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Planas, Porac, Pampanga

## Becoming a Deaconess



Growing up in the church I was attending Sunday school, DVCS, Bible Study, Christmas Institutes, and Youth Camps. In my mid-teens I was recruited and trained to teach these classes. I was exposed to the different ministries of the church. Ms. Leslie Malit, a Kindergarten Deaconess assigned to our church, seemed to do church work naturally; she could teach, play the piano/organ, conduct the choir, she prayed for the people she visited. Ms. Malit patiently nurtured me in the life of the church and convinced me to be a deaconess.

At the 1991 Christmas Institute, I accepted the call to become a deaconess. My father, on the other hand, refused and simply said he could not afford it. Ms. Malit together with our Pastor, Alfredo Salangsang, promised to find a sponsor for me. With a lot of prayers and perseverance of these workers, I was given four-year full scholarship by the West Pampanga District WSCS. In June, 1992, I enrolled at Harris Memorial College and graduated in 1996 with a Bachelor's degree in Kindergarten Education, and the recipient of the "Judith Bunyi Award" for Academic Excellence in Music!

## Church Appointments

1996-1997 Gospel UMC, Palat, Porac, Pampanga – Kindergarten Teacher and Christian Education Director.  
I served with Rev. Maynardo Nicolas.

Challenges –

Handling the kinder school, being the organist, Christian Education director, my plate was full! On top of all that, I also attended the mid-week meetings, the prayer meetings that my pastor led. I wanted to be there to observe. I made time to prepare for everything that I was to teach, preach, present, and music pieces I played. I pressured myself to do the best that I could do, which eventually led to spreading myself thinly.



At this church there were two retired deaconess members. Whenever the chancel choir sang one or both wanted to conduct the choir at the service. I felt like they were taking my job. Looking back, I attributed the misgivings to being young and the lack of experience in my part. Since then, I have learned to empower others to serve God in the fields of their interests.

The District Deaconess Meetings saved me! It was during those gatherings where I could re-energize in the fellowship with my sister deaconesses where there was a small sis/big sis relationship within the group; counseling and praying for each other.

## 1997-2016 Faculty at Harris Memorial College (HMC), Taytay, Rizal.

My assignments here included teaching Preschool, Elementary and up to College level at different times, offering my services wherever I was needed.



While assigned at Harris, I was a volunteer to the following ministries and UMC connections:

- Piano accompanist for student deaconesses during their choral conducting recitals
- Pianist, Choir Director, and Nurture, Outreach, Mission Chairperson at Jose L. Valencia Chapel
- Secretary of the Harris Memorial College Alumni Association (January 2013 - January 2017)
- Secretary of the Commission on Deaconess Service (June 2012 - October 2016)
- Chairperson - Committee on Deaconess Service at the Pampango PAC (June 2012 - May 2016)
- Assistant Secretary of the Pampango Philippines Annual Conference (June 2008 - May 2016)



## Challenges at Harris -

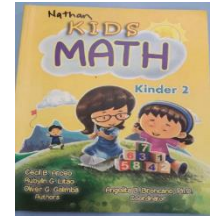
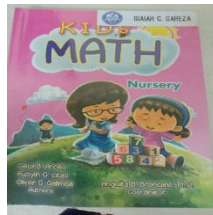
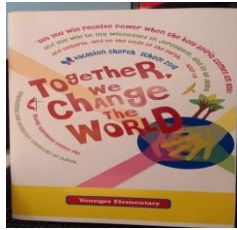
Keeping up with the academic standards; constant change in teaching assignments from one grade level to another – from the Elementary, to High School, to College and of different subjects- and loads of paperwork occupied my time. Fatigue did set in. Soon, I had medical issues that led me to discontinue pursuing my Master's degree.



## Co-Authorship

The Vacation Bible School Manual (middle elementary level) published in 2016 by the Board of Christian Education and Discipleship of the UMC. Especially designed for the 2016 VBS.

Math Textbook and Workbook (preschool) published by C&E publishing in 2017 and still out in the Philippine market.



## Migration to US

I decided to migrate to USA after 20 years of fruitful service in the Philippines. I prayed for God's guidance to use me in the ministry and I prayed the prayer of Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4:10a, "Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory!" Use me Lord, wherever I go!

## My Affiliation to the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioners



I transferred my deaconess status from the Pampango Philippines Annual Conference to the California Pacific Annual Conference, and became an affiliate to the US Lay Order of Deaconesses and Home Missionaries. My immediate family was always there for me. Above all, I am grateful to our Lord Jesus Christ who made all these things possible. Soli Deo Gloria!

## Present Appointment

Currently, I am a staff member at the Santa Ana UMC in Southern California. The church is a vibrant, multi-cultural and multi-lingual congregation. I am honored to work with a committed staff and gifted lay leadership in nurturing the children and their families in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

I am also available for any services needed in the church as my schedule allows: in leading adult bible studies, teach adult choir, adult choir accompanist, choir member, and other activities.

## 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. This verse is very meaningful for me.

I praise God for individuals and groups of people who helped in my journey to be a faithful servant, a deaconess, the Pampanga District WSCS who financed my schooling at Harris, the members of the Gospel UMC who were generous people. My heartfelt thanks to Harris' Administration for believing in me and providing me with a vast exposure in teaching opportunities. I am forever thankful to the Lord for blessing me with a sister and a friend in the person of Ate Violeta Mateo-Domingo and her husband, Joe, for housing me, and for Gerry Gerocha for helping me find my way into the ministry at the Santa Ana UMC. I thank God for blessing of a family; my husband Lemuel and our son, Lemcel. "Sa Dios ang papuri"! Hallelujah!