

# Radical Loves

(IDC 2017)

RONA PAMELA ESCALA

**J**esus didn't call us to be ordinary, but to be **RADICAL** in our love—for Him and for others. He Himself demonstrated it. —This is one of our earthshaking gleanings from the annual Intentional Discipleship Conference (IDC) organized by Christ Commission Fellowship (CCF) last January 26-28 at their main center in Ortigas. The eleven URFBC delegates came expectant of bringing home life-changing principles from the plenary messages delivered by Michael Ramsden, Dr. Samuel Chand, and Dr. Peter Tan-Chi, senior pastor of CCF. There were also separate workshops that addressed eight timely, vital, and practical topics: 1) Leadership Pathways, 2) Radical Love in Small Groups, 3) Creating and Sustaining Vibrant Church Multiplication, 4) Radical Love Across Cultures, 5) Understanding and Responding to the LGBT Community, 6) God's Design for Sex: Dealing with Pornography and Premarital Sex, 7) Radical Love at Home, and 8) A Christian Perspective on Dealing with Digital Addiction.

nary, to take extra steps of faith in loving as how Jesus does—intentional, relational, sacrificial, and missional. The truth that “radical love begets radical love” was reinforced through living witnesses, a number of brethren who came in front to share how God's extraordinary love could break pitch-black hearts, and tell that He can use us undeserving ones to pass on this kind of love. As one of them shared, “My discipler's life has spoken much louder than any preaching.” Real love commits itself completely. It's a life-on-life investment. It assumes responsibility and is not confined to convenience. But after all, it's still Jesus' sovereign hands who would radically reach out to radically change others' lives.

The event has really been a great eye-opener to more than 8,500 conferees from different parts of the world, and to the 546 volunteers who played a great role to its success. Aiming to share God's blessings through this conference, the delegates are preparing to echo the plenary and workshop messages to the whole URFBC family on February 5. It's sharing this P800-P1000 conference for FREE!

Like the first twelve, Jesus recruited us believers not just to be His faithful disciples, but to be radical DISCIPLES, too. With this year's theme, “Radical Love,” the IDC 2017 aimed to inspire Christians to love beyond borders of ordi-

So, see you later!



## Celebrating January Births

MARIA FLORIZA MAE ADRIAS

Last January 21st, the URFBC YP and Singles gathered together after the morning service to celebrate with the January birthday celebrants.

We had a lunch fellowship at the URFBC chapel. We first ate the delicious meal that was of course initiated through a prayer. Afterwards, with a glad heart we all sang “Salamat, Salamat” and the originally composed song “Dakilang, O Diyos.” Singing together for the Lord is the most wonderful way to praise and glorify Him. To bring out the energy of everyone, emcee Patricia Umengan led the ice-breaker. Few days ahead, some YP secretly prepared surprise gifts for the celebrants. When they opened the gifts, we were all happy because they appreciated the hand-designed shirts with their life-verses on it. The celebrants were given fun challenges that we all enjoyed.

The beautiful message was given by Pastor Christian Lauron on the verses 1 and 2 of Psalm 100 that says “Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs.” He made a point that singing or making music for God must be in a form that is pleasant to hear. If the musical instruments don't flow in harmony, then they only create chaotic sounds rather than music. Also, even if the lyrics, message and the voice sound excellent but the song doesn't reflect the life of the singer, then it shall be considered meaningless. Aside from prayer, singing hymns is a wonderful way to communicate with God. It mysteriously warms our heart and nourishes our soul.

We all are very much thankful to God for this gift of fellowship. Through the talents He has bestowed upon us, we will joyfully play music and sing for His glory all our lives.

## First Prayer And Fasting Week 2017

JULIUS ANDREW MANILA

**I**t's indeed soothing to know that in the vastness of universe, there is Jesus who knew our prayers and requests even before we utter a single word. Last January 16-19, the church held her year-opening prayer and fasting, another time when members of the church gathered together to pray and fast voluntarily, abstaining from food, drink, gadgets, or other object or activity to focus on prayer and fellowship with the Lord.

You can pray without fasting and fast without praying. But these two can go hand in hand. When combined, these could imply dedication and intimacy to give God the utmost glory and praise. Prayer and fasting is not about controlling God to answer your prayer requests, it's about allowing Him to take control over all your pleas and burdens, and relying to His provision, strength, grace, and love.

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# OUTREACH Gift Giving

JANENIAH DICDIQUIN

It's better to give than to receive. We know that God always pours His love into our hearts to flow onto others' lives. He Himself is the best example of generosity.

This January 7 in LRT and January 23 in GMA Village, the gift giving program successfully happened, with the help of Sis. Ethel Corpin who is part of AXEIA Group of Companies, the sponsor of the event. It was a tiring yet fulfilling day for the volunteers. Aside from physically-draining heat of the sun, we never expected that more people will attend. But because of God who gave us strength, we were able to handle and accommodate the number of people. We assured that those people didn't just receive material gifts but also spiritual blessing through some volunteers who delivered God's message.

Another thing that strengthened us was their smiles. It really lightened us whenever we see their smiles as they received our gifts. Those were just simple gifts, but it's not what really mattered because God always tells us that the state of our heart is more important than the size of our gift.

# BEAUTIFUL IN White

AALIYAH VERA RAYA

LOVE FELLOWSHIP

**T**o know one's value is important and the young ladies learned this on a "Ladies Of ValuE" (LOVE) Fellowship last 13th of January, Friday, at Nuvali, Sta. Rosa, Laguna. The gathering is entitled, "Beautiful in White" with the theme verse Isaiah 1:18: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." All ladies were wearing white.

We ate our delicious dinner there and each picked a number which was corresponding to a task. We enjoyed the special number, singing songs, and as well as the message. The message was delivered by Rona Pamela Escala, a YP adviser, where she shared the 7 secrets to sexual purity. The 7 secrets are: 1) Purity is a process, 2) Purity dreams of its future, 3) Purity is governed by its value, 4) Purity speaks boldly, 5) Purity loves its Creator at any cost, 6) Purity embraces wise guidance, and 7) Purity watches burning flames. We learned that we may have been born innocent, but we were NOT born pure. But God calls us to purity and He enables us to pursue it.

This fellowship became a blessing to everyone. We were reminded of what our value is. We are precious to God and we are His masterpiece; therefore, we should behave in the right way and make the right choices.

# Basketball Fellowship

RENZ CEDRIC ADRIAS

**L**ast January 8, the URFBC young men went to Binan, Laguna to have a sports fellowship hosted by the Binan Faith Christian Church.

Both churches gathered together to have physical and as well as spiritual strengthening. We introduced ourselves so everyone would be acquainted with each other. The two churches divided each member into teams and were designated to play in certain game times. Each team had their good game plan. The very sporty ambience energized all the players and they all played at their own best. Even though we're all exhausted, we appreciated and enjoyed the bonding time. After the game, we

went to Binan Faith Chapel and we shared real good spiritual and physical food. Pastor Chloe led our fellowship and he reinforced to us that all things are possible with Christ. He also made a point that even all of us have certain limitations, we must trust and commit ourselves to Christ because He is the only one who is limitless. We were also thankful for the food prepared by the ladies from the host church. When everyone finished their meals, we immediately went our way home because it was already late.

Our sport fellowship was a success and we praise and glorify God for our safety and this physical and spiritual strengthening.

# HISTORY in me: LOVED

EMMANUEL "JETHRO" UMENGAN

I'm not a good Christian. I lose more than I win. Blinded on what the world can give. I only trust myself. The truth is I'm a hostage of my own guilt, fear, shame and judgements. Yes, I can set perfection, standard and comfort, but I can't. Sin still covers up my heart and soul.

My life was like a note on a wrong chord. It's hard to move with purpose and open my eyes nor walk on straight line. This love alone is not enough. It's hard to be a good Christian if I'm a slave of my own lies. It came to the point that I cried and ask myself: "God, do you really love me?" Who am I to ask our God who loves us radically and pursues us when we're lost? But God speaks and brought my heart to life. By His Grace alone He gave His only Son Jesus to pay on the cross and die to save us. No one else could ever give the love He gave for us. His love is uncon-

ditional. His love is more than enough to remove my guilt, shame, fear and judgement. There's no distance too far to reach where He is. His love changes everything. His love is not based on what kind of sin we did or how good Christians we are. His love is based on how gracious He is that He died on the cross to take our place to save us sinners.

His detour stretches me out of my limits, so I fell on my knees to never stop leaning on Him. I just look through my heart and humbly pray, keep on learning His Word to know His desires for my life. I live by the truth that Jesus died for me. Being a Christian, it takes a ton of courage to follow His footsteps. I am no longer hostage of my sins. Thank you, Jesus; it's your relentless grace that saves me from falling. I am loved.

*I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST AND I NO LONGER LIVE, BUT Christ Lives in Me THE LIFE I NOW LIVE IN THE BODY, I LIVE BY FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME.*

GALATIANS 2:20