
Family Circus Children's Ministry Update

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"Poker Face"

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Missionary to Asia's Little Ones

Hi again, Friends,

If we sat with you in your home (as we have with many) and shared with you what God is doing in the lives of the kids and the people He sends to us, neither of us would have a *Poker Face*. You would see the tears in our eyes, just like now as I write this email thinking of the kids we've been able to save and those who we have lost. Already this year the list of those who have died is growing.

This past week we were called in to help one of our first Family Circus kids. Over the past 15 years we've helped save her life numerous times, by taking her and her siblings to the hospital and by providing medical care when infections would have killed her and given food when she was starving. She's a young mother now, and when we took her into the hospital, the impact on our wallet began immediately as the tests showed her life was at risk as she was hemorrhaging. We prayed with her and as she held our hand she gripped it as hard as she could as the pain was eating into her, threatening both her and the unborn child. She survived, but the child is with the Lord. We knew that if she was to survive, it would require us to open our wallet (it's tied to the heart). Four days later she's getting stronger and she should live. Thank God these are not tears of guilt caused by regret or inaction, instead they are tears of thankfulness. He said, "*Thank you, when I was sick you cared for me.*"

You are likely aware that the generosity of God's people through both prayer and finances enable us with God's blessing to minister to thousands of people in the Family Circus tent, where we hold dramatized services each week. Out of those that come, about two thousand are severely malnourished children that we are able to help feed them seven healthy meals each week.

Our level of responsibility increases as we accept God's challenge to feed the hungry and to bring the little ones to Jesus. The Bible says, "To whom much is given, much is required."

Sandy and I were in a committee meeting last week. Rather than complain about committee meetings and etc, that comes with the added responsibility, so we have chosen to be thankful.

During the meeting it was pointed out that our finances during 2009 were consistently \$1,100 per month less than what we needed for our operating expenses (The lacking funds have been coming from personal funds. (We don't have a problem with using money we have in our pocket, because we are doing what is in our heart.) The man chairing the meeting said, "Operating a ministry in the red is unhealthy and cannot be sustained; it needs to be corrected." The remedy is simple, Either cut expenses or pray and ask God to help increase the monthly operating funds, or both." One of the suggestions they gave was that we cancel one or two services every month, whatever it would take to minister within the funds we receive.

I evidentially wouldn't do too well at *Poker*, as my *face* fell and heart sank, as I thought of cancelling services and not being able to bring the kids in to Family Circus. Just as it is important for children to have regular meals, it is also important to be able to teach them each week about Jesus. (In the past we've had to make the hard decision and cancel services due to a lack of funds.) To the person making the suggestion it was evident he saw *my face fall* and could read my thoughts, because he said, "*Be prepared to do it and talk to God. He has provided for the ministry to the children in the past and He can provide for them now.*" As the conversation continued, they suggested for us to share with our friends the need for additional operating expenses and see what God would do."

No I don't have a good Poker Face, as my face reflected the sadness in my heart to think about having to limit our services to the kids. We are committed to being good stewards, and even now are doing what we can to cut back on expenses in order to bring our expenses in line with our income. We know this is healthy, and believe it is for the best. Will you pray with us? We have about 1,700 families attending Family Circus each week. We rent public transportation especially jeepney's, to bring many of them in from low income areas around town.

The operating funds we are lacking (\$1,100) comes out to about .65 cents a month per family.

Please pray with us, and if God has blessed you, please consider making a monthly commitment to Family Circus Children's ministry.

For the King & His kids,

Darrell & Sandy Blatchley

Family Circus Children's Ministry - Davao City PHILIPPINES