

## **SURPRISED BY OPPORTUNITY**

Life is filled with opportunities disguised as surprises—times when the unexpected happens, which opens a new door. You probably remember some of those times in your own life: being at the right place at the right time to be of help; or having just the right skill needed for the task; or providing just the right resource to meet the need.

For Christians these unexpected moments can present exciting opportunities, as this recent testimony of one Spanish woman reveals:

*A single woman, she prepared to participate with the “My Hope Spain” TV campaign being broadcast nationally during the Christmas season.*

*She had invited five friends to her home for the evening meal and to watch the “My Hope” program on TV. But none of them came. Discouraged, she called her pastor, who encouraged her to not give up.*

*After praying she went down to the park where she found six girls on a bench. She told them of her meal all prepared, but the people who had been invited weren’t coming. All six gladly accepted the invitation to join her for the meal. After seeing the program, followed by hearing her three-minute personal testimony, three of them prayed to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior! All were surprised by this God-appointed opportunity!*

*Early reports tell of several thousand who prayed to receive Christ or for rededication in these home meetings.*

## **TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY**

We are overwhelmed and thankful for all of the cards, letters, emails, and gifts which we have received over the Christmas celebrations. Many, many thanks!!! Your expressions of love have done much to fill the gap which we feel in not being able to celebrate with our families.

## **PRAY FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES**

For us, this looks like a decisive year in many ways. The weeks and months ahead may be filled with opportunities disguised as surprises. As you think of us, pray that we might be alert and responsive to God’s purposes in each situation, especially for the following responsibilities:

**T**he preparation and presentation of a teaching series with a local church during February

**A**dministrative oversight for the worldwide Ministry of the 20 members of our International Ministries Team (IMT) through the “virtual office” in our home

**L**eadership for the development of prayer and ministry networks for southern Spain workers among the “immigrant” population

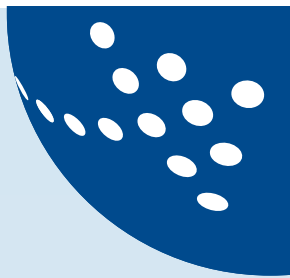
**T**he continued development of a pan-European community among workers as follow-up to the past Hope for Europe-2 Congress

**F**or family and ministry concerns as we consider the best time to wind down our work in Spain later this year

*Working together for the Kingdom,*



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# As You Pray

**R**ejoice over the incredible things that the Lord has done in the Philippines over these past 35 years.

*Pray*

that the Lord will continue to bless the efforts of our OC team in the Philippines, with the result that the vision of a church in every barangay will finally be realized.

*Pray*

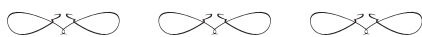
that the Lord would open the eyes and ears of thousands of Muslims to become followers of Jesus Christ as Lord.

*Pray*

that Filipino believers not only reach their own nation, but go beyond their borders to reach other parts of the world with the gospel.

# God is on the Move!

**W**hat has taken place in the Philippines over the past 35 years is one of the greatest stories of an extended spiritual harvest in the 2,000-year history of the church. OC entered this story in 1953 when the Philippines became our second field. I am thrilled with what God has done, and I am humbled by the strategic role that he has privileged OC to play in helping the churches in the Philippines reap this incredible spiritual harvest. Here's the story ...



*Aug. Santiago*

President, OC International

## Philippines 1965:

**H**istory (Vatican II) and a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit set in motion an amazing succession of cascading events. It began with Filipinos discovering the Word of God in home Bible studies. Many of these grew into churches, adding momentum to a vibrant church growth movement.

**1970s:** Denominations strategically embraced this new growth, accelerating the planting of churches.

**1980:** The Philippine church committed to a vision of saturating the nation with churches, and the Dawn 2000 Movement was officially birthed.

## For Your Encouragement

- **From 5,000 evangelical churches in 1974 to over 77,000 evangelical churches today ...**
- **From 600,000 born-again believers in 1974 to over 11 million today ...**
- **From 1.8 percent of the population born again in 1974 to over 12 percent today**

**The goal:** An evangelical church planted in every *barangay* (village) by the year **2000**.  
**The challenge:** To increase the number of churches in the country to 50,000.

**T**he next 20 years brought political coups and revolutions, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and terrorist activities. In the midst of this our OC team, in partnership with Filipino church leaders, pressed forward tirelessly to reach the goal. **Target date 2000:** 51,300 evangelical churches! The goal had been surpassed! By God's grace the number of born-again believers had grown from 600,000 to 7.2 million!

**E**veryone celebrated, and yet over half of the barangays remained without an evangelical church. **2001:** The OC team recommitted themselves to the goal and for the next decade labored side by side with Filipino churches to this end. **2010:** 26,000 additional churches had been planted. Once again, the Lord honored their efforts; now there were over 11 million evangelicals!

**T**he task is still not done, and neither is OC. Approximately 23,000 barangays remain without an evangelical church, thousands located in Islamic areas. Therefore our OC team continues to facilitate fresh church planting initiatives which are reaching hundreds of barangays. And God remains faithful.

*We apologize for an error in last month's story. In 1950 Margaret Hillis worked faithfully by Dick's side. After her passing Dick married Ruth Kopperud in 1982.*