

# **ACTION** *Table in the Wilderness* Philippines *Carl & Lisa Loewen*

**July 16, 2009**

Our family has been here at Second Mile for almost one month, but somehow it feels like we never left. Of course there are adjustments to make, but it does feel like we are back 'home' again. It feels like we have moved from a very private life in Canada (we figured out we probably had ten unexpected visitors in our year at home), to a public life living in community with lots of neighbors, and with people dropping by all the time selling us fruit, veggies, snacks etc. Pray that we would be a good example to those around us – even though we are a very normal family of four boys with some ups and downs!

We arrived back and were so blessed to see our kitchen that had been rebuilt by Gary and Eric while we were gone, as well as a new coat of paint on the whole place – so it feels bright and clean again.



It has been great to see a number of friends – Adrian and Fleur Boyle and their four kids from the UK were with us for a weekend and it was good to reconnect and get to know their kids. Adrian was on ACTION's Global Challenge outreach team in the early 90's with Carl, and has not been back to the Philippines since then! Their family is travelling around and visiting ministries and friends. While Adrian was here, we hosted a reunion for some of the other Global Challenge teammates – Rosalie (& husband Bernie), and Laloy (w/ wife Rellie). Both of these Filipino couples have been serving God faithfully over the past 16 years after they finished Global Challenge, so that was very encouraging for me and Lisa.

Home schooling started on Monday – I think the boys look quite studious in front of the bookshelf! Pray for Lisa as she has lots of challenges teaching three different boys at three different levels. They were all quite excited to finally start. Our classroom/office was also expanded while we were on furlough, so the space fits a bit better with its purpose.



As I settled back into ministry at Honest Hands, Jacob and Isaiah were able to accompany me on a few trips to visit prospective students. Jacob was quite impressed with the dove someone gave him at the Kanlungan Farm, but somehow he couldn't bring it home!



Most ministry trips with our former students end up at Jollibee, the Filipino equivalent of McDonalds. In the picture below are two grads (Lester & Andrew) of Honest Hands and Working Hands who are now working hard at a furniture factory in Manila. We dropped by to see where they were working, and had a meal with them. I noticed a remarkable increase in their self confidence and focus on working hard. They are still active in a church near the factory, so that was encouraging as well.



After following up and checking out a number of possible students we decided on ten young men for the long term program. Honest Hands Batch #7 started on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, and things are going well. We had a good orientation, and I am starting to get to know the students. This time round I feel a little bit 'out of the loop' as I was not here for the camps, and don't really know the students very well yet. Melchor and Lino have done a great job with the camps and recruitment, so we could move ahead confidently and start the program quite quickly. This group of guys is a bit older than our last few batches, with a number of 19 and 20 year old guys. Pray for them as they adjust to the program and start to grow stronger in their faith in Christ – especially as they are realizing a number of things that need to change in their personal lives as they follow Christ – purity, addictions and a renewed vision for personal devotions, Bible study, worship, and service in their local church.



Honest Hands has been blessed with a good staff for Batch #7 – in the back starting at the left – Mark is our part time social worker, Melchor is the discipleship & tutorial teacher, Lino is the houseparent and also helps with teaching Bible sessions, I am the sweaty white guy who helps with admin, teaching, and leadership, in the front is Renz, who will be our junior staff trainee for this batch. God has blessed us with a unique collection of gifts and interests, so it will be interesting to see what happens over the next few months as our team continues to develop and bond.



Malachi enjoying a donut! What could be better than a GoNuts donut (only in the Philippines?).



We appreciate your prayers over the next month as we continue to serve at Honest Hands.

Lisa's sisters Heidi & Bonita (w/ husband Jason & three kids) are coming out for a visit this coming weekend, and we are hoping to make a trip up to Bagabag where the Giesbrecht family served for ten years. It is very rainy and windy these days, so pray for good weather as we travel, and of course lots of fun and fellowship with family.

Your prayers are very much appreciated as it feels like life and ministry are on fast forward – full speed ahead! This causes us to rely fully on God for strength, wisdom and courage each day.

**Carl & Lisa**

*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 the Loewens.*