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Born: July 24, 1939
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Becoming a Deaconess



Mrs. Villalon, deaconess, was a big influence in my youth during those high school days at church. I was quite fascinated by her warmth and kind personality. I admired her knowledge of music, and her determination to instill in the minds and hearts of children and youth the love of God and to know Jesus Christ. She had a way of making people comfortable and feel loved while dealing with them individually. I became closely attached to her. On her death bed she said to me, "Serve the Lord." And I promised, "Yes, I will serve the Lord." I entered Harris Memorial School in 1958 and graduated in 1961 with a major in Kindergarten Education.

Church Appointments

1961-1962 Cabanatuan United Methodist Church – Resident Kindergarten Teacher, worked with Pastor Villanueva.

Fresh from Harris I was determined to do my job well as a kindergarten teacher. I arrived in Cabanatuan where the church had an existing Kindergarten and a strong School Board in place. In preparation for the new school year, I had to find more students by visiting families with kinder age children. I introduced the Kinder School Program to the parents and its benefits to their children. To the parents who could not bring their children to school due to lack of transportation, I proposed to pick them up from their homes in the mornings and take them back after the class in kalesa rides. This seemed to work as eventually we opened up the school with 25 students.



Without an assistant I had to do it all; from the preparations of daily lesson plans to picking up the children and dropping them off back to their homes individually, to cleaning the classroom after each session, coordinating field trips as well as Christmas program and graduation program. I met with the parents regularly, and reported to the Kindergarten School Board on any issues pertaining the school.

At this church assignment, one mission I felt God led me to was when I met a member who used to be active in church but stopped attending due to deep depression. She did not want to see anyone from church. One day, I visited her simply by being with her calmly and not talking too much. I continued my daily visits and prayers for her till I gained her trust. I led her to the piano and we played a few notes, and from there she was able to go back to her music – singing and playing. By the time I left this assignment, I saw her back to her old self, blooming, and beaming. I thank God for leading me to this personal mission; and that my daily prayers for her were answered.

1963-1964 Olongapo UMC – Kindergarten Teacher. I worked closely with Pastor Juan Sagun.

At this assignment, I had my own personal bodyguards whenever I went out of the church compound. I felt very special! If you know Olongapo UMC's location you will note that outside the campus on either side of the streets were all the bars and night clubs catering to the highly populated town adjacent to the US Naval Base. For my out-of-campus activities like visitations, errands for school projects, etc. the Church Board assigned young people to guard and protect me from seeing ominous streets activities. It was a win-win situation. I was leading the young people, MYFers, and they were guarding and protecting me. They were my constant companions; we enjoyed our fellowship together, the bible studies, the Sunday school, the Christmas Institute, and the Inter- District Evangelistic Institute.



At the Kindergarten School I had 30 students, with an assistant. I did not have to pick up and return the kids back and forth in the kalesa. I also found the Kindergarten School Board very cooperative, supportive, and I was assured they were there for me, which made me happy and my work easier. The young people were very much involved in helping out in the school activities.

At this church I also helped with the WSCS visitations and Bible studies. I was the organist at mid-week services and at the vesper services, as well as at church weddings and there were a lot of weddings in Olongapo! I preached occasionally, and held Extension Classes on Sunday afternoons, with the help of my bodyguards/MYFers.

1964-1966 Good Samaritan UMC in Manila – Kindergarten Teacher; I worked with Pastor Ignacio Bautista

The church here had a full staff of choir director, organist, and a Deaconess Director of Christian Education. I had one Kindergarten session held in the mornings with 30 students; I had no assistant in this school. However, I worked closely with a very cooperative School Board.

I pursued my studies in mathematics and science, and took post in teaching in these fields in the high school department and in the college level at Polytechnic University in the Philippines. Having lived in California since 1985 I eventually landed in the nursing field and became a surgeon assistant until my retirement in 1998.

I live with my husband, Arthur, our daughter and we have two boys. Arturo and I continue our volunteer work in the Philippines establishing church libraries and feeding programs.



Conclusion:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future...” Jeremiah 29:11.

God continuously gives me opportunities to serve and spread his words, love, faith, and hope to mankind. And, as the saying goes, “Bloom where you are planted.” God is so good and He is great. My family and I praise and thank Him for all that we are now.

To the Velayos in Cabanatuan and to the Ramoses in Olongapo, my sincere thanks for including me in your family while assigned at your church, for your hospitality, for your kindness, for your prayers. I lift you up to the Lord with thanks and praise!

