



Society of the Divine Word - Philippine Central Province  
Office of the JPIC (Justice-Peace & Integrity of Creation)

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Vol 3 Issue 1

# Arnold Janssen Kalinga FOUNDATION

Quarterly Newsletter of the Arnold Janssen  
Kalinga Foundation Inc.



## 1<sup>ST</sup> SCHOOL TO PROTEST DRUG WAR HOSTS 'TEATRO NG KABATAAN' *by Nirva Delacruz*



EJK YOUTH & ORPHANS HOLD UP PHOTOS OF THEIR LOVED ONES WHOM THEY LOST VIOLENTLY.

MANILA – As if coming full circle, Program Paghilom’s “Teatro ng Kabataan” performed at Adamson University, which was arguably the first university where students publicly protested Duterte’s drug war.

Featuring some of the EJK children and youth under Program Paghilom’s care, “Teatro ng Kabataan” had its first theatrical run for the year, on March 13, 2:00PM at Adamson University, Manila with hundreds of students and faculty in attendance. In line with the ongoing Lenten season, the theatrical presentation was inspired by the theme “Pasyon. Paghilom. Pagbangon.”



SOME MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY ARE MOVED TO TEARS WHILE WATCHING THE SHOW.

### ‘Huwag Kang Papatay’

It can be remembered that at former President Rodrigo Duterte’s first State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25, 2016, quite a few Adamsonians took to the streets, wore black, and carried placards with the message “Huwag Kang Papatay!” to publicly denounce the violent extra-judicial killings (EJKs).

In his welcome message, Adamson University President Fr. Daniel Pilario, CM shared how serving in Tondo, Manila where EJKs were particularly rampant changed him forever. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**

# Note from the Founder



THE ARNOLD JANSSEN KALINGA CENTER IS ALWAYS OPEN TO WELCOME OUR DEAR HOMELESS WHO ARE ALSO FORGING THEIR OWN ROADS TO EASTER.

## EASTER ROADS: NO GLORY WITHOUT THE CROSS

“Unless there is a Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday.”

- Ven. Fulton Sheen

**A**s you read this, we would have just ended Holy Week and with it, the Easter Triduum. Christmas, the birth of our Lord, is easily the more popular feast day, but it is Easter, the proof of the empty tomb, that concretizes Christ’s triumph over sin and death. “We are an Easter people, Alleluia is our song!”, said St. Pope John Paul II, rephrasing St. Augustine. Easter is the focal point of our Christian faith. Without Christ’s Resurrection, Christianity could just be another life philosophy with an enlightened teacher. But truly, Easter is where the rubber hits the road. It is the Easter promise that makes our faith eternally relevant, compelling, and transformative.

To reach the heights, we need to descend to the depths. And this is why Easter begins with the cross. Easter is our Lord Jesus Christ’s as it is every man’s. When He said “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23), He was inviting every one of us. St. Rose of Lima said it best: “Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.”

*It is the Easter promise that makes our faith eternally relevant, compelling, and transformative.*

The Paschal mystery is something we need to embrace in our own lives: the suffering and death; the rising; and Ascension of our Lord Jesus into heaven. Just as there is pain in every victory, there are several roads to Easter. God has blessed the Arnold Janssen Kalinga family with the unique road of providing dignified, systematic, and holistic care to EJK victims and the homeless.

Every day, we meet people along the roads of depression, abandonment, injustice, spiritual and material poverty. They are the orphans, those ostracized by society, neglected widows—all hungry for healing and hope. What is our response? We, who have heard and seen the glorious story of Easter, are likewise called to guide and lead others along their own road towards Easter.

Our Lord Jesus calls us to embrace and carry our own crosses joyfully and to help others bear theirs, simply because Christ’s love compels us! St. Teresa of Calcutta reminds us: “As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus’ thirst...He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you.”

A blessed and beautiful Easter to you all! ■



Rev. Fr. Flavie Villanueva, SVD

# WHAT THE YOUTH CAN LEARN FROM THE HOMELESS

by Br. Junmar Cris Caputolan



**MANY YOUNG FILIPINOS—HOMELESS OR OTHERWISE—STRUGGLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES LIKE ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE.**

**A** study conducted by an institution heightened worries about the psychological health of the Filipino youth. The youth of today are experiencing struggles with high levels of anxiety and recurring depressive states. A deeper understanding of this phenomenon is a study that needs to be endeavored by the academe. It suffices though to say that it is a problem faced by the society at large. Time after time we hear reports from all over media outlets of a young man or woman suffering from severe depression. We do not want to make sweeping statements as to the reasons why this phenomenon is occurring. We can only think of and reflect about them. I am presenting, in the most general manner, this condition of the modern youth one needs to know about. This one side of the world also deserves attention.

The other side revolves around the homeless people we serve. We see the homeless, the poorest among us, line up outside Kalinga Center to avail of the services offered. We see them, rugged and dirty, and we reflect about their struggles for basic necessities yet rarely do we make sense of what gives them strength. Setting apart the question of poverty, there are a lot of other factors to entertain as regards the reason of homelessness. As spectators from afar, we normally process in and through our inquisitive minds whatever datum there is available.

When we draw ourselves closer to them we feel their dire need to fill in what is lacking and at the same time we feed our curiosity. The moment we commence an intentional conversation with any of them, however, we do not only hear the struggles but intuit the strength that gives endurance. I have heard from a lot of them the words, “sa Kanya ako kumukuha ng lakas”. I am speaking about their willingness to entrust themselves.

Since the past two months, the foundation continuously receives youth (mostly students) to do volunteer work at the center. What can the youth learn from the homeless? Entrustment. The strength that gives endurance is the ability to entrust. Entrustment has an object and it is not the self. Entrustment is to the “Other” and in the language of our faith, it is Jesus Christ. The youth are experiencing constant pressure, external and internal. They do not have to renounce their concrete shelters and walk along the streets and avenues of the city to be able to entrust. Immersing the self into the liveliness of the faith makes one’s living vibrant. This vibrancy comes from encounter, an encounter with the divine. Entrusting becomes an event in a person who believes, the ordinary entrustment the homeless do. ■

# HOW *PAGHILOM* IS HELPING EJK FAMILIES FIND THEIR VOICE

by Jobart Bartolome

**L**ike many of the attendees of the Psycho-Spiritual Intervention (PSI) sessions, Anna (not her real name) hardly said a word on the first day. She was reluctant to speak, especially in the big group. Likewise, Faye (not her real name), who belonged to a previous batch, didn't open up until the seventh and last session, despite being nudged to share in all the sessions. This isn't uncommon, regardless of whether their loved ones were killed in the early days of Duterte's drug war or under the current administration.

Since face-to-face PSI sessions resumed last year, a good number of attendees were from families of victims who were killed in 2016 or 2017. And for most of them, Paghilom was where they first shared their stories.

We must not forget the context, and their situation before joining Paghilom. They belong to the *laylayan*, the poorest of the poor. Some of the victims were indeed drug users; while others were completely innocent. Either way, the violent killing of their loved ones was heart-wrenching and unjust, making their lives even worse.

Having lost their breadwinners, many families don't just struggle financially because of death and burial expenses, they also grapple with social stigma and intimidation. Their neighbors—and sometimes even relatives—shun them and talk behind their backs. Trust became nearly impossible; the government, its institutions, and people in general were all suspect.

But they have children and grandchildren to feed and care for, several of whom are also bullied by classmates and peers.



**FR. FLAVIE VILLANUEVA COMFORTS AN EJK MOTHER DURING A PAGHILOM RETREAT.**  
**RAFFY LERMA**

Many of them continue to be haunted by angry thoughts and desires to avenge the deaths of their loved ones. Guilt plagues many of them, who often blame themselves for what had happened.

Months—and even years—would go by as they went through the different stages of grief: anger, denial, bargaining, depression, etc., without fully making sense of it all. "Mayroong may tampo sa Diyos, bakit pinayagan na mangyari ito sa kanila?" (Some resented God, questioning why He had even allowed such a thing to happen to their family.)

We would soon discover that we were practically the first ones to ever hear them tell the stories of how their loved ones were killed. It's striking that they were only able to do so because they were in a safe space.

One EJK mother shared: "Kapag may nakikinig pala, nagiging bukas ka at nakukuwento ang lahat ng nararamdaman." [I realize that if someone is willing to listen, you are able to tell your story and how you really feel.]

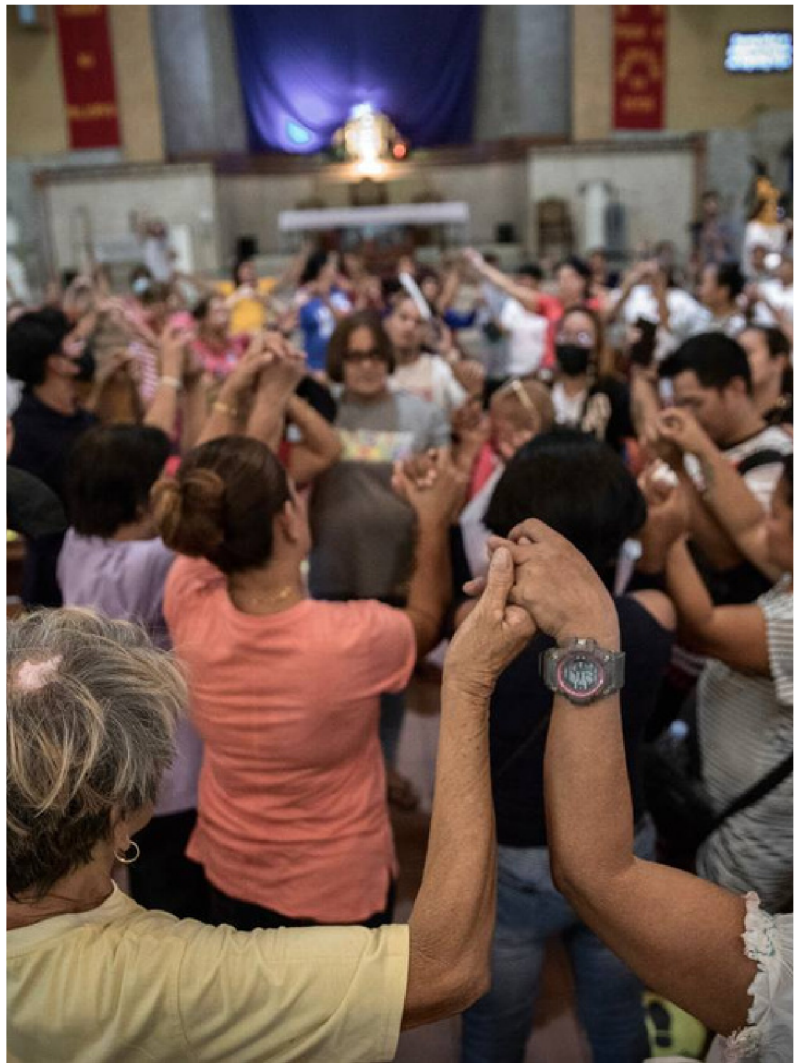
We couldn't help but notice how their faces softened and changed as they got used to sharing their stories, especially their feelings, while we listened. Anna, along with many others, soon began to smile as they revealed even more details. During the culminating activity, the 3-day retreat, Anna disclosed that before attending Paghilom sessions, she refused to comb her hair, had no desire to mingle with others, and mostly, just kept to herself. Her house, she said, was always dark and dead quiet. Taking a chance with Paghilom, she said she couldn't believe how the experience changed her—her feelings, outlook in life, and even her posture.

It was also during the retreat that Faye began to share the back story of her hard life. Her face had also brightened up. I guess that she found a "family" she can trust.

"We lost a loved one, yet gained a loving family," as those who are active in Paghilom say. ■



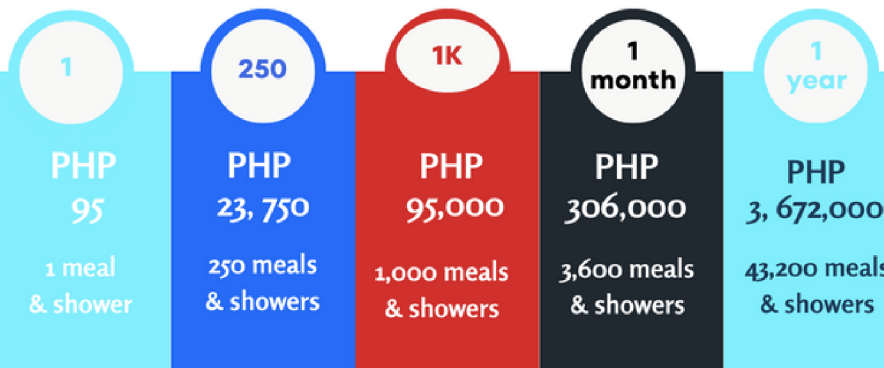
*We couldn't help but notice how their faces softened & changed...*



**PAGHILOM'S EJK MOTHERS AND WIDOWS HOLD HANDS AS A SIGN OF UNITY DURING ONE OF THEIR ASSEMBLIES IN 2023. RAFFY LERMA**



## ARNOLD JANSSEN KALINGA CENTER



*\*We serve an average of 250-300 street dwellers 4x a week.*

**Helping Manila's street dwellers start anew, begins with 1 meal.**



Teresita C.  
GCash 09175460829  
AJ Kalinga Foundation Inc.  
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## Be a partner-in-mission!



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The 5Ps of how to help: Pesos, Products, Presence, Promotions, & Prayers help the most vulnerable sectors of society, the homeless & the wounded re-create themselves.



**DIRECTED BY ALBERT SALDEJANO, THE PRESENTATION WAS INSPIRED BY THE LENTEN THEME OF "PASYON. PAGHILOM. PAGBANGON."**



**AJKFI MANAGING DIRECTOR TESSAM CASTILLO HEADS THE TALKBACK AFTER THE SHOW WHERE THE AUDIENCE CAN SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE.**



**MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY & OF THE U.N. LISTEN TO SOME OF THE STUDENTS' COMMENTS ABOUT THE SHOW**

## **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

He recounted how he had to personally preside over the funeral rites of 8-10 EJK victims who were violently and suddenly gunned down.

Directed by Kalipaya Ministry head animator and stage director Alberto Saldajeno, the theatrical presentation showed the socio-political realities in the Philippines and the brutal reality of the Duterte drug war, providing a venue where EJK youth and mothers shared the stories of how their loved ones were killed.

### **State of the nation, state of our lives**

In his own message Arnold Janssen Kalinga Foundation Founder and President Fr. Flavie Villanueva, SVD said he hoped the theatrical presentation would "serve as a catalyst that would awaken the sleeping faith [of many Filipinos], inspiring more people to live out the "prophetic witnessing which we are called to."

"This is not a show. It is a glaring picture of the state of our nation and even the state of our lives," he added.

The priest also shared how former German Ambassador to the Philippines Anke Reiffenstuel was mystified how Paghilom's EJK mothers and widows could still manage to laugh and dance. Making a reference to the theatrical presentation's theme, Villanueva explained the huge role faith plays in their lives. "[This is] why they continue to rise. There is a reason to start anew...Lent is about faith, memorializing the suffering, death, and rising of Christ. This is also the reason why they hope," he added.

### **Diplomatic community in attendance**

Around 24 EJK orphans and youth performed in the said presentation, learning their lines and rehearsing in merely two days.

Also present to watch the theatrical presentation were members of the diplomatic community: Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation to the Philippines Nicolas Brühl; Lisa Brucker and Diana Pearl from the Swiss Embassy; at United Nations Human Rights Commission Senior Human Rights Adviser Signe Poulsen; Rory Mungoven; Ester Lam of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Eva Oskam and Jaymie Reyes of the Netherlands Embassy; and First Secretary at the EU Delegation to the Philippines Frederic Grillet. ■

*This is not a show. It is a "glaring picture of the state of our nation and even the state of our lives..."*

# SPIRITUAL ‘LIGO’: HOMELESS GO FOR CONFESSION

by Nirva Delacruz

After years of pioneering dignified, holistic, systematic care for the homeless, the Foundation is including a spiritual kind of “ligo” in the mix: the sacrament of Confession.

For the first time, the Arnold Janssen Kalinga Center (AJKC’s) made confession available to the homeless at the Center on March 27, Holy Wednesday. Volunteers and a member of the AJKFI staff gave four catechism sessions on God’s love and mercy, the sacrament of Reconciliation, and the Christian life, in preparation for the reception of the sacrament.

## Love made visible

For regular AJKC volunteer Geegee Catral, it has been a long time coming, but facilitating confession for the homeless is part of “dignified care.”

“I think it is important to also give them opportunities to know God through the sacraments...The sacraments not only make God’s grace and love visible, they also connect us to one another and remind us that we are part of a community - the Body of Christ. It’s important that our homeless brothers and sisters feel this too,” she said in an interview.

Catral, an educator and a catechist in her own parish who gave the second session to the homeless, noted the homeless’ spiritual hunger to know more about God’s Word. “

The Bible stories I shared were not familiar to the participants. Hearing these for the first time made it interesting, I believe, but I could see that some explaining was needed as the analogies in the parables were not always quickly grasped. The occasional smile of one participant made me know she understood, and felt assured of God’s love.”

## Monthly confession

Meanwhile, for Charis Tan, a catechist for her parish under the Military Ordinariate, making confession available to the street dwellers who come to AJKC will promote “a worthy reception of the Eucharist [that] can cause outpouring of grace”, as well as support their mental health and self-awareness.

Quite candid about it, she admitted that she initially doubted the street dwellers’ motivation for attending the catechism sessions. “I thought they came just for the food, but I saw that they want to learn and be guided...I hope for them to be truthful during their confession. May they have a realization that God is for them,” explained Tan, who is also one of the Foundation’s regular volunteers.

AJKC will be holding monthly confessions to support the sacramental life of the street dwellers who visit the Center regularly.



GEEGEE CATRAL EXPLAINS MORE ABOUT THE SACRAMENT OF MERCY DURING THE SECOND CATECHISM SESSION ON MARCH 8 WITH THE HOMELESS.



THE SECOND BATCH OF ATTENDEES INCLUDED FIRST-TIME PENITENTS.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

APR  
6

**BAPTISM OF EJK CHILDREN & HOMELESS**  
1:00PM | Our Lady of Grace Parish,  
Caloocan City

APR  
8

**FORMAL ACCEPTANCE RITES OF BATCH 9  
(FOR AJ KALINGA FORMATION)**  
Catholic Trade Building, Sta. Cruz, Manila

APR  
4-5

**PROGRAM PAGHILOM LIVELIHOOD  
SEMINAR FOR EJK WIDOWS WORKSHOP  
& PLLP**

APR  
6-7

**DEVELOPING SELF-AWARENESS TO  
BETTER UNDERSTAND OTHERS FOR AACCS**  
Casamara, Tagaytay City

APR  
16

**GRADUATION OF BATCH 8  
(5 BENEFICIARY-VOLUNTEERS WHO  
COMPLETED AJ KALINGA FORMATION)**  
Catholic Trade Building, Manila

APR  
17-19

**PROGRAM PAGHILOM  
COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT  
MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

MAY  
1

**INAUGURATION OF 1ST EJK  
MEMORIAL SITE**  
La Loma Catholic Cemetery, Caloocan City

MAY  
3  
11  
18

**PROGRAM PAGHILOM BATCH 20**  
8:00AM | Catholic Trade Building,  
Sta. Cruz, Manila

MAY  
11

**'TEATRO PAGHILOM'**  
2:00PM | St. Jude Catholic School, Manila

MAY  
17-19

**PROGRAM PAGHILOM EJK YOUTH  
CAMP (BATCH 2)**

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