



Manila, December, 2019

Thankfully we still have water. Thankfully the hurricane "Tisoy" didn't go straight over Manila. Thankfully that few people died in the devastating hurricane last week. Thankful to be healthy in the time of a major flu epidemic here. Thankfully we were able to get a sick missionary with a plane ambulance to Manila. She is now recovering.

Yes, there is enough left to be thankful for! A short look back at how we ended up in Samar and Leyte.

HAIYAN

November 2013, a devastating hurricane made Leyte and Samar a huge mess. Churches, houses, streets, cars, shopping malls, everything was destroyed. It took years before life slowly got going again. Schools and shopping centers were rebuilt, gasoline became available again, cars returned to the restored roads.

Fishermen went back to the sea, but there was almost no fish left. The hurricane has changed the currents of the water in the sea and as a result the fish is much further in the sea, where the small boats cannot get to. But fishing is all they can in a fishing village. People who used to be well off now live on the fringes of society.

Growth of church congregations

The positive news is that thanks to the (financial) commitment through, among others, the GZB and OMF, the local churches were able to provide assistance. People were very impressed by this help. They became curious about the why. The churches are expanding enormously.



OMF and Bukang Liwayway teams live in the same simple wooden houses as the municipality ...

Children's and youth Christmas in Samar

Our young (in age and in time on the mission field) workers in Samar have made contact with a lot of youth and children! As was clear in these Christmas celebrations!





Bible study week In November we met with 50 ministers and church leaders from Samar and Leyte. We equipped them in Biblical sermons. Most are farmers, fishermen, taxi drivers, who also started a church. Because of poverty and because they often only finished primary school, they cannot go to a Bible school. In this week we gave them handles ... they worked hard.



No matter how hard they work, there is always some time for a "selfie".

The great story of the Bible, the theological story.

We taught them: observing the Bible story. Who are the people in the story and what can we learn about them from the text? The same applies with regard to the places and times. How is the story structured? We also looked at which words are

repeated and at the small words that turn the texts into one story.



Students had 10 important people and events from the Bible, which they had to put in the right order.

The goals of the lessons were:

- being able to find the core of the message
- be able to add structure to the sermon
- be able to illustrate every point
- be able to translate the message into the lives of people in their own city or village.



The different main points per group presented.



A lot of work was done in table groups.

Financial support

Hard work was done on this throughout the week. It is so nice to see how the students grow in understanding the text and explaining it to their congregation members.



For many, it was quite a task to have no income for a week, and even to pay € 8. The actual costs for the training are many times higher, even for the food alone. But we also want the students to be willing to make a contribution to participate. It remains a challenge not to make the growing church dependent, but at the same time to help where necessary.

We are grateful for good Filipino partners, who can already do a large part of the work. We are

often still needed for international relations and overseeing all the details, but it was great to work with this group (and another foreigner who had already left when the photo was taken) to provide the training. We have paid a lot of attention to coaching before and after. You see, they can still smile afterwards :-).



Within a year after the start of the international Langham training, we already had a mainly Filipino team. Grateful!





Agenda:

- Jan. 8 Meeting on part 2 of the "Langham" preaching training.
- 11-12 Jan Hermeneutics in Daet, Bicol
- 14 Jan Meeting on the support given to ABCCOP missionaries. Always difficult to distribute the money properly.
- Jan. 22 Christian arrives as a short-termer to make videos about Langham sermon stories and at the same time attend the training himself.
- Jan 27-31 Langham sermon training in Baguio. Part 2 Old Testament. I hope to do a lesson and an example sermon.
- Feb. 7-14 Maarten Kommers, our OMF director from the Netherlands hopes to visit. We look forward to that of course :-).
- Feb. 14-15 Simple Bible school training for people with little background in education.
- Feb 18-20 ABCCOP general synod
- Feb 25-27 Council meetings
- 28-March 1 Retreat in Tagaytay as a participant for a change :-)
- 2-6 March New workers introduction training.
- March 10 Start of a vision trip to Samar.

Blessing!

Iljo

COLOPHON

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