

TRAVEL WITH A CAUSE

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The Covid19 pandemic showed us that the world, as big as it is, can be connected by technology. The impact it made on the body of Christ, as far as the Great Commission is concerned, is that it made us realize that we didn't actually have to travel to the ends of the earth to reach it with the gospel. Technology brought the world, or at least most of it, to the online church! And it turned many of us into missionaries!

And it went on until a new fever - Travel2022 fever - went viral.

When the local and international borders slowly began reopening last year, many people remained hesitant to travel, waiting a while to see how safe it really is. With the help of social media postings, people got to see that even if Covid19 has not been eradicated and is here to stay, normalcy in global travel has almost fully resumed. It is no longer "only the brave and courageous" who are packing their bags! Many people have thrown their cares - and masks - to the wind, having experienced how tiresome wearing masks and being isolated in the confines of one's home can be. Travel is a friend that was sorely missed!

Those who travelled early on got to experience short lines at the airport, unoccupied beaches, personalized hotel and restaurant service, and huge travel discounts because the tourism industry was just starting to reopen and businesses had to make up for their losses. Those who succumbed to travel fever by mid-2022 may have missed out on those, but they didn't mind the return of the usual long queues and the crowds wherever they went. They were just

glad and excited they were out there once again, living life!

Thusly opening for us another opportunity for missions.

If there is one thing that travelling in pandemic times should teach us, it is that we should now travel with a cause - bringing Jesus to the world. We are to travel not only for the pleasure of it, we are to travel for a cause: HIS! If we became more missional during the lockdowns, then we should all the more become intentionally missional with this newly-regained freedom.

The next time you travel, consider this list as an example of many practical things you can do for the cause of Christ as a minister of the gospel:

- 1) Conduct prayer walks. While walking inside and around markets, malls, airport, community parks, government buildings, and tourist spots, pray for the salvation of the people around you. Or when you're on a bus or plane heading towards your destination, pray for those on board.
- 2) Bless others financially or materially. Take part in our Love Thy Neighbor campaign (even beyond February) by giving a gift or token to small vendors you're buying pasalubong items from and telling them that God loves them. If you don't have a gift to accompany the message, the best next best thing is not to haggle. Let us show them that Christians are a different breed of tourists: we are blessed to bless!
- 3) Give away gospel tracts. Bring copies in your wallet or purse so that you can readily give one away to

whom the Holy Spirit prompts you to give it to. You may also leave a copy and a good tip for the housecleaning staff the next time you check out of your hotel.

4) Pray for people. Most people welcome being prayed for, even those from other faiths. Just make sure you are being led by God's Spirit to pray.

5) Pray for yourself. Ask God to open your eyes to see people as He sees them. Ask Him to give you a heart of compassion and of passion for the lost, and to act on it.

As we observe Missions Sunday, may we be reminded that the mission isn't over, and we are the very people God intends to use to fulfill that mission. So the next time you travel, travel with a cause and bring Jesus into the world. ✝

