



*“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.”*

Job 14:7

Dear Faithful Friend and Partner of Bahay Sibol,

JANUARY 2021 UPDATE

Happy New Year! It has been a very different and understandably difficult year for everyone. We pray that God’s grace would grant us a better one in 2021; knowing that may not mean a reprieve from Covid, political unrest, or social chaos. ‘Better’, perhaps may simply mean we will have a better perspective, be better prepared, and have more firm determination to love and serve others as Jesus would despite such trying times.

At this time of reflection, we can look back through 2020 and see hardship and trials, mistakes made and opportunities missed. There were times where we allowed fear and uncertainty to delay and hinder progress. Not all of 2020 was bad; thankfully, we can also look back and see success, opportunities grabbed, progress made, accomplishments reached, numerous victories and blessings to celebrate. In the end, whether our memories from 2020 are positive or negative, we plan to use each experience as gained wisdom toward 2021 and the future. As we put 2020 behind us and look forward to 2021, we see all that can be accomplished. There are lives to be changed, families to be made whole, and children prepared for an abundant life. We will put the past behind us, and push towards being led by Christ and a desire to show His love to those who need it most.

Hope Education was put to excellent use because of face-to-face classes being canceled. The venue, material, and staff that were readily available to us meant that our kids were not only able to stay on course with their education, but some were able to use the situation to push even harder, making up for lost ground. **It is our goal that every child at Bahay Sibol will be at their appropriate age to grade level before face-to-face classes are implemented again.** We are ever so thankful to Calvary Christian Academy and the staff there; they have been instrumental in allowing our kids to excel academically.



Adoption for those children who are available to be adopted is one of our main priorities. The process of getting a child ‘available’ for adoption is long, difficult, and frustrating. Obtaining required documents, finding parents or relatives, and complying with all of the requirements takes great time, effort, patience, and finances on our part. We hired a new social worker at the end of October 2019. She had only a very short time to adjust to our center, the kids, and her new career when the pandemic began. Still, during this time we were able to complete 3 adoptions, reunite 1 child with his family, 4 children declared available for adoption, and requirements for 7 more children were submitted. **Our goal for 2021 is to obtain availability of adoption or begin the reunification process for every child possible under our care.** Every child deserves and needs a family of their very own and we are thankful for God sending a diligent, skillful social worker with a heart for placing children with families.

During the lockdown, the children were very active in the work of developing our property to be more self-sustaining. From caring for the animals to helping in the rice fields, planting gardens, building projects, washing their clothes, and even earning their own money, our kids spent time learning new **life skills and preparing** for their lives as adults. Despite our goal for a home for each child, one sad realization is that some of the kids will likely be with us until they become independent adults. **While life skills and preparing for adulthood was not an aspect of Bahay Sibol that we had originally considered, it will become one of our main focus points for 2021.** We currently have 6 children over the age of 12 who will most likely never be given or reunited with a family of their own. **This year we will be preparing more for these such cases: teaching life skills, preparing them academically for college,**



instilling good character traits they will carry through adulthood, into careers, and building their own families. Of course, this means that we will be preparing for the finances that will be required to put them through college or vocational skills training.

As part of life skills training, **we would like to open a bakery right on campus.** Victor and Mai Pavo have been our supervising house parents and assistant director since Bahay Sibol began in 2015. Before that, they ran a small bakery in our city. With their knowledge and skills, **we hope to build a small building that will hold the equipment and supplies for a bakeshop.** The older children will be trained to manage this small business. It will provide a means for them to earn their own money, leading to the experiential knowledge of responsibility and financial management.

Another special project that we will begin research and prep work for this year is a birthing center. Having a safe, affordable, and accessible place for women to give birth is a major need in our area. We hope to assist women who have no money, family, or partner, and in turn, lack confidence or have great fear about pregnancy and birth. Often, these situations leave them feeling hopeless or helpless, and choosing to abort or abandon their babies, or even worse. We desire to help meet needs during pregnancy, giving birth, and making better choices for themselves and their baby, based on options that they never realized they had. We want to provide these services at no cost.



As you can see, the common theme of all that happens at Bahay Sibol is the undeniable need for money. Currently, we are operating far below our needed budget, so **the first thing that must be done is stabilizing our monthly donations to a level that will support basic needs:** food, clothing, medical, hygiene, house upkeep, salaries, paperwork, and adoption expenses, and the list goes on. **Until we can stabilize our monthly budget, we cannot pursue the additional programs and projects that are also very needed:** college education for our kids, a bakeshop, and a birthing center.

At times, 2020 left us shocked and feeling unable to move forward. Regretfully, there was much more that we could have accomplished and done better in 2020, but we allowed fear and chaos paralyze and hamper progress in some areas. We have decided that no matter what happens this year, we will seek out, work hard on, and diligently follow the plans God has laid on our hearts for a greater life for the children under our care now and for all in need around us.

If you have been supporting us, thank you so much! We cannot truly express what it means to our home and to each child, but we will trust the Lord to bless you for your sacrifices. If you know of someone, a church, or other organization that would be interested in supporting us on a regular monthly basis, **please do pass our information along.** We are not necessarily looking for big amounts of support but rather we are hoping to enlist more people to support on a regular monthly basis. **No gift is too small. Even at \$10, \$25, or \$50, the consistency of that donation given on a regular monthly basis will make a big impact on our work here.** Our information for donations is given below.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter, for keeping up-to-date with us on Facebook, and for your financial and prayer support; without you, our friends, family and partners, there would be no Bahay Sibol. Thank you and Happy New Year!

SUPPORT ADDRESS

send donations to:

BEMA
4744 Winchester Pike,
Columbus, OH 43232, USA

Designated specifically for:
Bahay Sibol

A Children's Home Ministry of:
Calvary Baptist Church
9-10 Genesis Ave. Sarmiento Townville
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You may also send support
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