



# GRASSROOTS

Gamot Cogon School  
Steiner-Inspired Education

Libongcogon,  
Zarraga, Iloilo

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## Dear Parents,

**Warmest greetings in our fifth year of school operations!**

We are so happy to welcome new parents and new families to the school community and we are looking forward to an exciting and fruitful year

capacity as a hand-work and games teacher. We also welcome back Mr. Jun Selobrico who now has school maintenance and upkeep responsibilities.

ahead. We of course also welcome back our returning families and all the new children who have found their way via the increasingly extensive “grass roots” of the school. We now have 128 children enrolled which is a 36% increase over last year! At the same time, we also wish the best success to those families and children who have moved on to other schools.

I encourage everyone to please get involved! The parent community is part and parcel of the lifeblood of the school and we need your participation in order to help fully realize the potentials of Steiner education for every child in the school. Finally, we also wish everyone a meaningful St. John’s celebration where we can pause to hear “the voice of one calling in the loneliness”—a call to make our paths straight and to change our hearts and minds in preparation for the Christ-in-me.

In addition to welcoming the children and families, we also welcome our new faculty and staff. Our new grade one teacher is Ms. Christie Casugbo, a native of Jaro who spent five years in customer relations in Manila before changing course and seeking to become a teacher. Christie participated in the GCI teacher training program and we are most happy to have her join the faculty. We would also like to welcome back Ms. Lotis Costanilla, who has started her own family since first working with the school previously as a kindergartner. Ms. Lotis will now be joining the school in a part-time

We hope you enjoy the first issue of our newsletter for this year! ■

*James Sharman, Director*

### St. John’s Greetings!

Ask your main class teacher to know more about the feast of St. John and its significance in the Waldorf curriculum.

**GAMOT COGON SCHOOL**  
*Preparing Students To Become Self-Actuated, Creative, Responsible, Compassionate Human Beings*

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*Design and layout by Anna Slater*

## A New Journey Begins

An interview with Gamot Cogon’s new **Class 1 Teacher, Ms. Christie Casugbo**, who shares her experiences about the first few weeks with her children. *Interview by Anna Slater.*

- A: *So Christie, how are you doing?*
- C: I’m doing fine. So far, it’s been fun. Tiring, but fun!
- A: *What is the biggest challenge you are facing so far here?*
- C: A lot! (laughing) Hmm, probably getting to know each child and how I can mold and harmonize the class. Preparation for each class is also very difficult.
- A: *And what do you enjoy the most so far?*
- C: The kids themselves...their innocence and generosity. For example, a couple of times some children had no ‘baon’ with them and when I asked who could share their food, they were fighting over who would do it! Also, children are so forgiving. When they fight with each other, it only takes a short while and then they are friends again... playing as if nothing happened.
- A: *Awww...they’re so sweet. Any other funny, touching, or interesting stories?*
- C: Well, I love how the children are so truthful. Some even admit to me that they are still being allowed to watch TV! Also, some experiences for me are sad. For example, even though some kids look so happy and carefree, I know their home lives...

## Sa Pagpadayon...

**By: Tita Bulak Lapastora and Tita Nely Sobere**

Sadtong tini-on nga ang pulo ka kabataan halin sa kinder gindul-ong namon sa ila pagtabok sa bag-o nga bahin sang ila kabuhi sa pagtuon, nangin kahigayonan ini para sa amon nga mga Tita nga tun-an liwat ang amon responsibilidad sa pagbaton sa mga kabataan nga ang kalabanan lamharon pa sing pag-edason. Sa sulod sang duha ka semana nga amon pag-updanay, amat-amat na nila ginapakita ang ila tagsa-tagsa ka duna nga kina-alam kay kina-iya, tanda sang isa ka madinu-agon nga pagpanglakaton kaupod ang mga abyan. Kung aton binagbinagon, sa Kindergarten naton sugod ginatu-an ang mga kamatu-oran sa pangabuhi. May mga bagay nga pirme naga-updanay kag nagasugod ini sa pagtipon kag pagpares-pares sang tsinelas. Ang mga dalagko nga indi pag-intindihanay nagasugod man lamang sa bagay nga ginagmay. Kita makayuhum kun aton



pamati-an ang mga bata sa ila padayon nga pag-istoryahanay sang matawhay mga problema nagasulhay. Sa Kindergarten man kita nagasugod sa pagtu-on sa paghulat sang aton torno sa linya, may oras gid nga gintalana para sa tagsa sa aton. Amo man ini ang ti-on nga nagasugod kita mangin bukas kag magpamati sa istorya sang isa kag isa. Ang mga bagay-bagay sa kalibutan nagapadayon sa paglibot, nagapadayon sa pagpanglakaton. Sa liwat gina-abi-abi namon kamo tanan sa pag-upod sa aton pagsinadya kag patuon. ■

# Grade School Community

## In a Nutshell....Almost.

**By: Ms. Marites Pederio, Class 5 & 6 Teacher**



During the summer, GCS teachers went to Manila for the Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference where I attended the workshops which were preparing for the grades I am teaching this year. In a conversation, one teacher said to me that in her class a child defined gravity as the love of the earth; or the reluctance of the earth to part with the things around her because she loves them so, that's why she clings to them and pulls them towards her. When my wits came back to me, I wanted to meet that child and ask her what the air was. And the clouds. And how come there are storms....and stars?

Incidentally, these topics are studied in Grades 7 and 8, when the adolescents are experiencing a gamut of emotions in their souls; when they are learning to find their balance on such a shaky and challenging ground they find the world to be at this time; when they often find themselves longing to be away from

here; far into the enveloping dark night with its twinkling stars.

The Steiner curriculum tries to meet what is happening inside the children in their souls with resonating lessons about an observable element outside of them in nature or in stories, which offsets and harmonizes their inner mood of soul. We also try to use the very energy of their powerful emotions to come up with a conception of complex ideas and feelings: an understanding founded in the heart. We investigate how complex processes occur through experiments and observations; but we like to take care that the discussions are done in a descriptive, imaginative way; one that has its base in the children's own being. This is so that later on, in adulthood, when the children are perhaps already engineers, or lawmakers or government executives or artists, or homemakers, they would be able to make conscientious decisions that are humane because the basis for such decisions are at their very core.

In Grade 1, when the children have just come away from Kindergarten and are very much in the realm of imagination, they are in a very different 'soul state' than we usually imagine them to be and are not at all interested in numbers and letters in the way we think. They are more interested in the things that really matter: life and its drama as captured in fairytales and other such stories that embody truth; the immortal saga of how the good encounters and overcomes evil. So we teach the letters and numbers out of the drawings we make from the stories we told. Then the children find that letters and numbers worthy of their time, too.

In Grade 2, as they become capable of learning more than just letters and simple words, but also whole sentences and little paragraphs, their consciousness

*"...I wanted to meet the child and ask her what the air was...and the clouds..."*

...from page 2 'Nutshell'...

also broadens and begins to encompass and *know* 'evil.' They start to hear fable stories and saint stories that would give them the courage and comfort that they have the capacity within themselves to transform evil into good.

In Grade 3, one of the highlights is practical activities (farming, archetypal industry and occupations). At this age the children get out of the feeling of absolute unity with the world. They start to question what the teachers or parents say or do. The children take up practical activities to make them at home on the earth, with the many good things humanity can do. In Grade 4 this is intensified by starting lessons on local geography and history, and the introduction of fractions. With history and geography, an even deeper orientation in time and space is given to the children. With fractions, their initial feeling of being a separate entity is addressed latently, for fractions are relationships of the parts to the whole.

In Grades 5 and 6, the children study minerals and ancient civilizations, up to Rome. At this time the children transition

from a very balanced and harmonious being capable of going into the other so well, to an almost enclosed, exclusive ego. They leap from the heights of the Oneness of Ancient India and descend to the heavy, rigid, structure of the laws of Ancient Rome. But Rome is not only this; it is also nobility, resolute will, and a readiness to die for honor, ideals, and the word. When they have committed themselves to anything and have given their word, no army could stop them.

**Thus is the curriculum that guides the endeavors of every Steiner educator, may the gods and the children's angels give them the strength and health to do their jobs.** ☺ ■

## Dali Na, Istorya Na Kita

By: Ms. Nesel Dable, Class 3 Teacher

Alas sais sang hapon. Tion na para ang mga mag-ulutod matililipon. Natapos na ang tanan nga hilumuson. Ang mga baka ara na sa ila kural. Napasulod ko na, matapos mapainom sang preska nga tubi nga ginhaluan sang asin.

Sa sulod sang balay luto na ang pagkaun kag naplastar na sang akon magulang ang panyapon. Ang tanan tingob nga magakaon kag maghanda.

"Dali na kamo," ang tawag sang akon tatay. Kag ang tanan nga mga mata kag talinga handa na para sa isa ka istorya.

Didto nagsugod ang akon interes sa pagpamati kag pagbasa sang mga istorya. Apang limitado ang mahatag nga istorya sang akon tatay. Ini mga istorya nahanungod sa iya mga eksperensya. Gani kaupod ang akon magulang, nagtinguha kami sa pagbasa nga nag-umpisa sa mga malip-ot nga istorya halin sa mga libro nga ginahatag sang amon maestra.

Indi makasarang magbakal sang mga 'storybook' ang amon ginikanan. Nagtinguha kami nga magbasa sa mga ginahulam namon nga mga libro sa amon mga abyan. Asta subong indi ko pa malipatan ang mga istorya kun 'Ngaa Maalat ang Dagat' kag 'Ang Karera sang Bao kag Kuneho.'



*"...makabulig sa ila imahinasyon kag mangin isa ka instrumento nga magamit nila sa ila pagdako"*

Subong samtang nagakalipay ako sa pagtudlo sa akon mga estudyante mas nagakalipay ako sa paghatag sa ila sang nagakalain-lain nga istorya. Ano bala ang kabuhi sang isa ka prinsesa? Ngaa ayhan nagdaog ang bao sa kuneho? Diin ayhan naghaling ang dagat? Madamo pa nga mga pamangkot sang aton kabataan nga masabat sang isa ka istorya.

Ano ang bulig ang nahagat sa akon sang mga istorya nga akon nabatian kag nabasahan? Luwas sa pagpasangkad sang akon imahinasyon kag paminsaron, ini nangin dako mga bulig sa pagsulat ko sa inyo ginabasa nga artikulo subong.

Paano ini mangin isa ka dako nga bulig sa aton mga puluy-an? May mga tion nga halos maubos ang aton tingog sa pagpahanumdom sa aton mga anak. Ngaa indi naton pagtilawan nga ipabutyag inisa ila paagi sa isa ka estorya. Nagapati gid ako nga paagi sa sini nga simple nga buluhaton mapukaw naton ang balatyagon sang aton kabataan nga makabulig sa ila imahinasyon kag mangin isa ka instrumento nga magamit nila sa ila pagdako. ■

from 'A New Journey...' front page....

...are difficult because of their family's financial situation. Some of them have big responsibilities to take on at such a young age. I have children coming to me telling me they can't do their homework because they have no paper at home. My heart really goes out to them.

A: *Okay, on a different track, what appeals to you about Steiner/Waldorf Education?*

C: That it's not just education for the mind or thinking. It's holistic. I know I will see the effects of this soon with my kids.

A: *Tell me about the Rose Ceremony you had on the first day of class.*

C: It was really something different...very heartwarming. I felt that the kids received me well even though for some of them it was the first time we met. I saw in their eyes that they accepted me.

A: *Great! Before we end, anything you would like to share with the parents or your co-teachers?*

C: To the parents, love and take care of your children. Enjoy them because they grow up so fast. To my co-teachers, thank you. You all have been very supportive! ■

# Parents' Corner

## Tips to Welcome New Steiner-inspired Families

By: Ms. Dot Llariza, Class 4 Parent

*(These tips continue to work for me 100%. I hope they will work for you, too. I have no literal Ilonggo translation for all these, but we can have a nice discussion in our free time. :))*

**Trust.** Let us trust our parenting and our love. Things may feel, look, and sound strange, but let us also trust our children's mentors and guides. They know what they are doing, and even if they don't, eventually they will (and we will, too!) Trust is one personal quality I strengthened in my quest for win-win relationships. I've

learned that "It's okay to make mistakes while growing up," and "When in doubt, ask." Now, I trust myself, my child and his will to live his life passionately and fully. I trust life, because the whole of creation is in God, because God is trustworthy, because God is Love, and because God is All there Is.

**Be open.** There's a vast new world to be explored in the century-old philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. We are just beginning to learn (and re-learn) the wisdom he culled from the ancients. New researches are already telling us that the way to ride out the currents of this new world is to tap into other dimensions. A wonderful friend, Sr. Fidelis, said, "It is the task of children to push the boundaries that limit us." Indeed, we can choose

to stay open in heart and mind. That's what I did when I decided to enrol my son Daniel here, and we are still happy up to this day.

**Be aware.** Life is unfolding as it should, from moment to

moment. In the present moment, we are alive. Childhood, with all its minor aches and major joys, is going on under our roofs. This is also why we turn off our televisions and other gadgets - so we can feel, look, listen, and be in awe with clarity. Our children are aware of the *Now* all the time. They focus on whatever they are doing without baggage from the past, nor worry of the future. My 4 children are always quick to sense whether I am fully present with them or not. Daniel, for example, will wait until I am giving him complete attention before he begins talking to me.

**Be grateful.** There are endless reasons to celebrate life. Life is good, even if circumstances appear otherwise. Let us be grateful for love and abundance. Let us be grateful for being alive at a time like this when we can discard old and useless belief systems, and make life-giving choices. I myself am thankful for new ideas, old wisdom, and the opportunities to use them to support my children and other people. I am thankful for the

love and commitment of the people behind this initiative; in their hearts and hands, my child Dandan is nurtured safely. Each night, as we switch off the light for a restful sleep, he brings us both to a state of gratitude with the question, "What's the best thing that happened to you today, Ma?"

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Ultimately, these same qualities – **openness, awareness, trust, gratitude** - will rub off on every member of our household, and we shall have made a joyful difference in our community. ■

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Thank you to all our friends from around the world who have donated time, effort and money to the school. We are truly grateful.*

*Come to the launch of the ILOILO ORGANIC MARKET at the garden of the Mango Tree Restaurant in Mandurriao. This is partially a fundraising Project for Gamot Cogon School.*

### FINANCES

*We would like to remind everyone to please keep your school fee payments up to date. We look forward to your continuing cooperation to help in running the school!*

## Dates to Remember.

July 22	Last Day of Term; Early dismissal
July 23-27	Project Break, no classes
July 28	Resumption of Classes
Aug 28	Kamustahan



Daniel, Ms. Dot's son now in Class 4

To Parents interested in contributing an article for Parents' Corner, joining the Study Group or a Parent Committee, please contact Tess Cañonero or Anna Slater

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