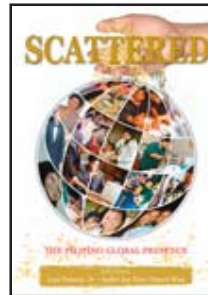


The Scattered Connecting to Gather

Filipino Christians around the globe are active in evangelism and are purposely reaching out to other “scattered” nationalities as well as to their hosts. This can be seen in the modern industrialized Taiwan where thousands of Filipino and other international workers cross paths and where many of them are introduced to Jesus Christ.

In *Scattered: The Filipino Global Presence* (2004), FIN News interviews Dr. Ronald Adhikari, a worker who has been ministering in Taiwan. He is not a Filipino, but he is playing a significant role in motivating and mobilizing Filipino believers for global missions. In the following, Dr. Adhikari gives us some examples of how Filipinos are reaching their hosts and other people who have been “scattered.”



- There are three Chinese ladies who are studying conversational English in Lotung, Ilan County; they were recommended to visit the Filipino service to practice their English among the Filipinos. They attended the meetings faithfully and they also began to like the fellowship and the lively worship. Someone gave witness to them and they became Christians and were baptized. They are now serving both in the Chinese host church and also among the Filipinos.
- Two Thai lady workers were befriended by Filipino ladies in Erhlin, Changhua County. They attended the services and enjoyed the Filipino meetings. They were beginning to understand the gospel when they had to leave Taiwan.
- In Taichung City, at the Community Church English service, a Chinese gentleman and two Indonesians joined the Filipino fellowship. One Indonesian accepted the Lord and after a year, the Chinese gentleman was baptized. The Filipino fellowship was the main instrument leading to their conversion.

Filipino followers of Jesus Christ are making connections in Taiwan and beyond. Please continue to pray that “scattered” Filipino Christians would continue to connect with their hosts and with other diaspora people so that many more people would be gathered to worship Jesus Christ.



“That’s plain enough, isn’t it? You’re no longer wandering exiles. This kingdom of faith is now your home country. You’re no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. God is building a home. He’s using us all -- irrespective of how we got here--in what he is building.” – From Paul, to the Ephesians (Ephesians 2:19; the Message translation).

More reads:

The People Next Door: A Call to Seize the Opportunities

Lausanne Congress for World Evangelization Occasional Paper 55 – Issue Group on Diasporas and International Students

Catch the section on Filipinos from “God’s Secret Weapon – The Filipino Diaspora.” These papers may be ordered online at www.WCLBooks.com.

Interview with Dr. T.V. Thomas

Dr. Thomas is Director of the Centre for Evangelism & World Mission. His deep commitment to world missions has led him to speak at large missions events such as Urbana Student Missions Convention, Keswick Conventions, and MissionFests. T.V. Thomas was born in Malacca, Malaysia. He is a long-time FIN friend and partner, and currently serves on the FIN Global Committee. Dr. Thomas is a representative of the South Asian diaspora, and his commitment to FIN's mission gives evidence of the fruitful results of diaspora partnerships for the Great Commission.

Dr. Thomas, it seems that many people are introduced to Jesus Christ as they are literally “journeying”, far away from home. From a missiologist's standpoint — what is it about being “scattered” that makes people seek out others and connect, often with followers of Jesus Christ?

It is true that most people came to Christ in the book of Acts while they were far away from home. Being away from home opens people to consider new things. It leaves them open to reexamine their presuppositions of their world view, increases curiosity, and makes them willing to risk investigating. Also, loneliness can be used of God to meet other people.

As a representative of another diaspora group (South Asian), how have you seen Filipinos unique in their ability to connect across cultures?

Filipinos adjust well. They are readily and well accepted. They are adaptable to different situations and are willing to take jobs below their “status” and their training. This adaptability opens up more opportunities to meet others and it increases their ability to travel to more regions. Evidently, the blend of cultures in Filipino history has produced a unique ethnic group.

You have been actively involved with FIN since its birth almost 10 years ago. What are some ways that FIN has effectively been a catalyst in motivating and mobilising diaspora groups for the Great Commission?

FIN has been able to get theologians, theoreticians, missiologists, church leaders, ministry agency administrators, leaders from other diasporas, and the diaspora churches and fellowships to work together and to enter into the dialogue of ‘how to enhance and expedite the FIN agenda’ that is to be a “catalytic movement of Christians committed to motivate and mobilize Filipinos globally to partner for worldwide missions.” Significantly, FIN has been able to network with the evangelical Filipino churches in the homeland (e.g. Philippine Congress of Evangelical Churches), inviting them to embrace FIN's vision, resulting in the ‘harmonizing’ of a vision for the Filipino Church and global missions. Furthermore, FIN has been quite effective at spreading its network in several parts of the world (North America, Middle East, Far East, Europe, and Latin America). It has established a network that includes a regular newsletter that keeps people informed and “Prayer Advance” gatherings of regional missions enthusiasts and Christian workers. It is significant that FIN has had a point person to travel and to network and connect with more churches, organisations, agencies, and individuals; and finally, and with great importance in the development of FIN, is FIN's publication of the book, “SCATTERED: THE FILIPINO GLOBAL PRESENCE” in 2004. This book tells FIN's story and encourages other diasporas to mobilise their own constituencies. Having listed all these, it is important to say that FIN's catalytic role in influencing other diaspora groups for world missions is a result of a combination of all these things. Having just one part would have hindered FIN's effectivity in motivating and mobilising the Christian diaspora groups. (continued in next column)

In the future, what are some practical ways that diaspora people or expatriate Christians can partner with each other for missions?

Here are four ways that diaspora Christians can partner with each other for missions:

- training opportunities need to be shared;
- building strategies in a region or a country need collaboration and communication;
- resource distribution could be more coordinated;
- theological education for lay leaders needs to have joint partnership; so for example, rather than having just a Filipino seminary partnership, Filipino, Chinese, and South Asian seminaries can work together for cross-cultural theological education.

Rather than each group doing it all on their own, the key is to becoming an “international multi-ethnic” collaboration for missions and missions mobilisation.



Filipino International Network

FIN's Mission Statement: The Filipino International Network (FIN) is a catalytic movement of Christians committed to motivate and mobilize Filipinos globally to partner for worldwide mission.

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