

Rick & Becky Martin

Your Missionaries in
Iloilo City, Philippines since 1976

Dear Friends,

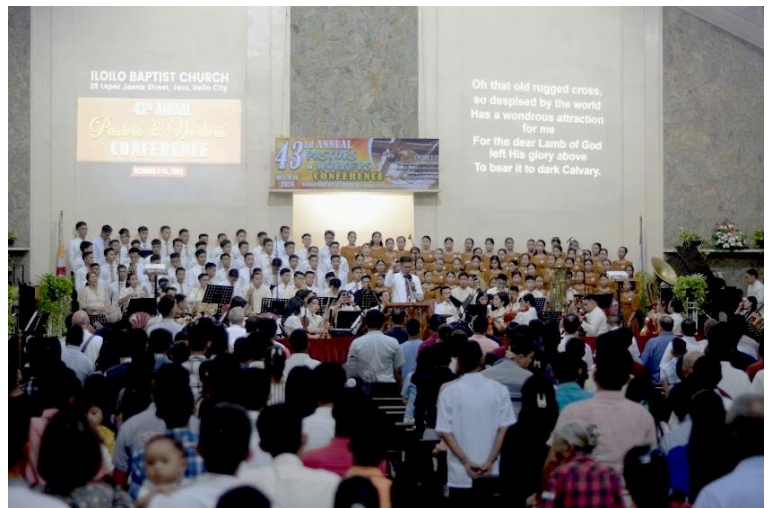
PASTORS AND WORKERS CONFERENCE

This past October Iloilo Baptist Church celebrated its 43rd Annual Pastors and Workers Conference. The spirit among the pastors and workers who attended was great. One part of the conference that I enjoyed was the singing. There is nothing like hearing a crowd of pastors and workers singing together!

The theme of the conference was "leaving us an example in suffering." It comes from the verse I Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

One of our guest speakers was Evangelist Craig Bryan. The Lord used him years ago to pastor a church in Michigan that was reaching many people. He told the story about his wife who got a terrible type of cancer that eventually took her life. He shared the pain she suffered until the Lord took her home. They had been married 28 years. Pastors are constantly being attacked by Satan. Brother Bryan's messages and testimony of his wife were very helpful to the delegates.

We honored two Filipino preachers who have been an example and an inspiration to many of us. The first pastor is Ireneo Bugtong who is the pastor of the Bible Baptist Church in Molo, Iloilo which is on the other side of our city. I have known him for about 35 years.



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Pastor Bugtong and I worked together years ago in the “Lifeline Philippines” ministry where containers of Bibles, material, items needed by pastors in their churches were shipped here. At that time, he was working in a church in Manila and the head of “Lifeline” there. We got to know each other and talked almost every month about the projects, and he was so encouraging to talk to. I looked forward to the funny things he would say that would make me laugh. When he moved to Iloilo City, I was glad.

Not long ago, he went through a near death experience involving a sickness. It was during that time he showed his greatness by trying to put his church in order so when he died it would continue to reach people. He was in so much pain but continued to pastor under such difficult physical pain. He told his story during his preaching session on Wednesday afternoon.

Below is Brother Bugtong being recognized for his example in suffering.

The other Filipino pastor we recognized was Pastor Eddie Gerodias. I first met him in 1976 on my survey trip to the Philippines. He had just graduated from the Bible College that Bob Hughes started. Bro. Hughes was in the US fighting cancer. Through the years, Brother Eddie and I developed a friendship. I invited him to speak at one of our conferences in the early 1980s and he was such a blessing. The result is that he has spoken at our Pastors & Workers Conference more than any other pastor. 15 years ago, he was diagnosed with cancer. I asked him to share his story with the pastors and he did, it touched their hearts. Mrs. Gerodias and Mrs. Bugtong spoke during the ladies’ sessions. They were also a blessing.



About 30 Bible Colleges were represented. Some of them brought their choir, including the one pictured below.



The IBC choir also provided music

On the final night, we had a "World Missions" theme and had several missionaries in attendance. We chose four of them and had a standing offering for them. In this offering, people would line up and personally give their offering to one or more of the missionaries. During the presentation, which took about 20 minutes, we had the choir and soloists sing mission songs. Years ago, I was at my home church, the First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, and I was one of the missionaries who received a standing offering. It brought tears to my eyes as hundreds of people would walk by and give an offering and often an encouraging word.



Below are the signs of four missionaries receiving the offering.



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Bible Distribution

One of the favorite parts at the conference is the distribution of Bibles. Over 700 pastors received Bibles this year. There were also about 500 Bible College students from other Bible Colleges who received Bibles. I could never over emphasize the importance and need for Bibles.

We are so thankful for those who are providing these Bibles for pastors and workers. This includes Bearing Precious Seed from Milford, Ohio, Beams Bibles from Gulfport, Mississippi, Mount Pisgah Baptist Church in Oliver Springs, Tennessee, and one anonymous donor. The need for Bibles here is enormous.

Below are a few of the pastors who received Bibles.



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Before the services were held on Wednesday and Thursday, we had 7 workshops to equip pastors and workers to be more effective. This year the workshops included:

1. Discipleship Workshop for any Christian worker - the speaker was Scott Cowling of First Baptist Church, Bridgeport, Michigan. Brother Cowling does a great job with this workshop each year.
2. Church Planters Workshop for pastors and older male Bible College students
3. Ladies Workshop for pastor's wives and other full time Christian workers
4. Music Workshop for church music leaders, choirs and orchestra players
5. Business Leaders' Workshop
6. Radio Workshop for pastors, station managers, technicians and broadcasters
7. Workshop for Pastors who desire to minister to officers of the Philippine National Police. (This was a new workshop).

Our staff began working on the workshops more than 6 months before the conference and I believe the Lord blessed their efforts. There were 24 speakers who participated.

Below are some of the pastors who joined the workshop to work with police officers. There were over 100 new pastors who joined this ministry during the conference and took the training.



A police officer shares his testimony how he received Jesus as his Saviour and the change in his life.

The first night of the conference about 60 more of the young police officers attended the service as we honored our City Director who also attended. Many of the officers received the Lord that night. Below are pictures of a few of them.



The radio workshop included the start of 5 online radio stations. These are not under any government control like the FM stations. They do not have the listening audience FM stations would have, but they are very good for training for those who have applied for an FM station. It gives them valuable experience that will help them when they are able to have an FM station. These online stations are not very expensive to start and have very little overhead costs in operating them.

Below is Missionary Randy DeMoville who is teaching the workers of the new online stations how to operate the equipment they have. He is an expert in this area and is a valuable person in the radio ministry here in the Philippines.



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CHURCH PLANTING

Training men to start churches has always been the most important ministry here. The picture below is of 27 of the 31 graduates who are pastors that have Bible Colleges. This was taken at our alumni meeting back in July.



They are just normal men who have given themselves to the Lord and have an extraordinary passion to start churches. The future for starting churches here is very bright as many of the other pastors are training married men in their church to start churches as well. Thank you for praying for the pastors here in the Philippines. It is much appreciated.

HEALTH UPDATE

Thank you so much for your prayers! Becky is doing well, overall. Although she's slowly re-introducing food into her diet, she keeps it healthy with very little meat or dairy. We can find some organic food here in the Philippines. I am proud of how self-disciplined she has been. In the end, we know it all depends on God and His plan. Thanks again for your interest and prayers!

Our health updates have been mostly about Becky recently, but I wanted to give an update on mine. I have had a sickness for almost 25 years that usually comes about once a year. This sickness usually occurs when I am suffering from overfatigue which normally happens after an event or after traveling. It usually would last a couple of days. Through the years I have only been hospitalized for it 5 or 6 times and have been able to live with it. But this year, I have already had it five times and it is taking much longer to recover each time.

Through the years, I have gone to 2 doctors in the US and 4 doctors in the Philippines along with countless tests and most of the doctors think it is some kind of virus that comes with overfatigue.

About a month ago I told our staff and church I was planning to stop all travel outside Iloilo including going to the US unless there is an emergency. Becky, our staff, and church are in favor of this. The main effect has been severe weight loss, and I am presently well under one hundred pounds. As of now, we are not able to have groups come for the foreseeable future until our health is better.

Besides stopping my trips, I am cutting out a few of the events our church has been having. This would not include anything that would affect our main ministry of church planting. I am eating a healthier diet, still playing basketball regularly, trying to take care of my health, and expecting to be here for many more years. Please pray this sickness will not hinder the Lord's work here.

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November-December 2024 (part 2)

martinsiloilo@gmail.com

OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS

1. The Christmas musical "O Holy Night" with presentations on December 15, 18, 20, 22 and 25. Please pray many will come to know the Lord as Savior.

2. Please pray for the "Help the Needy" programs from Dec.11-25.



Thanks for being a part of the Lord's work here!

God bless,

Rick and Becky Martin

HELP THE NEEDY
December 11-25, 2024

Your main purpose is to help our people in their day-to-day needs, especially and provide to help the most needy people in our barangay. You may join a lot of many groups serving 40-50 people. You may go to the start or change of the barangay you want to help and/or from home. There are every other groups in each day on the other barangay.

BARANGAY	DISTRICT	IBC STAFF	DATE	DAY	TIME	P	Y	PERFORM	OTHER
1. Bako	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 11	Wed	AM	Y			
2. Compostela	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 12	Thu	AM	Y			
3. Rizal	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 13	Fri	AM	Y			
4. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 14	Sat	AM	Y			
5. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 15	Sun	AM	Y			
6. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 16	Mon	AM	Y			
7. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 17	Tue	AM	Y			
8. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 18	Wed	AM	Y			
9. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 19	Thu	AM	Y			
10. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 20	Fri	AM	Y			
11. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 21	Sat	AM	Y			
12. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 22	Sun	AM	Y			
13. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 23	Mon	AM	Y			
14. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 24	Tue	AM	Y			
15. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 25	Wed	AM	Y			
16. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 26	Thu	AM	Y			
17. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 27	Fri	AM	Y			
18. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 28	Sat	AM	Y			
19. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 29	Sun	AM	Y			
20. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 30	Mon	AM	Y			
21. Santa Catalina	San Jose	Ch. Pastor	December 31	Tue	AM	Y			

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