

Livelihood Program in a Cart

10 August 2015



Joan Garcia

After praying for months for livelihood funds we were blessed when a friend from The Cornerstone International Christian Church (CICC) initiated a garage sale which proceeds were designated for this program.

Joan Garcia, a single parent, was one of the first two recipients. Her business endeavor will be considered a laboratory livelihood program which result will determine how we would go about entertaining other mothers for the program.

Joan has had experience in cooking camote (sweet potato) and banana cues to sell, thus, she decided to engage in this business to start with.

Ripe Saba (cooking banana), cooking oil and brown sugar are the ingredients.

Compared to a liquefied gas stove, it will save her money if she used a pump gas stove, thus we bought one for her.

She was then ready to make her first banana cues to sell.



Pump gas stove



Her first sale was very encouraging. A friend who frequented our Center bought all the banana cues and the children had them for snack after their band practice.

This was our friend's way of showing her interest in and concern with what we are doing.

Some other days following, two more friends on different occasion bought all that Joan cooked and again were served to us for snack saving our snack budget.

Joan has many things to say about her life before becoming our volunteer.

She hailed from Zamboanga City, Southern Philippines. Her father worked in an interisland ship and was away most of the time so Joan was entrusted to an aunt. Although she was well provided for she was not pleased with her father being away most of the time.

After a year or two of college, Joan was enticed by peer friends to run away from home. She thought she would have a brighter future if she went to Manila.

Unfortunately her expectation of a life in Metro Manila was far from reality. She had to switch from one job to another and always found herself alone later; being cared for by concerned friends.

In one of her jobs, she worked for a Chinese employer who eventually fathered her son, Skyler Chomo.



The birth of Skyler will always be remembered because it was somewhat unique.

The children having their breakfast while (in the background) Joan prepares her bananas to coke.

Her relationship with her Chinese live-in partner became sour that she had to leave him for her peace of mind.

She stayed with a friend until it was time for her to give birth. She was not prepared when the day came thus she was not brought to the hospital on time. She gave birth to Skyler in a Suzuki van which was supposed to take her to the hospital. The father who visited later begged that Skyler carries his last name, Chomo. Having been born in a branded van, Skyler has Suki for his name of endearment. He now sings in the Christian Children's Band



Suki (middle), now 8 sings with Daniel, Daniella, John Paul and Macmac

Before coming to us to help, Joan and Skyler were accommodated in a Baptist Church upon invitation of the Church pastor. They were ill-treated by some members resulting to Joan's disillusion re Biblical Christianity.

We hope her stay with us will somewhat correct this negative attitude and will later come to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Joan and Skyler have the cart which is parked in the Center compound for their overnight shelter.

Skyler, a 2nd grader, attends school at the 15th Avenue Elementary School, where the Abendano children, Abet, Santiago and Julito, go.

What Joan earns by selling banana and camote cue and sometimes pan cakes takes care of their daily expenses. Their accommodation and part of their daily meals is cared for by the Center. We hope the livelihood program will grow and will give her more income. Thanks to the members of the Cornerstone International Christian Church.