side the road and of course traffic jams and road works. Yes, this is Holland! It took some time getting used to the direct way of speaking, high speeds on the roads, eating bread, etc. But also, enjoying a sandwich with cheese, chicory, blackberries from the garden and croquettes.

Although I already miss the Philippines and receive a lot of emails from over there, it is nice to be back on Dutch soil, seeing (grand)parents, brothers, other relatives and friends again. Enjoying the Dutch landscape, Dutch humor and treats. Fortunately, the gingerbread nuts (one of those treats) !!! were already available ☺.

Also the annual GZB-day came up soon. This was a good opportunity for seeing many people again!

### Another Hurricane

Unbelievable reports. 80 % of Manila under water, people being lost, over a 100 mln. P of damages, many dead and missing. The water rose at some points so fast that people had to fly by climbing into electricity poles!!! Our house hasn't been spared. At this time it has been reasonably cleaned, but books have been damaged, the motorbike suffered water damage, a borrowed piano stood in our living room....about our refrigerator and such I haven't heard yet, but everything is incredibly dirty. But all the OMF-people are still alive, although some of them have lost almost everything...emergency aid is starting up slowly. A good opportunity to be Christians through words and actions! For me, it is very unreal to be in the Netherlands at this time.



### A Visit Back to Sariaya

A note of encouragement. When I had just arrived in Sariaya, it was at some times very difficult to make clear, that a healthy congregation is a congregation that works together and doesn't let everything depend on the minister. Especially in the rural context of the Philippines. Slowly but surely, I was allowed to give trainings in evangelisation, Sunday School and lead Bible study groups at home. It is always exciting to see what happens when one leaves a congregation. Do they fall back in their old ways, or will they continue? I was so grateful when I returned to Sariaya. Youth groups and women's clubs are under management and growing in numbers. People are helping in singing guidance, counselling, keeping Bible studies and preaching, etc. Also, there are now 4 permanent Sunday School teachers and 1 teacher for the kids club during the week. Many are involved with the congregation, growing in faith and in numbers.



*2 children puzzling over the Bible phrase they have to learn.*

One family, where I used to give Bible studies at home with just the mother, now comes to church with all the teenaged children, husband and even a married son. They all follow Bible studies at home now. This has to take place in 2 different groups, since the internet shop which they run, has to stay open and needs to be supervised.

In short, God's work continues and I feel grateful that I left at the right moment in time. Not too soon and not too late. Although it is very nice to be involved in such a lively and growing congregation, they obviously are capable of doing it on their own. Being there, from time to time, and encouraging them from

a distance is enough to keep the good work going.



*Women's club has doubled in size since they gather every Sunday after service.*

### **Singapore**

The weekend before I left for the Netherlands I made a stop in Singapore. I joined a prayer meeting at the OMF- headquarters and was asked to speak on Sunday at the Philippine service in Singapore. That took some getting used to, after all the simple churches in the Philippines, I now received an ear microphone and I was able to see on a screen in front of me, what was being projected on the big screen behind me. But it was good to share Gods Word of encouragement with these brothers and sisters. People who are often alone, doing underappreciated work in order to help their families in the Philippines. It was good to spend some time with them.

### **Leave of absence**

I will be living with my parents in Hedel. I hope to be able to meet as many people as possible during presentations, after services and in person of course. Please feel free to call in order to meet up. E-mail address stays the same...

In case one of my presentations takes place in your vicinity, feel free to call or mail my for additional information.

### **Scheduled Presentations**

- 14<sup>th</sup> October Vriezenveen
- 15<sup>th</sup> October Wageningen
- 18<sup>th</sup> October Rijswijk NB
- 19<sup>th</sup> October school Gameren
- 21<sup>st</sup> October school Hedel
- 22<sup>nd</sup> October Oudewater (afternoon) and Stolwijk (evening)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October OMF day of prayer
- 24<sup>th</sup> October Hedel

### **Important!!!**

The first of November I hope to be send out again by the PKN congregation of Wageningen (Grote Kerk, Markt 1) during the evening service, which starts at 18.30 h and the theme of the service will be missionary work.

Proceeding the service there is a cold meal at the 'dienstgebouw' across the church in Wageningen. This meal will start at 16.30 h. You are most welcome to join us. Please sign up, before the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, at Heleen Oosterom (apooster@tiscali.nl), 0317 413903. 06 14158695).

My kind regards to you all!  
*Iljo de Keijzer*

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<http://Iljo.algemeenbekend.nl> (with p.a.  
photos of the disaster in the Philippines)**

### **Leave of Absence 26<sup>th</sup> of August-4<sup>th</sup> of November**

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