



MUSTARD SEED DISCIPLESHIP VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

ACTION International Ministries, Philippines

Prayer Update: August 1, 2010

Greetings!

Can it really be August already?? I heard the first Christmas song on a TV advertisement last week. This is the earliest one yet. One month to go and the Christmas season begins.

Our power situation was cleared up 5 days after the typhoon blew through. We had off and on power outages during the days after the storm. But we are back on regular power and so far have not had any more problems.

The rain though continues. Most afternoons, some evenings and even some mornings. My kitties were caught outside this afternoon when the rain began. I had just opened the screen door but not called them yet when two furry bodies flew past me and into the house. It is a movie afternoon.

AT MUSTARD SEED...

Last Friday, three of our graduates from the last group finished their 6 months of On The Job training at two local sewing shops. They have done very well and the owner of each shop was very pleased with what the girls accomplished. We had a Celebration Lunch at the MS dorm last Thursday and presented each of the girls a Certificate of Completion. Each shared a short testimony of what God did in them while in the program and it was wonderful for our current students to hear their stories. The three will be applying for work this week or next.

On a sad note...last Wednesday morning the sister of one of our dorm moms called me, wanting to contact her sister. Their brother had just been taken to the hospital, unconscious. I contacted Iree quickly and within the hour she was on a bus headed back to Manila. The doctors did a CT scan and it was discovered that he had a ruptured blood vessel in his brain. JC never regained consciousness and died in the early Friday morning. We don't know all of the details yet. He was only 27 and left a wife and not quite one year old daughter. The family would appreciate your prayers.

This last Friday, we completed the first half of Term 2. We can't believe that 5 weeks have gone by already. There are 5 more weeks to go, then evaluation week again. The week following will be our Mid-program Break. A week off for students and staff to head home and rest before heading into Term 3. We will have a Staff and Student Hot Dog supper the Thursday night before they head home.

We have also had some shuffles in the last few weeks. Our long time Discipleship instructor, Leilani, stepped down from her position to concentrate on family concerns and her pastoring of a local church. She hopes to return to MS sometime in the future but only as God leads. Our new instructor, Pam Basilan, is a graduate of MS Batch 2 and also a recent graduate of the Philippine Bible Institute here in town. She has been doing a good job in her role as instructor. She would appreciate your prayers as she prepares and teaches our students three mornings a week.

Please continue to pray for the budget needs of Mustard Seed for 2010. We may need to make some difficult decisions in the near future. Thank you.

FOR ME...

My recovery from burn out is going very well. I sleep better at night and seem to be handling the stress load much better! My 61 year old knees are painful more days than not. I know that the rain affects the arthritis. But I still get around and still can drive the car. I praise God for this.

I am very grateful for the staff that I work with. With the help of my office assistant, Lorna, our financial records are up to date, thank you letters written, and filing done. It is a blessing. Because of her assistance, I have been able to concentrate on the expansion of our vocational department for Batch 6. I met last Friday with one of our staff ladies here at 2nd Mile who has been trained in Spa Therapy. We are hoping to offer this as our second vocational class in 2011. I am excited about this for our future students. Please pray that it will all come together for October 2011.

And, in March 2011, I will be coming home for furlough. I am not sure just what date I will be arriving but will keep you posted. I do hope to see many of you while I am home. My visa will be in place so that means that my passport won't be back in the Philippines to be stamped, which means that I can come to the US and visit friends there. I would appreciate your prayers as I begin to plan my time back in Canada.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of me and the ministry of Mustard Seed!

Blessings,

Prayer Update: July 15, 2010

Greetings!

It is morning and we head into our second day on generator power here at our campus. Tuesday night around 12:30 AM, Typhoon Basyang hit land and blasted through the country, with the eye of the typhoon tracking just north of where I live. The house was closed up, water was brought inside and I move the kitties litter box on the screen porch closer to the front door so the rain wouldn't get wet.

Around 2:30 AM, the power was lost. The wind howled in the trees and around the house. Rain came at us from all directions. The cats were unsettled but OK. Needless to say, none of us slept. Through the chaos of the storm, I sang over and over, "Thou art my hiding place...."

It was almost 3:30 AM, at the height of the fury, that I heard a loud clatter outside the bedroom window. I truly felt that the wind was lifting the metal roof off the beams. Carefully I opened the bedroom window and using my little flashlight, was greeted with the sight of leaves. I realized that one of the trees in my garden, a 20 foot tall bignay tree loaded with fruit, had come down. Because of the dark I did not know the extent of the damage.

When the skies lightened at 5:30, the wind was calmer and the rain was less. The storm had passed. Now to view the results.

The tree that fell at my house, did not fall on the roof. In fact, it fell neatly on the concrete patio. One branched dinged the edge of roof but nothing else. On the rest of the campus many branches fell, but no trees. Nothing fell on my car that was in the parking area. No broken windows or building damage. We weathered the storm well.

Damage in the surrounding neighborhood was also limited from what we have heard. Lots and lots of branches down, a lot with many banana trees was leveled. Roofs damaged. But no lives lost. We are truly thankful.

Most of Luzon is without power. I know that it will eventually return. We are grateful for the generator. We are hosting our yearly Fil Am Day tomorrow and the chicken for lunch for 100 people is in freezers and still frozen because of the generator. I brought most of what Mustard Seed had in the freezer of the dorm here to my house to keep frozen.

PRAY: that the power will be restored quickly, hopefully today.

PRAY: that our neighbors have weathered the storm as well.

MUSTARD SEED...

The girls are into their third week of term two and are suffering from colds and flu. Many have coughs and low grade fevers. We are keeping the clinic doctor busy!!

They have been busy sewing baby clothes this week for the family of one of our students. Her mom gave birth to twins last week after a difficult pregnancy. Both of the baby girls and the mother are doing well.

PRAY: that the mother will recover from the caesarian section she underwent to remove the babies.

Thank you for your prayers for all of us. What I reminded the girls yesterday morning, when I went to the dorm at 6 AM, Jesus is our peace and calm through any storm. God bless you today!!

Blessings,

Barbara Burchert

Program Director, Mustard Seed

If you would like to give you can make checks payable to Action International Ministries, P. O. Box 398 Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0398 or 3015 A 21st Street NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 7T1, Canada. Note that your check is for support of Barbara Burchert.