



FALL/WINTER 2014

Volume 2 Number 2

A Newsletter of WIN - USA Ladies

A PROMISE FULFILLED

Marita Villafuerte Pierce

***“People want the Healing but do not like the Hurt. You will have the Healing but first you will Hurt. People want a Miracle but do not want pain. I will give you a Miracle but first you will go through the process of pain. My Grace will be sufficient. I will be With you.*”**



With the best of my chemo-doused brain, the above statements were what I heard one night during my first week of hospitalization at the Makati Medical Center, Philippines between Nov. 19-23, 2012 my first few days of confinement.

It was not an audible voice but a clear gentle voice in my head. I believe these words were a revelation and a Promise from God. Like a delectable sandwich, **this Personal Promise was rich in Peace, lavished with Love and splashed with Joy of the heavenly kind.** These words encouraged me and prepared me for the rough ride I was about to go through in the coming months.

In spite of the 24-hour pain medications infused in my body, plus the pain patch on my arm and optional



pain pendant I can press anytime I desire more pain relief, I was in tremendous pain. My body felt so weak. I felt that a part of me was dying. I was not paralyzed but I felt like it as I did not want to move my back because it hurt so badly. Life was in super slow motion mode. It took many days for the doctors to find out what was wrong with me. I was subjected to a full MRI head to toe scan lasting for about 7 hours in which I fainted on and off. The ordeal ended at midnight. The doctors did not like what they saw so the following day, the doctor ordered another MRI scan.

It took two MRI scans, a cancelled brain surgery and several days of blood tests before a hematologist came to see me for a medical diagnosis, about 4-5 days after my arrival in the hospital. The God of Perfect Timing spoke to me, probably on my third night to prepare me for what is to come.

By the time the hematologist came into my room one afternoon to give me a supposedly surprising diagnosis, I was no longer surprised. Physically present was my private nurse and I. My husband was still up in the clouds across the Greenwich Meridian traveling to come visit me. My parents were in the province and my siblings, all five of them, were all traveling somewhere. I assured the doctor that I was (emotionally) strong enough to receive his news.

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A Promise Fulfilled

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“Just give it to me straight-forward in clear plain English,” I requested.

“Congratulations, you just won the lottery,” was the doctor’s seemingly sarcastic announcement. The rest I re-phrased based on my memory. — *You have Multiple Myeloma, a kind of blood cancer that over-produces useless blood which has caused lesions on your bones, thus you felt like your back broke. You have many tumors in your brain as part of the lesions. You will need to do chemotherapy.*

My nurse got nervous. A tsunami of tears and swells of shock hit my parents as soon as they heard the news. The news rocked my husband’s world. My sister Mylene, then in New York, frantically researched on the best alternatives for me and missed sleep for weeks.

If not for that divine nocturnal promise I received before I heard the doctor’s diagnosis, I may have been scared or shocked but I was not. I had been bedridden for almost two weeks and have resigned to a serious condition. My body was so weak to respond to any more shocking news so I was numb. The past two weeks have been way too dramatic beyond my imagination. Grit and the grace of God have preserved me thus far. I trusted God to be watching over me. My specific prayer was that whatever my condition was, I hope it would not be brain related.

A few days before the final diagnosis, my neurologist made a schedule to open my brain to check on the tumors that surrounded my brain. My brain operation was postponed until further notice to give way for more blood tests. Several series of specialized blood tests revealed Multiple Myeloma, which solved the mystery. My bones were so weak that it literally threatened to fall apart when I had the sneeze attack. Imagine a ramshackle building that collapses just by a toddler’s touch.

Although Multiple Myeloma is not diagnosed in stages to determine its intensity, unlike other cancer types, my doctor advised me that my myeloma was at stage 3 to impress the severity of my situation.

Since it caused multiple bone lesions all over my body, my delicate bone situation was stage 4 cancer. And by the way, Multiple Myeloma is incurable. Chemotherapy and possibly stem cell transplant may extend the life of patient up to at least 5 years based on recent science.

My Philippine-based doctors coordinated with MD Anderson Texas for my first chemotherapy to make sure that the former will follow the latter’s guide since I was being prepared to be strong enough to travel back to Texas (my residence) to continue my treatment there.

The first chemotherapy strengthened my frame enough to enable me to get up and out of bed and



learn to sit down, walk and mildly move about again. It reduced the biggest tumor sitting close to the tip of my spine to almost 50%. At the height of my helplessness, I could not move but lay flat in bed. I was propelled to momentary unconsciousness every time blood was drawn from me. I could not carry myself. I lost so much weight since it was hard to eat when you lay flat on bed. My muscles atrophied and my legs resembled Pinocchio’s.

After the first chemotherapy, just about Christmas time 2012 when the world was celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, I resurrected. I began

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God's Promise - I Will Be With You

Marita Hernandez

"I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. . . . As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you or forsake you. ~ Joshua 1:3-5

After the laying on of hands, Joshua received his mission order from the Lord: "Get ready to possess the land I have promised to Israel." Joshua was simply continuing a long-standing mission order.

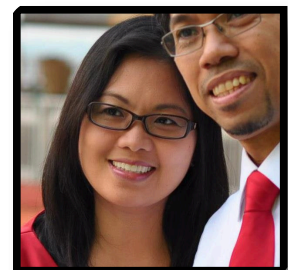
As we crossed the Jordan, from Singapore to New Jersey, I had to realize that my husband and I were tasked to fulfill a long-standing order. Generally, it is to bring the church to its full potential as the 'salt and light' of its community. Specifically and even strategically, this is what we still have to discover.

What gives me peace in my heart today is to realize that we are simply continuing what was already begun, fulfilling what was already envisioned and what was originally promised. Joshua was instructed to cross the Jordan, as originally planned. And with this comes the original promises of God (v. 3-4). As well as, the enablement (v.5).

So we do not have to fear and be pressured with expectations. We just have to be strong and courageous. Why? Because both the vision and the promises that comes with it are always daunting, always beyond our capacities. But as the Lord was with Moses, He will be with Joshua - this we have to remember. There will be old as well as new challenges but in all of these the Lord will "never leave you nor forsake you."

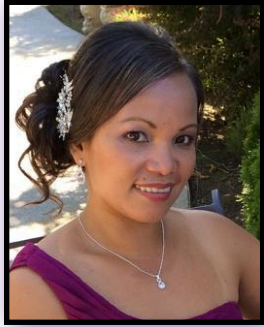
It is also interesting to note that the exhortation to be strong and courageous is because of a fact or outcome - "because you will lead this people to inherit the land." Being strong and courageous is not a condition to achieve the outcome but a standpoint because of the impending outcome. Be strong and courageous because the Lord is about to fulfill His promise to His people. And you will play a critical part. This standpoint we have to consciously imbibe.

Marita is the wife of Edwin Hernandez, Senior Pastor of WIN New Jersey. They have three children, Koleen, Kathleen and Caleb.



*Some people, no matter how old they get,
never lose their beauty - they merely
move it from their faces into their hearts.*

~ Source Unknown



LADIES IN FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER (LIFT)

Ida Lockhart, WIN Seattle/Tacoma Ladies Ministry Head

A gathering of women who love the Lord, who want to celebrate life together, hold one another accountable, encourage and inspire each other, and pray for one another. **LIFT** (Ladies in Fellowship Together) Women's Ministry of the Word International Ministries Seattle/Tacoma.

Our main focus are:

- **Sisters of Strength:** Join other women for a relaxing evening in an intimate gathering discussing matters of the heart. Meets every 2nd Saturday of the month.
- **Heart to Heart:** A gathering of single women to discover, embrace, and live out God's truth by having a deeper understanding of the true meaning of biblical womanhood.
- **Creative Women:** A get-together of women to learn something new or just have fun together. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet new friends for some fun craft activities, hiking, bowling, day trips, etc.
- **Women of Wisdom Book Club:** A wonderful group of women who come each month to make new friends, share a laugh or two, and enjoy great fellowship while discussing the book of the month. Bring a friend and enjoy the fellowship of other ladies who love to read!
- **Ladies in Action:** Local outreach are designed to engage women in understanding how they can touch hearts and show compassion as Christ did to the wounded and brokenhearted in our community. There are many ways you can serve God with your special gifts and talents.
- **Annual Retreat:** This event is a highlight for the women attending. Each year we plan a special weekend for women consisting of a weekend retreat or conference. These events provide concentrated time with God, a special guest speaker and connection with other women.



Enjoying time discussing "The Hat Box" by Patsy Clairmont



Preparing Meat Rub jar giveaways for Father's Day



Baby Shower for Sis. Kabibi, expecting baby girl 'Happy Grace'

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Ladies In Fellowship Together

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Since I have taken the role of the Women's Ministry head for our church, I realized how much I have grown spiritually. Before I became the Women's Ministry head, I didn't have any time available for another activity. I was always so busy with work, my kids after school activities, my daughter's gymnastics as she practices 3x a week and meets every Saturday, keeping up with my household, and workout because, I want to be healthy. I didn't have time for Bible study and sometimes miss going to Sunday church. All of these turned around for me, when God started to work on me. In February 2014, we had the church worker's retreat. My spirit was moved. We had a circle of women praying for each other, the one on your left side will pray for you. Each one of us said what we wanted to be prayed for. From my heart, I wanted to serve God and I don't know how with my busy schedule. I remembered Sis. Arlene praying for me. She prayed that God has a plan for me, it may not be right now but that time will come. She said that for now, it's to be there for my kids as they grow. I've been to numbers of retreat before when I was young. But there's something with this one that touched my heart. I have been focusing on God more and became more active at church. As the months went by and summer came, my daughter decided in June she did not want to do gymnastics anymore and would like to take a break from it. Now I have all this time on my hands. And at the same time our Women's Ministry head, Sis. Sharon and her family were moving to Texas. She said that she prayed and God told her that I would be the one to replace her role as Women's Ministry head. It is amazing how God works in us. He knows what we can take and are able to handle. He knows when we're ready. He is the only one that knows our future and controls our lives. I praise God for working on me. I now attend Bible study consistently, serving our church and community, and also part of the praise and worship choir, as I love to sing praises to God.



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"I will exalt you Lord, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me."
Psalms 30:1

Look for the flowers in your life, not the weeds! ~ First Book Club

Maria Velasquez, WIN Seattle/Tacoma, WA

Why the Ladies Ministry is important to her, and how they have been encouraged by joining this ministry.

This is actually my first Ladies' Ministry I've had the honor of being a part of since we've joined Word International. I envisioned a classroom with a lecturer and everyone just sits and listen. No interaction, no discussion. Similar to groups I've joined in the past that did not help my growth in the Lord.

I'm very happy to say that the Ladies Ministry is much more than that. It's a ministry where women come together to share, discuss, interact, learn and create. But, most of all, it's a ministry of women who care about one another and listen to each other's thoughts and feelings. It's a ministry of women who have Our Lord as the foundation of their lives, their families and their homes and mentors to the younger women or new Christian women. It is a ministry of women who sings praises, honors, worships and prays to the Lord.

The Women's Ministry has strengthened my walk with the Lord and I am blessed to be a part of it.



A Promise Fulfilled

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physical therapy and re-learned how to move about. About two to four people would help me get up. For about a month, my doctor did not allow me to turn my neck sideways when I was sitting down or standing up. I was stiff as a board. I was more fragile than Humpty-Dumpty. A fall, even a bump could literally break me.

God's grace abound each day. I had my husband email my loved ones and friends for prayer requests. The more people prayed, the stronger I got. When I emailed to more people for prayers, I was able to develop stamina and walk for longer distances and sit for longer hours. I cannot count how many times I asked God when I would ever get up and when I will be home in Texas to live with my husband again. Houston seemed like an impossibility.

December 26, 2012. My husband and I cried as he had to go back to the US for work and to prepare for my arrival. I could not even hug or kiss him to keep me sanitized. I was still stuck in bed. By faith, he set my travel date to January 4, 2013. I prayed to God to empower me so that I could be strong enough to travel. A few nights later, I had a dream of the Houston Airport Terminal where the NASA mascot welcomed me. I have arrived! *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."* Hebrews 11:1

The most difficult for me was last January 2013 when I arrived in Houston. I was strong enough to travel but still weak. After being bedridden for about 50 days, it was so stressful to be moving about daily as an outpatient at MD Anderson. Traffic in Houston was horrendous as it would take at least an hour to two hours one way to MD Anderson! The challenge was compounded as I had to wear a neck and full body brace in the car during the car trip. Every hump and bump on the Houston rode (they were many!!!) felt like a wild rollercoaster ride for my tender aching body. By the time I reached home late at night, tears would fall as a sign of protest and pain. **How in the world I survived the hectic harassment I was subjected to testify of God's grace that abound and the constant prayers of the faithful.**

I am going to do a major jump in my story for now as I want to go to the good part. To be able to write at this point is a positive sign that God fulfilled His Promise in His Perfect Time or as the Bible would say it, "In the fullness of time."

Do you believe that trees talk? The trees and twigs attest to my life story the past 7 months of my Multiple Myeloma Miracle Moments. **October 2012.** A few weeks before I left Texas for the Philippines last October 2012 to make it for my life-changing divine appointment, my Elijah asked me to get up early one morning so he could take my picture with the morning



glories under the shining sun. Little did I know that this would be a most unforgettable moment. He just wanted us to Pause and Pose along the fields of California poppies (CA State flower) growing wildly along the hilly path. Precious moment captured.

We did not intentionally plan to leave California but a few months after that, we moved to Texas because of his work assignment. Eventually, we realized that God moved us to Texas because of my divine appointment with the best cancer center in the world, MD Anderson. I so appreciate that California floral moment because during my chemotherapy treatment, up to this day, post SCT, I am not allowed near live trees and flowers. I have to stay sanitized and keep away from potential bacteria and viruses.

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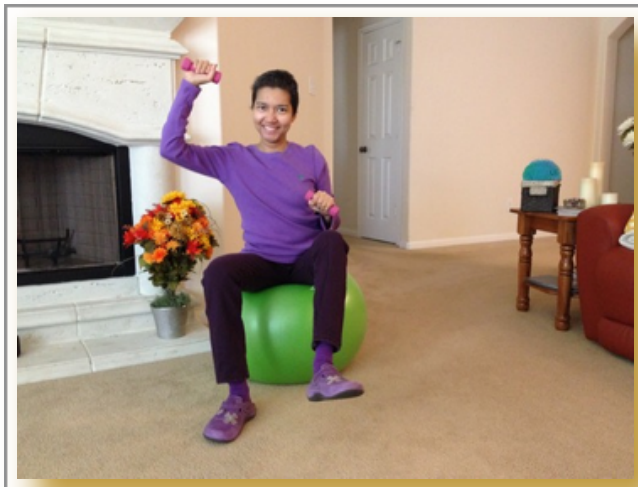
A Promise Fulfilled

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January 2013. When I arrived in our Houston home, I walked towards the window overlooking our backyard and saw dry, brittle twigs over the fence. The morning glories were gone. Each day, for three months, I looked out the window as I rest on the couch and stare at the twigs. I felt like my body was like those dying twigs, so brittle and dry, threatening to break any time.

One January 2013 day, I was praying while staring at the twigs, I heard God tell me; ***“You will heal as I promised. By the time you heal, the morning glories will bloom back.”*** For the first time, I began to appreciate the name “morning glory!” God re-affirmed His promise to me that He will fulfill it in His time. This time around, God gave me an idea of the timeframe. I was excited! I realized that my new life begins before my birth date comes. When summer blooms, I will resurrect.

February 2013. After three chemotherapy sessions from December 2012 to February 2013, I was getting stronger by the day. As my caregiver and I sped off the highway from MD Anderson to our home one afternoon, a tree caught my attention. I felt God reminding me, ***“This tree is like you. Your branches are not dead. You are healing. Soon, your bones will heal.”*** By **Mid-March 2012**, after my fourth chemotherapy, I was already cancer-free and ready to undergo Stem Cell Transplant (SCT) after a few weeks of rest to prepare for my SCT. **End of May 2013.** After a 2 weeks post stem cell transplant recovery in a rented apartment 5 minutes close to MD Anderson, the doctor allowed me to go home. He did not wait for three weeks because he was so confident that I was well. The amazing thing about my recovery was that it was uneventful and



super smooth. I did not have any complications or infections. Everyone was pleased and relieved. Praise the Lord!

June 5, 2013. My caregiver, Amie, remembered God’s Promise Story for me and she excitedly told me that the morning glories are waiting for me! I walked straight to the window and cried as I saw the flowers welcoming me.

God Fulfilled His Promise!

The flowers were blooming. I noticed that they were not as lush as the previous year. I related it to my healing body. I am recovering but am not fully well.

My bones still need to catch up with the healing. But I will be fine.

Each day, for at least the first three weeks of my homecoming after my stem cell transplant, I would cry as I prayed. I cried in thanksgiving for the humbling experience I survived. I cried in thanksgiving for the love of God that sustained me, the grace He made available to empower me and the peace that protected me. I cried for the many people who faithfully prayed for me. I cried that I was not able to go to heaven yet. I so wanted to go to heaven and



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A Promise Fulfilled

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experience eternal bliss, freedom from pain and problems. I realized that God has some more plans for me here on earth. Alas, it is not yet time. I cried for so many things. I cried for people I pray for so that they too will know what God's will is for them. Some have died in the course of my one-year cancer battle. Some are still struggling and fighting empowered by God's grace and hope.

Jan 2014. Thankfully, God has consistently blessed me with NORMAL blood count since May 2013.

The most important part of my cancer journey is that God is with me. It did not matter if He was going to heal me or send me to heaven. Both are win-win for me. What matters most was that His power sustained me and He revealed Himself to me daily so as to encourage me. It is up to God to decide if a sick person heals or dies. His love abounds whatever happens to us. What matters is that the person should know where he goes after he dies. It is God's will that we each know where we will go through the power of personal choice. It is God's will that each of us spend eternity with Him in heaven but it is up to us to make that decision. God has plainly revealed how we are to go to heaven. It is by grace that we are saved through the Blood of Jesus Christ and it is not out of our good works or through other channels. (Ephesians 2:8-9) To invent or presume our own way to heaven is not wise as it may not guarantee our entry.

It is not enough to copy or inherit what our parents and loved ones believe in. Eternal salvation, as well as personal healing is a very personal experience. One must **Believe Jesus Christ the Saviour**, the Only One who ever died for you and me; then **Receive Him**.

Acts 4:12 - "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." Ephesians 2:8-9 - "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God..." Romans 10:9 - "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." I share this to you because Eternal Salvation is more important than the miracle-healing story I experienced. **The God who healed me is the same God who loves you dearly. He also has a Promise for you. May you hear and receive it.**

I dedicate this story to those who are fighting their life battles with cancer and other diseases and to their faithful loved ones who continue to support them and fight on beside them. You are not alone. God watches over you. To submit and surrender to God's Will is the first step to peace and success.

The way I see it, there are only two Win-Win options for you: Healing? Or Heaven? (Even if we are healed, we are destined to die someday. Heaven is bliss and eternal.) Jesus our Savior saves us from our daily battles and for eternity. The important thing is that **GOD BE WITH YOU!**

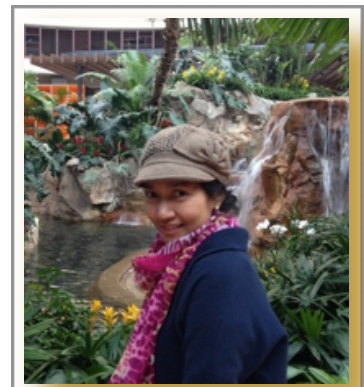
"The LORD himself goes before **you** and **will** be with **you**; He **will never leave you nor forsake you**. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged ..."

Deuteronomy 31:8

The Lord be praised forevermore.

To my Fellow Cancer Fighters who are now in heaven, I salute you! I bow down in reverence to our Loving God

*Marita and Elijah, her husband reside in
Cypress, Texas.*



The Word International Ministries family mourns the passing of Sis. Carol Agra Tuanqui, wife of Pastor Jess Tuanqui. She suffered cardiac arrest on January 16, 2015 following a very brief bout with leukemia.



Let's continue to pray for Bro. Jess and their children, Jecka and Jecko, as they go through this time of loss and grief. As we all know it is difficult to lose someone we love. Our comfort is knowing that she is in the presence of the Lord where there is no more pain and suffering, only fullness of joy.

Psalms 116:15 ~ Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants.

Psalms 23:6 - Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

John 14:3-4 - I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.

NATIONAL LADIES ADVISORY TEAM

Nickie Paulate
Tess Cordero
Rosemarie Jose
Ana Miciano



You can also add white chocolate chips to have a black and white effect. The chocolate chips will melt, but no worries, they will harden up when the cookies cool.

Or, you can add half a cup of peanut butter.

Ingredients:

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup margarine
1/2 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla
3 tbsp cocoa
3 cups oats

Procedure:

1. Combine sugar, margarine and milk and bring to a boil for 2 minutes.
2. Remove from heat and add vanilla, cocoa and oats.

Vicki's No Bake Chocolate Oatmeal Cookies

3. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto wax paper.
4. Let it cool until it hardens.

Serving size: About 30 to 40 cookies