

**Note that reserve funds are quite low (see p. 3).
Please consider a year-end gift to PAMI.**

CHRISTMAS ROOTS

What is the root of Christmas? The word breaks down to "Christ's mass." It's the great celebration that began when the angels sang the Good News that God had come to mankind as Jesus, to save them from everlasting punishment and death.

An antique reading primer stated "In Adam's fall, we sinned all." We sinned against the God who made us and became separated from Him, but He loved us enough to fix things by sending Jesus. This Son of His wants to live in us--to be our friend, brother, guide, and helper, through the Holy Spirit. He came that we "may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10 RSV) What a wonderful God! This is really something to root about!

--by Ardelle Thorud and nephew Mike Thorud

FALL POTLUCK AND RESPOND! TRIP

There was a good turn-out to the annual PAMI potluck on Oct 10th at Emmaus Lutheran, with about 65 attending. We enjoyed music provided by Joey Feliciano from Crosspoint Church and message by Ptr Mark Olson from Minnesota Valley Church. Mike Thorud showed recent slides and Ardelle Thorud shared a story. Becky Petersen of Emmaus Lutheran also talked about an upcoming July 8-30, 2009 Respond! mission trip opportunity. Praise God for the 5 people that have applied to go. In preparation, team members will start meeting monthly in January.

RECENT UPS AND DOWNS

We praise God for many people attending Bible studies and church services, and giving their lives to the Lord. We also praise God for the baptisms that follow. Twelve people were baptized in Bulan on October 18 (including 7 from Monte Calvario, 1 from Fabrica, and 1 from Lapinig), and 7 were baptized in Bulusan on October 21. Another baptism is scheduled for the 3rd week in December, with 6 candidates from the EBI Church and 7 candidates from Castilla Church.

We also praise God for how Pastor Randy and Nida Rivera's daily radio programs have reached many people in Allen, Samar and surrounding communities. Listeners will send text messages and follow up Bible studies are conducted. One such contact has recently led to weekly Bible studies and children's ministry on the small island of Bankawan, where 70% of the 15 households there attend.

Pastor Chito recently reports: "*Churches are doing very well. Even wives of pastors are very active. For instance, Marilou (Abner's wife) commits to church plant in one barangay of Donsol. So with my wife (Ofel), she's doing a lot of outreaches now that our kids are bigger. Everybody's on the run. We have a lot of activities here at EBI. We even extend teaching to pastors who want to enhance their training.*"

Along with ups come downs. We're saddened with the news of the passing of Bro Arman Doblón, a third year EBI student. He died from pulmonary tuberculosis on Oct 15. Pastor Chito writes:

Bro. Arman came from Allen, Samar, from a very poor family. He used to be bread winner of the family by growing and selling peanuts. He enrolled at EBI, having responded to the challenge of bringing Samar (one of the depressed regions of the Philippines due to frequent typhoons and occult practice like witchcraft) to the Lord Jesus Christ. Despite some obstacles (health and high school undergraduate), he was respected by everyone because of his spiritual maturity, seriousness with studies, and strong determination. Two days before he was brought to the hospital, he and classmates rehearsed for their final exam of the subject of Ecclesiology, in which Arman was the officiating minister in a mock wedding.

Although we miss Arman, God consoles us that we'll meet him again someday in God's kingdom. His being a true and loving brother to everyone serves as his legacy, which is worth following.

It will now be up to some of the other EBI students from Samar to eventually graduate and bring the Good News to the rest of Samar.

Izzy Allen Tidbit: "God so loved the word that He did not send a committee."

Here are some testimonies and feedback from new workers that we added this last year.

THOMAS ALMONTE (age 27, from Bulusan):

My life was in utter darkness before I knew the grace of God. Had it not been for His love to me, I might have ended up dead, if not in jail. At age 15 I was already a smoker, a drunkard, a gambler, a thief, and part of a trouble-making gang. Then a group of Bible believing Christians started an open evangelism in our barangay. Still with the gang, we ridiculed, taunted and mocked them. But the evangelism lasted for 5 nights, and I kept on listening. My reaction to the group changed and I began to long more for the word of God. Eventually I became a regular attendee of Bible study. Although I was persecuted by my so called "friends," I thought the new found activity was worth keeping more than my friends. Hearing a call for "Bayanihan" (a friendly gesture of helping) to build a new church, I was so eager and excited to help. In the first Sunday service, when the pastor asked who'd give their life to Jesus, I and two others from the gang responded. I experienced the wonder working of God immediately. I was completely changed and never again tasted the old life of vices and other evil deeds. I became so active with Christian works of Bible study, prayer meeting and other services.

Because of family needs, I went to Manila to find a job. I went first to Channel of Blessings Church (mother church of our barangay church) where there was a Christian Conference going on. God had a different plan for me than finding a job. The pastor in that church trained me instead to become a church worker, which I did for 3 1/2 years. However, I felt the need to further my education. I prayed to God about it and He graciously answered. I learned that two of my friends (Rafael and Samuel) were already studying at Emmaus Bible Institute, so I went to study there too.

After graduating from EBI this last March, Thomas helped with parsonage construction, and then was assigned to help Ptr. Randy in Allen, Samar in June. This is what he has to say about it:

I want to first thank God for the trust given to me to be part of the mission. Samar is a difficult place to work. Some customs and traditions here are different. But I know that I must love people in Samar as God loves them. Although sometimes I feel discouraged, I know it's a part of life. By God's grace, He gives me strength to continue and think more positively. It's a challenge for me to have faith in God. As the Lord says in Zech. 4:6 "Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit say the Lord of Host." An intern and I have surveyed every barangay near the proper town of Allen. We pray for them and study how we can approach them with the Gospel. So far I've had just a few contacts for Bible study. I keep praying God gives an open heart to be receptive to His Word this 2009.

Izzy Allen Tidbit: "Jesus left His place, to come to our place, to take our place, so we could go to His place."

ESPERANZA GAVINO (age 22, from Matnog):

I thank God for the opportunity to serve Him. After becoming part of EBI staff I had trouble being respected by students. I know this was because of the abrupt transition from being their schoolmate to being their teacher or work supervisor. But I thank the Lord for giving me patience and the ability to cope and adjust. Now I enjoy working as a teacher, handling the subjects I and II Corinthians and Personal Evangelism. I enjoy teaching because I tend to comprehend more of the subjects than as a student. I am helping too in going out for home Bible study--teaching adults, youth and children. Sis. Ofel made me her assistant in looking after the work program of the students, especially writing the weekly assigned tasks for them. My shift for looking after the bakery is after my outreach in the afternoon, from 5 pm until its closing at about 11-12 pm.

NORLITO GABION:

God is so good and great! I did not see myself as a worker of PAMI right after graduation. When Pastor Chito announced that Bro. Tom and Sis Espie were the only graduates that would be absorbed by PAMI, I said to myself that probably God has another plan for me. But Ptr Chito told me to help in building the pastoral house. I was so glad because I felt bad leaving our school. So I worked on the building and continued praying. Then Ptr Chito talked with me again about his plan of reopening the bakery, and that I could be the one supervising it. Not only that, but he'd make me a junior pastor in the campus church. God indeed is so good, answering the desire of our heart. Now I am helping in many outreaches, doing much of the morning devotion, teaching junior class in the church and working in the bakery. Please pray that I could adjust with my work of bakery and church works because I usually have the bakery work from 8 pm to 2 am early morning.

MISSION SUMMARY

PAMI is a non-denominational evangelical mission started in 1982 in Sorsogon Province of the Philippines by Norval & Ardelle Thorud, aimed at reaching the unreached, teaching and discipling, and assisting the suffering. U.S. missionaries stayed until 1989, and the work has flourished with national workers ever since. PAMI now has 23 Filipino workers in 13 locations. Besides churches and pioneering works, there's also a 4 year Bible school (Emmaus Bible Institute) with about 40 students learning to be church planting pastors and Christian workers. Christian radio shows and milk feeding outreaches to children are also conducted. All this is accomplished with an annual regular budget of only \$40,000. Gifts are tax-deductible and 99% goes to the field.

PAMI FINANCIAL REPORT
January 1, 2008 – November 30, 2008

**COMMENTS ON FINANCES AND
FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Receipts

Mission Support	\$22,306.00	
Designated	5,868.00	\$28,174.00
Memorials	3,348.00	
Potluck Offering	1,426.00	
Other	1,315.82	6,089.82
Total Receipts		\$34,263.82

Expenditures

Regular Budget	\$34,519.00	
Christmas Love Gifts	2,500.00	
Bonus PAMI Workers	1,530.00	
Extra Food for EBI Students	1,500.00	
Bibles	250.00	\$40,299.00
EBI Parsonage/guesthouse	8,750.00	
Medical Assistance	500.00	
Repairs	590.00	
Chairs	800.00	
Mountain Bike	125.00	
Radio Outreach	400.00	11,165.00
Other Philippine Disbursements		1,090.00
Administrative Expenses		291.60
Total Expenditures		\$52,845.60
Receipts Minus Expenditures		(18,581.78)
Cash Balance Jan. 1, 2008		24,471.70
Cash Balance Nov. 30, 2008		\$5,889.92

As can be seen in the summary table to the left, we started 2008 with a substantial balance of over \$24,000 (largely due to memorials and year-end gifts in 2007). In turn, we felt able to afford the \$8750 that it took to build a new parsonage/guest house at EBI last April-June. We also felt able to add a couple new workers, and to increase allowances to make up for lower exchange rate and higher fuel and commodity costs that occurred earlier in the year. At one point, the price of rice had doubled from what it was a year before. A large reserve balance enabled us to handle an average deficit of \$1000-1500 per month of expenditures versus income. But now the reserve balance has run out. In turn, we've already trimmed \$500 from a monthly budget of \$3400, and are considering trimming even more. The pain of cutting is eased a bit by a higher exchange rate and lower fuel costs, but it still hurts. Needless to say, we could sure use extra year-end gifts or an increase in monthly gifts.

The EBI bakery was restarted on Oct. 27 to help with the financial crunch too. It had been temporarily closed when prices of ingredients cut into profits and to focus efforts on parsonage construction last spring. In fact, EBI is pouring a lot of manpower into keeping the bakery store open 21 hours a day to serve late-night travelers from the bus station next door. Pastor Chito covers it 3 to 7 am, his wife Ofel 7 to noon, EBI students noon to 5 pm (during their afternoon work program time), and Sister Espie 5 to midnight. Furthermore, Pastor Norly bakes from 8 pm to 2 am, accompanied by some EBI students after their evening studies. Ptr Norly sleeps from 2 to 7 am and also leads morning devotions and afternoon Bible study outreaches. We just pray that they don't get too worn out.

Although running the EBI bakery takes a lot of effort, it can generate a couple hundred dollars a month. It's enough to cover the allowance of Ptr Norly and some of EBI's food expenses.



Ptr Mark Olson speaking at Oct 10, 2008 PAMI potluck



Joey Feliciano provided music (including a Tagalog song)



Becky Petersen and Claire Efteland promoted July 8-30, 2009 Respond! trip



Twelve people baptized in Bulan on October 18, 2008.



Oct. 18th Bulan Baptism of Sister Belen, saved from occultism (see April newsletter).



Pastor Randy Rivera leading Bible study on small island of Bankawan (near Allen, Samar), where 70% of 15 households there attend after hearing him on the radio.



Samar kids happy to see Ptr Randy & Nida.