

# The Goodness of God



“Taste and see that the LORD is good,”

Psalm 34:8, this is the central message given during the celebration of SMO’s 45th Anniversary on August 27, 2022. In the message, Board Chair Xerwin Ceballos, presented the richness of Psalm 34 where David exalted God and exhorted the people to exalt Him as well for His deliverance. Furthermore, the speaker pointed us to the New Testament where Peter quoted Psalm 34:8 highlighting that the goodness of God is anchored in God’s redemption of His people; that our salvation is solid proof that the Lord indeed is good. This is the heart of SMO’s mission for the past 45 years -- to proclaim the goodness of the LORD in saving His people from their sins.



**D**irector Nenita del Mundo then recounted specific workings of the LORD in the ministry to attendees comprising of fellow workers, ministry partners, students, and alumni of SMO. Pastor Elmer Genol also shared his personal life testimony and how SMO has been the Lord's instrument in introducing the Gospel to his life. Pastor Genol has been serving the Lord through SMO for more than 30 years now and is currently one of the administrative staff and faculty of our Bible Training Institute.

The celebration held at SMO Promised Land in Murcia was filled with prayer, praise, and singing which was followed by an enjoyable fellowship lunch.



# Rejoice, the Lord is Good!



# Through the years

## SMO at 45!

**R**ejoice, God is good! For 45 fruitful years, God never failed to keep His promises. Looking back, I could still recall the different seasons in the lives and ministry of God's people at SMO. Like the wandering Jews of old times, we made our spiritual journey by moving out from one place to another. For more than 35 years since the ministry started, we had rented different space and locations to serve as headquarter and student center. From SMO's inception in 1977, with Ms. Lourdes Robles-Burgess as the National Director, the ministry expanded its horizon from its office in Manila, extending to the different parts of the Philippines and became nationwide in scope. In 1994, the national office was relocated to Bacolod City, in the Visayas region, with the late Pastor Renato del Mundo taking the leadership. This was the season where God, in His goodness showered His blessings as He caused the ministry to grow spiritually and statistically. We started to conquer the school campuses through the collective evangelism and discipleship efforts of our workers and missionaries. This program yielded so much fruits in the lives of many youths nationwide. Many of them became members of the different local churches and had grown to become church leaders, Christian workers, missionaries, pastors, responsible citizens and public servants of the country. We were then encouraged to put up our very own bible school which we call, SMO-BTI (Bible Training Institute) where the youths who decided to commit their lives to serve the Lord in full-time ministry can be trained for three to four years and be sent-out to do mission work.



“45 Years  
of Greatness”



**D**espite the continued spiritual blessings from the Lord, there came also a time when the inconvenience, expenses, and difficulties of transferring from one place to another caused the people from SMO to grow weary, and weak. Through the seasons of wandering, we have marched through “the wilderness of sin” for the Israelites, but also literally to us at SMO. There were bickering, murmurings, and sufferings among the leadership of the ministry. Wearing and experiencing all these “rings”, led us to cry out to God for His mercy and grace. Faithful as He is, the all-present God who had seen our hearts and understood our deepest longings, heard our cry and led us to the final location that we have now - at our very own place this time, the Promised Land in Murcia, Negros Occidental. However, God took Director Renato Del Mundo home in glory to be with Him, even before he stepped into the land of promise, which made me to step-up and take the leadership of the ministry in September, 2010.

“45  
Years of  
Surprises”



**T**he Promised Land, as we call it, was provided by the Lord in 2011, through an anonymous donor from Christian Aid Missions, USA. It's a three-hectare farm lot where we built: 2 dormitories for Men & Women, (with both of the dormitories' ground floor serving as temporary classrooms, library, and administrative office of our bible school); the Dining Hall which is also convertible to session hall during our scheduled activities like camps and conferences; and the latest structure - the staff and guest house. The Promised Land is also home to farm animals like: goats, pigs, chicken and ducks; and a plantation of fruits and crops, as a means of food supply to both bible school students and staff. We also open our door to Christian churches and organizations to conduct their conferences, camps, and religious activities at the Facility where they can also enjoy the blessings God has showered abundantly to SMO.



“ 45 Years of Faithfulness ”

**D**uring the height of the COVID19 pandemic last 2021, when most ministries have been shut down, God opened the way for us to pioneer a church at the Promised Land. The high school students who used to attend our bible studies in the nearby schools stayed with us at the Promised Land during the pandemic to be of help in the farm as we also help them and their families financially. It was an opportunity to disciple them, and as a result, we were able to also reach out to their families thru visitations and regular bible studies. Their families became the first members of our pioneering Church. Last June, 2022, LIFESPRING CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH here at the Promised Land was born. The quest to reach-out to the people around the community continues on. As the local government slowly opens the different schools for a face-to-face learning to students, we thank the Lord for the opportunity given to us to once again conduct regular bible studies to elementary, high school,

and college students. What a great privilege for us to reach-out to the community thru campus ministry. Through this, there is a need for us to build another structure at the Promised Land to serve as our session hall/chapel for the gathering of the newly found church. It is our prayer that the Lord will lead us to more souls who will come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, more youths who will give their lives to Christ in full-time ministry, and more opportunities to pioneer a church in the different regions of our country. God is using the partnership of His people around the world - prayers and provision of support to accomplish His plan of saving people. May the Lord find us faithful as we all labor for the advancement of His kingdom here on earth.

“ 45 Years  
of Goodness ”



From the left end is the current director, Nenita Del Mundo. Followed by the late director, Renator del Mundo. Followed by the first SMO director, Lourdes Robles Burgess.



**A**fter three years of hiatus from in-face gatherings, SMO-Bacolod has kicked off its campus ministry work with a 2-day leadership training last July 25-26, at the SMO Center, Bacolod City. The training, which focuses primarily on equipping young leaders biblically, was attended by more than 70 students and young professionals from different churches and schools in Negros Occidental.

# When God Moves

# His Leaders

**P**astor Darryl Roque commenced the first day with a lecture on the Gospel and a workshop on Gospel presentation. He continued to teach on faith and repentance while the SMO Bacolod Team presented the Evangelism and Discipleship materials, "Two Ways to Live", 10 Follow-up Steps, and Word 1-to1. The day culminated with Pastor Theonikko Del Mundo's challenge on holiness and the pursuit of it. Movement of the Word Philippines' Pastor Larry Sy began the second day with a devotion on 2 Timothy 4:1-8. The entire day was then dedicated to studying the bible using the principles introduced by the Movement of the Word Philippines. The participants were grouped and were tasked to study Jonah 1 where they then shared the output with the plenary. One participant, DG Anze Belle Herbolario of Shalom Baptist Church, noted, "The program has helped me have a deeper knowledge of how to study the Bible without the need of relying on devotional books but God's Word alone."







# When God Moves Through the Youths



**C**hloe, 12, a Grade 7 student of Negros Occidental High School (NOHS), cheerfully arrives at the SMO Center at noon time bringing at least five classmates to join her for lunch, have chitchats, and eventually hear the Word of God. She is just one of the more than 50 high schoolers who regularly come to SMO Center on weekdays to have their lunch, play basketball and other sports, and listen to God's Word shared with them by SMO staff and volunteers.

Although the activity is nothing new to SMO, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the schools to prohibit in-face classes, hence, the year 2022 is the return of students to campuses since then. It also allowed the Center to reopen its gates to the students which started with around 10 high schoolers in August and now close to 60 in October.



Chloe is the second girl in front from the left end wearing a white mask.



**C**urrent health restrictions still limit campus workers from entering schools so the SMO Bacolod Team focuses on maximizing the Bacolod student Center in sharing the Gospel with students. SMO opened its canteen to serve affordable lunch meals and drinks to encourage more students to have their lunch there. Headed by SMO Bacolod Coordinator, Faith Lanaza, Paul Alacre, Elmharie Rabanal, Arniel Camacho, and Fred Repollo, different bible study schedules are being conducted with their chosen groups right after their lunch, just in time to have a 15 to 20-minute sharing before they head back to their school at 1 PM.

Every Wednesdays, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) holds its classes at the SMO Center and gives a regular 1-hour sharing of the Word of God to more than 30 ALS students.

The SMO Student Center is open on Mondays to Saturdays, to High School and College students who would want to rest and study in SMO on their vacant periods until 5 PM.



# When God Moves Through His Students

God has sustained another fruitful year for SMO Bible Training Institute for bringing in another batch of freshmen this school year. But more than that, God had opened even more doors than what BTI could handle. Pandanon Elementary School and Lopez Jaena National High School both entrusted a fixed schedule for BTI students and faculty to teach and preach the gospel during their “Edukasyon sa Pagpapalahaga” (ESP) subject. SMO is given one hour every week for every class of Grade 9 to Grade 10 to hold a Bible Study.

This also serves as on the job training (OJT) of Bible students as part of their curriculum.





“The harvest are plentiful, but the laborers are few”

“ We are praying for more students for BTI ”





“ We are  
praying to the  
Lord of the  
harvest ”



# Meet the the Freshmen

**I**t was a normal day in my high school years when me and my friends were doing our usual routines. Hanging out during class hours and even cutting classes. But little did we know that it was that day when God was about to turn things around. Someone approached us and invited us to attend a Bible Study. Since we weren't doing anything else then, we decided to nonchalantly attend. I wasn't even sure if I learned anything back then, but last thing I knew, she invited us over to attend Camp Forever. And it was at this camp that God really used to change my perspective about God. From then on, I started visiting SMO more often. I learned more about God and about myself. It was also here where I learned to struggle about many things such as temptations and things that I couldn't seem to ever give up. There were even times when I disdained God's provisions. Then the pandemic happened. It was here where I went to a real trial that tested my devotion, prayer life, self-discipline, study of God's Word, and focus. But two things really tormented my life, gaming and oversleeping. Because I was free and with no accountability, I failed to discipline myself in sloth and gaming.

It was my freedom that enslaved me back to my normal carnal life with no direction and end in sight. But the Lord didn't allow me to stay in my spiraling predicament. He purposefully led me to stay in SMO Promised Land and attend every Sunday worship service, every morning prayer times, all along with Pastor Elmer's mentorship. It was during this time that my zeal for God's Word grew even more. Then I knew it was time for me to follow the Lord whole heartedly through baptism. But even then, I suffered some consequences from when I was cold in my faith. I was forced to stop school because of my laziness and lack of discipline. And there are still much areas for me to grow spiritually and mentally such as my sour and rebellious attitude. But amidst all my imperfections, I am blessed to be endorsed by Pastor



Elmer to SMO Bible Training Institute. I had no idea that all my loss led to reveal God's wonderful plan in the end. Now, as I embrace my new calling of being a student, I have no other aim than to be faithful to wherever God has placed me. And I know that wherever that is or will be, it will still be for the good. Amidst all my shortcomings and wayward ways, still His blessings and provision continue to shower over me. And with this, I have no other reason not to love Him because He loved me first.

- Marjohn Santillan

“It was my freedom that enslaved me...”



“We never  
suffered great  
need...”

**W**ith all honesty, I entered the Bible School for sole reason that I thought I was not ready for college. I also still haven't decided which course to take. My dad wasn't on board with this idea as well. He wanted me to go to college badly. I understood his sentiments since it was his frustration to finish college. But my sister insisted that I enter the Bible School. Ever since I was in grade 10 my sister was already encouraging me to enter Bible School. She told me that it would best to seek God and to serve Him first above all things.

But it was really during the pandemic and the typhoon Odette that God personally showed the greatness of His goodness to me and my family. Our house was badly hit by the typhoon but God showered us with blessings that we were able to recuperate and rebuild our house. All the materials and labor came from people that God used that we didn't pay a dime. During the pandemic when we cannot generate our own means and livelihood, we still received much assistance from people around us. We never suffered great need. From vitamins to food, we never experience lack nor hunger. Also when my mom passed away, many people helped showed their love to us. I knew that this was from the Lord. Through all these circumstances, I realized how much God still loved us and cared for us in every step of the way. It was then that I finally decided to enter the Bible school in gratitude and worship to all that He has done for us. And that finally I can learn more about God and about His word more intimately.

- Joevic Amario Cañete



# SMO in Different Places

## Seminars and Book Distributions



Since the local government's provision for an in-person public gathering, several seminars on "Climbing out of Depression" and "Excelling in Relationships," have been conducted in different areas in Negros Occidental from July until September, 2022. Pastors and church leaders in Escalante, Sagay, Toboso, Don Salvador Benedicto, Cadiz and Bacolod City open their doors to benefit from this 1-day training to avail of the materials they can use to minister to their fellow members, as well as reach out to the inmates in jail, policemen, and public employees of the government.



**P**astor David Meengs, the author of the books and the Director of the Biblical Counseling Worldwide (BCW) conducted the training himself in 2018 until 2019. Since then, SMO conducts the same training to different Churches and BCW continue to give out books and materials for free to participants who would attend the seminar.





John Kottelenburg wear Orange Canada Shirt.

**W**ord and Deed coordinator for Asia, John Kottelenburg, personally visited the beneficiaries helped by Word and Deed through SMO. The project was initiated to help recipients recuperate and rebuild their homes that were devastated by Typhoon Odette specifically in inaccessible areas of Negros Island. John went on with high land hikes and boating rivers to hear their testimonies. We are praying for more joint projects and initiatives.



LIVING 180°



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SMO PROMISED LAND,

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