

UPDATE LETTER

AUGUST 2017, PHILIPPINES



Naldina Palizari, together with the children she and her group of sponsors are supporting, during the week of our 20th anniversary celebration in February.

It was a sunny day and as part of their usual Saturday activities, our seminarians headed to the surrounding communities to give catechism, distribute old clothes and bring candy to the children. It was 1997.

How time flies! That simple act of love has grown into something greater than we even imagined. We never thought of starting something like this, like the Pag-asa Social Center that it is now. We just wanted to love: to love our neighbors, and to bring the love of Jesus to them.

Twenty years is a milestone we never thought we would reach but because of your immense generosity, we have come this far. Even the warmest, most sincere thank you is not enough to show how grateful we are to you for helping us turn 20. To commemorate this anniversary, we invited some of you to reminisce how we began, to witness what we have become, and to visualize what we want to achieve in the next 20 years.

Through songs, dances and skits, we have showed that not everything went smoothly for Pag-asa all these years; it was like a roller coaster ride. We are operating only by faith and naturally everything, every suffering and every year is entrusted to God. Each success and good news is likewise offered to Him.

Pag-asa Social Center is a social expression of the Focolare Movement, and like Chiara Lubich (foundress of the Work of Mary/Focolare Movement), we entrust the needs of our less privileged beneficiaries to God, and we do our part by putting together what we have (including you, our dear friends and supporters).

Victoria Deslarzes: "I spent 200 days here in Tagaytay, Philippines. I came to work in a social center, to help families in need but this experience helped me more than I helped them. It completely changes me and I'm forever grateful for everyone I've met there. You brought me love, hope, faith, happiness and I will never forget anything about these amazing three months and a half. To all of you, salamat po. Mahal ko kayo."

While others have to take one or two part-time jobs to support their education, or have to stop schooling to support their family, Marvin is one of those lucky kids who was supported by a selfless

sponsor for 17 years. When he entered college, we gave him additional sponsors to support his tuition.

Despite the positive number of children we are feeding and helping to graduate, the statistics still show negative numbers.

According to figures from the Department of Education and the National Statistical Coordination Board in the Philippines, 1 in 6 Filipino kids will not attend school. Furthermore, only 7 out of 10 kids will complete elementary school. Of those 7 kids, only 4 will complete high school, and of those 4, only 1 will proceed onto university. The main reason for this is poverty because most families cannot afford to provide basic education for their children. Because of your contributions and donations, you are helping us increase the number of those who proceed onto and graduate from university. Thank you so much! Together with you, we are bringing children closer to their dreams.

The Philippine economy has grown already in the past 10 years, however, malnutrition of children from 4 to 10 years old has remained. There are still 3 out of 10 Filipino kids who are malnourished. As if it's not enough, our country's chronic malnutrition rate among children

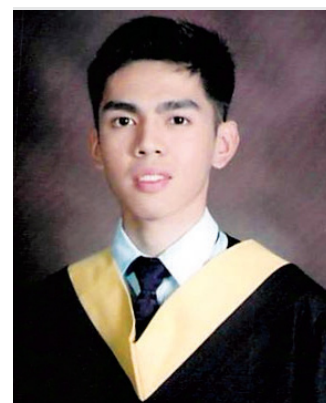
aged 0-2 has reached the highest percentage in 10 years* and it is presenting irreversible effects on their health, like stunted growth and wasting. From another perspective, malnutrition also cripples our economy to a certain extent, preventing a bright future for these children. Tagaytay City, in particular, has a high level of malnutrition severity. (*according to a recent survey by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).)

Dear friends, we have already reached 20 years and with your continuous support, we can make the negative numbers even smaller.

We are very much aware of the ongoing crisis in Europe, and we are not asking for more funds. What we suggest is that perhaps you can tell your friends about Pag-asa. If they find it difficult to give an annual quota, they can opt to donate smaller quota through our SUPPORT OF A PROJECT program. Your contribution will be spread throughout all the programs of Pag-asa instead of a single program like the Support at A Distance program. However, you can also specify if you want your money to be used in specific programs like FEEDING PROGRAM, HOUSING PROGRAM, and LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM.



(L) Dr. Christopher Trouw, with Dr. Philippe Caby, and Annemarie Messmann distributing pancake they prepared during the Dental/Medical Mission organized during the 20th anniversary week of Pag-asa. (R) Marvin Elizar, one of our college scholars who finished Bachelor of Science in Accountancy.





Dr. Diether Schenkel and Agnes Schenkel and her group, together with Pag-asa staff, after the Dental/Medical Mission organized for the 20th anniversary week of Pag-asa.



Dr. Christopher Trouw, with Dr. Philippe Caby, and Annemarie Messmann, proudly wearing our haPag catering services apron.

BRACELET MAKING

In January, we started Bracelet Making as part of the growing livelihood programs in our cooperative, thereby providing a source of income to 12 mothers from an impoverished area. The materials are bought from a supplier as a start-up but we are looking to make this livelihood program more meaningful by using upcycled materials, not only to help the environment but also to enhance the creativity of our members. You can find our bracelets on our facebook page (www.facebook.com/pagasasocialcenterfoundation), where we have links on how to order locally and abroad. We also customize bracelets for your company or event giveaways.

BAKERY

Our bakery is now in full operation providing freshly baked goodies every day. Pan de sal is freshly baked in the morning while the rest of the breads are baked in the afternoon.

Thanks to the following sponsors who contributed a one-time donation to Pag-Asa Social Center from late November 2016 to early May 2017!

Dr. Diether Schenkel and Agnes Schenkel
The Rotary Club of Pabpenburg Germany
World Day of Prayer – Slovenia c/o Tanja Povsna
Helmut and Brigitte Hirschberg
Rief Johannes

Giuseppe & Graziella Fragale
Fabio Marchetti
Savino & Rosa Sorrenti
Maset Enrico
Dr. Renzo Beltramin
Checchin Emanuele
Gnes Catia
Fioretti Edoardo
Tomasella Sergio
Checchin Fernando
Eleuteri Fabiana
Carlesso Francesco and Vanna
Djurdjevic Rafael
Pitton Stefano
Borsoi Cecilia
Lizza Annalisa
Alma Tavelli

...and also for those who prefer to remain anonymous.

Welcome to these new sponsors who gave their support from late November 2016 to early May 2017!

José Ramón Castillo Cuadrado
José Moles Cerezomaria
Roberta Corona & colleagues
Mrs. Soon Hee Jeong
Sorah & Juna Kim
Tim & Stefanie Koke
Mrs. Solar Lee
Eric & Lut Mattern
Josef & Anne Messmann
Infante & Natalia Pacheco

Telmo & Maite Portela
Fraziano Giulia, Sergio, and Leonardo
Luia Puellen

Your donations and contributions went to the education, health, livelihood, and skills programs of the children and families you are supporting.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SUPPORT?

What matters to us is not how much you give, but how you give your support. Write to us, and to the children you are sponsoring. Your feedback is very important to us.

Dear friends, there have been several terrorism-related incidents since the beginning of 2017, and the Philippines was not spared. It has worsened our problem with education and malnutrition, among many others. Despite all that, we try to see the good things each season brings and continue to make a difference by giving and sharing. Many summers have passed, and whether you started earlier or later with us, you have shared your life to Pag-asa in these 20 years, and we would like to THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts.

Enjoy your summer!!!

Your Pag-asa family



Dr. Thomas Mrosk and son Friedrich Mrosk during the Dental/Medical Mission organized for the 20th anniversary week of Pag-asa.



The 20th Anniversary Dinner and Presentation Night, with foreign and local supporters and persons linked to Pag-Asa.