

## News update and subjects for prayer – DECEMBER 2009

### Proverbs 14:31 “Whoever is kind to the needy honours God”

After suffering so much with the flooding, a major fire broke out in the Block 37 area of Mandaluyong, where Hands of Mercy is working. On the 16<sup>th</sup> November I received a text from one of our staff members saying a fire had started to break down houses near one of our feeding centres. Joey, my daughter June and I rushed to the scene and were really shocked, seeing a massive fire eating up hundreds of houses. A number of our Hands of Mercy families have been greatly affected by the fire and were taken to one of the city schools as a temporary home for evacuees. They have lost their homes and all their belongings. Fortunately, no lives have been reported lost, only damage to properties. At the moment, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) have provided medical and food support for families. I organized a relief operation requiring each member of our team to voluntarily donate their used clothing to be given to the victims as a first step to meet their needs. Last night, I had a personal encounter with one of our Hands of Mercy family crying that she had lost everything. I hugged her and prayed for her. We are standing by for whatever assistance these victims might need. Since the fire we have given families, drinking water, milk, feeding bottles and diaper's for babies and small children. The situation is very bad, comfort rooms are so smelly, no wonder people are getting ill. Please pray that our government will really do something for these families. Sad to say that promises have been made many times, but then nothing happens. The families do not take these promises seriously, they said, “if this will happen well and good, but if not, they are used to it.” *Sally Escoto*

**Dec 1/2** Due to the floods and fire, there are many children suffering from diarrhoea and there is no assistance for them from the government. Please pray that we will have the funds to help these children through the **Prescription Medicine Programme**.

**Dec 3/4** Please pray for Sally Escoto and the staff workers as they deal with the many desperate people coming to the Hands of Mercy office for help with medication, food, housing, repairs etc., Please pray that money will be given to help these people as their physical needs will continue for a long time.

**Dec 5/6** Every time we use the toilet or turn on a tap today, thank God that our water and sanitation is clean, safe and a few short steps away. In the squatter communities of Mandaluyong sanitation facilities are inadequate, which creates a real health risk for the people. Hands of Mercy would like to replace the community toilet which was destroyed in the fire. If you would like to give towards building a new toilet in Block 37, please send your gift to the – Hands of Mercy UK office.

**Dec 7/8** Give thanks to God that no one was killed during the fire. Please pray that the Mandaluyong City Mayor and Philippine Government will help the families that have suffered so much during the October floods and November fire.

**Dec 9/10** Please continue to pray for **Joey Escoto** as he oversees the repair work on shanty homes damaged by the flood, and now the building of new homes due to the fire. Pray that he will be given wisdom and be able to prioritise where the greatest need is.

**Dec 11/12** With all the trauma of the past weeks, please remember in prayer our Filipina staff as they plan and prepare the **Christmas activities** for the sponsored children and young people, as well as the **“Christmas meal”** for the malnourished children. Please pray that funds will become available to hold these events.

**Dec 13/14** Please remember in prayer our staff workers in the communities of: **Sto. Rosario** – Vicky, Mariette, Diana, Rebecca, and Brenda. **Ginhawa** – Mila, Pina and Tess I. **Kayamunggi** – Anita and Dhea. **Block 37** – Fina, Beth and Girlie. Please pray for wisdom as they balance their family and ministry commitments.

**Dec 15/16** Please remember in prayer **Elmer Aquino** who audits the Hands of Mercy accounts in the Philippines, and also for Mila Espanola as she deals with the Philippine accounts. Please also pray for the **Hands of Mercy** and **Mercy Community Church** administrative tasks, which need to be accomplished on a daily basis in the Philippines.

**Dec 17/18** Please pray that the children and young people will really enjoy their **Christmas parties** and benefit physically from the food prepared, and also that the weather will be dry as the parties take place out of doors. Please pray that whilst enjoying the Christmas food and activities, the children will remember Jesus, whose birthday they will be celebrating.

**Dec 19/20** Each week through the **Disabled Therapy Programme** Hands of Mercy staff have a special ministry helping young children. Please pray for the faithful team who provide care and support to disabled children and their families.

**Dec 21/22** Hands of Mercy feeds around 600 malnourished children in ten centres three times a week. Please pray that people will give towards buying the food for these hungry children. Food prices have risen considerably during the past months.

**Dec 23/24** Please pray for some of the **Hands of Mercy team as they visit the local prison** in Mandaluyong and hold two Bible study small groups with some of the prisoners. Each week the team give sacrificially so that food can be taken to the prisoners, some of them just young boys.

**Dec 25/26 "Today.... A Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord"** - Let us praise God the Father for the gift of His Son, and pray for the Mercy Community Churches as they celebrate His birth. Please pray for those who will be sharing God's Word on this special occasion.

**Dec 27/28** Give thanks to God for the **Small Groups** in the communities where Hands of Mercy has a presence. Please pray for the leaders of the groups as they share God's Word and encourage the new believers. Please remember in prayer Sally Escoto, Fina Savandal and Remy Lubiano as they lead and oversee the three **Mercy Community Churches** and for Greg Lubiano, Lolong Savandal and Joey Escoto as they lead the **Men's Groups** at the Churches.

**Dec 29/30** Please remember in prayer our Filipina staff workers in the communities of: **Florante Street** - Bing, Analyn, Terie and Margie. **Block 38 and 40** - Remy, Helen, Ara, Mina and Eliza. Many of the Hands of Mercy staff workers have emotional hurts, physical pain, financial needs and often little to eat - they and their families face many hardships each day. Please pray for them and for Nenita, Pina, Alberta, Marieta and Diana who are widows, and for those who are single mums Mila, Mina, and Ara.

**Dec 31** Please continue to pray that **Cordio and Elena Dalangpan** and **Sonny and Gerlita Sabado** will also have a sponsor through the **Family Support Programme**. Please pray for the many little children who need supplementary milk and vitamins. Many parents do not have enough money to feed their families and the physical state of the children is extremely poor. (If you can help the above families or one of the many other very poor families in Mandaluyong, please contact the UK office on 01582 416151)

**\*\*Because of the Christmas holiday season we have taken this calendar into January. The next calendar will arrive around the 8<sup>th</sup> January.**

**JAN 1/2 Let us give thanks and praise for every expression of God's love and blessing during 2009.** Please pray for Sally and the Hands of Mercy team that during this holiday time they may have rest and refreshment and know God's guidance as they serve their needy neighbours in the coming year.

**JAN 3/4** Please pray for the Philippine and UK trustees that they will have wisdom and discernment in the decisions they take and guidance they give to Hands of Mercy.

**JAN 5/6** Corruption is a symptom of poor governance that undermines democracy. Please pray for the **Philippine Government** and their president **Gloria Macapagal Arroyo** that they will govern with integrity. Pray that decision-makers will look to the needs of the most vulnerable in their country. Please continue to pray for fair national elections to be held during **May 2010**.

**JAN 7/8** As the work of Hands of Mercy develops and with it the **UK administration**, please continue to pray that God will raise up people to give additional help in the office.

**Thank you so much for your ministry in prayer**

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