



Christ for Asia International MISSIONSINFO

NEWSLETTER | JULY 2024

THE POWER OF BEING SEEN



Small, looked down on and pushed away by people - that was the life of Zaccheus as we read in Luke 19. Yes, as a Chief Tax Collector he stole from his own people - no wonder the people didn't like Zaccheus. But did you ever think about how the life of Zaccheus was before he became a Tax Collector? The bible says he was very short. What if that was his life even before he became a Tax Collector for the romans: unseen and overlooked by people. Desperate to see Jesus, Zaccheus ran ahead and climbed a tree. And then it happened: "When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." (Luke 19:5)

Can you imagine what Zacchaeus must have felt at that moment? His whole life, being unseen and overlooked and all of a sudden, Jesus sees him. We call that the "POWER OF BEING SEEN". In a huge crowd, Jesus looks Zacchaeus into the eyes.

Many children in the streets of Cebu deal with very similar struggles like Zacchaeus. They too are looked down at and are pushed away by people, experience abuse and neglect. When children sleep on cartons on the sidewalk, it seems like they are unseen and overlooked by the people that pass by. This is why a team of CFAI goes into the streets every day, to bring one message to these children that are unseen and overlooked:

GOD SEES YOU!

He does not see your past, he does not see your mistakes, he does not see your wrongdoings, he sees YOU. This is also the message we bring to our children in our Nehemiah Homes and in the school as we give them a safe place to grow up and learn to be children again.

Jesus looked Zacchaeus in the eyes and called him by name. And the rest is history. Jesus spends UNDISTURBED quality time with Zacchaeus which changed his life completely. And this is our vision for every child in CFAI, that they will experience a personal encounter with God, the God who sees them. Because we know, one personal encounter with Jesus can change and transform lives. Through your partnership we can continue to bring this message into the streets of Cebu, to tell the children that God sees them.

Jenmar & Jomarie for example, are two brothers who were left behind by their parents when both parents ended up in prison because of drugs. The two boys can now experience that God sees them and even more, loves them. But read for yourself what God is doing through the ministry of CFAI.

Manuel Stumpf

EMBASSY VISIT

In April, we received a special invitation from the German ambassador in Manila. It was very special and very personal, there were about 20 people in total who were invited. Together with our 4 volunteers, Jonas and Manuel flew to Manila for 2 days. The ambassador, his wife and the key members of the ambassadors' staff attended the meeting. They wanted to thank us for our work and get to know us better. We were also able to talk about some of the things that are challenging for us as an organization and could also discuss possible partnerships for future projects. It was very interesting to meet the ambassador and his team in such a personal and uncomplicated way. And we are convinced that these are important contacts for the future.



INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY SCHOOL (IMS)

Last March, we praise God for another wonderful victory! Our IMS (International Ministry School) students, consisting of 2 Germans and 4 Filipinos, who have been enrolled in this curriculum for 6 months have finally graduated!

They faced different challenges or struggles in their everyday lives, but we have seen that within those 6 months in the ministry, they have learned a lot from their mentors, experiences and especially from the word of the Lord itself. It has strengthened them, made them mature and it also impacted their lives and brought them to another level or in a different perspective in life. We are so proud and happy that they have grown spiritually through this course. During the graduation the students shared their highlights from both, the three months Lecture Phase as well of the three months of Practical Outreaches.

Jenmar & Jomari

Jenmar, an 8-year-old boy, and Jomarie, who is 6 years old, are brothers who were very malnourished making them both look below 5yrs old. They live nearby a fish port and were found to be dirty while playing and roaming around the streets seeking for money and food. However, these two boys are very consistent in attending our feeding programs. Their mother was unemployed while their father worked at the fish port but both got arrested due to drug involvement. The father was released just last year in 2023 but he was arrested again last March 2024 for the same reason, leaving the children under the care of their grandparents. Even though the grandfather works in the fish port, his income is not enough to meet their daily needs. The children seemed to have lost hope about their future because of their current situation.



Since March 8, 2024, Jenmar and Jomarie have been living in our Nehemiah Boys Home. According to our House Parents, when they first came, they used to have a strong bad odor and dislike being bathed.

During their mealtime, they couldn't wait and wanted to eat right away. Whenever they see our staff pass by, they would not care. But after a few months, there have been a lot of improvements. Even if they still need to be monitored, they are already willing to be bathed. Before eating, they learned how to wait and pray first.



They also learned how to greet our staff good morning and "bless" which is a traditional greeting in the Philippines as a sign of respect to someone older than you. Although they are still adjusting to their new life and environment, we have seen that they are very happy and smile much more often than before. Join us in prayer for Jenmar and Jomarie as they adjust in their new home, and the journey of their healing from the life they had in the past.

NEWS FROM THE FARM



Almost three years ago, CFAI decided to purchase a small portion of Farmland in the northern part of the Island Cebu. Our houseparent couple, Brian & Annelyn live here with 10 boys from CFAI. The boys continue their schooling in the nearby High School, while they learn important life skills in farming and agriculture. And after almost three years, we are overwhelmed with the amazing development our boys underwent in these years. We see four very important elements for this amazing success:

- The love and care of the house parents.
- Teaching them biblical values creates the foundation for their growth.
- The privilege to go to school to learn and study shows the boys how important they are to us.

- And lastly the training and work on the farm give the boys and staff meaningful assignments during their free time which also has a Team-building effect as well.

At the same time, the produce of the farm helps CFAI to lower expenses for groceries. Their active involvement in the church helps them to translate experiences and skills from farming into their spiritual life and growth as the bible uses many pictures and examples from farming to explain the Kingdom of God in a deeper way. And beside the positive development of our boys, we are also amazed to see how God opened more doors for CFAI to reach out to more children in need.



NEW DEVELOPMENTS

In 2023 our team started a Feeding Program in the City Center near the Farm. Our staff conduct the feeding program together with our boys who help in preparing the food, as well as doing program and bible studies with the kids. We are shocked by the extreme poverty the children in this city experience, which shows us that we are in the right place where urgent help is needed. One day our staff encountered two children aged 2 years and 6 years old that were tied to a table with a rope on their feet, left behind while the mother was looking for garbage and food. We found out their father is in prison, and they are just sleeping in the streets. Another day the Department of Social Welfare and Development called us for help as there is a 14-year old boy that is held in a chicken cage because the mother is mentally ill and not able to take care of the boy so the grandparents hold him in a cage so that he does not do any foolishness.

The extreme poverty and circumstances of the children in this city has shocked our team and we know that we need to help. So, we are currently in talks with the government to expand our programs in this city. We also started negotiations and talked with a neighbor of our farm about the possibility to purchase additional property to build more place for children, continue to expand our farm operations, and go into poultry farming to become more self-sufficient in our operations. The property we are interested in is 3.6 hectares and would open the door to many possibilities for expansion for CFAI in the future.





SILA GRADUATES:

On January 24, 2024, I was officially recognized as a Marine Engineering graduate from the University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu-Mandaue. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout this journey, especially my Christ for Asia Family. Your unwavering support has been instrumental in my success, and I am deeply grateful to each one of you. I also want to acknowledge God, my Heavenly Father, in guiding me through the challenges I faced on this journey. Although the road was not easy, I persevered with God's grace. While I have reached this milestone, I recognize that there is still more ahead as I embark on my apprenticeship. I am excited for what the future holds knowing that God has great plans for me. Thank you all for your tireless efforts and support; your labor has not been in vain, and I will forever be grateful.

Justine Lee Sontousidad
Marine Engineering Graduate

I want to thank God for making things possible in my life since I could never have imagined being able to go to school and finish my studies. But now, I'm in my last months before I finish college and will be graduating in the Bachelor of Elementary Education in the University of Cebu Main Campus. I offer this success to God for He has always been my comfort and my source of strength every time I lose my hope and when I'm about to give up. I know that life after I graduate is not always cupcakes and rainbows, but I know for sure that God is always present, who's ready to be my comfort and guard me every time I face life's battles. All for His glory.

Shaina Jumao-as
Elementary Education Graduate

We are very happy that two of our college students have graduated this year! It all started with a simple dream, a simple desire not knowing whether it will come true or not. But God is amazing that despite the struggles they went through in the past, the circumstances they faced in their everyday lives, God answered their prayers. We rejoice in their achievements in life and are very proud of them.



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