

MY FAITH JOURNEY

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Outside the front door of our old home back in Cainta, my mom suggested a life-changing idea, “Isha... lipat ka kaya ng school?”. It was because my mom had recently been employed by a new company and my brother started university, both being located in Makati. If I was okay with it, we would leave our two-storey house and move to a condominium in the city. As someone with many dreams, I said, “yes!”. I cannot deny that it was an exciting idea as it was a new start, however, that excitement soon deflated.

In August of 2022, I had my first onsite classes. The exciting idea I had only been thinking of became a reality, and it scared me. It scared me because I realized that the plans I had made with my old friends during quarantine would no longer be possible because I left home. Although the first few days of the school year were great, September hit like a storm. I had experienced homesickness and culture shock together at once, and I’d cry for what seemed like every night.

There was no one I could talk to because my classmates all knew each other and I’m not someone who easily opens up to others, nor could I vent to my old friends because they were all busy catching up on things they missed out on. And most of all, I didn’t have the heart to tell my parents of my struggle and that I wanted to move back. I couldn’t tell them because it would be tiring for my dad to drive me to school that was more than an hour away. Having nothing else to do, I resorted to laying down on my left side, facing the wall once everyone was asleep, and begging God to make things better.

And things did get better in October. Not only did he remind me that I would eventually receive the fruits of my labor, he also showed it to me. After my countless efforts to fit in, I could now be friends with people I wanted to spend a lot of time with. He offered me a chance to be a part of the Living Rosary during the UN celebration, which was where I met one of my closest friends. I also was introduced to two of my other friends, which helped create the small group of four that I cherish to this day. From there, everything flowed smoothly. I received more opportunities as my teachers and classmates believed in my potential and entrusted me with leadership roles.

This season of grace is my personal reminder that there is always hope. As we celebrate the Jubilee Year this 2025, it has inspired me to always trust God’s plan. Back in August of 2024, I experienced again the feeling of being the odd one out when I entered UST-SHS, however, I faced this better because this time, I trusted God. It was something I was lacking back in 9th grade, which made my move incredibly hard. I trusted God that I wouldn’t lose my friends as they can actually understand my worries even if they are busy with their lives. Because of them, I learned that distance does not matter with the right people. I also pushed myself to socialize and meet new people who now act as my pillars in this big school as I realize that just like me, they are new here and have a lot of worries. Then God helped me to spend more time with my family as I started to tell them about my days at school, both the good and the bad things.

But above all, I grew closer to Him. Because I continue to believe in His great plan, I spend each day productively. I work hard to be better at different parts of my life, but me being able to succeed would never be possible without God. I live more happily as I understand that challenges in life are inevitable but not impossible through Him.