



ExcElla

CENTEX
Quarterly Newsletter
December 2007

CHRISTMAS DEFINED

Carol Atacador

The spirit of Christmas is as elusive as a butterfly this 2007. The Grinch has visited the Philippines in the issues and events in the last few months. There is much skepticism, mistrust, and disinterest. Even the Christmas lights and lanterns that capture the excitement of the season fade in the night. The spirit is missing and missing with it is hope.

Perhaps the letter of one CENTEX BATANGAS graduate can rekindle the message of hope in Christmas. There is peace, there is hope, there is a future deep in the heart of Hershey Gabi. Through excerpts from her letter, let us redefine and recapture what Christmas is all about.

"Good day! It's been a while since I left Centex. I miss the school so much. But if ever CENTEX offers secondary education, I won't be transferring because I want that another school will visualize how good CENTEX pupils are. I mean, it's not just one school who will see how good CENTEX is in molding pupils."

If a 12-year old can see how important it is to scatter our Good News to various schools and try to continue her studies with the values of CENTEX, then it is indeed a Christmas tale of hope.

"Monthly, I bag medals. In June I got bronze in the poster-making contest of our mission statement celebration. In July I got gold in the extemporaneous speech during our Nutrition month celebration. I had to convince everyone to eat ampalaya! In August I won gold in the impromptu speech to celebrate "Buwan ng Wika." In September I got the Family Teamwork Award unexpectedly. Almost all my family attended the kite making and kite-flying event. The last good news is that I am the Gold Awardee in our class."

Wouldn't you say this is the biggest Christmas treat for all of us? Our CENTEX students are the living messages scattered in various communities. They are the forces of change, the change so urgently needed now.

"I told you about these things not to brag or boast. I just wanted to make you happy. I want you to realize that after all those efforts, sacrifices and hardships you've done for us you can see the result of all your hardwork. I hope you are smiling now."

To all of you, our donors and partners in making sure that those who cannot afford can also avail of the quality education through CENTEX, know that you bring Christmas everyday to the lives of our CENTEX scholars. Where there is hope and love, there is the spirit of Christmas.

Hershey ends her letter with her dream, "This is my greatest wish...when I reach my dreams, I want to continue the good deed you started. I want CENTEX to have a bigger library, computer lab and science lab. I want them to experience what I am

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Let the Rain Come
Down...

Acrostics



having now at my present school. I want them to realize that poverty is not a hindrance to success. Just like me. Who would ever think that a student like me would be able to study at a school where tuition is so big that my parents would not be able to afford. But I am here! I believe nothing is impossible if you would just believe in yourself. One favor, a **REUNION**. I miss my BATCHMATES very much. I know it won't be hard for you, right?

I wish that through this letter, I was able to put a smile on your face even just for a while."

So there...despite the challenges and difficulties, our CENTEX scholars know how to change adversities into opportunities, poverty into a wealth of experience and dreams. They will be the keepers of the Christmas spirit ensuring that children will always hope and believe in Santa Claus. CENTEX proclaims...Yes, there is a Santa Claus!

A blessed Christmas to one and all. May you continue to carry the torch for the least of our brothers and sisters. May Christmas always be etched in your hearts as you continue to generously shower our scholars with your support. Remember, jolly old St. Nick lives in the dreams and wishes of the likes of Hershey Gabi.



CENTEX MANILA MAKES IT TO IDOL KA KID SPELLING QUIZ BEE FINALS

Once more, CENTEX students prove that indeed, the school is all about striving for excellence as two representatives from CENTEX Manila makes it to the NCR wide finals of Idol Ka Kid Spelling Quiz Bee!

Out of 12 contestants coming from both private and public schools in the NCR Region, Joemel Ann Tanudra, Grade 2 and Alyssa Andrei Ramos, Grade 3, both from CENTEX Manila were the two contestants who survived cluster 2's semi-finals last November 17, 2007. The two students will again compete in the finals round on Saturday, November 24, 2007. The contest is patterned after the Scripps National Spelling Contest held in the United States wherein students orally spell words. The quiz bee's champion will receive the following prizes: trophy for the school, a laptop, vitamins from Cecon and free tickets to Enchanted Kingdom. Sponsors Miriam Webster, Cecon and Enchanted Kingdom made this contest possible.

Again, we would like to wish our two contestants good luck on their finals round! You are already winners in our hearts!

CENTEX BATANGAS WINS IN ROSARY MONTH CONTESTS

CENTEX Batangas students participated in the Rosary Month related contests sponsored by our Mother of Perpetual Holy Parish last October 2007.

Chosen participants competed in the Poster Making Contest, Quiz Bee Competition and Luwa. Eddyson Ambon and Isaac Medrano, both from Grade six, Azie Calinao and Jeancel Calapit, from Grade five joined the slogan and poster making contests. Calapit won third place.

Meanwhile, JayPee Acuzar of Grade six and Vanessa Claribel Medrano of Grade five joined the Quiz Bee Competition and won first place.

Furthermore, Kristine Joy Aguire and John McNeil Mendoza from Grade four joined the Luwa Contest. Mendoza place first.

Building on Relationships



The annual three day teachers' training was held last October 24-26, 2007 at the Mariapolis Center, Tagaytay City. This year, the teachers focused on the topic, Relationships: with self, with students and parents, with Administration and my family. A total of 90 educators from CENTEX Manila, CENTEX Batangas, Buklod Bahayan, Food for Hungry Minds and high school teachers from St. Bridget's College, Alitagtag, gathered together and



truly an enriching experience for the teachers because human sexuality was presented to them as all about their relationship with self, others and God. The day's session helped the teachers recognize and appreciate themselves and other's better through human sexuality. Each was challenged to pass on their new understanding of human sexuality to their student according to their level of understanding.



renewed their passion and commitment for teaching as each one reflected on the relationships that they were able to form with the people around them.

CENTEX Director, Carol Atacador, formally opened the event as she reminded and inspired the teachers of their transforming power to shape the lives of their students. Consequently, it was also her who handled the session of the day. She walked the teachers through discovering the school culture and climate that each institution is projecting to their community. This session made teachers realize the priorities that they have in this stage of their lives.

Sr. Mila Sandoval, SSPS, handled the training's second day. The day focused on the topic human sexuality. This was

Ms. Ellen Zaldariaga, an elementary teacher from Beacon School International handled the culminating topic of the three-day training. Her session entitle, Igniting Learning gave tips to the teachers on how they can make learning fun for their students.



She shared with them effective learning strategies and activities which the teachers themselves enjoyed doing as they became learners themselves.

Truly, after this training, teachers are again ready to face the challenge and the responsibility of shaping the lives of the students in their schools!



Welcome Sir Mon!



The CENTEX family would like to welcome its newest member, Dr. Ramon Miranda, as he becomes the school's new Deputy Director. Sir Mon, as we call him, is an educator and scientist by profession. For 6 years, he was the Executive Director of the Philippine Science High School system, with 9 campuses nationwide.

As former Associate Professor at the Institute of Chemistry, UP Diliman, he taught graduate and undergraduate courses in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He was a Visiting Scientist at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York, U.S.A. in 1999-2000. Sir Mon also had his stint as a teacher-host for the PTV4 show "Chemistry in Action." He earned his Ph.D. degree in Biological Chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on a Fullbright Grant and MIT Fellowship. He graduated magna cum laude from UP Diliman with a BS degree in Chemistry. Aside from his love for the sciences, Mr. Mon Miranda is also an artist and musician himself. He is fond of listening to classical music; he plays the piano and loves photography and film.

Welcome to the CENTEX family Sir Mon and we all look forward to working with you!

“Let the rain come down, and wake my dreams, let it wash away my sanity...” by: Lois Anne Gabriel



These are the lines from one of my favorite songs. Usually, rain represents problems and sadness at times. That’s why I think Mariah Carey says that she can make it through the rain, just to prove that she’s strong enough to face problems and solve them. In another case, rain symbolizes hope. Like in the lines mentioned above, rain may mean hope for others. It may also mean new beginnings. Maybe because everytime it rains, bright sunshine appears afterwards.

Scientists say that rain is the result of the water cycle, on which water first evaporates into water vapor, and then forms clouds and falls down as rain. Rain is one of the miracles of the earth. Without rain, plants will die, animals will suffer from extreme thirst, rivers will dry up, and eventually affecting people. For the past two months, our country experienced “dry spell.” Farmlands dried up and our water supply was cut short. If not for the three typhoons that visited the country this August, drought would have been declared.

Now, everytime rain comes, I feel that we are starting to get back on our toes. And like what I’ve mentioned, rain brings hope to people. And I’m one of them. It, however, symbolizes sadness as well. Too much of it causes devastation. Remember Milenyo? It left Metro Manila with too much destruction. Lives were taken. Sadness emerged. Milenyo left a scar on everyone’s lives.

Whether it brings hope or sadness – time to think of a lost loved one, reminisce of melancholic memories, problems conquered – rain is just something out of our control.

ACROSTICS by Princess Noriega

S - hare your feelings with others

A - sk yourself about how you can move on

D - ig for those happy moments that could defeat your sadness.

J - oin other friends and share a moment

O - r show that you’re glad to be with them

Y - ell with joy and have more friends

CENTEX all occasion cards for Sale!

Proceeds of the sale will be for the benefit of the scholars of CENTEX, Ayala Foundation, Inc.

Photography by Carol E. Atacador

Available in box of 16 at
Php 350.00
and box of 8 at
Php 200.00

