



OIGI UPDATES 12

Updating Members of Odyssey Initiatives Group, Inc. and Odyssey in Christ, Asia Family

For the Month of January to April, 2025

A Looking Forward to Another Year of God's Favor!

Our OIGI family started the year with the retreat team doing a dry-run of a newly-designed retreat entitled “The Holy Spirit as Spirit in the Gospel of John.” The retreat team composed of Mina Gonzales as team leader and co-facilitators, Malou Boone and Vicky Constantino “journeyed” the regular members of the J-Walkers Saturday night fellowship group into several sessions covering the gospel of John.

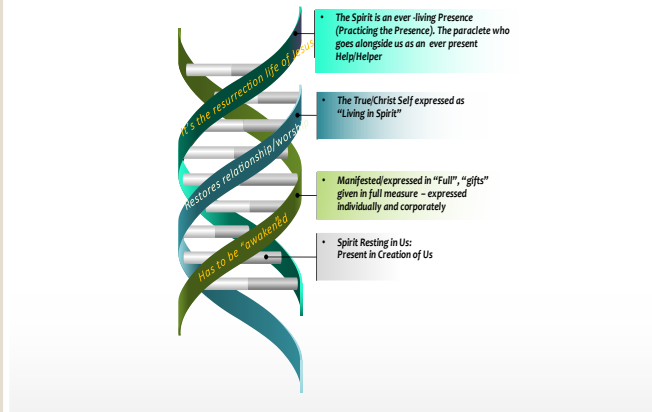
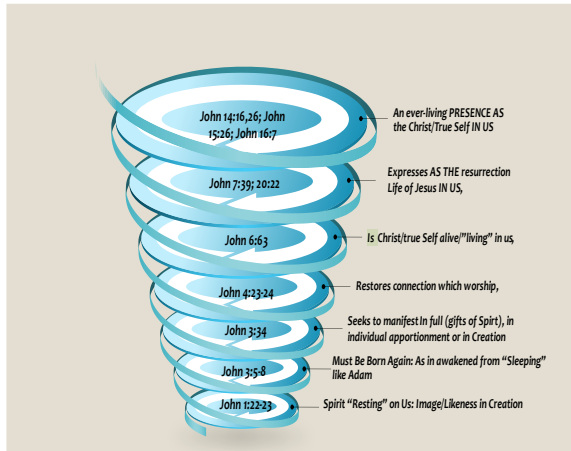
The retreat is aimed at showing how Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit in John’s gospel sequentially in seven narrative-stages as shown in the diagrams below. Further the retreat guides retreatants to a personal reflection on how believers relate to the Holy Spirit, experientially and progressively as manifested in the narratives in the gospel.

Following the retreat conducted for the J-Walkers group, the team together with Dr. Rey Taniajura and his wife June conducted the same retreat to the leadership and members of the GCI Tabaco congregation. The retreatants were also joined in by some GCI leaders from Masbate, Pili and Legaspi congregations.

**TheFLOW of the Holy Spirit in John's Gospel
described in 7 Stages**

- Stage 1: The Spirit resting on Jesus - "Jesus is the expression of the Spirit", John 1: 32-33
- Stage 2: The Spirit and regeneration/born again - "Must be awakened", John 3:5
- Stage 3: The Spirit rests on Jesus to an unlimited degree - "Jesus as fullness and demonstration of living in Spirit", John 3:34
- Stage 4: The Spirit is involved in worship- "Results in relationship/worship", John 4:23-24
- Stage 5: The Spirit gives life - "He who is in Spirit IS experiencing real Living!", John 6:63
- Stage 6: The Spirit will be given only after Jesus's glorification - "The Spirit is recognized/experienced in resurrection", John 7:39; John 20:22
- Session 7: The Spirit is referred to as paraklētōs, or "helping presence" - The Spirit is an ever-living PRESENCE - the practice of (LIVING in the Present Moment)", John 14:15, 26; 15:26; 16:7

- In 3 or 4 Instances, the Spirit is named "Holy Spirit": (Jn. 1:32-33)
 - Jn 7:37-39; Jn. 14:26;
 - Jn. 20:22-23



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Here is a first-person account about the retreat by one of the retreat participants and co-retreat facilitator Myrta Dawal:

On February 28 and March 1, Odyssey In Christ Asia conducted a retreat titled "The Holy Spirit as Spirit in the Gospel of John." The retreat was requested by Pastora Virgie Manzano, who was visiting from the U.S. for a few days. It was attended by members of the Pastoral Team of GC Tabaco, along with leaders from Bicol churches, with a total attendance of 22 participants.



The team of facilitators, led by Dr. Rey Taniajura, included OIGI retreat team members Carmina Gonzales, Ma. Lourdes Boone, and Myrla Dawal. Jina Raduban conducted the communion service. Before the retreat was concluded with communion, Myrla Dawal was ordained-commissioned as Chaplain by Dr. Taniajura, with the OIGI team assisting, under the partnership of Odyssey Initiatives Group, Inc. (OIGI) and Church Planting Movement Institute of Missions Inc. (CPMIMI) led by Dr./Bishop Alexander Arceno.

On May 8, 2025 the same retreat will be conducted for OIGI team who will compose the core team that is envisioned to design and run a “Capstone Project” for Bureau of Jail and Penology personnel. The project is aimed at teaching spirituality, spiritual formation and practices, among others, to those who would be doing jail and similar other ministries.

Any interested groups, whether connected to OIGI or not, who would like to host this retreat on “The Holy Spirit as Spirit in the Gospel of John” may contact Ms. Carmina Gonzales at gonzalescarmina1@gmail.com or myn_gonzales@yahoo.com.

And Here’s a Mission Update from an OIGI “Family” Member

February 7, 2025

Dear OIGI Family,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

First and foremost, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to God for His unfailing love and provision in my life. I am deeply grateful for your support and generosity, which have allowed me to pursue my studies at the Philippine Christian University. I am currently taking a Master's in Management, Major in Educational Management a journey that has been both challenging and rewarding.

Before I share our mission updates, I humbly come before you with a prayer request. Please pray for God's provision regarding my tuition fees. My husband and I are fully committed to the mission work God has entrusted to us. As many of you know, our ministry often faces financial challenges. The tithes we receive sometimes amount to as little as 80 pesos, which we often use for gasoline to transport our mission members on a motorbike so they can attend gatherings and worship services. Despite these financial constraints, God's faithfulness continues to sustain us. In the Book of Acts 20:35 reminds us, ...It is more blessed to give than to receive. This verse resonates deeply with us as we continue to serve the Manobo tribes and other communities in Agusan del Sur. We have witnessed countless moments of God's grace and hearts transformed, lives renewed, and faith strengthened in the midst of hardships. It is truly humbling to be a part of His work. However, I find myself at a crossroads where I need your prayers and, if God places it on your heart, your financial support. Continuing my education will equip me to serve the mission and the community better, providing knowledge and skills that I can use to uplift others and glorify God.

Please join me in praying for this need and believing in God's provision. If you feel led to support this cause, know that your kindness will not only help me reach my educational goals but also empower our ongoing mission work.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your willingness to journey alongside me in faith. May God continue to bless you abundantly for your generosity and heart for His kingdom.

April 18, 2025

To my OIGI FAMILY,

Warmest greetings and blessings in the name of our Lord!

I thank God for all the great things He is doing through you. I am especially thankful for your prayers and generous support, which have made it possible for me to pursue my master's degree. By God's grace and your kindness, I have now completed my first semester at Philippine Christian University. What a journey this has been, a journey I never imagined I could walk alone. But God, in His faithfulness, has used you as His instruments to help me reach this far. When I finally received my transcript of records, diploma, and graduation photos from my college degree, my family rejoiced with me. I will never forget the tears in my mother's eyes as she said, "Finally, I have a professional daughter." Her words pierced my heart in a moment I will forever cherish. For a family like mine, it was more than a milestone; it was a miracle.

Amidst all the trials I have faced, God has turned my mourning into joy. Not only am I continuing with my Master's degree, but I have also finished the course Master in Transformative Spirituality. I once thought my dream of finishing college was enough, but God, in His abundant mercy, added even more. I had let go of my personal ambitions to serve Him and minister to children and my fellow tribes in the mountain areas. I never imagined that, while following His will, He would open even greater doors for me through your love and generosity. Please continue to pray for God's provision for my studies and the mission work we continue here, especially after the devastating flood we recently experienced. Despite the hardships, we continue to serve and shine His light in every way we can.

May the Lord bless you richly for the love and compassion you pour out for His kingdom. Thank you for being part of this journey not just in my life but in the lives of many people He is reaching through us.

In Christ's love and service,



Marissa S. Gonzales

MY DIPLOMA, GRADUATION PHOTOS & TOR

I am forever grateful to my OIGI family and my brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you for your love, support, and prayers. I humbly ask that you continue to lift me up in prayer, especially for God's provision as I pursue my master's degree, particularly for my tuition and financial needs.



FIRST CHILDREN FELLOWSHIP

After I received my diploma, Transcript of Records, and graduation photos, I chose to celebrate this milestone with a thanksgiving celebration surrounded by the children who have become a big part of my mission journey. We invited more than 50 children, though we wished we could welcome more. Unfortunately, we didn't have enough chairs or food to accommodate everyone. Despite that, the joy in their eyes was overwhelming. I cooked "BINIGNIT" for them a humble dish that reminds me of the mountainous areas where I often do mission work. I told the children, If I had more resources, I would prepare something even more special for you. It is my prayer that one day, I can serve them even just fried chicken a simple treat that would bring them so much joy. I remember the last time I was able to give them ice cream. That was possible because Ma'am Vicky Constantino generously gave me money. That moment brought me so much gladness. It was a beautiful memory I will always treasure. Please continue to pray for the Mission Ministry here in Mindanao. May the Lord provide for every need so that more children can feel the love, joy, and hope that only Christ can give.



MISSION 1

Sitio Linatawan Sta Teresa Loreto Agusan del Sur

FOR PARSONAGE

In Mission 1, the trees are not the problem when it comes to building; the real challenge is the lack of financial resources. What we need most is money for gasoline, to pay the chainsaw operator, and to cover other necessary expenses to complete the work.



GOAL:

My two brothers, together with my husband, have a heartfelt goal to buy ukay-ukay clothes once again and give them to children in this community who have so little to wear. Many of these little ones are living in deep poverty, some with only one worn-out outfit to use every day. Our prayer is to clothe them not only with garments but also with love, dignity, and hope. It may seem like a simple gift, but to a child in need, it means the world.



SCHOOL MINISTRY

The School Ministry has always been one of our deepest prayers. We are asking God to open more doors, especially in Mission 2 and Mission 3. The photos shown are from Mission 1, where my brother, Angelo Gonzales, has been assigned as the pastor. We were moved when the school principal personally invited my brother to serve as their religious teacher every Thursday. This ministry is not only for the students but also reaches the hearts of the parents and teachers. It is a beautiful opportunity to plant seeds of faith, love, and hope in the lives of many. As the new school year approaches, we continue to pray that God will grant more open doors for this ministry to touch more lives, guide more hearts, and shine His light through every classroom.



SHORT TESTIMONY

One of the children from our mission here in Sitio Linatawan made us all so proud she won a gold medal in the javelin event (elementary girls category)! What makes her story even more inspiring is that she comes from a remote mountain area. Despite the hardships, she is a brave and hardworking child who helps her parents every day just so they can have food on the table. She is also one of the most faithful young hearts in our mission ministry. Her victory is not just a medal; it is a testimony of God's grace, strength, and faithfulness in the life of a child who never gave up.

To God be all the glory!



MISSION 2

Sitio Cabuga Sta Teresa Loreto Agusan del Sur

One of the beautiful ministries we continue to nurture here in Mission 2 includes the Children's Ministry, Serenades, Tract Distribution, and personal witnessing. Each effort may seem simple, but it is filled with love and faith, sowing seeds of hope in every heart we reach. We thank God because in every step, in every little act of service, His presence is with us. He strengthens us, provides for us, and moves through us. Truly, it is not by our might but by His Spirit that the mission continues. My brother, Jonel Gonzales, continues to faithfully respond to God's call, giving his best to follow the will of the Lord. We are inspired by his obedience and servant heart. May the Lord continue to guide him and use him mightily for His glory.

WITNESSING



SERENADE



BIBLE STUDY



CHILDREN MINISTRY & TRACTS DISTRIBUTION



MISSION 3

Purok 6-B Logco Poblacion La Paz Agusan del Sur

Mission 3 is where my husband and I are currently being led by God to do a pioneering mission. Starting a new work is never easy; it requires deep faith, unshakable commitment, and a heart willing to endure. I can personally testify to this, as I have been walking this path since 2018 up to the present. There are many trials we've had to overcome and countless challenges we still face. At times, the journey feels lonely and uncertain, but God's grace always sustains us. Every hardship reminds us that this mission is not ours, but His. This is just the beginning of our journey as pioneers in Mission 3. We may not have much, but we carry the love of Christ, the power of prayer, and the hope that God will transform lives through this work. We believe that what we plant in faith today will bear fruit for generations to come.

DURING FLOOD

During the flood, we were unable to cook our meals because our dirty kitchen was soaked and unusable. With heavy rain still pouring, we had no choice but to humbly ask our neighbors if we could cook in their home. Despite the difficult situation, we were reminded once again of God's provision through the kindness of others. Even in the midst of the storm, He made a way.



SUNDAY

Every Sunday, our hearts are filled with hope as we begin our routine of gathering those who are willing to join the worship service. My husband lovingly takes the time to pick them up one by one through muddy roads, far distances, and all kinds of weather. Thereafter, he prepares everything needed for the service with a joyful heart. It may seem simple to some, but for us, it's a sacred task, a labor of love for the Lord and His people. Each soul that comes is a blessing, and every Sunday becomes a testimony of how God moves through willing hearts.



BIBLE STUDY

My husband and I have a deep love for holding Bible studies, not only for the family but also for their neighbors. It's a precious time where we can come together to share the Word of God and experience His presence in our lives. We are so grateful to God for His constant provision and guidance throughout this journey in the Mission Ministry. Every step we take, every life we touch, is a testament to His faithfulness. We trust that He will continue to lead us as we spread His love and truth in this community.



MISSION 3 NEEDS

My husband and I have been praying for the provision of our electricity for the Mission Ministry. Each time we have some money, we use it to buy the necessary materials to make this possible. But every Sunday, we are still dependent on the kindness of our neighbors, asking them to connect us to their electricity so we can hold the service. We are trusting in God's timing, and we know that He will provide. Currently, we need 4,000 pesos for labor, materials, and the necessary documents to process everything. This is a significant need for our ministry, and we humbly ask for your prayers that God will open the doors for this provision. We believe that with His help, we will overcome this challenge and continue to serve Him with all our hearts.



MISSION'S COMFORT ROOM

-Please join us in prayer for the Mission work here, that by God's grace, we will be blessed with a comfort room. This is a simple yet necessary need for the ministry, and we trust that God, in His perfect timing, will provide for this as we continue to serve and reach others.



THANK YOU !