

Balitang Nagbibigay Buhay

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Archdiocese of Vancouver



Sherwin Ruiz and family: Covid-19 survivors and by their faith, all the better for it!

500YOC-PANDEMIC

How the gift of faith helps Filipinos weather difficult times

by: Marie Pacheco

More than a year in the pandemic, most of us probably have our own personal stories of Covid-19 -whether as survivors or knowing someone who went through it. This month we feature Covid through the eyes of people who have seen it up close; and how it reminded them of their gift of faith.

Sherwin Ruiz from Surrey has lived in Canada for almost 14 years. He works at an architectural firm and is a part-time Interior Design instructor. He is an active volunteer for ANCOP (Answering the Cry of the Poort), a charity organization that promotes awareness and raises funds to help poor countrymen back home.

He and his family are also Covid-19 survivors.

"Our experience was awful. As a family, we feared losing one another, infecting other people, and the anxiety of what the future might hold."

A constant picture throughout the family's ordeal however was an image of Jesus protecting them from the crisis.

"Our faith has increased drastically, we bonded together, we prayed together even more and we realized that only God can really help us through the bad times. God has given us a second chance in life

and He is always there for us.”

Their time in isolation also gave way to an outpouring of blessings from the community.

“We experienced blessings that sometimes words cannot describe. Friends are blessing us with goods, foods, notes, flowers, etc. to uplift our spirit and lighten the mood. We are truly blessed.”

When asked to ponder about this year’s celebration of 500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines, Ruiz says their family’s Covid experience made the celebration more meaningful. He says it is a reminder that going through trials is a test of one’s faith. But it is also God’s chance to show He will not abandon you. And this has inspired the Ruiz family to give more.

“We are so grateful for all the things that He has given to me and my family during our low time and it’s our turn to help others. He has given us all these gifts and we are gifted to give it back to those who are needy.”

Gifted to Give

Liza Arzadon moved to Canada from Bulacan in the Philippines more than 30 years ago. She has been a nurse for more than 38 years. She says the most challenging part of being a nurse during this pandemic are the ethical issues they face: providing high level of care for patients while putting their own safety at risk.

She has found ways to cope by focusing on being kind to herself and others, thinking positive and maintaining a good relationship with friends and families. Her faith has also played a big role in helping her throughout the pandemic.

“Keeping myself focused on the Lord, actively participating in virtual Masses and virtual gatherings in our faith community. If there are opportunities, I go to mass often and receive Communion. Aside from my secular job, I juggle my time being an active member of Couples for Christ, serving in Handmaids of the Lord, being a member of the Filipino Ministry, and helping in our Parish.”

Arzadon knows that practicing one’s faith means giving it back and sharing it with others as well.

“We received the gifts of faith from the Philippines and these gifts that we receive are to be shared. Having our children and our grandkids like ourselves, we can see the importance of passing this faith as a legacy to our younger generation and for them to be aware of how our Christianity started.”

The pandemic continues, but this gift of faith has allowed Arzadon to remain at peace.

“I start the day with a prayer and I end my day with a prayer, something that makes us feel at peace whenever we go to sleep. Asking the Lord to take up my cross while I’m sleeping, as it gives me hope that I am going to wake up the next day.”



 <https://tinyurl.com/4evv24yy>
 <https://youtu.be/bi2mxG3Kuzs>


Matthew 7.7 Prayer Brigade

Monthly Intensive Prayer Session
 of the Filipino Ministry
 Sunday, 27th June, 2:00-5:00 pm




JUNE 27TH

Join our 3-hour prayer session

Via Zoom:

<https://tinyurl.com/4evv24yy>

YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/bi2mxG3Kuzs>

Join us in praying the
Perpetual Help Novena
 with special reflections about
 500YOC




Starts June 18th

and finishing with Mass on th 26th

Download booklet here:

<https://tinyurl.com/twyt8aw7>



SALAMAT
 Receiving the
 GIFT OF FAITH

JOIN US ON
JULY 09, 2021
RECEIVING THE GIFT
 Friday, 6:00-7:30pm PST
 Online meeting details to follow, stay tuned for further announcements!