

CARSTEN & MERCY AUST







"The only important thing in life are the traces of love we leave behind when we go away."

These words of Albert Schweizer point to the vanities of life which will all pass away one day. All that will remain is what we have invested in others. In the light of this fact, the Bible encourages us to look for opportunities to do good whenever we can. And if we go through life with open eyes, we will find many opportunities to make that possible.

Looking for such opportunities has become our main purpose in life and we are grateful that God has placed people on our side from all over the world who help us in doing good to those in need. Without your kindhearted support, our work would not be possible. Thank you that you have again been with us these past months. Besides our daily care for the street kids and orphans of Manila, we also had the chance to help many who suffered through the destruction which the last typhoon season brought. We were able as well to assist the thousands that were displaced by the Taal volcano eruption and, on top of this, we helped feed families who struggled to survive through the total COVID-19 lockdown.

The following pages will now take you on a short journey through the past weeks and months. Be blessed!

Yours sincerely,

Carsten Aust

Director of VHICF





OUR PROFILE

Educational Scholarship

Apayao Province

Day-Care Center & Pre-School
Tondo (Manila, NCR)

House of Hope
Antipolo (Rizal Province)

Willage of Hope

Morong (Rizal Province)

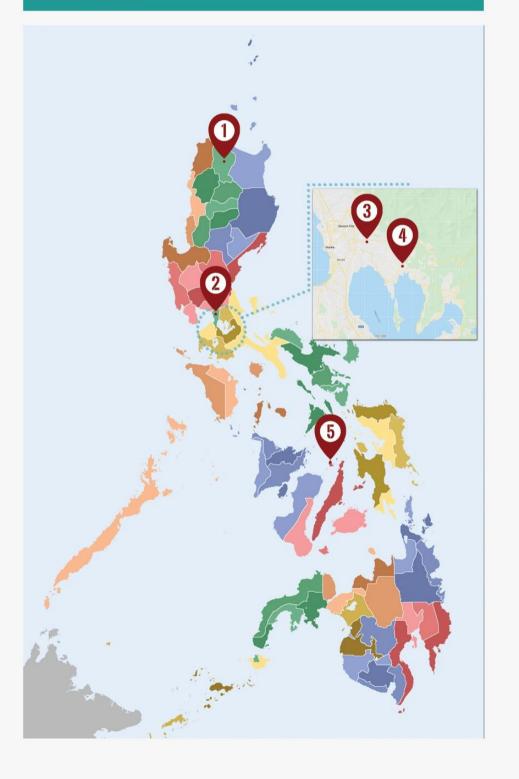
Church Ministry: Citylight Church & Educational Scholarship

Madridejos (located in Bantayan Island, Cebu Province)

VISION HELP INTERNATIONAL CARE FOUNDATION

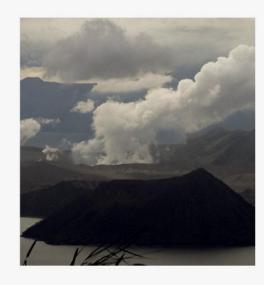
was founded in 2011 by Rev. Carsten and Mercy Aust. They have been working as missionaries in the Philippines since 1996.

We aid and assist social and community development projects, addressing social needs. Our main projects are medical missions, disaster relief operations, schools and scholarships for the indigenous and the underprivileged, operating of daycare centers, conducting of livelihood projects and feeding programs, as well as the operation of residential child care centers.



PHILIPPINES NEWS We are Vision Help, help us save lives.

THE TAAL **PROJECT**



On January 12, Sunday at 14:30, one of the most active volcanoes in the Philippines erupted. Taal Volcano shot up a 15-kilometer high Tephra column on the next hours which caused a thick blanket of ashes covering the surrounding communities.

This violent eruption sent more than 38,000 families fleeing for their lives. It also brought frequent earthquakes that split roads, and other residences establishments which lasted for almost ten weeks.



Rommy*, a fisherman who lived in a nearby town called Agoncillo, shared with us the horror they felt on that Sunday afternoon. He and his family were in their nipa hut when they felt the ground shook from underneath and saw the sky turned dark in the middle of the day. "We decided to flee at once", he said "and grabbed all things that we could." They drove to a safer place and for three weeks, Rommy could not feed his family and could only depend on the supplies that came from the local government and non-profit organizations.

Lisa*, a young mother of a new-born baby, ran for their lives when Taal blew up. She scrammed out of their house with her little one wrapped secured from the hazardous ash fall.

Lisa lived in a classroom which has been turned into an evacuation center where she and her little baby girl slept on a thin mat every night.



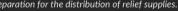






Rommy and Lisa represent families from different backgrounds but ended up having nothing. It did not matter whether their houses were built with stones, with wood or with nipa palms; the ash fall, lava fountains and frequent earthquakes terrorized all properties leaving everybody within its reach devastated. People like these are who we think about with our disaster relief operations. We were able to hold two relief distributions to respond to the needs of affected families.







The first relief operations was on January 22 with a team of 12 people who drove for four (4) hours to a university which served as an evacuation center to hundreds of families.

We were privileged to serve over 170 households by sharing with them packed goods of essential toiletries, ready-to-eat food, biscuits for the children to cheer them up in their unfortunate state, loaves of bread, drinking water and medicine.



The second relief operations was held on February 12 with a team consisting of 14 people. After a long 4-hour drive, we successfully distributed 950 goods to children and families with the assistance and kindness of the province's police officers. We were able to reach out to two school and three towns.





Families gladly received packs of hygiene necessities like alcohol, body soap, laundry bars, shampoo, toothbrush & toothpaste, sanitary pads, tissue rolls, underwear, and vitamins for both kids and adults.

As for the children, they cheered upon seeing the bags of school supplies containing new notebooks, pad papers, pens and other things.

It was a very grueling two months and there was so much that had been done. Thankfully, in such a calamity, we could provide much needed supplies to families in need.

* Not their real names

PHILIPPINES NEWS

COVID-19 RELIEF DISTRIBUTION



The COVID-19 Pandemic left both the rich and able struggled. But those from already poor communities are affected badly because even without this outbreak, families already struggle to survive.

In Tondo, Manila families who survive through garbage collecting or manual labor have lost their source of income. *Myrna, a grandmother, took in her children and grandchildren in her little house because there is nowhere else for them to go. And even though Myrna's own children are old enough to be able to fend for their own families, they have no choice because they cannot work. Myrna divides 5 kilos of rice for ten people in her household, two meals a day, and tries to conserve as much as she could so the supply would last even for three days.







As for our neighbors within the community where our Village of Hope is situated in, the situation is no less different even though people do not live surrounded by garbage.

*Leon, a father who is left jobless and frustrated to provide for his family, tried to look for other ways to earn money but found none. Because of this, his family would have days when they would eat only a small portion of lugaw (rice that is cooked in water and has salt only to taste) in the morning and the next meal they would have is lunch with only cooked rice and leftover food from their neighbors—this is the last meal of the day. When his children asks him for dinner, he and his wife try their best to divert the children's attention to other things so they can divert their attention and forget their hunger.



In response to this dire need, we conducted a series of relief distributions in three major locations for three months where some of our big projects are situated on: Cebu, Tondo, and Morong.

Our City Light Church in Cebu gave away 80 sacks of 50-kilogram rice to 80 families. In Tondo, there were more than 110 families who each received one sack of 50-kilogram rice and a full bag of groceries. As for the communities nearby Village of Hope, teams delivered and distributed rice to more than 1,600 families.

We are very thankful for the opportunity as a foundation to be able to help them, both the people in the community and those who are caring for them.

















PHILIPPINES NEWS

The COVID-19 life at VHICF

Coronavirus has turned a lot of societies upside-down. It affected people of all ages and there were a lot of rules implemented by governments to keep slow it down which included limiting our outdoor activities, scaling it down to going out only when it is really necessary.

With this, how do we cope as an organization?

Our center in Tondo and our City Light Church in Bantayan Island of Cebu has become non-operational since March due to a series of community quarantine periods. However, our mission of helping those who are in need did not completely stop. We were able to distribute sacks of rice and bags of essential grocery items to many families in both locations through thoroughly planned and well-coordinated relief operations.

In House of Hope, a number of our staff who lives far had to have days when they had to stay in. Our babies and toddlers had very limited to no chances doing their afternoon walks within the neighborhood since children were prohibited to go out. However, they continued to do the rest of their usual daily routines.

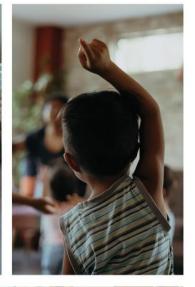
Babies take a lot of good nap while our energetic and cheerful toddlers play with puzzles, pretend to read books in the playroom (they're probably simply looking at the many colours in the books) or just randomly sing and dance to songs. The big ones would also have their daily devotions with our staff that is mixed with dancing and singing which they enjoy so much!



















In Village of Hope, the effects of the community quarantine on the children and on their daily routine are guite minimal except that it largely affected the way they have to do their schooling.

The children can no longer go out for a walk outside as well Thankfully, we have a lot of fruit-bearing trees and a huge farm with animals within our property so the kids' interests are piqued even without going out. And since summer came early, our mango trees have been bearing so much produce that kids get to eat freshly picked mangoes from



As for Sunday church services, all mass gatherings were prohibited since March and so we decided to hold our own. Our teenagers are taking on schedules wherein they can lead our smaller kids to sing songs and worship. During the weekdays, there are also two services for our kids and teenagers every Tuesday and Thursday nights.







We believe that this pandemic gives us an opportunity to know more about our Creator and the Love that Jesus has for us. And so, through our services, we get to closely listen and study God's Word. We also teach our younger ones to pray for each other and understand what it means to sing songs as praise and worship to

Many things had to suddenly change but this has not stopped our work here in the Philippines.

We are grateful to still have the means and resources to help our beloved children and sponsored families realize there is a choice to have a bright future.









VOLUNTEERS AT WORK





So many things that we have been used to in running and managing our House of Hope and Village of Hope suddenly changed because of this outbreak.

Unfortunately, all our long-term volunteers who are dear to us had to be recalled to fly home to Germany so suddenly. They helped us so much just like the ones who were with us and so it spurred sadness from our staff and children alike because it is a departure no one anticipated. This abrupt change meant also that we would be so short of workers.

However, as we have stood believing that VHICF is not run on our own but it is in and by God's doing, we have been provided with people after the long-term volunteers flew back home. We welcomed three volunteers from Germany who flew in just before the lockdown was implemented.

After some days, a missions team of 11 from a nearby partner-organization gave an immediate "Yes!" to our volunteer work proposal.



PHILIPPINES NEWS



They were the team of 11 divided to House of Hope and Village of Hope









I was assigned to work in the ganden and look aften the animals. I enjoy cultivating the soil, planting vegetables and secing them gnow. It really brings joy to me. Also, watching a duckling being hatched out from the eggs and feeding piglets are awesome.

This place is gnowing and I enjoy being pant of the growing environment so I can gnow as well.





With that, our work in our children's houses did not have too much difficulty coping up with the changes.

Our volunteers have been designated to work in different assignments of farming, animal husbandry, cooking and cleaning, teaching our BLESS classes, caregiving, setting up the electrical system in the construction, doing office work or multimedia management.



We do not only receive the finances needed for our various projects in different locations, but most importantly in difficult times, we receive the manpower we need to accomplish the work set before us.













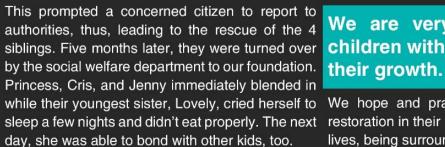
PHILIPPINES NEWS



On March 4, 2020, we welcomed Princess Anne, 12, Jenny Anne, 10, Cris Laurence, 8, and Lovely Joy, 7, into our big and growing family. They are four out of the nine Raz siblings and are victims of neglect. Their parents were apprehended in 2018 due to involvement with illegal drugs. After they were imprisoned, the older Raz siblings took care of the younger ones with their close relatives. However, with families and works of their own, Anne, Jenny, Cris and Lovely were left in the house with no proper adult supervision for many days.

Because of this, Anne, being the oldest among the four, took the responsibility of looking after her siblings. With no one to feed them, they would go and roam the busy streets to ask food from strangers.







We are very glad to have these precious siblings. Five months later, they were turned over **children with us in Village of Hope and witness**

while their youngest sister, Lovely, cried herself to We hope and pray that God will continually bring healing and sleep a few nights and didn't eat properly. The next restoration in their hearts as they embark in this new season of their lives, being surrounded by people who care for them.

The Village of Hope children welcomed them well in the family which contributed to their fast adaptation. After a month, the Raz siblings look like they have been with us for a long time.

They are very active especially when it comes to playing. However, their own colorful and individual personalities started to shine. From taking the responsibility of looking after her siblings, Anne is now able to enjoy being a child again and she likes reading different kinds of books in our library. Jenny is the friendliest among all of them and she loves playing volleyball with the other kids. Cris, being the only boy out of the four, while he enjoys playing a lot, he has become a more responsible kid because he knows when to play and when not to. He would finish his assignments first before diving in to playtime. Relationally, he is friends with everyone, from his roommates even with girls of his age. Because of this, they would help him finish his homework at times so he could play with them. Lovely is quiet and hesitant at first but when she becomes comfortable with the person, she can be talkative and playful too.



The building of our third house and the preparation of our new farm in Village of Hope slowed down but did not stop in spite of the series of lockdowns and the eventful shut-downs of many companies including construction stores. As of the beginning of June, the finishing touches to the new house were implemented and it only counted a few more weeks before the house would be completely finished to be occupied by our kids.

Soon, the biggest house in Village of Hope would serve as a facilities house complete with classrooms, a library, and a computer room.









As for the new farm, we have completely purchased a backhoe which will be brought before the end of 2020. Right now, temporary fences are being put up and the ground is slowly being prepared for farming.

Things are coming together and even though slow, it is still progress and we are so thankful because these additions would serve our work greatly, as well as the precious kids and teenagers who live with us.



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