

Rev. Roger & Amy James,  
serving the Lord at Lutheran Theological Seminary & Training Center, Baguio City  
The Lutheran Church of the Philippines

I think most LCMS pastors eagerly desire to know how they can best serve the church, whether in the congregation they are at presently, or, if they get a call, in the new congregation. Same goes for pastors in the mission field. It is not always clearly apparent what useful impact one is having. I, like everyone else, I suppose, often wonder where, when, and how I can best serve.

At our Asia Region Missionary Work Group Meeting in Chiayi, Taiwan a week ago, I was having a conversation with the pastor pictured here, Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram. He is my supervisor. He oversees theological education in Asia for the Office of International Mission. We were talking about parish ministry back in the USA, which can be a great enticement to missionary pastors, remembering the blessings of congregational life. Dr. Jastram made the extremely perceptive observation that a pastor teaching in a seminary can have an exponentially greater influence on the



Rev. Teodorico Taran (Dean of Lutheran Theological Seminary [LTS]), enjoying some theological continuing education with vicars, LTS students, and pastors of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP).

church than a pastor in the parish. Now please understand, the point is not at all that the parish ministry is unimportant. Both Dr. Jastram and I were parish pastors for many years. Just the opposite! The seminaries of Lutheran churches *exist* precisely to prepare men for the parish ministry. Each faithful parish pastor nurtures and cares for his own fold in a specific location by properly giving out the blessed Word and Sacraments, and so through the pastor, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit brings the faithful of each flock into eternal life and calls for service in their various vocations in this life. What could be more important than that? But the seminary professor or teacher prepares many men so that they can do this bless-



PRAYERS

- Good health for Amy and I and for the all the faculty, staff, and students.
- Success for our students, especially our six new seminarians.
- Safety from storms during this typhoon season.
- Thanksgiving for safe travel and worthwhile meetings at the LCMS Asia Region Missionary work-group meeting in Chiayi, Taiwan, September 23-27.

Contact us at  
[roger.james@lcms.org](mailto:roger.james@lcms.org)

if you would like us to visit or Skype with your congregation or organization.

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Remember the fellows below? We mentioned them in earlier newsletters. They have both graduated and now have been ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry. Thanks be to God!



**Pastor Jonas A. Gumba**

serving **Christ Lutheran Church, Albuera, Leyte**. This is the home congregation of both of these men.



**Pastor John Michael (JM) Bote**

serving **Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tugatog, Malabon**. This congregation is in the capital city of Manila.

ed work in many different places. Each pastor works in one place. The professor works in many places, in a manner of speaking. I think that is what Dr. Jastram meant.

Later, it occurred to me that there are many pastors and missionaries and other church workers who little see the results of their labors. For instance, a missionary may work in a particular place for long years without anyone coming to Holy Baptism; or a pastor might



diligently and faithfully serve a declining parish in the USA, burying many, baptizing few. Success and growth, in such cases, are hidden, only to be revealed at the Lord's return. I, and others who train pastors, are blessed to be able to see the fruit of our labors more clearly than many. Our classes might be small, perhaps only a handful of students, but even so, we witness man after man who will go out blind, so to speak—

blind in the sense that they are not guaranteed success in any worldly sort of way. But still they go!

I thank you that you have given me this blessed opportunity to exert *exponential* influence for the blessing of Christ's church. I thank you that I have the opportunity to teach the men who will be pastors and women who will be deaconesses in the Lutheran Church in the Philippines, who will go and serve in multiple congregations throughout this nation. I am blessed actually to see the fruit of my labors. Blessed are those who are faithful even without seeing!

Please continue to support us with your prayers and gifts.

*Roger B. James*



Seminary students and a deaconess student in their natural habitat—the dorm.

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at

[www.lcms.org/service](http://www.lcms.org/service).

Click on

"Service Opportunities"

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