

# MISSIONS

## Info

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# SERVE

Our monthly service for street children has just finished. I find myself still sitting with Liezel, the staff in charge of the outreach ministry, and inquiring how the feedings are doing. I was stunned by her answer. She said, "Only if we discover these children's value as we see them through God's perspective we will be able to truly serve them."

I am reminded of how Liezel and her team are about 300 days a year somewhere on the streets whether sunshine or heavy down pour – they visit the kids in the streets, to listen to their needs, to pray for them or help in just practical ways. If they take a child on their lap or just hug it its not the smell that prevents them but the love of God that enables them. Week after week, they deliver warm meals to anybody who is needy and the message of the Gospel and acceptance is sown into the hearts of people otherwise rejected.

I think about that sentence just mentioned by one of my staff. I realize that true service needs a renewed mind. God is more interested about our motives than he is about our ambitions. True ministry reaches out to the need of our neighbor not only with a help but also with dignity. When we choose not to think lowly but rather less about ourselves, true servanthood is demonstrated. In Phil. 2 Verses 4-7 Paul reminds us see the example Jesus gave us,

*"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being".*

Isn't his example of selfless devotion a daily challenge to us? To deal with our selfish nature is not to align our focus in accordance to our needs but to focus on the undertaking of God for our life. Servants do not use God to fulfil their dreams but they make themselves available to see God's dreams fulfilled through their lives. This is only possible if love is the motivating factor in our relationship to him. Mary took the most precious thing she had, an expensive perfume worth a years labour to pour it over Jesus. While some mocked at her generous ministry – Jesus called it significant. Mary knew how to express her love for Jesus.

As always, our team will have a lot of chances to visit and to serve needy children in the streets of Cebu. This year in the feedings there will be about 50,000 meals served as an expression of God's character, his care and his love. We continue to do this because for streetchildren, the meetings with our staff will be a time of comfort and encouragement and for some an opportunity to invite God into their lives.

Love is expressed through servanthood.

Harald Rauch



# ON SERVICE...



"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

Albert Schweitzer



Juliet Oleo, Administrator



Ruel Rabin, Houseparent

I started working in Christ for Asia as an errand but when I heard that Project Nehemiah Boys Home is in need of a staff, I volunteered myself as a housefather or child care giver.

At first I find difficulty in taking care of the children in the orphanage since I was yet the only child care giver. Another thing is that, it is very difficult to deal with different behavioral problems of streetkids from various backgrounds. However, as I carry on, I discovered that most of them love music and enjoy singing so much. Slowly, I introduced to them my passion in music. I and the children shared the same interest on music that we value it and grow up with it together until we were able to compose gospel songs and testimonial songs that convey message of hope and love. **A lot of lives were changed because of our music.** This is one of the legacies I have in CFA that I would never forget. To God be the glory for He is the giver of gifts and talents that we have.

I have seen and experienced God's

powerful presence in the ministry for the past 15 years of my life spent with CFA. I was raised in Christian family and values thus I was very active in every church activity and had enjoyed doing them without complain. I thought, it was the ultimate experience I could ever have in my life until one time I came across Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This phrase has brought me to sincerely seek God for His perfect plan for me. Convinced of God's direction, I quit my secular job and came to the ministry of CFA.

At first, I struggled working here long time ago because I can compare that there was no proper structure and office as I was then used working in a huge office. However, I submit myself to the Lord's will and His word so I got on my knees in prayer and intercession for CFA and its different ministries. Of course, I was accepted then as a secretary to the President and I did not apply as a prayer person nor CFA demands prayer from me. But I firmly believe it was God's divine appointment. **It was then I understood by heart that God's plan of hope and a future embraces peoples of the earth-** that includes the children in Nehemiah Boys, Girls Home and in the feeding program as well. Problems tend to erase God's plan of hope and future but I cling to what God says in Jer. 33:3 "Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you don't know." With this verse, I want to say; God is always waiting for individuals to call unto Him in prayer, working and trusting He is able to do greater things beyond our human imaginations.



## Sandra Schuster, Missionary

If someone had said to me years ago “Sandra, one day you are going to be a missionary in the Philippines and work with street children”, I would have probably just looked at him with disbelief. It is not like mission was not important to me back then. In fact, the opposite was the case. But why would God in particular want to send me when I am only an ordinary person. **It took me some years to realize that God often calls ordinary people.** And thus I followed His calling.

I am with Christ for Asia for three years now. By profession, I am an elementary and high school teacher. Therefore, it is great for me to see how God placed me into NSO I (our Nehemiah School of Opportunities Inc.) to work as a tutor for kids with special needs. Every one of my students has a special place in my heart. It is a privilege for me to be able to influence their lives positively considering that fact they faced so much negative impacts already before.

Once a week, I accompany our outreach team visiting the children in the streets of Cebu City. It is not always easy for me to see them growing up in an environment that is mostly cruel and destructive. How nice it would be to just bring them to a place that is safe and appropriated for children.

It fills me with joy to spend time with those who are so precious and wonderfully made by God. I like to play with them and raise a smile from their dirty but beautiful faces although some of them stare passively. My prayers are with them.

The last three years have been a great blessing to me. To live in the Philippines working with Christ for Asia enriched my life and made me more into the person God wants me to be. Very often people ask me: “How long are you actually going to stay in the Philippines?” My response is, “It depends on how long God wants me to be here.” And secretly, I hope it would be still for a long time.



## Manuel Stumpf, Volunteer Staff

I am involved with Christ for Asia as a volunteer for one year. I am helping in the Nehemiah Boys Home and also in the Feeding Outreach program. The first thing I noticed when I arrived in Cebu City was that the people are so friendly. It does not matter much if they are so poor; they seemed to be just so happy.

Every time I join the Outreach Program, I observe and see it as a wonderful sight that the streetchildren are having a lot of fun. It crossed my thoughts that in Germany some children are so spoiled. They have enough to eat, a lot of things to play with and many other things. Yet, somehow I see there is still a certain difference in the joy that streetchildren in Cebu City has. Of course the streetkids must have a meal. But, even if they don't get the proper meal three times a day, the kids still got this certain joy.

I think I can learn so much from these children. And that is, **“To be rejoicing about the things we have and not to be commiserating about the things we don't have”**. In this aspect, I'm glad that the children can learn something from me and I can also learn something from the children. Thus, I'm happy to be here.



## Christy Mae Sandaga, Communications

Being a Filipina and growing up in the Philippines, I am accustomed to seeing poverty everywhere. Street children, street youth or street adults of the urban cities are all too familiar to me-they are with the beggars, the poor, the gangsters and the illegal syndicates. I felt like I can not do anything for them and even if I exert any effort, it would be worthless.

Opportunity came; I partake of the good work here in Christ for Asia, a ministry for streetchildren. I encounter more and more lives in poverty that are desperate to be filled. As my life intertwines with street people and streetchildren along with their poverty, I consciously become aware of my own poverty. Before, my thinking was..., “I'm just fine compare to the poor street people. It's just like that life is difficult. And what do I care about the poor?” But it was like my case is read aloud in Revelation 3:17, **“You say I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing. But you do not realize you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”** Yet I was poor, the one waiting to be filled, wanting to take anything for self-fulfillment, so self-focused, uncaring, bored and apathetic. I realized poverty is also personal and a bondage. I need freedom.

Working in CFA, my job covers stuff like writing news and stories about street children, taking photo shots of poverty and its contrast, composing the newsletter and filming life stories, and conducting discipleship meetings to CFA youth. I discovered that I have so much to give. Now, it doesn't matter if my effort is small and apparently insignificant for I know the wonderful thing is... as I am liberated with my own poverty, I also liberate others from their poverty in the process. And this is freedom.





**E**ach one of us has his own perspective but what matters most is that we rely on God's perspective as we go through life. The fact that God has brought me here in Christ for Asia is a privilege to work in His ministry. My time spent here transformed my inward and outward self. I developed a deeper relationship with God as I deal being a teacher and a friend especially to children with different controversial past and attitudes. It made me realize that teaching is not only a profession but also a vocation or a calling. Teaching children in the Nehemiah School is not only imparting knowledge to the kids but also helping them developed holistically as well-not just mere students but children who have rights and values. My experiences as a staff of Christ for Asia make me happier and more equipped. I believe this is a best training ground for the next season in my life wherever the Lord may lead me.



Antonio Rabino, Nehemiah Boy

I'm so grateful to God that He brought me to Nehemiah. I cannot imagine where I would be now if I am not here. I guess my life would be very chaotic or how we say it in Cebuano "Gubot Pa sa Lakot"(tangled like wires). I'm here in Nehemiah since I was 7 years old. When I arrived here, I thought that I like the life on the streets more than here because in the streets I could do whatever I wanted to with no discipline and responsibility. Almost six years I had a really hard time to stay here. But now I understood that the life here in Nehemiah is different than the life on the streets. Here, I was able to finish my elementary and my high school. I'm now studying in a University with the course "Fine Arts major in Media Design and Drawing". It is a good feeling to have a life in which you can do what you want and have a good life at the same time. It's really true that God is always with us and He keeps the promises which he has for all of us. He is giving us a good future. I hope that I can finish my course in 2 years with my belief in God's help and the people which are supporting me.



Mobilyn Mirabiles, Nehemiah girl

I live here in a children's center which is called Nehemiah Girls Home. My old life at the streets was really difficult and full of problems. My father is an alcoholic and irresponsible. He is most of the time drunk. My mother had to raise her 3 children by herself. So I grew up with my mom. She tried to send me to a public school to study. But I couldn't even finish grade one because we don't have enough money. So she send me to just a learning program called "Mobile School" organized by the government. "Mobile School" is a bus which is making a stop every week in different parts of the Cebu City to teach street children with lessons. Also, every week, I was looking forward to Friday because I joined the feeding Program from CFA because they teach bible stories and lessons. My mother became sickly. One day, a teacher from the Mobile-School told me that it would be better for me to stay in a shelter like CFA. At first, I was afraid because I didn't want to live far away from my mom. But I obeyed and went to Christ for Asia. I really appreciate it that I can stay here in Nehemiah Girls home because I also learned here that there is a God who cares for me.

