



CSC NEWS

33 Years of
Ministry in Cebu

Children's Shelter of Cebu

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Reunions at CSC: Love and Memories That Last a Lifetime

by Paul Healy

Some former residents of Minnesota joke that our home state is a good place to be *from*. The implication is that the place where we are is better than where we came from, Minnesota being a land of long, cold winters with lots of snow and ice. While I don't agree with that sentiment, I often use the same phrase to describe CSC. CSC is a good place to be from. To have lived at CSC is to have been loved and appreciated. To have left CSC is to have been given to loving adoptive parents who will continue the good things that started here.

Because CSC is such a good place to be from, it is a great place to come back to. In recent weeks several former residents returned to Cebu to reconnect with our staff and workers. Although fun comes in many forms at CSC, there is nothing that compares to the happiness of seeing a former CSC kid or sibling group walk through our doors.

There are many reasons why former residents return to the Philippines. Some want to search for birth parents or other family members. Some want to tour the country of their birth and experience the beauty of the Philippines. Some just want to see the people at CSC who cared for them. Some have lots of questions about their past; some just love to play with our children and hang out with the staff. Whatever the reasons, CSC is a place where they will find people who remember them, who still love and appreciate them, and who will assist them in finding answers to the questions

that might be important to them as they return to the place of their birth.

A recent visit by the Bourke family of Belgium was especially enjoyable for our staff and workers. Luc and Willie adopted twice from CSC: they came to get Joel in 1994, and returned in 1998 to bring Mirta home. So it had been 18 years since Joel left and 14 for Mirta. But

when they pulled into the CSC campus they were returning to a place where they were remembered with smiles, squeals of joy, hugs and loving accounts of their time with us. Returning children are almost always pleasantly surprised at the number of people who remember them and who are genuinely excited to see them again. For Joel and Mirta, there were several workers from the Eicher Home who are still with us. Their reunion produced lots of smiles and tears.

These events are a significant blessing to the staff and workers at CSC. We feel fulfilled to see them grown and happy in their lives. We feel honored that they want to come back and see us. And we feel encouraged by the results of the investments that we made in their lives.

But CSC's welcoming love doesn't end with hugs and remembrances from staff and workers. Some of our children are passionate about finding their birth families, and our social workers are experienced in helping make that happen.

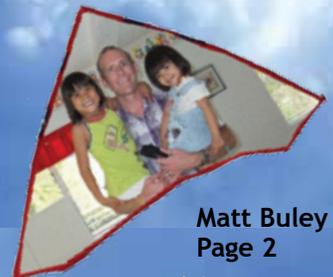
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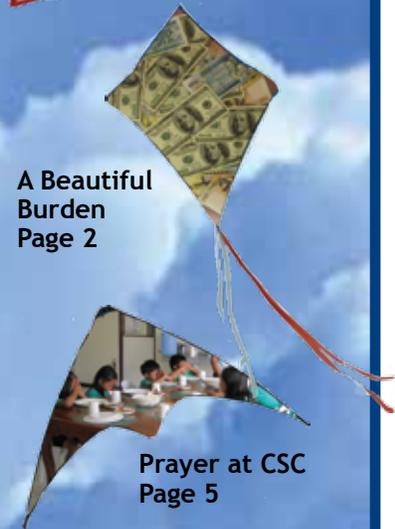
Joel and Mirta get some love from Nita and Tessie upon their return to CSC in July.

*Every child
deserves a
family.*

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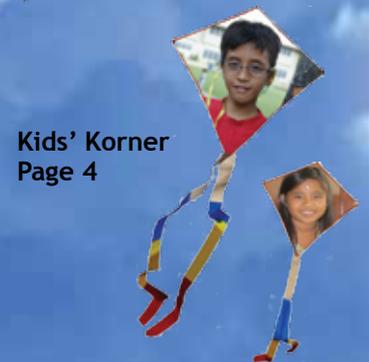


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Birthdays are a big deal at CSC. This week we are celebrating five! A long time ago the staff decided that each of our children deserve a special birthday party. Even as we've grown, and more and more nights in Cebu have included a birthday party, we continue to keep this tradition. Staff, who aren't required to attend, do anyway. The kids mean too much to them to miss a child's big day.

This week a birthday came with a mixed set of feelings. Argei Kem, a kind and generous young man, turned 18. Normally, 18 is the absolute cutoff on adoptability. We do still have a few months of retroactivity on a law change, but it's looking less likely that Kem and his three siblings will be adopted together.



Watching him celebrate his birthday, and as you look at his picture, I'm sure we share a similar sense of heartbreak. We hope for families here and it's hard to see that hope slip away. We want the best for Kem.

I hope it helps to imagine Kem when he arrived. Picture the boy above, but completely malnourished. When our team went to process the admission reports on Kem and his siblings they were found in deplorable conditions. Their hair was red from lack of nutrients, and one of them was lying next to a dead dog. They may have died themselves without CSC.

Maybe we need to look at Argei Kem's picture again. Perhaps adoption won't happen for this young man, but look where he is. Look at that smile and the home behind him! He is in a place made to care for him, and for his siblings, Adelyn, Janice and Ardian too. Kem is being loved every day, learning at school and is growing in his faith in Christ. He is home, adopted or not.

A Beautiful Burden by Matt Buley

Last night I got to spend some extra time with the older girls in the Eicher home. I even let them stay up a little late as they were helping me draw a few cards to send in the mail.

Summer is hard when it comes to giving. It always is, but our ministry continues doing what it does every month of the year.

All of us were lying on the floor in their home. They were drawing and writing and I had flipped open my computer to do some other work. Eventually that brought me to do some number crunching for the month. There I was looking at our financial reports in a circle of our children—the reason those reports matter at all.



Here you are in our newsletter, on page two. Knowing that much about you, I know you love the Children's Shelter of Cebu. You care enough to have gotten this far.

I hope you will feel the burden with me. If you

At one moment I looked down at the need and looked up at Mae Ann, a bright and beautiful 12 year old. I looked at her for a moment and felt a terrible burden. "We have to make our numbers," I thought. "For her."

have the ability, would you send us a gift to help us make our numbers? Not because the numbers matter, but because we need to make our monthly sending to Cebu so these kids have their needs met.

If you can't give, please pray for our finances, that God would prompt hearts for our work. Thank you so much for standing with us. God bless you.

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Although it is not always possible to find birth families, they make strong efforts for this to happen. Recent meetings with birth families have been heart-warming and even life-changing for the young people who had a burden to reconnect, and for their families who were so happy and thankful to see them again.

One reason that reunions are sweet at CSC is that many of our workers stay with us for many years. We have child care workers who have been with us since the early 80s. One of our former residents came back to see us in 2009, 28 years after leaving for adoption. She was shocked that several of our workers who had cared for her as a toddler remembered her fondly. She was not able to connect with birth family after all those years, but she told us that she was thrilled to have found her "first family" at CSC.



For some, CSC is the only link they have to their biological families. For others, CSC is the only family they will ever know in the Philippines. In both cases, we stand ready to welcome our former residents, letting them know that they will always be cherished. We are an important part of their past and their present, and it is important for them to know that there will always be a light on for them at CSC and loving people to welcome them.

A Whole New World by Lindsay Ostrom



we were ready. I think it's fair to say that we've seen and experienced more new things in one month than we could have ever imagined!

Let's back up – why are we here, anyway? I'm a teacher and Bjork is a technology guy. We are so fortunate to be able to use our skills to partner with the staff at CSC this year. I will be teaching at the Children of Hope School, and Bjork will be initiating several technology-related projects for CSC.

Some of our eyebrow-raising experiences during this first month have included geckos in the house, crowded Jeepney rides, and cockroach hunting. Suburban Minnesota did not prepare us for this new place!

But more noteworthy are the experiences we have had at the shelter with the precious kids who live here. In just a month, there have been no shortages of birthday parties, thumb wars, basketball games, piggyback rides, genuine laughter, and sweet hugs. God's love for orphans is being lived out so passionately through the house parents, aunties, teachers and staff who have dedicated their lives to this ministry.

And this place is not only caring for orphans – it is inspiring and challenging people from all walks of life (like, uh, myself) to think about what really matters to the heart of Jesus.

Thank you, supporters, for making this ministry possible. And thank you, CSC, for allowing us to be a part of it for a year.

Almost exactly one month ago, my husband Bjork and I landed at the Cebu airport ready to spend a year at the Children's Shelter of Cebu. Or at least we thought

Life is fast. We can record a video, post it on YouTube and within seconds it is accessible to billions of people. Food is fast; I know I get impatient if I have to wait more than 3 minutes for a handcrafted caffeinated beverage, or more than 5 for a meal in the drive-thru. What is that about? Another example, I just traveled from Minneapolis to Cebu in 1½ days. 8,013 miles in a mere smattering of hours, a distance that would have taken weeks to travel - once upon a time.

Wow. The world is within reach and needs can be met instantaneously. But must things be so accessible? What is lost in our fast pace?

When we eat a meal in the car, throwing fries to the passengers in the back while we race to our next event, we miss out on fellowship with others. When we so eagerly anticipate the next thing we want, the next place we're going, or the next stage in life, we forget to see what we have, where we are, or what we are doing. We diminish the value of the present for the allure of the future.

Again I ask, what is lost? To which I answer, the most important thing we have: NOW. Author Ann Voskamp wrote a book about gratitude. She challenged herself to identify one thousand God-given gifts, believing that focusing on blessings leads to living more fully.

The need for speed?

by Lindsay Hoeft, Child Development



Voskamp talks about the speed of living today, how it is not true living and it is not what God intended. "We are merely moving shadows, and all our busy rushing ends in nothing." (Psalm 39:6). She says if we pause to acknowledge the blessings we have been given, God will actually multiply them. If we stop and sit in His presence, thanking Him for the abundance in our life, He increases our blessing.

Pause? Stop? I know these are unnerving words, but think on them a moment. I decided to take a moment this evening and just be present. I had packed up my belongings, said a tear-filled goodbye to

loved ones, and traveled halfway across the world over the past 2 days. I had just returned to my second home. I dared myself to pause. Life moves fast in Cebu as well. This tropical island is not immune to the call of progress or the beckon of instant gratification. It takes effort here, too.

Recently, we had a farewell dinner for an adoptive family that had brought their now-grown children to see the place where they had lived as infants. I paused during the meal. I heard animated voices and laughter, blessings of fellowship and good company. I heard the sounds of food and drink being passed, blessings of nourishment. I heard the prayer that preceded the meal, a comforting reminder of God's abundant provision.

Following the meal, the children and staff sang our farewell song, "God Will Take Care of You," to the family, a CSC tradition. I chose to pause here also. I saw the family's tears; I heard the boisterous voices of eager singers. I felt the tiny arms of a child wrapped around my leg; I felt the warm weight of another in my arms. I heard the kind and grateful words of the family; encouraging the children to believe in God's plans. I felt God's presence. Truly, in these moments, in NOW, we are most alive and most blessed.

There is no need for speed. Rather, I dare you to pause.



Robert Leonard (3 months) came to live with us on the day of his birth. He has recently started smiling a lot, and is very attentive when his caregivers talk to him. Often he will giggle when teased. He is a very handsome boy and is very popular with the aunts in the Duterte Home. He has had some upper respiratory infections lately but is getting better.

Micaela (3) and **Carl John** (4 months) came to CSC in early April. They live in the Cherne Home. Micaela is very talkative and the house parents report that she can be demanding at times. She is affectionate and loves to sing. She has a wonderful personality and has lots of friends in the home. She enjoys arranging the chairs at the younger kids' table after meal time. Carl John



is a very smiley little boy who is very bright and responsive. He loves to be held and will cry when he is eventually put down in his crib. He doesn't move around yet, but will shake his legs and arms when lying in his crib. Both Micaela and Carl John have been very healthy during their time at CSC.

Cheryl Mae (11) arrived at CSC in June from a neighboring island. She has two younger relatives who also live at CSC. Cheryl Mae has made a great adjustment to living in the Cherne Home at CSC. She is very well behaved and affectionate. Her house parents report that she is very observant and helpful in the home, doing her assigned chores without reminders. She enjoys washing dishes. She loves to read and do coloring, and has made several good friends in the home. She is very loving with her younger cousins.



Danilo (8) came to CSC in June and the Cherne Home (not to mention the Children of Hope School) has never been the same! He is very active and is still in the mode of testing limits. He is still learning the rules and is adjusting well, though there are times at school when he would rather run around the room than pay attention. He needs lots of attention and supervision. Danilo is good at drawing and does a good job with his school assignments once he is on task. He does his assigned jobs well in the home.



Michael (10) came to live in the Eicher Home in April. He had spent most



of his life in foster homes. When he came to live with us he was diagnosed with significant hearing loss and was in need of eyeglasses. Our teachers did a lot of testing and assessment during the referral process, and they report that he has made significant improvement since coming to CSC. He loves school. Being able to hear better has opened up his world and he is making the most of it. His favorite activity is soccer. He is learning to be responsible in helping with the younger kids. We are all thrilled with Michael's progress and his adjustment to life at CSC.



Nesthley was born on June 7 and came to live at CSC one week later. She lives in the Eicher Home nursery. She has a good set of lungs and will cry loudly when she needs feeding or changing. Nesthley has a great appetite and sleeps well. She is our youngest child at CSC.

Ana Marie (5 months) was two weeks old when she came to us. She is Nesthley's partner in the Eicher Home nursery. She is growing fast and is a smiley baby girl. She doesn't like lots of noise and activity in the home but responds very well when she has one on one attention. Ana Marie is much appreciated by the caregivers because it is very easy to put her to sleep.



We Pray for You, Too

by Mitch Ohlendorf

Prayer is a very significant part of CSC's ministry and covers the work we do for our children. Our prayer partners from around the world bring the needs of our children to God daily. Our supporters, board members, U.S. staff, Cebu staff, and adoptive families are intercessors. The daily ministry has challenges that cannot be met by our hands alone. The children who come into our care have tremendous immediate and long-term needs and our many praying friends put those needs before God each day. Over the 33 years of CSC's ministry, God has continually made himself evident through answered prayer.



Our children pray for themselves and each other. We often have at least one sick child. Our children lift them up in prayer. They pray for their own behavior, that God will help them to be respectful in the homes and at school with their houseparents, caregivers, and teachers. Our children pray for themselves and others who are still waiting for an adoptive family. They know God

is the Provider for their futures.

Our children pray for those around them. They faithfully thank God for those who care for them, cook for them, teach them, and do kind things for them. The children always remember the travels and safety of the CSC staff. For more than two years, one child has unfailingly prayed for the safety of a former teacher now in the U.S., never forgetting her. Most of the children pray each day for the birth families they left, asking God to protect them and show them His saving grace.

But each of you praying for CSC's ministry and our children should also know faithful prayers are being made for you. Our children gather for prayer regularly, if not daily, to pray for others. Each of our houseparents and staff has times of prayer with our children, either one-on-one or in groups. Their prayer requests, praises, and thanksgivings, shared with such sincerity, may be very general to a group or specific to one person.

The children in our care come from very humble, if not tragic, circumstances. Most came not knowing God. They may have come to think of themselves as insignificant in the whole scheme of things. But God holds each one of them in His hands and each of our children holds God in their hearts. Our children are up front about their faith and God's power to answer prayer.

We regularly talk to our children about CSC's supporting friends and they know how important each of you is to this ministry. Our children know that while God provides, He provides through people like you. A prayer time does not pass without prayers of thanksgiving for CSC's supporters, Foster Friends, and others who have come to visit the shelter. Our children are grateful for you and they express it.

Not only are your prayers lifting up our children and ministry, but our children are praying faithfully to lift you up, as well.

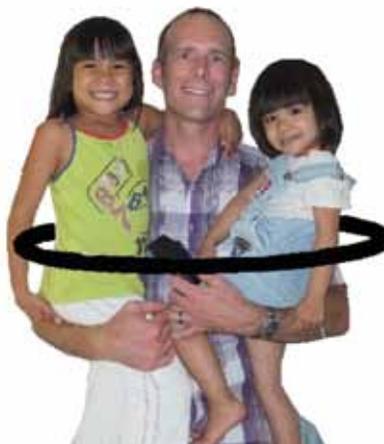
Prayer

1. Prayer is needed for our income during these summer months when giving usually dips. Our needs in Cebu remain consistent throughout the year, so we have to tap reserves when giving is low. Pray that our friends would be generous in the coming weeks.

2. Pray for Bjork and Lindsay Ostrum. They have begun their year of service in Cebu and are making a great contribution to the ministry. Bjork is consulting on IT and communications with our staff and at the school, and Lindsay is teaching in Level C.

3. Pray for our ongoing relationship with the government agency that oversees the adoption of our children.

Our CSC Circle of Prayer



Praises

1. For our Canadian partners who raised money for a new vehicle for the ministry.

2. For our volunteer board in Minnesota that works hard to offer leadership and governance, and to encourage our staff and workers in their work.

3. For Matt Buley's recent trip to Cebu and all the great interaction and brainstorming that occurred.

4. For the good health of our children in recent weeks.



CSC NEWS

P.O. Box 247, Cambridge, MN 55008

Change Service Requested

President: Matthew Buley
Field Director: Paul Healy
Cebu Executive Director: Mitch Ohlendorf
Medical Director: Marlys Healy
Outreach Director: Ruth Ohlendorf
Child Development Director: Sandy Swanson
School Consultant: Shari Reasoner
Teacher: Amy Luck
Teacher: Tammy Vosika
Asst. Director: Joel Reasoner
Child Development: Lindsay Hoeft
US Office Manager: Roger Anderson
Administrative Assistant: Brenda Leaf

Editor: Paul Healy

Cebu Address: Box 178, Cebu City
6000 Philippines

Cebu Children's Shelter Society of Canada
P.O. Box 141, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z5

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Photos: Joel Reasoner

Phone: 651-493-1551

E-mail: cscusa@cscshelter.org

CSC online at: www.cscshelter.org

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Bethel University Honors Paul Healy

We have a lot to be proud of at CSC. We have an exceptional team and an exceptional ministry, and I see evidence of this in every department.

All of this great work got started in the late 70s at a college in Minnesota called Bethel. It was there that we really got off the ground. Paul Healy had just graduated and began to share the dream he and Marlys had for serving children in the Philippines. His dad, Jerry Healy, an English professor, was drumming up support from his colleagues. And a student there shocked all of them when he responded to a talk Paul was giving by providing a gift that would start our ministry.



Paul was there from the beginning. We wouldn't exist without him, and I am proud to call him a partner in ministry and friend. Paul Healy is a model of God's love for children. A deep, cher-

ishing love seeps from him as he serves our kids.

We are especially proud of Paul right now. Bethel University has recently named him the 2012 Alumnus of the Year! We are thrilled that the Bethel faculty and staff, National Alumni Board and 40,000 alumni have chosen to honor Paul in this way. Indeed, Paul has changed his corner of the world to the glory of God. He deserves this great honor.

Hear, hear Paul Healy! Bethel couldn't have chosen a more deserving Alum.

- Matt Buley