

Illustrated By: Elaine Tanpin

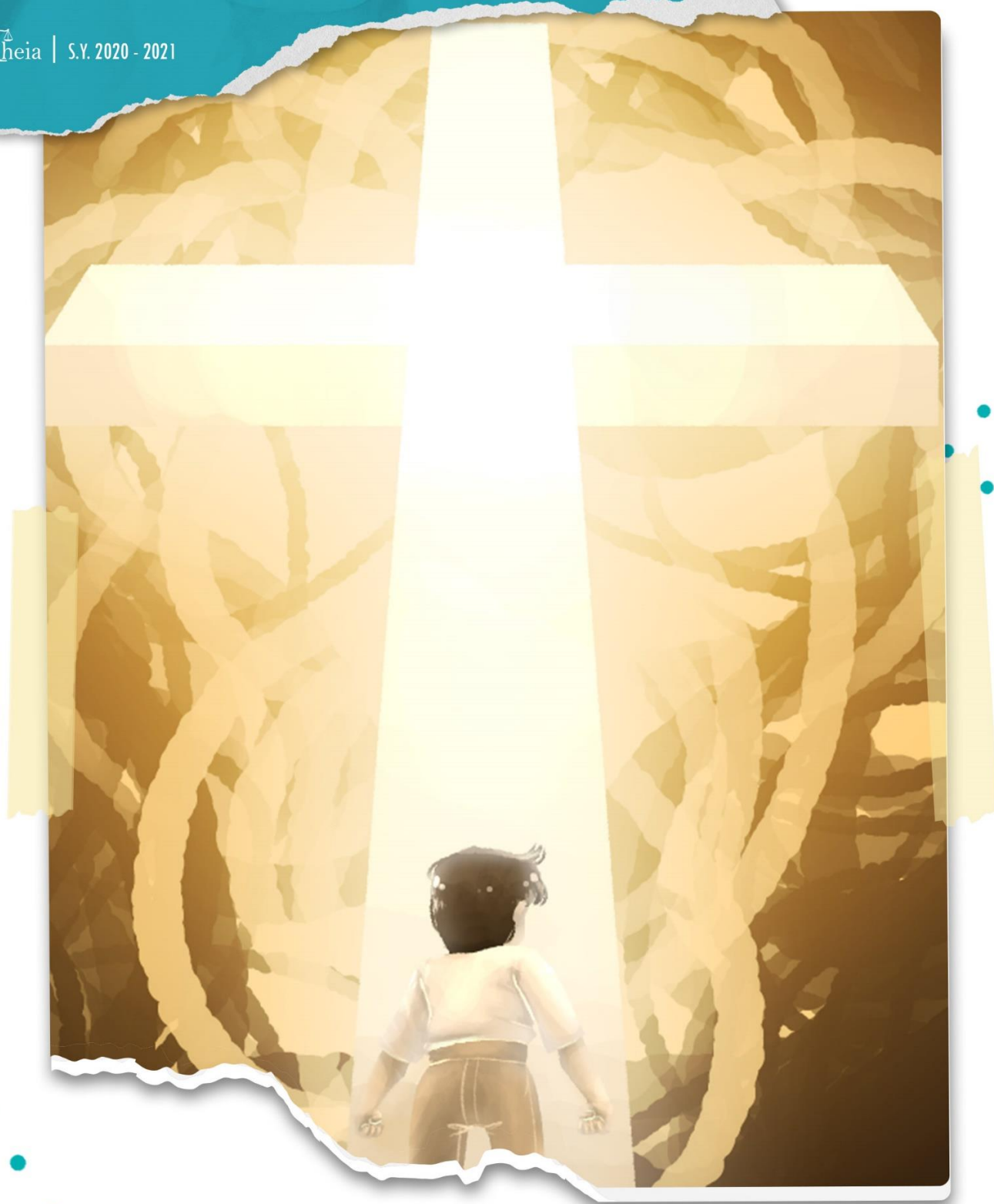
Phos Aletheia

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ABOUNDING IN HOPE

Perseverance and Experience



ABOUT THE COVER

The cover tells a boy whose life is filled with challenges, and these challenges can sometimes put him down and defeated. Eventually, this boy finds out that the Lord has always been with him that's

why he calls on the Lord to help him get through the challenges. Because with God, light guides along the way and strength carries the burden.

Cover by: Elaine Tanpin



TEACHINGS

FROM THE PAST YEAR

time. Even though our chats most of the time happen virtually, they are still as warm as we do when we are in a café or in the living room minus the tea and coffee perhaps.

The past year taught us to use our personal and private time wisely. It's definitely the silver lining of this tragic period because we get to be more introspective and meditative on God's Word. The past year has made us better people because we are learning to appreciate the most simple and essential things in life, and we are taking good care of this gift of life that God has bestowed upon us. The past year has made us experience God's goodness as He is guiding and strengthening us in every challenge that we are facing. Furthermore, it has made us closer to Jesus as time is allowing us to spend a good number of days and months to be saturated in His Word and in His character. May we become more like Jesus because this is the perfect time in which we should be bold and courageous to show His glory and power in all this trying time that is unfolding before our naked eyes! May we persevere by God's grace and experience His lovingkindness and mercy all the remaining days of our lives!

It's been a year since the beginning of quarantine, and numerous and various things have

happened. Some of the people we know may have taken the winding road and some have taken the straight path. Whatever road we have walked on the past year, one thing matters the most – we have persevered by God's grace! We are still breathing, walking, and working because God's mercy has enveloped us all along. I believe and hopefully so this journey we have been traveling has changed us for the better. We have developed and discovered habits that we never thought we enjoy and make good out of. We have fostered and cherished relationships even more because we have not been going out for the longest



The deepest deep, and the lowest low on the planet Earth is the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench found in the Western Pacific Ocean southwest of Guam. It's 35,853 ft. (10,297 meter), nearly 7 miles deep and it spans 43 miles. Scientists once said its depths were unfathomable, and due to the immense pressure of water, no life could possibly exist at that depth. They deemed it a dark, desolate place. But on January 23, 1960, Jacques Piccard and US Navy Lieutenant Don Walsh launched Trieste, a Swiss-designed, Italian-built deep-diving research bathyscaphe which reached a record depth of about 10,911 meters in the Challenger Deep of the Mariana Trench. To their amazement— it was light and clear, and they observed life! A flat fish, sea cucumbers, and shrimp! There have since been 3 other trips to the bottom of the Mariana Trench, 2 unmanned with only cameras, and one other manned with a film crew. Each came back with evidence of more and more life forms (Youtube - National Geographic, March 8, 2012).

Scientific expeditions have been launched both to the deep of the oceans and to the outer space to gain more knowledge and understanding of our world and other life forms. We know more about our world now - what is out there and below the oceans, as a result of these expeditions. What used to be "unfathomable" (like the Mariana Trench) or "unreachable" (as in Mt. Everest), are now a thing of the past. True, there are still many discoveries and explorations that need to be done. It's only a matter of time. Many words are associated with the word "unfathomable." Some suggestions are 'inexplorable,' 'untraceable,' 'inexhaustible,' 'incomprehensible,' 'illimitable,' 'inscrutable,' 'infinite' and 'incalculable,' 'unsearchable,' 'untraceable,'

'endless,' 'boundless,' 'inexplorable,' 'inexhaustible,' and 'without limit.' These words in one way or another convey the idea of something never-ending and beyond human measure. **What is it or who is beyond human measure? GOD is! God remains unfathomable.** Because if we could grasp the greatness of our God and figure out all of His ways, He would fail to be God at all for He would be no greater or wiser than our understanding. But, with unfathomable greatness and wisdom, we have an infinite God who "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" (Eph. 3:20).

God's Unfathomable Power and Wisdom as seen in the Creation Story

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep ... and God said, let there be light and there was light" The first day, this. On the second day, God separated the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth with a space in between and so, the creation story goes. Imagine what chaos there would have been had God brought things into existence without exercising wisdom so all the variety fit together in a coordinated and good functioning design. Imagine if man and woman were created on the first day or on the second day, there was nothing but darkness – no vegetation, no water, etc. *"But God made the earth by his power, he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding"* (Jer. 10:12, 51:15). In God's unfathomable wisdom, the heavens and earth came into being, according to His grand design – each one according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. The psalmist exclaimed, *"The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork"* (Psalm 19:1).

UNFATHOMABLE

By: Dr. Wanda Po Liam Giok

God's Unfathomable Love and Justice as seen in the Redemption Story

"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, ESV). "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23, ESV).

In the children's book *"He Took my Whipping (Licking)"* by Timothy Robinson, the new school teacher asked his students to make class rules. Ten rules were drafted, correspondingly anyone caught violating any of these rules will get ten beatings or whipping. One day, Tom, one of the big boys found that his lunch was stolen. Soon, it was found out that the little, skinny Jim got his lunch. For stealing, Jim was going to get ten beatings. Jim begged not to remove his coat. To the teacher's aghast, the boy wore no inner shirt at all only a suspender over his skinny back. The teacher was in a dilemma – he could not come up to beat the boy yet he had to uphold the class rule. Just then, Tom, the boy whose lunch was stolen stood up and volunteered to take the boy's beatings. There was a rule to allow this. Thus, Tom got the whipping instead of Jim. After five strokes, the rod broke. By this time, the whole class was sobbing. Little Jim had reached up and caught Tom with both arms around the neck. *"Tom, I'm awful sorry, Tom, I was so hungry. I'll love you till I die for taking my licking for me. I'll love you forever!"*

This was exactly what Jesus Christ did for each one of us. He was scourged, his head bled because of the crown of thorns he was made to wear. Only Jesus could remove this burden of sin from us because He is God in the flesh (John 1:1, Colossians 2:9). If He had not done this, we would be separated from God forever (Romans 6:23). Our God is holy and righteous, but we are not because we have broken His perfect laws. We deserve to

be punished. But because God is also love, He wants us to be reconciled with Him. The only way out was for Jesus, who is perfect in every way, to become a perfect sacrifice and take upon Himself the sin of mankind. Jesus took the punishment we deserve and thus satisfied the requirement of the law that sin be punished (2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24). As in our story earlier, Tom took the punishment that little Jim deserved and thus satisfied the requirement of the class rules that stealing should be punished.

God's Unfathomable Grace and Mercy as seen in Our Experiences

Today, God continues to reveal His characteristics and attributes - one truth at a time, He unfolds them to those who would seek to know Him sincerely. God can indeed be known because He chooses to. Because of His inexhaustible patience, we are not immediately consumed by God's divine wrath when we sin. Because of His infinite mercy, we do not reap what we sow; we do not receive the consequence we deserve; we never get the punishment we earn. Because of God's unfathomable grace, we are the most blessed people of the world. We are transitioning from one expression of grace to another, but all grace. As the apostle Paul wrote, *"By the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain"* 1 Corinthians 15:10. Who Paul is and what he does is the result of the totality of the unfathomable grace of God poured out on Him when he accepted Christ as his Savior and Lord. This can well be your story as it is also mine.

Every day, we feast in God's unfathomableness – *"his love has no limit, his grace has no measure, his power no boundary known unto men. For out of his infinite riches in Jesus, he giveth, and giveth and giveth again"* (from the song *He Giveth More Grace* by Annie Flint).



A DIFFERENT LIGHT

By: Kylie Allison L. Yu

As most of you know, from this point in time when I am writing this, I am (or probably when you read this, was,) running for SSG President. I have to say, it's been quite a challenge for me. Knowing that already a year has passed since the lockdown, I acknowledge the fact that it has been a while since I have ever done so much creative work. Just to let you know, I am someone who is used to exhaust my brain for intellectual, not creative, skills. So, when thoughts and situations for proposals, campaigning, and posters came flooding in, it is not an overstatement to say I was petrified. So, you may ask, knowing that this was coming anyway, why did I run? Well, this leads me to one of the two reasons why I am writing this short essay.

I've always been a fan of the saying 'Experience is the best teacher' ever since March of last year. Due to the lockdown, I have missed so much, but looking through another perspective, have gained so much more. There was one time in a very long time I went out of the house to bond with my family in the mountains. I was at the same time embarrassed and shocked at how much confidence I have lost from simply walking outside because of staying cooped at home and experiencing none or almost no physical interactions with the outside world in over a year.

I cannot exactly explain how I felt that day. I was stunned, I realized I had to do something about my lack of confidence and security. This experience alone, along with some events along the months: encountering the virus with my family, a 'singing ghost' (literally) with my sister, and so much more, made me muster the courage and need to say yes once Ms. Pearl Lao asked me if I was willing to run. The point here is not why did I run, but why I needed to run.

So here I am right now, half of me regretting my decision while the other half convincing myself to push forward. I am proud of what I have accomplished so far, my past achievements before the campaigning and achievements after (like the thought of VAGUE magazine and others), but there is always a reason to challenge yourself to be better. If there are always reasons for people to say no, then there will always be reasons to say yes.

Which is why, if you still do not get it, the willingness to learn is very important if you want to grow, and of course, persevere. TwoSet Violin, a YouTube channel, once said something that I will never forget: **"If you don't take criticism, you're not growing."** I took this statement very much to heart. To put it into action, I had to seize every single opportunity willingly (I force myself too haha). Although this may sound in terms of what this world calls it, not showing 'self-love' towards yourself, I beg to disagree. Self-love is pushing yourself to grow because you know it's best.

My sister and I spoke of certain people who were so talented yet do not use their talents. And we both realized how if we were those types of people, we would even do the same because in this case, we, wouldn't even bother to try doing something. There would be no use of it! We would already have what we need without even trying.

In this very much long-term yet current situation we're in, it's easy to make excuses that we never asked for it, like I did. We never asked for COVID-19 and never asked for online class, but we have to learn to seize all opportunities. Hopefully, what I spoke of about above will not only encourage you to embrace everything that comes your way in a different light, **but to also have hope that only comes from the Hope Giver and persevere through what you have accepted and embraced.**

PASSION AND PRODUCTIVITY

WITH SHAUN

Before the school year 2020-2021 began, we have somewhat adjusted to the lockdown life. Some have been well, and some have not. Some have been in the state of ennui for too long, and some have thrived that means discovering new skills and hobbies. One Grade 9 student of Klan Kee stood out among those who have posted their productivity in the social media in the midst of isolation. Shaun Borromeo upped his baking skills since he had the time and materials to produce not just delicious but artistic baked creations. Shaun was kind enough to share his feelings about baking and his experience doing this in a difficult time.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BAKE AND COOK?

"What inspired me to bake or cook was seeing many people making delicious and mouthwatering food. During the quarantine period, I was inspired to follow my dreams and tried to teach myself how to prepare and make food."

HOW DID THE QUARANTINE IMPACT YOUR PASSION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN BAKING AND COOKING?

"The quarantine has greatly impacted my passion and productivity in baking and cooking by allowing me to have a long break from school. I got to explore the kitchen and my passion for baking and cooking became stronger; also, I dream to be an excellent chef one day."



WHAT DOES BAKING OR COOKING MEAN TO YOU?

"In my opinion, baking and cooking is all about fun because if you don't enjoy doing it, the outcome won't come out as what you expect it to be. Baking and cooking is just like playing, it's all about fun and the love you show towards it."



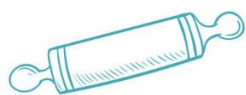
FOR YOU, WAS BAKING REALLY A HOBBY BEFORE QUARANTINE OR WAS IT DISCOVERED DURING QUARANTINE?

"Baking was actually a hobby before quarantine. However, I didn't really have the time to bake because of school. It was just because during this quarantine, I got to enhance my skills in baking and I learned so much from my past mistakes."

ARE YOU DOING THIS AS A REHEARSAL FOR YOUR FUTURE BUSINESS OR ARE YOU STILL CONSIDERING IT AS A HOBBY?

"No, I'm not doing this as a rehearsal for my future business and no, I do not consider it as a hobby because my plan in the future is to study in a very nice culinary school and once I graduate, I want to open up a school where I teach people different sets and variations of baking and cooking. However, I can't live with just being a teacher, so I definitely have to open a business. That business will relate to baking and cooking, which is selling baking and cooking ingredients and equipment."

For some of us, we are blessed with things that can be turned to hobbies while some have nothing; however, whatever our situation is during this difficult time we have to be content of what God has given us. Like Shaun, he has maximized what he has and turned it into something beautiful. Our situations are very different, yet if we keep on sulking about the challenges, would it make things better? Remember the verse from **Matthew 6:27**, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" This makes a lot of sense. Instead of worrying, why not be humble and seek the Lord's face because He's the only One who can make things better not our worrying. Again, like Shaun, and for sure we, can overcome this long and arduous journey if we put God in the center and front.



ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!



Because of the present condition, all the yearly activities in Philippine Christian Gospel School have been either cancelled or modified. One event that students, teachers, and parents anticipate every year is the Intramurals and Founders' Day celebration which is not possible to happen this year. However, by God's grace, the High School Department found a variation. Last March 19, the department launched the **SPORTSFEST FITNESS CHALLENGE ONLINE**. Headed by the Physical Education teacher, Coach Mark Cabacaba, the activity did not include basketball, volleyball, and the like, instead, students were encouraged to engage in different exercises. These were the different challenges performed by representatives from every grade level: the 30-second challenge in which students perform push-ups, sit-ups, and squat thrusts for 30 seconds with the most number of repetitions; the fastest workout challenge encouraged students to carry out the exercises the fastest with 5 sets of squat thrusts and jumping jacks in 5 minutes; and then, relay race challenge which grouped 5 students of the same level accomplishing 5 exercises to be done after one set is finished. The selected students were told beforehand to prepare and warm-up for this activity. [Here are some students sharing their preparation and experience in this first ever SPORTSFEST FITNESS CHALLENGE ONLINE.](#)

Trisha Bok from Grade 8 Joy said,

"My advisor told me and the others that were joining the Sportsfest to really prepare for the event because Miss Lovely wanted our batch to win first prize, so I kept practicing and even timed myself to how many reps I could do in a span of 30 seconds. I'm happy that my batch won because I know we made both Sir Sayson and Ms. Lovely proud. I was actually very anxious a few days before the event because I just kept on thinking how funny I would look performing the exercises in front of the whole school, but other than that it was a cool experience to be a part of. It's very sad that we couldn't have

any physical activities this year, but I like that even with the virus around our school was still able to make a fun activity out of these bad times."

Clarence Lagmay from Grade 8 Peace also shared,

"Before the sportsfest, I just tried doing as much burpees as I can every day. I did burpees because that was what I had to do during the sportsfest. I thought it was going to be embarrassing for me, but it didn't really feel like anyone was watching me when I actually did it, so it was fine."

Justin Ching from Grade 11 also discussed his preparation and his experience during the activity,

"I have prepared my body by practicing the fastest workout challenge every Monday during my PE time. Other than that, I really haven't made any preparations. I felt neutral and calm performing to everyone virtually because I couldn't see most of them. There was also no pressure because my classmates didn't have high expectations for me. The experience was something new and memorable. At the beginning, I was doubtful that the program would be successful because sportsfest online sounded like a bad idea, but I was wrong. The program turned out to be successful and I'm grateful to be a part of it."

The program was organized by the high school faculty and some help from the administration. Dr. Wanda Po Liam Giok opened the program, Coach Mark Cabacaba declared the opening, Mr. El-cid Sayson tallied the scores, Mr. Timothy Baccayon emceed, and Mrs. Stephanie Wong closed the program. The class advisers had fun as well as they were gathered in one room cheering for their respective students. Who would've thought that this activity would be possibly enjoyed by every family in Kian Kee remotely? All by God's grace, indeed, because with God all things are possible!

SPORTSFEST FITNESS CHALLENGE ONLINE

Held last March 19, 2021 via MS Teams

Congratulations!



1ST PLACE

2ND PLACE

3RD PLACE

30 Sec-Challenge

Male Category

- Push Up
- Sit Ups
- Squat Thrust

Otero, Benjamin Matthew H.
Yeo, Miko Earl D.
Agraviador, Tudor Jethro L.

Co, Matthew Derick T.
Villarin, John Nicholas R.
Uy, Michael Gerald B.

Sy, Brent Donovan N.
Blanco, Alex Samuel E.
Pepito, Marc Jenson T.

Female Category

- Kneeling Push Up
- Crunches
- Squat Thrust

Lim, Renise A.
Yu, Kylie Allison L.
Bok, Trisha Sophia O.

Yu, Ma. Victoria D.
Tan, Anthea Keeley R.
Go, Carmela T.
Li, Cassandra Fae A.

Tan, Jaala Dorothea Kaye R.
Chen, Jhanelle C.
Demata, Keikelani An L.

Fastest Workout Challenge Category

Male Category

Round 1
Round 2

Ching, Justin Kyle C.
Tan, Reeve Mitchell M.

Dee, Gyabez O.
Borromeo, Shane Eldrick W.

Lumain, Don Vandel Anthony D.
Sia, Joaquin M.

Female Category

Round 1
Round 2

Su, Annie C.
Valendez, Al Gabrielle C.

Tan, Eunice P.
Tan, Janelle Kelsey Hye R.

Lim, Trisha Daphney L.
Go, Desiree Regine N.

Fastest Relay Challenge

GRADE 8

Lu, Serge Gio M.
Kim, Jaejun
Lagmay, Clarence M.
Go, Johanna Christabelle M.
Lee, Zireh Cherish L.

GRADE 12

Zhuang, Johnny Z.
Khan, Asiel Nevan K.
Abellana, John Keith L.
Nazareno, Jhunrell A.
Montecillo, John Simoni III D.

GRADE 10

Chua, Adison Ron U.
Belocura, Brent Tyler S.
Lu, Vince Y.
Choi, Aemee Lou Zeke S.
Otero, Beverly Maica H.

OVER-ALL CHAMPION
Grade 8



TRAVELLING THROUGH GRADUATION

By: Trisha Daphney Lim

*“Direction, not intention,
determines destination.”*

Each person journeys through life, hoping that they might reach their desired destination. They each set their eyes on a different destination, whether it is money, recognition or fame. We all want to reach that destination, but simply having that desire is never enough. We still need to take the right actions to achieve what we really want in life.

But without a destination in mind, it's nearly impossible to realize the direction you should take. In the past years, I had been aimlessly doing the things that were required of me. I would study and do my assignments properly, but in my spare time, I would do meaningless things. I didn't realize that I was walking without so much as a destination in mind. This year, having online classes challenged my reasons for studying and even for just listening in class. With the teacher being unable to see what we're really doing in class even with the cameras on, it's easy to turn on some music, read an unrelated book or even play games in class. It was then that I realized how I had relied on that silent pressure to keep myself focused. To get myself in the right direction, I had to first think about why I had to do these things even though it would be easier to relax or play. *I remembered that doing things that were hard or tiring would all be for my future career and for the glory of God.* I realized my destination and adjusted my direction in accordance.

Through my journey, I also learned to take breaks from pursuing my goals to look after the other areas of my life. Before the pandemic, I had put off many things that I wanted to do, like travelling or spending time with friends and family. After the pandemic struck, I realized how much I had taken the opportunities to spend time with those I love for granted. Whether it was seeing relatives get hospitalized from contracting the virus or simply being unable to meet others face-to-face, those experiences that I could've had with my loved ones were taken away. When I thought about it, I had been taking those potential experiences away from myself even before the pandemic. Blaming it on being busy or tired, I hadn't gone to outings that my family had suggested, much less actively sought to make memories with them. Even during the pandemic, when I was inside the same house as my family, I would find myself only exchanging a few words with them every day. When I realized this, I decided to make more time for my family. Instead of working too hard to perfect projects and assignments, I talked, played, and watched movies with my family.

I regretted not following these principles earlier in my life. But rather than continuing to look back on the path I'd taken, it would be better to keep my eyes forward and avoid more regret later on. After all, the end of my journey through high school brings me to the beginning of my road in college. *Hence, until college and even after, I will continue to adjust my direction to arrive at the right destination.*

WHAT TEACHERS Say ABOUT Online Classes

When the school year 2020-2021 opened, everything seemed hazy. Thank God that Philippine Christian Gospel School is blessed with equipped leaders. The calendar for 2020-2021 was set, the learning management system was chosen, and students and teachers were somewhat ready to uphold the new system. Of course, everyone was adjusting and for now, perhaps it's settled down. With this new environment and new equipment, the school year seemed strange, exciting, frustrating, or maybe more intimate

and personal compared to the past years. Online classes can never replace the traditional and physical classes, yet both the students and teachers tried their very best to make it look, sound, and feel like they were in a classroom. For sure, not everyone was happy when this seemed to be the only path that would be taken, yet the school is blessed with teachers who always find some silver lining in dark times like these. [Let's read what the teachers have to say about online teaching.](#)

The sudden shift to online classes has made me become more resilient and empathetic.

MRS. STEPHANIE WONG
Junior High School
Department Coordinator

As someone who easily gets anxious about things (unending class preparations on top of the list), I can say that how I survived this year is clearly a testament of God's grace.

MS. HANANEL IRENE HOPE NACARIO
English Teacher



It's challenging yet fulfilling.

MRS. STEPHANIE TULOD
Computer Teacher

Every day is different, anxious, and exciting.

MR. EL-CID SAYSON
Math/TLE Teacher



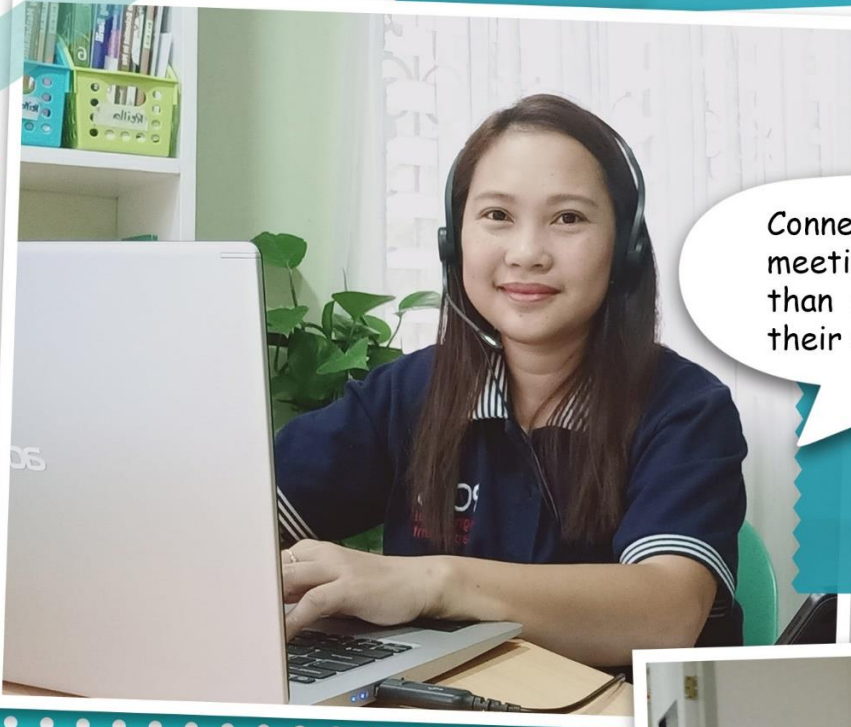
Online class paved the way for me to unlock new skills in technology and in teaching which is indeed a blessing.

MISS LOVELY DESIREE SUNOG
Filipino/History Teacher



Connect, join, download attendance, end meeting, yet nothing is more challenging than engaging your students even when their camera is off.

MRS. LELAMAE CABALSE
Science Teacher



As an introvert, it's my comfort zone, yet it's still challenging most especially in carrying out the emotions and appreciation of the students toward literature.

MR. MICHAEL MATT GUITGUITEN
English Teacher



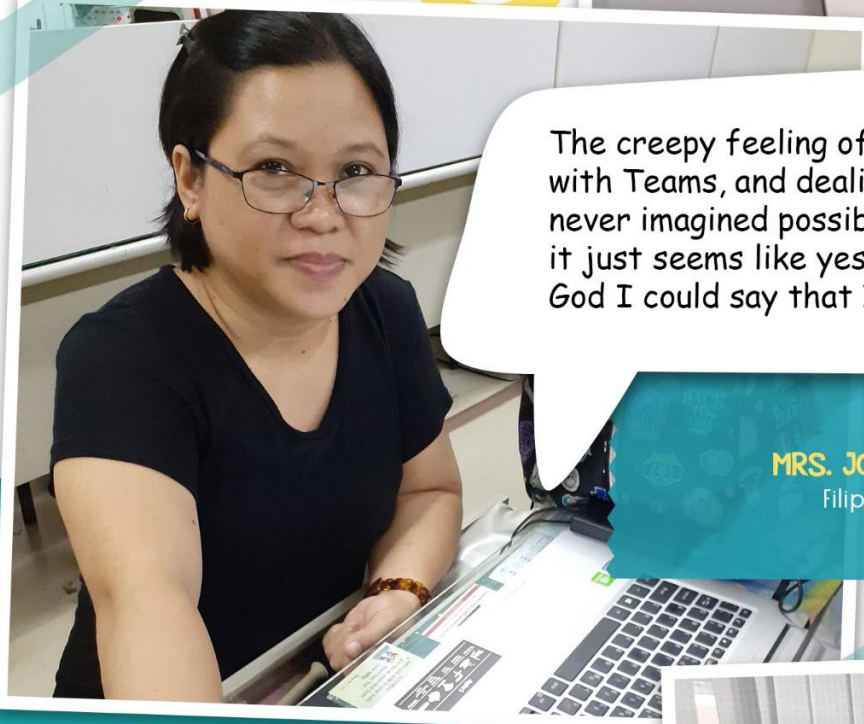
It is the students' responsibility to actively engage for their learning, but it is our responsibility to design synchronous lessons in a motivated way for students to remain actively engaged during class.

MRS. JOCELYN LAZARO
Math Teacher



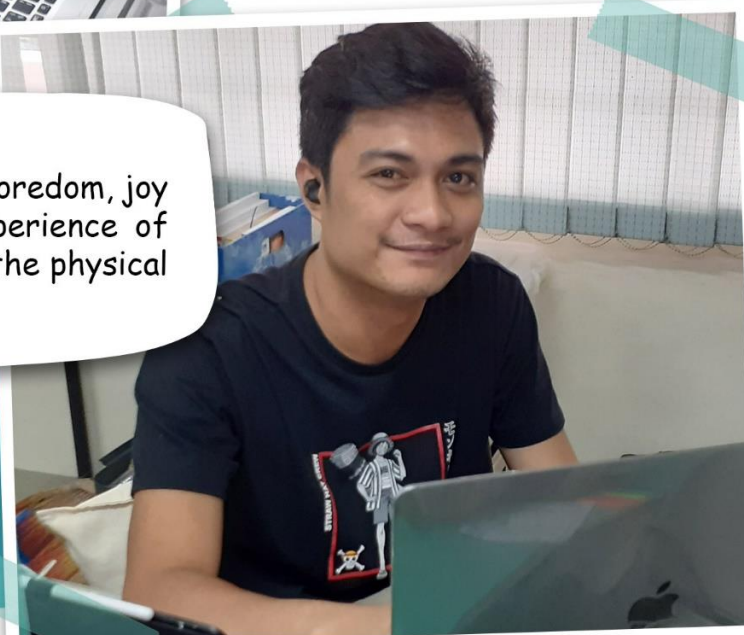
The creepy feeling of using the laptop, adjusting with Teams, and dealing with the students that I never imagined possible to happen ended so soon, it just seems like yesterday and by the grace of God I could say that I made it!

MRS. JOCEN VARGAS
Filipino Teacher



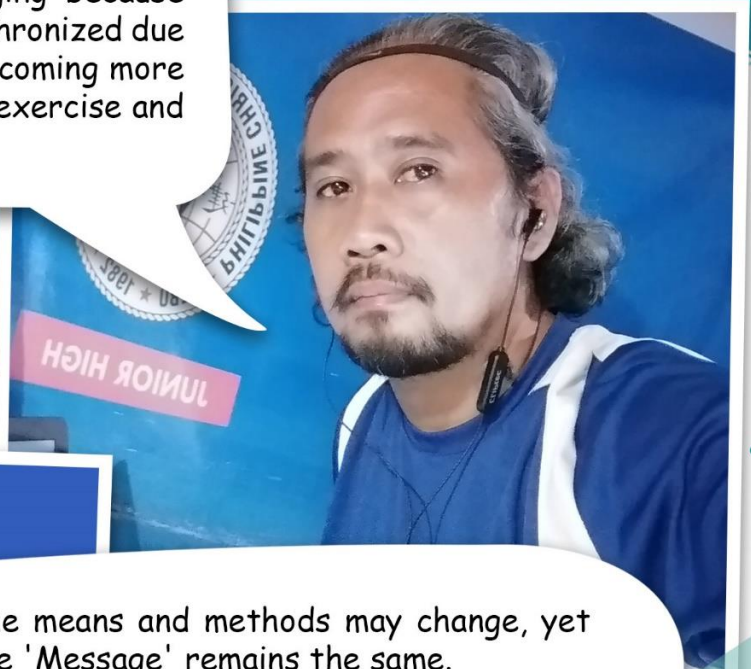
It was an undulation of fun and boredom, joy and despair, yet a thrilling experience of learning beyond the borders of the physical school.

MR. TIMOTHY BACLAYON
Science Teacher



My online experience was a bit challenging because there were times that we couldn't be synchronized due to some technical problem or students becoming more conscious on how they would execute the exercise and appearance.

MR. MARK CABACABA
Physical Education Teacher



The means and methods may change, yet the 'Message' remains the same.
#jesusisthewaythetruththelife

MR. LORENZO CASTRO
Bible Teacher



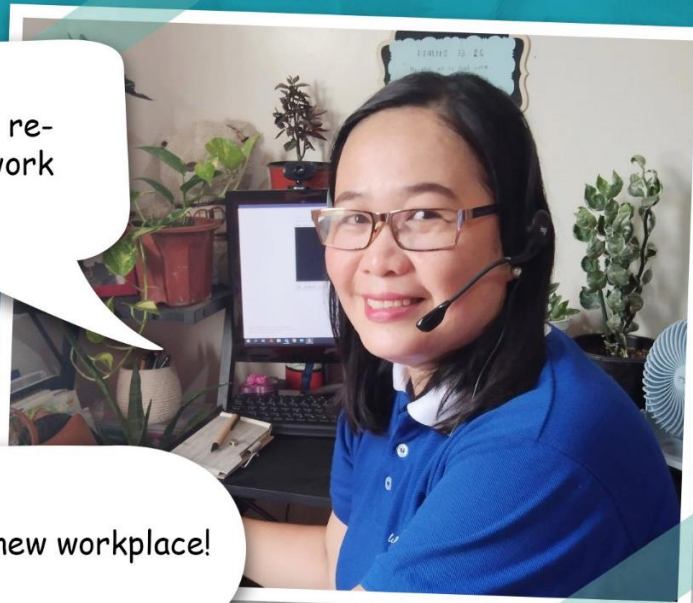
Online teaching feels like working in NASA where we have to visualize what it is like to be in that side of the universe.

MR. FRITZGERALD GAVIOLA
Social Studies Teacher



It takes a great deal of time and patience re-shaping my classroom materials to make it work for online class.

MRS. MERIAM PAGALAN
Filipino Teacher



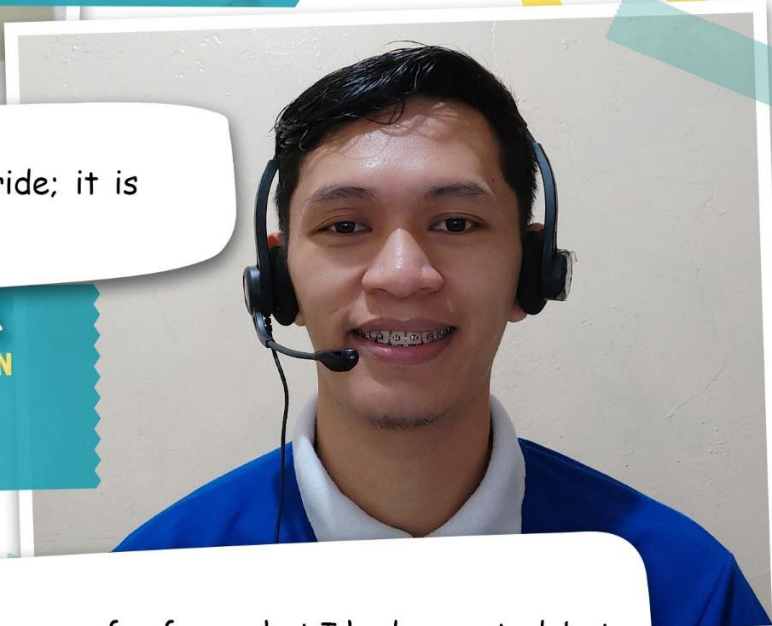
Cyberspace is the new workplace!

MR. EDUARDO PUA
Junior High Schol Office Assistant



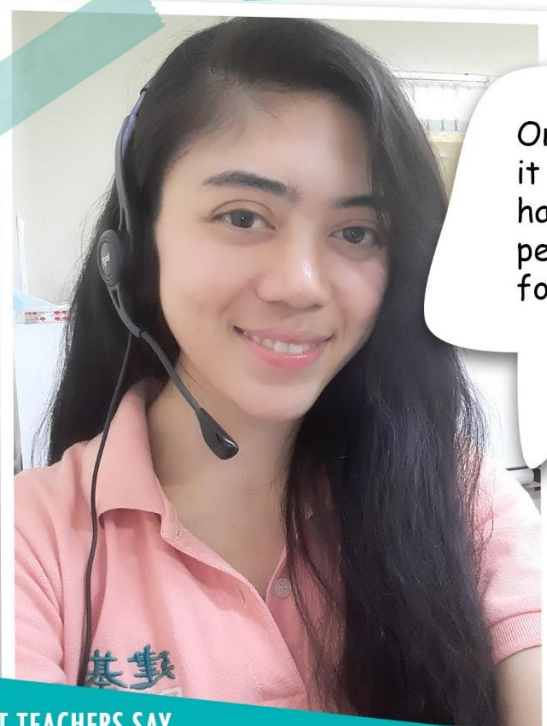
It is like a roller coaster ride; it is challenging yet rewarding.

PTR. JONATHAN UBANAN
Bible Teacher



Online class was far from what I had expected, but it was all worth it - to know that even if everyone has been struggling, we are thriving, learning, and persevering in life, in school, and in the Lord; and for now, that's just what matters.

MISS GADDIEL PUZON
Science/TLE Teacher



WHEN WE ARE Humble and Obedient

By: Zireh Lee

is a great example of a person who has humility. When David was facing the Phillistine giant, Goliath, "David said to the Phillistine, *You come against me with sword and spear and javelln, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, he God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head*" (1 Samuel 17:45-46). David had confidence in the Lord, and he trusted in Him which brought him to victory. Even after defeating the giant, he was praised by many, but he remained humble giving back all the glory to God. *Having confidence and faith in God can lead us to many victories, giving thanks to Him and remembering that it was through Him we are able to succeed, but when we do not win, know that He has a greater plan for us, and it is a time of healing and humility.*

Picture yourself in a situation where you opened the fridge and saw no trace of the food you left for you to snack on today. Naturally, you would start connecting the dots and conclude that your sibling had eaten them which would make you very aggravated. If that made you so annoyed, then how much more if your sibling had made a promise that they would not eat your food. Is not that even more infuriating? There is a difference when someone gets something from you that they did not know you owned and when someone gets something from you which they did know you owned, plus made a promise that they would not touch it, but they did anyway. So, think of how God feels, if you get mad over something so little how much more God when what He commands us to do is important, and it is our duty as Christians to obey His commands. Doing what He wants us to do is hard for us since we always sin, because it is our nature. We are sinful beings and the God over all things Who hates sin is instructing us. Yes, it is indeed difficult – very difficult to avoid sinning, but with God anything and everything is possible. When we are being tempted, the first thing we should do is pray about it. Ask God to help us resist the temptations for He always listens to us. Obeying God leads us to the right path in life though we sometimes think otherwise. Making decisions affects our lives just like when we are in a situation thinking of thoughts like "I should have done this...", "I should have said this." When a dilemma arises, God also comes along! Let Him choose for He is the Author of our lives. Once we submit, trust, and fully obey Him everything will go according to His Will, but do not always expect that all will be splendid because in Job 1: 21 it says, "The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away, may the name of the LORD be praised." Remember what happened to Jonah? He was angry that the Lord had shown mercy and compassion to the people in Nineveh, so he had sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter (Jonah 4: 5). "Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort . . . but at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered." (Jonah 4: 6-7). What happened to Jonah shows us that God uses both the good and the bad to change us. When obeying Him seems hard, He will provide a way for us, whether it is a clear or rocky path. Both will just be alright because they will definitely be a learning experience.

Have you ever had a conversation with someone that was all about them? Talking about the places they visited, things they possessed, achievements they accomplished, and all that. You might have found it nice to get to know more about a person, but sometimes you might have gotten annoyed with them. However, we also might be the "someone" in the conversation occasionally, and whether that is or is not the case we must do something about it. Ephesians 4:2 says, "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love." So, when someone is constantly boasting to us about all sorts of things and we find them irritating, we should try our very best to tolerate them. When we find ourselves to be the one who is bragging, we ought to put down all those things. But there are two questions which are, "How do we become humble?" and "Why should we be humble?" The first way to become humble is to bring down our pride, this does not mean that we are to degrade ourselves, but we should acknowledge that all the success we have in our lives are through the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Humbling oneself does not mean lowering our confidence either. *The difference between having pride and having confidence is that pride is thinking high of ourselves while confidence is believing in our ability. It is having confidence in the Lord because He is the source.* Pride does not come from the Lord which later answers the question of "Why should we be humble?" It says in Proverbs 3:34, "He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed." And in 1 Peter 5:5 it says, "Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." God is against people who are prideful, and God hates pride. If we are prideful then that would mean God is against our works and nobody wants to be against God, right? Fully submitting our life to God is one step to being humble for it is a way of showing that we do know that God is indeed greater than us and everything else in this world. King David

LITERARY PORTFOLIO

HOPE

By Hannah Sophia Woo

When the going gets tough,
When the seas become rough,
When there's nothing to cling on,
Because your strength is all gone.

When the skies are grey,
And you can't find your way,
You don't know what to do,
You're lost, you can't push through.

But for every problem
there's a solution,
No matter how big or
how small is the attribution.

All you need is hope
Found in Jesus alone.
With hope, you won't be afraid
To go through the unknown.

If you're feeling lost,
Just turn back to the cross.
If you're feeling stressed
Just trust Him in the process.

He promised us hope and a future
In Jeremiah 29:11,
So stop feeling down
We have a hope anchored in heaven.

Whenever you lose hope,
Just cling on to His rope
Because in Him, hope is found
And in hope, we must abound.

HOLD ONTO HOPE

By: Tashana Ong

My thoughts are filled with gloom
When something makes me grieve.
But I won't give it any room,
HOPE is what I choose to believe.

Deep down is an empty feeling,
Dark shadows subdue the light.
What the world needs is healing,
It's just around the corner, hold tight!

Hope warms the heart,
Lightens the spirit and soul.
Let it be a work of art,
And let God make you whole.

It's not a hope akin to a wish
That whimpers, sighs, and pleads in its core.
It's a hope that grows, it lets me flourish
Forever steadfast, unshakable, and sure!

A SPACE

By Gianne Dy

My eyes flutter open to the greatest expanse
And I could hear nothing but the wind's sultry dance.
I lie there awake in the space of my mind
At peace in this blissful and calming confine.

Here the warmth of a hand slowly lulls me to sleep
But to sleep I cannot, for trouble my heart reap.
A force that is too much to bear on my chest,
So swiftly I spring up to catch my own breath.

I'm aware of the quiet, it surrounds this space.
Far beyond it's a shadow of what I must face,
In a silence as somber as the one I am in
The weight of the world trickles down on my skin.

Watching ripples distort this reflected expanse,
A barrier of sorts that is unseen at first glance
Made to conserve the fragile space of my mind,
A refuge and cage is its special design.

Is a refuge designed to make its dweller weep?
What more can I do to go against this false keep?
When the strength that I need is less than possessed,
So I call out for help, "Please," is my request.

I reach out to the quiet, the floor of this space,
And a light slowly pulses from across my place.
My heart is still heavy, but not alone within
I sink past the barrier, forward, I begin.



Grade 12, Class of 2021

THROUGH THE TEST OF TIME

By Eliana Ong

The day is fair, almost too bright to bear contrary to yesterday, winds howling, hissing, ominous lightning in the air.

"You've seen everything, hundreds of experiences to share. You've weathered lightning, bore the scorching sunshine. Don't you get tired and weary?" I asked the great Pine Tree.

"Of course, I get tired, of course I get weary. Standing so tall is never so easy. Just keep standing strong as life goes along."

"But how do I get up when things get too tough?"

"Take a page from the book of children. When learning to walk, they fall six times but stand up seven," the Pine replied with such wisdom and experience.

"Can't I just give up?"

"Let me tell you a secret, a very simple secret. Perseverance is when we go on when things seem hopeless. The measure of success, the key to progress. Be steadfast and learn from the past. Only patience and strong determination can achieve goals through perseverance."

"But I am no longer a child, sheltered and pale. I don't have the time to try and fail."

"What you're doing is not failing but learning. The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling but in rising. Even if a person has no talent, success is within reach if one perseveres year by year."

Through God's goodness, one can achieve success. Through His will, one can make a difference. And with perseverance one can easily walk the hazardous journey, success within his reach and his only."

The day is fair, almost too bright to bear. The smell of pine and hope wafting in the air.

STAY-HOME SENIORS

By: Brianne Sy

March 28, 2020. The midday sun glinting off the whiteboard, half-erased. The abrupt swing of the classroom door, and those three uttered words *"no more school"*. The air of shock and temporary joy that engulfed the room was soon diffused by reality. The frantic scribbling of Muji pens on last-minute essays. The smell of soda and soggy pizza. Swollen eyes and runny noses. The ribbon tied in the air conditioner, flapping limply in the air as if bidding us goodbye for the last time. The gentle sobs floating out of each classroom door, followed by waves of embraces. The feeling of comfort, togetherness, and love.

Fitting in a picture was never a problem for our batch. During Christmas parties, cheer dances, batch photos, you name it. Thanks to our number, we can all effortlessly huddle together in front of the camera — just a grinning bunch of peculiar people.

But this time it was different because it felt like the last time we'll ever be complete. Eyes brimmed with tears as we flashed our bittersweet smiles. The shutter of the camera went off, resonating around the room. At that moment, we wished that time would just freeze, so we may savor the joy of normalcy. For who knew when we were going to experience it again?

It seems like only a day has passed since. That day that will forever go down in Kian Kee history. One moment, we were all in school, cramming lab reports, playing basketball, and volleyball in the open court, lining up for siomai in the canteen. And now we're here, cooped up in our homes, stuck in who knows what date it is. To be honest, this year wasn't even close to the dreamy "last year of junior high school" that my batch had always envisioned since elementary days. Back when we were grade 7 students, grade 10 to us was a far-off fantasy, something straight out of a coming-of-age movie. Fast-forward to today, where we are currently trying to survive in a zombie-apocalypse film — except make it a knockoff corona version. Frankly, our grade 10 experience wasn't as eventful as it would have been if we had face-to-face classes, but despite that, it was still quite a ride, filled with unmuted mic mishaps, chaotic discord calls, and everything in between! Here is a closer look at our unique online class experience as batch 2020-2021: Kian Kee's first-ever "stay-home seniors".

STAGE 1: THE GREAT SILENCE.

To start it off, let's just say we really didn't know what to expect. Before, in physical classes, our morning routines were usually whirlwinds of uniform struggles, sheer panic, and fear of getting late. But in online classes? Never in a million years did we think we could ever attend classes in pajamas. Now that was quite a change, but obviously, we didn't mind. The actual classes kicked off with a rather bumpy start. I remember the first few days of online classes being slightly awkward and it took a lot of getting used to. Something was just quite off with finally meeting each other yet not actually meeting each other in person. Just a disclaimer: our batch, most specifically my class, is made up of rather shy specimens. On most days we hide behind closed cams and mics, but if you're lucky enough, you may get to see us come out of our natural habitats! Except you



won't see faces, sadly, more like a sea of foreheads. Props especially to the teachers! Every Q&A session was like trying to play Pinoy Henyo with a bunch of mutes. The truth is, each time the teacher asked a question, we'd all silently hope that someone would speak up to break the dead air. Usually, it was the same person each time, while the rest of us sighed in relief. Many awkward instances happened during this stage, but the most embarrassing ones were the unmuted mic mishaps. Trust me, I've been there, done that.

STAGE 2: THE RENAISSANCE.

Thankfully, a few months in, or probably a hundred awkward silences later, we slowly started to come out of our shells. More and more people participated in discussions and finally, teachers weren't always just talking to themselves. Unique and interactive online minigames were also integrated to help us learn new lessons. Sometimes we even got a little too competitive during Quizizz tests! Classes became a little goofier and a little less quiet, a bit more engaging, and a bit more bright. But that didn't mean we didn't have our share of ups and downs. Sometimes the internet was your friend, but sometimes your greatest enemy. Our live presentations could go from Ted Talk level to sounding like malfunctioning robots. Bad internet, especially during test time, is the absolute worst. Exam periods would usually sound like: "Sir, I can't see the test on my end", "Miss, my file can't be attached", "Madam, the form won't submit". Yup, that's online class for you. But we eventually got used to it. During this stage, our batch's capability, creativity, and versatility were also put to the ultimate test. Tsunamis of performance tasks came flooding in our workload once in a while. Surely we missed those early Saturday mornings in school where we would spend hours working on our projects, chatting, snacking, and chilling near the business office. Since we couldn't do that anymore, breakout rooms and discord calls were our go-to meetup places. Here, we can do almost everything we do in school meetups, minus the "snacking on Potato Corner fries from Bootcamp" part. During the quarantine period, we each have unlocked some new skills, whether it be playing instruments, video editing, cooking, animating, and more! So these group projects were perfect ways for us to put our newfound talents to good use! Of course, class days wouldn't be complete without after-class hangouts with friends! Movie laags in SM Seaside became Netflix parties, while Valorant matches were our "internet café standbys". We couldn't be together like we used to, but thankfully, through this online means, we were still able to stay connected despite being houses away.

STAGE 3: THE END. OR IS IT?

Nine months. Can't you believe how fast time flew? And now we've reached the final stage: the ending of the school year. The absolute highlight of March was when we finally got to see each other after months of not meeting. This was when the school organized a graduation phototaking for our

batch. It honestly felt so unreal, as if we saw each other for the first time in ages. A lot of us have changed since we last met. Some donned new hairdos, while some lucky ones looked like they grew a foot taller. Faces were hidden behind masks and face shields, but that still couldn't hide the happiness that emanated from our laughter. The hardest thing to do during that time was resisting the temptation to hug each other, so we decided to give corona-friendly air hugs instead. When it was time to leave, our photo storages had already become full, and our pockets packed with exchanged mementos. The feelings of togetherness were finally restored, and this was truly a treat for all of us before the final periodical exams. After the exams, most students might've already deleted their Microsoft teams, but for us, the curtain hasn't fully closed yet. Here comes our encore, an online moving-up ceremony that will happen in a few months.

As for our current state as stay-home seniors, well, it's complicated. Some of us are making plans for the next chapter of our life, while some are still stuck in 2018, clinging to that dream that Grade 10 never was. Inside, there's still that lingering bittersweetness that our junior high school is all over. Next year will not be the same anymore, as some of us might venture out to pursue our own paths elsewhere. "Was our grade 10 really worth it?", we ask ourselves. We didn't get to have physical classes, no intramurals, no retreat, no grad ball, no actual moving-up ceremony. This was supposed to be the year that we give our all. It was supposed to be the year where we would make the most of everything. It was supposed to be the year to make final memories as a complete batch. It was supposed to be our goodbye before parting ways. It was supposed to be, but it never was. No amount of "supposed to's" is enough to bring us out of this situation, but as they say, life is full of surprises, and we'll just have to accept that we're here. We may never know why God allowed this pandemic to happen, but one thing is for sure. This is all part of His perfect plan. That is why, if there was one thing we have all learned during this school year, it would be gratitude. We're grateful that despite all the challenges that the pandemic has brought, we were still able to have classes together. We're grateful that the obstacles we had to face helped us come back stronger. We're grateful for the teachers who endured all the online struggles and patiently taught us along the way. We're grateful that we still made simple, but unforgettable memories. And most importantly, we're grateful for the growth that only this online experience could bring to us. Surely, we will bring these valuable lessons with us as we enter the next chapter of our high school life. As for when our batch will be reunited again, we still don't know when. It could be in months, years, two years, or three years into the future, but for sure, when all this is over, we will meet each other again. It'll be a day when we can finally make up for all the missing months of being apart, and by then, we can relive our grade 10. We'll fulfill those canceled plans, make those special memories, and take that one last batch photo — all smiles with no more tears, complete and happy again. But till then, stay home, seniors, and stay safe.

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ABOUNDING IN HOPE

Perseverance & Experience



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