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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

OUTLOOK

VOLUME 93 | NUMBER 02 | 2007

**Publishing
 Ministry
 Congress
 Makes
 History**

PHILIPPINES



'Made in the Philippines' Programs Premier on Hope Channel in October

I have never seen people, until lately, working as a team under so much pressure and time constraint doing 147 'half hour' episodes in 22 days! That was the Hope Philippines Project team whose members came from all over the country and converged between June 11 and July 5 at the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

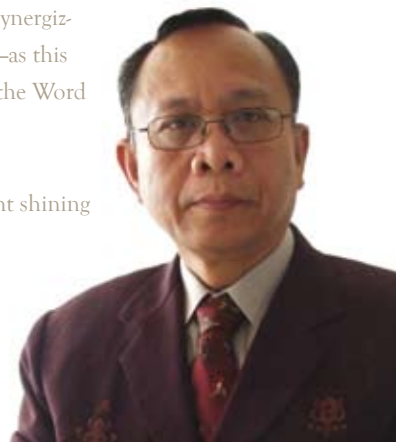
Executive Producer Kandus Thorp, vice president for International Production of Hope Channel, and Program Director Andrew Hunt from Australia, were pleasantly surprised at the persistent commitment of participants during this remarkably short time to surpass the projected 135 programs!

There were many nights when taping ended past midnight, but no one complained; in fact, all were of high spirits as they boisterously laughed at each other's mistakes when tiredness and sleepiness overtook them. I count it a very rare opportunity to work with people who left their jobs—some on vacation without pay while others resigned from work just to be part of this historic event for Hope Channel in the Philippines. I know there have been hangovers—some physical—like me who visited my doctor a couple of times; on mental—I can't yet compose within many hours a simple article like this one; on social and emotional—for those who have developed strong bonding during those days and nights of rigorous production events. I am also sure our scriptwriters, researchers, hosts, presenters—for gospel, health, musical and youth programs—including guests, look back at these events as unbelievably doable considering time constraints. But we did it.

We finally produced television programs 'Made in the Philippines,' highlighting Philippine artwork, set designs, costumes, music, and even accents! These will premiere on our screens at Hope Channel starting October 1 through the first quarter of 2008 and replays afterward. This early, we look at ways to produce 150 episodes or more each year. This needs big financial backups—not necessarily solely from the church organizations' coffer but through contributions of church members and friends.

We also seriously consider establishing an Adventist broadcasting organization that will oversee media programs in the Philippines—both in radio and television. Through these we can harness material and human resources toward achieving the goals of the "Tell the World" program of the church. We look at synergizing all broadcast media—whether owned and operated by the church or by lay members—as this would consolidate our efforts toward accomplishing the Lord's command of preaching the Word unto all ends of the earth.

Certainly, we are seeing the fulfillment of the vision of Ellen G White: "I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages...and God's word was proclaimed."



DR. JONATHAN C. CATOLICO

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Church Welcomes Benefactor

ARMAND D. ARDANAS/AND

The Caluya District in the island of Antique in central Philippines warmly welcomed its benefactor, Alex P. Jayme, who has been supporting projects on this island. Jayme came to visit the place recently with Dr. and Mrs. Paoring Ragui from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), Armand and Dr. Gay Ardanas and their daughter, Landa Gayle. Pastor Owen Emen, pastor of the district, hopped with them to the island.

Jayme, a VP for finance at Sconza Candy Company in Oakland, California, and who serves as one of the elders of the San Francisco Central Adventist Church, expressed happiness and gratitude to God to see the projects he has been helping to construct—a church in Sibay Island and a school in Semirara Island. His scholars at Mountain View College, many of whom already graduated, were also happy to know that he was coming to the Philippines.

In November this year, Jayme and his team will conduct an evangelistic meeting in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Afterward, he will visit Mountain View College and the SULADS high school in the mountains of Bukidnon in southern Philippines.



Dr. and Mrs. Paoring Ragui, Alex Jayme and the rest of the brethren at the newly built Adventist Church in Antique, Central Philippines.

Mother's Love

by Nyar Moo as translated by Ken Suanzanang

My mother's name is Rose. She is five feet and three inches tall. Her complexion is fair. She is 57 years old but still healthy and energetic. Her smile is what a cup of energy drink does for me.

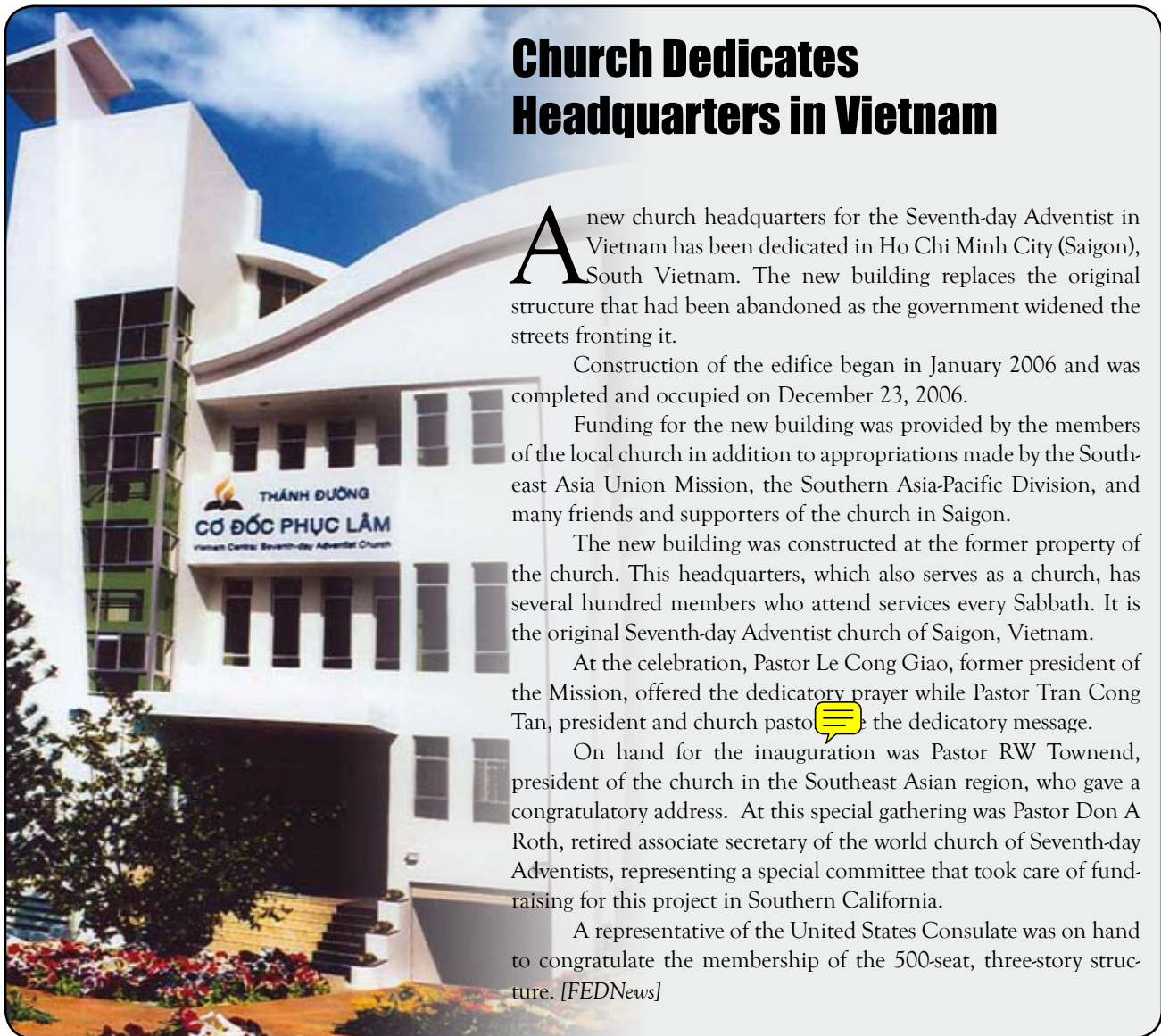
She is the most admirable person in my life. She always counsels her children to be wise and to live religiously and morally. She leads out in the morning and evening worships and participates enthusiastically at Dorcas Society activities where she extends help to whoever is in need.*

Aside from busying herself with social activities she never neglects her household obligations. She fulfills each of her children's needs. When I am downhearted she gives me comfort. She has a ready counsel when I ask her of some decisions I make in life. She is indeed my intimate friend!

My mother is whom all her children depend upon – the safest place of abode like chicks gathered under the warmth of mother hen's wings. Mother's love is immense.

Yet there is a greater love than mother's love. No one on earth can comprehend that love except those who first experience what mother's love is. And that love surpasses all love of human understanding. That love comes from the source of all love as the prophet John lavishly described, "God is love."

*Dorcas Society is a church organization where women come together to make goods available for the needy. This was derived from the Bible's philanthropist named Dorcas.



Church Dedicates Headquarters in Vietnam

A new church headquarters for the Seventh-day Adventist in Vietnam has been dedicated in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), South Vietnam. The new building replaces the original structure that had been abandoned as the government widened the streets fronting it.

Construction of the edifice began in January 2006 and was completed and occupied on December 23, 2006.

Funding for the new building was provided by the members of the local church in addition to appropriations made by the Southeast Asia Union Mission, the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, and many friends and supporters of the church in Saigon.

The new building was constructed at the former property of the church. This headquarters, which also serves as a church, has several hundred members who attend services every Sabbath. It is the original Seventh-day Adventist church of Saigon, Vietnam.

At the celebration, Pastor Le Cong Giao, former president of the Mission, offered the dedicatory prayer while Pastor Tran Cong Tan, president and church pastor, delivered the dedicatory message.

On hand for the inauguration was Pastor RW Townend, president of the church in the Southeast Asian region, who gave a congratulatory address. At this special gathering was Pastor Don A Roth, retired associate secretary of the world church of Seventh-day Adventists, representing a special committee that took care of fund-raising for this project in Southern California.

A representative of the United States Consulate was on hand to congratulate the membership of the 500-seat, three-story structure. [FEDNews]

Week of Prayer—

Renews Hearts to Truth

The young community including many teens in Mirpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh, was seen to respond both by attending and leading out at the Adventist Youth Week of Prayer. The World Church prepared timely messages and set apart the week starting from March 17 through 24. This spiritual exercise afforded the youth around the world to receive meaningful messages.

Like many other Adventist churches in Bangladesh, the Church at the headquarters also observed this special week. Taking the song into their hearts - “Create in Me a Clean Heart, Oh, God that I might Serve You” (including the Bangla translation), the audience feasted on this nutritious spiritual menu. Young people and teens who presented the messages translated the English material into Bangla before they preached it. “Indeed, among our youth are preachers who deliver messages so clearly that touch

hearts of worshippers,” said church leaders.

Remembering this year as the “Year of Renewal,” the youth designed beautiful, hand-made logos of the Adventist Youth Ministries Department and placed them at the inner wall of the church. “Amid the prevailing culture of corruption around the world, Bangladesh included, our Adventist youth desire to stand up and take a step towards lifting up the banners of the truth,” leaders concluded. [Robert Sircar/ AND]

Church Starts Regular Leadership Training of Lay Leaders

A regular training program, envisioned by the Peninsular Malaysia Mission (PEM) and designed to equip lay leaders with various skills of church leadership, was started March 25.

For several years, the International Institute of Christian Ministries (IICM) had been conducting these courses in Malaysia at training camps. But the 23rd triennial session of PEM, January 16-19, 2006, officially voted to constitute a regular program under the Personal Ministries (PM) Department in cooperation with the Education and Youth Departments of the Church, thus creating the Peninsular Malaysia Mission Institute of Christian Ministries (PEMICM). This mandate took to tasks the above three departments to structure the implementing guidelines of the said program.

The PM Department ~~would~~ take lead in the implementation of the Institute, hence, Pastor Matthew Mambu, PM director, was appointed chairman of the Institute, with Pastor James Edward, youth director, as the secretary, while Pastor George John, education director, ~~would~~ assist in curriculum planning and other necessary arrangements.

While the turnout of the extended registration deadline of February 28 was not encouraging, the efforts of leaders to sell the program resulted to 120 registrants by March 15, which even grew when classes were formally launched on March 25, bringing the total enrolment to 136 at its four training centers.

At the Penang Center, two classes on Small Group Ministries (CR102) were conducted. Pastor Tan Meng Chen, instructor for the Chinese class with 17 students; and Pastor Terrance Sim, for English class had 18.

Ipoh Center had also two classes, offering a course (CR104) on How to Teach Basic Adventist Doctrines. The English Class was conducted by Pastor Matthew Mambu with 13 students, while the Tamil Class done by

Pastor James with six students.

At the Klang Valley Center, the course (CR102) on Principles of Personal Christian Witness were conducted in three different locations: Mission Conference Room- Pastor George John had 19 students in English Class; Sungai Way Indian Church- Pastor David Kumar had 25 from the Indian Churches; while at Puchong Chinese Church- Pastor Ngo Kim Chai had eight students.

Classes on Spiritual Gifts: Keys to Ministry (CR101) were also held at the Johor Baru Center. The Chinese Class was conducted by Pastor Leong Fai at the Skudai Chinese church with 20 students; while Pastor Samuel Money conducted the Malay Language Class of 10 students.

This year's courses were core subjects under six areas of studies or specialties, such as Specialty 1: Local Church Leadership; Specialty 2: Personal Evangelism (Lay Bible Instructor); Specialty 3: Public Evangelism (Lay Preacher Certification); Specialty 4: Adult Religious Education (Small Group Leadership); Specialty 5: Youth and Young Adult Religious Education ; and Specialty 6: Children's Religious Education

There are roughly 10 to 13 courses in each area. Each course takes about 4-6 hours of class instruction. Just like educational institute, students are given tests, quizzes and examinations. Some may be required to turn in assignments, class projects, project papers, reading reports, and others.

PEM plans to offer 5-7 courses a year at each teaching center, thus each student may complete an area of study within two or more years. This plan would lead to January 2009 graduation during the 24th Triennial Session of PEM.

Seminar Keeps Treasurers Updated on Financial Management

A team of six financial specialists from the headquarters of the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD) and Adventist Risk Management Inc., England, conducted a three-day treasurers' seminar at the headquarters of the Adventist Church in Bangladesh (BAUM), June 4-6.

Aimed at enhancing the skills of the treasurers in Bangladesh, the seminar gathered together 20 participants, who met at the computer laboratory of the school located at the compound of BAUM.

The team consisted of Keith Heinrich, treasurer of SSD, who spoke on Financial Stability and Financial Management; Sergie Ferrer, SSD undertreasurer, on Defined Contribution Plan, Retirement Contribution Plan and Investments; Moldy Mambu, associate treasurer, SSD, on Local Church Treasurer and Property Insurance; Gay Tanamal, controller, on Cash Flow and Internal Control.

Phidee Tagalog, SunPlus specialist, presented in two sessions a module on SunPlus, and delved on the versatility of the program in managing the financial records of the institution.

Mervyn Leceister, a representative of Adventist Risk Management Inc., England,

spoke on General Liabilities/Executive Insurance in one of his sessions and on Global Life/AD&D (Accidental Death & Disability) at another. Sweetie Ritchil, BAUM treasurer, spoke on In-House Items.

Toward the end of the seminar, the treasury department of the church in Bangladesh gave a token of appreciation to field treasurers who were up-to-date in submitting reconciliation statements, retirement contributions, tithes & offerings to the church headquarters.

An observer likened the seminar to a “flowing stream that enabled the participants to draw water from it, making their field grow much fruit for the Lord’s kingdom.” [Robert Sircar]



Cell Group Meeting— Best Way for Outreach

“Small Group meetings prove versatile in enhancing interest of spiritual matters of people who join them,” said implementers of this cell group activity. In Jakarta, a cell group has been in existence for a year at the home of Jannus Hutapea, a prominent church member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From these meetings, many people had received Jesus as their Savior through the service. And currently, 20 non-members of the church attend the meetings regularly.

During this special cell group meeting on Tuesday, May 5, officers of the church in west Indonesia (WIUM) and in south Sumatra (SSM) together with Sergie Ferrer, undertreasurer of the church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, accompanied Pastor Claude Sabot from the world church who was in the country for the mid-year meeting of WIUM.

After a special dinner, the program started with praising God through songs followed by Pastor Abdon Nadeak’s prayer. Jannus Hutapea, the host, introduced the guests and cell group members to each other and presented a topic on the Sabbath truth. “During Jesus’ time nobody questioned the Sabbath as of today, only after Jesus ascended to heaven that many people shifted from His teachings and chose Sunday as their day of rest making it a holy day.” Hutapea also emphasized that the Bible never recorded any change on the day of worship. He concluded his lecture from a Bible text, “... Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath” (Matthew 12:12). Pastor Claude Sabot ended the night meeting with a prayer and later. [WIUM Press Release]

Nine hundred and fifty-seven participants attended the Ministerial and Shepherdess Council organized by the Adventist Church for west Indonesia (WIUM) held at the Indonesia Adventist University (UNAI) in Bandung, Indonesia, June 11-14.

The participants represented the church headquarters in north, south, and central Sumatra; east, west, and central Java; Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara; and institutions such as Surya Nusantara Adventist College, Indonesia Publishing House, Bandung Adventist Hospital, Medan Adventist Hospital and the host, Indonesia Adventist University.

Council Addresses Needs of Ministers and Wives

Most of the participants stayed at UNAI dormitories. This arrangement provided opportunities for reminiscing memories of their college life on campus.

Pastor Johnny Lubis, WIUM president, opened the program with a spiritual challenge to all ministers and wives. He exhorted his audience to be more like Jesus, as conveyed by the theme of the council. The first topic discussed was “Core Ministerial Leadership” by Anthony Kent, associate secretary of the Ministerial Association at the Seventh-day Adventist world church.

The pastors were separated from their wives for the seminars designed for each group.

A team of presenters discussed various topics that helped pastors and wives cope with their roles and responsibilities.

As part of the first day’s program, Dr. Israel Andoy, chair of Theology Department of the Adventist University of the Philippines, talked on **The Meaning of Discipleship and Church Administration.** Pastor Houtman Sinaga, ministerial secretary for the church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD), presented the topic **Closing the Back Door,** while Dr. Tagor Tambunan, head of the Cancer Surgery Department of Darmas Hospital in Bandung, dealt on **Continuing the Inheritance of Health.**

At the Student Center, the shepherdesses (*ministers’ wives*) were led into discussion as Pastor Sinaga talked on **A Pastor Speaks to Pastors’ Wives.** Following this the delegates from the field gave their testimonies on how they help their husbands reach the objectives of the church program of ‘Tell the World.’

On the second day, both groups—pastors and their wives attended the morning devotional presented by Dr. Ed-

ison Panjaitan at the university chapel. “It is heartwarming to see husbands and wives love and care of each other as this was what Jesus wants to see them. It is a picture of unity in the Godhead,” said Dr Panjaitan.

Also, Pastor Kent presented *The Pastor’s Spiritual Journey*, and Servant Leadership Skills. Dr. Andoy discussed the importance of *Evangelizing the Elite in the Community* while Pastor Sinaga, spoke on *The Pastor and the Conflicts within the Local Church.*

Helen Gulfan, SSD

Shepherdess International coordinator, nurtured the participants’ spirits with thoughts on “Team Ministry.” She demonstrated ways on how a shepherdess can partner with her husband in the work of evangelism.

On the third day’s devotional, Dr. Prema Gaikwad, professor at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), spoke on **Live a Balanced Life.** This balance is reflected on six areas—spiritual, health, mental, social, emotional, and financial.

During the first session of the morning, the husband-pastors spent the moments with Pastor Andoy as the topic “Training Disciples” was presented, while the Shepherdesses listened to Helen Gulfan talk on “The Pastor’s Wife and Seasoned Leadership.”

Combined, the delegates were led into the realm of health-



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Youth Ministry in south Philippines Holds Witnessing-Leadership Seminar


The Youth Ministry of South Philippine Union Conference conducted a Youth Witnessing and Leadership Training on April 29 to May 20, in Zamboanga City, under Southwestern Mindanao Attached Field (SWAF).

The training aimed at equipping the youth on church leadership and involving them in the soul-winning program of the church. Fifty-three youth, most of whom were juniors, attended the meeting. Participants, according to observers, did excellent performance in home visitation, homiletics and public evangelism.

On April 6-12, the participants formed themselves into six groups for the actual public evangelism, enabling them to have hands-on experience in gospel presentation.

Also, on May 15, the youth of Zamboanga City joined the Youth Ministries Centennial Celebration. The celebration started with a "clean-up drive" in the heart of Zamboanga City. More than 70 youth participated in the drive held from 6:00-10:30 a.m., and assisted by the KBP Zamboanga City Chapter and Zamboanga City Press Club. Two vehicles transported all the garbage to the dumping site.

In the afternoon, after a short ceremony, the youth planted mango trees near San Roque Church,

one of the churches in the city. Prayers were offered before planting trees, after which the participants were asked to write their names on a piece of paper and place them inside an empty bottle of mineral water  which would be buried adjacent to the trees which were planted.

During the ceremony, Pastor Jobbie Yabut, SSD Youth director, challenged the youth to be faithful and expressed his hope to celebrating the next 100 years of the youth ministry in heaven. After his short message, the youth sang "There's another task to do, there's a battle to renew." Dr. Josue Benito, Youth director of SWMAF, closed the meeting with a prayer.

Publishing Ministry Congress Makes History

“This is a new milestone in the publishing ministry’s history,” said Vivencio R Bermudez, publishing ministries director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD), referring to the first Asia-Pacific Literature Evangelist Congress, April 25-28 held at the Ambassadors Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. Close to 900 delegates from 23 countries convened for this four-day congress.

This Asian congress brought in 130 participants from the northern Asia-Pacific region with headquarters in Seoul, Korea; 107 from the South Pacific in Australia, five from Southern Asia in India, and 624 from SSD. There were five guests from the Seventh-day Adventist world church (GC), and 11 from Africa.

Its theme: “Keeping the Vision Alive” was given emphasis in the congress. A parade of 23 nations highlighted the grand opening. Pastor Orville Parchment, assistant to the GC President, gave the keynote address and the message on Sabbath. The three regions’ presidents spoke at the devotional sessions. Pastor Howard Faigao, world publishing director, took the pulpit on Friday night with his vespers message.

During the congress, each region was given a slot to present testimonies and reports of the publishing warriors while shows depicting cultures were presented at every evening with participants donning their country costumes. Top literature evangelists were given awards in recognition of their years of service and top performance in sales and soul-winning. It was concluded by a commitment service on Sabbath afternoon.

“We are returning to the Lord the honor and glory for the success of this congress!” concluded Pastor Vermudez. [AND Staff]



Church Leaders Gain New Experience in Congress

“In His Footsteps,” became the focus of discussions and presentations during the Church Leaders’ Congress held at Mountain View College in Valencia City, Bukidnon, southern Philippines, April 10-14. It was attended by 5,000 participants that ballooned to more than 20,000 during the Sabbath (Saturday) services.

“For years we have been conducting seminars for Sabbath School leaders, youth leaders, and other church leaders but never for elders. This time, the church elders were targets for this seminar that was designed primarily for them,” said Pastor Leonardo L. Asoy,

former Ministerial director for the Adventist Church in southern Philippines (SPUC) and now Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD).

“Leadership becomes effective when leaders are transformed into the character of Jesus, and only when we are filled by the Holy Spirit,” rejoined Pastor Carlos N. Aganeo, SPUC ministerial secretary.

Among the guest presenters were Dr Clifford Jones, professor of Christian Ministry at Andrews University Theological Seminary; Dr Fredrick Russel, church pastor from Maryland, USA; Dr Peter Prime, associate

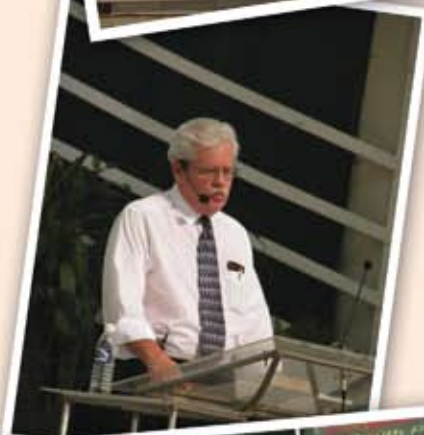
ministerial secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist world church; Dr Dennis Smith, author of books on Holy Spirit; Pastor Houtman Sinaga, ministerial secretary; Pastor Gary Rustad, associate executive secretary; and Pastor Leonardo L Asoy, all of SSD.

“These presentations have given us newer perspectives in church leadership,” participants were heard to comment.

Dr. Dennis Smith, one of the presenters and author of **Baptism of the Holy Spirit** and six other books, emphasized that “there is nothing we cannot accomplish with the Holy Spirit.” He added that “the reason why man is powerless and tired is that he does the work in his own hand and he spends so much time and effort in the work that is not his’.”

Smith, who did altar calls after presenting each topic, initiated participants to write their personal request on paper and dropped them on bins as he led out in a special prayer. “We feel God’s answer to our requests every time the prayer was offered,” said Congress participants. “And we always look forward to this event at every session.”

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Were You That Neighbor?

Do we know our neighbors? Do they know us? Normally, if we have established good relations with those who live in the vicinity of our home, it is very likely we know each other—the nature of each other’s work, the number of family members, the names of children, and so on. It is also possible that we do not know each other even if we share the same roof for many months or even years. Why? Is it because we live as individualists? Perhaps. But living in a community demands one basic thing—relationship. And relationship certainly does not develop overnight. It should go beyond the “hi!” and other casual greetings. It must be intentioned—spending a bit of our busy time and giving out of our precious aloft-ness with the one at the other door. Only then can neighbors know each others’ work, hobby, beliefs, family details, and the like.

Man is a social being and, as such, friendship with someone enhances that societal need. Neighbors and friends are an important part of one’s life. As Adventist Christians, how is it with you being a neighbor to someone with those who do not share the same religious faith as yours?

After two separate baptism ceremonies following a public meeting in Surabaya and Jakarta, Indonesia, several newly baptized members gave their testimony of how their transformation took place that eventually led into their accepting Christ’s religion and becoming members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Many of these transformations root back to acquaintances with an Adventist neighbor. “Attending a public preaching is just the icing on the cake,” said many of them. The basis of their attraction and motivation started a long time, sometimes years before; and it began with knowing an Adventist neighbor or an Adventist friend. “The outlook of an Adventist is different from that of others. Adventists are unique,” rejoined others “and this led us to seek why they were so.”

This friendship, displayed by their Adventist friends, was marked with kindness, openness and sincerity, and led them to a changed life. Following are testimonies they gave of their Adventist friends:

“We noticed that our Adventist neighbors love

“One striking lifestyle that draw us near to Adventist belief was that they do not disagree over a bottle of beer—they value their good relationship just as they value their health.”

their God more than anything else. Even if their ‘strange’ belief of a day of worship—that is Saturday—contradicts with ours, we thought that would not matter as long as we too can experience the joy that they live with.”

“One striking lifestyle that draw us near to Adventist belief was that they do not disagree over a bottle of beer—they value their good relationship just as they value their health.”

“Their sense of community services embedded in their belief had changed many villages into a happy sharing, giving, and sacrificing community.”

A lot more of these “words in due season” have bolstered our spirits being recipient of praises.

But my question is, “Were you, indeed, that neighbor? Were you that happy, warm, amiable, kind, peace-loving, smiling human being that they described? Were you that neighbor whose countenance looks the same in the face of problems and disasters besetting neighborhood?”

We can add to the already long list of good things neighbors say about Adventists. Some of these are true; others may be exaggerated, but importantly, your picture of yourself should just be a reflection of Jesus’ lifestyle or else you will begin to experience stress just to please others, and at the end of the day you will get worn out.

Doing good deeds is never a stressful activity—it should be a by-product of that Christianity in us.

Right Attitude, A Key to Pastors’ Happiness and Success



“Pastor’s Attitudes” was the theme of the week as Pastor Claude Sabot, associate secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church, led pastors and church workers of the Adventist Church in west Indonesia (WIUM) to a Week of Prayer, June 4-8. It was also timed for officers of the field, hospital and learning institutions for the mid-year meetings.

“This Week of Prayer is special,” said Pastor Johnny Lubis, WIUM president, “not only because our speaker comes from the headquarters of the world church, but his expertise on church leadership will lead all of us into increasing our grasp of what spiritual qualities mean to leaders in this part of the world field.”

“Pastor Sabot has a very strong connection with us,” said an introduction of him. “He hails from Belgium but married a lady from Holland with Indonesian roots. Mrs Anita Sabot was born in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and grew up in Surabaya, until she moved to the Netherlands at age 17. They are blessed with three children, two daughters-in-law and three grandchildren.

Pastor Sabot was translated into Bahas by Dr. Edison Panjaitan. Talking about “Today Matters” and the “Big Picture,” he said that “nowadays many people are over exaggerating yesterday, and they are always talking about their achievements but never plan to start a new thing today.” Pastor Sabot emphasized that the children of God should be proactive and not reactive.

“Proactive persons focus on today, pay now for tomorrow and not pay now for yesterday. And the children of God should have a big picture in life, in order for them to redirect their mind from the influences of this sinful world.”

“Success,” a big thing in our world was defined by Pastor Sabot at the second day. “Different people equate success with wealth, influence, strength, honor, luck, productivity...and on an on, but success is not all about these, it is achieving what God intends us to do and recognizing what God made us for a specific purpose—and to find that purpose and achieve it.”

At the middle of the week, Pastor Sabot discussed the importance of attitude. He explained that people’s attitude is the key to happiness and success. “How we react to others’ insinuations often determine their acts toward us.” He counseled that everybody should substitute unpleasant attitudes with things that draw positive reactions towards each other.”

The remaining mornings of the week brought discussions on values and commitment. “Pastors must learn to evaluate their values and commit those to the Lord that which brings about changed lives for themselves and for others,” he admonished.

The Week of Prayer culminated with a communion service officiated by Pastor Mastur Sitompul, president of the church in Jakarta.

“This was a very refreshing event in my life,” commented Pastor Mantas Limbong, president of the church in central Sumatra. “The practical insights gleaned from these messages enhanced my work as financial officer of the church,” rejoined Binsar Pardose, treasurer for Nusa Tenggara, while Rudolf Doloksaribu, vice president for Finance of Bandung Adventist Hospital, considered the week a “wonderful lifetime experience.”

Also during the week, Pastor Sabot visited the Kramat Pulo Church, where he enjoined church members to walk the walk of faith. He pointed out that a human life is likened to an airplane that when its engines stop on the air, it falls. He counsels the brethren to observe six important guides as they walk with God—1) Make the most of your time, 2) Understand the will of God, 3) Be filled with the Holy Spirit, 4) Make a melody in the heart to the Lord, 5) Give thanks to the Lord always, and 6) Be subject to one another.

Pastor Joseph Peranginangin, WIUM executive secretary, and Pastor Edison Panjaitan, WIUM ministerial secretary, accompanied Pastor Sabot and his family on this visit.

Members of the Kramat Pulo SDA church expressed appreciation for the blessings they received from the messages. [WIUM Press Release/AND]

A CANCER'S GIFT?

By Stephanie Loriezo

Church service was about to start one early summer when I learned that my friend, Analy, was dying of cancer. I called up some of our high school classmates to arrange for a visit in the afternoon.

“Reverse Isolation.”

Those two words were written on my friend’s hospital door. We met the hospital chaplain who also came for a visit because the patient’s mother had requested for a special prayer. I told him that we were visiting the same patient.

As the chaplain opened the door to the room, we heard Analy screaming in a strange manner, arguing with somebody we could not see. The pastor then invited us to come in. We kept a good distance from her bed because we were not wearing face masks.

“I was not able to sleep well since last night because my daughter kept screaming and fighting with someone I cannot even see,” Analy’s mother said.

We felt sad looking at my friend’s thin and pale body. She was staring at the window screaming “No, I don’t want to die, God will heal me, go away from me! I won’t come with you, I am God’s child, and if He will give me a chance to live I will serve Him again faithfully!”

We listened to her silently. She didn’t give any attention to any one of us. Sobbing, she said “I am just human, weak and sinful but God will forgive me, I know I make big mistakes in my life when I forsake God, but go away evil! I will not come with you.”

Looking at my companions, I could tell that we felt strange and sad watching her struggle with dear life. I could not even believe she looked like an old skinny dying lady at that moment.

The pastor came near the window and opened wide the Bible in his hands and pronounced, “Be strong, God will forgive you, He is your Creator and your Redeemer, commit yourself unto Him.”

Then the pastor asked us to join him in prayer.

Holding our hands and placing the Bible on my friend’s bedside, he read aloud several verses and prayed. The room was silent and as the pastor prayed, we felt a soft warm breeze inside the hospital room and experienced calm.

After the prayer Analy looked at us and smiled.

“Hello, thank you for coming,” was all she could say in a fainting voice.

We held back our tears but were amazed to see her eyes blink and her cheeks turn pink and young. “Her face looks so fresh!” one of my classmates whispered.

We stayed for a while to talk and promised to come back the next day.

We were not allowed to come the next afternoon, and her mom told us that during the early hours of the morning Analy was screaming and arguing with someone she could not see.

She managed to ask her mom to sing “Whiter Than Snow” and “When We Walk With The Lord.”

We called the pastor and asked him to pray for her again. The next day I came back alone and listened to her mom talk about Analy’s life after her graduation. I learned that she had lived a complicated life. Her mother’s concern was her marriage to a man who came from a prominent family but was not an Adventist.

In 2006 she was diagnosed with cancer. Because she was pregnant at the time she gave up the treatment and refused to lose her baby. The doctor had to perform caesarian operation in the baby was eight months old because of the rapid growth of her cancer. She was willing to die for the sake of her son’s life.

After our talk with her mom, I knew my missionary spirit was rekindled. I asked some pastors in our local conference to visit and pray for her each day and night. God didn’t fail us. Analy started to eat and was able to talk to her family. “I am ready for whatever God has planned for me. I know I am too young to die but I am at ease and I feel that He has forgiven my sins.”

Days went by fast. Analy’s doctor said her “days are numbered.” The thought that she could not see her son grow into manhood hurt her so much. This was compounded by the reality that very soon she would be leaving her understanding and loving husband and parents-in-law who loved her dearly and her own mom who stayed by her bedside for a year until her sunset moments. I was there; yes, I was there during the last week of her days in the hospital. She told me she could not recognize my face clearly, only my voice. But I made her smile and laugh. We reminisced memories of our elementary and high school days, and the time we met unexpectedly four years ago before I left the Philippines.

By how she talked to me, I knew I was talking to her for the last time because her pulse rate was

New Graduates Strengthen Church in Myanmar

Myaungmya, Myanmar – Being the only Seventh-day Adventist Church-operated college in Myanmar, Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary (MUAS) annually sends out graduates to fill the needs of the church in advancing the Lord’s work in this country of the pagodas.

On Sunday, March 4, 58 graduates were conferred certificates and diplomas at the 41st Graduation Exercises. Of this number, 11 completed the Bachelor of Arts in Religion, 21 Education, 20 Business, while six finished enrichment courses.

U Aye Han, chairman of District’s Peace and Development Council Committee, was the guest of honor on this occasion.

As the highest ranking officer for the Myaungmya district where the college is located, chairman U Aye Han, represented the district in commending the graduates for their successful pursuit of higher learning.

On March 2, Pastor Rawlson Johnny, president of the Adventist church in Ayeyarwady, led out in the consecration service for the candidates. He told the candidates to pursue their calling “in union with Christ,” while Pastor Memory Tun, executive secretary for the church in Myanmar, at the baccalaureate service inspired the candidates to be faithful to their chosen profession as the “Crown of Life” awaits them.

“God is calling you,” echoed Pastor Khin Mg Nyein,

retired mission president and ministerial association secretary, as he addressed the graduates on Sunday.

The new graduates represented the vast territory of Myanmar—15 from Ayeyarwady, four from Central Myanmar, nine from Southeast district, 20 from Upper Myanmar, and four from Yangon.

Ms Lalfakmawia of the Business Department, who was class sponsor assisted Alvin Po Hla, president of the college in conferring the degrees on the graduates; while Pastor Muller Kyaw, president of the church in Myanmar, dedicated the graduates in prayer to God. [Morris Chit/MAN]

Church Takes Step to Fully Lean on Jesus

SIXTY CHURCH LEADERS representing various institutions in Bangladesh attended the three-day Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Conference, March 21-23, at the Bangladesh Adventist Seminary & College (BASC), in Gowalbathan, Gazipur, Bangladesh.

“A skillful leader looks beyond first impressions on others to discover the hidden talents to enhance God's will for the world,” said Philip Follet, a former vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist world church, and one of the resource persons for this conference.

Organized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bangladesh (BAUM) under the leadership of Pastor Edward P. Chambugong, executive secretary and concurrently serving as interim president, the LEAD conference enabled the participants to be treated to a variety of leadership topics. Follet helped the participants through group discussions, role play, skits and demonstrations.

Dr Hendrik Sumendap, executive secretary of the church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, led out in the discussion on servant leadership and attitudes, while Keith Heinrich, SSD treasurer, expounded the tenets of integrity and budgeting.

“We appreciate the leadership of Southern Asia Pacific Division in cooperation with the world church for helping us lean on Jesus in every way of our church functions and become united to preach the gospel,” said Pastor Chambugong on behalf of all participants. [Milton Das]

Preachers' Kids Talk of Life Experiences at Convention

The first region-wide convention for preachers' kids (PKs) of the Adventist Church in northern Philippines (NPUM) gathered together 142 participants coming from the whole island of at the 1000 Missionary Movement campus in Silang, Cavite, May 4-6.

Primarily launched to honor the preachers' kids, the event was coordinated by the Ministerial department of the church through the Shepherdess International in coordination with the Family and Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, Women's Ministries, Health Ministries and Communication Departments with a five-fold intent, as follows:

1. To celebrate God's goodness and guidance to PKs through the years;
2. To establish friendship, camaraderie, and support for pastors' children;
3. To recognize their varied talents and spiritual gifts;
4. To help PKs understand better their special roles; and
5. To listen to their stories and life experiences.

To achieve these goals, the activities lined up for the event delved on the theme: "PKs: Making a Difference." These included listening to the personal testimonies of adults and older PKs, team building activities, mini-concert of musically inclined PKs, Bible Trek, and recognizing outstanding PKs who have served in the Lord's work in the church, foreign missions and non-church agencies. Sixty-five PKs who finished their studies and have earned special skills and talents in music, preaching, arts, sciences, leadership and other ministries were given certificate of recognition, and among them were 12 who were recognized as outstanding.

At the opening ceremony, May 4, Pastor Gary Rustad, associate secretary of the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, presented what it's like to be a PK by making use of object lessons taken from biblical truths, concepts, and principles and his own experiences as a second-generation PK himself. Pastor Abner Roque, NPUM president, took the pulpit at worship service on Sabbath (Saturday), May 5, and was assisted by PKs themselves. Among them were Dr Raul Morena, Miller Payoyo, Ben Omar Saban, Francis Ray Gayoba, Verby Bermudez, Francis John Tejano and Rangie Mar Perdido. Pastor Carmelito Galang, Jr, communication director for the church in Central Luzon, and retired pastor Oseas Zamora led out in a solemn commitment ceremony at the Prayer Garden of 1000MM.

Heart-shaking personal testimonies addressing varied issues and situations that PKs cope with were presented by Judy Haniel Poblete - Living in a Fishbowl; Rodolfo Bautista, Jr. - Father's



Cancer's Gift, from page 14

failing, but she tried to be strong even as the respirator was stalling her life for some more moments.

The daily visits of our pastors to worship with her and family in the hospital had given light to her non-Christian husband and in-laws. They joined the worship and learned gospel songs and lessons from the Sabbath School Study Guide.

On April 8, 2007, I stood before the congregation in front of her coffin to give tribute and read the words of sympathy on behalf of our classmates. Tears rolled down my cheeks as I started: "Sometimes we don't know why things happen this way, but instead of asking, we trust Him; because in life there are so many questions that only at eternity will God reveal the answers."

Her mother-in-law remarked: "The events in our daughter-in-law's life led us to know you better. Your friendship and your faith that led you to support us in times of our need have taught us the true essence of Christian life, friendship, care, and trust in a God who doesn't go away from our midst."

I do not know if you share with me the thought that Analy's battle with cancer that eventually led to her demise has served a purpose—bringing hope on others' lives.

Leaders Visit Maluku Mission

Many people are still haunted by the many faces of conflict that ravished Maluku and Ambon in the territories of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Indonesia (EIUC). However, today, that picture is gradually superimposed with landscape of hope as God's grace hovers over these places. Government and people work hand in hand to erase the stigma brought about by these past experiences. The hand of cooperation extends financial stability and security of abode.

With this situation, Pastor Alberto C Gulfan, president of the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD); and Pastor Bobby J Sepang, EIUC president, visited Ambon and Maluku, February 18-24. They arrived at the Patimura Airport, February 18, where officers and staff of the church in the local area were there to meet them. The event was a sort of festivities of cultural dances and traditional fair.

On February 19-21, Pastor Gulfan, Pastor Sepang, Pastor Tomatala, Mr. Kuhu and staff held devotional programs separately at churches in Yordan, Halong, Ambon, Pusat, and Galala. While on Tuesday morning, February 20, Pastor Gulfan, Pastor Sepang and Maluku Mission officers had an audience with the Honorable Mr. Latulconsina, vice governor of the province of Maluku.

On Thursday, February 22, the group took a day's tour of the churches in the Seram Island that included Piru, Waisamu, Kamal, Kairatu, Kamarian, Rumahkay and a Branch Sabbath School in Tihulale and had audience with the Vice of the Head of the Regency of Seram Bagian Barat. At lunch time the group feasted on Durian.

February 23 saw the group visiting Maluku Academy where they were welcomed by a Cakale dance performed by the students. Here Pastor Gulfan conducted devotional worship with students and staff at the Chapel while a Sabbath vesper was held at the Mangga Dua Church.

On Saturday, February 24, a throng of church members from all over the island of Ambon came to worship as Pastor Gulfan led them in preaching the Word.

"We have been greatly blessed by the visit of our leaders most especially that this is the first time in 32 years that the president of our regional headquarters had visited us," chorused the church members. [M.L. Saluy/R. Wurangian/AND]

Council Addresses..., from page 8

related topics: Does Heart Problem have to occur?" by Dr. Pintoko, a heart specialist of Bandung Adventist Hospital; while Dr. Gaikwad, on "Power in Weakness." She invited the participants to commit themselves the Lord, to admit their weaknesses, to let the Holy Spirit work in their lives, to be available and willing to work for the Lord, to praise the Lord for that He has done for them.

On Sabbath morning, Pastor Kent preached on Finishing Well. "It is not enough to start well or to do well, we have to make sure that we finish well," he emphasized. In the afternoon, the delegates talked about the progress of the work in their respective fields. Ministerial service pins were given to the pastors. And as the night signaled close of the council a cultural show was presented, which according to one participant, "revitalized the tired bodies of the participants due to the very hectic four-day meetings." Asked about their impression of the event, the participants said, "very memorable, inspiring, mentally and spiritually refreshing that enhanced our quality service for the Lord." [WIUM Press Release]

Youth Mark..., from page 15

Church Leaders..., from page 11

"In the past a lot of church members were opposed to the idea of raising hands as a means of praising God," said one participant. "In fact, it was believed a devil's method," added another. But during this congress, the delegates were cleared of that wrong notion. "It is indeed a way of praising God," said Pastor Nelson Paulo, communication director for SPUC.

Prior to the Leaders' Congress, April 8-10, a SPUC-wide retreat for all ministers and their wives was held. Dubbed "Team Ministry Conference," the participants were introduced to several lectures and presentations, some of which came from Dr Smith's "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit;" "Mid-Life Crisis," by Pastor Wendell M Serrano, executive secretary of SPUC; and "The Joy of Team Ministry," by Mrs. Pliny R Camagay, retired SPUC family life, women, and children's ministry director. [Venus Fernandez-Borja/AND]

Preachers' Kids..., from page 16

Absence; Joyosthie Orbe - Coping with Brethren's High Expectations; Nedilyn Talasan - Meager Income of Pastoral Family; Lester Lagabon - Constant Moving; Alfrida Rodelas - Loss of a Pastor-Father; Herminia Ladion - Becoming a Successful PK; Pastor Oseas Zamora - Winning PK's Spiritual Battle; Rex Mangiliman- What It's Like to be a PK; and Eufe Tantia - Special Role and Responsibilities of PKs.

The team-building program activities took varied forms—small grouping, sharing, brainstorming, scavenger hunting of Bible verses, crafts, scrapbooking, and many others. These activities fostered camaraderie and enhanced closer bonding among pastors' kids. Participants agreed this part was the most enjoyable part of the convention that generated desires for PKs conventions on a yearly basis.

Serving as activity specialists and facilitators, most of them were young adult PKs: Ma. Rizaline Alfanoso, Albright Dy, Rex Mangiliman, Gemboy Castillo, Joyosthie Orbe, Rae Lee Roque, Lani Rilloma, Jun Bautista, Lester and May Lagabon, Jun Damocles and SI coordinators Shirley Asuncion, Josephine Payoyo, Nelia Garrado, Delba de Chavez and Vincie Allida.

This event led to a desire to organize preachers' kids association at each mission or conference and also at learning institutions. Insights learned during the convention was the reality that preachers' kids have special needs to be addressed—that they should be treated like others who deserve constant support and prayers. This desire should prompt leaders to consider plans strategically addressing their needs. One participant commented that the care shown to each pastor's kid would go a long way to help in pastor's family to achieve its purpose of advancing God's kingdom as the members help prepare people for the return of Jesus. [Eleanor V. Roque]

Born to Fly!

Let me start with this quote: “Tomorrow’s world will be greatly affected by how we deal with youth today” (George Gallup Jr., an Internet Release).

What influence will our youth cast on tomorrow’s world that is dependent on adult’s handling of our youth today? This statement targets two audiences—the adult and the youth. From the youth’s perspective, the adult gets the greater blame if he is handled wrongly; on the other side, the adult chides the youth for desiring that which is not for him to reach. This often muddles the point. But to see both achieving a desired goal creates a tango in the landscape of cooperation. It’s imperative though that the adult understands the enormity of his influence on the unadulterated mind of the young. On the other hand, the youth should learn how to distinguish that which is right to derive from his predecessor. The how of this process is crucial, and I suggest that we look at the succeeding points.

Dealing with youth’s future is epitomized by the lesson God wants His people to learn in bringing about change and maturity in their lives. This brings to discussion a biblical passage: “Like an eagle that stirs up his nest, that hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions” (Deuteronomy 32:11).

First, the eagle builds her nest on a high plane for a purpose. She knows that after building a nest she lays eggs that will eventually become like her in due time. It is a secure home for her future eaglets. But why on a high plane? For her young to learn to fly they need a greater distance to the earth’s surface below. They need a wider room for the mother eagle to abort a plunging eaglet to death should the going gets wrong!

It’s imperative then that parents establish a home where they can train their children for better life in all aspects—physical, mental, social and moral. The Adventist school should reinforce the training that the young learn from home. Simply said, the teachers and parents’ roles complement each other. As such, teachers should take their role to heart. The paternal home and the educational enterprise are established in an atmosphere that makes provision for resolving conflicts should discipline encounters challenges.

Second, mother eagle demonstrates how to fly. Even before an eaglet shows dexterity of movements, mother eagle slowly pushes her to the edge of a perch but hovers over her. The young eagle in this process imitates her mother until flapping becomes natural and spontaneous when out of the perch.

What a role adults have toward teaching and learning! Jesus said, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father?” Can adults rightly say the same thing? Is the young’s observable behavior a reflection of their predecessors? At this stage, however, education of the child is a crucial responsibility of parents but not without the cooperation of the children themselves. The feeding necessarily prepares the young to fly on their wings up to the unlimited horizon of success.

Third and last, eaglets must fly. Stirring up is necessary to flying. Mother eagle has no choice but to let her eaglets go. The time has come when the distance between the nest and the ground must be negotiated. In fact, the eaglets must go up higher from where their nest rests in order to give no room for unwanted downfall as they finally let go of their home.

Young men and women, it’s time for you to fly. You have learned enough of life that embarks you into knowing more of it in the counsels of the godly. You were born to be so. Sometimes there is a need to change direction. Oftentimes, the air space negotiated may be stormy, a little of detour makes struggles subdued. As you negotiate your own road, walk the walk of faith. God will never fail you even if sometimes you have the urge to believe it. Take a look again at the verse, “... He spreads His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.” Sometimes, indeed you fail. That is normal. We still live in a world where life must be fought hard... but remember, God, in the person of your parents, teachers, and other adults—your pastors and responsible friends—“will spread His wings and catch you, and carry you on His pinions!”

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