



# Global Network



## CCTA Moves Forward

By Angelito “Anjji” Gabriel



“Angelito, now we know how you felt when you visited us in Dallas last April!” Those were Gary Hoag’s first words when I met him and Wes Willmer after they landed on Philippine soil after about 24 hours of air travel. They were relieved to know that the first scheduled activity on their itinerary was to check in to their hotel to get much-needed rest.

### A trip with a mission

What can be accomplished on a four-day ECFA visit to the Philippines? A lot, especially when members of a global network are praying for a fruitful trip to advance the faithful administration of God’s resources in the Philippines. These were the outcomes of their first ever visit to the Philippines from October 8-13, 2015:

- Encouraged and energized the Christian Council for Transparency and Accountability (CCTA) board members to move forward with its governance, transparency, and accountability advocacy.
- A great awakening in the practice of governance and stewardship after the trainings facilitated by Gary and Wes.
- Clamor from training participants and many others to get their own copies of ECFA Press books, *The Choice* and *The Sower*.

The two trainings, “Faithful Administration and Governance” and “Integration of Faith and Fundraising,” at Asian Theological Seminary were packed thanks to assistance from Zenet Maramara. More than 90 participants actively interacted in the teaching and discussion format that Gary and Wes facilitated.

The same trainings were initially planned for the board members and leadership team of the Center for Community Transformation group of ministries (CCT), but were opened to their ministry partners at the last minute. A good mix of participants (pictured atop this edition of the Global Network Update) such as lawyers, fund managers, board members, and ministry leaders attended and learned biblical principles and practical applications of governance, transparency, and accountability.

The CCT training was capped by a dinner hosted by Ruth Callanta, CCT president. The fellowship with her was very productive and informative and she shared how she has had discussions with ECFA even before the CCTA and ECFA relationship was established during the International Accountability Summit in Dallas.

### **Divine appointments and accolades**

God also allowed us to enjoy meaningful and wonderful fellowship with Gary and Wes beyond we could have asked for or imagined. They really inspired and encouraged us to do the work God has called us to do through CCTA.

Gary had an opportunity to preach at the Cosmopolitan Church, an evangelical church in Manila, on the Sunday of their visit. He blessed the congregation by revealing to them, "The Secret Every Steward Must Know!" from Matthew 25:14-30, i.e. "Show you know the Master by how you use His money".

After lunch hosted by the elders of the church, we visited Fort Santiago, which is the old Spanish fort where our national hero, José Rizal, was incarcerated before he was executed by musketry (falsely accused by the Spaniards of inciting rebellion and sedition).

When we went atop the Fort we experienced a soft gentle breeze that not only soothed our tired body but also touched our soul. I thought to myself, this is God comforting us, especially Gary and Wes, after a day of travel and tiring days of training and for Gary, preaching.



Towards late afternoon, we proceeded to Makati, one of the central business districts in the Philippines where we planned to get early dinner. On our way to the restaurant, we passed by the American cemetery where a monument to the fallen American soldiers during World War II was built. It was 30 minutes to closing time so we had the opportunity to enter the premises. The place was serene and quiet and the inscriptions on the monument allowed Gary and Wes to appreciate how America and the Philippines cooperated to thwart the Japanese invasion.

As we were preparing to leave the place we witnessed the golden sun peeking from the clouds in between the tall leafy trees. It was as if God was smiling at us, manifesting His presence, and assuring us of His approval of the work that Gary and Wes had done and what we at CCTA will do for Him.

When Gary and Wes arrived on the evening of October 8 there was a slight drizzle as I was driving them to the hotel. "Hear that (speaking of the sound of the rain on the roof of that car)? Max Lucado calls it divine applause," Gary said. I nodded in agreement.

The divine applause was there again as I was driving them to the airport on the early morning of October 13! Gary sent Zenet Maramara and me this note as he and Wes were awaiting their departing flight at the airport: "Wes and I saw this rainbow as we were leaving Manila. It's a great reminder that God's promises will carry you through whatever challenges you face. We love you both!"

