



THE OPEN WORD



United Bible
Societies

ANNIVERSARY EDITION 120th PBS Anniversary and 100 Years of the Cebuano Bible Translation

Generation
2 Generation

120 Years of Bible Proclamation

THE OPEN WORD

is the official information organ
of the Philippine Bible Society
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CONTENTS

- 2 *PBS Through the Years*
- 3 *Remembering the May They Be One Bible Campaign, Embracing the MTBO+*
- 4 *The Adopt a Church Program Goes to Lubang Island*
Adopt a Church Frequently Asked Questions
- 5 *Adopt a Church 2019 Generosity Report*
- 6 *The Word Proclaimed and the Lives Changed*
- 7 *You Gain and You Give: Trauma Healing Insights from Past Participants*
- 8 *Word Riders Philippines: The Journey Has Only Just Begun*
Bible Museum Updates
National Bible Month 2020 Announcements
- 9 *Be a Bible Ambassador Today*

VISION

“A Transformed Filipino People through God’s Word”

MISSION

“Making the Bible Known”

CORE VALUES

F – Faith in the triune God and obedience to God’s Word
(Matt. 28:19-20; Ps. 119:7-8; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

O – Obedience to the law of the land
(1 Pet. 2:13-17)

R – Respect for all people
(Rom. 12:10, 15-16, 18)

C – Commitment to inter-confessional relationships
(Eph. 4:4-6)

E – Excellence and integrity
(Phil. 4:8; Prov. 4:24-26)

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



*“Sing to the LORD,
and praise him!
Proclaim every day the good
news that he has saved us.
Proclaim his glory
to the nations,
his mighty deeds
to all peoples.”*

Psalm 96:2-3
Good News Translation (GNT)

Our journey as one PBS family in making the Bible known is—as of this year—120 years long. What a beautiful and awesome testimony of the Lord's faithfulness to the Bible Society ministry! To our dear reader, decades may have already passed but God's ever-reassuring presence has made each moment sweeter than the one before. He alone gives us the strength and resources to **make the Bible known**.

We at PBS have dedicated our lives to be of service to Him. Let us recall what Psalm 96:2-3 (GNT) says: "...Proclaim every day the good news that he has saved us." The reality of God's love is so transformative and so life-changing that it cannot be ignored.

Indeed, He has given us every reason to sing joyfully, to dance freely, and to worship Him in unity. This special edition of *The Open Word* is dedicated first and foremost to God, our Heavenly Father, who has blessed each step of the journey towards our 120th Anniversary. And with Bible translation being at the heart of what we do as a ministry, it is only apt that our celebration as an organization goes hand in hand with our commemoration of 100 years of Cebuano Bible translation work in the Philippines.

In this issue, you will see a basic milestone map of memorable events and specific years throughout PBS history. We thank God for His generosity and invaluable guidance, especially when we decided to repackage and relaunch the May They Be One (MTBO) campaign into the May They Be One Plus (MTBO+) Bible campaign. Looking at our most recent Scripture engagement initiative under this relaunched campaign, the Adopt a Church Program (AACP), we can only smile and say "Thank You" to God for supplying the heavenly wisdom we needed and for allowing the said program to bear much fruit. You will be able to read more about the latest AACP updates in the pages to come.

We have also included special features for each of our other Scripture engagement initiatives. For our Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH) and Trauma Healing Program (THP) features, we have provided a collection of testimonies that will introduce you to a unique and diverse cast of characters. But there is one thing that unites them—they were all transformed by the power and saving truth found in God's Word. We also created a comprehensive yet reader-friendly info sheet on the latest Word Riders Philippines (WRP) statistics, so that you can see how far we have come since that first Bible ride in Bulacan back in 2015.

There is much to discover and to delight in as you read this special edition of *The Open Word*. The stories, testimonies, and statistics shared within these pages testify to the greatness of our God. We thank Him wholeheartedly for giving us the opportunity to be stewards and ambassadors for the Bible cause. We treasure this mission that He has entrusted to us. May we bring Him all glory and honor in all the ways that we can!


Dr. Nora G. Lucero
General Secretary

PBS Through the Years

1899

Rev. Jay C. Goodrich arrives in Manila and officially begins Bible Society work in the Philippines.

1957

Rev. Angel B. Taglucop is appointed as the first Filipino General Secretary.

1967

Interconfessional partnership for Bible translation begins.

1983

The PBS bylaws was amended to include NCCP, PCEC, and other non-affiliated Christian groups or churches in the PBS Board of Trustees.

2006

PBS fulfills its dream of having a new BibleHouse constructed in its permanent location at 890 United Nations Avenue, Manila.

2018

This is the year with the most number of launched Scripture offerings: six (6) New Testaments and two (2) Bibles.

1905

The Tagalog *Ang Biblia* was published, making it the first ever translation of the whole Bible into a Philippine language.

1966

The Philippine Bible Society (PBS) is granted an autonomous and national status.

1982

Pres. Ferdinand Marcos signs the Presidential Proclamation 2242, declaring the last week of November as National Bible Week. Succeeding proclamations No. 44 and 1067 institutionalized the annual celebration of National Bible Week every last week of January.

1994

PBS becomes a Bible Society that is capable of financially supporting its own operations and contributing to the global fellowship of Bible Societies.

2017

President Rodrigo Duterte proclaimed the whole month of January as National Bible Month.

2019

PBS celebrates its 120th Anniversary and commemorates 100 years of Cebuano Bible translation.

*Generation
& Generation*

Remembering the May They Be One Bible Campaign, Embracing the MTBO+



“With the coming of the MTBO Bible in my life, my faith in God grew stronger. I came to know Him deeper through its pages as I read it daily. At around six in the morning, I read the Bible to have a fresh start. When I am about to sleep, I read it all again. The Bible helps me become more connected with God. Since this Bible is affordable, I also encourage my neighbors to get a copy of it.”

-Raquel A. Arenal (Quezon Province)



“Before I start my day, the first thing I do is read the Bible—at least a page a day. I read the Bible every morning and before bedtime. My entire family reads the Bible, too. I have a son and also an adopted child; they both have the MTBO Bible and they read it. ‘Read it every day,’ I encourage them. It is because our life depends on the Word of God daily.”

-Judith E. Morano (Olongapo City)



“The MTBO Bible was really needed by families especially in the far-flung barangays under our parish. We have 15 barangays under my former parish—St. Jude Parish Corcuera, Romblon. I took several MTBO Bibles and gave them to the families there. Since they did not have enough money to buy for themselves, I just gave the Bibles to them free of charge. Now, I would ask something about the Bible and the parishioners can answer. As a result of the Bible distribution to our parishioners, they became more active in the parish. More members took on leadership roles and led Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC) gatherings. Others became active catechists.”

-Rev. Fr. Cornello Magramo (Cogon, Romblon)

The May They Be One (MTBO) Bible campaign started in November 2008. After several years, it was eventually repackaged and relaunched as the May They Be One Plus (MTBO+) Bible campaign. We incorporated the “Plus” to signify our deeper commitment to our new focus: spiritual engagement. More than the Bible distributions that we organize and execute, we want to give Bible recipients access to the tools and training that they need to better appreciate, understand, and enjoy their reading of God’s Word.

Our latest addition to PBS’s list of flagship programs—the Adopt a Church Program (AACP)—falls under the scope of the MTBO+ Bible campaign.

The Adopt a Church Program Goes to Lubang Island

It takes a fellowship of God-centered and dedicated servants to help the Body of Christ grow! This is true in Lubang—the largest island at the northern end of Mindoro—where an Adopt a Church Program (AACP) activity was recently conducted. There were 13 churches and seven PBS staff and volunteers that participated in the Bible distribution and training session last August 18-20, 2019.

A team composed of volunteers from the Philippine Bible Society (PBS) and AACP partner Union Church of Manila (UCM) spearheaded the eight-hour Bible distribution and training. Our PBS team was led by Mrs. Perry Cartera, Associate General Secretary; Mrs. Kay Maatubang, Resource Development Manager; Mr. Ivan Gervacio, Church Relations Officer; and Ms. Aura Villarosa, Multimedia and Promotions Assistant. The UCM team was composed of husband-and-wife tandem Mr. Jonathan and Dr. Mayette Yara, along with Mr. Karl Bañas. About 65 pastors and church leaders received 650 copies of the MTBO Bible and 130 WDA discipleship materials.

The trip of three hours by land and six hours by sea bore much fruit. The participants expressed joy and excitement for the discipleship training, which provided them insights about the importance of establishing small groups for Bible study in their churches. There were three breakout sessions where participants were asked about their dreams for their children, their plans for helping their children achieve their goals, and the reasons why believers do not share the Gospel. Through these breakout sessions, participants came to realize that discipleship is a journey which entails TLC (tender loving care) of the “flock” as their spiritual children. Moreover, pastors and leaders have come to know that their fears in sharing the Gospel to others are surmountable through the WDA training.

The AACP activity concluded with a series of interviews about how the Bible changed the participants’ lives and how it helped them in their walk with God. The team also got to know the story of Ptr. Edwin Trajico of the Church of God (Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost) in Tilik about his extraordinary life as a pastor by day and a fisherman by night. The interview will be showcased in the AACP documentary to be launched during the PBS 120th Anniversary celebration in November 2019.

Adopt a Church Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the rationale behind the AACP?

A: The AACP is a national program which addresses Bible poverty across the country. The need is matched to the generosity of individuals, churches, and organizations that share the passion for missions.

Q: What happens during an Adopt a Church Program activity?

A: The Bibles are distributed to the participants with a one-day training to help them grow as Christians. As such, they can effectively guide their community in forming small Bible study groups.

Q: What is the role of PBS in the AACP?

A: PBS believes that it takes a fellowship of believers to grow the Body of Christ. Thus, PBS provides the platform for donors who have the heart for ministry and connect them with poor churches and parishes that cannot afford their own Bibles.

Q: What is the role of the Donor in the AACP?

A: The Donor gives financial support to fund the Bibles, discipleship materials, and biblical training for the adopted churches or parishes. The donor is the sower in the ministry and if willing, can take part in the Bible distribution and visitation of the churches or parishes adopted. In such cases, the donor will shoulder his own transportation and logistical expenses.

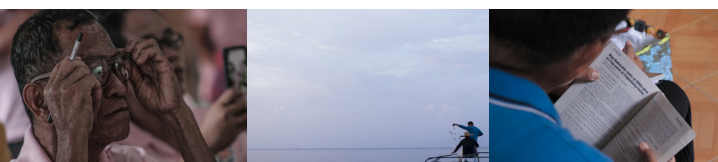
Q: What is the role of the Recipient in the AACP?

A: The Recipient (adopted church) is responsible for starting a discipleship program using the Bibles and materials it has received, and for providing updates such as reports and testimonials within three months upon acceptance of the Scripture materials.

Q: Is AACP available in the provinces?

A: Yes. Since its launch in March 2018, the AACP has been brought to different churches and parishes nationwide.

The program prioritizes geographically isolated and economically depressed sites in remote islands, mountainous regions, and other unserved and underserved communities. These areas may be separated from mainstream society and are more difficult to reach due to transportation constraints and unpredictable weather conditions.



WHAT IS THE ADOPT A CHURCH PROGRAM?

The Adopt a Church Program (AACP) is a program to connect churches to help one another eradicate Bible poverty. It aims to raise the awareness on the importance of the Bible in the life of the church. It provides leaders with the training they need to help their members have a deeper understanding and love for God's Word.

August 19, 2019
Lubang Island

APRIL 22, 2019
Philippine Bible Society
UN Avenue, Manila

JUNE 26, 2019
Sablayan,
Occidental Mindoro

JUNE 24, 2019
Calapan, Oriental Mindoro

MAY 30, 2019
Camotes Island

BREAK FREE FROM BIBLE POVERTY



134

churches reached

2019 GOAL: 700 CHURCHES



7,790

Bibles distributed

2019 GOAL: 60,000 BIBLES



1,785

discipleship materials
distributed

2019 GOAL: 1,200
DISCIPLESHIP MATERIALS



461

leaders trained

2019 GOAL: 1,200 LEADERS

How can I adopt a church/parish?

To be part of this program either by adopting a church
or signing up for adoption,
please contact **Karl Ivan Gervacio, PBS Church Relations Officer,**
at **0933-861-9041** or **(02) 524-5337.**

You may also send an email to **imgervacio@bible.org.ph**

The Word Proclaimed and the Lives Changed

FAITH COMES BY HEARING (FCBH)

THE “FIRST TIME THAT COUNTS”

Obo-Manobo tribe Chieftain Federico Gumbay, along with the members of his village, have spent their entire lives on the mountains. Most of them were animists and can neither read nor write. But the Proclaimer provided by PBS's Faith Comes by Hearing (FCBH) team paved the way for this community to hear God's Word for the first time. Federico witnessed his fellow villagers' joy and affirmed that they were indeed very happy. He further added, “Jesus brought life to their village. Many from the far-flung villages would also go to our gatherings to listen to the Proclaimer as it proclaims the Word of God.”



Federico Gumbay
(Davao)

THE “WAIT” THAT IS WORTH IT

Annalie Ogwon and her fellow school moms gather in solidarity every day at the school's waiting area. They all look forward to the dismissal bell, because then they would be just a few minutes away from seeing the faces of their beloved children. But during their waiting time, they would collectively listen to the Proclaimer provided by a catechist within the area. Indeed, no time is wasted, especially as we work to proclaim God's Word and make the Bible known. Annalie shared with us her simple prayer: “May the inspirational words that come out [of the Proclaimer] always sink into our hearts and be seen in our lives to the praise of our Father God in heaven!”



Annalie Ogwon
(Davao)

THE “BIG C” THAT MATTERS

Despite being diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer, Corazon Iyog maintains a positive outlook on life. She finds joy and strength from God's Word through her practice of listening to the Scriptures via her Bible Listening Group's (BLG) Proclaimer. And while the letter “C” can stand for many words—like “Cancer” or “Chemotherapy”—at this point in her life, it seems like the only “big C” is Christ Himself. Corazon shared, “If we have cancer, we may or may not be healed. If we don't have cancer, we will also depart from this world. And so what better way to be prepared and find peace with our Creator than to find comfort through His Word?”



Corazon Iyog
(Davao del Sur)



The Proclaimer is a device that plays a recording of the New Testament, dramatized with music and other sound effects.

Faith Comes by Hearing (FCBH) is first and foremost an international audio Bible ministry that strives “to record and provide the Word of God in every translated language.” Here in the Philippines, the FCBH team prioritizes local languages and dialects. FCBH Philippines exists as a joint effort with several organizations such as the Hosanna Ministries, United Bible Societies, and the Philippine Bible Society. Though the main tool that the FCBH program uses is the device known as the Proclaimer, ministry workers also employ other methods of sharing God's Word. They make the Scriptures available for traditional reading (printed Bibles), easy viewing (the Gospel Film Project), and convenient studying (Bible.is app).

You Gain and You Give:

Trauma Healing Insights from Past Participants

A testimony by Jean Fornoles from Marikina City, Metro Manila

"I thank God for the opportunity He gave to the Sampaloc Bible Christian Community (SBCC), for us to attend the Trauma Healing session. All the lessons I learned from the session were new to me. I have been reading books about healing from the wounds of the heart written by Christian authors—some of them are pastors, psychiatrists, and psychologists. I had a keen interest on the subject matter, since I was going through depression and anxiety disorder. I wanted to understand what was happening to me—what was the cause aside from hormonal imbalance (according to the medical point of view) and how do I stop relying on medication to fix my condition? One thing I have learned from these writings is that the disorders are manifestations of a wounded heart. However, each of the authors had their own approaches on the subject matter. The points discussed were helpful to me. But it was hard to consolidate the different approaches to come up with a simple one that I could share with others who were going through the same pain.

The Trauma Healing session provided me with a structured approach to heal the wounded heart with the Scriptures as its foundation. The concept of trauma was clearly defined; the pathway to healing (the arc of healing) and grieving was discussed in detail and was easy to understand. For me, the most significant part is when we help the wounded person bring his or her pain to the cross of Jesus Christ because only Christ can heal the brokenhearted.

I would definitely integrate the Trauma Healing in my ministry, because I am convinced that we are all in this [brokenhearted] condition. It is especially true for the women in the poor communities where our church has started sharing the Gospel. These women are vulnerable and they do not have the power to defend themselves. My plan for the elderlies who have suffered from poverty all their lives—both economically and spiritually—is this: first, to share the principles of Trauma Healing with them, and second, to encourage them to attend a Trauma Healing session. So, they too can experience the healing of Jesus in their hearts and be channels of His healing to other women. To the praise of our God and Savior



GAIN new knowledge

"I gained new knowledge about dealing with trauma. I learned about the grief journey or process and the steps toward a new beginning. I also learned the importance of good listening."

—Joseph Agot

GAIN newfound freedom and peace

"I feel thankful and very glad to have gone through this Trauma Healing session. Through it, I was able to address those traumatic experiences in my life which still affect me in the present. I felt liberated from the burdens. I was also encouraged to go through the process of forgiveness to give myself peace and allow myself to move on. It feels good on the inside."

—Jayk Guylaine L. Magistrado

GIVE others a chance to heal

"I want to apply my learnings to the youth in our Child Development Center to help them, as well as their parents, who are going through trauma."

—Joseph Agot

GIVE others opportunities to learn

"I am planning to have a discussion with my colleagues about the need to have Trauma Healing sessions, so that more people would understand the process a traumatic person needs to undergo."

—Lito B. Diaz

The Trauma Healing Program (THP) was launched by the Philippine Bible Society in partnership with the American Bible Society (ABS) in November 2016. Trained facilitators guide program participants in addressing the different causes of their pain and grief by first answering the question, "Why do we suffer?" Our THP is grounded on the "Healing the Wounds of Trauma" approach of ABS' Trauma Healing Institute (THI).

Many years have passed but we know that the work is far from over. It is our prayer that we will be able to train more facilitators to help thousands of trauma victims nationwide to recover, heal, and enter into a new victorious life with Christ.

#PraywithPBS

Word Riders Philippines: The Journey Has Only Just Begun

Riding to place a Bible in every Filipino home

The Word Riders Philippines, founded in 2015, is an organized group of big bike enthusiasts who come together for yearly Bible Rides to different provinces in the Philippines. These men and women are passionate and determined in bringing God's Word to Grade 8 students nationwide.

Aside from distributing Scripture materials, they conduct lively classroom discussions and educational games to help the students build a strong foundation for their daily Bible reading practice.



Bulacan Bible Ride
June 26, 2015
475 Bibles



Bataan Bible Ride
October 1-3, 2015
December 4, 2016
985 Bibles



Gapan Bible Ride
February 5, 2016
356 Bibles



Caliraya Bible Ride
July 1, 2016
738 Bibles



Northern Bible Ride
November 16-19, 2016
2,795 Bibles

Special Bible Ride
February 4-5, 2017
35,000+ Bibles

2015 and beyond!

11 Bible Rides conducted
11 provinces visited
38 national high schools reached



Baler Bible Ride
June 22, 2017
1,000 Bibles



Zambales Bible Ride
November 9-10, 2017
1,000 Bibles



Quezon Bible Ride
July 20-22, 2018
1,844 Bibles
July 18-20, 2019
1,070 Pinoy NT



Mindoro Bible Ride
November 9-10, 2018
1,003 Bibles



Daet, Camarines Norte Bible Ride
February 21-23, 2019
1,879 Pinoy NT

PRAISE ITEM

As of 2019, we have distributed more than 47,000 Scripture materials (Bibles and New Testament portions) nationwide!

But this is only the beginning! Please keep the Word Riders Philippines program, its leaders, and its members in your prayers. May there be more Bible rides to come!

Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path.

Psalms 119:105

Good News Translation (GNT)



Our Bible Museum presents the long and beautiful journey of the Scriptures throughout history in an informative yet engaging way. Book your tour with us today and experience the joy of knowing more about God's amazing Word!

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- ✓ Friendly and knowledgeable tour guides
- ✓ A 1-hour tour suitable for all ages
- ✓ Fascinating facts about the Bible and its history

Book online: bit.ly/PBS-BibleMuseum
or

Call: (02) 524-5337 or (02) 526-7777 loc 634

Email: biblemuseum@bible.org.ph

2020 National Bible Month

Theme:

**#2020Vision: The Bible Transforms
and Unites the Nation**

DATES TO REMEMBER

- National Bible Month: January
- National Bible Week: January 19-25, 2020
- National Bible Sunday: January 26, 2020
- National Bible Day: January 30, 2020

Mark your calendars now!

How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in harmony!

Psalms 133:1

Good News Translation (GNT)

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13

New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE)

BE A BIBLE AMBASSADOR!

PRAY. SOW. REAP.

Becoming a member of the Bible Society is one step in responding to God's call.

If you are willing to fulfill the following:

- ✓ Embrace and promote PBS's vision, mission, and core values
- ✓ Support PBS in prayer, time, and resources
- ✓ Be endorsed by an active PBS member

THEN YOU QUALIFY AS A MEMBER OF PBS!

OUR SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS:

Adopt a Church Program

May They Be One Plus (MTBO+) Bible Campaign

Word Riders Philippines

Trauma Healing Program

**Faith Comes
By Hearing**

Bible Museum

**National Bible
Month**

Bible Relevance in Modern Times Seminar

Do any of these resonate with you? Want to learn more?

Come and visit us—let's talk about it!

PBS Ministry Center

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Mobile: 0933 861 9041

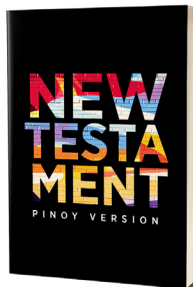


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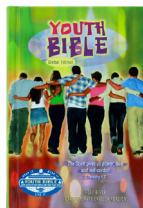
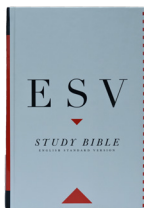
SCRIPTURE OFFERINGS



New Testament: Pinoy Version



MTBO+ Bible



ESV Study Bible | GCEV Denim Bible | GCEV Youth Bible | The Lion First Bible | Look & Find Series



WOW Coloring Books and WOW Storybooks

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Lazada

lazada.com.ph/shop/biblehouse

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