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McGraths' Newsletter – March, 2010
Manila, Philippines



Greetings Faithful Partners:

We have been so encouraged by you during these months since being here in the Philippines. It is hard to believe that by the end of March 10 months will have slipped by already. So much has happened in our lives when we have appreciated so much having the knowledge of your presence with us in prayer as we have journeyed through these events. From sickness, to typhoons, to car repair needs, to relocating and dealing with two floods in our new home, to increased responsibilities – to say it has been a whirlwind might be an understatement. It has made us so aware of the presence, provision and enabling of our Lord in our lives. Your partnership has been part of all the Lord is doing through us! Thank you!

The next three months will be very busy months – particularly April and June. In April there are four important meetings of which Eric is part of – in three of them he will be leading in his role in Human Resources. These three meetings are new territory in the restructuring of the way SIL we will be operating now, so they will bring their particular challenges.

Then also during April Eric will be conducting the final phase of what is known as CLI (Cross-Cultural Living Internship). These sessions are spread over four days and provide some intense training in this very important area of integration into Philippine society and culture.

Then in June, we will be part of our biennial conference from June 7-17th up north. These are times of doing business and enjoying seeing many in person that we have been only in text-message or e-mail contact with for months. We are looking forward to the spiritual renewing from the ministry of the Word as well during these days. They too, are intense days as again we explore the changing ways of our ministry here in the Philippines. Pray for God to richly bless, encourage, refresh and strengthen during the days of conference.

Sharon sometimes feels like she is not spending many days in the library – and in reality she isn't! She continues to spend a lot of her "spare" time doing member care. We have had several who have had need of her to either drive them to doctors and hospitals, or just to be their silent listener as they have revealed to them their medical conditions and prognoses. So her role as member Care facilitator is a very important ministry here at our office complex and is being used readily.

Sharon has also had a new role added to her repertoire. She has been requested by the Director of Personnel (☺) to provide supervisors with a synopsis of prayer letters that are written by our staff. She reads each letter that is written, after it has been sent, drawing from it pertinent information that a supervisor should know and then forwards it to the supervisor. This enables the supervisor to be aware of any special situations in his/her staff's life. For example, she might point out special health needs in the individual or their family, any travel plans, any special recognition someone has received – i.e. a graduating student, etc. Supervisors do not always have time to read the prayer letters of all their staff, so this synopsis that Sharon prepares draws to their attention highlights. Then the supervisor can respond back to the staff person.

We would continue to ask your prayer to for our "extra-curricular" activity. One of those, that we have asked our grandsons, Will and Jacks, to pray with us about, is cookie distribution to the street children. These children come knocking on car windows when cars are stopped at traffic lights, looking for money. We know that any money given to them is passed over to adults on the side of the street, who in some cases are part of syndicates, so we give them packages of cookies. We print stickers, which say "Jesus loves you and so do we!" in both English and Tagalog, and place this on each package. We see the children move away reading the sticker and then enjoying

the cookies. They have come to recognize our car now, so as soon as they see us, they will rush over to us and with sheepish looks in their eyes hold out their hands.

We have asked Will and Jacks to pray that someday God will bring that sticker back to their mind, and that they will seek out the Lord, Who has said they will find Him!! Will you also join us in that prayer?

Also, with Easter approaching we are busy at church – or should I say Sharon is busy with the choir. The choir is doing a cantata called “The Witness” twice on March 27th and once on the 28th. In preparation they have been having practices, Thursday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons. And when the choir sings in the four church services on a given Sunday (7AM, 9AM, 11AM and 6PM), she needs to be there at 6AM and finishes at 7:30 PM. Long days for sure! Please pray for strength for Sharon especially as we lead up to this special Easter season.

Also Eric is teaching a discipleship class on Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM and we will soon be starting a Growth Group during the week in our home. We currently attend one on Wednesday night, so this will not mean another night out; in fact it will mean another night in! PTL!

One more prayer request, which will probably be passed by the time those who receive this by snail mail have it, but we are co-sponsoring a special Easter concert here in our Barangay (Ba- wrong-guy) our community on the 27th. We have asked a group called Harvest come in to do a concert. Our theme is “Holy Week – Celebrating the Love of God!” Holy week is a very special time here in the Philippines and we wanted to have this outreach with our neighbours. So SIL (our organization here in the Philippines, the Barangay and the Homeowners Association are joining together to host this concert. Pray God will use it to speak to hearts for eternity.

BTW, the extra role that Eric mentioned last month is not going to materialize, as he went to his supervisor and just explained that he was pretty much maxed out and almost on overload, so he didn't feel he could take on anymore. His supervisor understood and so the search is on for someone to fill that role. Thank you for praying with us about that and also for the advice that some of you took time to send. It was appreciated and followed up on.

One final request for prayer – the Philippines conducts national elections on May 10th this year. There are ten candidates for president. Please pray that all will be done well and that the result will bring peace and stability to the nation of the Philippines. This nation truly needs a smooth and steady transition of governments at this time.

Rejoice with us - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2lBrKFxDmk>

LATE PRAISE ITEM: Some of you will know that we sent out a request for used copies of a hymnbook for a church south of Manila that had severe flood damage back in the fall. PTL, a seniors group from Kitchener had 60 copies of the hymnbook we were looking for and are shipping them over to this church! PTL for His faithfulness, through His people.

Resting in Christ, Eric & Sharon McGrath

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

March Support Status Report:

% of Total Ministry Budget Met – 94%

Balance required: - \$227/mth