

NEWS FROM CEBU

—THOMAS' NEW CHAPTER

BY PAUL HEALY, FIELD DIRECTOR

Today we stood in the picnic area as we sang our traditional farewell song to Thomas and his adoptive family. One of our child care employees, Gina, was openly weeping. She had given so much of herself to this little boy named Thomas during his six years at CSC. She read to him, held him, comforted him and prayed for him. She cared for him in the hospital and watched him on the playground. Now she was having to say goodbye. It was an emotional farewell.

One of the things about an anniversary celebration like we enjoyed last month here in Cebu, is that you tend to look for red letter dates to chart God's goodness over the years. For CSC many of those dates have Thomas' name on them. Major surgeries in Manila and

Cebu. Amazing acts of courage and recovery. Great accomplishments at school and in his home (Duterte). Hilarious statements and observations about life. And now, the answer to his and our fervent

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prayers – a family of his own. What had seemed impossible a few years ago came true in glorious fashion today as the CSC van pulled out of our compound with Thomas and his adoptive parents waving goodbye.

Thomas brought out the best in CSC. He forced our medical team to look for creative ways

to get him the care he needed. He required prolonged one-on-one aftercare, which meant that the house parents and Homelife staff had to make schedules that always had our aunties available to be with Thomas. His needs compelled us to provide necessary therapy, medical consultations and counseling. The intelligence and depth of his questions and observations

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CELEBRATING

Recently we celebrated 40 years of ministry here in Cebu. It was a great time of looking back on the miracles and milestones in our amazing history. One of the questions that I have been asked frequently in the months leading up to the celebration and during the festivities themselves, is this: Did you ever imagine, when you were starting out, that the ministry would grow to the size that it is now? Although we are amazed at God's goodness and provision over these years, a truthful answer to that question, at least by me, would be – yes, I did. I can say without hesitation that we believed that God was leading us to this work and that He would provide all our needs. We were young and idealistic, and we had big hopes and dreams.

But I did not have a vision for the facilities we would eventually have. I had no inkling of the many

PRAYER REQUESTS and PRAISES

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please continue to pray with us for our older children who will soon be too old to be eligible for adoption under Filipino law. We are committed to helping these children transition into adulthood and ultimately become productive members of Filipino society. Pray for us as we work to foster a future for these children and as we work to improve our services for them.

PRAISES

- We continue to be so grateful for Roberto and Heather Atienza and their family. We believe they are an answer to many prayers and are excited for them to move to Cebu and take up leadership of CSC for another generation.
- Our Social Workers are a vital part of the ministry. We are so fortunate to have a great group who work with diligence and compassion. Their efforts directly impact the referrals of new children and in shepherding the adoption process forward for many of our kids.



40 YEARS OF MINISTRY

BY PAUL HEALY, FIELD DIRECTOR

challenges we would face and the hard work and resilience that it would take to keep going through times of economic, emotional and political difficulty and chaos. And I had no clue as to how many people it would take -- staff, volunteers, advisors, donors, prayer supporters -- to make it to 40 years. In that respect, I stand amazed at what God has done to sustain us for all these years.

One of the reasons that CSC has been successful, I believe, is that we have managed change well. People come and go. Ministry opportunities change.

Governments and their policies are always being revised. Technological developments provide opportunities and challenges. Giving priorities and

donor needs evolve. CSC has been willing and able to adapt with the times and according to the needs of children in the Philippines. And we have been flexible with the seemingly endless changes of government policy, personnel and regulations.

But CSC's success has also been a result of our not having changed. We adjust to different challenges,

but we remain steadfast in our mission. We are doing the same work that we started out to do in 1979: we care for Filipino children who do not have families.

I can say without hesitation that we believed that God was leading us to this work and that He would provide all our needs.

I pray that CSC will be there for 40 more

years. As we make the changes in personnel that are needed with growth and retirement, may we never outgrow the ability to take in abandoned, neglected and abused children and give them what CSC is known for around the world: quality, loving care. ■



INTRODUCING OUR NEW FIELD DIRECTOR ROBERTO ATIENZA

BY PAUL HEALY, FIELD DIRECTOR

We are thrilled to introduce our new Field Director, Roberto Atienza! Roberto has been connected to CSC for many years, including his role on the Board of Directors and as a mentor to many former CSC residents. Roberto is a Converge pastor who has served at the Filipino American Christian Church in Mounds View, MN for 13 years.



TIM HOLMBERG CSC PRESIDENT:

Paul and Marlys Healy have given 40 years of service to orphaned children in the Philippines. We are grateful for them beyond what our words can convey. It has been a daunting thought to consider how to fill the Healys' positions upon their retirement. But it has been a hopeful thought to remember how God has blessed CSC for these past 40 years, and we look forward to His continued blessing. This is His ministry. We are also grateful beyond words for Roberto, his wife Heather, and their family. **We believe God has carefully prepared them for this role and that the ministry will continue to be**

one of compassion and care. We are thankful for all who play a role in giving children hope and family, both now and for the future.



Roberto is a Filipino American. He and his wife Heather have four children between 8 and 15 years old. Together they felt called to pursue God's leading to serve the children at CSC. Roberto and his family look forward to honoring and upholding the legacy begun by Paul and Marlys Healy.

The Healys will retire in the coming year after an amazing 40 years of service and dedication to children in the Philippines. The Healys are pleased and excited about Roberto stepping into the Field Director role.

The CSC Board of Directors was unanimous in their decision to hire Roberto as the Field Director, and our Cebu leadership also supported the choice without exception. Roberto is an answer to many prayers, and we believe he is the right person at the right time to help lead CSC into the future. The board is committed to supporting both Roberto and Paul through this transition time

CAROLYN ANDERSON CSC BOARD PRESIDENT:

After having the privilege of serving on the CSC board with Roberto, I am filled with gratitude and joy that he is moving into this leadership role at Cebu. **As a Board, we are committed to offering our full support to Roberto as this incredible ministry continues a legacy that started with Paul and Marlys and now moves into its next generation.** Two constants remain unchanged: God's limitless grace and the preciousness of each child who walks through our gates.





PAUL HEALY CSC FOUNDER/FIELD DIRECTOR:

These are exciting days at CSC! We have a new multi-purpose building that just opened, our solar energy system is up and running, and the Habitat for Humanity project is complete and occupied. With Marlys and I planning to retire in the next year, another exciting development is the hiring of Roberto Atienza as our next Field Director. **As a Filipino American, Roberto knows the culture here in the Philippines. As a board member, he understands the ministry. As a person who feels a strong calling to missions in general and the Philippines in particular, he has the determination and resiliency that the job will require.**

Roberto, his wife Heather, and their four kids spent time here in Cebu recently, and we were impressed by Roberto's love for CSC and his strong desire to lead this ministry into the future. Marlys and I are very happy with the board's decision to hire Roberto, and we are looking forward to helping him and his family get settled here in Cebu and start the adjusting and learning process.

and beyond. God has blessed Children's Shelter of Cebu for the last 40 years, and we pray both humbly and confidently for His continued blessing in the years to come.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and financial support of CSC. You are truly vital to the ministry!

ROBERTO ATIENZA:

I am grateful beyond words for the heart, dedication, and faithfulness that the Lord has given to Paul and Marlys. What began with a trip to the Philippines 40 years ago has grown, by God's grace, into a beautiful expression of God's love and presence. I am also thankful for the many individuals whom God has used to sustain the ministry at CSC over the years. Some of my closest friends have come from the shelter -- adopted children whom I never would have met, nor served the Lord alongside, were it not for those who obeyed God's call to serve and support the children of Cebu.



My wife, children, and I are excited and honored to be called to serve at CSC. It's humbling to step back and see how this ministry has made a lasting and eternal difference in the lives of so many. I want to thank Paul and Marlys, the Board, and all those at CSC for entrusting me with the task of carrying on a legacy with an impact far greater than can be measured in this lifetime.

I am prayerful, humbled, and continuing to trust in the Lord as I follow His calling to serve as CSC's next Field Director.

KIDS' CORNER

New Kids:

ELYSHA had been surrendered by her birthmother, who was unable to care for her. We received a call from a social worker on another island saying they could not find a place for Elysha because all of their shelters were full. Our team drove to the southern tip of Cebu and took a ferry to that island to pick up this little one and bring her back to CSC. Although the trip was treacherous through winding mountain roads, the team had this sweet face smiling at them. Elysha has been doing well in the Duterte home, and we are honored to be a part of her story.

Almost two-year-old **VICTORIA** is the newest girl at the Duterte house. She came from a town in southern Cebu. Her mother has been very ill, so Victoria had been cared for by an elderly priest, a distant relative, and a local teenager from the neighborhood. It was decided that she needed consistent care, so she was brought to CSC. Victoria had pneumonia upon admission, so she stayed in our medical facility before she got the chance to meet her new buddies in the Duterte nursery.

MATTHEW came to us as a newborn. His mother is very young and is unable to care for him. Upon arrival, he moved in to the nursery in our Cherne home. Having such a little one is both a joy and a challenge, but our childcare employees have given him all the things a newborn needs: nourishment, security, and lots of snuggles. We love to see the changes in Matthew as he grows.

MARK ANTHONY, four years old, is adjusting to the daily routine in Eicher Home. He was abandoned by his mother, so his grandparents had been caring for him. They lived on the streets and had no income. A concerned citizen reported the situation, and Mark Anthony was placed in a nearby shelter. This shelter does not allow boys over the age of five, so when he turned four years old, they contacted us and asked if we would care for him. Mark Anthony has mild hearing loss and also has some speech delays, which make his adjustment a little more difficult. Despite this, Mark Anthony is doing quite well. He is a quiet and sweet boy who is bonding with caregivers and making new friends.

FORD AND ROB are two-year-old twin brothers who were admitted to CSC this spring. Their birthmother had contacted us



Victoria

Elysha



Matthew



Mark Anthony

to ask us to care for them because their living situation was unsafe. We have taken them into our care and are tending to all of their medical, nutritional and developmental needs. Ford and Rob have adjusted well at the shelter and are developing well.

JON JOSEPH is eight years old. He lived with his young mother in the fish market, where he was exposed to extreme poverty and crime. His mother couldn't care for Jon Joseph, so he came to live at CSC, joining his two younger twin brothers who had come to CSC three months earlier. Their mother is getting help from the government and is now living in a safe place. Jon Joseph had parasites when he first arrived, but we treated him, and he soon moved in to the Eicher Home. He is articulate and bright and is overjoyed to be reunited with his little brothers.

Recently Left:

THOMAS is the little boy highlighted on the cover of this newsletter. Thomas came to us as an infant, and it was obvious fairly quickly that he had major medical issues. He spent many weeks in hospital rooms, getting his blood drawn or being taken to various appointments. He eventually underwent major surgery on his brain and nasal passages. Thomas waited for a family to adopt him and his prayers were answered. He now lives in Arizona with his new adoptive family.

ELISE was recently adopted! He left CSC for his new life in Sweden just before his third birthday. Elise came to us as an infant and developed so much during his time with us. Elise is a joyful child and gives an easy smile to anyone who speaks to him. He is vocal and easily expresses his emotions and needs. We are thankful for this new journey in his life and pray for his attachment.

EPIFANIO (JUNJUN) recently turned 18 years old. At CSC, children do not have to leave CSC when they turn 18 and are too old to be adopted legally. We have a teen/young adult program, and we work to help our young adults learn to be independent and successfully emancipate. In JunJun's case, he has an older sister who was too young to care for him a few years ago, but now that she is older and JunJun is older and more mature, the option for him to move in with her opened up, and we are so excited for this opportunity for him. Please pray with us for JunJun's major life adjustment.

Ford & Rob



Jon Joseph

Elise



Epifanio (JunJun)



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THOMAS' NEW CHAPTER *continued from cover*

made us think carefully about how we talked to him and explained his situation. Our social workers faced many challenges in the legal aspects of his case management and needed lots of persistence and emotional endurance to get his birth documentation and other papers for him to be legally free for adoption. And our faithful and generous friends and supporters came through in a big way,

allowing us to pay for expensive medical costs and always give him the best care available in the Philippines.

We are thankful for Thomas and all those red letter dates that he provided for us. May he continue to grow, develop, trust, amaze and entertain people around him, starting with his new parents.

I will always remember Thomas' fascination with the David and Goliath story that the aunties read him after his surgeries. Maybe he loved that story because he realized that he and David were so much alike. Thomas faced many giants in his young life. He took them all

on and won every time. May the victories continue as he trusts God for every day of his life. ■

