



HANDS OF MERCY Philippines

News update and subjects for prayer – May 2020

.....*whoever is kind to the needy honours God. Proverbs 14:31*

Week 1: May 1st – 9th

** The **Coronavirus** has affected people all over the world and in the Philippines many people are suffering, especially those living in the squatter communities. Sally Escoto the Director of Hands of Mercy in the Philippines wrote to us in April and said..... *“At the moment we need your prayers. It seems like the Coronavirus patients here are increasing. The government is strict about people going out. We have to get a Barangay pass to be able to go out from the house with a valid reason. The Ichthus Water Filtering station is allowed to operate as water is needed by the people. I have to give an employment certificate to Ichthus staff to allow them to deliver water. We know how desperate every family is in every community. The longer the lock-down continues the harder it is for the families. A lot of people are hungry and some are saying that they won't die of the virus but rather in hunger”*..... Hopefully when you read this the virus will have gone but your prayers will be greatly valued by the families now and in the future.

*** Hands of Mercy was able to send some money to the Philippines for the staff and families to buy food. The jobs some individuals had e.g. washing clothes for richer families, helping the disabled children, driving trikes, working in fast food shops etc., has stopped and Sally told us that people were starving. Hands of Mercy would like to send more money to help feed the families, so if you could give just a little it would be well used. Please send a cheque to the office in Luton, made out to Hands of Mercy International, and please remember these families in your prayers.

Week 2: May 10th -16th

*** Give thanks to God for the many meals Hands of Mercy has served to underweight and malnourished children during the past years through the **Supplementary Feeding Programme**. Because of the Coronavirus the community feedings had to stop but thankfully whilst preparing the calendar Sally Escoto has told us that they have used the SFP money to buy rice and keeping a distance, families have been collecting their “bags of rice” to cook at home. Please also pray that people will give financially in the UK through the **Supplementary Feeding Programme** so the thrice weekly feedings can continue when the virus has gone.



Collecting their rice from the HOM office

*** Please pray for the Filipino staff members of Hands of Mercy that when they can all meet up again, they will continue to work together in unity. Pray that they will not tire of being good neighbours to the many poor families in Mandaluyong, especially when criticized or facing rejection. Please pray that they may receive God's help and strength to keep persevering in their ministry each day.

Week 3: May 17th – 23rd

*** Last month we shared that Hands of Mercy UK recently had a wonderful answer to the prayers of many people as Mrs Linda Clitheroe who is known by the UK Trustees has offered to be the new part-time administrator for the compassion ministry. Because of the Coronavirus Linda's commencement as administrator will not be immediate as Fran and her husband are having to self-isolate at the present time. In the coming months, more information will be shared with all the Hands of Mercy supporters, but in the meantime please pray that the Coronavirus will stop spreading and for all the practical details to be sorted out as Fran hands over the reins.

*** May the 21st is **ASCENSION DAY**. Please remember in prayer the Pastors of the five **Mercy Community churches** in Mandaluyong and Baguio. When the Coronavirus has gone the members of the churches will be able to meet again for Sunday worship. Give thanks for the Worship teams at the churches and please pray for God's enabling as they lead people closer to Him through praise and worship songs.

*** Poverty means not being able to pay your rent or to have electricity or water brought to your shanty home, or even having a toilet to use. It means waking up every day facing insecurity and worry about money. The stress can lead to many problems and especially now with the Coronavirus affecting many thousands of people living in the squatter communities. Please pray that the Philippine government will govern with integrity and give justice to the families, and that the promise of the President to give money to the poorest families will actually take place during these very difficult days.

*** At the moment because of the Coronavirus children are not able to attend school and it will soon be their summer holiday. Please remember in prayer all the **sponsored children** and give thanks to God for all the sponsors who have faithfully supported their child/children with their education, health care and personal development. Even when the schools re-open, many children cannot receive an education because of poverty. Although schools in the public education system are affordable, the school uniform, transportation costs, money for food, school supplies etc., make it too expensive for those living in poverty. Please pray for more people to come forward to help a child. (For details, please contact the UK office on 01582 416151 or email: info@handsofmercyph.org)

Week 4: May 24th – 31st

*** When the Coronavirus has gone, please pray for the members of the Mercy Community Church **Men's Group** as they reach out in practical ways to help their neighbours. Please pray for them as they befriend and help the men, some who now attend church, to grow in their faith and relationship with God and become role models in their communities.

*** Please pray for the men in the squatter communities, particularly for those who are bound by addictions and who are physically violent towards their wives, especially within some of the **Family Support Programme** families. Please pray that they may meet with Jesus their Saviour and discover how He can give them a different attitude towards others and a new purpose in life.

*** **Hands of Mercy** is a reflection of God's compassion for needy children and their families. Give thanks for all the relationships that Hands of Mercy has with children, young people and families in the squatter communities of Mandaluyong and Baguio. By choosing to partner with us, you can help restore hope to someone in need. Please pray that God will touch the hearts of others and give them the burden to join us in reaching the poor in Mandaluyong and Baguio.

*** Give thanks to God for the faithful support of churches as well as the many individuals in the UK who support the Hands of Mercy compassion ministry. The prayers, sponsorships, gifts to the compassion programmes do make a difference in many Filipino lives. We may not be able to change the situation for everybody, but Hands of Mercy is changing the lives of children and adults in Mandaluyong, Manila and giving them hope for the future.

Thank you so much for your ministry in prayer