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McGraths' Newsletter – December 2009
Manila, Philippines

Greetings Faithful Partners:

Daniel, in his book, records several statements about the Lord in chapter 9. He says: *“O Lord, the great and awesome God”* (verse 4); *“Lord, you are righteous”* (verse 7); *“the Lord our God is merciful”* (verse 9). He goes on to reflect on the power of God in bringing Israel up out of Egypt, and then helps us appreciate that our God listens, forgives and hears and acts on our behalf (verses 15 and 19).

What a privilege and honour to serve such a God and to experience Him in all the ways Daniel describes in this brief portion of his book. We are so thankful we can rise each day and know that He truly is present with us and goes before us, preparing and guiding in the way we are to walk.

We apologize for not sending out a November newsletter. It has been a very busy month. The schedule has been full with regional meetings (4 different locations around the Philippines), as well as adjusting to the redefinition of Eric's role at the end of October.

Being on support staff sometimes can make you wonder what role you really have in the work of SIL. However, it certainly becomes evident, when you sit and talk with those who are actually involved in translation and as you

listen to their exciting and precious reports of celebrations of progress. The following are some of those celebrations that have occurred since we arrived. They help us realize that our support ministries are very important in the process.

CELEBRATIONS:

May 09 – Calamian Tagbanwa New Testament (NT) dedicated

June 09 – Antipolo Ifugao Old Testament (OT) & NT dedicated

September 09 – Kinaray-a NT dedicated

September 09 – Central Sama OT and NT portions dedicated

And because of your faithful partnership with us, you too have had a part in these accomplishments. We continue to be grateful to our God for each of you and your encouragement to us. Thank you for your notes, emails and calls. Yes, some have actually picked up the phone and called our Kitchener, Ontario number (519-489-0317) and reached us here in Manila. ☺ Those are special to us. And of course, through technology, we are able to keep in touch with our family on a fairly regular basis.

Please continue to pray for the Philippines. There has been a lot of recovery from the typhoon devastation, and yet some are still in the clean-up mode. Some who have had to rebuild have started but must only move ahead as they have finances to do so.



Eric & Captain Brian up north.

Another exciting matter is the establishment of Wycliffe Philippines. WP is what we call a Wycliffe Organization (WO). For example our WO is Wycliffe Canada – our sending organization. So WP is the sending organization for the Philippines. This is truly a blessing as the Filipino people sense God calling them out to go and serve other parts of the world in translation work. Truly this indicates the work has come full circle since SIL arrived some 57 years ago.



With new found friends from Peru off southern city of Davao

On a personal note, Sharon and I had the privilege of travelling to the southern-most part of the Philippines, to Davao City. It was a working vacation, with several appointments and people to meet, but we did manage a couple of days of “vacation”. One day we toured the city and on another we went with a group of about 35 to an island off of Davao and enjoyed a day picnicking and swimming, while many of our group went scuba diving. Several of them are marine biologists and so are interested in exploring the waters off the coast. The cost was amazing – only \$6 each, that included our lunch, boat trip, mask and snorkel!

We also had the privilege of attending the Christmas presentation of Faith Academy Mindanao. What a delightful evening.

One other matter of a personal nature I suppose you call it. We have moved our photos away from our website to another location. We want to be able to post pictures for you to see but we need to be careful we do not compromise any of the work being done in sensitive areas. So what does this mean? It means that you need to write us with a request for the website address where our photos are located. We will send it to you, with the proviso that you do not share it. We need to be the ones distributing the URL for the photos. Thanks for your understanding.



Both sides of a street nearby lined with Christmas “parols” (Christmas decorations).

We want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very blessed and joyous Christmas season. We would love to be with you all and share the rejoicing of this season together, but we are where we know the Lord wants us. Your love, prayers, and encouragement will be our Christmas gifts this year, in place of your presence.

With grateful hearts, Eric & Sharon

Contact Information:

By regular mail – Box 2270 CPO, 1099 Manila, Philippines - 519-489-0317(H); 927-398-2975(C)

By email at: eric-sharon_mcgrath@wycliffe.ca

By contacting the Wycliffe office: Wycliffe Bible Translators, 4316 10th Street NE., Calgary, AB T2E 6K3
800-463-1143

By contacting The USA Wycliffe office: Wycliffe Bible Translators, P.O. Box 628200, Orlando, FL 32862
800-WYCLIFFE

Mark support sent to the office “for the ministry or work of Eric & Sharon McGrath”

December Support Status Report:

% of Total Ministry Budget Met – 85%

Balance required: - \$601/mth