

Hands of Mercy – Quarterly Update & Prayers: September – November 2026

Reflection

I don't know if you've ever climbed a mountain before... My husband and I decided to climb Ben Lomond in Scotland a few years back on the off-chance (which perhaps wasn't the wisest thing to do!) However, the first stretch of the climb felt ok – we had fresh legs and it was a beautiful, sunlit day. A few hours in, when it was too far to turn back and we still couldn't see the summit, we started to wonder... As we climbed further, our legs got tired and wobbly, we began to run out of food and water and although we had journeyed for many hours, we felt nowhere closer to the summit.

Our prayer journey for the Philippines can feel like that sometimes. God is faithful and His word is real. But the situations we pray for – like a turnaround in the government or the economy – seem slow to change. We might have prayed for many hours, months or even years, but we don't seem to have arrived at the summit yet.

I believe that God says to us at these times to “keep going.” He is the Lord who will do abundantly above what we can ask, seek or imagine (Ephesians 3:20), He has promised to always be with us (Hebrews 13:5) and has declared that we will reap a harvest if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9). He encourages us to keep climbing the mountain of prayer, trusting Him to bring about the breakthrough and turning to Him whenever we need sustenance along the way.

My husband and I got to the top of the mountain in the end (picture to the right) – and it was worth it! As we pray for the Philippines over the coming months and years, let's believe for God's reassurance and encouragement to carry us through because one day, there will be breakthrough.



God bless you,

Sam

Samantha Graham, Chair, Hands of Mercy International

Early heads up – Christmas gifts for sponsored children and families



“I would like to say thank you very much for the cash gift you gave me. I truly appreciate your kindness and thoughtfulness. Your gift will be a great help and I am very grateful to receive it... Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.”

We know it's only September (and we've just said the 'C' word!) but this is an early heads up! **If you kindly sponsor a child or a family, and are planning to give a Christmas gift, please can you send this by 30th November?** This will enable us to send the gift out in time. £20 for your sponsored child or £25 for your sponsored family could double the amount of support they typically receive, giving them much-needed provision at this time of year. **Thank you so much.**



1st – 7th September: God's goodness

- As we start this new month, let's take a moment to reflect on God, the maker of heaven and earth who is on our side and who will help us (Psalm 124).
- A prayer for September: *Lord, we know that there are challenges ahead, both big and small – whether it's finding a new building for Ichthus or praying for health for the team. We lift these situations to You, trusting You for Your breakthrough.*
- The Bible highlights God's special compassion for those in poverty (e.g. Proverbs 19:17). Pray that children and families living in the squatter communities will experience His goodness and provision through Hands of Mercy.

8th – 14th September: Investing in the lives of children

- *"If I hadn't been helped by HOM I would say that my college education is impossible. I may end up nothing and the cycle of poverty in my family will just go on and on."* Thank God for the impact of the Child Sponsorship Programme.
- Pray that children being sponsored in their education will thrive – school is not always easy and some children do struggle.
- Temptations for young people exist in the Philippines, as much as they do in the UK, including drugs and peer pressure. Pray that sponsored children will be able to successfully stand against these temptations.

15th – 21st September: People's lives being changed by Jesus

- One HOM beneficiary said: *"If I hadn't met Jesus, I would say that my life is in danger. In the community where I live is full of vices but because I have Jesus in my life, I can reject what the world has offered."* Praise God for this testimony!
- Hands of Mercy doesn't just exist to meet physical needs but to see people come to know Jesus and experience His life and hope. Pray that people in the squatter communities will experience Jesus' love through Hands of Mercy's outreach.
- Sally has asked for prayer for when the team carry out evangelism: *"We are praying that the Lord will really open hearts, accepting Jesus as their Lord and Saviour."*

22nd – 28th September: Praying for healing and breakthrough

- Ara, a long-standing team member, is currently undergoing dialysis. She is almost 70 and her body has been struggling to adjust to this. Pray that she will settle with the treatment and for healing for her kidneys and body.
- Please pray for Ray Crampatanta (featured in the last prayer calendar) – he still needs to have oxygen at home but his living situation is now uncertain. Pray that Ray and his family can find an affordable place to live, especially as Ray can't work.
- Please pray for 'Mommy' Liza, another team member, who has been diagnosed with scoliosis. She will need to have an operation to correct this but she is concerned about doing so. Pray for God's provision and for healing.

29th September – 5th October: Florante

- This week, there is again just one prayer request for the Florante land ownership situation. We are also praising God for His miraculous intervention! The group of families in the Florante community (including some sponsored by Hands of Mercy) lost the court case. This was devastating news and meant that they had to pay the new owner's court fees, as well as vacate the land in the next couple of years (with nowhere to go). There was a right to appeal but the costs were high and the chances of them winning the appeal were slim. Then, in an answer to prayer, Sally (HOM

director) was able to speak to the Mayor's office after months of trying! The Mayor has offered to pay for a majority of the appeal costs. The Mayor is also seeking to put some stipulations in place to ensure that the families either stay or have a place to go. As of the time of writing (late August), things have gone quiet again so please pray that this situation gets resolved soon.

6th – 12th October: Ichthus

- Please pray for a new premises to be found for the Ichthus water filtering business. The owner is selling the building in November and we have not found a new premises that we can afford. Ask God to bring about breakthrough.
- A couple of the drivers and their families also live in the Ichthus building. Please pray that any new building will allow for this as this has been a godsend for the families.
- Every Thursday, Hands of Mercy runs a bible study with the team. This has had a positive impact, helping to create unity and reducing the temptation of theft as payments are taken in cash. Pray that the team will go from strength to strength.

13th – 19th October: The economy

- The economic situation is difficult in the Philippines. Many prices have risen sharply in recent months and years, e.g. electricity costs in the main Barangka office have gone from 9,000 pesos a month (£107) to 14,000 pesos a month (£167). Please pray for the situation as high prices are causing many people and families to struggle.
- It will take time for prices to reduce and families will have to survive in the meantime. Pray that they will be able to keep going each day.
- The government is still facing accusations of corruption but the investigations into these also seem to be fixed. Pray for God's justice in this situation and that there will be good government in the Philippines.

20th – 26th October: Hope

- *"HOM is really helping a lot of families, hopeless families, hopeless people in the community. These are people who feel rejected or neglected so through HOM, they're able to experience love and feel like they belong"* (Sally). Thank God for the encouragement and hope that Hands of Mercy is bringing.
- Sally said: *"[People] are very thankful for the selfless love HOM is giving to them. They were saying, 'we don't know these people who are helping us but they give all their best to help us.'"*
- One beneficiary said: *"The impact of Hands of Mercy to me is love, hope and acceptance... HOM also restores my hope when I felt there is no hope for me to finish my education, but HOM restored my hope and accepted me of who I am..."* Praise God for every supporter of Hands of Mercy who makes this possible.

27th October – 2nd November: Mercy Community Churches

- The Mercy Community Churches have evolved out of Hands of Mercy over the last 26 years. They provide vital support as people learn about who they are in Jesus. One beneficiary said: *"Hands of Mercy is not only helping my education, but it also helps me to know more about Jesus through Mercy Community Church. Knowing Him changes everything in me and become a good and better person. When my mother died a year ago, my church family helped me overcome the sadness and loneliness I felt. I undergo a discipleship training with one of the youth leaders and [I am] now active in the youth ministry. To God be the glory!"* Thank God for this.



- The Mercy Community Churches now meet in four locations – three in Manila and one in Baguio. Pray for God's equipping for the pastors and worship teams.
- Analyn, a former team member, is trying to set up another Mercy Community Church in the Libmanan Bicol province (where she has moved back to). Pray for this to come together and for it to be a blessing to the community there.

3rd – 9th November: Prescription Medicine Programme

- There is no National Health Service in the Philippines so if someone gets sick it can be life-threatening. Things like high blood pressure that are easily treatable here, can cause serious illness or even death without the right medication.
- For those who can afford it, people buy laboratory tests to pick up on potential illnesses early. It costs £50 for a complete laboratory test and £20 to buy 40 packets of ibuprofen or 133 packets of paracetamol.
- Pray for the Prescription Medicine Programme which provides medicine for children and adults who become poorly and that funds will be received to help this to run.

10th – 16th November: Christmas preparations

- Please pray for the team as they start to make preparations for the Christmas parties. These are a highlight for the children supported through Hands of Mercy. For some children, it will be the one time of year where they will receive a gift.
- For a number of years, we have been able to give an additional rice gift to the team at Christmas. Pray for the funds needed to make this possible.
- Thank God for the hope of Christmas and pray that many people in the squatter communities will find hope in Jesus this year.

17th – 23rd November: Prayers for the team

- Prayer request from Sally: *"For me and Joey's health and that we continue to do what the Lord is calling us to do. Please pray for day-to-day strength as we face all these trials and people's different situations. It can be heartbreaking at times."*
- Thank God that in the main, the team in the Philippines are healthy. Praise God for His protection and His keeping of the team.
- All of the team live in the squatter communities and face day-to-day living challenges, especially with rising prices. Ask God to equip, strengthen and sustain them.

24th – 30th November: The future

- Please continue to pray for future leaders for Hands of Mercy – for the right people to come on board who can take on the mantle from Sally and Joey in time.
- Thank God for the faithful service of the trustees and volunteers here in the UK. Please pray that God will raise up new people who can take on key roles in the future, including the treasurer role and administrative support.
- Thank God for His faithful provision and protection for Hands of Mercy. *"Thanks be to God! He gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Thank you for praying.