

Heading into the Second Half . . .

November 2016

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners

I used to play football a lot when I was younger. It wasn't just the game I so enjoyed; it was all the strategizing that I so enjoyed. With my dad's coaching, I used to design all sorts of ingenious plays, and I know that, had the Denver Broncos gotten their hands on those plays, they would have won the Super Bowl a lot sooner than they did!

Now in the Philippines I don't get much chance to even touch a football. Yet God still gives me the chance to experience the thrill of the game through the Bicol University campus ministry He's given me. Like a football game, college ministry also has a first and second half as well as a semester-break half time. Each has its own challenges.

By God's grace we have just finished the contests of the first half and are now excitedly launching our first plays of the second.

The first half was pretty intense and challenging. Fewer students on campus this year due to a change in the educational system, more packed and unpredictable schedules for the students who were there, and less volunteer help all made the game harder than last year. Yet God was good, and the first half still ended with a score on the board.



"Team 2016" – some of the volunteers and student leaders who will be hitting the ministry playing field this second half. Thanks for praying for them!

One of the big scores was the start of a senior high ministry. As described in my last newsletter, God opened an amazing door in that playing field when I was invited to substitute in a high-school earth science class. It was hard-won yardage at first, though, since senior high had no policies for campus groups, and it was therefore hard to solidify a schedule. But by God's grace, when the buzzer sounded at the end of the first half, 23 students had signed-up. It wasn't as strong a finish as I had hoped, but it was still enough to set us up for a good start to the second half of the year.

With God's help we saw scores in other areas too. A second booth during BU Week, which we titled "IQ Blast," pulled in not only students, but also teachers, food-stall attendants, and BU maintenance workers. We were able to share the gospel or give literature about Jesus to all. We successfully completed our campus Bible study in Daniel (just before the buzzer), and, with God's amazing provision, reached within only a few yards of finishing this phase of renovation of our new student center. During "half-time" (semester-break) God allowed us to host as well a four-day camp for 14 of our college students aimed at helping them better prepare for ministry in the second semester.

As I write this letter, the buzzer for the second half of the year has just sounded, and we are hitting the field running as hard as we can. Making use of our student center to avoid delays in getting campus approval for events, we've already been able to hold two senior high meetings, launch our new mid-week student Bible study, hold one large-group meeting, and execute two evangelistic-outreach plays on campus. Within a few days we will resume our Sunday Discipleship Training School as well. At present nearly every night of the week has an event scheduled at our center – but that's how I like it. There is no time to waste in the business of eternity. Every play – and every day – has to count.

Thank you so much for all of your prayers as we enter this second half of campus ministry, for one of the lessons I learned during the first half was how much we need God's strength, wisdom, and favor if we hope to break through the opponent's defenses and score. It's not always easy, but prayers really do make a difference.

I really appreciate as well those of you who write or support or encourage in other ways. Although I know God is with me, knowing there are also people cheering me on helps a lot! And it's really my prayer that the Lord will pour out His grace upon you as well in the playing field where He has placed you. We all have a unique game to play, so let's do it well.

Running hard for Him,

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Prayer for More Points

Prayer is key to hitting the missions field goals that God has set for us. Therefore, thanks so much for joining us here in praying for whatever the Lord might place on your heart from the following list. Every prayer counts toward the score, and I appreciate it so much. Thanks!

- 1. *Present students and church attendees*** – consistency, growth, ability to break from old habits, joy in the Lord, love for one another, and a growing zeal to serve Jesus.
- 2. *Borderline and inconsistent attendees*** – God to break the strongholds in their lives that keep them from really committing to Him and set them free to follow Him with whole hearts.
- 3. *As of yet unbelievers*** – God to bring us to those persons He wishes to call at this time and give us the wisdom and empowering to help them meet the One reaching out to them. Pray especially for more men to come to know Jesus. Thanks!
- 4. *Workers (including myself)*** – physical strength (since many of the activities here require lots of time to prepare and a lots of energy to execute), a close walk with God (that service will never take priority over the One being served), love and patience for those being served, and the filling of God’s Spirit for all ministry.
- 5. *Generation Christian Fellowship*** – growth of our Legazpi church, both quantitatively (not just students, but also more families and graduates) and qualitatively (God’s leading and empowering as I seek to teach His Word accurately and nurture each member in their walk with Jesus).
- 6. *Island ministry*** – wisdom with radio ministry, as we still deal with some technical problems, for our campsite, as we seek to use it in the best way for God’s glory, and for the three churches being handled by Pastor Fernando and Pastor Leo.
- 7. *Health*** – continued healing of back problems. Amazingly the problem with several discs in my lower back, which I thought might send me home last May, has actually improved in the past months, I think because of the prayer of many. However, the problem is still there, and my back continues to remind me of that more than I would like. Thus I know it still needs prayer. Thanks so much for lifting that and all these requests up to the Lord!

If you would like to see a few more pictures of last semester’s events, I just posted a group of them on my blog. Please feel free to check them out at:

www.fianews.wordpress.com