



# EFM COVID-19 UPDATES PRAY FOR THE PHILIPPINES



EFM has been supporting ministry in the Philippines since 1978. A yearly meeting has been established there called PEFIM. There are 18 Friends churches connected to this yearly meeting and they are located on various islands. The director of PEFIM is Crisanto de la Cruz. Cris and his family live in Metro Manila on the island of Luzon. He responded to the questions I sent to all our missionaries and national leaders last week as follows:



## **How is COVID-19 affecting those who live in the area where you live and minister?**

1. The island of Luzon is in lockdown. The immediate effect is that people are now restricted to their houses. Classes and work have been suspended.
2. As for our church members, none have contracted the disease so far. I encouraged our leaders to cooperate with the government and to fervently pray to the Lord for mercy and for his will and purpose to prevail.
3. Many daily wage earners have been severely affected by the lockdown. While markets are still open, there is serious concern about where to get money to buy food. This is also true of many of our members here in Pasig, Antipolo, Silangan, and Taguig.

## **How is this situation affecting the ministry you lead?**

1. We have suspended our gathering for worship in our sanctuary since March 15 until the lockdown is lifted. It is very likely that the lockdown will last the whole month until April 14.
2. The situation is preventing our churches from collecting tithes and offerings thus seriously affecting our pastors' salaries. I requested the PEFIM Board to immediately release emergency funds to give cash assistance to our pastors. Thankfully we were able to do this on March 19. But we only have very limited funds and as the lockdown persists our pastors will suffer badly. Our local government will soon begin to distribute food packs to each household. I'm not sure that every local government is able to do this.

## **What are some opportunities you are seeing for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those who don't know him?**

1. The situation presents an opportunity for us to do our worship via live stream. We are streaming it on the Facebook pages of PEFIM and Pasig Friends Church. That enables us to reach a far bigger audience, including friends of our members. The response is truly overwhelming.
2. There is a need to bring food assistance to some households in our community, including some of our members. As I see it, feeding them spiritually and physically forms part of our responsibility in times of crisis such as this.

## **What are two or three prayer requests we can use to pray for you and those you lead?**

1. Please pray that the Lord will grant me wisdom to be able to respond gracefully and in a manner that glorifies him in this very trying time. May we be able to share the gospel of Christ more effectively even in difficult times.
2. Please pray for our well-being...that we be protected from this disease as well as from anxiety for the whole period of the lockdown.
3. Please pray for the Lord's provision for my family, for our leaders and members affected by the lockdown.

---

Roy and Jinky Twaddell, EFM missionaries serving with Muslim Ministries and based in Metro Manila, also answered the same questions. They work closely with PEFIM on certain projects like leadership training (FEAST) and outreach to Muslims. Their answers to the questions reflect much of what you have already read from Cris. Here are some of their insights and prayer requests:



## **How is this situation affecting the ministry you lead?**

1. We have had to close our residential classes in FEAST. Fortunately, we have the internet and the students can finish their course work. But graduation will be postponed.
2. All of our inter island activities have been cancelled. Tentative reschedule dates are late May and early June.
3. We may not be able to restart our FEAST residential school for months.

## **What are some opportunities you are seeing for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those who don't know Him?**

1. We are able to share our garden and tree fruits with many informal settlers we know in the neighborhood. These are people impacted by job losses.
2. We have an elderly neighbor that we check on. We help her get water and talk with her over the fence.
3. We are sharing a meal with our security guards on a daily basis.

## **What are two or three prayer requests that we can use as we pray for you and those you lead?**

1. Pray for Pastor Cris, Pastor Hildegarde, Pastor Manny, Sister Marie, and I (Roy) as we discuss how we will finish up the remaining FEAST requirements for our courses and for those who will graduate.
2. Pray for all our FEAST and Purok Uno students and their families, for health, and for minimal impact on their lives, especially with their finances as many jobs are being impacted.
3. Finally, pray for the Philippines as we endure this quarantine and that we will do so in a spirit of love and compassion and not in fear or panic