



AJ KABANAY

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When Mission Comes to Town

It is somewhat unfortunate that here in Cebu City we don't have much data regarding urban migration. However, active peddlers in Colon Street and the Carbon area say that in the past five years the "new" faces in these places have doubled. Surprisingly a great majority of them come from Muslim Mindanao, and they come for two reasons: education and business.

These reasons are misleading. Firstly, though Cebu is known as the education capital of the South, yet it is not the "only" and also not the best in academic discipline. Secondly, business opportunities are possible anywhere as long as one has a good business model. The reading and interpretation of urban migration should not be limited to financial and academic pursuits. It is inevitable for

us then to look into the spiritual aspect of this mass movement.

It is high time for us to sit and scan our old notes on mission territories and strategies. Are they still relevant today? Are we still on the right track of the evangelization race? Could it be possible that our dreamt mission is already in town?



Some members of the AJKabanay went to Po-g, Toledo, Cebu for a faith-excursion last February 24, 2010.

Old friendship, youthful heart

Last January 26, 2010, I received a letter from Fr. Robert Schmitz, SVD in response to the Christmas greetings I sent him last December 2009. As you know, I only keep in touch with him during Christmas and his birthday. I have been doing this ever since he left the University of San Carlos (USC) for his assignment as Treasurer General in Rome. When he was in USC, he was the Vice President for Finance.



He writes to me only when he has something really important to tell me, like when he celebrated his 40th anniversary as a religious missionary priest. I felt honored by that letter because he usually would not answer my greetings even though I knew he appreciated them. When he was still the Treasurer General, everytime he would come to USC for an official visit he would always go to my office to see me and thank me for keeping in touch.

In his latest letter he mentioned that he has ceased being “Treasurer” since first of May 2009; however, as a religious priest, he continues to celebrate mass every day in an old folks’ home where he stays.



Witness Christian Values in the Mission Frontier

As a librarian in the grade school library of the University of San Carlos – South Campus, there are instances when I encounter graduating college students who act as if they have not known the basics of GMRC – good manners and right conduct. Asking permission and simple courtesy are among the common-sense acts of respect expected of a student. I believe that my “patience” in reminding them of these basics of good relationship, such as asking

permission when plugging electronic equipments and observing silence in the library, are my way of witnessing Christian values through my chosen job to which I am deeply committed.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

John 8:1-11

The Merciful and Gracious God



Opening prayer: To beg for the grace of a merciful and gracious heart so that we can love truly by deciding to forgive radically.

For true Christians, radical loving and forgiving are inseparable. In the scene of the gospel for the 5th Sunday of Lent, we see the Scribes and the Pharisees bringing to Jesus a woman condemned for adultery and about to be stoned for failing to conform to norms set by the Jewish society. Jesus is asked for his opinion

(a trick set by the Jewish authority to trap him): “*What do you say?*”

In this precarious situation, Jesus sees the need to listen... to get in touch with his inner being as well as with the values he holds dear and important in life. Perhaps this is the reason for his taking the posture of bending and writing on the ground with his finger. Surely, it is the time to connect and listen to His beloved... His Abba. Doing so, he is able to frame a response that touches the deepest core of those who condemn the woman. “*Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*” It is a response and a challenge that reconcile justice and mercy. “*Woman, has no one condemned you? Neither do I condemn you.*”

Reflection guide:

As a member of AJK, what and when did I experience the Lord’s rich and abounding mercy? When was I faced with a situation that called me to forgive and be merciful?

I prayerfully go through this list of what it means to be merciful:

- Entertain no bitterness and be willing to trust again and forgive from the heart.

- Do not hold grudges and do not seek revenge against those who have hurt you.
- Do not brood over injuries and do not be quick-tempered.
- Pray sincerely for your enemies and for those who persecute you.
- Do to others whatever you would have them do to you.
- Be slow to anger and rich in kindness and patience.



If ever Mo. Josepha had to make the final decision when opinions were divided, she did not judge before she had a clear insight into the matter and had heard all sides. (Mo. Josepha)

What is my response to the call of our present reality to enable others especially women to experience God's love and mercy? An excerpt from the article, "*A plea from the Catholic Theological Society of the Philippines: a plea for and in behalf of the women victims of abuse*": "The stories of women victim-survivors that we have encountered are very unsettling and disturbing for us. Their testimonies tell us of the ugliness of sexual violence, the depth of human suffering and the extent of the crucifixion these women-victims experience. Their experiences made us think deeply about how our modes of doing theology can address their struggles to regain a sense of self-respect and dignity after being preyed upon and reduced as objects for domination and sexual gratification."

What do I know of the experiences of our founding Generation: how did they live the challenge of radical loving?

How people thought and spoke about the plan and the planner became clear from the sarcastic remark of the curate in Kempen who was supposed to have said to Fr. Arnold, "You are sufficiently impractical." (St. Arnold)

People came to see an exotic European, not to listen to his message. And worst of all they shouted, "Foreign devil!", at him. (St. Joseph F)

All her life, she found herself caught between different groups whose different expectations she had to satisfy. (Mo. Maria)