

Monthly Diary No22 - September 25th 2008 -

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Quote of the Month:

"The sign of enlightenment is peace – you stop fleeing when you see you are only being pursued by the fantasies your fears have fabricated"



Well I start this diary with health matters as I have once again just escaped from another eight days in hospital, this time I was diagnosed with Typhoid which can be a pretty nasty bit of work altogether. Fortunately Doctora's treatment was able to contain the problem to a couple of painful days when I was a very sick chappy indeed. My fear was that I was so weak that any virus going would trip me up. (*This month's quote had the answer for me if I chose to take it on board*) Carl was also diagnosed with the same problem but apparently they got to him in time to prevent some of my symptoms. We are both on tablets and a more stringent hygiene ritual. Our water filter, such as it was, has been done away with and we are back on bottled water. This, along with a little more care with the way we use the local water supply, should keep us out of trouble in future. Frank has remained fit and well throughout this period which just goes to show New Zealanders are tougher than Australians, well it sounds good to Frank's ears. A quiet week at home will do the trick says Doctora and certainly won't do me any harm.

School News:

We are still continuing to assist the school financially with many of the small projects needing our attention. The four projects on the go at the moment are the upgrade of the WCs, the fitting of five more white boards and the building of storage cupboards for the teachers in each classroom. Carl is looking into the construction of more shelving for the Library. Our local bands once again found themselves competing for the honor of first prize last week. The good news is Saint Teresa School Hilongos took out first prize against pretty tough opposition. P5000 (\$125) should go a long way to buying several more new instruments for the school band. One of my first year students has been away from school for several weeks and the rumor going round was he may have broken his leg, so Carl and I managed to track down where he lives. It turns out he went to the Doctor alright, but was given no x-ray because the Mother could not afford the P200. The first thing we did was arrange an x-ray which fortunately showed no break just a very severe sprain. Doctora supplied him with some medicines which hopefully will counter the pain. He has been put in hospital as he has lost a lot of weight and is complaining of severe joint pains. Let's hope he recovers soon. Just a bit of trivia but Frank has claimed he has reached a milestone or was it a record; anyway he

has being teaching without a break now for over 16 weeks which is something of a new experience for him. Of course the periods go from 7am to 5pm every day which is also trail.

Sogod:

While convalescing I made a brief trip to Sogod about an hours' drive from Hilongos. This town is at the top of Sogod bay and the Parish has a college there called Saint Thomas Aquinas, which, not surprisingly, is badly in need of funds to finish its building programme. Like Saint Teresa School here in Hilongos it has unfinished classrooms and much work needing to be done. The student population is much the same as here (400) though they hope to be able to increase their numbers in the future. They have spent quite a deal of money on their computer room but once again they are looking for funds to allow them to complete the project. They also ask could we help with supplying Library books and Science equipment. I promised to see what I could do. So when we ask for assistance we are talking about two schools needing your support. I have prepared a power point which focuses on the Leyte mission so a copy will be sent to Bob Chambers (RBChambers@edmundrice.org) If you would like a copy for your community or your School please contact him and he will be happy to forward a copy to you. This CD will interest anyone who would like to know more about what we are doing here on Leyte and certainly it would be very helpful to those wishing to assist our mission financially.

Parish Day:

The day started with a 5 AM mass and devotions and this was followed by a couple of hours of charismatic singing and praying run by the local people themselves much like what we experienced in the mid 60s in Australia without the speaking in tongues of course. Then at 10 o'clock the big celebrations began with the High Mass followed by a concert, lunch, Procession through town (*30 to 40 floats representing the local Barangays*) and then an exhibition. This took all day and needless to say I tried to attend most of the celebrations but started to wilter around about 4pm. This was the 271st anniversary of the Parish which is older than any parish we have in Australia. The story of why the Parish was named after Momma Mary was told through a reenactment by the local children. It is said she rescued the people from the Muslims many years ago by appearing as a white lady with sword in hand and so frightening off the Pirates who would often make raids on the little Town of Hilongos from Mindanao. The towns' people did a marvelous job and a wonderful day was had by all. The Photos below capture the spirit of the day. **Till next time Peter T**

Life in Kabankalan:

A recent National Convention of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) was held in Davao, Mindanao. There were 2080 participants from all over the country, among them on table 207, Rod. This is the second such gathering I have attended. It was huge, well organized, informative and, at times, inspiring and I felt quite at home, which was marvellous. Mrs. Marie Roque, a friend of Thruppy and the Mirrabooka Community, met me at the airport and took me back again at the finish.

On the way home, Thruppy and I caught up for a few hours in Cebu – another bonus. We speak to each other often enough on Skype but seldom see each other. But he will be across here for the Aquinas College visit next weekend (Sept 27). Peter will spend two nights with us. A few days before Aquinas arrives, CBC Adelaide will also join us for a week's immersion. CBC will spread themselves between two schools, Aquinas will simply visit one. These immersion experiences for Year 11 and 12 students (CBC) and Year 11 (Aquinas) are a highlight for the schools in our diocese. They prepare well. At this stage excitement is mounting amongst the student population. There are few visitors to these parts apart from aging missionaries! (Ahem!) Young boys from Australia are a much more exciting prospect!

Meanwhile Peter has been working hard with his Theology and music classes at KCC, and John and Neil with the Alternative Learning Scheme (ALS) across the river. The ALS clients have had little schooling, or long periods since formal schooling and often not very positive experiences in the past. So they are hard work to teach. October looms with an all important exam set nationally. Neil is taking a two week break home to help his sister, Sister Marie Therese, celebrate her Golden Jubilee in Townsville – happening as I type. He will also include a retreat before returning in a week's time. And that's about it for now, apart from the rain which is quite persistent. Greetings to all!

Peter, Neil, John and Rod.

