



**MERRY CHRISTMAS, BELOVED FEASTERS!**

It's been a fruitful and joyful year for us at The FEAST.

And yes, I believe that it's by no accident that we end every year celebrating Christmas.

**Christmas Is Christ**

Yet, in a world that's getting noisier and darker, we are always reminded that *CHRISTMAS is CHRIST*.

And where CHRIST is, there will be peace, joy, faith, hope, and love – leading to a brighter life.

On our last FEAST for year 2024, we come together again on our GRAND FEAST as One Family in our Feast Bay Area District and of our Light of Jesus Family. (We shall have a 2-Sunday break for our servants and for you to be with your families, be in your local parishes for the Masses, and to celebrate the season in a more restful mood.)

We shall *FIND JESUS in the NOISE* and learn *How To Put a Spotlight on JESUS Amidst the Craziness of the Christmas Season*.

Like the shepherds who were brought the Good News by angels, and like the Wise Men who were guided by the Star of Bethlehem to the Holy Infant, we too shall hear, come, and see the Savior – The Light of the World!

We lift our thanksgiving, praise, and worship to The Reason for the Season  
-- *Emmanuel – God with us!*

*Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will*  
.-- Luke 2: 14

Welcome to The FEAST, where *You are Loved!*  
*Have a blessed Christmas and a hope-filled New Year!*

*Mayroong Magandang Mangyayari Sa 'Yo!*

**Alvin Barcelona**



## ***This Christmas: Go Up! Grow Up!***

“Because it’s there.”

That was the response of British climber George Mallory when a reporter asked him why he wanted to climb Mount Everest.

Rev. Fr. Albert Garong has climbed the highest peak of Luzon, Mount Pulag, three times. He shared his experience in his Homily last Feast Sunday. Because climbing mountains, he said, is very much like what we do this Advent season-- preparing for the coming of our Lord Jesus. How? Read on, *page 3*.

Fr. Albert added that when you climb mountains, you go through various landscapes-- hills, valleys, crooked and meandering paths.



Speaking of landscapes, Bro. Alvin Barcelona points out the paths we take as we look forward to Christmas-- even amid the landscapes of darkness and noise around us.

That’s about the Talk in our last Feast this 2024 which Bro. Alvin introduces, *page 1*.

Yes, this issue is of *The FEAST FAMILY* is about going up difficult paths.

It is also about growing up. Which was the message of the Special Talk last Feast Sunday by Bro. Audee Villaraza: God wants to see you grow up as a mature Christian. How do you know that you’re mature? Bro. Audee shared six qualities, *pages 14-27*.



Bro. Nico Narvaez touched on the first quality: You’re Multiplying. As a Christ follower, you’ll know that you are maturing in Christ if you’re no longer living your life just for yourself--you’re also living for other people. Bro. Nico said more in our *Love Offering* section, *page 9*.

Yes, we take the path that leads to our Lord Jesus.

Not because it is there.

But because it’s what will make us spiritually joyful.

And will make our Christmas merry!



All for God’s Glory,

**Randy Borromeo**  
Media Ministry  
Executive Director





## Holy Mass



**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## Homily

**REV. FR. ALBERT GARONG, SSP**

on the Gospel Luke 3:1-6

Excerpts:

Good Morning, Everyone!

My body has been aching for a week already. It may be a sign of aging, right?

Actually, last week, I went hiking. Yes, I know. One look at me and you can tell that I am sporty and outdoorsy. Especially now, I look like Barney or Grimace from McDonalds.

It was already my third time to climb the highest peak of Luzon which is Mount Pulag. I was with other priests. It was six hours of hiking. From the starting point, you can already see the peak of Pulag.

Our guide pointed it to us: "Father, that's where we are going."

I said to myself, "Ahhh, it's not that far from here. This is going to be easy and manageable."

We started hiking at 1:00 a.m. because we wanted to get to the peak before sunrise. One hour into the hike, all of us priests were thinking, "Why are we doing this? We paid to tire ourselves!"

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## Why Climb the Mountain

The air was thinning. It was super dark, completely dark. It was slippery because it rained the day before. It was really difficult. The thing about climbing a mountain is that the path goes up and down.

I thought it was supposed to be a straight line. But there we were-- having to cross more hills, more valleys, more crooked and meandering paths.

Finally, before 6:00 a.m., we reached the peak. We did something special: we held Mass at the top. It was a really beautiful experience for us.

Why am I telling you this?

First, we are in the season of Advent which is pretty much like going to a mountain to hike.

Why? Because you have to be intentional about it. You have to carve out time to do it. Why did my co-priests and I go up the mountain? Because we knew that by the time Advent and Christmas come, we would be going left and right. These are our peak seasons-- Christmas and Holy Week. It's insane.

We knew that we had to set out time for us to be away from it all to find some time to commune with the Lord in that peaceful mountain-- because of the call of Ministry.



### First Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

*Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever: <sup>2</sup> Wrapped in the cloak of justice from God, bear on your head the mitre that displays the glory of the eternal name. <sup>3</sup> For God will show all the earth your splendor: <sup>4</sup> you will be named by God forever the peace of justice, the glory of God's worship. <sup>5</sup> Up, Jerusalem! stand upon the heights;*

*look to the east and see your children gathered from the east and the west at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that they are remembered by God. <sup>6</sup> Led away on foot by their enemies they left you: but God will bring them back to you borne aloft in glory as on royal thrones. <sup>7</sup> For God has commanded that every lofty mountain be made low, and that the age-old depths and gorges be filled to level ground, that Israel may advance secure in the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> The forests and every fragrant kind of tree have overshadowed Israel at God's command; <sup>9</sup> for God is leading Israel in joy by the light of his glory, with his mercy and justice for company.*

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## Making Advent Happen

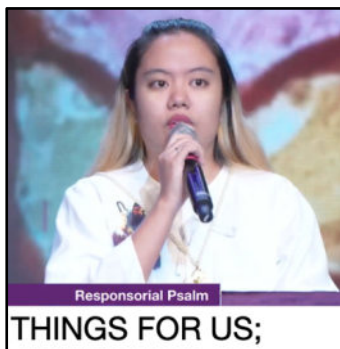
My dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Advent won't happen to you. You have to make it happen. You have to choose to embrace this time to set yourselves apart from all the distractions-- even for a while-- to look at what's more important rather than be carried away by all of the business, craziness, and the lights.

If we just go with the flow, Christmas will just come and go. It will feel like nothing happened. Before you know it, it's January already and you will then have to make New Year's resolutions that you won't even fulfill.

It's not because Christmas lost its meaning. Christmas will always be meaningful. But it would lose its meaning if we did not prepare for it well. We did not take the time to make the most of this season of preparation so that we could receive the gift of Jesus Christ.

Tell the person beside you: "Let's celebrate the Advent seriously."

Let's embrace this season of preparation. Get away from distractions. See how much time of your life is consumed by ultimately meaningless things. All the things that consume our time, energy, and attention-- do they bear fruits? Or are we just tiring ourselves out?



## Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6)

**R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.**

*1 When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming. 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing. (R) Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."*

*3 The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad indeed. (R)*

*4 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the torrents in the southern desert.*

*5 Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing. (R)*

*6 Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown, they shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves. (R)*



## Changing the Landscape of the Heart

Advent should be the time for us to step back and look at the landscape of our lives.

Speaking of landscape, that's the second reason I was talking to you about mountains earlier. Our Readings are full of talk about landscapes. They talk about mountains that need to be flattened and made low, valleys that need to be filled, crooked paths that need to be straightened, and rough ways that need to be smoothened.

Advent is about preparing a God who will reshape our world literally. At the end of time, all of these will change. Heaven and Earth will become one and nothing that you see right now will remain the same. But that's in the future.

In the present, what we're focused on is the landscape of our hearts.

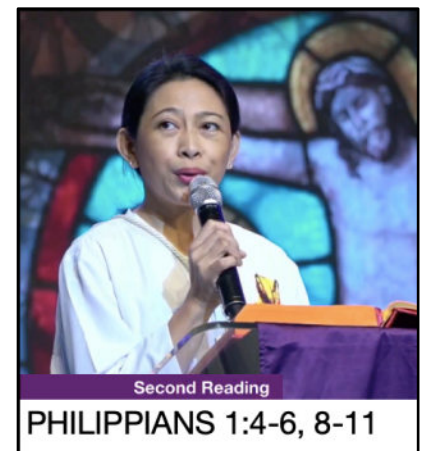
Human technology can change landscapes. We've seen mountains flattened. You've seen us reclaim lands from the ocean. Talk about human ingenuity.

But what about the landscape of our hearts? That is not something you can change. Instead, as St. Paul reminds us in the Second Reading: "Righteousness comes through Christ."

So, we must allow Jesus to reshape our world. Are you willing to do that?

## Second Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

*4 Brothers and sisters: I pray always with joy in my every prayer for all of you, 5 because of your partnership for the gospel from the first day until now. 6 I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. 8 God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, 10 to discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.*



## What the Lord Wants

Here, at The Feast, our prayer starts this way:

*"Today, I receive all of God's love for me..."*

That prayer is a brave one because that prayer means we are allowing the Lord to reshape our lives.

That's the thing: When you step back and allow Advent to do its thing, it will let you look at the landscape of your heart and it will show you mountains that need to be made low -- mountains of pride, unforgiveness, anxieties, ambition, and other concerns.

Advent will show you valleys that need to be filled -- valleys of woundedness, trauma, and abuse. It will show you crooked ways that need to be made straight. Things that you do in your life that are really wrong but you do them anyway because you want to get ahead.

Little corruptions in your life that you've come to tolerate and you say, "Since everyone is doing it, it must be okay."

Addictions and bad habits hinder you from reaching the top. Those are the obstacles between where you are and where God wants you to be.

In this Advent, the Lord is asking each and every one of us. "Will you allow Me to reshape your heart? Will you allow Me to change your world?"

Will you allow the Lord to make all the things that He needs to do to get you from here to where you should be?



That's the only thing God wants for us: to get you to the top and to get you home to Heaven.

As we prepare to welcome His coming, may we allow the Lord to reshape our lives.

Amen.

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# Welcome!



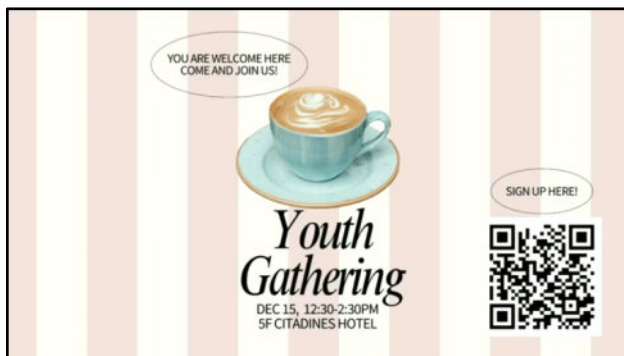
**BRO. NICO NARVAEZ:**

Good Morning, Feast! Welcome to the happiest place on Earth!

First-timers, thank you for being here. I just want to tell you, from the bottom of our heart, we really, really love that you're here.

Welcome Home!

## Announcements



## Love Offering



In your *Feast* bulletin, there are two envelopes. Usually we have only one: the Love Offering envelope for our tithes, for our operational expenses.

Today, we have another envelope, the red one, you will take home. We'll give you one week to pray-- if God is telling you to give more.



All you put in this envelope will go directly to our Mercy Ministries-- for the abandoned elderly, people with cancer, street children-- and also our missions-- like our Youth Ministry through its Campus Mission going to schools to minister to students.

Give this red envelope in our next Feast Sunday, our last Feast for this year.

Do you believe that God can multiple our blessings 5X, 10X?

Yes, we do. But let's not make that the reason we give. That's just a bonus from God. The reason we give is Jesus gave Himself up first for us. God gave His only Son for us. And we just want to replicate that kind of generosity that God already extended to us in the first place. Let's raise our envelopes and let's pray:

*In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

*Father, bless the work of my hands  
so that the fruit of my work may  
multiply and that work may bless  
me, bless my family, bless  
the people around me, and bless  
even strangers. Use my blessings,  
Lord, to bless other people more.*



**Help the Feast Mercy Ministries. Help them all.**

 Assisted Living Ministries Foundation, Inc.	 Grace to Be Born Maternity Home and Nursery	 We Care Foundation Street Children-Caring Center	 Jerusalem SBC-7 Foundation	 Payson ng Parang Scholarship Foundation, Inc.
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With smiles, let's give to God today.

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## Worship!

**SIS. LUAN FEDERIGAN:**

Brothers and Sisters, we are gathered here today to give praise, and to worship, and to hear God's Good News.

Psalms 62:6 says: *God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken.* Hallelujah!

So, in whatever season you are in right now--whether it is joy, in despair, in fulfillment, or in doubt, always remember: that God remains faithful to that promise.

Because He is our firm foundation.

Let us put our trust in Him and in Him alone.

Let this song be our declaration of faith:





**BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:**

We are in the Presence of our Mighty King.

Everybody, lift your hands right now. Let's pray:

*Father, we could have been anywhere in this moment. We could have been taking that extra nap for our body that's tired this week. We could have been running some errands and getting ahead of the Christmas rush. We could have been just lying around somewhere.*

*But we choose to be here today. Because it's a statement that says there is no other place that we would rather be in right now than here in Your Presence, and there is no person we are choosing except You. And so, Father, we choose to lift our hands, to lift our voices, and to worship You. To lay down our crown before You and to call you our King, our Redeemer, and our Savior.*

*Today, we worship You, oh, Jesus. Today, with our lips, with our life, and with our love, we choose to worship You. We want to know you more, oh, Jesus. We choose to know You more.*

And so, with our voices, let's lift one more praise to Jesus and say:  
"I want You Jesus!"

How many of you are blessed that you are here? Give me a wave.



And say to those around you: "Welcome to the happiest place on Earth!"  
Say that with joy!

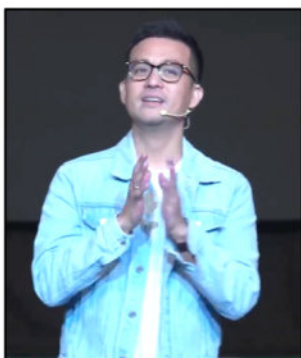
I want to welcome everybody here. If you're online, thank you so much for joining us. We want you to know that the same grace that fills this place is flowing right back into the screen to you. because God is here and God is there, God is everywhere.



## NOVENA TO GOD'S LOVE **DECLARATION OF ABUNDANCE**

### **BRO. AUDEE VILLARAZA:**

It's my joy to lead you to the Presence of God. I want you to open your hands. Lift them in the air like you just don't care. Say this with me:



TODAY, I RECEIVE ALL OF GOD'S LOVE FOR ME.  
TODAY, I OPEN MYSELF TO THE UNBOUNDED, LIMITLESS,  
OVERFLOWING ABUNDANCE OF GOD'S UNIVERSE.  
TODAY, I OPEN MYSELF TO GOD'S BLESSINGS,  
HEALING, AND MIRACLES.  
TODAY, I OPEN MYSELF TO GOD'S WORD SO THAT  
I BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS EVERY DAY.



TODAY, I PROCLAIM THAT  
I AM GOD'S BELOVED.  
I AM GOD'S SERVANT.  
I AM GOD'S POWERFUL CHAMPION.  
AND BECAUSE I AM BLESSED,  
I AM BLESSING THE WORLD.  
IN JESUS' NAME. AMEN.

Everybody, lift your hands in honor of God's Word as we sing:

*Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet  
And a Light unto my path.*



# Special Talk



The Lord is humbling me today. May the Holy Spirit use this message to speak to all of us today.

We're taking a page, a Scripture, from one of the Letters of St. Paul to the people of Corinth. You may have heard of this before but I pray that I'm able to package this in the way that you need to receive this:

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11  
"WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I SPOKE AND THOUGHT AND REASONED AS A CHILD. BUT WHEN I GREW UP, I PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS."

*"When I was a child..."*

That's a great reflection question.

Once upon a time, we were children. I loved Saturday morning cartoons when I was a child. I loved sleeping in on Saturdays. When I was a child, we had 15 dogs...

Everybody, finish that phrase: *"When I was a child..."*

**WHEN I  
WAS A  
CHILD...**

## The Message Today

We're near the tail end of 2024. When you think back of all that have happened in your life, you get to realize that you've come a long way. Imagine all you have been through to get to this moment -- all the struggles, all the mountains you had to cross, all the challenges you had to go through. The thought makes you feel that you're in a much better place now.

Joyce Meyer, American Charismatic Christian author, speaker, said this: "I may not be where I want to be but at least I'm not where I used to be."

I believe that you're stronger, wiser, and more resilient.

But here's the key: Don't get too comfortable just yet because you may have come a long way-- but you still got a long way to go.

God is not done yet with you. God is still strengthening you. He's still taking you from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory.

You're still in beta version. God is still taking you to the better version.

God is still shaping and transforming you. I believe that God still wants to see you grow up. That's the message for today.

We're going to break open the word of God. We're going to lean in. Put your hand over your heart and say this with me: *"Jesus, I'm here. I'm ready to listen and to be changed only by You. By Your grace, I will be transformed."*

*Thy Word  
is a Lamp  
unto my feet  
And a Light  
unto my path.*



**GOD WANTS  
TO SEE YOU  
GROW UP**





## Options

My eldest child, Ethan, is now seven years old.

One of our pastimes whenever we get bored, or whenever we need to kill time, is we play a game called *Would You Rather?*

It's a pretty interesting game because there are no right or wrong answers. Any answer that you give would be the right answer for you. It's simple. It's where you're asked the question and you choose whichever you prefer.

For example: Jollibee or Mc Donald's? 7-11 or Uncle John's? Bini or BTS? Would you rather not using the whole day shampoo or toothpaste? Be stuck in an elevator with the noisiest high school students or middle-aged judgmental men? Go on your whole life without eyebrows or eyelashes?

My point is simple. Life is full of choices. Life has a lot of options. It's easy when the choices are good or bad because obviously, we will always choose the good if you've got a good moral compass. But what happens when the choices are both good? That's challenging.

Some people might say, "Well, you can choose both."

That's true. Eating is good. Vacationing is good. Sleeping is good. But I can't do all those at the same time. Sometimes, you've got to make a choice. Let me stretch that thought even further. What happens now if the choices are also both bad? It gets even more challenging.

For instance, in the recent viral news, the one that Father Albert mentioned, the one that you've been reading, the options for these people are very hard. If they don't own up to their mistakes, people will judge them for being cowards. If they own up to their mistakes, people are going to burn them for those mistakes. The options are both bad.

What do you do when options A and B are not very good or both are good? Which one do you choose?

I believe this is where the Holy Spirit will work in your life.

Because it's now up to you to start discerning which one is better for you. The Holy Spirit will now give you the grace and the power to choose what is good. But again, it's not often easy.

Many months ago, I read in social media this post: "Guard up, Buds. We need to protect our children from evil."

As a parent, I think that's a good advice, right?

But I also thought about this: Because when I was growing up, I realized that my parents were not able to protect me from evil 24/7. I mean, with everything that I've been through.

So, I thought that maybe my job as a parent is not only to protect my children from evil but also to teach them to choose what is right.

## Our Job as Parents

Let me tell you a story. This is something that I do with my children-- especially Ethan, because he's old enough and more cautious about it.

I'm at a stage in my parenting where he asks us whether words are good or bad.

For instance, he came up to me and asked, "Dad, is this a bad word?"

...And then he paused for a moment.

And in that moment, I tell you, I was praying, "Lord, please don't let it be *F you* or *P.I.* or some of those really bad words because you don't want your children saying that, right?"

So, he said the word: *damn*.

And I was like, "Thank You!"

So, I answered this way: "Ethan, it's not really a bad word per se but it's not a good word either. It's not a word that we use at home because it's like the shortened version of *damnation* which refers to *eternal punishment in hell*. You ask a preacher, get ready for the preacher to preach."

Ethan said, "But Dad, why is it that my classmates say it all the time?"

I said, "There are families that accept it as a word. But for our family, we don't say it. Some people teach their children that it's okay but in our family it's not okay."

The point I'm sharing this, especially to the parents, is that our job as parents is to protect our children from evil-- by all means. Surround them with love and care-- but you cannot be with them 24/7.

So, maybe, when they start growing up, your job now is to tell them about right and wrong, to present the options like, "Yes, you will be exposed to evil. There will be people who will bash you and bully you. You will hear foul language from time to time. But I want you to start learning how to choose what is good."

My fear Friends, that's what spiritual maturity is. It's having the grace to be able to tell right from wrong.

Let's face it. Good and evil will always coexist. In the Bible, it says that in the beginning, there was nothing. There was darkness.

Then God said, "Let there be light."

But take note: God never removed the *darkness* which He called *night*. The *light*, He called it *day*.

Good and evil will always be there. As Christians, our job is to discern which is good and which is bad in the eyes of God-- not according to our own terms.

Which brings us now, my dear Friends, to our passage.





## Childish or Childlike?

Paul is speaking to the people of Corinth and he gives them a beautiful advice. He says:

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11  
"WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I SPOKE AND THOUGHT AND REASONED  
AS A CHILD. BUT WHEN I GREW UP, I PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS."

I love how Paul is making a distinction that when he was young, he used to act, think, reason, and behave like a child.

But when he grew up, he set aside all those childish ways. He's making a distinction between *childish* and *childlike*.

I want to talk to you about this for a moment. You might be sitting there and acting high and mighty: "Well, I'm an adult. I'm no longer *childish*."

But did you know that there are people who grow old but they refuse to grow up?

I'm preaching this to myself. I may be 46 years old but some of the ways that I respond to Life, I get childish at times. I can easily get angry. I can easily get grumpy. I can easily get grouchy. No patience.

*Childish* is when you may look like you've grown up but deep inside, you're still immature.

*Childlike* is when you are all grown up but you still behave like you are innocent in the eyes of God.

For instance, you're so dependent on God even though you are a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a company. You still see life with eyes of wonder.

In 2013, when Tacloban was hit with by Typhoon Yolanda, there was this message on one of the walls of the house that collapsed: "We have no walls. We have no roof. But we've got a lot of hope."

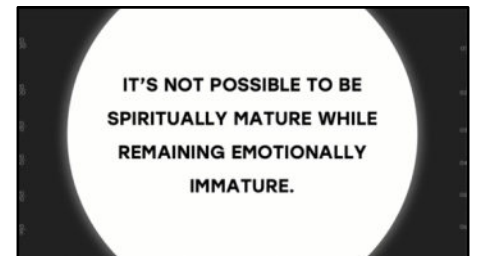
That is childlike. That you remain to be a child of God--and even though you can do things on your own, you rely on God for certain things.

Because He is your source.

So, Paul is making a distinction right now. Who are you to say that you're already mature in Christ because there are some things that you might have left behind that still make you immature?

The truth is that it's not possible for you to say that you're spiritually mature and then be emotionally immature. The way that you behave sometimes will reveal that you haven't really grown up yet.

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## Six Qualities of a Spiritually Maturing Person

The truth is that you'll start becoming mature when you encounter Jesus. That's the first step. The moment you encounter the love of God, something changes in you. You start behaving like a different person. You stop doing what you're doing that's sinful against God.

Here are six qualities of a spiritually maturing person.



As a Christ follower, you'll know that you are maturing in Christ if you're no longer living your life just for yourself. You might be living alone in the house, that's fine. You might still be single, that's fine.

But you're also living for other people.

There's no such thing called a "Barren Christian." If you're going to call yourself a Christian, you need to bear fruits. You can grow spiritual gifts in your life. They say that the fruit of the spirit is love.

Are you growing in love? Are you growing in perseverance? Are you growing in self-control? Are you growing in the spiritual gifts that God gave to you?

The Bible says: *"Go therefore and multiply."*

We're supposed to multiply. You cannot remain here and not grow. You've got to grow in your gifts. Not only that. You've also got to grow in your calling.

Because Jesus says, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations."

You've got to be growing people. Be a disciple maker.



You're never too busy for God.

Do you have time to still pray every day even though life is so busy and Christmas is coming?

Do you really have time to sit and thank the Lord for all the blessings in your life?

My experience here in Ministry is there's a lot of burnout. People get tired--and that's the truth.

Servants, say, "Amen."

Sometimes, you're so tired--like you do nothing but serve and serve and serve every Sunday.

You're like, "I'm in charge of the slides again? The Builder was late again in submitting his slides?"

Some of the servants at The Feast have approached me a number of times and they say they're experiencing burnout.

## Solution to Burnout

Do you know what is the solution for burnout? You'll be shocked by this:

The solution to Ministry burnout is to spend time with Jesus.

You might say, "Huh, spend time with Jesus? I'm already spending time with Jesus serving him."

There is a difference. Some people equate spending time for Jesus by doing some tasks for Jesus.

Doing for God is not the same as *being with God*.

Do you remember the story of Mary and Martha? Martha is so busy in the kitchen preparing for the meal that she wants for Jesus. She is toiling in the kitchen, cutting the onions, and preparing the dish while Mary is sitting at the foot of Jesus.



DOING FOR GOD  
IS NOT THE SAME AS  
BEING WITH GOD.



Then, Martha complains, "Jesus, tell my sister to help me in the kitchen."

Jesus says, "No. Mary chose what is better. To sit right by my feet and to listen to me-- and I will not take that away from her."

How much time are you spending *serving the Lord* and how much time are you spending *being with the Lord*? This is a quick sign that you need to look out for to know that you are spiritually maturing, that you love listening more than speaking.

Are you in that season already where you don't really want to say to the Lord how you feel but you want to receive and listen to Him instead when you have your quality time?

That's a mark of a Christian: That you're growing in your faith when you're becoming more and more available to the Lord.

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The next time that someone corrects you, better own up to that statement:



"I'm open to correction."

Because the truth is, when we get to a point where we're so mature because of our age, we think that we're so wise that we're no longer teachable.

Once, I gave a talk to a group of Justices of the Supreme Court. I was invited by Judge Marlene who happens to be one of our warm servants here. One judge looked at me from head to toe and I knew she was judging me not because she was a judge.

She said, 'You're our speaker? You should be the one sitting down and I should be the one talking to you!'"

The truth is you arrive at a point in your life when you've got so much experience in life that you think that you know it all. But the truth is if you're going to remain a Christ follower, or a true Christian, you need to be open to feedback

Look at what Jesus did when He looked for disciples. He didn't really look for the most educated or the most talented of people. He looked for people who were pliable -- still can adjust to circumstances and can still be molded.

Jesus is looking for pliable followers-- those that in the hands of the Master, can still be reshaped and be remodeled according to His image.

How can the Lord still change you and transform you if you're not teachable?

Teachability is all about humility and it speaks so much about who you are.

If in your mind, you're saying to someone, "I know more than you," you're not following the footsteps of Jesus.

When you're growing in your teachability and if you're always open to feedback, then I congratulate you.





You admit you don't know it all.

When I was being invited to become a Feast

Builder, it took me three years to say *Yes* to becoming one.

The simple reason is this: I was so afraid of taking that leadership role because I had this image that a Feast Builder is supposed to be the smartest, wisest, and strongest person ever.

That's what I thought until I met the Builders. Truth be told, I realized that they're not the wisest and strongest-- but they're the people who have the biggest hearts.

I realized that leadership is not being the excellent person in knowledge, but being the most excellent in loving people.

Here in the Light of Jesus Family, we have *21 Leadership Beliefs*.

No. 2 says: "Strive for excellence-- but most especially the excellence of love.

What are the two greatest commandments? *Love God and love others*.

The action word there is *love*.

So, I don't want to be just the greatest preacher. I want to be the most loving person you've ever met.

Because that's a call of Jesus: That we grow in understanding, that we don't have to know it all, and that's okay.

Because you're not God or Jesus. You have to say to yourself: "Yeah, it's fine even if I don't know."

The perfect example that I can give to you was an advice from a good salesman.

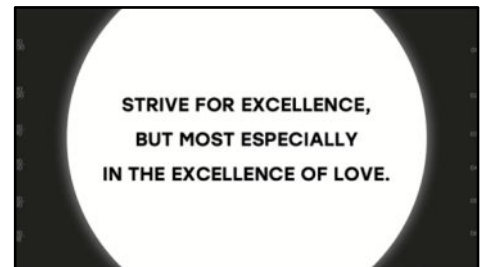
He said that when a client comes up to you and asks you something that you don't know the answer to, say, "I'm sorry. I don't know but I will get the answer for you. I will look for somebody else who knows the answers."

If you are an Light Group Facilitator, you're not supposed to be an expert.

The last thing you want is to show off and say, "I know exactly how that is. I know what you're supposed to do."

No. You're supposed to love them first and then tell them: I'm sorry, Brother. I'm sorry, Sister. I do not know the answer to your problem but I will look for a person who knows the answer and I will point you to that person."

Sometimes, all you need to do is point them to Jesus, or to a priest, for solution of their problem. Because you're limited and for you to admit that you don't know, says so much about your humility: That you're growing in your understanding, that you're not God but you're here to love.



5

## RESTFULNESS

"I TRUST IN GOD"

Many of us have different definitions of *rest*. It can be sleeping, vacation, watching a good movie, reading a good book,

sipping a good cup of coffee, having a great conversation with your friend. These are different variations of rest.

But I found out that *rest* can be anything-- and that's a good definition of *rest*.

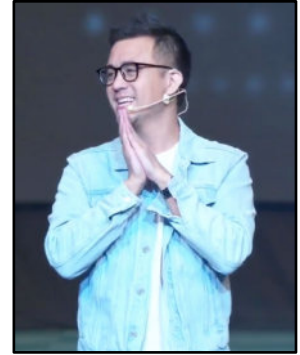
But *real rest* is when you trust in God even if you're not sleeping, even if you're working, even if you're biking, and even if you're swimming. As long as you are trusting in God, you are resting in God.

When I start to trust God, this tells me that *I can rest because God is doing the rest*.

You're here on a Sunday. Praise God that you're here. You're not working. You're not in the mall. You're not banking.

These simply tell me that you can park your business for a moment. You can park your job for a moment because while you are here, God is the one working on your business. He's the one working for you. That's how good our God is. He never gets tired of working.

And that's a message for somebody here: Please rest. Even the Lord rested on the seventh day of Creation. You're just human. You've got to rest. The more that you trust in God, the more that you can find rest in Him.



6

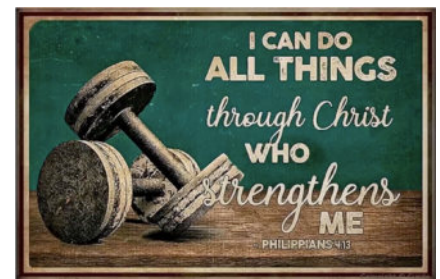
## EMPOWERMENT

You Are Becoming More Empowered  
"I am nothing without Jesus."

I remember in our old gymnasium, there was this old poster that never failed to encourage me. It was so old and decrepit that if you touch it, it would disintegrate. That's how old it was. But every time I would look at that poster, I would get an extra ounce of strength. You want to know what the poster was about?

It's Philippians 4:13: *I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength*.

So, whenever I need that extra strength, I would just say that verse and I'm able to finish my program.





## Outer and Inner Strength

When you ask people what makes a person strong, they'll always tell you, naturally, the person's muscle. The more you work out, the more you get muscles, right? The more that you flex, the more that you gain strength.

That is what you call *outer strength*.

But there is also a thing called *inner strength* and I call it *mettle*.

*Mettle* is something that you do not see. It's the character and the mold of a person. While *muscle* is what you get from a grind, *mettle* is what you get from grace.

Only God can give you *mettle*. While physical strength is what you get when you flex your *muscles*, *mettle* is what you get when you flex your *faith*.

Muscle we all have.

Paul said, "I can do all things."

Obviously, you can do all things because you're good, you're talented, and you're skilled. But I'm so glad that Paul did not end it there because Paul was talking about inner muscle.

He said, "*I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.*"

Paul was talking about *mettle*.

There are some things that you cannot do and that only God can do.

That's what Paul was talking about.

The more that you lean in and depend on Jesus, the more you will know that only His grace can power you up. You can have security in your life but without Jesus, you will never have significance. You can have good income right now but without Jesus, you will never have impact-- because there are things that only God can do for you.

That's empowerment: when you rely on God for things that you alone cannot do.

So, 6 Qualifies.

What do they stand for? You are becoming MATURE. If you thought of that in a negative way, you still need to go do some growing up.

### 6 QUALITIES OF A MATURING CHRISTIAN

- 1 MULTIPLYING
- 2 AVAILABILITY
- 3 TEACHABILITY
- 4 UNDERSTANDING
- 5 RESTFULNESS
- 6 EMPOWERMENT

## Spiritual Gifts

I want to end this and talk to you first about how this Scripture, Philippians 4:13, came to be.

Paul was writing to the people of Corinth but the context of what he was writing about is something you really need to know. This comes from 1 Corinthians 13.

Many of you might remember this verse because this is the book of *Love*.

In a wedding, this is the Scripture that is usually said: *"Love is not kind. Love is not boastful. Love is not patient."*

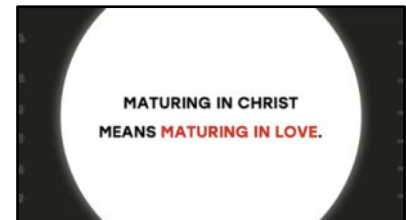
But you know what else Paul is talking about? He is talking about spiritual gifts. During this time, the people of Corinth were so focused on spiritual gifts -- the gift of tongues, the gift of wisdom, the gift of prophecy.

Paul is saying:

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11  
"IF I SPEAK IN THE TONGUES OF MEN OR OF ANGELS, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, I AM ONLY A RESOUNDING GONG OR A CLANGING CYMBAL. <sup>2</sup> IF I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY AND CAN FATHOM ALL MYSTERIES AND ALL KNOWLEDGE, AND IF I HAVE A FAITH THAT CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, I AM NOTHING. <sup>3</sup> IF I GIVE ALL I POSSESS TO THE POOR AND GIVE OVER MY BODY TO HARSHIP THAT I MAY BOAST, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, I GAIN NOTHING."

Paul is pointing to us all the spiritual gifts but he makes it a point to stress that even though all of these gifts can be in our possession, he says something so important: *"If I do not have love, I am nothing. If I do not have love, I gain nothing."*

My dear Friends, What does it look like when you're starting to mature in Christ? It simply means maturing in love-- that you start loving more and more like Jesus. You start acting more and more like Jesus and you start putting priority on love over the spiritual gifts that you have.



So, I'm speaking this to everybody. Because you might be a person who's so gifted and so talented but you don't have love, Paul says you've gained nothing. If you can be the most skilled servant here at The Feast -- the best singer, instrumentalist, preacher, or usher, but you don't have love in your heart, you don't have anything. That's a sad reality.

Because love is what makes us mature.

Who loves getting your heart broken?

Honestly, you know you don't want that, right? You want a serious relationship. You want the love that's mature, right?

But here's the news: so does God. Loving God is a serious business-- and it takes a mature person to really love God.

It takes a serious person who is mature here in the heart to really say, "Lord, I love you and I'm not afraid to be persecuted. I'm not afraid to be abandoned. I'm not afraid to get hurt-- because I'm mature enough in loving you."



## Surrender

You want to arrive at that point in your life where you know that you're maturing in your faith.

What does it look like when you're really maturing? It's when you no longer live your life for yourself.

Jesus showed us how when He was in the Garden.

He could have turned away from the mission and said, "No, forget this. Instead of going to the Cross let's just do a fundraising. Let's just do a free concert."

But He didn't. He said, "Nevertheless, not my will but Your will be done."

As we end 2024, as you embark on the season where you encounter Jesus, that you would see yourself the way that God sees you-- the potential in you.

The way that God wants you to mature-- that one day you can wake up and say: "Today, I will not be easily offended. Today, I'm not going to be selfish. Today, I'm going to serve even if I'm afraid. Today, I'm going to be available to those who need me today. I will attend The Feast even if that's not my favorite Builder today. I will be mature because that's the calling -- that we grow more like Jesus."

It starts by knowing Him, getting to know Jesus.

You're in a place of miracles right now because this is the place where you can encounter Christ Himself. If you want more of Jesus, put your hand over your chest and I'll pray with you:

*"Lord, Thank You for Your Word.  
Right now, I realize how immature I still am. I know that I can still grow. With your help and with your grace, I can develop into becoming more like You. So, in this moment, I want to encounter You. Show me Your face. I want to be transformed. I want to be changed.  
In Jesus' Name. Amen.*

Let's worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.



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## Commitment

I want to lead you into a powerful prayer that I believe will change your heart.

We believe that the Lord has given us freedom to choose for our own life.

Right now, you're presented with two options.

Will you choose right or will you choose wrong?

Will you choose goodness or will you choose evil?

Are you going to choose Jesus to be your King, to be your Savior, and to be your Lord in your life?

You make that choice.

As your leader, I can't make it for you. Your parents can't make that choice for you. Even your spouse cannot make that choice for you. You have to do it alone for yourself and by yourself.

If you're ready to commit your life to Jesus, I want you to open your arms in the Presence of God. We're going to surrender and submit to the authority and sovereignty of King Jesus. I want you to make this prayer as your prayer. I will lead you to it but it will be your prayer. Say this with me:

*Dear Jesus, I am a sinner in need of a Savior. I know I am weak and I am broken. Without you, I can do nothing. At this moment, I am starting a new life by saying, "You are my Lord. You are my Savior. I turn away from my sins and I turn to You. Change me. Transform me. Mold me. I want more of you in my life, in my family, in my job, in my organization, in my community, and in my heart. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*



Praise You, Jesus! Hallelujah!  
Glory to You, Oh, Lord!  
Tell persons around you:  
*God Wants To See You Grow Up.*

**GOD WANTS  
TO SEE YOU  
GROW UP**



## **Thank You!**

The Feast Family, now organized as the Feast Mercy Ministries, is a spin-off ministry of the Light of Jesus Family founded by Bro. Bo Sanchez. Earlier named as Kerygma Family, The Feast Family is a unique online, non-physical, borderless, international community of friends who support each other's personal growth.

Partner beneficiaries of the Feast Mercy Ministries flourish because of your generous support.

Thank you for being with us. We pray that you find your daily source of inspiration from the resources that we send to you. We pray too that you may consider giving to The Feast Mercy Ministries. No gift is too small.

Thank you very much in advance for your gift. Our prayer is that God will continue to reward you as you give.

### **FOR EXISTING DONORS:**

Thank you for the Love. Your monthly donation helps us to continue extending support to our Light of Jesus spin-off organizations, including our partner beneficiaries. Your gift will sustain our operations and, we hope, help us reach out to the persons our Lord has called us to make disciples and give them renewed hope.

Be a Feast Family member. Write or call us. Now.

Email Address: [jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com](mailto:jocelyn@kerygmfamily.com)

Website: <https://kerygmfamily.com>

## Our Partner Beneficiaries

**Jeremiah 33 Foundation**  
is a shelter for minor girls  
particularly victims  
of sexual abuse.



**Grace To Be Born**  
is a halfway home  
for pregnant women  
in crisis.



**He Cares Mission**  
provides shelter  
and pastoral care  
for street children.

**Pag-asa ng Pamilya Foundation**  
grants scholarships  
to indigent students.



**Jesus Christ Cares for Cancer**  
provides financial assistance and pastoral care  
for indigent cancer patients.

**The Light of Jesus Pastoral Care Center**  
ministers to those who are emotionally  
and spiritually wounded.



**H.A.I.L. MARY** is acronym for Healthcare Assistance for  
Indigents and Lepers of Mary, adopting the Blessed Mother  
as the patroness of its mission to eradicate leprosy in Abra  
within 8–10 years.



**The Light of Jesus Disaster Recovery Ministry**  
provides evacuation assistance,  
relief goods, financial aid, and other needs of calamity victims.

**The Light of Jesus Prison Ministry**  
brings Jesus to the Correctional Institution for Women  
to give them hope for a new life of dignity.



**Anawim Lay Missions Foundation** provides a home for poor elderly  
who have been abandoned by their family and have nowhere else to go.

## CHOOSE HOW YOU WANT TO GIVE

1. Donate ONLINE (through credit card) Go to [www.kerygmfamily.com](http://www.kerygmfamily.com) and click 'DONATE' box Paypal I US Donations.

2. Pick Up from Your House or Office (Metro Manila Only) Cash or Checks  
Address Checks to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and call Joy at (+632) 725 -9999 loc 112 or text (+63) 922-828-9890 and we'll pick them up from your home or office.

3. Mail 12 Post-Dated Checks to Our Office for US and CANADA: Address Checks to Kerygma Family, 848 Rainbow Blvd # 1937, Las Vegas, NV 89107. For Other Countries/Philippines: Address Check to Shepherd's Voice Radio and Television Foundation Inc. and mail (registered mail) to Shepherd's Voice, 60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109.

4. Directly Deposit to Our Bank Accounts. Deposit to Shepherd's Voice Account in any branch of these banks:  
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# **FAMILY ONLINE NEWSMAGAZINE**

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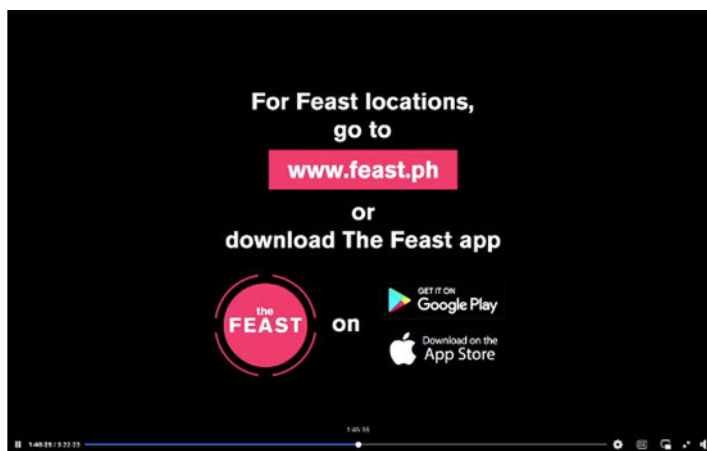
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***Go and make disciples of all men.***  
— Matthew 28:19

