

Manila, December, 2013

Out of the ordinary

After the unrest in Zamboanga, where so far more than 10.000 still live in evacuation centers, the earthquake in Bohol, we heard about a super typhoon coming.

To storms, we're used here, but the storm, which is called Yolanda here (Haiyan), seemed nevertheless to be very strong. Many people were preventively evacuated.

The death toll is now over 6000, but without the pre-evacuation had been much much higher. Many times if you walk around in the affected areas and see a pile of materials, which was once a house, you can not imagine how many more deaths there would have been without evacuation.

We are extremely grateful for the millions of pesos that come in via OMF and GZB to help the victims. Through the GZB I have become personally involved in the province of Aklan, in Altavas. We've got a young church (1 year) there, with since four months a couple pastor.



Church in a house. The Front is still standing.

Arriving at the airport in Aklan (Kalibo), we see the first buildings without roof but the damage seems not too bad. As we move further towards Altavas the damage becomes more and more visible. We see electricity posts tumbled, houses collapsed like card houses, mountains with coconut trees are completely bare, only a portion of the trees still stands.



Together we can do all!

In Altavas they already started cleaning. Electrical cables are built slowly, some of the fallen trees are now building materials, wood for cooking!

We drive around on motorcycles and see the home of one of the ministers, several leaders of the church, and people just nearby. A mother tells her daughter prayed while they ran to the school for their lives: "God, please let us keep one room in our house." And that was exactly what was left of their home. Now

the family is grateful, but also teases the girl, he should have prayed for two rooms. Humor helps to go through difficulties.



We meet a woman, Juana, whose younger brother actually needs dialysis, but they have no money. While he was so sick he himself repaired the roof of his hut. Now he slowly is waiting for the end. We have brought him some special food, so he can get enough to eat.

The houses they have to build themselves in groups of 10, with a group leader. If this goes well, we can send money for a second batch. If you walk around you would prefer to have huge teams come and complete houses for them. But experience has taught us that that is not the best way to really help. Houses are sold for money to buy food for example, or to flee to the big city. By doing it in a group context, experience has shown that the percentage of people that we can help the long term goes up tremendously.

creativity

One of the women had a temporary house made of the bus shelter! Others had the broken roof plates bent back again and again placed them back. Obviously it had thus become a leaky roof, but at least better than nothing. One family had

the pair of plates that were still in one piece a makeshift tent, others made banners into walls.



From busstop to house.

De average Filipino has an amazing ability to recover from tragedies. At the same time though, they need all the help we can give with food, housing and psychological help.



Meanwhile, 100 people have a roof over their heads now and we hope to go further in rebuilding the village. We will return as soon as possible

The spiritual need is also very large. I spoke there in the Sunday worship not long ago. Despite the heat, too many people in a small house and no electricity for a fan, everyone listened attentively, even the 20 people who were for the first time in the church. There is



openness to Bible studies and people with questions about the meaning of life. Of course we help everyone we can. Christian or not, but we are grateful for open doors ...

For those who want to know more, see the following link

<http://www.gzb.nl/project/gzb-houdt-noodhulpactie#.Uq--BaVq4dc>

Agenda

January 2 to 6: OMF annual conference
8-10? January: Aklan visit again for evaluation of the first phase and the introduction of the second phase of reconstruction after the typhoon.
January 14 to 17: First teacher training in cooperation with ATS. There seem to be 70! people to come!
January 23: Flight to Netherlands
Week of January 27: School in Kerkwijk
February: Week in Wageningen
16-28 March: Available for presentations via GZB
March 17 Rijswijk, NB
March 29 OMF parents' day
April 30: Return to the Philippines

During the time in the Netherlands, I will try to renew my license, my birth certificate, official diplomas etc etc. They all need an official stamp of the Philippine Embassy. Because I'm registered in The Hague in the Dutch population register for Dutch abroad this must all be done in The Hague and is it all a bit more complicated.

Blessings!

Iljo de Keijzer

COLOFON

De GZB en de OMF werken samen om de uitzending van Iljo de Keijzer mogelijk te maken.

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