



“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” –which means, “God with us.” Matthew 1:23

Year 2008 is like a lovely life-size canvas that is painted with signs and symbols of Immanuel.

Here and there, the light of the gospel shining on the hopeless faces among the poor of Manila—like dead bones, metaphorically, coming back to life. Their lives that seemingly evoked stories of survival and desperation only, until Jesus came to them, have become sources of God-faithfulness stories.

- Up there, the bloodless trail of foreign squads, coming no longer as colonizers, but as God-seekers and channels of blessings—not necessarily showing a change in foreign policy, but a change for God deep down in their hearts.
- Over there, images of bony children lining up for meals, and for the story about Jesus—healthy food for the body and soul—a sight to behold with holiness for God was at work in the lives of these little ones as well.
- Over here, missionaries praying, resting, and simply waiting on the Lord—strength spent, now strength recovered.
- On this side, young people whose families are too poor to send them to school, have received college educational scholarships.

Lots of small and big people have received the grace of God in various forms. Indeed, it has been a year of God-dwelling among us missionaries, among our visitors, and among the poor. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

Here are the highlights of my ministry:

I. PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

- A. I thank the Lord for your continued support and partnership; without which we could not have done the work of the Lord entrusted to us.
- B. I thank the Lord for what has been accomplished, through your partnership with us, at Jovil, Montalban, where I am doing holistic ministry. This month is a transition stage for my teammates and myself. Our contract to work with Christ’s Servants Christian Fellowship is ending this month. While we look forward to the Lord’s leading for our next ministry area next year, we also feel sad that we have to leave so many lovely people who have been touched by the loving presence of Jesus. So many people have been encouraged to come back to the Lord, and to join church. Some of them have given up on the Lord, but through our ministry, have come back to His fold. It has been a very fruitful ministry for me at Jovil. I leave with the partner church four Bible study groups that has an attendance of 6-8 persons per group. It was not a smooth-sailing ministry. There were cases of relational problems among them, but the times when people were touched by the Lord in various wonderful ways, are incomparable to the human frailties that mar the fellowship of the faithful followers of the Lord. They have not become rich and famous as a result of our work among them, but it certainly gave them a foretaste of the kingdom of God. We have given them the one enduring wealth, which is no

other than the Lord himself! There is now a growing church at Jovil being nurtured by the hard-working Pastor Johnrey Quinones. There are lots of testimonies about the faithfulness of the Lord in their lives. On Dec 28, my last Sunday at Jovil, there will be a Christmas celebration in church. I will give the Christmas Sunday message.

- C. I had the opportunity to preach as a volunteer pulpit minister at Capital City Alliance Church in Quezon City for the whole month in October. I preached on Missions and based all messages from the book of Jonah.

II. ADDITIONAL MINISTRY

- A. This second semester I have the privilege and honor to be part of the teaching force at Asian Theological Seminary. I was asked by Dr. Corrie De Boer to co-teach a course called Theory and Practice of Urban Ministry. Dr. De Boer, who was to co-teach the course with Dr. David Lim, was scheduled to teach in India the second semester. She needed somebody to take over in her absence. The work is not that heavy. Part of my job is to bring the students, eleven of them, to several ministries that work among the poor. After each field trip, I facilitate the discussion on their experience during the field trip. I check their attendance, reflection papers, and their work project. This is a three-hour class each week. It has been a fruitful time for me. I needed to read nine books on urban ministry and theology in preparation for this job. Right now I enjoy reading their reflection papers. It is interesting that I should be the one entrusted to grade the work and performance of the students.
- B. Last November 24-28 Jannette and I attended a seminar-workshop called Inner Healing Prayer at Asian Theological Seminary. This is a wonderful way of ministering to the deeply-rooted, inner wounds of Christian men and women. It is not counseling nor is it the Pentecostal type of power prayer. It is a very gentle way of looking inside and the past of a person, and praying for that person. It is best to experience it than to explain it.
- C. The following week, December 1-5, I also attended a module called Theology of Work. Our instructor was Prof. Paul Stevens of Bakke Graduate University. I consider myself fortunate enough to have taken this class. Everyone in the class was given by Stevens the authority to share with others all the materials that he gave in class. I can teach this module in our areas, in church, as well as to our missionary trainees.

III. FAMILY MATTERS

- A. Ariel Lev, our second child is now 14 years old. Recently, she expressed her desire to take cello lessons. This is a pleasant surprise for Jannette and myself. We are praying that we will be able to find a cello that we can afford to buy. We imagine that someday the three of them will be helping in church music.
- B. Asher is graduating from high school in March next year and Anya from grade school, God willing.

IV. PRAYER REQUESTS

- A. Please pray for God's direction for our next ministry area, after Jovil. Please pray that the Lord lead us to a church partner who will work with us.
- B. Please pray for God's direction for Asher as he enters college in June 2009.
- C. Please pray for God's provision for a cello for Ariel.
- D. Pray for Jannette as she seeks God's direction in her plans and applications for graduate school.

*Every Blessing
Winston and Jannette*