

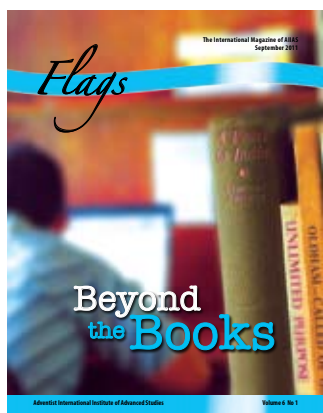
Flags

Beyond the Books

Flags

Contents

Editorial	3
Academic	
Accreditation	4
Reformation Tour	5
News	
25 Years of Excellence	6
Constituency and Board News	7
New Faces	7
Graduation 2011	8
Feature	
Moses' Journey	9
Cultural Group: Myanmar	10
Activities	
AIAS African Theological Association Forum	11
Special Feature	
Interview with the New Seminary Dean: Richard Sabuin	12
Alumni	
Christoph Berger	14
Linda Zhu	14
Davidson Razafiarivony	15
Spiritual Life	
Cavite Jail Ministry	15
Digging in Bethsaida	17
CHRIST ALIVE!	18
Lessons from India	21
Perspectives	23



About the Cover

On any given weekday, AIAS students are surrounded with books—textbooks, notebooks, and reference books. However, students are encouraged to go beyond the books to find their life purposes and develop their skills in serving their churches and communities.

Cover Design & Photo by **Mac Carlos**



Flags, September 2011 – Vol. 6 No. 2

Flags EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor

Teresa Costello

Content Editor

Shawna Vyhmeister

Copy Editor

Elsie dela Cruz

Layout and Design Editor

Mac Carlos

Committee Members

Paoring Ragui, James Park
Raimond Luntungan

AIAS EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President

Stephen Guptill, EdD

Vice President for Academic

Dolf Oberholster, PhD

Vice President for Finance

German Lust, CPA

Vice President for Student Services and Public Relations

Paoring Ragui, DPS

Dean of the Graduate School

Denise Dunzweiler, PhD

Dean of the Seminary

Richard Sabuin, PhD

Flags is the semi-annual international magazine for alumni and friends of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), a graduate-level educational institution of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

P.O. Box 038, Silang, Cavite 4118 Philippines

Phone +63 (46) 414-4300

Fax +63 (46) 414-4301

Email info@aiias.edu

Visit our website: www.aiias.edu

www.facebook.com/aiias

ISSN 1908-1693

It's common in certain parts of the world to do some self-reflection as a new year begins. Although the new calendar year has not yet begun, we here at AIIAS have spent 2011 reflecting on the 25th anniversary of becoming an "Educational Institution of International Character" as noted in the Philippine Presidential Decree 2021. In our previous issue, we focused on the past and how it has shaped us. We noted the high academic quality represented in our programs and in the accomplishments of our graduates. In this issue, we want to go beyond the books and share another unique aspect of AIIAS as emphasized in our mission statement:

*The mission of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies is to develop leaders through distinctively Seventh-day Adventist graduate education, excelling in **spirituality**, research, instruction, and **service** to the church and society.*

Spirituality and service – These are two words that are core to the AIIAS mission. In this issue, you'll be introduced to students whose faith has been tested through the challenges of working their way through graduate school.

You'll be intrigued by how the unfamiliarity and unplanned situations that seem to always accompany mission trips can re-ignite one's relationship with God. You'll read of how a study tour brought alive to us the faith of those who have gone before and caused participants to re-evaluate the strength of their own Christian commitment. You'll be encouraged by how the humble beginnings of one group's desire to serve the community has developed into a unique prison ministry.

We definitely have much to share about the strong academic programs at AIIAS, and the activities as well. Forums, graduation and other such events are a vital part of AIIAS. However, we hope that this issue's stories of faith and growth, of finding one's mission while at AIIAS, will give you a glimpse of the heart of AIIAS and inspire you towards your own time of self-reflection, spiritual growth and service.

From the Editor's Desk



12th AIIAS Graduate School Forum
on Business, Education, and Public Health

Sustainable Reform In the *Developing World*

Key Topics

- Intellectual Capital
- Information Literacy
- Quality of Life

Keynote Speakers:

Ella Simmons, PhD, Vice President, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland
Vicente Antonio Pijano III, MSc, Senior Consultant, Delft University of Technology, Delft, Netherlands
Robert Prouty, PhD, Head, Education for All – Fast Track Initiative, World Bank, Washington, DC

Endorsed by the Philippine Commission on Higher Education and by the Southern Asia-Pacific Division

December 1 - 3, 2011
AIIAS, Silang, Cavite, Philippines

www.aiias.edu | <http://graduateschoolforum.aiias.edu>



Southern Asia-Pacific Division



AIAS Graduate School *completes* PAASCU re-accreditation visit

On July 4 and 5, an accreditation team from the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) conducted a re-accreditation evaluation on campus. The faculty and administration of the Graduate School at AIAS are dedicated to continued improvement of our educational quality, and therefore are seeking level II re-accreditation.

Although most educational institutions in the Philippines are evaluated for a minimum requirement type of accreditation known as “recognized by the government,” AIAS strives to provide a standard of educational quality that goes beyond this. Private-voluntary accreditation such as that from PAASCU provides the AIAS Graduate School with an opportunity to attain top-level standards of excellence in all areas.

Several months ago, the graduate school faculty, students, and administration formed their PAASCU teams and began writing responses to the recommendations and self-surveys in preparation for the accreditation team’s visit. PAASCU recommendations originate from the interviews, observations and documents provided by AIAS with the goal of sharing a clear picture of its current status and goals for the future. In addition to the PAASCU recommendations, the self-survey provided valuable input from faculty, students, and administration regarding our educational resources and effectiveness.

Within four months, PAASCU will issue its accreditation report regarding AIAS’ Level II status. The institution’s goal is to maintain that status and then,

upon receiving the report, apply for level III status after waiting the required six months. Only programs that have been granted “clean” re-accreditation may apply for Level III status. A clean re-accreditation indicates that no progress report or interim visit is required within the five-year accreditation period. Level III status would provide AIAS with greater autonomy to start new programs and have them accredited.

The ultimate goal is Level IV status, the pinnacle of PAASCU accreditation. This designation is given only to the top Philippine institutions whose very high quality academic programs are comparable to similar programs in excellent foreign universities and carries with it a significant amount of prestige and authority.

PAASCU is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), and is also an active member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). Additionally, PAASCU has linkages with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which is a private, nonprofit national organization that coordinates accreditation activity in the United States.

Currently, in addition to the PAASCU accreditation, the AIAS Graduate School is also accredited by the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AAA) of Maryland USA.

— DR. DENISE DUNZWEILER
Dean of Graduate School



Reformation Tour of Europe

For the past three years, AIIAS Seminary has been hosting different educational tours. For the first, the Biblical Studies Department organized a trip to Rome and Greece with Dr. Papaioannou serving as the guide. Last year Dr. Mora coordinated a tour of the Holy Land and Egypt for interested people from AIIAS. This year, on behalf of the Theological/Historical Studies Department of AIIAS, Dr. Papaioannou and Dr. Whidden conducted a tour of important Reformation sites from May 15-30. A group of 20 students and 9 faculty and staff visited six European countries.

The main goal of this tour was to visit as many of 16th century Reformation sites as possible in addition to the Waldensian Valleys of Italy, the Herrnhut (house of lords) in Eastern Germany, and sites related to the Moravian brethren, the descendants of John Huss. Huss was a priest, philosopher, and reformer of 13th

century Czech Republic who was burned at the stake for heresy against the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

This tour concentrated mainly on sites significant to the lives of reformers such as Huss, John Calvin, Charles Zwingli, and Martin Luther. The group visited Konstanz in southern Germany near the Swiss border. Konstanz is the location of Huss' martyrdom. It was there that Huss was condemned by the Council of Constance (Konstanz) and finally burned at the stake in 1415. In the Czech Republic, the group visited the city of Prague, known as one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, the Bethlehem chapel and the city of Huss. In Switzerland, they visited Geneva, the city where much of Calvin's work was located. During their time in Zurich, they learned more about the work of Zwingli and the Anabaptists. There they also visited the place where Felix Manz, an Anabaptist who spoke out against infant baptism, was drowned in the River Limmat for his views by a city council that included pro-infant baptism reformers.

The main highlights of the tour were the visits to the German cities made famous by Luther: Wittenberg, where Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the Castle Church door, Eisleben, where Luther was born and ironically also the town where he breathed his last, and Wartburg Castle, near Eisenach, where Luther was hidden away and also where he spent fruitful

time translating the Bible into vernacular German. A day was spent visiting Berlin's famous Pergamum museum which is famed for its collection of eastern archeology. There the group was able to see the restored Ishtar gate which led to Babylon.

An interesting side trip to the German portion of this tour was the Gutenberg museum at Mainz. According to Dr. Whidden, Gutenberg was a Christian technologist who flourished in the 15th century and whose work greatly affected the work of the reformers. He was the inventor of the movable type for printing. His invention enabled printers to easily produce pamphlets, sheets and books in large numbers rather than relying upon the time and cost prohibitive tradition of manual copying. Culturally speaking, this was the single most important technological invention in the history of the Christian era to spread the gospel. Dr. Whidden compared this invention to the present day's evolution of computers and the Internet, where people are using these new means to spread the gospel.

What a privilege to hear stories of the remarkable faith and courage displayed by the reformers in the actual locations where their stories occurred! This tour inspired the participants to delve further into the richness of both Protestant history and their own relationship with Christ.

— VIJAY KOLABATHULA



Photo Credit:
STEPHEN GUPTILL

25 Years of Excellence



It was a time for remembering the past, looking to the future and, above all, acknowledging God's guidance. On January 31, 2011 the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies celebrated 25 years as an "Educational Institution of International Character" as recognized in Philippine Presidential Decree No. 2021.

Highlights of the five-day celebration included a Graduate School of Business forum, a vespers chronicling the origins of AIIAS and the people who contributed to its development, alumni reunions, a gala concert and an alumni banquet, culminating in the commemorative ceremony on Monday, January 31. Ceremony attendees included alumni, faculty and staff as well as local, national and international dignitaries.

General Conference Associate Treasurer Roy E. Ryan, one of the developmental pioneers of AIIAS, gave a brief history of the institution. As the



first dean of the AIIAS Graduate School and the assistant to the president of AIIAS during its formative years, Dr. Ryan shared fascinating glimpses into the miraculous ways God guided AIIAS' formation. In addition, he explained the challenges involved in obtaining the Philippine Presidential Decree 2021 which launched AIIAS as an official graduate level institution and was necessary for its day-to-day operation. After his presentation, he received a plaque of appreciation for his contributions to AIIAS during its pioneer days.

Dr. Stephen Guptill, the current President of AIIAS, gave an overview of AIIAS and expressed appreciation for the distinguished guests who attended the ceremony.

The Honorable Ms. Leila de Lima, Secretary of Justice for the Republic of the Philippines, noted that, "because of the achievements of AIIAS, the Philippines has become a destination for graduate studies. You can be assured of the continued support of the Philippine government and the Department of Justice." She concluded, "My sincere congratulations for not just being an institution of achievement but also of great values."

Representatives from both the office of the Governor of Cavite and the mayor of Silang expressed their congratulations and anticipation for continued partnerships with AIIAS, particularly in the area of service projects for the people of Silang.

Ambassador Manuel Pérez Iturbe, Chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Venezuela, noted the impressive work of the Adventist church and the necessity for the continued exchange of ideas between AIIAS and other non-Adventist universities.

Attorney Conrado Dar Santos from Quasha Ancheta Pena & Nolasco, one of the oldest law firms in the Philippines, briefly shared the history of their late founder William Quasha's involvement in AIIAS' appeal for the presidential decree. He commended the school for its "vision to be recognized globally and internationally for quality education and service."

With continued emphasis on service, Goran Hansen, ADRA Philippines country director, noted the involvement of AIIAS' students in ADRA projects. This was particularly evident during the floods of



2009 as well as in the months afterward. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve together with AIIAS in meeting the needs of the surrounding communities.

General Conference Treasurer Robert Lemon recalled his 15 years of serving on the board of AIIAS and watching the progress that has taken place. He commended its development over the years and the position it now has in impacting the world church. Other representatives from the world church headquarters included General Conference Associate Secretary and AIIAS board member Myron Iseminger and General Conference Associate Secretary Agustín Galicia.

Elder Alberto Gulfan Jr., President of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), acknowledged AIIAS' contribution to SSD when he remarked that "leaders in every union in this division have trained at AIIAS. Praise God for what AIIAS has done and how it has contributed to the work of the church." His observations were a fitting conclusion to the anniversary celebration and reveal the vision that has molded AIIAS into what it is today: service to individual students, the Adventist church and our communities.



Photo Credits:
BRYAN SUMENDAP & RAIMOND LUNTUNGAN

Constituency and Board News

On Tuesday, May 2, amendments to the AIIAS bylaws were approved by the Philippine Security and Exchange Commission (SEC). The Bylaws Committee and the Board had been working toward this goal for almost a year. Significant changes include the merging of the former 10-member Board and 35-member Management Committee into one new 15-member Board. The Constituency was also redefined to make it possible to meet every year in the Philippines.

Consistent with SEC requirements, AIIAS held its constituency meeting on May 3. In the future, this will be an annual meeting held on the first Tuesday of May every year. At this year's meeting, new Board members were appointed for five-year terms. The Board now consists of four General Conference leaders, five Northern Asia Pacific Division leaders, five Southern Asia Pacific Division leaders and the AIIAS president.

In addition, a Bylaws Committee was appointed as well as a financial auditor. A beautifully designed annual report was presented to the assembled constituents.

Following the usual pattern for the AIIAS Board, on May 5 the Board finance and academic committees met in the morning and the new Board met in the afternoon.

One significant development from these meetings was the reelection of all AIIAS officers for another five-year term ending May 2016. They include **Dr. Stephen R. Guptill** - President, **Dr. Frederick "Dolf" Oberholster** - Vice President for Academic Administration, **German Lust** - Vice President for Finance, and **Dr. Paoring Ragui** - Vice President for Student Services and Public Relations.

New Faces

Although our newest faculty family has joined us just this month from the United States where they have been working for the past 13 years, they are no strangers to AIIAS.

DR. SAFARY WA-MBALEKA and his wife **GIMYLIN** both completed master's degrees here at AIIAS (though not at the same time). In addition, Gimylin is from Central Philippines. So this is a return home in many ways. In spite of both having studied here at AIIAS, however, they actually met in Congo, when Gimylin was working there as a missionary.

Safary holds MA degrees in Educational Administration and TESOL, and a PhD in Curriculum & Instruction, and he is working on his dissertation for a second PhD in online learning. Gimylin has an MBA, and is working on a PhD in Business. In addition, they have many years of experience in their fields. Safary has an extensive background in online course development and the teaching of English, which will enhance AIIAS' developing TESOL program. Gimylin's expertise in business and finance will be a blessing to AIIAS' accounting department. Together they have served in various Adventist institutions around the world.

They have two children, 10-year-old J.B. and 8-year-old Lisa. As a family, they enjoy playing badminton. Biking and swimming are also family favorites, especially for the children. When asked about their expectations, they responded that "we are looking forward to a safe and healthy environment for our children and to see how God will use us mightily to contribute to the mission of AIIAS."



GLENSON GALUPO, a 2004 Bachelor of Science in Computer Science graduate from the Adventist University of the Philippines, is now serving as a full time systems and applications developer for the Information Technology department at AIIAS. Before coming to AIIAS he served as a computer instructor at the Central Luzon Adventist Academy for a year, at the Central Philippines Adventist College for two years, and at the Adventist University of the Philippines in the same capacity for one year. Glenson is originally from Floridablanca, Pampanga. He loves programming and spends most of his time thrashing the keyboard. But when he needs a change, he plays basketball, chess, or badminton. When asked why he considered serving here in AIIAS, he just flashed a smile and said "I like programming..." Welcome to AIIAS, Glenson!



— ROY MAYR

Photo Credit: ARNEL PASTRANA

New Faces



DR. DONALD and MARJORIE BANKHEAD come to us with a rich background in mission and education. Although retired, they were enthusiastic about taking on a busy teaching schedule for their one-year stint here.

He is teaching Education classes in the Graduate School and she is assisting with reading specialization at the AIIAS Junior Academy.

Mrs. Bankhead was born in India to missionary parents, leaving that area only for some of her high school and college years. As a result, she is fluent in Khasi as well as English. In 1941, her grandfather built and pioneered the ASSAM Training school, now known as North East India College. Dr. Bankhead was also mission minded and began preaching when he was in academy. As a result of their mission years, he speaks Hindi and some Khasi along with English.

The majority of their married life has been spent in India with less than ten years in the United States and a short time in Sri Lanka. Much of their time in India was spent at North East India College so their children grew up on the campus just like Mrs. Bankhead did. Since retirement, the

Bankheads have returned to India three times for short-term service appointments.

Dr. Bankhead has served as the president of the Sri Lanka Mission as well as a vice president and lecturer at Spicer College. He enjoys building things and being of service to others. Mrs. Bankhead is a registered nurse with a wonderful gift of hospitality. Her sweet nature is quickly obvious and makes her very effective in friendship evangelism. They have four children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren scattered across the globe.

During their time at Spicer College, the Bankheads greatly enjoyed interacting with the masteral and doctoral students because they had a chance to get to know them and work with the future leaders of the Adventist church. This is their motivation to serve here at AIIAS as well. We hope you take the time to get to know this fascinating and pleasant couple.

Graduation 2011

On March 13, 2011 AIIAS conducted its 95th graduation ceremony. The 139 graduates represented 25 countries and a variety of degree emphases in the fields of business, education, public health and theology on the master's and doctoral levels.

This graduation is notable in several respects. It featured the first graduates from the two newest additions to the AIIAS academic offerings: the PhD in Business and the MAEd with an emphasis in TESOL. The PhD in Business is the first such program within the Adventist church, and enables degree holders to teach, or to further their professional goals and expand their options in the area of business. Doctor of Philosophy in Business degrees were conferred upon Khin Maung Kyi (Myanmar) and Annalyn V. Okan (Philippines). The new Master's in Education emphasis in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) degree enables recipients to assist their students in the acquisition and mastery of the English language, which can be a vital workplace skill. Alexander G. Dugan (Philippines) and Jin A Kim (Korea) were the first recipients of this new degree.



The speakers for the weekend celebration were global in both their backgrounds and presentations. For the Friday evening Commencement program, Dr. Mathilde Frey, Old Testament Exegesis and Biblical Languages instructor at the AIIAS Seminary, gave the audience a stirring glimpse into Moses' life lessons and the education he received from God through his journey from and return to Egypt. She concluded with the story of the religious persecution she experienced during her childhood years in Rumania. On Sabbath, Pastor Guillermo Biaggi, President of the Euro-Asia Division, inspired the baccalaureate congregation to respond to God's call with trust and action as the faithful believers in Russia and other parts of his Division have done. During Sunday's Commencement ceremony, Greg Melchor C. de Lara, Executive Vice President of Philippine Christian University, shared wisdom gained from the

richness of his Filipino heritage as well as from his professional experience.

Other highlights of the weekend included the Sabbath afternoon Tribute and Thanksgiving, during which the graduates publicly thanked God, family, AIIAS representatives, friends, and sponsors for their encouragement and support. Afterward, during the Saturday evening President's Reception, graduates and their guests enjoyed fellowshiping with the AIIAS president, officers, faculty, and their spouses.



Moses' Journey

Moses Kayongo had a degree in Business. He knew the value of planning. And so he planned. Together with his wife Rhoda, they had planned and saved money for their studies. They were prepared. But three months into their stay in AIIAS, their one-year old daughter suddenly became so ill that she required hospitalization. Before they knew it, their budget was shattered to pieces and their plans didn't apply anymore. Such are the challenges of self-sponsored students.

But faith is a strange thing. Abraham was inspired to make a difficult decision that led to the uncertainty of a journey with no known destination in mind. Likewise, the Kayongos had to make a hard decision: Should Moses pack his bags and go back to his native Uganda, or push forward towards his dream of getting a Master's degree in Public Health from AIIAS?

Abraham stepped forward in faith toward a future he couldn't see. Faith gave Moses the courage to step forward, board a plane, and land in some place called Texas (USA). In his pocket he had an address scribbled on a piece of paper and a grand total of twenty dollars. In his heart he had a plan to work as a literature evangelist and

thus earn money for his and his wife's AIIAS tuition and his family's living expenses.

In a storybook tale, his plan would have worked and he would have returned to the Philippines with an overflowing bank account, but then, that would be fiction, not a story of people who had their faith tested. Wouldn't your faith be tested if you were a stranger among strangers, knocking on doors for days and weeks without any significant book sales? Then what if Hurricane Indo destroyed your entire supply of your books? And to add to all this, wouldn't you feel weak at the knees when the U.S. financial crisis was announced in September 2008? Surely, Americans who were panic-stricken enough to count their pennies for food had no money or interest to spend on books.

After two months of minimal sales in the aftermath of the American financial meltdown, many of Moses' fellow colporteurs saw no future in their endeavors and abandoned their ministry. But Moses adjusted his strategy and pressed on. Instead of staying in Texas, he traveled from state to state, visiting Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia. Instead of going from house to house, he went from church to church and asked permission to present his books to the congregations. And instead of relying on his selling skills, he learned to pray.

"It is not what you pray for, it is how you pray," he says with conviction born from those long days with little to show. "What do you mean by how?" I probe deeper. His gaze skims the top of the coconut trees that adorn the AIIAS campus, as he seeks the right words to express his feelings of total reliance to God. "I did not pray for sales. I prayed for good relationships. And I prayed for and with the people I met. Each and every one of them. 'Huh?' they would say, 'Who are you? Even my minister doesn't pray for me!' I prayed every step of the way and, believe me, I walked a lot of steps!" His answer is a reminder that we are here to serve, to minister, and to be used by God; we are not here to just get an AIIAS degree as a self-centered act, or a means to an end.



After four months in the United States, Moses returned to AIIAS. He had made enough money for his family's modest living expenses and a small deposit towards his tuition account. Moreover, he had made several good friends and had seen the grace of our Heavenly Father in many ways, especially in the way he was accepted in Adventist churches solely because he was a member of the Seventh day Adventist Church. "Nothing is as great as that. Whenever you go, the church is one. Even other churches accepted me because I was an Adventist," he says as his eyes sparkle with the memories.

After his return, he settled into student life. However, scarcely had a term gone by when he found out that a church in Washington State was looking for volunteer Bible workers. At that time, his wife, Rhoda, was expecting their second child and with pressing family's needs, Moses once again flew to the United States. "When you give up, you lose everything completely. So keep pressing on and on," he advises, gesturing in a way that says "I know what I am talking about. I almost lost everything; this is not just a nice saying. It is real, very real."

At the end of his volunteer term in Washington State, Moses traveled for two and a half days on a Greyhound bus going south to Texas again. This time God opened doors for him through the people he had met on his previous trip to America. For the three months of his second Texas stay, God provided a night job for him, babysitting the infant son of good friends who were working night shifts. During the day, he became a prayer partner to an elderly lady who used to be a nurse and

...continuation in page 10

September 2011 | *Flags* 9

Photo Credit: BRYAN SUMENDAP & JOY WHIPPS



knew a lot of shut-ins. Together they would visit the people in need of prayer and encouragement. On Sundays, he would teach the Sunday school in two Korean churches. Through these activities he was blessed with enough book sales to cover part of his and Rhoda's tuition.

Back at AIIAS, life was not easy for Moses and Rhoda as they continued their studies while caring for a young family. "God knows how many difficulties we can go through. He takes away our fear and gives us a strong heart for service," Moses observes. Moses and Rhoda found that fearless service in their AIIAS teachers and administrators. To them, their professors were more than teachers and top-notch academicians. "The teachers are down to earth people. So are the administrators. They pray with you. You don't find that in the public schools," he says. "From our professors I have learned the value of sharing; I have learned to pay it forward; I have learned to be humble." And he concludes with a challenge, "What is important for you? What is your direction? How big is your faith? Whom do you believe in?"

A few months ago, Moses again found himself on a plane but this time it was headed for his native Uganda. He showed Rhoda's parents her Master's degree in Education. He showed his aged parents his Master's degree in Public Health. His father, who had only received a certificate of theology back in the 1960s, was ecstatic. He passed away the next day, after 45 years of faithful ministry, knowing that his son had a graduate degree from the church's foremost institution of advanced studies in Asia.

And where are they now, these faithful travelers? Rhoda is currently pursuing her Education Specialist degree at AIIAS and Moses is pressing on and on at the Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP) towards his PhD in Public Health. Upon completing their education, they, as did Abraham of old, plan to follow God wherever He takes them through this journey of faith.

— ESTHER PAPAIOANNOU

Cultural Community Feature: Myanmar

In addition to high quality academic education, AIIAS offers students a unique opportunity for diverse cultural education. With students representing more than 30 countries, life at AIIAS gives students and their families a glimpse into a myriad of customs and cultures beyond their own. One of those fascinating cultures worth exploring comes to us from the country of Myanmar.

Presently, three families represent Myanmar on the AIIAS campus: the Tanbaunaws, Moos, and Puias. Pastor Paul Tanbaunaw is completing doctoral studies in the field of Theology. He is a returning student who finished two master's degrees, one in Education (Curriculum/Instruction) in 2000 and another in Theology in 2002, at AIIAS. He has served as an assistant professor in the Theology department and as the Vice President for Academic Administration at Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary (College). He and his wife live on campus with their four school-aged children.

Another MBA student from Myanmar is Saw Lay Moo, who is finishing his last course requirements for the Master's in

Business with an emphasis in financial management. He has served as the mission treasurer at one of the five local mission headquarters in the Myanmar Union Mission before coming to AIIAS. Saw Lay Moo has two children.

Lal Ro Puia is a Master of Divinity student. He is a layman who ran a boarding school in Myanmar which prepared high school students for the National High School Board Examination. He has two children.

In addition, there are three single students—Kam Cing, Do Lian Thang, and Seng Bu. Kam Cing hopes to complete her Master's in Public Health degree with an emphasis in nutrition and health promotion this semester. She is currently writing her project and looking forward to her graduation day. Seng Bu is completing her Master's in Education with an emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction. Like Cing, Seng Bu is hoping to finish her work this semester. Do Lian is a doctoral student in Business with an emphasis in Financial Management.

Since Myanmar is a country with diverse ethnic cultures, these students



represent some of the different cultural backgrounds which exist within the same country. The people of Myanmar are known for their simplicity, honesty, generosity, hospitality, and friendliness. The majority of the population of Myanmar is Theravada Buddhist. Other religions include Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, and Animism.

In Myanmar, we have two phrases or expressions that can be used as greetings. The famous phrase “min-ga-la-bar” is quite formal and not used in casual conversation. It traditionally means “good wishes to you” and used in place of “Good morning,” “Good afternoon,” “Good evening,” or “Good day.” The closest literal meaning of “min-ga-la-bar” is “blessed are you!” However, it is more common to use an informal greeting. So next time you meet a Burmese friend on the streets of Yangon, ask, “Where are you going?” or “Have you eaten?” instead.

You might not realize that Burmese do not give greetings to a stranger. Greetings are only for friends and relatives. So please understand if we do not greet you right away. After we get to know you, we are less shy.

It is very important in Burmese culture to honor the experience and knowledge that comes with age; therefore the children are taught to respect the elders. When the children or ladies pass in front of or between a group of their elders, they excuse themselves with the utterance of “I pay homage to you” while lowering their head and upper body. Even though this custom of respect is quickly disappearing in the big cities where life is greatly influenced by western culture, a respectful attitude is always appreciated in our community.

On behalf of the Myanmar community here at AIIAS, we hope that this short glimpse in Burmese culture will encourage you to learn more about us and our way of life. As students, our time here at AIIAS may not be very long but what a nice sample of Heaven it gives as Christian brothers and sisters share and celebrate the uniqueness of their home countries, customs and culture with each other.

— KAM CING

AIIAS African Theological Association (AATA) Forum

The AATA, a subdivision of the African Student Association (ASA) of AIIAS, held its 7th Annual Forum on April 9 and 10, 2011 at the AIIAS Amphitheater. Its theme for this year was *Faith in Crisis: Spirituality, Church Growth and Discipleship in the SDA Church in Africa*.

The Forum focused on the challenges of keeping newly baptized members in the church and helping other members develop into spiritual maturity. Though the Adventist Church membership in Africa is growing in quantity, the Forum concentrated on some factors that affect the quality of members in terms of membership retention and spiritual maturity. To further explore these factors, topics such as spirituality, postmodernism, dress, discipleship, and offshoots were presented at the Forum.

The Forum was well attended with a total of 77 attendees and participants from the AIIAS African community, the AIIAS students and faculty, and representatives from the Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP) as well as a number of non-Adventist friends from outside of AIIAS.

One of the highlights of the Forum was the dedication and launching of the first edition of the AATA journal on the second day of the Forum. This inaugural edition is a compilation of biblical and theological articles from four African AIIAS alumni and two current AIIAS doctoral students. For subscription information, write to aata4all@gmail.com.

One recurring point of the Forum was the emphasis on the need for AIIAS African students to submit articles and papers for publication. In this way, they use the education that they have been privileged to receive at AIIAS to help address pertinent and pressing theological issues that are challenging and dividing the church back on the home continent. All

attendees were encouraged to be involved in research, writing and presenting papers, especially within the nurturing academic atmosphere that AIIAS provides.

Attendees were greatly impacted by their Forum experience as evidenced by the comments during and after the forum. Dr. James Park, a seminar presenter and Seminary associate professor, focused on the significance of the Forum when he commented that “usually forums are led by professors in the Graduate School or Seminary but this was an entirely student-led forum. It was very well organized and presented. We greatly appreciate the students presenting a journal which is the real capstone of any forum presentation. A forum is a lot of work and a journal is a lot of work but I really hope they continue to do this. They’re not meeting just for themselves. They are trying to produce something for the world-wide church.”

Kambere Thadee Kakembo, an AIIAS graduate student, noted that he “was impressed by the different presentations about faith, issues and whether or not we still have (spiritual) power in the church.” He said that one aspect of the Forum that was most memorable for him was “the aspect of cultural barriers. We need to accommodate each other because the church of God is a church for different cultural perspectives. In this way one can feel at home even if he worships God in a different country.”

As these comments testify, the participants were blessed to be part of such a significant event and highly anticipate next year’s Forum.

— MICHAEL OLUIKPE

Note: The 2011 Forum presentations and devotionals may be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-ADMfMF_Fc&feature=related.

Interview with the New Seminary Dean

Dr. Richard Sabuin was named the Dean of the Theological Seminary at AIIAS in May. Recently, he took a few moments from his busy schedule to share his AIIAS story.

When did you first come to AIIAS?

We came here in October 2001 for my doctoral studies at the Seminary.

So you are a product of AIIAS and now, as the Seminary Dean, you've come full-circle. What is your background?

My father is a teacher and an ordained pastor, now retired but still serving. I was born on the campus of a boarding Adventist academy on Timor Island and lived there until I went to college. So an academic setting is very natural to me. After college, I went to Borneo in the Kalimantan Mission and served as a church pastor for almost 7 years. Next, I served as an associate editor at the Indonesian Publishing House for almost 3 years.

You have such a diverse background. How did this lead you to AIIAS?

Over the years I had filled out several spiritual gifts surveys and each one indicated that I had the gift of teaching. Even though I greatly enjoyed my work as a pastor and in publishing, the desire to teach was increasing. I began taking Distance Learning Center (DLC) classes from AIIAS in 1996 when I was pastoring and continued when I transitioned to publishing. During the last DLC course I took, I met with the late Dr. Kenneth Mulzac, an AIIAS professor. He needed a translator, but none of the usual translators were available. So, they chose me, one of the students, to translate for him. After spending some time together, he asked me, "Richard, what do you want for your future?" and I told him, "I want to study." Immediately, he said, "You come to AIIAS and I will pay your fee for the first semester and then for the next semester, we'll see." I went home and shared this with my wife

Paula and my son. We decided to go and sold everything we owned. We arrived with about \$2,000 US and that was all we had to our name. That was the beginning of everything.

This definitely sounds providential. I'm sure you have many stories of God's providence in your family's life while you were a student here.

It's true! God always took care of us. He gave me my wife and I would not have made it without her. I owe her very much. God gave her the strength to do everything she could do to help me continue my studies. She took care of other students' children and also sold batik fabrics. Both of our children helped as well, especially when we made *tempeh* to sell each week. As a family, we made lunch boxes to sell every day at the AIIAS store. I also made *empanadas* to sell there. I taught badminton classes to students and a Math class at AJA. So, we all, as a family, did



what we could to help earn enough for my fees and our living expenses.

Others helped us as well. I received assistance from the Johnson Scholarship fund, the one offered from SSD, for almost three years. The Korean community also assisted me for about two or three years. Those specific funds were given to me, I believe, because people could see that we worked very hard and tried in every way we could to raise money for my fees. I believe that God gives to those who are willing to really work. With God's help and the support of family and friends, I graduated on October 15, 2006 – exactly five years to the date of my arrival on the AIIAS campus.

After graduation, many graduates look for jobs but I've heard that you had a different situation.

At least once a year since 2004, I was asked to teach a class at AIIAS. In 2006 they gave me more classes. Before I defended my thesis, I was given a one-year teaching contract with AIIAS in June 2006. On the day after I defended my dissertation, we moved to faculty housing. I can remember standing in apartment F1 just before we left. My wife and I hugged each other and cried a lot and thanked God for how He had led us.

How did your faculty colleagues mentor and support you?

They mentored me even before I became a staff member. When I was awarded a scholarship, I was assigned to assist Dr. Clinton Wahlen. He taught me many things about teaching. Plus, when he had to be away from the campus for a week or so, he would ask me to teach his class so that was good preparation. This type of opportunity is just one of the many benefits an AIIAS education can offer students.

Speaking of the benefits of an AIIAS education, when students leave your

class, what do you hope they take with them?

Every time I teach, I would like to teach them that they know more than I do, they can do more than I do. I try to stimulate their minds so they can think new thoughts and ideas.

What advice would you give students to have an optimal experience at AIIAS for themselves and their families?

I think students should seek both an academic and spiritual experience here, especially those who come here as non-sponsored students. I don't want to encourage people to come here only based on presumption, thinking it will all work out. They should do as much preparation as they can beforehand to save and extend their finances and then when they are here, they should be wise with what God has given them and have a willingness to work. I thank God for the experiences I've had as a working student because I can share with students in similar situations that they are not alone and that someone has gone before them through this process.

Also, I believe that people coming here should have a plan and a clear direction for their family. They have to consider the impact on their children and spouses. Is there something for the spouse to do? How will their children adjust? It is not good for a family to come here and only have the husband grow through his studies. The wife should also have opportunities to grow in her experiences and knowledge. It is not good to sacrifice a family only for a future job. A person can graduate with a degree but not have a complete family.

Do you have any particular goals or visions for the Seminary that you hope to implement in the future?

I depend on God and the advice of my colleagues as we are now developing those ideas. Personally though, I would like for the Seminary to have more learning centers



outside of the Philippines so as to be a blessing for pastors throughout SSD and NSD. There is also a need for an informal type of training, perhaps in the form of seminars, for some areas we service. I also want to encourage all faculty members to participate in service projects outside of AIIAS or even outside of the country at worker's retreats, seminars or other events. In terms of academics, my focus is on accreditation of all our programs.

A teacher who is continually learning, a perpetual student of life, someone with a story to encourage and inspire his students – These are all qualities that make for a model dean and from his AIIAS story, we now know that these are all qualities that define Dr. Sabuin, our new Seminary Dean. Dr. Sabuin, we wish you God's blessings as you embark on this new chapter in your story.

Friday, March 3, 2001 was a special morning for the graduating class of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) and for me. I had an important appointment to practice for the graduation ceremony which was planned for the coming weekend. I was at the church a bit earlier than the announced time for practice and since no one else was there yet, I decided to wait outside and look over my sermon outline. I had the privilege of being the class pastor and was still busy with my sermon preparation.

In front of the main entrance to the church, the terrain rose into quite a steep slope. Around 20 steps led up to the main road in front of the church where some cars were parked at the edge of the street. I found a nice place to sit and read my manuscript quietly on about step number three. I sat facing the church building, with my back to the street and the parked cars. My eyes were fixed on the manuscript, and my thoughts were far away.

Suddenly I saw something in my peripheral vision to my left. Some meters away, a car was barreling down from the street onto the grass in my direction.

Everything happened so quickly that it must have been only a matter of seconds. In a flash, the car was upon me and it rolled over both of my legs. I should mention that there was no driver in the car. A parked car had somehow rolled from its spot to where I was, gaining momentum on the way.

Moments later I was on my way to De La Salle University for medical treatment. Based on the great pain I felt, I was sure that both of my legs were broken, but I felt peace and thankfulness. I realized that if the car had come down a little closer to where I had been seated, it would have driven over my stomach or my spine. In that case, I might have died at the scene, or, at the very least, sustained irreparable damage.

At De La Salle, a doctor examined me thoroughly. Everything seemed to take a very long time. After a while, he checked the X-rays of my legs carefully and asked my wife: "Are you married to a superman? Because he has no fractures at all." He couldn't believe it. My wife answered, "I am not married to a superman, but he has a super Protector!" To everyone's



Christoph Berger

amazement, during the divine worship service the next day, I was able to talk about this great Protector and the miracle that will always be one of my greatest memories from my time at AIAS.

Berger currently serves as Vice President and Religious Studies lecturer at the Asia-Pacific International University in Thailand. Previously, he worked in youth ministries in Southern Germany. He is married to Stefania and they have two teenage daughters, Sharon and Charlotte.



Linda Zhu

My Alma Mater will always occupy a special place in my heart. I think I might have earned the title of the student who attended AIAS the longest because I stayed five and a half years to complete my two degrees.

My fond memories of AIAS are in three areas:

I experienced a rich, multicultural Christian atmosphere at AIAS. Before I came to AIAS, I seldom associated with Christians from other countries, especially Seventh-day Adventists. It was an exciting and educational experience for me as I learned about other cultures and met Adventists from all around the world. Since China does not have a large number of people from other cultures, the multicultural setting aspect of AIAS was very special to me.

I experienced Christian education at AIAS. As an Adventist living in China, it was a long-term dream of mine to study at a Christian institution. Interacting with Adventist students, professors and faculty on a daily basis taught me a lot about Christian lifestyle and how to live the Bible truth in our lives.

I experienced a beautiful tropical climate. The AIAS campus is one of the most beautiful campuses I have ever seen. It was really a blessing to live on this

beautiful campus for a few years. One feels very close to the Creator when surrounded by such beautiful scenery.

I am happy to see that more and more Chinese students are studying at AIAS. I wish AIAS God's richest blessings as it continues to prepare future leaders for the church.

With a Bachelor's degree in Theology, a Master's in Business Administration and an Advanced Certificate in Public Health all courtesy of AIAS, Zhu is uniquely qualified for her current position as the Country Director for ADRA China. Her responsibilities include strategic management for all areas of ADRA China operations with an emphasis on economic development, health, environment, and emergency management. She previously served as a Project Director for ADRA China for six years prior to her current position. As an international speaker, she has given presentations in countries as diverse as Canada, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), New Zealand, and Thailand.



David Razafiarivony

AIIAS has become my second home. As a result of the seven years I spent completing my Master's and Doctoral degrees at AIIAS, my life and the lives of my family have been forever changed. My children, Priscila and Evelyn, spent most of their childhood there, growing up with other children from different nations and cultures. I saw with my own eyes the progress of AIIAS. And I am proud of it. Many of my colleagues at the Adventist University Zurcher were trained at AIIAS, so there is no wonder that much of what we do here is done in the "AIIAS way."

I enjoyed participating in evangelistic crusades and missionary activities with fellow students and professors at AIIAS. I can testify that AIIAS is mission-oriented. I also have fond memories of cultural nights, international food fairs, and student

outings. I thank God that He led me there to pursue my studies. AIIAS has truly prepared me for my various and heavy responsibilities and I will always be grateful for that. May God richly bless my Alma Mater, AIIAS!

Razafiarivony currently serves as the President of the Adventist University Zurcher in Madagascar. Prior to this position, he served as the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Theology, and a theology professor at the same institution. In addition, he has served as the Editor in Chief of the Adventist Publishing House in Madagascar as well as a conference pastor. He has published numerous academic articles and given presentations on a variety of topics world-wide.

Cavite Jail Ministry

"In Jesus Christ we are one family."

On any rainy or sunny Sabbath, this beautiful song of belonging fills the halls as well as the hearts of those in the Provincial Jail located in Trece Martires, the capital city of the Cavite Province in the Philippines. The Cavite Jail Ministry Team (CJMT) members from AIIAS visit the prisoners and serve them every Sabbath, giving them hope in Jesus beyond the walls of the prison.

This ministry began in 1992 with some Korean students at AIIAS and gradually others have joined. Now it has grown into an international outreach ministry team. In this jail there are about 600 prisoners, many of whom are awaiting their court verdicts. There are many dorms or cells but only six are assigned for worship. During a typical visit, the CJMT members divide themselves into six groups, with each group going to a cell and conducting worship with the prisoners there. Due to the time limitation, CJMT cannot do as much as they would like, but prayers and a sermon are the essential elements of their activities. The worship begins with an active song service,



followed by prayer. Next, a five-minute inspirational thought precedes the sermon. After the sermon, there is a closing song with a prayer, and then comes the most interesting part of service. Each prisoner is given a memory verse each Sabbath to

memorize during the week and after the divine worship service, they are given turns to recite that memory verse. If they recite

...continuation in page 16



the memory verse correctly, they receive a small gift. This is one way of helping the prisoners to not only meet some of their incidental needs but, more importantly, to memorize God's word so it can be a comfort during their struggles. CJMT uses this program to intentionally encourage the prisoners to value and treasure God's word which has the power to transform them.

Over multiple visits, the prisoners and CJMT members get better acquainted and the first inroads are made for future spiritual programming. As a result, every year CJMT normally conducts two evangelistic meetings, usually one in June and one in December.

This past June 22-24, CJMT held an evangelistic meeting led by Dr Reuel Almocera (AIAS Seminary Associate Dean), Pr Laudimer Gatus (AIAS Senior Church Pastor), and Pr Eliezer Barrientos (AIAS DMin student) who are all from the Philippines. The theme of the four-day evangelistic meeting was "The King Is Coming: Are You Ready?" The meeting culminated on Sabbath, June 25, with a combined worship and baptismal ceremony at Cavite Provincial Jail. Sixty-two precious souls began a new life in Christ through baptism.

During the ceremony, Dr Youngsoo Chung, AIAS Seminary Professor and CJMT Advisor, gave a short message encouraging the 62 candidates to hold onto Jesus as the only surety in life. After the baptismal vows, the candidates braved the heavy rain and went straight to the baptistry. Once there, eight ordained pastors baptized them into God's family and into the membership of the worldwide family of the Seventh-day Adventist

Church – God's Last Day Remnant. Praise God for the mighty working of the Holy Spirit. It was indeed a joyous occasion for both the prisoners and CJMT members.

CJMT members try to practice the teaching of Jesus which was given to us: "Jesus here identifies Himself with His suffering people. It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was naked. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison. When you were enjoying the food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing in the hovel or street not far from you" (WM, 40).

To participate in this outreach program every Sabbath is to willingly sacrifice individual time with one's own family so that others can be introduced to the family of God. Through the service and sacrifice of its volunteers, CJMT will continue its mission of reaching out to those often forgotten. As a result, many people who are sitting down in the darkness will find the light of our Savior Jesus, and turn their life from despair to hope, from being disheartened to having courage, and from death to eternal life!

— DR. YOUNG SOO CHUNG
Master of Divinity Program Director



Digging in Bethsaida

Bethsaida is the third most-often mentioned city in the New Testament after Jerusalem and Capernaum. Its history, however, extends beyond the days of Jesus. This town was once the intriguing biblical city of Geshur before Jesus' time.

Its beginning is generally thought to be in the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC). The Bible reflects its military strength during Joshua's time (Josh 13:13). Later, the Scriptures mention two kings of Geshur known as Amihud and Talmi (2 Sam 13:37). David married Maacah, one of the daughters of Talmi (2 Sam 3:3), and Maacah became the mother of Absalom. During the 8th century, this city was controlled by Aramean kings until it was destroyed by Salmanaser V (727-722 AD).

Omaha University, based in Nebraska in the United States, has been working on this archaeological site since 1987. They have excavated the collapsed walls of the city, the main gate and the courtyard, and six different layers from the Late Bronze Age until the Roman period. Perhaps the most exciting find has been the stone street from the days of Jesus.

I had the opportunity to join the Bethsaida Excavation Project as a volunteer last June. I had taken a course in Archaeology during my doctoral program. After that, I taught Biblical Archaeology for seven years in our seminary at the Chilean Adventist University. I began to

love ancient history and archaeology and their relationship with the Old Testament. I read extensively about archaeology but had never had any practical experience—it was all theory.

Finally, AIIAS gave me the opportunity to participate in a real excavation. For ten days I worked alongside archaeologists, scholars and volunteers in this most interesting place.

I experienced the things I had expected: many stones, hot sunny days, dust, and dirt. What I did not anticipate was the overwhelming emotion when you realize that you are standing on an intact place that existed many centuries ago. The inhabitants from those long-ago days walked, lived and worshipped there.

Digging in an excavation project involves more than these grand thoughts, however. It is also a very real adventure. Not the exaggerated Indiana Jones type of adventure; although at some sites it is possible to feel a little bit like that. No, the exciting activity is when you take your pick and your brush, start to dig in the ground and unexpectedly touch a rock, a shard, or a bone. Then you dig slowly and carefully, hoping to find something important. Small finds like coins, seals, or little tools are causes for celebration.

The volunteers wash their small finds, especially the shards, ears and rims of pottery. In the afternoons, the archaeologists "read" the findings. I was

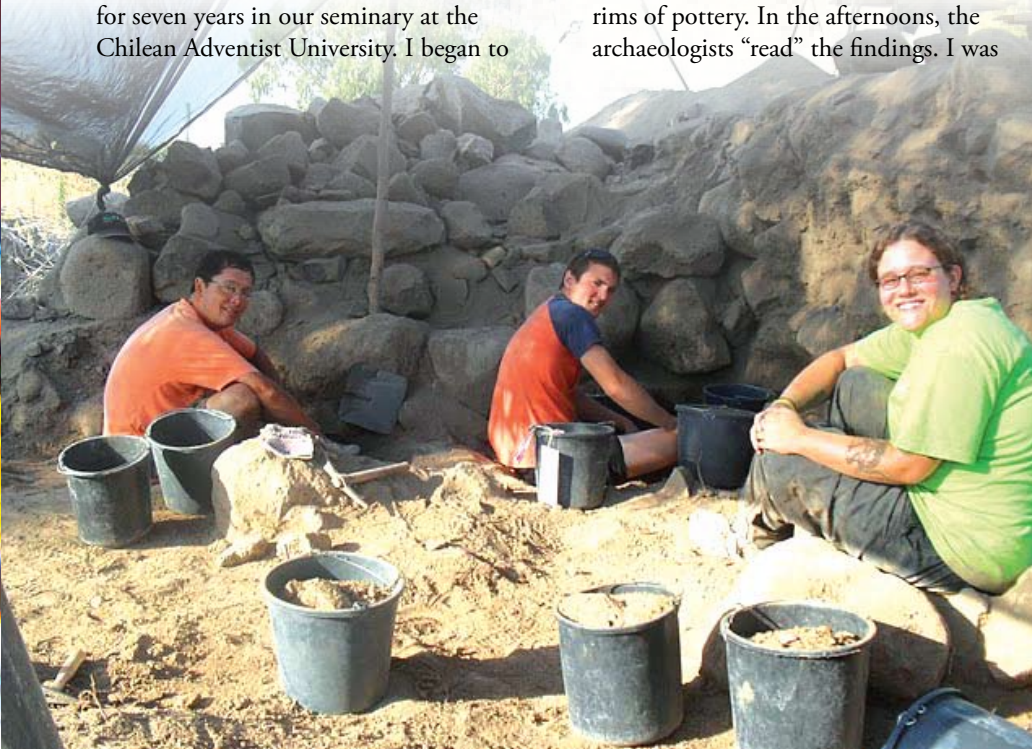


amazed by the ability of Dr. Rami Arav, the Bethsaida Excavation Director, to describe and explain the kind of pottery (jar, jug, casserole, plate, etc.) that had been found, its dating and its history, with only a broken piece of a rim as a starting point.

The best shards and the precious small finds (coins, rings, metallic bottles and so on) are photographed and stored. To close out the day, interesting lectures about issues related with Bethsaida and its findings are presented each evening.

All these elements are most interesting when you consider them in the context of the historical setting. For the greatest impact, they must be framed by the history, and especially in relation to the environment of biblical times.

We must recognize that very few of the ancient sites have been surveyed or even found, and probably less than two percent of the known sites have been meaningfully excavated. A small percent of the information found about the archaeological sites has a connection to the Bible. It is very difficult to find direct evidence. Rather than being discouraged by this, we must remember that archaeological sites contain the remains of a place and evidence of its development through the centuries. They can also provide clues to the culture of that city. Such information



...continuation in page 18

...Digging in Bethsaida from page 17

gives us a glimpse into the social mores and cultural mindsets that undergird many of the biblical accounts.

In spite of the previously mentioned limitations, the Bethsaida excavation does shed light upon the Bible. First, I can mention the so-called Fisherman's House, a ruin with the remnants of a kitchen, courtyard, and rooms of a house from the first century AD. It would be risky to say that this building was the home of Peter and Andrew; however, it is a good example of buildings from that time and gives us a better understanding of how the people lived. Close to this house, there is the Winegrower House. It is a dwelling that was built in the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods (about the first century BC) in the courtyard style.

The most interesting place to me is the stone street dating to the time of Jesus that lies near these two residences. You can visit many places in Israel, where the traditions suggest that many biblical events happened. You will find beautiful chapels and flowered gardens there, but no evidence of how they were during Bible times. Yet on this street, you can see the sun above your head and feel the wind in your face. You can walk the street where Jesus and His disciples walked. You can imagine the moment when Jesus "took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village" (Mark 8:23) in order to heal him.

Bethsaida is a place where Jesus performed many miracles, but the people did not believe (Matt 11:21). Archaeology has helped us to know this place and its history so we can better understand the Bible stories. In this place, we now have the physical evidence, just as the people of Bethsaida had. Like them, the next step is to believe! May God help us to take what the physical evidence can teach us and add it to the faith already instilled in us, so we might draw closer to the One who once walked the streets of Bethsaida.

—DR. CARLOS MORA
Biblical Studies Program Director

CHRIST ALIVE!



On Sabbath April 23, 2011, AIIAS presented its first walk-through Easter pageant. Like similar programs at sister schools in the United States (Southern Adventist University and Andrews University), the AIIAS presentation was designed to share the gospel story with the surrounding community as well as nearby churches. After nearly two years of planning and collaboration from the

AIIAS Spiritual Life Committee, AIIAS Church and AIIAS Women's Ministries, the program was a blessed success.

As the only person on campus to have participated in Southern's highly successful SonRise pageant, Master's in Religious Education candidate Emily Appel was recruited to adapt the program to AIIAS. With the approval

of the AIIAS Administrative Committee (Adcom), the plan to contextualize the event and use it as an outreach ministry was set in motion.

However, the magnitude of this project became apparent after the first Easter came and went without the program happening, or even being close to ready. Since this was a first time endeavor for AIIAS, there were many details to coordinate and without a precedent to follow, the logistics were challenging. An appeal during a Sabbath School event brought together a team of volunteers but there still remained much to do.

With the support of the community and administration, the program began to take shape. Administration members volunteered as cast members, the Women Ministries leaders sewed over 30 costumes and AIIAS students assisted as cast and crew members.

Having placed the program in God's hands, the CHRIST ALIVE team did everything they could right up until the moment the program began. Unfortunately, not everything went as planned. "It didn't take long for me to realize that there was something greater happening on campus than just the first walk-through Easter pageant," Emily remembers. "There was a heavy spiritual battle going on, and CHRIST ALIVE was right at the heart of the issue. Things started happening, or not happening." Practices were challenging due to the busy campus schedule of the participants. Unexpected deaths and family emergencies prevented a number of cast and crews from attending practices and planning sessions. All of this took a toll on the production. With four days left before the program, it seemed that they would have to cancel. However, through a series of events, the cast and crew were reminded that God is good and that even in their weakness, He is strong.



One such example involved the actors. Casting had been a challenge throughout the process due to the students' busy schedules and even throughout the three weeks leading up to the event, there were unfilled roles. Thankfully, an hour before the program began, fourteen volunteers came forward to fill the needs. Although a few technical difficulties slightly delayed the scheduled start, the program gained momentum from that point on.

CHRIST ALIVE began in the new AIIAS auditorium with a look at world events and the role that good and evil, God and Satan, play in them. The opening scene was a combination of video and live action pantomime featuring the characters of Satan, Gabriel and Jesus. Following this, the disciples and Mary Magdalene shared a scene.

Leaving the auditorium with inspirational words and the leading of Peter, the cast and audience made their way up the road from the auditorium to the bell tower with the disciples and a group of children shouting "Hosannas" for the Triumphal Entry. From the bell





tower, the whole group went to the library steps for the Last Supper, and then on to the Graduate School for Gethsemane and the Seminary for Pilate's Judgment. Initially, the onlookers treated the scenes as entertainment but once they moved to Gethsemane and later to Pilate's Judgment, the mood changed and became more reflective.

The path from the Seminary to the outdoor amphitheater next to the church represented the Via Dolorosa, with the amphitheater as Golgotha. Returning to the auditorium, a heavy silence reigned as Jesus was buried. The opening notes of Newsong's *Arise, My Love* echoed through the auditorium as the final battle between good and evil played out. As Satan slunk away across the stage and Jesus exited the tomb, the room erupted in applause and praise to God.

Attendees seemed to go away in a thoughtful mood. There were a number of young people among the audience including one who commented, "I think CHRIST ALIVE gave my friends a new idea they hadn't thought before. It's easy to read the story in the Bible of Christ being killed but to see it before your eyes, it brings more impact and makes it real. I think it would be good to have it again so more people can see that."

"Was it perfect?" asks Emily. "No," she answers with a smile. "But nothing can be when humanity is involved. Was it a success? Most definitely. We had two main goals with this program and both were accomplished: (1) God's glory was revealed as He filled in where we could not and (2) lives were touched. We can ask for nothing more."

— EMILY APPEL

Lessons from India



2011 India Mission Trip Team: Pastor Mark Monreal, Pastor Rudolfo Bautista, Atty. Silvino Sumagaysay, Pureza Nasution, Shaira Nasution, Frederick Murillo, Meg Therese Murillo, Amber Murillo, Kurvey Punay, Ringanung Ramrar, Jennie Ramrar, Pema Frasco, Mirriam Carlos, Rudolfo Bautista, Jr., Puring Ragui, Pastor Paoring Ragui, Arnel Pastrana, Dulce Amor Pastrana, Jaime and John Micah Pastrana

I had never before been on a long trip, much less a mission trip. I had heard stories about how challenging a mission trip would be, but I thought it would be fun and very fulfilling. I just didn't realize how much I would be challenged and how much I would learn as a result. If you've ever been on a mission trip, you'll probably recognize some of the lessons I learned.

Lesson #1: When you commit yourself to God's work, Satan is also committed to making you fail in any way possible. It seems as though the enemy doubles his efforts to keep God's worker from doing his missionary work. But GOD ALWAYS makes a way to overcome the obstacles.

Before our trip, two members of our team needed to have their passports renewed. Due to his unique situation, one member was unable to go. So, we were now one member short on our team. Two weeks before our scheduled departure, the passport bureau ran out of the necessary security papers and so our second team member couldn't renew his passport. This, in turn, delayed him in purchasing his ticket for the flight. The situation began to look hopeless. However, we continued to pray and amazingly, within a few days his passport was renewed, and his ticket situation worked out as well. We rejoiced with him over this answer to prayer.

Lesson #2: God, our heavenly Father, is faithful to His children.

In Manila, we had issues with luggage limitations; the airline did not allow us to check in as a group, but with constant prayers and endless negotiations, they eventually let us through. We had to discard, repack and transfer our baggage along our way to India. We thought our troubles might end once we reached our destination. However, after we landed in Kolkata, we were held by immigration officials for almost two hours as they processed our tourist visas. Since Christian missionaries are not allowed in this country, we were very cautious as we were questioned which led to more questioning. After much prayer, we were cleared by the officials and could leave. By the time they released us, we were hungry, confused, tired, and overwhelmed. Nevertheless, throughout our journey we saw how God answered prayer after prayer. Our faith was tested and subsequently increased from one airport experience to another.

Lesson #3: The one true God deserves my praise and worship, and my full commitment.

We visited several places in Kolkata while waiting for our flight to Manipur where we would be having a series of evangelistic meetings. We visited Kalighat Kali Temple, a Hindu temple where animal

sacrifices are still offered. Regardless of sectarian differences, pilgrims from all over India visit this temple to bring their prayers and offerings. If the prayers are answered, they return to give another offering. Those devotees taught me a very important lesson—if they could worship their man-made god with utmost passion, then I should worship with utmost praise and sincerity the one true God who created me and provides for me.

Lesson #4: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:34-40, KJV). There are many ways to help the needy around us.

Our Brahmin guide in the Kalighat Kali Temple told us that they feed hundreds of poor and hungry people every day, thus they urge every visitor to donate a certain amount of rupees for this cause. I was hesitant to give in to the request of the Brahmin to donate 1,000 rupees for a sack of rice, because I didn't have much money with me and I was afraid that I would run out of money before the end of the trip. In the end, I gave it in spite of my doubts. However, I was consoled in the morning when I discovered a Hindu man feeding hundreds of doves at 5:00 a.m. We talked with him and found out that he had been doing this for 50 years. He said that he had made a covenant between himself and his god to feed these birds and that he would keep his promise up to his last breath. It



...continuation in page 20



reminded me to always lend my help to the needy in whatever way I can.

Lesson #5: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart” (Proverbs 3:5, KJV). You can’t do it on your own. You need to depend on God, and He will provide solutions for your problems.

When we got in Ukhrul, Manipur, we were surprised to learn that there were scheduled times for electricity. Although we had been warned about this possibility, I wasn’t really ready to face this. Thankfully, we had generators, so the first few days of the presentations there was no problem.

However, one night, right in the middle of the presentation in Shirui village, the electricity produced by the generator went off. It could no longer support the laptop, LCD projector and the sound system. Thankfully, the computer had enough battery power to continue to be used and we used a kerosene lamp to provide light so we were able to continue the presentation.

An even greater challenge seemed to be the fact that the village was strongly Baptist. The people were afraid of being cast out. Accepting Adventist beliefs



would mean that the people could not send their children to school because the only educational institute in the village is Baptist run. Believers from another faith are not allowed to enroll in the school, so their children would not receive an education. Their dead loved ones would not be able to be buried in the cemetery because it is exclusively for Baptists. Add the extremely cold weather, language issues and the attendees walking out in the middle of the meeting and you have a very discouraging situation. With all these circumstances, it was very easy to worry, but over and over again I was reminded through the response of some of the people and the encouragement of my teammates that there is nothing impossible with God. We just have to rely on Him and have faith even when we cannot see the outcome.

Lesson #6: Faith grows in the midst of difficulty.

Our first assignment was to visit Adventist churches around the area. I was assigned to sing in Shimtang church and Pastor Mark was the speaker. The roads are rugged and winding, but accessible to cars. We had to travel for 30 minutes and then hike for about 250 meters in order to meet with the 50 or so members there. I so admire the dedication of the people there. Distance, land conditions, and circumstances such as a lack of electricity do not undermine their faith in God. Regardless of what seems like mountains of obstacles, they continue to praise God and grow in their Christian experience.

Lesson #7: One last lesson worth bringing home and putting into practice is the lesson of praise.

It’s just my opinion, but I think the reason the faith among the believers there was so strong was in part because of their passion in singing and praise. The youth were so inspiring to me. They never hesitated to lead out during the song service, and they always gave their best effort. The congregation was very involved, even to the point of suggesting the songs to sing! It’s as though their singing and praise were part of a heartfelt conversation between them and God.



Shirui Adventist Church Inauguration. This church was established during the 2007 Mission trip to India through the efforts of Dr. Paoring and Mrs. Puring Ragui, Dr. Jim Park, Jerry Karundeng, Jason Canfield, Eustacio Penniecook, Cornelius and Gladys Ramrar, and Ungreinam Reisan, who did the ground preparation. Seven people were baptized on April 27, 2007.



Baptism in Hallang Village. Twenty-five souls were baptized during the 2011 Mission trip to India: 7 from Hallang Village, 1 in Shirui, and 16 from Churachandpur. These were the results of 4 Weeks of Prayer in schools and 3 evangelistic efforts.

When it was time for us to leave, we wanted to stay longer, but we were also eager to go home. I left with a feeling of wanting to do more for God and for His people. This experience opened my eyes to what serving really is—to remain humble, be trusting, be faithful, give your all to God, and depend fully on Him. I have more lessons to learn, but I feel I’ve moved ahead to the next set of lessons waiting for me in my quest to become a messenger for God.



For an AIIAS student, learning takes place both in and outside of the classroom. Students here have the opportunity to explore rich cultural heritages within the Philippines and beyond. Above: Elderly women display traditional Filipino dress - *Barot Saya and Terno* - as they ride on a float decorated with rice grains and pineapple fibers during the *Pahiyas* Festival in Lucban, Quezon Province, a southern part of the Philippines.

PHOTO CREDIT: JOY FLORES WHIPPS
Master of Business Administration candidate (Philippines)

AIIAS Is Beautiful

—BETH REYNOLDS

AIIAS is beautiful
When the dawn breaks
And the birds wake
And the dew glistens on the grass

AIIAS is beautiful
When the sun sets aflame
And the bats swoop low
And the wind murmurs in the trees...

AIIAS is beautiful
When the flowers bloom
And the palm trees wave
And the sunshine tints the red roofs

AIIAS is beautiful
When the stars shine bright
And the frogs sing
And the moonlight shimmers on the palm fronds...

AIIAS is beautiful
When the dark clouds roll and
The lightning flashes and the
Wind toys with the rain...

AIIAS is beautiful
When the Sabbath comes
And the people sing
And all nature worships the God of creation

"To me, AIIAS is many things. I've been blessed to be a student in both on campus and online classes. For me, AIIAS Online is more than just a door of opportunity for my future; I call it a "special room" in which to grow (socially, emotionally, spiritually and mentally). At my own convenience and on my own time, I can earn my Masters, meet people and upgrade my skills! Best of all, AIIAS guarantees that my learning experience will be profitable for God's service in the future."

Lorena Ponce is a teacher working in Hat Yai City, Thailand. With her busy schedule, a unique AIIAS program enables her to minister to her students during the school year while taking online classes during the evenings. During the summers, she attends on-campus classes. She is a 2014 candidate for a Master's degree in Education with an emphasis in Educational Administration.

Perspectives

We want your AIIAS perspective! We're looking for original photos, poetry, and opinions.

Photos

AIIAS, the Philippines or your home country as the subject. High contrast, colorful photos that tell a story. High-resolution, jpeg format

Poetry

Original poetry that reflects your culture, your AIIAS experience or spiritual journey

What AIIAS Means to Me

Your thoughts about AIIAS in 100 words or less.

Deadline: December 30, 2011

Send your submissions to flags@aaias.edu with Perspectives in the subject. Please include your name and home country.

Alumi: Please also include your degree and graduation date.

Current Students: Please also include your area of study and anticipated graduation date.



Thinking of ^{an affordable} graduate school?

Business • Education • Health • Theology



Think international...

Think AIIAS...

AIIAS is a fully accredited graduate institution
operated by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies
www.aiias.edu | www.facebook.com/aiias

Graduate School Programs

Education • Master of Arts in Education (Curriculum & Instruction*, Educational Administration, Instructional Technology, Leadership*, Library Administration, Religious Education, TESOL) • Master of Arts in Teaching • Doctor of Philosophy in Education (Curriculum & Instruction, Educational Administration) • Graduate Certificate in Education*

Business • Master of Business Administration (Business Management*, Finance, Information Technology) • Master of Science in Administration (Church Administration, Business Management*) • Doctor of Philosophy in Business • Graduate Certificate in Business*

Health • Master of Public Health (Health Ministry, Health Promotion*, Nutrition) • Graduate Certificate in Public Health*

Seminary Programs

Professional Programs • Master of Ministry* • Master of Divinity* • Master of Arts in Ministry (Intercultural Studies) • Doctor of Ministry (Church Ministry and Mission, Church Leadership) • Graduate Certificate in Ministry*

Academic Programs • Master of Arts in Religion (Biblical Languages, Old Testament, New Testament, Theological-Historical Studies, Church Ministry and Mission) • Master of Theology (Old Testament, New Testament, Theological Studies, Historical Studies, Church Ministry and Mission) • Doctor of Philosophy in Religion (Old Testament, New Testament, Theological Studies, Historical Studies, Church Ministry and Mission)