

Fruitful Homes

Tell How
They Do It!

Special
Action
FSM #25



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Pandita Ramabai:

I pray for you, that your faith fails not, and that you will be missionaries. For that is your calling, and that is the calling of the children of David no matter where they live—whether in America or England or India or Pakistan or China or Romania or anywhere—it does not matter. You are to be missionaries and witnesses and soul winners, examples of God's true love, liberty and light.

(ML #3117:58, Vol.24)

Roll the Activated Gold

By MaryAnn for the Rose Garden Home, India

The fruits of promoting *Activated*

When the Activated ministry started here in India in 1999, we were at the point of being very desperate for a change in our witnessing. Our

witnessing had been focused a lot on getting out the videos and tools, and also on our CTP work, and not enough on our true calling of telling people about Jesus. So when we saw the beautiful and feeding magazines, we were very excited about getting subscriptions.

From the first month that we started presenting the *Activated* magazine to people, October 1999, we knew it was the answer to bringing back true joy and victory in our witnessing. After a few months of activating we had precious sheep to feed!—And we also won the WS shiner prize of a computer!

We send out a lot of road teams, as it is easier to get tools out on the road, and our budget was built largely on tool distribution. More and more our road teams began to see that if they

Cover



Joe (21) of the Love Fortress Home, Taiwan, giving a Word study to a club member at The Rock Club. See story on page 19.



(L-R:) June and Neeta with Neeta's daughter Richika, at our Home's weekly Bible study

presented the *Activated* magazine subscription first, even before the videos and tools, the trips were more fruitful.

In our carnal mind, it seemed like people would just opt for taking a more inexpensive subscription over the tools, so we had formerly felt we should push the tools. But the Lord's plan doesn't work that way, and so we got in the habit of asking for subscriptions, which resulted in fruitful road trips.

When we would present the *Activated* magazine and explain how much it helped us and how we felt that they could benefit from the subscription, people seemed to see our sincerity and concern for them; many times they would take a subscription and the tools as well. We have often felt the Lord's blessings on us for putting the witnessing first rather than the fundraising.

Getting out *Activated* magazines changed the whole spirit of the Home! It was so inspiring when the children would ask the outreach teams coming home each day, "How many subscriptions did you get?" and not, "How many videos did you get out?"

Everyone in the Home caught the *Activated* vision and way of life! Our nursery teacher was scheduled to go out one afternoon a week with an Active member or with one of the teens, and she would faithfully get *Activated* subscriptions every month. She has now renewed some of her people for the third year.

Activated helped to transform our young people's witnessing, as it gave them a platform for starting conversations. The children also enjoy going witnessing with *Activated* and know how to ask people to take subscriptions. We have also introduced our Active members to helping us get subscriptions!

We realize, though, that being activated as a Home is more than getting subscriptions. Through following the guidance in the Letters, we started giving weekly classes to our hungry activated sheep. We have found it is very easy to give feeding classes, as we can just sit and read the magazines or *Get Activated* booklets with them, for example *Prayer Power*, *Obstacles Are for Overcoming*, *God's Gifts*, etc. Sometimes we show them Bible movies or the Endtime videos. We have now started COLs in our Home on two different days for two different groups of sheep. It is exciting and challenging to see our friends growing as they come over for Bible studies. Church growth is such a wonderful result of the *Activated* vision.

As the number of people we are feeding weekly has grown, this has helped us all to learn to become "teachers, pastors, and shepherds" as the "Expansion Program" Letter (ML #3308, GN 908) talks about. We have had to learn to keep our house tidy and visitor-ready, to give classes, to feed the Active members' children, to be available when the sheep come, and the lessons go on.



Dahlia (L), who is an Active member, introduced *Divya* to the Family, and they both attend the weekly 12 Foundation Stones classes.

We have seen over and over that when we are faithful to make Activated a priority in our Home, the Lord does wonderful miracles of supply beyond our expectations. One outstanding reward of our focus on Activated happened seven months ago when our landlord of eight years asked us to move. The Lord did an absolute miracle in leading us to a house without our even looking—and the house is just beautiful! The rent is a stretch of our faith, but He has never failed to miraculously bring it in. We are enjoying our new house so much, as it is so easy to keep clean and has so much light and nice rooms. We feel it is the Lord's blessing for our following the Activated vision.

It's so true what Jesus said in "Activate the World, Part 8": "You will receive rewards greater

than your mind can fathom, larger than you can imagine, more perfect than you would ever dream possible!" (ML #3460:10, GN 1045). He has given us a "generous salary," as He has promised, as well as the blessing of being able to see lives transformed as people read the Word in the *Activated* magazines and books.

We are so thankful for Mama and Peter being faithful to give us the vision and the Word on Activated that has changed our lives and our Home.

Activated lifestyle

Here are some key points we have learned to focus on to be activated as a Home.

- **Each one in the Home should get personally activated**, as the Activated program is

(Editor's note: Here's a reaction written by the Rose Garden Home at the end of August 2003, that shows their response to a request by the CGO board to up the Activated progress in their area. Although this dear Home had been often been a shiner in Activated subscriptions, they took up the challenge and set even higher goals. Their note gives insight on how they have achieved good results and the Lord's blessings.)

Zeroing in on success

During the month of June 2003, the CGO board issued our area a special challenge to strive for higher goals for our *Activated* subscriptions and programs. There were shiner prizes for the Home with the most subscriptions per voting member. Over the following three-month period the Lord taught us precious lessons on faith, obedience, and using the power of the keys.

None of us in the Home consider ourselves great shiners. Our results are thanks to the Word that Mama and Peter send out to us, which has all the guidelines to success in the Lord and obtaining His financial blessings.

Following the challenge from the CGO board, we set goals for higher *Activated*

subscriptions than we had in the previous months.

Thinking back now, I can only thank the Lord for the "How to Have a Happy Home" GN (ML #2956, Vol. 21 and DB 12), which came out just after the Charter and which we were able to base our Home on. We realized that in order to be fruitful, we also had to take care of our dear disciples at home—our children. We took a step of faith and decided to schedule one of our outreach personnel to work with the children, to strengthen their schooling. God bless our dear CP board and FED board, who helped us via regular meetings and reminders via letter to strive for a higher commitment as far as our childcare department went. This decision to have one more person on the childcare front was a step of faith on our part, but we felt the Lord encourage us to obey and apply His Word.

As I reflect on those three months, I can clearly see the Lord's hand at work. We had a financial shortfall in the first month. One of our outreach teams was also focusing on a yearly *Souvenir* project (a publication of quotations, with ads purchased by companies as support to us), we were helping out on the boards, our childcare standard needed revamping, and our budget needed to be raised.

a way of life. It should become the center point of the Home for not only outreach people but also childcare people. If you are not out getting subscriptions, you can be praying for the teams out. The childcare department can also get involved when the Activated members start growing to the point that they start visiting the Home and want to learn more about how we teach our children, etc.

• **Read the Word on Activated.** Believe the Word and how important it is to get people activated. Everyone in the Home should read the *Activated* magazines and materials, such as the booklets as they come out.

• **Everyone should realize that getting an Activated subscription is only the first step in activating someone.** After people sign

up, we should ask the Lord which ones are hungry for regular and deeper feeding. Spend time each week doing follow-up classes and reading with the hungry sheep. Even if it is only two or three sheep, be faithful to feed them every week so they can grow. It's good to read the magazine *with* people to teach them how to apply the Word to their own personal lives.

• **Activated is not a quick results ministry; it requires patience and perseverance.** It is difficult to get the ball rolling in the beginning, but as we read the Word more and see how much the Lord blesses as we obey the Activated vision, it starts becoming a habit. After about two years, for us the momentum picked up and there was exponential growth. The sooner a Home starts following

As we took time to hear from the Lord on how to focus on all these things and yet continue on, He clearly showed us to make Activated our focus for the coming months and to strive for higher goals. Also, on the childcare side He gave counsel on what changes were needed to give our children the schooling and attention they need and deserve. He also encouraged us to keep focusing on the Word Revolution, have regular prayer vigils, and call on the power of the keys and the help we have from our spirit helpers.

As we worked towards these goals the second month, we got our whole budget but still had quite a large deficit from the first month. But by the end of the third month when we asked ourselves, "Did the Lord keep His side of the bargain?" The answer was "YES, HE DID!" Miraculously, one of our outreach teams went to see a company director who had taken "Mottos" previously on different occasions. Upon explaining to him the need for help this month, he said, "Just to help you, we'll take 500 'Mottos for Success!'" PTL! Another company called us—one we weren't even pursuing—and they placed an order for another 400 "Mottos." Then there was another order from a friend in a city reached by road teams, and he ordered 100 "Mottos," which

gave us 1,000 "Mottos" out that month! Wow! He never fails.

The children are growing spiritually and are happy and challenged with the needed focus on childcare, our young people are inspired about going out activating—and all this happened by our starting off and then staying on the road of obedience to the Activated program.

We have by no means arrived yet; we still have a long way to go, but we have faith that as we live the Word Revolution, keep focusing on childcare, call on the keys, and keep activating, like it says in the Word, we will have lasting fruit.

All in all, here is what the Lord helped us with in those three months:

- We got 231 *Activated* subscriptions and renewals.
- We got out 1,245 "Mottos."
- We got out 213 VCDs.
- We prayed with 150 people to receive Jesus.
- Our budget was covered for those three months.

The Lord also helped us win the Activated Shiner prize for the three months issued by the CGO board—a brand-new computer! PTL! TYJ!

the Activated vision consistently, the sooner the results will come.

Growth in subscriptions and renewals

There are two aspects of being activated: firstly subscriptions, and secondly feeding the sheep.

One thing we have found very helpful for subscriptions is setting goals. Sometimes we have goals per team, and sometimes we put a chart up with each person in the Home listed. Our childcare personnel go out one afternoon a week, and they mainly do activating. We have a regular Home goal for *Activated*, which we shoot for consistently.



(L–R:) Andrew (of Rejoice) talking with Active members Glen, his daughter Rishka, and Sudin after a class

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It is our goal to testify how much the Lord has blessed our Home financially and otherwise since we have been following the Activated vision. We don't want to sound proud or like it was anything of ourselves, but we have seen so clearly how much He has blessed the fact that we 'activated.'
”

We have always tried to put *Activated* up front in our outreach. Distributing videos and “Mottos” are a big part of our budget, but we have the faith that if our contacts get signed up for *Activated*, they will also help with the tools or



MaryAnn with friends having tea after a COL

someone else will. We feel that our focus on the *Activated* program has been a key to us being financially fruitful.

We have been faithful to keep a database of all the contacts we meet who take tools, and we send them a monthly feeding, with two pages of articles and two about our CTP. Because we keep in contact with these people monthly through the mail, many of them feel touched to help us and to get activated, even if a few months, six months, or a year later (such as in a road team area).

We also keep a database of all the people who have gotten activated so we know when we need to visit them for renewals. We also can check if they are receiving the mag regularly or if they are interested in taking other tools.

Referrals from contacts and Activated members is also a good way to get new subscriptions. We also encourage our Active members to start signing people up for the magazine, as they are already sold on it and it helps them in their witnessing.

Sometimes people sponsor *Activated* subscriptions for others. Sometimes we have sponsored subscriptions for students who can't afford the full amount, but we have found it is important for them to pay at least part of the subscription to help them appreciate it.

It is exciting when people renew after their first-year subscription is finished. Some of our people are on their third year now. Often

not only one person reads it, but many in the home.

We constantly keep our eyes open for those who want deeper feeding, but we can only handle so many, so we look for very hungry people with good leadership qualities. We also sell the *Get Activated* booklets to help people get a fuller feeding. The magazines aren't enough if people are hungry—they want more.

When meeting people for the first time, here are some things that help you introduce the *Activated* magazine:

- Know the magazines yourself and read them personally.
- Explain how *Activated* has helped you personally. Show them an article from the mag that spoke to you and helped you.
- Read the “From Jesus with Love” message on the last page with them.
- You can read the “Personally Speaking” editor’s letter on the inside cover of the magazine, to get ideas as to what to say about the mag to people.
- You can explain that the magazine is an informative course about the teachings of Jesus, or a helpful course based on the Bible. We don’t focus on the word “Christian” here in India, as some people have such a mindset when they hear that word.



(L–R:) Active members Jaya (reading from the song book), Dalhia, Divya, and Angel

“We feel that our focus on *Activated* has been a key to us being financially fruitful.”

Growth in feeding the sheep

An important part of activating is feeding the sheep—making a subscriber into an Active member. This is explained so well in GN 849, “The Activated Program” (ML #3238). It is the most exciting thing to see people’s lives change as we feed them the Word.

Initially some of us were quite nervous about giving classes, but we realized that giving a class can just be reading a part of a *Get Activated* booklet with them. We also find it is important to read the Bible with them, because most people here are from a non-Christian background, yet they respect the Bible and know it is from God. So it’s good to build their faith on the Bible.

We have found that the main thing with feeding the sheep is consistency—to make a regular meeting time each week or even twice a week, keep to it, and not miss it. There are many different reading courses to follow: For those from non-Christian backgrounds we often start with *Treasures* and move on to *Get Activated* booklets—*Prayer Power*, *Understanding God’s Word*, *God’s Gifts*, etc. and also read with them the *Mountain Streams* series of books. The two *Bible Basics* books are also a big help for teaching Bible classes. We often have to go over the basics again after they are a bit farther along.

We also have our friends watch Bible story videos and movies to help them learn more about the Bible and Bible characters.

The ones whom we can teach to read the Word on their own are the ones who grow. Just getting a one- or two-hour feeding class once a week is good, but to really become an Active member they should learn to read and study the Word on their own, preferably at least a little each day.

The other step that seems essential for the sheep to grow is that they learn to start witnessing and sharing their newfound faith with others. They can start in a simple way, such as by offering the magazine to others or by starting up a conversation with someone as a prelude to witnessing. We also accompany our Active members to help them learn to witness. In those who start actively witnessing, we see their faith come alive as the Holy Spirit anoints them and they develop an even greater hunger for the Word and start feeling responsible for others.

Everyone in the Home gets involved in feeding the sheep. Those in our childcare department give classes on childcare to Active members. The children come with us and read with Active members' children when we visit them at home. Everyone pitches in to help when we have classes or COLs in our Home. Some people do clean-up, make the snack, lead the inspiration, or give a class to the AMs' children. Everyone can give lots of hugs and smiles.



Rejoice and the children at the COL

We have seen how feeding the sheep needs to be a united effort of the whole Home if it is to touch and change people's lives.

Feeding the sheep and having Active members has changed our Home and our inspiration level, our vision for our Home standard, and our vision to teach and train our children. We all pray we can learn to become teachers, pastors, and shepherds.

How the Activated Vision Has Changed Our Lives

*Comments by Brethren at a Bangalore CGO Activated Action Committee Meeting
Compiled by MaryAnn for the South National CGO Board*

In this city meeting of YAs, SGAs, and FGAs, we went around the circle and everyone told how getting out Activated subscriptions had changed their witnessing and changed their lives.

- We start witnessing to people rather than just talking about the tools or our CTP, and we witness more deeply.

- *Activated* helps to get us out of socializing and onto more spiritual topics.

- We have seen a lot of financial blessings from obeying the Activated vision.

- We feel spiritually renewed and more inspired and on fire since living the Activated vision.

- We experience a lot more personal fulfillment now that we are witnessing and counseling people more deeply.

- It has helped us keep on track and focused on what is most important—witnessing and feeding the sheep.

- It has put us on the spot to grow and change, as when we are feeding the sheep, the Lord exposes areas we need to grow in too.

- It helps us to find the real sheep quicker and determine who is really interested in us for the right reasons.

- We have a feeding course to take people through now [*Activated*], and clear direction in how to feed the sheep [*12 Foundation Stones*].

- We can all be instant teachers by pulling out a mag and reading it with people.

- Brethren have been raised up as new teachers who are now able to give classes and feed people.

- It is easier to get our new members turned on and part of the work, when they see they can be a part of the Activated vision.

- It has helped cross the barrier between outreach personnel and childcare personnel, as everyone can be working on the Activated

program, getting subscriptions, praying for the vision, and feeding the sheep.

- Even our children are involved and excited about *Activated* and can play a big role in offering the magazine and feeding the Active members, especially their children.

Establishing a Fruitful Follow-Up Work

By Angela (Italian, Co-Chairman of the National CGO Board for Southern Europe), Croatia

Thinking about these past years during which our Home has become more established, gaining faithful supporters and Active members, I asked myself, *How did all this come about? What were the keys?* I'll try to summarize here the main points the Lord brought to mind.

Putting Jesus first and staying close to His Word

I would say that our basic team, which has been together for a few years now, is by no means made up of perfect, well-balanced people—not at all! But we have the common denominator of dedication to Jesus, the Family, the New Wine, the new weapons, etc. We definitely agree on the main issues, and that is our foundation.

Commitment to our team

Commitment on the part of our team to shtick, get victories in unity, and stay together

has been vitally important. Of course, making our commitment to our team and laying its foundation happened simultaneously with our witnessing, as it was the sheep, their welfare, and the work that motivated us to shtick and get victories in our personal and collective lives. It's much easier to make sacrifices if you can see the reason and some fruit right away!

We always have new people who are with us only for a while or who are passing through, and we enjoy that very much. But at the same time, we try not to get distracted from our commitment and to stay loyal first and foremost to the Lord and to the now-famous Home goals we decided on together. So I can see (and it's mentioned in several Letters) that one of the keys to a successful Home is the willingness of members to shtick together and keep on going, no matter what happens around them or where other people go.

At times, as happens everywhere, some people have decided to move on, or to start raising funds for going to another mission field, or to travel around, and at times like these it's easy to catch the "itchy feet" syndrome, feeling curious, wanting also to travel or to try other fields, and end up losing the vision for your present field. ("Suddenly I don't feel so inspired!") It takes a lot of concentration and sometimes blind faith to go on because of the commitment to the team, even when the feelings disappear.



Marco having a 12 Foundations Stones class with Paolo, Andrea, and Filippo (the teen boy who was brought to our Home by his uncle, to stay for two weeks)

Being faithful with “small beginnings”

I remember that in the beginning we just had a few sheep, and some were not even that potential, it seemed. For example, Francesco was 17 and had rejoined the Family the year before when he got his first sheep to take care of, a young handicapped boy. Francesco started ministering to him faithfully the best he could, almost on a daily basis—calling him on the phone, visiting him, having him over, reading small portions of Word with him. It was actually taking quite a bit of Francesco’s time, and we asked the Lord a few times whether it was worth it or not (as this person was a sheep but not able to be a full-time disciple due to his handicap). The Lord encouraged us to keep going, to keep being faithful, because Francesco didn’t really know how to take care of a sheep and this was a time of training for him. The Lord said that if we were faithful with the least, He would soon entrust us with more.

Some of our first sheep didn’t seem so potential, and with some of them we wondered whether we were wasting our time. But since our Home had mostly new disciples or young people, it took some time for everyone to learn feeding and discernment. So our early period as a Home was a precious time of learning to minister to others personally or by mail. It was a time when we made mistakes and learned from them, before the Lord entrusted us with a larger flock.

In the beginning everyone was experimenting, for example, with various methods of keeping addresses, or with what kinds of activities would

be the most fruitful for getting sheep to come over. One year we had the idea of inviting young people to participate in a seminar on “How to Change Yourself and the World Around You.” We made a big announcement after a Christmas show, and a few young people said yes to our offer of the seminar. So we started weekly meetings. We were eager to start the *12 Foundation Stones (12FS)* classes with them, but when we did, it seemed like we were losing people more

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Commitment on the part of our team to stick, get victories in unity, and stay together has been vitally important.
”

and more, until all we had left were two girls, who never missed a class. Now these two girls are some of our most faithful Active members, God bless them. We had gotten discouraged not seeing big numbers, but then we realized it was the Lord’s way of teaching us to go for quality and not quantity.

It was the same with some of our most faithful supporters—small beginnings and greater ends. It started with our being super faithful to thank them for small things or to remember their birthdays or other important events. For the past two years, Paolo has faithfully called or written a special birthday message to every one of our sheep and supporters—and I think we have over 500! This year we also sent them GP versions of the horoscopes found in *Eve*, and that got such a response!

It’s amazing how a simple call or offer to pray for someone can work wonders. Many people in our Home have prayer lists by their beds with the names of their sheep. We also have a Home Prayer Folder where we write up prayer requests from our sheep, and put a check when the Lord has answered a specific prayer request. The answers to these prayers are such a testimony. Little by little, our relationships with our sheep have grown and become deeper.



Visiting some refugees with friends from Italy

Faithful mail ministry

From the very beginning we were faithful to thank donors, of course, and especially our few provisioning contacts from Italy who still helped us after we moved to Croatia. Then at one point we got the idea of sending out something more than the usual one-page newsletter.

We put together our first 12-page mag in April of 1998, with various articles and photos. We've been trying to get one out faithfully every three months since, and along the way it has improved considerably both in content and format. Now it has regular columns, for example, a "Kids Corner" (usually in the care of Mark, our resident artist); a "Mail Corner" (we try to include the most significant reactions we receive either by email or snail mail); a Word page; a "New Projects" page; a "Thank You" page; and so forth. Lately we've been advertising *Activated* and other Aurora products, with good results.

While in the beginning we were just photocopying this pub here and there, for the past few years some sweet friends in Italy have been printing it for us in three languages (Italian, Croatian, and English)—a total of around 1,300 copies each time. The production of this mag involves almost everyone in the Home, and it's quite an accomplishment when we finally have it ready! Of course, it has borne a lot of fruit, both in the way of supply and in positive reactions from people we are ministering to.

Visitors

The Lord has blessed us with a very inspiring home situated by the sea, which in itself is an attraction. Getting visitors over has been something that has steadily improved and increased over these years. We've had lots of visitors from Italy, especially during the summer, since we live in a tourist area.

“ Many people in our Home have prayer lists by their beds with the names of their sheep. ”



The view from our Home

It was a big boost when one summer three years ago we got the idea of offering a one-week camp to the sons and daughters of our supporters, like an alternative vacation. Only six kids participated, and they were pretty young and rascally. But again, the Lord encouraged us to be faithful with what He had given us, and to give it our best. The second year we didn't even want to do it, but the parents asked us for it, and they did so again this year!

Then this past August, we had a super inspiring camp for 24 young people from Italy (right in our Home!), most of them university students (see the testimony in *GV164* by Paolo Alleluia). The Lord told us that He had rewarded us for our faithfulness with the younger teens.

This past summer during July and August, our Home had over 100 visitors who stayed with us at least one night, not to mention the ones who just came to visit us for a few hours.

A couple of years ago we started a Guest Book—a type of visitors log for people to sign or write in, using a nice big book we didn't know what to do with, ha! Now it's full of beautiful reactions from people who have passed through our Home, mostly sheep but also Family members. In the beginning it didn't come so naturally to us to ask people to write in it, but now it just flows. People sit around reading reactions, and getting convicted! Now it's a permanent part of our living room setup for visitors, along with a few photo albums (more or less in chronological order); a few books of *FARs* which we have bound together; an

Activated folder; videos of our activities; and a folder with newspaper clippings describing the various problems Croatia is still facing, such as drugs, landmines, unemployment, etc.

Before visitors come, we usually pray about what to do with them, and of course what we do varies depending on the type and length of their stay. For bigger numbers and for those staying longer, we try to have a few people involved, as it's quite a job.

Having visitors requires us to be good samples at all times as we keep pouring into them in continual witnessing! It sure keeps you on your toes, as we've also had a few who were honest and told us a few things they didn't like or understand, or asked us why so-and-so never smiles, etc. Wow! That kind of comment really got us desperate and moving!

We would say that taking care of visitors is a very big job, but it's also an investment. Often we don't realize how powerful our sample as a Home can be, but if we can just get people to experience it, they will never forget it! We may be familiar with it at times, Lord help us, or even bored with it—and that's when it helps to reread some reactions from our Guest Book! Ha!

In our Home, some people are better than others at taking care of visitors, and in fact that is one of the main ministries of some people. But we've noticed that it's good for everyone to contribute something to ministering to them, in order to participate and learn.



Dining together after an Activated meeting at our Home

OK from the Boss, we had him stay for two full weeks. During this time, a few of us took turns taking care of him, doing activities with him, and of course witnessing to him. By the end of his two weeks, besides getting saved, he had received quite a few *12FS* classes, gone out clowning and witnessing, done CTP with us, learned to pray—and more! His relatives were so shocked at the way he had changed that they helped us with a generous donation.

All this wouldn't have been possible without the help of Paolo, who taught him the Word and took him around; and Andrea, who stayed up every night with him to talk or watch meaningful movies. (He had a super powerful diet of *Final Stand*, *Countdown to Armageddon*, *Brother Sun*, *Lost Horizon Found*, *Jesus*, etc.—a real “heartwarming” course!)

Besides these kinds of visitors, we have our regular Active members who come weekly for classes or other events, join us in witnessing and other activities, and bring a lot of inspiration to us all!

Staying tuned in to the sheep and their needs

So many of the decisions, sometimes tough ones, that we had to make in our Home during our formative years, were for the sake of the sheep, the incoming new disciples, or other witnessing projects. If in a Home Council meeting you have people who are tuned in to witnessing and to the needs of the sheep, so many issues will be discussed from an entirely different point of view. It makes everyone grow up, adults included!

It's the thrill of deep witnessing and really winning people to Jesus that has kept many of us in the Family through many trying times.

For example, a couple of months ago one of our dear friends in Italy asked us to take in his wayward 18-year-old nephew, Filippo, for a few days, to try to “redeem” him. After receiving an

Compiled observations

Having worked for one and a half years with the CGO Board, and having had the opportunity to talk to many Family members of both generations here and there on the topic of follow-up, winning disciples and Active members, etc., I can see that in spite of our already having read many pubs on the subject, there are still a lot of people who feel incapable. Many would like to learn how to do outreach and follow-up better.

For some it's like the dream of their lives, but they either feel they can't do it, or that their present Home or situation doesn't favor it, so they just keep on going with a little bit of witnessing here and there, some fundraising, some CTP, but with very little lasting fruit. Consequently they don't experience real satisfaction and fulfillment. However, it's the thrill of deep witnessing and really winning people to Jesus that



A precious sheep, Katija, and her two kids, when they came to visit us for a few days

has kept many of us in the Family through many trying times.

During my informal interviews, people have shared the following with me:

- They don't really know how to invite sheep to their Homes, what to do with visitors who come for the first time, or especially how to go about having them come back again after they have visited once.

- They don't know how to give Bible classes to sheep (even though some started using the 12FS classes just recently).

- Many Homes don't really have a serious, regular, witnessing-filled CTP ministry, appeal project, or plan on how to involve outsiders in their activities.

- Many don't have a good mail ministry, or even an email ministry.

- People don't know where to start!

Quite a few young people and also adults have expressed to me the desire to learn more about deep witnessing and establishing a fruitful work and national church. It helps to watch someone else do it, visit a successful follow-up Home, and go out with a seasoned and anointed witnesser—learning by the clinical method! As babes we received a lot of this personalized training, and I'll never forget it! If we could all keep in mind the 2Tim.2:2 vision, I believe we would have much more training flowing around, and more national churches.

(Editor's note: Yes, you who are experienced in follow-up can do a lot to help others catch on and show them how to get started. Lord willing, these topics will be covered in an upcoming series of FSMs with specific tips and pointers for ministering to and teaching the sheep effectively.)

How We Became a Fruitful Follow-Up Home

By Penny and Team, China

To begin with, we didn't do it at all! The follow-up work that developed in our Home was strictly the Lord's doing, and we just kind of

blindly stumbled along after Him! Two years ago my teammate Joel and I were teaching in our city, doing a little witnessing in our classes, and trying

to witness to different people we would meet. Joel was teaching adults in an “adult English training” program, and he faithfully held free-talk times with his classes.

One day somebody came to his free-talk who was not actually in any of his classes, and this person, Darren, asked him outright if he could teach him something about the Bible. Well, of course Joel was happy to comply, and made an appointment for Darren to come to our apartment.

Darren came, and then asked if he could come again the next week as well. The next week he brought his young wife Harmony, who was also studying at this school. (It’s unusual for married couples to study at a university, and they couldn’t afford to rent an apartment, so they just lived in dorm rooms, separately. God bless them.) They mentioned they had some friends who also wanted to study the Bible, so we changed the appointment to a convenient time one evening each week. So Darren and Harmony came, and brought some of their friends and classmates.

Each week more and more new faces would show up! Joel was faithful to explain right away to each new person that the Bible is a spiritual book, and that to really understand it, it’s best to pray a simple prayer to receive Jesus into your heart. Then we’d all hold hands and repeat the prayer.

Not everyone came back a second time, which made it even more important that we pray with each new one on the first night. But many did come back, and our little Bible study grew and grew and grew. Now our apartment was quite small, and we really had to squeeze people in. We bought little stackable stools for the people to sit on. God bless them, after studying all day, they would sit on these uncomfortable stools for a couple of hours, for this chance to study the Word of God!

At this time we didn’t have the *Activated* magazines but we did have Word Curriculum classes in English and Chinese, so we began printing copies for everybody to study. I bought a cheap guitar and started a “Church of Love” songbook of simple songs—all English at first! Well, many of these dear ones stuck with us and became our very close friends.

We taught at that school for two years, and never had a single problem with any of the authorities getting upset at our meetings. One reason is that since we were speaking English with the students, the supervisors were happy about the extra exposure to the language and the cultural experiences the students were getting, apparently not minding the content of our gatherings. We understand that not all schools would have reacted the same way, however, and it was very much the Lord’s protection.

One interesting thing is that some of the other foreign teachers were also Christians, and they knew what we were doing. One fellow had a contact who brought in bilingual New Testaments regularly, and he would keep us supplied with these Bibles! God bless him! Some of these other foreign teachers were also witnessing to different sheep, but none on such a scale—usually on a one-to-one basis. A few of them would get together (foreigners only) for a weekly afternoon prayer meeting, and they told us they prayed for our Bible studies regularly! I think they were amazed at our audacity and faith.

“Joel was faithful to explain right away to each new person that the Bible is a spiritual book, and that to really understand it, it’s best to pray a simple prayer to receive Jesus into your heart.”

As is the case all over China, we were also told not to teach religion. So we had to decide if we would obey God or man (Acts 5:29). Of course we had to do it with lots of wisdom, and pray desperately for our security.

The meeting eventually grew so large that it didn’t fit into our apartment any more, so we opened up another evening for Bible classes. We tried to divide the group into newer and more advanced sheep, but it never really worked out that way, as people would come to which-

ever class was convenient for their schedule. Plus, people just kept bringing more and more friends, boyfriends, roommates, classmates, etc. Whew!

We finally had two evening Bible studies with about 20 people showing up faithfully for each one, as well as an afternoon meeting for four of our closest friends, for “advanced classes”—Letters from the *Dare to Be Different* book! Finally we started getting the *Activated* mags in Chinese and English, so after a year or so switched to reading these with our Bible study groups.

One class that I taught for two years was called “Newspaper Reading” or “Extensive Reading,” and I designed the whole course around topics from the *END*, on the Endtime. Another huge class I had (300 students!) was “A Survey of World Religions”—during which I gave them a very solid witness.

One student came to me after class one day very distraught, saying she was full of questions. I invited her home and tried to answer her questions, which were mostly about Christianity and Jesus. Finally I said, “Well, let’s just pray and you can receive Jesus, and then He’ll answer your questions!” So she prayed with me, and began coming to our Bible studies. Shortly after that I noticed that she had dropped my university class, so I asked her why. She said, “I don’t need to come to your class any more. I just want to study the Bible!” Ha! PTL!

After several years at that school, we realized that teaching full-time English classes was taking too much of our time, so we decided to move together with the other team in our city. We didn’t know exactly what we were going to do to support our new Home, or even where we were going to live, but the Lord knew and had already arranged something!

One of our Bible students, Heather, was also the headmistress at a small private English school for children. She really got turned on to the Lord, and came to us with “a plan”—as she put it. She invited the two men in our Home to teach at her school, and said she’d help us find an apartment for all four of us to live in. The men worked it out with her to each teach not more than eight hours

a week, and actually it has worked out to only three or four hours a week!

Heather helped us look for a new apartment for some weeks, but we never found anything suitable and convenient and cheap. Finally she announced that she was buying an apartment in a new compound just down the block from her school, and that after it was decorated we could move in there. It was very nice. We protested, saying, “But don’t you want to live there? It’s so convenient to your school!” But she assured us that she wanted us to live there so we could be close to the school and have a comfortable place to hold our Bible studies. Amazing!

So we did move in, and of course we had so many of our sheep to help us make this move—they were so wonderful to help so much! Two of them even rode our bicycles a long distance to the new apartment, since there wasn’t room for them on the truck.

Since we were concerned that our sheep who were still out at our old school wouldn’t be able to come so far for Bible classes, we arranged to hold one weekly class at the apartment of a couple of our Bible students, which was conveniently located. Then Joel and I began to hold a second Bible class at our new apartment. Max and Pamela, whom we had begun living with, had also been having classes with their sheep, and began to have a couple more Bible classes at our apartment on different evenings.

It’s amazing how the Lord has arranged our classes for us: We have one evening with the students, then another evening it has ended up that a different group of people come to study with us. This second group is composed mainly of older, working people, including some parents.

Max and Pam also have basically two groups, one composed of younger people, and one “ladies group” who are middle-aged professional ladies, several of whom are divorced.

One of their “ladies” is the wife of one of our Bible students who is not able to come on the same night as her husband due to other obligations. Her husband can’t join the “ladies” and she can’t come on the night he comes, so they come separately. God bless them.

And dear Heather asked me if I could start one more weekly Bible study in the afternoon, because she wanted some of her Chinese teachers to be able to come study the Bible with us! This class now has six members who come one afternoon a week to read the *Activated* mags and study the Bible. God bless her. She's testified to everyone how the Lord saved her marriage and her family!

We've also begun a weekly "movie night" on Sunday night, and everybody is welcome to come on this night. The Lord has miraculously managed to keep us going with either Bible movies or meaningful movies of some kind. We of course powwow

them so that they can see the lessons, and relate them to the spiritual. We read some Bible verses or chapters along with the movie, before we start or during it. We have lots of explanations and discussion to help them see the spiritual aspects. It's a miracle how many excellent movies we've been able to find here through different sources! PTL!

See the list on this page of movies we've shown over the past two years. We're looking forward to some new releases—Mel Gibson's *The Passion* and another movie from the Gospel of John, and also a new historical film, *Luther*, on the life of Martin Luther.

Movies We've Viewed with Our Sheep

Here's the list of some of the movies we've shown over the past couple of years:

<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	<i>Devil's Advocate</i> (we studied	<i>Man of La Mancha</i>
<i>A Walk to Remember</i>	Rev.17–18.)	<i>Noah's Ark</i> (edited)
<i>Abraham</i>	<i>Esther</i>	<i>Omega Code</i>
<i>Always</i>	<i>Evelyn</i>	<i>Pavilion of Women</i>
<i>Animated Bible—Elijah, etc.</i>	<i>Forbidden Planet</i>	<i>Pay It Forward</i>
<i>Bedazzled</i>	<i>Gandhi</i>	<i>Prince of Egypt</i>
<i>Ben Hur</i>	<i>Groundhog Day</i>	<i>Quo Vadis</i>
<i>Bible Cartoons</i> (Ha!)	<i>It's a Beautiful Life</i>	<i>Samson and Delilah</i>
<i>Brother Sun</i>	<i>Jacob</i>	<i>Solomon</i>
<i>Bruce Almighty</i>	<i>Jeremiah</i>	<i>Son of God</i> (a BBC doc)
<i>Chariots of Fire</i>	<i>Jesus</i> (from the Gospel of Luke)	<i>The Other Side of Heaven</i>
<i>Close Encounters</i>	<i>Joan of Arc</i>	<i>The Robe</i>
<i>Countdown to Armageddon</i>	<i>Joseph</i>	<i>The Ten Commandments</i>
(and <i>Beyond Armageddon</i> ,	<i>Lady Jane</i>	<i>Visual Bible:</i>
the sequel)	<i>Lean on Me</i>	— <i>Gospel of Matthew</i>
<i>David</i>	<i>Les Misérables</i>	— <i>Book of Acts</i>

We've also had some fellowship evenings with them, or "parties," where we had Dr. Chainbuster and his patient come (this totally blew their minds!), or a Bible quiz, or "Talk Time" questions, etc., and singing. They love to sing and we try to sing a little bit every evening with them. I have put together a more extensive song-book, with some Chinese songs, too.

Max and Pamela have started having a "Church of Love" fellowship one Sunday morning a month, and they've let the sheep know they are welcome to bring friends and family, and thus it is a harvest event. Heather brought her husband to

the first Church of Love, and he prayed to receive the Lord—what a wonderful victory! Something we'd been praying for desperately for months.

During one period of time we asked our students to give a short personal testimony, including what their life was like before they met the Lord, how they met the Lord, and how their life changed after that. We were able to collect a number of testimonies from them—truly heartfelt stories of how the Lord had changed their lives!

By the way, Joel and I made a trip to Tibet! When we announced to our Bible study groups that we were planning to go there, some of our

friends said they wanted to go too! So we organized the trip and five of them went along with us. I made some booklets of material we could read together during the trip, and brought my guitar so we could have some type of devotions as often as possible. We met with this little group beforehand and explained how it would be dangerous to witness openly in that land, but that we could make it our goal to make friends and then do as much witnessing as possible. They were very excited about going! It turned out to be a wonderful experience, and brought us even closer to some of our faithful sheep.

I send regular mailings to sheep who have moved on and to former students. Many of my students write me back after receiving one of these mailings—letting me know what they're up to, where they are, and thanking me for the material. Of course, the sheep keep in closer touch and always write me sweet emails, and come to visit when they're in town. We've been able to hook up some of our now out-of-town sheep with teams in other cities, so they can continue to have fellowship and get fed.

We do realize there are many ways that we could improve our Bible studies and follow-up. We always encourage our sheep to witness, and although some of them do witness, love to witness, and are good witnesses, some of them don't know how to go about it and just end up bringing their friends or roommates to our Bible studies for *us* to witness to! Ha! We've started making sure they have copies of "Man of Love" to share with their roommates and friends before they bring them to our Bible study now.

We also want to do better in our follow-up. We want to schedule more regular personal time with each sheep. We want to train them all better, and constantly try to drive home the concepts of daily quiet-time/Word-time, prayer, memorization, hearing from the Lord, etc., etc., and give them homework assignments. Some of them are "getting it," and report to us about the time they've set aside with the Lord every day, or what they got when they took P&P time. Some of them just look convicted, but don't seem to make much progress. Still they faithfully come for this weekly feeding.

The Lord showed us that getting the materials into their hands is the most important thing. As Dad wrote in his "Wee Word of Introduction" (Introduction to Vol.1):

It wasn't Mao's teachers and leaders who did the job of molding the minds of 800 million Chinese revolutionaries!—It was his own teaching via the printed page! The teachers were simply seed sowers and scatterers of this seed for years, and the mighty harvest is only now being truly reaped as a result! A few well-ordered fields of followers and fighters scattered this seed, but the harvest is the entire population! Personal witnesses and visible living, working Colonies bring quick but limited visible results, and are dramatic samples of the ultimate. But seed saturation sowing is more far-reaching and will bring a mightier harvest in the long run!—A whole world of youth won by Jesus' love!—Through our literature telling our example and how it works through the love of Jesus! Hallelujah! Amen?

We are so thankful for the Chinese Lit Pic and the faithful translators who provide the beautiful, *very* Chinese translations for us. The life is surely in the seed!

Our vision is to find the potential ones and train them into labor leaders who can work alongside us. In China the harvest *truly* is plentiful, and unless we train leaders to help us, even with small Bible study groups we'll not be able to make much of a dent in this country at all!

Of course, being in China is a special situation as we cannot go out tooling or sell subscriptions. We have to be very prayerful about even passing out tracts, and we have to have System jobs for our visas and cover and support—though the Lord has miraculously supplied jobs that take minimal hours and supply our needed finances and provide visas! But I pray that as you read through this account perhaps you can glean some helpful tips, and at least pray for us as we do what we can to reach our part of the world for Jesus! And please pray desperately with us for openings to share the Words of David in this fertile land!

Prayer Made the Difference

By Rufina Smile, Ukraine

We've been learning a lot lately about the principles covered in the "Action Through Prayer" series (ML #3319, GN923; ML #3325, GN930; ML #3339, GN933; ML #3340, GN940; ML #4314, GN100). Not that we didn't realize the importance of prayer before, but with time you can get familiar with it, especially if you don't always see the answers on the spot. It takes patience, perseverance, and most of all great faith to keep on praying for a situation if there is no visible change or improvement over a certain period of time. But prayer sure does work, and it's not the least that we can do, but the *most*, as our sweet Jesus keeps reminding us over and over again.

We started weekly Bible classes for young people together with the other Homes in the area, and for a while the project didn't seem to be going anywhere. People were attending very irregularly, and on some days we would end up with no one or only one person showing up. That got to be pretty discouraging at times, and we were even thinking of giving it up or putting it on hold for a few months, until we could figure out how to make it more attractive and interesting so that people would attend on a more regular basis, and thus we could start feeding them more of the meat of the Word.

Well, so much for our trying to figure things out in our own minds!—All the Lord wanted us to do was to keep praying for our Bible study faithfully on a daily basis, as well as pray for the new sheep that we met while witnessing. He reminded us that we ourselves wouldn't be able to make a difference and get the ball rolling, but that He would.

And He did!—He answered each and every one of our prayers. It took time, and it didn't happen overnight, but He was faithful to His word and kept all His promises, answering our petitions in His time.

In our prayers we asked the Lord specifically that He would intervene somehow and give our sheep greater hunger and desire for the Word, so that they would choose our Bible studies over any of the other business that they often have to attend to.

Now our Bible study group is growing and maturing in spirit and people attend classes more faithfully. There are other new on-fire people who've joined it recently as well, which has been very encouraging to see.

One of the girls who has been attending our Bible studies off and on for the last half a year recently told us: "You know I'm a very busy person. I work till late and I do my studies, so when Sunday comes around all I want to do is just sleep in and have a break. I don't really feel like going anywhere. Though I like this Bible study very much and it has helped me a lot and really improved my life and relationship with the Lord, sometimes I'm just so tired that I don't have it within myself to make an extra effort and go all the way to attend the classes.

"But the interesting thing is that lately I have been waking up at 7 AM every Sunday and can't go back to sleep any more! It's almost like some invisible force is pushing me out the door, sometimes almost against my will!" We just smiled quietly to ourselves, for we knew why. God sure does work in mysterious ways!

We can do only as much as we can do, but He sees the whole picture and works miracles in answer to our persistent prayers. This is indeed an era of action and greater miracles through the power of prayer!

Tips on Shepherding the Sheep

By Jimmy, Joy, Tabitha, Jono, and Joe, Love Fortress Home, Taiwan

First of all we want to say that if anything good gets accomplished in our Home, it's only Jesus, to Whom we give all the glory! We are Jimmy and Joy (a Chinese national couple with nine children, seven of them presently in our Home, including SGAs Jono and Joe), and Tabitha and her junior teen daughter. We've been working together as a team for more than four years with various personnel changes, including some new disciples. In some areas we are still struggling, but thanks to the keys and rising above, we're still moving forward for Him, very excited and challenged by all that He's doing!

In our Home, we are learning how to balance our ministries so that everyone receives training in many different areas, yet can specialize in what they do best. This has been a key in helping us to both meet the children's schooling needs and have more witnessing teams out. We now have teaching teamworks where one teacher specializes in one or two subjects, and can free the other teacher the other half of the day for follow-up.

This plan has enabled our national and foreign moms to team up a couple of times a week, which has caused a revolution in our follow-up! It's been great for our foreign mom to be able to do follow-up with children and young people as partners, and our friends and contacts love it.

Having a national regularly work together as a team with a foreign partner has deepened our witness and brought people along much faster. We realize that not every Home has a national, but we want to encourage Homes in an area to try to work out a plan, perhaps at a city council, for a foreigner and a national to team up on a regular basis, as it adds so much to your witnessing and brings your sheep along so much faster, even the sheep who can speak English well!

Variety is still the spice of life, and we also find that having a variety of partners at times to feed the sheep is good, as they can see the sheep from different angles and approach them in different ways.

Before each appointment, we've found that it's very important for the members of the follow-

up team to pray together and hear from the Lord together about the person they are going to see. It's good to have a plan, or at least a guideline for each visit and how you're going to teamwork it. In that way you're always sure to include the child or young person on your team, so that they will have an important part in the witness. This is also very helpful for a teamwork consisting of a national and foreigner.

We base our teaching around *Activated* and the *12 Foundation Stones* classes, and we now challenge everyone we see to meet with us regularly for a Bible class. As a



(L-R top:) Andy (14), Jono (23), Joe (21) (Middle:) Genty (12), Tabitha (FGA), Kaylee (16 months), Jimmy (FGA), Joy (FGA), Lylee (15). (Front:) Eman (10), Willy (4).

result, we have almost more classes than we can handle! We have a difficult time getting most of these people to come to our Home, but we find as we go out to see them, they are more than willing to see us.

Our motivation in feeding the sheep and what to feed them is all from the Word, with the emphasis on *Activated* and the *12FS* classes. We've found that people here really like to read the stories in the *Activated* mag, but not so many people dig into the deeper articles or read the Bible. When we meet with them, we read with them directly from *Activated* and refer to the Bible. We challenge them regularly with continuing to read *Activated* as "homework," and sometimes add Bible readings and memory work, according to the individual.

We've found in shepherding our Active members that it's very important to have heart-to-heart talk times to see what they need and learn where they're at. We often need to ask them direct, deeper questions about their health or marriage, according to how the Lord leads, to help them to open up their lives to us. It bonds us and brings the Lord into their lives in a much deeper way. They see our sincerity as we get involved in their lives.

It's also important during these times to challenge them to go as far as they can for Jesus—to win more souls, other Active members and disciples, and even to be labor leaders with a vision for China! We find that it's very important to give them the vision to want to be a missionary to China, where the need for the Gospel is

so great, especially as their parents and relatives often have had a negative influence on them regarding China. Many of the Active members have begun going to our institution witnessing activities, the main one being at a youth correctional center in another city. Although hesitant at first, they have fallen in love with this CTP work and try to regularly go along with us. They, along with our Family young people, help with skits, give Word classes, share testimonies, and give personal encouragement to the students. They are also a special blessing as translators for the foreign brethren.

Before each appointment, we've found that it's very important for the members of the follow-up team to pray together and hear from the Lord together about the specific person. It's good to have a plan, or at least a guideline for each visit and how you're going to teamwork it. In that way you're always sure to include the child or young person on your team, so that they will have an important part in the witness. This is also so helpful with a national and foreign teamwork.

“We now challenge everyone we see to meet with us regularly for a Bible class. As a result, we have almost more classes than we can handle!”



Joy giving a class at a youth delinquent center

Sometimes our Active members may fall back a little, and we need to go after them, show them we care, and bring them in closer again, keeping them involved, challenged, and full of the vision.

We've found that a key word in our witnessing, especially with our follow-up, is **IMPORTUNITY!** We need to go after the sheep, claiming the keys and God's will! It can be humbling to make those calls over and over again, to push for that appointment, to forsake the opinions of man to do what we're supposed to do. It just seems that in spite of a few rejections, the Lord always comes through and blesses boldness to step out and fight to get ahold of those sheep!



Jimmy teaching at a youth delinquent center

A quote to claim is this: “To use the keys effectively you must keep expecting more of yourselves and of Me. Expect the impossible and I will redefine the laws of nature for you, My brides.” That’s also a good one for when you go out on a regular follow-up day. It’s a bit like juggling—you want to keep up with your regular supporters, give Bible classes, get *Activated* subscribers, follow up on those who are already subscribing, etc., etc. You just need to pray that you can “pack your suitcase well,” using every available space that day! Thank God for the keys!

We see how Jesus’ power needs to rule over our human nature, in that we can get shy or self-conscious or too worried about the opinions of man sometimes. For example, one of our friends at the market was experiencing a lot of pain from arthritis in her legs. Whenever we went to the market and saw her, we would stop, lay hands on her, and pray for her, claiming the power of the keys for her healing. Many people would turn around and stare at us as we did this; however, her leg was soon healed and she told everyone around her testimony. As a result, she became an *Activated* subscriber and a faithful helper and generous supporter. We’ve had to claim heavenly thought power and forget about ourselves in such situations, and when we do, it bears such good fruit!

We have two wonderful advantages in shepherding the young people in this city: We have an area youth club in our city, and a large university near our Home. The youth club has provided wonderful training for our Family young people

in relating to Chinese youth, giving Bible classes, etc., and has resulted in several new disciples and Active members. Almost our whole Home is involved in the club witnessing, and many of us are involved in feeding the Active members who come to our Home.

Our vision for the people to whom we minister is for them to become part of our work. We always pray for new disciples and try not to worry about how we will keep them or take care of them. We try to stay as flexible as possible with our schedule so that we can be available to the sheep. Our goal is also to try to involve the children in our Home as much as possible in our witnessing and to inspire them in the vision too.

We are especially encouraged by the Word Revolution, which is keeping us on track and uniting us in vision. The Word that we’ve been reading both unitedly and personally which has really inspired us a lot is “What the Future Holds—Parts 1–5” (ML #3349, GN 942; ML #3351, GN 946; ML #3354, 947; ML #3357, GN 952; ML #3359, GN 956); “The Gift of Heavenly Thought Power” (ML #3377, GN 974); “The Keys Turned to Swords” (ML #3375, GN 972); “Rise Above” (ML# 3317, GN 921); “Nothing Is Impossible” (ML #3316, GN 920); “Heavenly Key Craft” (ML #3435, GN 1018); “Full Possession” (ML #3376, GN 973); and “Focus on the Power” (ML #3374, GN 971).

Our united devotions and Word times (which include the children), along with our united key promises memory projects reviewed at each meal, as well as our prayer and prophecy meetings keep us stirred up and renewed. It can be easy to fall back into old ruts, and we sometimes feel overwhelmed as we look at what needs to be accomplished and how far we need to go. We find, therefore, that we need to always ask Jesus to renew our vision and strength as we pray for new ideas and ways to challenge ourselves.

We will need sold-out, versatile, trained laborers from many walks of life, and we need to find, win and prepare them today. Today is the day of salvation for these, our fellow laborers!

—Mama (ML #3357:15, GN 952)

Unity Through Area Projects

By Rejoice (Regional CGO Chairperson), Japan

(Taken from Japan Delegates' Meeting '03 Class Notes, Translated from Japanese)

Here I would like to share some testimonies from our area, which show how wonderful and beneficial it is to work together in unity.

Working with other homes multiplies talent

I would like to share how one Home expanded the circle of a project that they started, for the sake of the whole area. In the Blade Home, for many years they have been having a weekly English discussion club for university students. It is called "True Colors." Eventually they started to receive invitations from the university students who would come to the club, and thus they ended up attending quite a few university discussions and the events held by the University English Association. It started as one of the projects of the young people in the Blade Home, and now there are other Homes that have started similar projects, having learned from these experiences.

These discussions are not only for the purpose of carrying on a conversation in English, but as you can see from the name "True Colors," they are to talk about their innermost feelings and opinions, showing one's true colors regarding a meaningful theme the Family members prepare each time. They try to choose a topic that the participants can relate to, such as friendship, relationships with people, love, loneliness, giving, seasonal events, and current events. These topics are often taken from *The MOP* or *Reflections*. Through a variety of subjects they can get out the message and eventually lead them to salvation and then share Bible classes with them. (The Lord brought a new disciple, Sunny, to the Family through the "True Colors" club!)

They invite these university students to the large seminars they hold, where many of them get saved. The seminars have been on topics like "How to be Happy Anyway," and "Peace" (in



The True Colors Christmas party for university students, organized by the Blade and the MP3 Homes, with dinner, games, stories, and table discussions



The Keys of Unity in Action

By Dani, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Lord has been doing a lot with the unity in our area, and thanks to the power of the keys of unity, I feel we are starting to become a *work* more than just individual Homes. The VS here has been organizing city councils quite often, and there has been a lot of organizing or coordinating among the Homes, thank the Lord! We do a lot of the provisioning together, especially at the fruit and vegetable market; we do CTP projects or outreach together; and we coordinate activities with the kids and young people. It brings a real nice spirit.

Everyone also shares what they get in the provisioning with the other Homes as they can, God bless them! We're starting to work on the Activated program with the young guys from the other Home. The meetings we do for the young guys in the area are also going real well—all the kids from around here come, and we all get high on the Lord.

Thank the Lord for the keys of unity; it would be impossible without them.

At the True Colors 2003 special seminar, "Peace on Earth," for university students, Ivan (SGA), Sunny (new disciple won through the True Colors ministry), and Abe (SGA) are singing "The Prayer of St. Francis."

view of the Iraqi situation), and have been very fruitful and inspiring.

The Blade Home also started to have a monthly event, working together with the Tokyo Studio Home, so they could bring these young people there and feed them. Young people enjoy working together. They invite members of the other Homes to participate in a project they have started, and they enjoy planning these events together. If our young people come to the fore, it helps greatly to win the young people in the world. Giving our Family young people some opportunities to work together with young people from other Homes inspires them to take initiative. They become more desperate to do their best, they enjoy it, and they learn from other young people who are sold out.

Working together in this way is also good for our sheep. Because they are dispersed all over Japan, depending on where they live they can choose from a few different Homes or events to visit or attend. Also, while some of the sheep may be attracted to our music, others may be interested in English, or in foreigners. Some like to talk to one of us privately, and others look forward to group get-togethers like barbecues or other events.

Naturally, it is very difficult for one Home to do all these things, but working together with other Homes makes it easier for us to provide variety to these sheep.



This is a True Colors event organized by the university English club organization. About 140 students from 10 universities attended this discussion event with native English speakers who were Family members—a great opportunity to witness and win youth laborers.

For example, we don't have any young musicians in our Home. So it is such a blessing that we can get the help of some of the young musicians from the other Homes when we hold events for these young university students. After all, manpower is one of our desperate needs in Family life. So working together can be one of the greatest factors in accomplishing any project.

Anybody can take initiative!

Last year a mother in one of the Homes took the initiative and organized a witnessing day for the children at a park in Tokyo. It wasn't a big event; it was just her inviting mommies from other Homes. "We are going to take our kids for witnessing at such-and-such a park this Sunday, so would you like to come with us?" But I think you can imagine how happy those mommies and children were to be invited.

Probably many of our children wish they could go witnessing with other children their age, and they also have a genuine need for fellowship with other children. But how wonderful it would be if that fellowship has something to do with having fun witnessing! It would renew their vision and joy for witnessing if they could win souls through personal witnessing with their friends, or if they could share their testimonies with each other after witnessing.



The Japan Activated Office team of Jay, Phil (SGA), and Josh selling tools at the party

in fact, we as a board were a little hesitant to get involved in the organizing of such a big event. We had just finished a three-day "National Activate Meeting" for CM/FM/AM in October. Our board members were thinking of getting away from board-related work for a while and tuning into the needs of their Homes. After all, Christmas is such a good season for fundraising as well. So taking time to organize an area project could mean quite a sacrifice.

On the other hand, because it was just after finishing the study month to prepare for persecution, when we prayed and heard from the Lord if there was anything that we as a CGO board should do in preparation for the coming persecution, the Lord told us to start something that would encourage unity in the area and promote the Family. He showed us how important it was to do something about this.

The Lord also showed us that each Home should not only think about their own Home, but they should think about the whole area and the whole Family. He said that we won't stand the future persecution without starting to build a wall together unitedly.

We received a few prophecies about it, and I would like to share one of them here. We received this message when we were praying about how we, as a CGO board, could apply the messages from the persecution prep study month and if there was anything we should do.

Manpower is one of our desperate needs in Family life. So working together can be one of the greatest factors in accomplishing any project.

It is not difficult! Just go ahead and communicate with the other Homes. It could be an answer to the problem of not being able to find a partner for witnessing.

Working together will help our persecution prep!

Last year we had an Activate Christmas Party in Tokyo, hosted by the CGO board. But

(Jesus:) Promoting unity as a Family is one of your [the board's] main roles. The Enemy is trying to divide and conquer you, but the strength of My Family is found in unity. You can find that strength by believing the same thing, speaking the same thing, and trying to follow the same standard. The Enemy will tempt you not to unite but to fight individually, but you can't recognize this attack unless you see the whole picture. That's why you must lead the [Homes] to unite as a field so that they can recognize the attack in advance and foil the Enemy.

Somebody has to speak up in order to promote unity. Somebody has to start doing things together, and the board is in the best position to do it. Each board, within their purview, should encourage their area to work together and get united, so that the Enemy cannot enter into that circle of unity.

So start something for the sake of the area. It will promote unity, and show [the Homes] the joy and the strength of working together. Because it often takes time to unite, start building a hedge of unity as early as pos-

sible, before the Enemy attacks you. If you do so, you will be glad when the time comes, having built the hedge already.

You are bound to face difficulties when you first try to promote unity. It is because the Enemy is fighting very hard against it. But do not give up. If you do not give up, I will bless you with supernatural love and harmony. If you fight together, you will reap a great harvest and build a wall that even the greatest enemy cannot destroy.

Now is the time for each Home to get out of the shell of their own Home, to get together, contributing their talents, reaping the last harvest, and fighting the last fight. When the sound of the trumpet of fighting together blows, the people will swell with the fighting spirit, the standards will rise up together, and the wall that will hold back the lies of the Enemy will be built.

The lies of the Enemy storm their way inside from the lowest part of the wall. So do not be assured that the whole city is safe just because a great wall surrounds your own Home. The safety of the whole city will not be established unless you encourage and help the weaker brethren so that they can build the wall that is equally high and strong.

So encourage them to work together and think about the benefit for all, not only about the benefit for themselves. *(End of message.)*

Making sacrifices for the unity of the area

After receiving the above prophecy, we asked the Lord what we should do, and He told us to have a Christmas party hosted by the board. But since Christmas was approaching fast, we were concerned about the possible difficulty in finding a place and being pressured by not having enough time for the preparations. So, we even thought it could be better to have such an area project sometime



An original Christmas skit, "The King of the Light," was performed by the Blade Home. Isamu (SGA) was the King and his brothers and sisters were the children in the Kingdom of light.

after the busy Christmas season, when things would be more settled down. But the Lord told us to not worry about these things and that *now* was the time to build a wall of unity and that we shouldn't miss this Christmas season, which was a golden opportunity.

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(Jesus:) Now is the time for each Home to get out of the shell of their own Home, to get together, contributing their talents, reaping the last harvest, and fighting the last fight.
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To our surprise, during that very meeting, at the very first place we called, we found a very nice hall. On top of that, the management of the place agreed to give us a discount. Encouraged by the prophecies and these miracles, we proceeded to plan the Christmas meeting. As a result, we were able to make this event successful by working together with the nine Homes in the area.

In the area we have several Homes that already have established projects of their own. While those Homes have been holding their own parties and events every year, the promotion of the work of the Family as a whole has been small, and most of those events were held by whatever was the name of the project that each individual Home had. Also, since one of the main reasons of having those events was to raise funds for their own Home, the other Homes were often hesitant to bring their sheep there.

At that time, it had been one year since the *Activated* subscription course had started, and we found that there were some subscribers who didn't belong to any Homes. Also, there were many other sheep who couldn't visit a Family Home, as there were no Homes nearby. We also received requests from some of the small Homes, asking if we, as an area, could plan

something for Christmas, as it was difficult for them to do something special for their sheep because of the shortage of personnel. Even some of the bigger Homes wished they could offer live Family music to their sheep, but couldn't do so because they didn't have any musicians. So as you can see, holding an area event in the name of the Family has many advantages for both the Homes and sheep.

But what about the finances? If it generates income for your own Home, many people don't mind spending many hours in planning. So it is only natural to consider the financial side of an event such as this Christmas event, which is a golden opportunity to raise funds. But we felt that even if it didn't generate income for our own Home, if the Lord showed us to do it, then the Lord would mightily bless us if we were willing to help.

For example, if there hadn't been a Christmas party for the area, there would have been many people who would have missed seeing the wonderful sample of the Family. So, don't you think it is worth it to have this kind of event, even if it doesn't generate your own income, so that the sheep can see the wonderful fruit of our unity as a Family?

As a matter of fact, at that Christmas party nobody—including musicians, performers, and staff—received any gifts for their work. Of course, we spent some of the income from the party for the transportation for those who were involved and for other expenses. But we had agreed beforehand that the rest of the income would go to



The younger children in the Blade Home, Masaki, Akari, and Nozomi



In this Christmas event, two dancing teams did performances. One was from the Blade Home, and another was from the MP3 Home. Here is the Blade Home dancing team of Sunny, Yuriko, Kibo, and Yoko.

the Activate office and to promote *Activated*. We weren't able to generate so much income for the Activate office, but at least the sheep were fed and they saw the wonderful sample of the unity of the Family. It also resulted in new subscribers and the beginning of more growth in the lives of our new potential kings.

It wasn't only good for the sheep, but it was also good for the Family members. The inspiration and faith of the people from each Home was encouraged, they were able to exchange ideas, and it also gave them a chance to open their eyes to something new. It gave them a desire to work together more for other projects, and it served as good practice for us on working together.

As you can see, it takes more time to have an area project than to do something on your own, because you have to communicate and get together for meetings, etc. But if that's what the Lord shows you to do, He may have many blessings in store for you that you never realized before.

In closing, I would like to share a prophecy that the Lord gave us after this Christmas party. To be honest, some of us on the board felt that since the visitors were fewer than we had expected and because it had put a lot of pressure on us during this

busy Christmas season, maybe it hadn't been the Lord's will for us to have this area project. We felt that maybe if we had put more emphasis on something else, it might have borne more fruit. We also worried about the people from the other Homes whom we had asked for help with some of the work involved, because we thought that maybe we had given them an extra burden during the busy Christmas season.

So we asked the Lord how He saw this Christmas party. The Lord showed us again about the beauty and need for the unity through these clear word pictures.

(Jesus:) Well done, folks! It was such a wonderful Christmas present to Me, because what I wanted more than anything for this Christmas was your love for Me, your love for the sheep, and your love for each other.

The fact that you united as an area and helped each other, sacrificing your own time and schedule, was such a wonderful gift to Me. Didn't I tell you many times that if you love each other and help each other, people will see you and know you are My disciples?



Makoto (SGA) and Hopie (SGA) singing Christmas songs

Yes, it always takes sacrifice for unity, cooperation, and helping each other to work. It also takes extra time, communication, and consideration for each other. But if you make these sacrifices, it makes it possible for Me to bless you more and you will see how much more fruitful you will be.

Through this party, you have reaped lasting fruit. People's hearts were won, subscribers were fed, and their families were won as well. Your children's vision was renewed and the members of My Family found the joy of working together. This work, which has begun unseen to you, will continue to grow.

So rejoice, each and every one who labored hard for this party! Rejoice with Me! Here in Heaven, a shout of victory and joy is ringing loud in this time of great harvest and transition.

More and more, the Family is going to have to work together in unity. It will be impossible for them to reap the harvest on their own, and neither will they be able to stand against the Enemy on their own. It is because the harvest will grow bigger and bigger, and the attacks of the Enemy will be greater than ever.

So appreciate each other, respect each other, cherish each other, and continue to work together. Those who reap the harvest together will partake of the blessings together and rejoice together. Happy are the people who share the harvest, as their happiness will be multiplied.

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(Jesus:) *When the sound of the trumpet of fighting together blows, the people will swell with the fighting spirit, the standards will rise up together, and the wall that will hold back the lies of the Enemy will be built.*
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What you did this time was to go out into the ocean as a big group of fishing ships. You could go out with one fishing boat, taking only one fishing pole. You could also take your crew on one fishing boat with a small fishing net. But if you go out with a bigger group of ships and work together, you can cover a bigger area and catch many different kinds of fish all at once. It will be one of the techniques that you will be required to learn in order to reap the greater harvest that is waiting to be reaped in Japan.

It also means that if you don't learn how to work with other Homes and how to unite as an area, you will miss the great harvest that I have for you.

It was such a remarkable start and I am well pleased. I see this as the best present to Me. So continue to go forth together. Together, reap the great harvest and blessing that I have for you. *(End of message.)*



(L-R:) John Listen, Keiko, and Michael

Update: Those testimonies are from Christmas 2002, but as the above prophecy said, that event was just the beginning of our working together! We held the Tokyo Summer Concert 2003 six months later, which was on a much larger scale. Tokyo Christmas Concert 2003 was held in a bigger place and reaped double the number of sheep! We are still learning wonderful lessons through these united events, because it is not easy and the Enemy fights them. But even though we've had big battles, the victories we are winning are even greater! Hallelujah!