



Doing Good That Is Good™

The newsletter of FARMS International Formerly AGRICULTURAL EVANGELISM

Southern Philippine Update - May 2008

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families – Galatians 6:10

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus!

IT IS TRULY A JOY TO KNOW you are doing what God has called you to do. For me, helping the poor of Christ's body is very fulfilling, yet at the same time humbling. The needs seem insurmountable at times. Nevertheless, God has called the ministry of FARMS to be an advocate and a voice for the poor. What a privilege! God "hears the cry of the poor" the scripture says, and then he speaks to our hearts to help them. Let me illustrate this fact.

As I have opportunity, I love to visit the program sites of FARMS. Many of these places are off the beaten track and each have their own distinct sense of adventure. However, what I enjoy the most is hearing the words of the project holders as they thank God for hearing their prayers and sending help. **You and I are just in that heavenly loop.**



In this edition, we are sharing about our loan program in the southern Philippines. Because of security concerns, locations and other information are not used. This program has been especially helpful in providing income-generating projects for those in various ministries and outreaches. God is using these coura-

geous men and women to reach those that live in darkness with the Gospel. They cheerfully "go" even at great personal risk.

This newsletter also includes an article from the news website of WorldNetDaily.com entitled, '*Silent*' famine sweeps globe. The report pieces together many circumstances affecting food supplies around the globe and is very enlightening. In addition, I recommend that you go to BBC's website for further analysis of this emerging tragedy. The news is very provoking, especially when one considers the poor of this earth. Those we work with are already being affected. High fuel costs, scarcity of basic commodities like rice and corn, and other necessities always hurt the poor the most. Because of this, it is imperative that we redouble our efforts and expand our programs. We are monitoring each one and will respond to their needs as God provides.

In His service

Joseph E. Richter
Joseph Richter
Executive Director

FARMS BLOG

Web News: FARMS is starting a blog. It will be a place that we can place interesting articles about our work and about micro-credit in general. Please visit it and let us know what you think. We trust it will be a great place to exchange ideas.

<http://farmsinternational.blogspot.com>

Southern Philippine Update

Valentino Gonzales

VAL CAME TO KNOW THE LORD through vacation Bible school when he was just 10 years old. During his high school years he sensed a call to ministry leading him to attend Bible school. He became a pastor in 1987 and also conducted evangelistic meetings. He married and now does tribal outreach. Presently Valentino oversees 3 outreaches as well as 20 cell groups. They live in a very sensitive area of the southern Philippines and use their opportunities to witness to other groups. They have been instrumental in leading many to the Lord as well as baptism.

A FARMS project holder shared about the loan program with the Valentino family and they applied for a loan. Their loan was used to buy a three-wheeled bike that is used for transportation in their rural area.



Loan Amount: \$168

(Continued on next page)

FARMS International, Inc. • P.O. Box 270 • Knife River, MN 55609 • (218) 834-2676 • 1-888-99FARMS

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Jonathan Pila

JONATHAN WAS A SKILLED LEATHER craftsman. He had a very good job of crafting leather gloves and aprons used in the steel industry as well as other companies. However, when the company he was working for shut down, he lost his job of ten years. Out of a job, he tried to continue to work on his own selling to hardware stores. However, due to a lack of capital he was forced to discontinue his business.



Like many believers, he met the Savior Jesus when he was at a low point in his life. He came to know the Lord through his sister-in-law who was a Christian. During a Sunday

service in his sister-in-law's church the pastor called on Jonathan and declared to him God's purpose for his life and ministry. Without delay, he fully committed his life to follow and obey God.

Now, Jonathan is pastoring a local church. Jonathan and his wife Ruth have two children. The support from their new church was not yet sufficient to meet their needs. Therefore, he decided to start his business again. FARMS was able to provide him with a loan that enabled him to buy enough materials to keep up production while awaiting payment for goods delivered. This has greatly stabilized his business.

Loan Amount: \$361

Rene D. Licardo

RENE SERVED IN THE PHILIPPINES military service before he met the Lord. Like many in the military, his life was engulfed in vices and other struggles. These struggles only worsened when his wife died leaving him to care for their child. Amidst his pain, confusion and helplessness, God used a comrade in the service to lead him to the foot of the cross. He was invited to a thanksgiving service and during this service he met the living God. He experienced a unique and special touch that placed him in a position of unworthiness. This brought him to a point of confessing his sins before his Savior.

The goodness and grace of God is so evident in his life. He was not only forgiven of his sins, but God also



granted him a Christian wife to encourage him in the faith. Rene is now out of the service and is working as a carpenter. However, with a slow down in the Philippine economy he found it harder to get steady work. Thus, they came to FARMS and the committee granted them a loan to start a food service to their neighborhood.

Rene now has three children and is a deacon in his local church.

Loan amount: \$120

Helen Lizardo

HELEN CAME TO KNOW JESUS through her mother. However, through sheer disobedience, she married a non-believer. "Thanks be to God for his unending mercies." The Lord not only carried her through many difficulties, but also proved His word to save the unbelieving husband through the godly behavior of the wife. Helen's husband eventually converted to Christianity and they now are serving the Lord together.



Helen was doing her best to add support to her family, by running a small store in the front of their home. It had been her prayer to expand the business to increase her earnings. The answer to her prayer came when her pastor shared about the loan ministry of FARMS. With a loan from the committee, she expanded her store and her earnings have now increased.

Loan Amount: \$120



Delfin Corsi has a fruit tree nursery. This project earns a good income and was started with a loan of \$144.

'Silent famine' sweeps globe

Posted: April 01, 2008 - 8:59 pm Eastern
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Rice, fertilizer shortages, food costs, higher energy prices equal world crisis

WASHINGTON – From India to Africa to North Korea to Pakistan and even in New York City, higher grain prices, fertilizer shortages and rising energy costs are combining to spell hunger for millions in what is being characterized as a global "silent famine."

Global food prices, based on United Nations records, rose 35 percent in the last year, escalating a trend that began in 2002. Since then, prices have risen 65 percent.

Last year, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's world food index, dairy prices rose nearly 80 percent and grain 42 percent.

"This is the new face of hunger," said Joesetta Sheeran, director of the World Food Program, launching an appeal for an extra \$500 million so it could continue supplying food aid to 73 million hungry people this year.

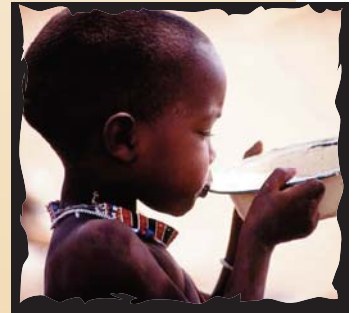
cally modified crops, to allow its farmers to compete with the United States.

Argentina, Kazakhstan and China have imposed restrictions to limit grain exports and keep more of their food at home.

Vietnam and India, both major rice exporters, have announced further restrictions on overseas sales.

Officials in Bangladesh warn of an emerging "silent famine" that threatens to ravage the region.

"A huge amount of the world's farmland is being diverted to feed cars, not people," writes Gwynne Dyer, a London-based independent journalist.



He notes that in six of the past seven years the human race has consumed more grain than it grew. World grain reserves last year were only 57 days, down from 180 days a decade ago.

Another contributing factor to the crisis is the demand for more meat in an increasingly prosperous Asia. More grain is used to feed the livestock than is required to feed humans directly in a traditional

From The Times

March 18, 2008

Million face famine after plague of rats devastates rice crop in Mizoram, India

SATEEK About a million people are facing famine in India's northeastern state of Mizoram after rats ate the region's entire paddy crop.

The rats swept through the forests, feasting on the fruits of wild bamboo, which flowers every 48 years. When they finished the bamboo, they turned to the farmers' crops. The last time the bamboo flowered was in 1959 when a similar influx led to severe food shortages.

Aid agencies have said that most villagers are surviving on wild roots, yam and sweet potatoes. "Conditions of widespread food shortage and hunger prevail in all eight districts of Mizoram," said a report by the international aid agency Actionaid. "The Government is reluctant to accept that the situation is rapidly slipping out of its control." Mizoram needs about 15 million kilos (16,500 tons) of rice a month, but only about a fifth of that is available....

The article goes on to list events that illustrate the dire situation the poor are facing:

In Thailand, farmers are sleeping in their fields because thieves are stealing rice, now worth \$600 a ton, right out of the paddies.

There have been food riots in Morocco, Senegal and Cameroon.

Mexico's government is considering lifting a ban on geneti-

grain-based diet.

Bad weather is another problem driving the world's wheat stocks to a 30-year low – along with regional droughts and a declining dollar.

For complete article go to:
<http://www.worldnetdaily.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pagelid=60480>

FARMS International's chaplain goes home to the Lord.

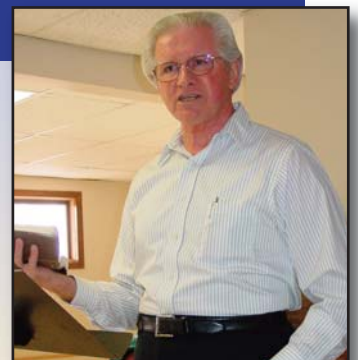
DON PERES SERVED as our chaplain for five years. He provided inspiring devotions for our meetings and with his wife Patty, prayed for the needs of ministry faithfully. Don was Pat's and my pastor for many years. He and his wife were very mission minded. In fact, Patty was instrumental in forming a very active mission committee in our church as well as teaching a "Missions Perspectives Survey" in our Sunday school. Don and Patty were long time supporters of FARMS and knew of the ministry even be-

fore we joined their church. We will truly miss him, but his enthusiasm for the Lord and reaching the lost is still with us. Don is survived by his wife Patty who now lives in Minneapolis, two daughters, three sons and two foster children, as well as seven grandchildren.

Note: Go to FARMS International's blog to read his exciting testimony!

<http://farmsinternational.blogspot.com>

—Joseph Richter



Pastor Don Peres: 1940 -2007
Chaplain of
FARMS International



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