Journeys: Aging Gracefully

Devotional: “Philosophy of Life/Death” Diego Sausa
Editor’s Thoughts: “Aging Gracefully” Raylene Rodrigo Baumgart

Featured Items:
1. 7 Ways the Mind and Body Change with Age Jeanna Bryner, Live Science
2. Quotes for the Week Collection
3. Personal take on Aging Gracefully Eddie Zamora
4. Playing – is it only for the young? Gwen Ferraren-Cabales
5. Golden Year sucks? Dr. Laurence Gayao
6. Poem - ABC’s of Aging ABC’s of Aging The Internet
7. Growing Old Gracefully thru 7th Day Advantage Nelson Ornopia
8. Best Birthday Ever The Internet
9. Positive Things about Aging The Internet
10. Whatever! I’m Evelyn Tabingo
11. Aging: A One-way Journey Joy Caballero-Gadia

SULADS Corner “The Tiny Messenger” Sulad Elka Samm Chisel Jo Rosalita
Patch of Weeds: Jesse Colegado
LIFE of a Missionary: “Christianization of the Philippines” Romy Halasan
o, you have a nice house, a new car, a new special friend? There’s something exciting in what you do, your job, in what you work hard for? You’re excited about a new vacation and travels? You’re pleased because after all your sacrifice, you have achieved much? So you’re into some exciting new endeavors, new adventures, and new achievements? Yeah, yeah, well and good! But know oh vain man that no matter how we planned our lives, no matter how we’ve succeeded professionally, academically, socially, financially, materially and spiritually, nature still aims to kill every one of us either slowly or quickly, either sooner or later, and that is cold, remorseless termination without failure.

In reality, we are repeating the same cycle that our predecessors did before us: we live, struggle, get excited, bask in the glow of our achievements and material gain so that in the end we die, have nothing and become nothing. Even the ones we love and care about so much about, even the ones who have the money in the world to buy anything, do anything or go anywhere are not exempt from the squirmy jaws of death. The sooner we realize this reality, the better are our chances or making the right choices that reverses this cyclicity.

We, who are currently alive take not much thought about this reality. Like an ostrich, we would like to bury our heads in the sand and ignore the reality and would like to make ourselves believe that somehow it is different with us, that there’s something new and exciting in what we do every day, that we can accomplish better, that we can present better, that there’s something more exciting about what we do now than what our predecessors did who have now morphed into cold heaps of dust and bones in the grave. And so we bask in our bourgeois vanities oblivious of the fact that we are engaging in the same vain cyclicity that our predecessors engaged in. There’s nothing new under the sun as far as human life is concerned. We all live, then die.

As King Solomon, the wisest man and one of the richest men on earth that ever lived, says, “Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.” (Eccl 2:11).

This is because without Divine intervention, humans ultimately die. Jesus has rightly portrayed the plight of man: “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” (Mk. 8:36, ESV). In other words, Christ is saying, “What good is it for man to have everything in the world when at the end, he dies and becomes nothing?” Without the answer to death, life is eviscerated of meaning – all mundane aspirations, accomplishments, achievements, wealth, realities, belief systems, including Christianity, and yes, Facebook, Twitter and even dreams, are like vapor that eventually disappears into eternal nothingness.

That’s why Paul tells us that if Christ was not victorious over death, our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.” (1 Cor. 15:4). Without a God who is able to answer the problem of death, “Man, as existentialist Jean Paul Sartre rightly describes, “is a useless passion” because death is
the fate of every man from which there is no exit. Death zeros out anything and everything that we have achieved and accomplished. Sartre of course is exactly right that man is a “useless passion” because without the assurance of eternal life, mankind is a been-there-done-that cyclical exercise in futility.

Mankind strives and struggles to achieve and to accumulate things only to leave everything behind in the end as he ultimately becomes a neat heap of dust in the grave – that is, of course, if no one can reverse man’s compass that always points south to the grave. But that is exactly why Jesus came, because without Him, nobody else can offer us an exit from our own plight of eternal death. If all that we have is what this world can offer us, then all that we can hope as our ultimate achievement and destiny is nothingness. What does it profit Steve Jobs if he has made billions from his iPhones and Macs if he ends up in eternal unconsciousness?

Clifford Goldstein has insightfully said it right, “We know our need for something more than life can offer – something that’s beyond us, that transcends us, though we’re not sure what, even if our hearts know, but pride and flesh feed the doubt that pulls us back inside ourselves, into the rash carnality that dies with old animals. How sad to be captured and commandeered by what’s so small, so fleeting, so trivial in contrast to the eternal, which is all around us and which beckons us – even if with nothing more than the idea itself, especially when we wake up, half asleep but startles, blood pumping frightfully at the knowledge that one day we’ll be gone while the idea (of eternal life) remains. The cross has made it a gift for us, more real than everything in the world, because everything in the world wears away. It is as if each turn of the earth on its axis, each revolution around the sun, grinds all things slowly into the ground and leaves only the gift, as eternal as the Giver, the God who cannot lie, who through the sacrifice of Himself has made us a way to escape the fate from which there is (as Sartre wrote) no exit, but from which Jesus says, “I am the door” (John 0:9) and promises all who step through it, eternal life.” (Clifford Goldstein, God, Gödel and Grace, p 111).

In reality, there are only two paths: the path of billions of humans before us and repeat the same cycle of vanity that ultimately ends up in the dust of eternal oblivion or accept the gift of God, the gift of eternal life and eternal bliss that is as eternal as the Giver who HImself became human like us that He might vicariously die the eternal death penalty for our sins that He might bring us humans back to what we were meant to be in the beginning, namely, that we were meant to live forever with God. “For God so loved the world, that he gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life: (John 3:16).

When we sum up our lives from beginning to end, what ultimately matters is whether we have Christ or we don’t because “He who believes in Him is not condemned unto eternal death; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the Begotten Son of God (John 3:18). And to those who accept Him, God promises this, “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4). Eternal life or death is no accident. It is a series of deliberate prioritization of either eternity or vanity which ultimately reaps its reward.
I woke up on my 61st birthday to the predicted 2017 Virginia blizzard. Thick fluffy white snow blanketed our lawn and back porch. I was ecstatic since I had been wanting snow. Our pastor already emailed me the day before that church services have been cancelled much to my husband’s amusement. He got his wish and I got mine. A long fanciful breakfast prepared by him took place. Towards, the end of the day, we were still wearing pajamas. I spent the day just reading and eating and watching some old Christmas movies. Then I decide to give myself a Dead Sea masque and facial.

As I sat on the table with all my skincare products before me and facing at this huge cosmetic magnifying mirror, I realized the inevitable truth: I am really aging! Although I did not see those anticipated deep wrinkles yet, I can see visible fine lines across my forehead and some age spots/discolorations around my eyes.

When I took off my hair cover I freaked out! I could clearly see those strands of gray hair framing my face! And I did not like it! The magnifying mirror does not lie. I know that wrinkles are a natural if not pesky, part of aging. Caused by sun exposure and other elements, plus daily muscle contractions and other genetic factors, we cannot escape them. I know that I cannot escape aging (at least not until I find the Fountain of Youth). The march of time is most evident on the face. I know my skin will start to droop and sag right in front of my eyes not to mention underneath them. Everyone dreads the onset of wrinkles – those telltale signs of aging on which many spend so much money, time and mental anguish. But then of course everyone has different ideas about how to prevent laugh lines and crow’s feet. But do we really know what works?

“Aging, in and of itself, is a subtle, quiet process,” says Marie Bernard, MD, deputy director of the National Institute on Aging. The key is to know what is normal and what is not.

The reality is, we should not be concerned only about the white hair and the wrinkles. I know the fact that there are age-related physical changes that take place as we are getting older, since our bodies will be changing. We could grow a little rounder around the waistline or mid-section, or
wake up in the middle of the night for acid reflux or feel a little stiffer upon waking up in the morning. Some age-related physical changes are more obvious: an extra laugh line or two, graying hair, additional weight around the mid-section. Knowing how and why our body changes with age can help us decide what to do and possible change our lifestyle.

So, for this issue I decided to write about Aging Gracefully and may we be inspired to follow a healthier lifestyle as we accept maturity and the changes that come with it.

Three months before my Mama Dinah died, my daughters and I spent five weeks with her in Cebu. Every morning before the roosters could even crow and before the sun comes up (around 4:30 early morning), I could hear my mother singing some hymns from the church hymnal by memory. At first I was irritated but did not really have the nerve to tell her to stop. One morning, I went to her room and asked why she has to sing so early every morning. She replied, “I am just exercising my brain. I would never want to die from Alzheimer’s disease.” So instead of reprimanding her, I joined her singing and was quite surprised that she memorized more stanzas than me.

Research shows that memory might naturally become less efficient with age. It will take us longer to learn new things or remember familiar words or names. But the good news is that mentally-stimulating activities can keep our brain in shape and might help memory loss at bay. Since then, I have been doing crossword puzzles, playing scrabble whenever I can, and I, too have been singing songs from the Church hymnal by memory. I have been trying to memorize more Bible verses too. I, too, would like to echo my Mama’s wish of not losing my memory that much sooner.

Here is one funny poem from an anonymous author which I really enjoy.

My Rememberer

My forgetter’s not getting better, but my rememberer is broke
To you that may seem funny, but to me, that is no joke.
For when I’m here, I’m wondering if I really should be there,
And when I try to think it through, I haven’t got a prayer.

Oftentimes I walk into a room and say, “what am I here for?”
I wrack my brain but all in vain, a zero is my score.
At times I put something away where it is safe, but gee!
The person it is safest from, is, generally, me!

When shopping I may see someone and say, “Hi” and have a chat.
Then when the person walks away, I ask myself “Who was that?”
Yes, my forgetter’s getting better while my rememberer is broke;
And it is driving me plumb crazy and that isn’t any joke.

P.S. Send this to everyone you know. Because I do not remember who sent it to me.

P.S. Send this to everyone you know. Because I do not remember who sent it to me.

The poem may give us the laughs and my action and reaction while facing the magnifying mirror will make us squirm but the reality of the matter is that we do all want to look good and feel good.” It is just best to be always reminded though that, “Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”-Proverbs 31:30
Lots of changes. The poster child of aging seems to be a wrinkly-faced, forgetful, grumpy old man. But science is painting another, more in-depth picture of aging Americans. The elderly tend to become more happy, liberal and in many cases remain pretty sharp. Here are 7 ways we change as we get older.

1. **Lean liberal.** As wrinkles set in, so do a person's rigid beliefs, many people have long assumed. Not true, according to a survey of more than 46,000 Americans between 1972 and 2004. While the study didn't follow individuals as they aged, the results represent snapshots of the changing attitudes of respondents in different age groups. Over time, adults' attitudes got more liberal regarding politics, economics, race, gender, religion and sexuality issues. While the results don't mean your grandma is sure to revert to hippie-dom, on average older adults will head in that direction.

2. **Your stem cells age,** too. Beneath the sagging skin, the body's cells are also deteriorating. Stem cells, thought to combat aging by replenishing old or damaged cells, also succumb to the wear and tear of aging. Research published in the journal *PLoS Biology* in 2007, suggests stem cells' regenerative capacity declines as one ages.

In the study, researchers looked at stem cells that give rise to bone marrow that had been isolated from young and old mice. The cells were transplanted into mice whose bone marrow cells had been destroyed.

At first, both young and old stem cells churned out new cells at about the same rate; but later, the old stem cells' repopulating ability dropped off considerably compared with their young counterparts. The scientists suspect genetics is at play, as genes for stress and inflammation became more active in these stem cells with age.
3. **Need less sleep.** In a study of 110 healthy adults who were allowed eight hours of bed time, the oldest group (ages 66 to 83) snoozed about 20 minutes less than the middle-agers (ages 40 to 55), who in turn slept about 23 minutes less than the youngest group (ages 20 to 30). The simplest explanation for the fewer shut-eye minutes: Older adults need less sleep.

Another explanation, and one supported by research: Older adults just can't get the sleep they need, taking longer to nod off, spending less time in deep sleep, and having more trouble staying asleep. In fact, more than half of men and women over the age of 65 say they suffer from at least one sleep problem, with many experiencing insomnia, according to WebMD.

4. **Become more distracted.** If you have trouble tuning out extraneous information from background chatter to flashing billboards, age might not be your friend. As a person gets older, their ability to ignore distractions gets worse, according to Karen Campbell, a doctoral student in psychology at the University of Toronto. But Campbell and her colleagues found a silver lining that might focus you: Seniors might have the unique ability to "hyper-bind" the irrelevant information, tying it to other information appearing at the same time. The ability could ultimately boost memory.

5. **Everything starts to sag.** Your skin can be a dead giveaway that you've passed the half-century mark. With aging, the skin's outer layer, called the epidermis, thins. At the same time, the skin becomes less elastic and facial fat in the deeper layers of the skin wanes. The result: a loose, saggy façade marked by lines and crevices.

While injections of fillers can help plump up a face, researchers are now finding such cosmetic procedures might not be enough. That's because jaw, cheek and eye-socket bones also wear with the march of time, according to research led by Dr. Robert Shaw, Jr., of the University of Rochester. The loss of this "scaffolding" results in upper eyelid droop, plummeting cheeks and jowls that sway in the breeze. The study researchers suggest bone implants might be in order, though as with any surgery there are risks, such as infection and numbness.

6. **Still enjoy a good laugh.** Laughing is good for you, science has shown. That's good news for older adults who still appreciate humor - providing they understand it, according to a Canadian study published in a 2003 issue of the Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society.

"The good news is that aging does not affect emotional responses to humor - we'll still enjoy a good laugh when we get the joke," Prathiba Shammi, a psychologist with Baycrest Center for Geriatric Care, said in a statement. "This preserved affective responsiveness is important because it is integral to social interaction and it has long been postulated that humor may enhance quality of life, assist in stress management, and help us cope with the stresses of aging."
The downside of the study: Older adults had more trouble than spring chickens comprehending humor. They were less able to choose appropriate punch lines for jokes or to select the correct funny cartoon from an array of cartoons. Another research team came to the same conclusions in 2007, that older adults have a harder time "getting a joke" than younger individuals.

7. Have a positive attitude. The stereotypical picture of grumpy old men might not hold weight in science. Age could bring happiness for many people, though whether or not that conclusion is true and the reasons for cheerfulness in old age are debatable.

For instance, a study published in 2008 by Yang Yang, a sociologist at the University of Chicago, suggests the increase in lifespan that’s occurred since the 1970s has been linked with an increase in years of happiness. At the same time, however, health and income – important factors when it comes to happiness – decline with age. Some researchers have pointed out that when you take these two factors into account, the elderly are less happy than their younger counterparts.

Even so, whether well-being stays strong in old age could come down to a person’s attitude. Research has shown older adults remember the past through a rose-colored lens; they are more optimistic than younger individuals; and the sick and disabled are just as happy as the rest of us.

**Quotes for the Week**

“Aging is an inevitable process. I surely wouldn't want to grow younger. The older you become, the more you know; your bank account of knowledge is much richer”.

William Holden

“Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength”.

Betty Friedan

The most important thing I can tell you about aging is this: If you really feel that you want to have an off-the-shoulder blouse and some big beads and thong sandals and a dirndl skirt and a magnolia in your hair, do it. Even if you're wrinkled”

Maya Angelou

Prayer for Senility:

God grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

~Anonymous
My Personal Take on Aging Gracefully—Two Versions

The first one is an example of aging pretty-gracefully by artificial means. The following set of pictures show different stages of life using only one model, but with the help of artists in make-up and fashion, as well as the model’s own facial expressions.
The next one is the real aging: sort-of-gracefully without the help of make-up or other artificial means.

I kind of like the second one, and as they say on Facebook, LOL.
Playing – is it only for the Young?
by Gwen Ferraren-Cabrales

This was a sign I saw at a small park close to where I lived and it challenged me. Would you believe that I never learned to ride a bike as a youngster? Back in those days, in high school really, I once tried to learn how to ride a bike. One of my friends helped me by holding the bike as I tried to balance and pedal at the same time. I was not aware that he had let go of the bike and I was on my own. However, because I was so tense I did not know how to steer the handlebar and just kept going all the way to the stairs of the girls’ dorm. That was the end of my learning to bike. But when I saw this poster, I determined to learn to ride the bike. I was already in my mid-fifties then. My bike was well-equipped with… guess what? You’re right, with training wheels! Round and round the park I’d go with the training wheels squeaking.

One time as I was pedaling, an elderly man walking down the street looked away when he realized it was not a ‘chick’ on the bike (LOL) but a hen trying hard to learn. I used the training wheels and pedaled around whenever I got a chance to be on the bike until finally the big day arrived when I graduated from the training wheels and learned to ride without it.

So you folks out there who have stopped playing, c’mon get off the couch and play. Aging is just in the mind!
Aging is the natural consequence of living. Too often many complain about growing old. But look - some of our friends never had a chance to get old because they have taken a permanent leave of absence six feet down under or in urns.

In our society we are brainwashed to think early in life that youth, good looks, money and material things translate to happiness. This preoccupation with “youth and good looks” had created in many an abnormal or persistent fear of growing old or aging. The name for this condition is Gerascophobia. Unfortunately, aging is a fact of life and if you live long enough, you will inevitably get old. So, if you have gerascophobia the longer you live the unhappier you would be because there is only one way to avoid getting old that is to die before you get there.

When I was a young physician an elderly gentleman complained, “Doc, this Golden Years really sucks.”

You know you are getting old when your conversation with friends is about grand kids or you say something like, “I used to do this and that,” enumerate your aches, pains and illnesses. You fret about the misery of getting old. Just getting out of bed in the morning takes quite an effort. Looking in the mirror you see someone with gray and thinning hair, more wrinkle lines, eye bags, and sagging skin with age spots. As you go on through the day, you have trouble doing the things you used to do with ease or remember where things were placed or hidden. Instead of singing, “Achy Breaky Heart,” it is now, “Achy Sweaky Joints.” Did I say enough to make you think you have geroscophobia?

For me before I retired, life was a hectic routine. It seemed there was not enough time during the day between a full work schedule, added to that were other activities such as social media, church, alumni events and family time. Time seems to have gone so fast like a blur. I soon realized that many of the folks who were older than me were passing away one after the other. Then the reality hit me that I was now a member of the so-called “older generation.”

For the younger generation, an advice I would give is: more does not necessary mean better. Learning to be content and enjoy life is not dependent on how big your house is, how many cars you have or how expensive your car is, how big your bank account is or how many letters after
your name. Jim Carrey said, “I hope everybody could get rich and famous and will have everything they ever dream of, so they will know that it’s not the answer.”

Yes, oftentimes in life we work too hard to acquire more and more things to the extent that we hardly have time with family and friends or no time to enjoy life. Let me paraphrase a Bible verse this way, “What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world” and missed being happy.

One thing that has helped me to enjoy life more after joining the “Medicare generation,” was learning to be content with what I have. Learning this has been a great blessing. After retirement, one’s income is suddenly decreased and one has to live on a fixed income. Reality sinks in and your desire to have more and more is dramatically reduced. The good thing is you have more time to enjoy what you have and do the things you like to do. I have about ten guitars and it is only after retirement did I had time to do some picking. It is a refreshing feeling that you are no longer part of the rat race and you don’t have to prove your self-worth.

I believe and practice what John Adams said, “Old minds are like old horses; you must exercise them if you wish to keep them in working order.” Retirement could really be an exciting period of one’s life. For me it has given me more opportunities and more time to learn new things. I decided to make a health blog, so I had to learn how to make my own website and manage it. Writing blogs made me do a lot of research. So far I have written almost fifty articles in the last two years. I have reached readers in over 106 countries and have over two thousand subscribers. I know I have learned a lot and today I am healthier than when I retired, applying what I have learned.
My advice to retirees is to set up short and long-term goals. First of all, take time to have close relationship with your Maker and your family. Secondly, focus on investing time and effort to take of care God’s greatest gift to your body and mind by living a healthy lifestyle. Thirdly, learn something new each day to be of greater blessing to those around you.

I recall this poem we were made to memorize in high school that has meant more to me as I have gotten older.

A PSALM OF LIFE
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal.....
Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Afraid of getting old? Well, I would say if you plan it well, these years may very well turn out to be the best time of your life.
“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Psalm 90:12

Quotes for the Week – con’t

“There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age”.
Sophia Loren
Being a new SULADS Missionary, I found it lonely to be away from the home in which I grew up. To deal with my homesickness, I often took walks by the seashore to brighten my day. I was having one of my walks one beautiful day with the fresh sea breeze blowing through my hair. I felt my spirits lighten. Sitting on the sand, I watched the birds hop up and down the shore catching insects and crabs scampering across the beach. Fascinated by their motions, I sat by and began to whistle the tune of a song that crossed my mind.

Suddenly, I heard a soft twittering behind me. I looked around but could not pinpoint the bird from the flock that made the sound. I laughed, feeling like a princess from a fairytale who could magically attract animals to sing along with her. But as I listened closely to the bird's soft tweeting; I realized that the bird really was mimicking the tune of “Via Dolorosa,” the song which I had been whistling.

Excitedly, I ran to my Sulads companions and shared with them the wonderful discovery. I quickly searched the internet for the lyrics of the song as I only knew the tune but had no idea as to what the song is really about. It was only then that I learned that the song was about Jesus' suffering as He walked the road to Calvary.

Now, every time I get depressed and homesick, I still go to the seashore and every time I stay there, the little bird is always there twittering the tune of “Via Dolorosa” to me, reminding me that the difficulties I am experiencing are nothing compared to the suffering that Christ suffered for our sakes. What is a little sacrifice in the service of the ministry, compared to the great suffering He experienced while here on Earth?

Each time I hear that bird sing, I am filled with happiness as I feel God's presence with that tiny messenger. As the ravens were to Elijah and the dove to Noah, I too have a tiny messenger sent especially for me.

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The late Peter Marshall was an eloquent speaker and for several years served as the chaplain of the US Senate. He love to tell the story of the “Keeper of the Spring,” a quiet forest dweller who lived high above an Austrian village along the eastern slope of the Alps.

The old gentleman had been hired many years earlier by a young town councilman to clear away the debris from the pools of water up in the mountain crevices that fed the lovely spring flowing through their town. With faithful, silent regularity, he patrolled the hills, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt that would otherwise have choked and contaminated the fresh flow of water. The village soon became a popular attraction for vacationers. Graceful swans floated along the crystal-clear spring, the mill wheels of various businesses located near the water turned day and night, farmlands were naturally irrigated, and the view from restaurants was picturesque beyond description.

Years passed.

One evening the town council met for its semiannual meeting. As they reviewed the budget, one man’s eye caught the salary figure being paid the obscure keeper of the spring. Said the keeper of the purse, “Who is the old man? Why do we keep him on year after year? No one ever sees him. For all we know, the strange ranger of the hills is doing us no good. He isn’t necessary any longer.”

By a unanimous vote, they dispensed with the old man’s services.

For several weeks, nothing changed.

By early autumn, the trees began to shed their leaves. Small branches
snapped of and fell into the pools, hindering the rushing flow of sparkling water. One afternoon someone noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the spring. A few days later, the water was much darker. Within another week, a slimy film covered sections of the water along the banks, and a foul odor was soon detected. The mill wheels moved more slowly, some finally ground to a halt. Swans left, as did the tourists. Clammy fingers of disease and sickness reached deeply into the village.

Quickly, the embarrassed council called a special meeting. Realizing their gross error in judgment, they rehired the old keeper of the spring, and within a few weeks, the veritable river of life began to clear up. The wheels started to turn, and new life returned to the hamlet in the Alps.

Never become discouraged with the seeming smallness of your task, job, or life. Cling fast to the words of Edward Everett Hale, “I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

The key to accomplishment is believing that what you can do will make a difference.

(from HeartWarmers)

TRAGEDY OR BLESSING?

Years ago in Scotland, the Clark family had a dream. Clark and his wife worked and saved, making plans for their nine children and themselves to travel to the United States. It had taken years, but they had finally saved enough money and had gotten passports and reservations for the whole family on a new liner to the United States.

The entire family was filled with anticipation and excitement about their new life. However, seven days before their departure, the youngest son was bitten by a dog. The doctor sewed up the boy but hung a yellow sheet on the Clarks' front door. Because of the possibility of rabies, they were being quarantined for fourteen days.

The family's dreams were dashed. They would not be able to make the trip to America as they had planned. The father, filled with disappointment and anger, stomped to the dock to watch the ship leave -- without the Clark family. The father shed tears of disappointment and cursed both his son and God for their misfortune.

Five days later, the tragic news spread throughout Scotland. The mighty unsinkable Titanic had sunk, taking hundreds of lives with it. The Clark family was to have been on that ship, but because the son had been bitten by a dog, they were left behind in Scotland.

When Mr. Clark heard the news, he hugged his son and thanked him for saving the family. He thanked God for saving their lives and turning what he had felt was a tragedy into a blessing.
I’m convinced that God must know how to smile, maybe even laugh right out loud. I think that’s one of the reasons he gave us puppies.

I enjoy snow, even though I view it with the realization that there is always work connected with it, shoveling, etc. I think it is wonderful to look at and thoroughly enjoy its beauty, in fact this morning Melody and I enjoyed a beautiful sunrise over the snow covered countryside.

This week we had an unusually deep snow for us and our little, black Peek-a-poo dog had to struggle to get through it. It brought back memories of her and her experience with her first snow.

I remember very clearly that as she went outside, we watched curiously as she ventured out into snow for the first time. At first somewhat tentatively putting down her feet, but after about ten minutes she decided that she loved it. She began bounding around in the deepest snowdrifts she could find and in moments she was completely covered with snow. All we could do is just laugh at her sheer joy in discovering snow.

When was the last time you had that much-uninhibited joy in life? When is the last time you appreciated some gift of God as common as snow? When is the last time your heart was so filled with joy that you bounced up and down with enthusiasm? When was the last time you counted your blessings?

The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice.” James 1:17 tells us, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

Now you may not bounce around like a puppy (but then you might too), but start today to try and appreciate some of the good things our God has given us!

May God grant each of us the ability to find something to “rejoice” about today.

There are only two kinds of people on earth today
Two kinds of people, no more I say.
Not the rich and the poor, for to know a man's wealth
You must first know the state of his conscience and health,
Not the happy and sad, for in life's passing years,
Each has his laughter and each has his tears.
No, the two kinds of people on earth I mean
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.

-- Ella Wheeler Wilcox
le and Lena were sitting down to their usual cup of morning coffee, listening to the weather report coming over the radio. "There will be 3 to 5 inches of snow today and a snow emergency has been declared. You must park your cars on the odd-numbered side of the streets." Ole got up from his coffee and replied, "Jeez, OK."

Two days later, again they were both sitting down with their cups of morning coffee and heard the weather forecast: "There will be 2 to 4 inches of snow today and a snow emergency has been declared. You must park your cars on the even-numbered side of the streets." Ole got up from his coffee and replied, "Jeez, OK."

Three days later, they both were once again sitting down with their cups of coffee and the weather forecast was, "There will be 6 to 8 inches of snow today and a snow emergency has been declared. You must park your cars on the..." and then the power went out so Ole didn't get the rest of the instructions. He said to Lena, "Jeez, what am I going to do now, Lena?"

Lena replied, "Aw, Ole, yust leave the car in the garage."

(from GCFL)

I pulled into a crowded parking lot and rolled down the car windows to make sure my Labrador Retriever had fresh air. She was stretched out on the back seat, and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there. I walked to the curb backward, pointing my finger at the car and saying emphatically, "Now you stay. Do you hear me? Stay!"

The driver of a nearby car gave me a startled look. "I don't know about you, lady," he said incredulously. "But I usually just put my car in park."

(from GCFL)
ABC’s of Aging

A is for arthritis,
B is for bad back,
C is for the chest pains. Corned Beef? Cardiac?
D is for dental decay and decline,
E is for eyesight--can't read that top line.
F is for fissures and fluid retention
G is for gas (which I'd rather not mention--
and not to forget other gastrointestinal glitches)
H is high blood pressure
I is for itches, and lots of incisions
J is for joints, that now fail to flex
L is for libido--what happened to sex?
Wait! I forgot about K!
K is for my knees that crack all the time
(But forgive me, I get a few lapses in my
Memory from time to time)
N is for nerve (pinched) and neck (stiff) and neurosis
O is for osteo—for all the bones that crack
P is for prescriptions, that cost a small fortune
Q is for queasiness. Fatal or just the flu?
Give me another pill and I'll be good as new!
R is for reflux--one meal turns into two
S is for sleepless nights,
counting fears on how to pay my medical bills!
T is for tinnitus--I hear bells in my ears
and the word 'terminal' also rings too near
U is for urinary and the difficulties that flow (or not)
V is for vertigo, as life spins by
W is worry, for pains yet unfound
X is for X ray--and what one might find
Y is for year (another one, I'm still alive).
Z is for zest
For surviving the symptoms my body's deployed,
And keeping twenty-six doctors gainfully employed.
Growing Old Gracefully thru 7th Day Advantage
by Nelson Ornopia

Sometime ago a friend of mine remarked that he did not believe it when I first told him that last year I turned 78 and the year before that my wife and I celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary! When he finally did admit to believing me, he then asked me what my secret was for still looking younger than my real age.

I replied that firstly, it is because of my Adventist faith, I had the so-called 7th Day Advantage! And Secondly, it is because of my supportive wife (who is 77 years young herself) who is responsible for it because she regularly colors my graying hair black!

I am both proud and lucky to be born into an Adventist home more than 78 years ago where my parents believed and practiced most of the principles of healthful living and trust in our God taught by our Church. I observed with sadness though that many of my boyhood friends and former classmates in the schools I attended who did not have the “7th Day Advantage” are either gone to their graves or are now suffering the debilitating effects of aging.

I thanked God that He has given me a lease in my life where I was able to go beyond the Biblical life span of 70 years (Three score and ten)! I have just experienced my second retirement on Dec. 30, 2015 after working for 20 years in the City of Redondo Beach here in California. My first retirement was from Central Philippine Union Mission where I served as a gospel worker for 32 years, after my graduation from Mountain View College in 1960!

In my retirement years I still enjoy serving God and our fellowmen as a Deacon and volunteer worker in the Community Services of White Memorial Church here in the State of California. To God be the Glory!
I am not 60 yet so I don’t want to think about aging process although signs are beginning to appear. But, I recently celebrated my official birthday last January 16 and want to share the blessings I received.

I just wanted to be quiet about it but you can’t do that when you’re in Facebook. Little did I know that my BFFs in Keene (Carmen Angeles and Lolita Valdez) were already planning a surprise birthday celebration that Saturday luncheon. Having visitors from McAllen even made it more of a surprise. And so the celebration began. From Saturday, January 14 to Tuesday, January 17, I got so many surprises. The greatest gift of all was a bouquet of roses and a Tres Leches cake that my husband managed to send to me.

Indeed, this latest birthday was the best ever because of friends and family who made it possible. The outpouring of messages in the FB was outrageously wonderful.

Thank you guys for everything.
As a retirement gift, my co-workers gave me a clock with the phrase: **WHATEVER... I'M RETIRED.** The numbers were out of sequence, a hint of the future life I would have.

I will no longer be awakened by an early morning alarm on workdays. No more adrenaline rush when a “code blue” or “trauma alert” is announced overhead, or running down the hallways to respond to patients’ needs. My time would not be “ruled” by work schedules, classes and staff meetings.

I also received a box of cards that contained a “bucket list.” Some items were hilarious (excluded from the photo) and some were not so practical to undertake like, “Climb Everest.”

There are moments when I look back and recall my “working years.” I miss the teamwork displayed when a patient “crashes” or the interaction with my patients and their families. I miss the parties when the staff got together, not as nurses but as friends just having a good time.

It has been a year since I retired. Henry and I have done some traveling. We climbed “The Great Wall” of China, travelled to Thailand to be with 6-months old tigers and ride an elephant in Changmai. Shopping at the colorful floating market in Damnoen Saduak was a dream come true.

With the temperate climate of San Diego, Southern California, tropical fruit trees have been planted in our backyard. We will soon be planting sitaw, okra, kamote, kalabasa and other vegetables.

I will enjoy walking on the beach and watch the sunset at the different places to where Henry and I will travel. I will cherish each moment I spend with family and grandkids. I will plant my garden and enjoy its yield. I will continue to serve God in whatever capacity I can. To me, that is “aging gracefully.”

And perhaps, I might “climb Everest,” who knows?
It’s no use getting old if you don’t get wise, and getting older isn’t all doom and gloom if you realize that life is a journey; a journey of life lessons and experiences containing successes and mistakes.

What nobody tells you is that it’s the accumulation of this knowledge and how you respond to it that makes your later years the ‘golden years’ because as you age, you earn your stripes. But if your stripes aren’t put to good use and acknowledged, then you’ve missed the point of getting older.

1. **You don’t always have to be right.** Remember when you were younger, how important it was to be right? Well, as the years pass by, we begin to understand that being right isn’t nearly as important as listening to and weighing up every side of the argument, even possibly deferring to someone else’s point of view. We begin to understand that it’s often better to lose a few battles in order to win the war.

2. **You learn not to judge.** In the Western world, we learn early on to want material things and strive to get them. While this isn’t altogether bad, it often brings with it envy and jealousy. We might begin to judge others on their material assets and not on who they are as people. As we get older, ‘stuff’ becomes less important than people and relationships and we learn not to judge, but just to accept people as they are.

3. **You begin to want less.** We accumulate so much ‘stuff’ on our journey through life in the Western world and much of this is redundant and in excess of what we actually need. As we get older, we begin to realize that sometimes less is more. It’s an incremental understanding that we don’t need to surround ourselves with a whole lot of material things.

4. **You gain more confidence in making decisions.** It’s true age brings wisdom. It can also bring more confidence. Why? Because we accumulate Experience with a capital “E” as we journey through life and our life lessons are powerful tools to draw from to make future decisions. Yes we’ve made mistakes, but we’ve learned from them and that instills an innate confidence for future decision making.
5. **Your children become your friends.** It’s hard to think of our children as friends when they are firstly so dependent upon us and then perhaps when they’re rebellious against us, or even hate us, during their teenage years. What nobody tells us is that as they become adults, grow into their own lives and fulfill their own dreams, we as parents take on a different role. Children now return to the family home and hearth as individuals in their own right and as friends.

6. **You understand that** there’s no point in telling anyone what to do At some stage in your life you might feel the urge to proffer unsolicited advice and think that you’re doing someone a favor. At a certain age, you then realize that there’s no point in telling anyone what to do, that actually, if you think about it, being given advice you didn’t ask for doesn’t feel very nice. What does feel good though is if someone plants a seed for you to ponder which leads you on to find the right answer yourself.

7. **You learn that wrinkles** should be worn with pride. For women especially, the onset of the first wrinkle is a day of some grief and in the years of growing up, a wrinkle free face is falsely deemed a prerequisite of beauty by our youth-centric society. Later in life, we realize that we are fortunate to be growing old and that wrinkles stand as a testimony to our experiences. It shows that we have successfully navigated the troughs and peaks of life. Wrinkles represent the days of our lives, each telling a different story.

8. **You are able to treat your parents** with unconditional respect. Our parents, although we love them, may have driven us mad at some point in our lives, and for those of us with children ourselves, the pattern is repeated. As we get older, we learn how to treat our mothers and fathers with respect and how to have patience as they reach their autumn years because we have better understanding of the trials and tribulations they have gone through in the process of aging.

9. **It’s O.K. to play the fool again.** As children we laughed, played the fool and generally didn’t think too much about what other people thought about us. Then our ego’s developed, self-awareness set in and we began to reign in our inner child, and squash the idiosyncratic part of us that was once so spontaneous. When we reach a certain age, it begins to matter less what other people think and not taking ourselves so seriously becomes an option once again.
10. You learn not to criticize. As we get older, we learn there’s little value to be gained by criticizing anyone. If we need to say something, it’s far better to say something positive than dwell on what’s negative. By mid-life, we have learned through trial and error that positive reinforcement always puts us in a much better position.

11. You are thankful for growing old. Not everyone grows old. Many die before their time or in the prime of their life. With age comes gratitude and the knowledge that with every passing year we are privileged, and being grateful becomes a daily ritual that enhances our lives in so many positive ways.

Remember, life's too short to worry about so many things.

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My philosophy: “aging is not the absence of youth. It is a new journey to be explored and cherished.”

I was 12 years old when our family first went on foreign service. I was a teen. Of course, I was upset to be separated from my friends but my siblings and I also understood that this opportunity was a once-in-a-life-time one. We knew this one-way trip could never be repeated so we consciously choose to embrace the experience; to watch and learn.

Aging the Masai Way: with strength, resilience and wisdom
I was 14 living in Kenya and so fascinated with the Masai, an Eastern African tribe of nomads. I would run back to the dorm screaming in excitement whenever I get to gawk at Masai walking by the gates of Maxwell Academy. (My poor dean had to be creative in finding punishments for my unruly conduct but I didn’t care. I was just too happy to see the Masai.)
The very young Masai stay within the Engkang, an enclosure made of thorny plants that protect the tribe and cattle. When boys turn 12 they get their first of 7 or 8 initiations. Suddenly dropped off in the middle of nowhere with no adults and no protection, they are expected to fend for themselves for a couple days. Snakes, lions and other wild creatures are expected. Many boys die but those who live through this ordeal are strong. If they live, then they quality to train to be moranni (warriors).

As Moranni, they form their own warrior’s camp (Emanyatta) consisting of 30-40 homes. Two of the boys are chosen to lead, guide and represent the camp while the rest are the foot soldiers. For 10 years, they continue warriors’ training together protecting the camp from bandits, wild animals and enemies. After the 10-year initiation, if they live through that, then they are allowed to marry and become fathers. But training does not stop there! They must live through 4 more initiations before they can be considered for the status of junior elders. Only the strongest and wisest make it to this level. As a junior elder, he is finally allowed to leave home and form his own clan, being completely responsible for the new clan’s survival. Independence with many responsibilities. The strongest junior elders are then selected to be the senior elders.

Living conditions in a typical Masai community is nomadic and harsh. Because death is a constant when a baby is born, he will not be recognized, named or taken to meet the family until he has lived more than 3 moons (months) old. This is because too many babies die before they get to their 3rd month. Another harsh reality in a Masai community: female children are married off before they reach their 9th birthday. Some as young as 6. They are married off to junior elders who are most likely in their 20s. Because they are young, the elder’s older wives will help raise the younger ones. Alas, many of the young girls die of childbirth. Whether male or female, only the strongest survive.

Aging the Cypriot Way: with elegance, intellect and love
For 3 years our family lived in the Greek side of Cyprus. As my siblings and I immersed ourselves in the culture, we were sometimes afforded behind-the-scenes experiences normally not open to the public or non-Cypriots.

The island of Cyprus is believed to be the birthplace of the goddess Aphrodite. It is also believed that the goddess Hera, mother of hearth and home, gifted the children of Aphrodite (Cypriot women) wisdom and grace to win battles and to keep the family intact. Cypriot women are the backbone and strength of their society; the Cypriot family is the heart of their culture.

Factoring in aunts, uncles, cousins and their children a family can easily have 40 people in it. There is no extended family in Cyprus; just family. They regularly have family get-togethers at grandma’s or at a designated older aunt’s place. We were fortunate enough to experience this first hand.

Our landlady’s family gathered every Sunday at her great-grandma’s place up in the mountains of Troodos which was a short drive from our rented house. We sometimes got invited along with our next door neighbors, the Nelson and Lucille Tabingo family. And whenever she could take a couple days off work at Beirut, Yolly Babao (Ed Babao’s wife) also joined us.
Early each Sunday morning before the sun rises, our land lady’s family would arrive at a previously designated area: perhaps an olive grove today and a vineyard next week – all owned by the family. They drove up the mountain from different parts of the island where on regular days they were doctors, teachers, bankers or businessmen. But on Sundays, they all worked hard as farmers their movements precise and quick. You see, hired hands are a rare thing in Cyprus so it falls upon the family members to come home to the farm each weekend to get the job done. And with more than 70% of the country’s export being agricultural, it falls on the family to work hard to get their vineyards and olive groves in top shape. It did not matter if you were a surgeon, a lawyer or a businessman the other days of the week – on Sunday everyone helped in the manual labor including the very old and the young.

Around 9:30AM the family would go to church at the nearby village church, being good Orthodox Greeks. After an hour of church, they return to work doing as much work as possible because next week the crew would be working at another location.

And as is true with all big gatherings, the preparation for the meal is quite an highly choreographed event. My job was to help the pre-teen kids bring around 2 dozen mismatched tables and a ton of chairs to the middle of the meadow where we would have lunch in the open: no walls, no roof, no protection from the sun. As a Filipino whose elders are always trying to protect you from the sun, this eating in the open was so strange to me but I quickly learned to love it.

My brother’s job was to help catch about 3 dozen rabbits which was cooked at a low, open-fire hearth starting early in the morning. (My sister was so traumatized! She loves all creatures furry and cute! Our Cypriot friends thought we were weird because we wouldn’t eat rabbit.) My sister’s job was to help harvest fresh fruits to eat from either the vines or the trees nearby. We would sometimes take home baskets full of pears and peaches. There was no slacking around; we were teamed up with other kids. I observed that the kids all took pride in the contribution they made to the team. I noticed how they took pride in the quality of their work knowing that the family relied on them. I thoroughly enjoyed our Sunday work-bee (pahina) with our landlady’s family.

As I observed the dynamics of the family, I noticed that the older women exuded warmth and dignity. I noticed that they presided in everything while the men worked out in the field. I noticed the conversations in the kitchen were not idle. They resembled brainstorming workgroup more than a kitchen full of cackling females. Calculators, charts, notebooks were used just as much as the chopping board and sink were.

During the meal, the conversation started with the patriarch asking each one to share what is going on with everyone. By mid-meal the conversations were sounding more like a business meeting where different family members were giving progress reports. Even my teenage friends shared what was going on in school, how the high school soccer team was doing, etc. By the time the feast was done, it would be decided which jobs would need to be done the next week.
Did you know that traditional Cypriot women consider themselves daughters of Aphrodite? Did you know that Cypriot daughters are nurtured and trained to be the backbone of the home? And did you know that by the time they graduate from high school, Cypriot daughters are gifted their very own brand new home fully paid. The rationale is that no matter where she goes in life, whether she marries or not – she will always have a home. When she marries, she still owns the home. It does not go to the husband nor does it become “common property” like it does in the Philippines. Her husband and her children will belong to her family, in the most traditional way. And as she ages, the higher her responsibility to her family gets. But no problem! Cypriot women are trained to be the strong pillar of the family, gathering the family each week and directing the family so that the family businesses would flourish. Many of the Cypriot moms I know went to Europe or the U.S. for their college education before returning back to Cyprus to start a family.

Conclusion:
I couldn’t help compare the metamorphosis of Masai men and Cypriot women to that of the Filipino people. The Masai go through different initiations and in each stage, many of the boys die. Only the strongest and wisest live. The Cypriot women, believing that as daughters of Aphrodite they were born with Hera’s gift of innate grace and wisdom, they go through different stages of life knowing that the wellbeing of the family falls on their shoulders and they must battle to keep the family intact and flourishing. The Filipino parents never leave their sons in the wilds to fend for themselves. Instead, they keep them as close to home to a point where some married kids still live with their parents. Filipino parents believe that whether male or female, their children have an equal opportunity to be either the backbone of the family or be the black sheep.

My attitude about aging is influenced by the many cultures that I had been immersed in. I still say aging is not the absence of youth. It is a new journey to be explored and cherished.

As I age, I plan to be that leathery ancient Masai. He never flaunts his battle scars nor sings of his own process. There is no need. He has earned his place. He sits amid his clan watching and listening. Engaged but not overbearing. As I age, I plan to be that wrinkly Greek Cypriot lola whose wisdom and grace remains. Why not? Like the Masai, Life has brought me through many initiations and I lived. Like the Cypriot who boasts of lineage connecting to the gods of Mount Olympus, I too have a lineage only far better. For I am a daughter of the God of Heaven, first by Creation and later by Redemption.

But if I die before I get to be wrinkly or leathery enough, I can go content knowing that I have lived as I choose to: in gratitude and in joyfulness. Not too many can say that.
Islam was the most advanced religion before the Spanish came to the Philippines. Arab and Malay missionaries, traders, and adventurers brought Islam to the Philippines about two centuries before Christianity came.

On September 20, 1519, Ferdinand Magellan sailed from Spain on a fleet of five ships to find a route to the spice island in the east. Although imperial glory and commerce were perhaps the primary motives that led Spain to send out expeditions to the unknown world, the religious factor should not be discounted.

Philip II, successor to the Spanish throne, and in whose honor the Philippines was named, is quoted as having said: “I will give the whole Indies for the conversion of one native.” Together with Magellan was the Augustinian friar, Pedro de Valderama.

On March 31, 1521, a year and a half after the expedition reached the Philippines, the first Catholic mass was celebrated at Limasawa, an islet south of Leyte. The next day, the fleet sailed to Cebu where Magellan himself, with his slave-interpreter Enrique, delivered sermons to the attentive audience of the native notables and explained the principal beliefs of the Christian religion. To the joyful surprise of both Magellan and Valderama, a “people movement” quickly developed. On the morning of April 14, 1521, Rajah (King) Humabon and 500 of his followers were baptized. Later in the afternoon, Humabon’s queen, together with forty of her ladies also received the sacrament. It was Magellan’s religious enthusiasm but wrong proselytizing strategy that led him to an untimely death. He sent an ultimatum to Lapu-lapu, chief of the Mactan island, to abandon paganism or else! Lapu-lapu did not bulge and the fateful battle of Mactan ensued. Magellan was killed.

Not many months later the few remaining members of his crew sailed home for Spain. Before another expedition could reach the Philippines, the newly baptized Filipinos without shepherds lapsed into their former religion. This is the rationale for the Catholic Church dating the beginning of the “Christianization” of the Philippines not in 1521 but in 1565, forty-four years later.
In 1565, a successful expedition dispatched by Philip II from Mexico reached the Philippines. Miguel Lopez de Legaspi headed the expedition together with Fray Andres de Uraneta, an Augustinian priest and a scholar of high moral character, as the chief adviser and navigator. Three other Augustinian friars on the ship were: Martin de Rada, Diego de Herrera and Pedro Gamboa. The priests began a systematic missionizing program in Cebu. All attempted to learn the Cebuan language. Within five months of language study, one of them, Rada was able to preach fluently in Cebuan. Mission work was done in a very cautious and deliberate manner.

The friars never allowed themselves to forget the “ease with which the Indians apostatized” at the time of Magellan. The Augustinian friars were determined not to repeat the mistake of baptizing large groups without reasonable assurance that the Spaniards would remain in the islands. Both in regard to the ultimate spiritual welfare of the natives and from the viewpoint of the friars’ sacerdotal conscience, it would be better for the Cebuans to remain pagans that become apostates, which would inevitable happen if the Spaniards would suddenly withdraw from the Philippines again.
Spain and the Catholic Church never allowed other Christian bodies to enter the Philippines during their more than 300 hundred years of rule in the Philippines. But when US Admiral George Dewey sunk the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, a new chapter was opened in the Christianization of the Philippines.

President McKinley of the United States did not know whether to take the Philippines or not. His nation had never fought a war of conquest before. But three vested interests pressured him and the American public to seek the ceding of the Philippines by Spain to the US. First is economic interest in the expanding American business of the Orient. Second, naval and military interests in the Philippines as America’s first line of defense and third, religious interests in the evangelization of the Philippines and its being made into a base of operations for American Protestant missionaries of Southeast Asia.

Fighting between American and Filipino forces began in February of the next year and lasted until May of 1902. Even before the war was concluded different denominations began sending missionaries to the Philippines. The first missionaries to arrive were Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, United Brethren, Protestant Episcopal, Christian and Missionary Alliance. Missionaries of other churches followed later.

Adventist Established a Foothold, 1905-1913

More than all the other countries of the Far East, the Philippines portrayed perhaps the greatest magnitude of God’s providence through the literature ministry. After centuries of spiritual darkness, the Filipinos reached forth with eager hands to receive the advent message through the printed page.

Soon after his arrival in Hong Kong, Abram La Rue sent packages of literature to the Philippines through friendly ship captains. However, the first direct contact with the islands was in 1904.

This is the start of the Adventism story of the Philippines.
Alumni Tribute to (brief write up about) outstanding female leaders who happen to be MVCian ie: worked at or was educated at MVC for at least 1 semester or 1 summer. Include her name, why you believe she is an outstanding leader, and some specifics as you remember. For the Women’s’ History Month Issue of CyberFlashes. DEADLINE: March 1, 2017.

Alumni Stories about “Little Surprises”: the little events or observations we had which we might overlook but which enriches our lives or brightens our days. Unlike graduations, promotions, etc., they cause us to smile when we least expect it. Examples: unexpected comments from a child, things in nature, a small act of kindness, etc. DEADLINE: Jan 24

Send your write up to any of the CyberFlashes editors. Thanks!

Attn: Peri Operative Nurses

ATTN PERI OPERATIVE RNs. (Pre-Op, Outpatient Surg, Sterile Processing, OR nurses, PACU, etc.) The International Convention sponsored by AORN will be held on April 1-5, 2017 at Boston, Massachusetts. The Association of Peri-Operative Nurses or AORN is offering financial aid to attend the event. MVCSN grads are going. If interested, housing and meals with MVCians can be coordinated.


For more info . https://www.aorn.org/surgicalexpo
To coordinate with MVCians (housing, meals, etc): Lily Bell Durias.

Announcement from SULADS Philippines

MVCSN Reunion Sept 2017. Cancun, Mexico

MVCSN Reunion Sept 2017. Cancun, Mexico

MVC School of Nursing USA Chapter Advisory Committee and officers met this week and are organizing a MVCSN Reunion with Nursing Symposium (CEU opportunity!) included.

- **WHAT:** MVCSN USA Chapter Reunion & Symposium
- **WHEN:** September 1-5, 2017 (5 days, 4 nights)
- **WHERE:** Cancun, Mexico
- **ACTIVITIES:** Nursing CEU classes, socials, sports, swimming, etc.
- **COST:** $399/person (shared room) or $798/couple with 2 kids under age 12. This cost does not include your airfare to get to Cancun. This all-inclusive cost for the resort covers the following:
  - hotel accommodation,
  - concierge service,
  - unlimited buffet meals or a-la carte at any of the three restaurants,
  - unlimited domestic drinks, snacks, room service,
  - sauna and steam room,
  - two pools with wide beach,
  - use of tennis courts, all hotel taxes and gratuities included.
  - all non-mechanical sporting equipment
  - banquet night and food,
  - shuttle to/from airport.

- **COST, EXTRA STAY.** If you wish to stay a few days before and/or the reunion, additional cost of $75/night for the same coverage.

- **RESORT ACTIVITIES FREE** to our group, if you are interested. Windsurfing, Hobie Cats, Kite Surfing, Kayaks, Yoga, Pilates, Latin Rhythms, Aqua aerobics, horseshoes, etc.

- **CAN non-members of MVCSN USA Chapter come?** Yes! However, all must register with the MVCSN Association of America.

What a cool once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to combine work and play in a paradise setting where you can bring your loved ones at a very inexpensive cost.

For More info or to reserve your spot at Cancun: contact our president Ted Ray Llasos in Facebook or Cellphone (956) 607-2299.
MVCSNA of North America presents

2017 Grand Reunion w/ CEU & Vacation

Theme: “Shine MVC Shine”

Make a Difference

September 1-5, 2017
(5 days, 4 nights)

$399 per person (shared room) or $798 for a couple with 2 kids under 12 years of age for 5 days and 4 nights.

ALL INCLUSIVE:
Free Accommodation,
Free food and drinks,
Free tour, free airport pick up, etc.

Ocean Spa Hotel in Cancun, Mexico

Please call our President Ted Ray Llasos at (956) 607-2299

Open to all MVC-SN USA Chapter members and friends
Licensed RNs for the U.K.

RNs INTERESTED IN WORKING in the U.K.?

FOUR SEASONS COMPANY is looking for RNs to work in the United Kingdom and will be in the Philippines on February 14-26 to recruit hardworking Filipino nurses. MVC School of Nursing alumnus Sam Nazareth, who currently serves in Chicago, IL, has been happily working for this company for 10 years now and would love to see MVC alumni members join their team.

For more info, please contact MMA Healthcare Recruitment 0063 9063389963 or 0063 9494682648 or www.mmarecruitment.com. Or message Sam Nazareth in Facebook.

Oshkosh 2019 Update

NOW OPEN! REGISTRATION to the International Pathfinder Camporee which will be held at Oshkosh, Wisconsin on August 12-17, 2019! For more details or to register, go to http://www.camporee.org/ MVCians from all over the world will be there. Will you?

[Remember: registration is 1st come, 1st serve catering to Pathfinders worldwide! Act fast!]

Alumni Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>For More Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19-20, 2017</td>
<td>Preaching Lectureship</td>
<td>All ASI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 01-05, 2017</td>
<td>AORN Int’l Convention</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Lily Bell Durias (Facebook)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31-Jun 4</td>
<td>Philippine GYC (PYC)</td>
<td>Iloilo City</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Aug 02-05, 2017</td>
<td>ASI Int’l Convention</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asiministries.org">www.asiministries.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 1-5, 2017</td>
<td>MVCSN Alumni Reunion</td>
<td>Cancun</td>
<td>Ted Ray Llasos (Facebook)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019 Summer (TBD)</td>
<td>MVCSN Golden Anniversary Reunion</td>
<td>MVC Campus</td>
<td>Devaney Bayeta, Pres MVCSD Homebase Chapter</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019 Aug 12-17</td>
<td>Int’l Pathfinder Camporee</td>
<td>Oshkosh, WI</td>
<td><a href="http://www.camporee.org">www.camporee.org</a></td>
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I wish to thank the following for their contribution in this week’s issue of CyberFlashes:

- To those who wrote on “Aging Gracefully”: Diego Sausa, Eddie Zamora, Meriam Fabriga, Dr. Laurence Gayao, Gwen Ferraren -Cabrales, Nelson Ornopia, Evelyn Tabing, and Joy Caballero-Gadia. And to...

- Jessie Colegado for the chuckles in “Jessie’s Patch of Weeds”;
- Romy Halasan for the Philippine History story in “Life of A Missionary”
- The SULADS and Gospel Outreach for “SULADS’ Corner”;
- Evelyn Porteza Tabingo & Ed Zamora for their help in editing;
- Joy Caballero-Gadia with the layout

This week’s issue of Cyberflashes was by Raylene Ann Rodrigo-Baumgart. Next week’s issue will be by Eddie Zamora. Please direct all entries to him or any of the editors.

NAME:  
Eddie Zamora  
Evelyn Porteza-Tabingo  
Jessie Colegado  
Joy Caballero-Gadia  
Lily EscaraLare  
Melodie Mae Karaan-Inapan  
Raylene Rodrigo-Baumgart  
Romulo ‘Romy’ Halasan  

EMAIL ADDRESS:  
ezamora594 at aol dot com  
etabingo at gmail dot com  
Cyberflashes at gmail dot com  
watermankids at yahoo dot com  
LyLare at Hotmail dot com  
melodieinapan at yahoo dot com  
raylene.baumgart at gmail dot com  
romsnake at gmail dot com

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PRAYER REQUEST: Starting Jan. 1, the Adventist Church’s Middle East and North Africa Union (MENA) will start a special 80 Days of Prayer relay. We will be featuring the Union’s prayer requests, and we invite you to join us in praying for this region.
PRAYER REQUEST: COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED FAMILIES OF:
Araceli Arit, Jovita P. Solis, Wayne Chavit, Nanette Chio, Kerry Tortal, Elmore Jornada, Rolly Boniales, Pastor Rudy Bermudez, Celia Mendez, Venus Pasco, Necito Ruado, Malachi Zamora, Pura Alsaybar,

PRAYER REQUEST: FOR HEALING
Rebecca Antemano, Roxie Pido, Virgie Osita, Neneng Sanes, Pastor Oseas Zamora, Pastor Remelito Tabingo

PRAYER REQUEST: The leadership and spirituality of all the MVC Faculty and Staff; the students, the family of the students. The college itself.

Continued Prayer Request for Gary’s safe return. A person who was so active in church activities in California then in Virginia, he went to the Philippines to study medicine. Sadly, last month he went missing and his truck was found abandoned. Nothing makes sense. No further clues have been found. Philippine authorities are actively working on the search.

Closing Thoughts
By The Editor

"Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised."
–Proverbs 31:30

It was one busy Wednesday morning and I was standing in line at Roses with a cartful of purchases when I heard this conversation between the cashier and the lady in front of me.

"Ma’am? Would you like the 10 percent senior citizen discount today?" The cashier inquired.

The lady’s big eyes immediately became slits as she jerked her head up to look at the young clerk and said, “Excuse me, did you say senior citizen discount?”

“Yes, ma’am. Don’t you want it?” The cashier again inquired politely.

“No thank you. I don’t qualify,” the irritated customer said with a bit of an attitude.

The young clerk just raised one brow as she rang up the purchase while the customer dropped abruptly all her purchases for the cashier to scan. And oh, everyone in line sensed her anger at being mistaken as a senior citizen.
Then it hit me! I qualified for this! How can I forget today is a Wednesday! So, I immediately opened my purse to look for my photo ID. So when my turn came, I smiled and immediately told the young cashier, “10% off for me today. I am almost 61!” The cashier looked at me and said, “Get out of here. You are joking, right?” I smiled! Was she being nice?

So, what is this obsession with not wanting to ‘look’ our age? Pride? I remember when I turned thirty years old, I was very sad. I was just a young bride and I thought I was really old and have spent longer hours facing the mirror checking for wrinkles. Then when I turned 40 with a young baby in tow, I was even sadder and literally asked myself, “Will I be able to walk down the aisle with this baby Alexa on her wedding day?” I was already picturing myself walking down the aisle with a walker.

But why are we so worried about getting old? God states pretty clearly in Proverbs 31 the woman He wants us to be: a busy, respected one whose inner beauty enhances her outward beauty. I have seen this many times in social media: ‘Growing older is a privilege denied to many.’ And now, as a sixty-one year old, I have learned to accept and love everything about it including some special privileges such as store discounts on specific days.

Yes, growing older is a privilege. It’s a blessing. I realized that if God allows me to live a long life then He has much for me to do. I have become active as a Women’s Ministry leader plus busily involved with Norfolk Sister Cities Organization and other community services. At the same time I am busy promoting and selling skincare products that help defy the aging process. I certainly have no time to worry about droopy faces and saggy bosoms. I am supposed to be about His business. I don’t want to be concerned about growing older, wrinkles becoming more prominent, acquiring the ‘rooster neck’ or gravity making me buy sturdy, no nonsense bras. After all, there are so many ways of camouflaging those fine lines or using my cell phone apps for instant beauty or other kinds of photo edits if we want to. I just have to be more computer-savvy. What I should really be concentrating on is to just want to be pleasing unto God in my words, actions and deeds.

I have learned that if someone asks me if I’d like the senior citizen discount I am going to smile and say, “absolutely,” and take the discounted price or accept the free coffee or the extra scoop of ice cream. After all, there are quite a few privileges to growing older.
1 Timothy 2:9-10 says, “I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.”

HAPPY SABBATH, EVERYONE!

“Age shouldn't affect you. It's just like the size of your shoes - they don't determine how you live your life! You're either marvellous or you're boring, regardless of your age”. Morrissey