

Tabitha: Food for LIFE



2009

November 2009: So I am a father now. Hard to believe, but amazing to me almost daily. I have been thinking a lot about the heart of a father these days and what a father's heart is supposed to look like... like God's heart I guess. I look at Judah and I think that I used to be like that, so helpless, so little and so dependent. I think, "Wow, God sustained me and brought me through those days, what a Father!" I also think about how much I love Judah and how much more God loves him and then I think I understand just a little bit more about God's heart for us. I shared these thoughts with a friend the other day and he said, "You sound like a dad." I guess I do. So, I can honestly say that when I look at the kids in the feeding program I see them a little bit differently. Not that I see them as my kids, but I see them with a little more compassion and I think I love them just a bit more, so much so that I consciously left my lap-top at home a few days this week just so I would have more time to spend with the kids. I got all sweaty and a little dirty, but it was worth it.

Recent Highlights: The children's outreach that we held has definitely been the number one highlight of the last couple of months. Every two months we hold a big gathering for the kids who are regular members of our feeding program, but we also make it open to kids outside of the program. The kids in our program prepare things like dances and dramas and we try and do something special for the kids. This time we had a professional clown come in. Noel is a Christian guy who mixes magic, humor, and entertainment with the gospel. We were truly blessed to have Kuya Noel come and do a show for us. It was hard to tell how many kids came, but it was somewhere around 150. It was nice to meet children who do not normally come. We held the event at one of the local gyms in Agdao which gave us a lot more room to maneuver. One of the neatest moments was the award time. We gave out awards for everything from "Most Helpful" to the "Best in Memory Verse."



Our numbers at the feeding program have dropped a bit over the past month or so due to things that are beyond our control. A few families have left the area and others have gone through hard times like divorce where one partner has decided to leave the city and take the kids with them. Other families have decided to no longer attend our program for their own reasons. It is not always easy to figure out which kids we should invite. To help with this, we came up with the idea of having "Open House" every Saturday. The point is to open our program to anyone in the community who would like to attend. This helps us to build relationships with more families and children and by God's grace, hopefully find those children who are most in need of being regular members. Of course, making the decision to decide which children can attend is never easy, so we really rely on your prayers for wisdom on who we should invite to attend all five days a week. In line with this, we are also working at getting the help of local government agencies at identifying the most needy children in the community.



The donors forum that Ate Jenny Montenegro (our director) and I attended was a big success. We were able to meet several groups and individuals who are passionate about helping the poor and marginalized people of Davao. We were able to be matched with a local agency who has tentatively pledged the support of his foundation for the feeding program. He will be visiting us next week to finalize a few things, but it looks like his group will be providing things like vitamins and medical supplies as needed, as well as a food supplement designed to help malnourished children. It sounds like the amount of vitamins could last us up to one year. We don't know all the details yet, but we feel very excited because this is one of the first times we have received such interest from local supporters. We hope that we can develop more types of relationships like this in the months ahead.



Well, that is all the space for this update on **Tabitha: Food for Life**. Thanks for all your support and prayers!