



Pag-Asa News – December 2022: My Trip to the Philippines

Hi there,

fasten your seatbelts, please, because now I am going to take you along with me on my journey to the Philippines. So, let's enter the time machine and travel back in time. Ready, steady, go!

Reunion with Dear Ones in the Philippines (Sept. 9 – Oct. 5, 2022)

When I returned from the Philippines on October 5, I almost immediately started packing for my move of residence and then the next semester of my studies started. Therefore, I am only now finding time to tell you about my wonderful and exciting stay in the Philippines. So fasten your seatbelts, please! I was very happy to finally visit the land of more than 7000 islands again after such a long absence due to Corona and seeing the people who have become so dear to me. How nice that Ate Gina continued to represent the Pag-Asa Mission project on site. On the very first day after my arrival, I went on Beate (my motor scooter) to her family in Libjo, where some children gathered right away to meet me – some knew me personally, but others had only seen me in the online devotions. What a great reunion with the people I knew! I was glad that despite my long absence, I was able to follow the work and relationships I had previously enjoyed there.

Crying, Laughing and Sharing Faith

Several times we met in Libjo with eight to eighteen people, mostly women, to read the Bible together and share life. These encounters were very moving. Many women had tears in their eyes, when they spoke of their difficulties, such as the loss of loved ones, but also when they were touched by the presence of God, for example, during worship songs. I was moved by how all the women cried together and we prayed heartily for each other in pairs. It is good to share life, to carry each other's burdens, but also to laugh together and to encourage one other in faith. One woman also decided to live her life with Jesus. Furthermore, I visited various friends and people I know and prayed with some of those who had also come to various Bible meetings in the past. I was able to give some people a small *pasalubong* (souvenir, as is customary in Filipino culture) or clothes which was given to me in Germany before. I was also able to distribute a few second-hand reading glasses. In addition, I met Jacqueline in Cavite near Manila, who had worked for half a year there in 2021 as part of Pag-Asa Mission, organizing children's and youth meetings, providing medical aid in financial terms, and distributing Corona relief packages. We were able to share about our lives and faith, and I



1 Child program



1 Reunion with family Geocada



2 Bible reading meetup

encouraged her and prayed for her. It was a warm meeting. In addition, I was able to see my former landlords again. In addition, my friend Che-Che, who had been my classmate in the Youth with a Mission Discipleship Training School in Manila 2017-2018, visited me on the last day of my stay, which was also a great joy. I am grateful to God for so many good encounters. Because Jesus says:

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” “(John 13:35, NIV)

With Education to Success

An important factor on the way out of poverty is a good education. With the help of a local community in southern Manila, we are supporting Emanuel, a boy who was not well off financially and had no family support before. Thanks to the sponsorship, he now has basic necessities for life and sufficient funds for school uniforms, school supplies, and transportation to school. He has already graduated from Junior High and is now in Senior High School. The local church community and an initiative to help children and youth support him through guidance, - emotionally and spiritually. It was nice to have a time of encouragement, sharing and prayer with him and the people who accompany him.



3 Meeting with Emmanuel and company

“Let the little children come to me“ and „unless you become like little children“...

These words of Jesus speak volumes. For me, the children's meetings with dancing, Bible stories and food distribution were special highlights. It was great to see how Ate Gina prepared and organized the invitation of the children, helpers for the food distribution, the location and the food. She really has a gift there. It was fun to dance with the 50-70 children, to share the joy of Jesus with them, and to tell them something about how to collect real treasures, treasures in heaven that cannot be broken. There was also a youth meeting, which some of the previous participants attended, but also new ones, among them Buboy's best friend.



4 Kids program in Libjo

Wanted: A Roof Over the Head

Not everyone can enjoy the safe shelter of a roof. Ate Ana, her grandson, son and another young woman are living under a plastic tarpauline. This is especially uncomfortable during tropical rains. Already in 2020, I got to know Ate Ana. But now she was still living under a tarpauline, so I tried to raise funds to help her. How nice that already so much has been collected that we can start to make arrangements for the construction of the roof. After an earlier estimation of a certain amount that is needed, however, it has now become apparent that around 93€ are still needed in addition. You are welcome to support this and similar projects by donating with the note "help for the needy".



5 Ate Ana under her tarpoline

Buboy's Grave

Buboy is Ate Gina's son whom God called to Himself in 2021. Together with Gina's family and his best friend, I visited his grave and read an encouraging word from the Bible for the family. It is hard to understand why some people pass away so early, but despite everything, God gives strength and comfort and the hope of eternal life. We visited other graves of people who unfortunately passed away in my absence.

My Local Church and a Filipino Wedding

It was also nice to meet again with my local church community in Parañaque. There, I was also able to attend the wedding of friends and witnessed some Filipino traditions. For example, a cord is put around the bride and groom, which stands for the Bible verse from Ecclesiastes 4 that says that a threefold cord does not break easily. A beautiful symbolism and a happy celebration.

Baseco's Got Talent and a Night with Pastor Manny's Family

Actually I wanted already to go to the poor district Baseco on September 26th, where John 14:12 Worldwide Ministries, with whom I had cooperated, are located. But a typhoon prevented me from doing so, as there was a warning and it was not safe to plunge into the traffic of the metropolis for at least an hour on a scooter in this weather. But the next day I could finally see my friends from Baseco again. Together with an Australian living in Singapore, whom I already knew, and his sister and nephew, we organized a children's meeting with dancing to Christian songs, games, deworming and a meal, although I only helped in the activities which had been organized by the others. In the evening, I taught children's dances to the young leaders of John 14:12's kids program - a nice way to pass the time, since it was already pouring again, and I had to wait for my ride home on the scooter. Afterwards, we exchanged ideas about Philippine history, which I enjoyed because I had gained knowledge about it through my Bachelor thesis.

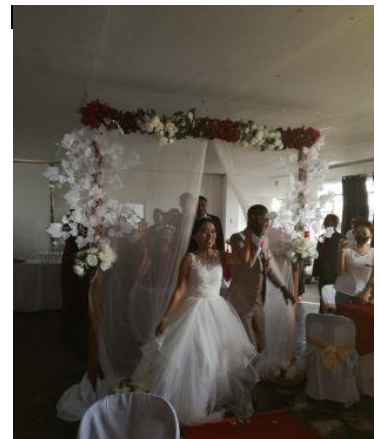
The following day, I went to Baseco again to be on the judging panel for the Baseco's Got Talent show. It was an interesting evening with performances ranging from dancing to beatboxing, painting to singing. I was asked to give a 'Special Number' so I contributed a mime piece to which I then, in a few minutes, summarized the good news of Jesus who wants to lead us into freedom. As a result, a number of people chose to live their lives with Jesus. What a joy! The show was over when it was late, so I was grateful for Pastor Manny and his family's invitation to spend the night with them. I was able to sleep well and they were very hospitable.

Growth, Collaboration and Health Care

Since I left, Ate Gina has continued to host two new weekly meetings that she had not organized regularly before: a youth meeting and a Bible study for adults. Pastor Manny also agreed to come to Libjo once a month and share the word in the Bible studies; on the other days, Ate Gina and another woman from Libjo usually lead the meeting. Currently they are working with a booklet for a Bible study in Tagalog on the Epistle of James. The



6 In Ate Anas House



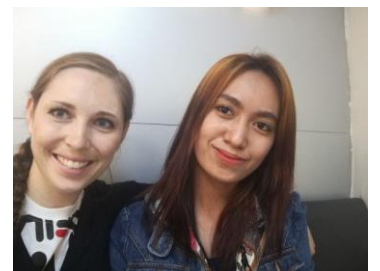
7 Visiting a wedding of my church in the Philippines



8 In Baseco, with Pastor Manny



9 House visitation



10 With Jacqueline in Cavite

meeting is small. Please pray that more participants join. In addition, I would like to tell you about our medical aid. One woman who had attended the Bible meetings when I was there is May Ann. I had seen her belly when she was pregnant. Recently I received the sad news that her baby died at birth, it had to be brought out by cesarean section. We were able to help her with funding for medication. Please pray for her for comfort and for healing of the wound. In addition, Maricon has already had tests but is still waiting for another medical examination. If all is well, she can be operated so that her intestine can be put into its original place again. Please pray for a timely appointment, as the procedure has been dragging on for quite some time. Furthermore, we were able to help Ate Nits, who often attends the adult Bible study, with medication and food, when she needed medication and good nutrition after a hospital stay. She is already much better, but she must still take medication until mid-January.



11 Youth group

Prayer Requests

Thanks	Intercession
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for the wonderful stay in the Philippines, the joy of reunion and God's working that people have found hope in Jesus for Gina Geocada's work in Libjo for the cooperation with Pastor Manny for the new meetings in Libjo for the team and the prayer initiative that continues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for comfort and healing for Ate May-Ann that Ángel gets his visa for the marriage as soon as possible timely date for the examinations and surgery of Maricon Growth in faith of the participants of the different Bible studies and pprograms that more people come to the Bible study and youth meeting for the Christmas activities

Isaiah 9,2 (NIV): “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.”

Thank you for your thoughts, prayers and financial support! I hope you are well! A blessed Advent season!

Yours, Sara-Lena



My work is based on donations. If you want to support Pag-Asa financially, you can transfer the money to the following account or donate via PayPal using the QR code. If donation receipts are desired, please send your address to Globe Mission (on the remittance or by email to claudia.vogel@globemission.org).



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