

# Liwanag - Tanglaw

## International

### Praying to Heal

In June 1996, a popular newsweekly magazine ran a story about how a study showed that prayers helped in healing the sick. It was great news at the time because it showed at least that the medical community was now turning its attention toward spirituality.

Then, ten years later, a bigger study at Harvard showed that prayers did not work. In fact, prayers caused harm.

In both studies, hospital patients with serious illnesses were involved. The first study in 1996 consisted of advanced AIDS patients while the second study in 2006 consisted of heart bypass surgery patients. In both studies, essentially half the patients were prayed for by strangers while the other half was not.

Volunteers were recruited

to pray. The volunteers were each assigned a patient's name and were asked to pray for the patient daily for a set number of days.

In the first study, the results were significant. Those prayed for healed or became far healthier than those not prayed for. There were also fewer re-hospitalizations for the prayed-for group.

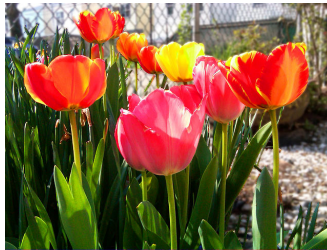
The second and much bigger study—1,800 patients versus the first study's 40—produced results that shocked even the experimenters. More deaths and

complications occurred among patients prayed for than among patients not prayed for. It seemed that not only did prayer not work, but it was bad for you.

Although the two studies appeared similar, there were, in fact, differences.

For example, patients in the first study were not aware that they were being prayed for. In the second study, patients were told they may or may not receive prayer. The patients in effect were given undue stress by making them agonize over imagined expectations.

In the first study, the volunteers were only given the patient's first name and last initial. In the second study, full disclosure was made on the patients' names along with photos, and illnesses.



Sis. Dina Figueras' garden in Jersey City, New Jersey.

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Message on

### We Are Good

By Bro. Virgelio Carpio

Being good may be a lot easier than we think. Because there is growing evidence that the human body already possesses what we need to generate compassion.

Up until early last century, it was believed that our expressions of emotions – smiling, crying, laughing -- were cultural in origin. Expressions of emotions varied from culture to

culture. After all, Japanese women smiled when their Samurai-husbands died in battle. The native Indian tribes of Canada have no expression for anger even when their canoes were damaged by tourists. And surely compassion comes from one's belief in God. Expressions of emotions, it was believed back then, were invented according to different sets of values, morals,

and social institutions. They were not universal.

At least one scientist disagreed. Charles Darwin believed that our facial expressions and gestures of emotions evolved naturally. Involuntary muscle contractions on the face, according to Darwin, are shorthand versions of full-body actions. For example, our expression for

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East Coast  
Next Sesyon:

**June 12 – Saturday, 5:00 p.m.**

Pag-gunita at pag-alaala sa pag-alis sa laman ng KGG na Gran Superma, Dr. Rosa Pena Tongko. Gaganapin ito sa tahanan ng mga kapatid na Bro. Eddie at Sis. Lota Cantada, sa:

3117 Bangor Drive,  
Chesapeake, VA 23321  
Tel. (757) 483-2103

West Coast:

Maaring tumawag kina:

- Bro. Louie & family:  
(619) 264-4251
- Sis. Fia Zabat Swartz:  
(619) 656-3138
- Sis. Amor & Bro. Salvador Pia:  
(619) \*82-656-0325,  
or Fax (619) 421-5240.

## Praying to Heal

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In the first study, the volunteers were allowed to recite their own prayers. While in the second study, the volunteers were asked to include the phrase, “for a successful surgery with a quick, healthy recovery and no complications”. According to people who meditate, “no complications” is negatively-themed. The negative should never be invoked in meditation and prayers should always be framed in the positive. One may, instead, pray for Nature to run its course in the patient’s body.

But perhaps the most important difference is that while everyday churchgoers were recruited to pray in the second study, experienced meditators who do remote healing were recruited in the first study. Meditators are honed through years of practice for generating love and compassion.

With love and compassion in the core, the first study better simulated real-life conditions of praying for a loved one.

Prayers work. We should not hesitate in asking others to pray for our loved ones. Indeed, we should ask that others pray not just once or twice but daily until the patient recovers. A genuine desire for the sick to get well is all that is needed.

Studies on prayers similar to the first study are still being done today. And the suggestion is made that zeroing in on the specific part of the body that is ailing works best.

What organ needs to heal or whether the left or right side

is affected should be clearly stated in prayer.

Successful remote healers have one thing in common. They do not believe that they hold the power to heal. Instead, they “step aside” during meditation for a “greater source” to do the healing.

This is important. When praying for the sick, we need not distress over how to obtain powers to heal. Rather, we should simply keep the patient in mind, generate feelings of kindness, state the patient’s illness, intend for healing to occur, step aside, and let go. All this goes without saying—and we may look back to the sage of ancient times who told us to love one another—that the person being prayed for is a loved one.

### Sources:

- Lynne McTaggart. *The Intention Experiment*. New York. Free Press. 2007.
- Wallis, Claudia, Jeanne McDowell, Alice Park, and Lisa H. Towle/Raleigh. “Faith & Healing.” *Time Magazine*. June 24, 1996.
- News Release. “Largest Study of Third-Party Prayer Suggests Such Prayer Not Effective In Reducing Complications Following Heart Surgery”. Harvard Medical School Office of Public Affairs. Mar. 31, 2006. HMS Press. May 2, 2010. <[http://web.med.harvard.edu/sites/RELEASES/html/3\\_31STEP.html](http://web.med.harvard.edu/sites/RELEASES/html/3_31STEP.html)>



Bro. Ging and Sis. Amor Pia’s Pagoda in Chula Vista, California.

## A Moment of Silence

### Sis. Bibiana Reyes

Our mother, Bibiana C. Reyes passed away on March 14, 2010 at age 85 after a short illness with severe osteoporosis-pneumonia. She was born on 12/2/24, had only reached 6th grade in elementary school but she was able to send me and my 3 brothers, Solfio, Efren and Oscar to college. She practically raised us as a single mother because our father worked until his retirement at Clark Field in Pampanga and

only went home every Friday night. We will always remember her as full of life and love, was always the life of the party with her witty jokes and pleasant disposition. She was very headstrong, assertive woman, to our surprise, growing up in a small town. She was very generous to friends and neighbors in need, as poor as we were. Her memory will be for a blessing.

—Sis Lulu Reyes Lorenzo

### Sis. Iris Morales Zabát

Iris Morales Zabát, the younger sister of Dr. Vicente Zabát, passed away on Friday, May 14, 2010 in her home in San Diego, California. She was one of the steadfast members of Caloocan and attended some of the sessions in Southern California. She was born on June 3, 1913 to Dalmacio Zabát and Catalina Morales of Gapan, Nueva Ecija. She

settled in Omaha, Nebraska with her husband Dr. Jorge Simon. She is survived by their children—Reynaldo, Dante, Honesto, Artemio, Ricardo, Alma, and Dennis. Dr. Jorge Simon and their eldest son, Jorge Jr., have passed on. She was an accomplished church singer and Miss Luzon in her youth. She held on to her spiritualist beliefs until her passing.

## Coming Sesyons

### Agosto 21—Sabado.

Pag-diriwang sa anibersaryo ng pag-angat sa kalagayang relihiyon ng Institution. Gaganapin ito sa West Coast. Maaring tumawag kay Bro.Louie, (619) 264-4251, upang malaman ang oras at tahanan.

### Oktobre 9—Sabado, 4:00p.m.

Pag-diriwang at pag-alaala sa pag-silang sa laman ng KGG na Gran Superma, Dr.Rosa Pena Tongko, at gayon din ang kapanganakan sa laman ng ating Gurong Ispirital,

Dr.Vicente Morales Zabát. Gaganapin ito sa tahanan ng mga kapatid na Bro.Angel at Sis.Grace Santos, sa 390 Chestwick Drive, Martinsburg, WV 25401. Tel. (304) 267-7248

### Disyembre 25—Sabado, 4:00 p.m.

Pag-diriwang at pag-alaala sa pag-silang sa laman ng Jesus, ang Kristo; gayon din ang pag-gunita sa pag-silang sa espiritu ng Fundador ng Espiritu ng Katotohanan. Gaganapin ito sa tahanan ng mga kapatid na Bro.Regino at Sis.Catalina Lopez, sa 160-15 12th Ave, Whitestone, NY 11357.

## This issue’s contributors:

Bro. Nel Clemeña  
Sis. Anneth Pablo

## If You Prefer...

... to receive your copy of the LTI Newsletter by e-mail only, please send e-mail to [billy@billicarpio.com](mailto:billy@billicarpio.com). This issue is also available at <<http://www.billicarpio.com/LTI>>

## We Welcome Submissions!

Send your articles, photos, birth and death announcements, awards, and recognitions to:

- Bro. Billy Carpio  
[billy@billicarpio.com](mailto:billy@billicarpio.com)
- Sis. Gwen Ciego  
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## Stay In Touch!

No matter where you are, you can stay in touch. Send e-mail to Bro. Ed Nibungco at [ednibun@msn.com](mailto:ednibun@msn.com) to join *Liwang-Tanglaw* at *YabooGroups*.

## Serving Others Through Music and Medicine

By Bro. Jim T. Nibungco, Ph.D. and Sis. Madelfia A. Abb

God graced Fiel Raymundo Matias with the gift of music. His father, Jose Matias or Lolo Pepe as he was known to many, provided Templo Sol with music for generations. His mother, Felizidad Raymundo or Lola Idad, encouraged music in young Fiel. In time, Fiel would grow fond of playing the piano. His music would become a shining achievement that few can equal and would open a path toward a life of service in the field of medicine.

Born on January 18, 1931 in Los Angeles, California, Fiel's family lived with their dearest friends Lola Itang and Lolo Tongko and their daughter, Tita Baby. Fiel and Tita Baby grew up as brother and sister to each other. It was a relationship that Fiel cherished fondly throughout his life. Lola Itang with her deep love of music, along with Fiel's parents' devotion to music, provided encouragement and inspiration for Fiel to learn to play the piano at a very early age.

Fiel inherited his father's passion for music. Lolo Pepe was an accomplished and extraordinary violinist. While in the United States, Lolo Pepe conducted an orchestra on cruise ships. When the family returned to the Philippines, Lolo Pepe conducted the church choir. He taught music to young children. Even late in life, he played the violin with virtuosity. Holding the instrument with his chin, one hand gripped the neck while the other stroked the strings with the bow, filling the room with music, his rigid back swaying staccato-like to the melody that flowed from it. Those who watched him did so with awe and wondered how at such an advanced age one could play the violin with near impossible vigor.

In the Philippines, at age 5, Fiel started formally learning to play the piano.

Exhibiting a natural talent for music, he later received a scholarship and attended the Conservatory of Music at the University of the Philippines, the country's sole state university at the time.

At age 16, Fiel earned his bachelor's degree in music.

Fiel won acclaims and plaudits whenever he performed. During recitals, the music he produced, as his fingers danced and swayed across the keys, invoked the emotions that the classical composer originally intended. His music sounded no different from those of renowned concert pianists of the time. One witness to his recital, Sis. Aleli Carpio, recalls how Fiel could listen to a chord and know exactly what piano keys to play. He was, in the words of Sis. Aleli, a genius in music. Like his father, Fiel earned the right to be called an extraordinary musician.

Fiel participated in the church's music program with his father. As a child, he watched his father play *Thais Meditation* on the violin and was mesmerized by the grace, conviction, and drama with which his father played. The powerful and hypnotic music emanating from his father's violin awoke the mind and spirit of every soul in church.

Enraptured by his father's violin, Fiel, too, learned to invoke the same spiritual experience on the piano. Soon he was playing solo at Templo Sol, captivating and winning the admiration of everyone with his rendition of *Thais Meditation*. On special occasions, Lolo Pepe would descend from the platform and play with Fiel during the meditation; father and son in a duet leading the gathering into religious epiphany with their violin and organ.

Growing up in Templo Sol helped Fiel develop a strong faith and belief in God. Fiel wit-

nessed and admired Lola Itang's commitment to serving others. He admired her genuine servitude as she provided free medical care in the community. Lola Itang became Fiel's role model and it was she who inspired him to follow in her footsteps to become a doctor of medicine. With music scholarship and support from his parents and Lola Itang, Fiel pursued a career in medicine. In 1957, ten years after he received his degree in music, he completed his medical degree at Far Eastern University. Practicing medicine along side Lola Itang and caring for those in need was one his crowning per-

signed to work at Brook Army Hospital's Pathology Department in San Antonio, Texas. One year after he left the Philippines, he returned home from active duty. He became a university medical professor and worked at the Hospital Ng Manila.

He resumed his volunteer work at Lola Itang's community clinic.

Fiel and Norma were blessed with six children. Tragically, they lost their first two children. They lost their first baby son to a congenital heart defect and their first baby daughter to scarlet fever



Fiel Matias in the 50s. **Back row:** Atty. Stanley Tongko, Darfrente Nibungco Sr., Felipa Nibungco, Gran Superma, Jim Nibungco, Dr. Vicente Zabat. **Front row:** Pia Pantig, Rose Villongco-Flores, Fiel Matias, Lope Papa. (Photo courtesy of Bro. Jim Nibungco.)

sonal achievement he dearly cherished.

In the year of his graduation from medical school, Fiel married Norma Laurel Almeda and started a family. Fulfilling his conscription required of an American citizen, Fiel left his young family and went to Fort Ord, California to complete the United States Army Basic Training. Subsequently, he was as-

during the years 1959 to 1960. From 1961 to 1966, three daughters -- Midea, Domciely, and Madelfia -- and a son -- Fiely -- were born. In 1973, Norma convinced Fiel to move and immigrate the family to the United States.

Moving to another country brought many challenges. Since his medical degree was com-

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## Serving others...

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pleted outside the United States, Fiel had to pass a series of medical board exams and complete a residency before being granted a license to practice medicine. Despite his 16 years experience as a surgeon, professor of medicine, and general practitioner in the Philippines, he had to start all over again as if he just graduated from medical school. It meant recertification, education, and training while raising a family. It was seemingly a daunting task.

However, Fiel drew inspiration from Lola Itang to tackle the challenge of becoming a license doctor. He witnessed Lola Itang's pursuit of a law degree which she completed at an age that some

considered old. It was also a time in Lola Itang's life that would have been impractical as she was busy practicing medicine and ministering at Templo Sol.

Yet, Lola Itang prevailed. Fiel felt he too could prevail.

Settling his family in Los Angeles, California, he took a job as a bank teller. Later he worked at a hospital. While he worked during weekdays, he studied at nights and on weekends for his medical board examinations. His determination and commitment during this most arduous time of balancing work, family, and studies were rewarded when not long after he passed the board. He completed his residency in 1978 at Saint Luke Hospital in Saint Louis, Missouri despite the onset of a terminal illness.

## We Are Good

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disgust—mouth open and tongue sticking out—is an imitation of someone who is about to throw up. When we want to domineer others, we make ourselves look physically bigger by extending our arms then clasping our hands behind our heads. And when we feel weak and impotent, we stoop down and hunch our shoulders to reduce our size. Expressions of emotion according to Darwin are universal and not cultural in origin.

Sometime in the 60s, Darwin was proven right. An anthropologist went to a remote a jungle in Papua New Guinea and conducted experiments there. He found that the natives made use of the same expressions for anger, fear, sadness, surprise, and happiness as Europeans did.

And so humans all over the world share the same expressions of emotions. Whatever concerns we might have, in whatever part of the world we find ourselves in, we can rest assured that our true feelings will always be heard.

Darwin also theorized that through a process called "natural selection", only those species that can adapt to the ever-changing environment can survive. Species that cannot adapt will become

extinct. Although natural selection has been successfully applied in the field of biology, lately, it has also been used in other disciplines. In physics, for example, some theorize that the Universe is the way it is because of natural selection. A universe that evolves where  $2+2=5$ , for example, will have its many mathematical foundations collapse and so will quickly cease to exist.

In the behavioral sciences, natural selection has also been used to explain cultural behaviors. One may wonder, however, that if natural selection holds true for societies, then the strong and domineering societies will overpower the weak and the meek into extinction. The world should be filled with dictatorships and nothing else.

But that is not what we see today. Dictatorships are rare lot. Barbarian and savage leaders like the Huns, the Goths, the Vikings, and even the Romans and the Greeks, who conquer neighboring lands for loot and plunder are virtually extinct. And this may be because sympathetic communities are more likely to produce healthier offspring. Caring parents produce children who are healthier and of sound mind. While cruel parents raise children with a mindset that could lead to their own downfall. Indeed, history

From Missouri he went back to California and practiced primary care at East Los Angeles Family Clinic. His perseverance in re-establishing his career was not lost on his children. His children witnessed and admired the perseverance he displayed in his quest to become a US licensed doctor at an age that some would consider old and impractical.

Looking back, Fiel's greatest personal achievement was practicing medicine alongside his mentor, Lola Itang. On days and weekends when he did not work, Fiel earnestly joined and traveled with Lola Itang to provide free medical care to the community. It was an experience Fiel often reminisced about. Moments spent with Lola Itang made him live the true meaning of charity -- sharing

with others what God blessed him with. Templo Sol was where Fiel developed his God given-gifts. And it was also there that he began freely sharing those gifts back. For Fiel, caring for people was not a burden -- it was a blessing. Despite failing kidneys and high blood pressure, he practiced medicine in the United States for ten years. He passed away in 1988 at the age of 57.

While his first love was music, it was music that paved the way for his medical career and enabled him to serve others through the gift of healing. It is said that music is the language of the soul. Harnessing the power of music and employing the rigors of medicine, Fiel Matias not only cured the body but healed the soul as well.

shows that compassion always pulls through in times of war. When applied to societies, natural selection seems to guarantee that the good shall always prevail.

There are other signs that seem to ensure our goodness. Unlike most animals, we evolved to walk on two feet. Sometime during our evolution millions of years ago we stood upright and started walking. The moment we did, the woman's birth canal narrowed. Human babies will then have to be born while still very small in order to pass through the narrower opening. In contrast to animals whose newborns can stand and walk the moment they're born, human babies need a long time of nursing—eighteen months at least—before they can survive on their own. For us humans, care-giving evolved to become a way of life.

Within our chest is a bundle of nerves called the "vagus nerve". The vagus nerve's primary role is to slow our heart rates down when we feel anger or are fearful. But it does much more than that. The vagus nerve also releases chemical toxins to the brain that generate feelings of love and trust. When we hear about a loved one's distress, for example, it is the vagus nerve that instinctively contorts our facial muscles to form an expression of sympathy. It is also the vagus nerve that

produces the lump in the throat when we feel awe and inspiration. Because of these, some believe that the vagus nerve is the body's center for compassion. If true, then it seems that our bodies have been engineered so it can guide us along towards feeling compassion for others.

And so things seem to point to the fact that we, the humankind, are not a lost lot. We are by nature, good. When we are bad, it is because we are going against our nature. Mother Nature seems to have made every effort in guiding us along by turning the straight and narrow path into a lane wide open for a slam dunk.

Jesus wants us to be good. And our bodies are already wired for that. We just need to fill ourselves with the one ingredient that will keep the goodness in our hearts. Jesus calls this ingredient, "God's love". It is the kind of love that has no self-interest, is freely given, and is so universal that it would even make one love one's enemy.

When Jesus said his body is the bread and his blood our drink, he may have been making an analogy—a parable if you will—where he uses himself as metaphor. Whereas food and drink are what keep our bodies alive, the love that Jesus embodies is the nourishment that our souls need.