

Medina, Jeremias Cruz (1917–2011)

FAITH S. BAYONA

Faith S. Bayona serves the Central Luzon Conference as an urban church planter in Parañaque City, Philippines. He holds a Master of Arts in Religion degree from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in Silang, Cavite, Philippines. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theology degree from Adventist University of the Philippines.

Jeremias Cruz Medina was an evangelist, church planter, and church administrator in the Philippines.

Early Life

Jeremias Cruz Medina was born July 2, 1917, in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. He was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist family by his father, Nicolas Medina, who was a farmer, and mother, Romana Cruz, a housewife. He was baptized on March 15, 1934, in Artacho, Sison, Pangasinan, Philippines, by Elder E. Lugenbea!¹

Education and Marriage

Medina attended Cuyapo Elementary School and Northern Luzon Academy to complete his basic education. Then he proceeded to Philippine Union College and earned a bachelor of theology degree, with a minor in history, on April 19, 1949.²

On May 22, 1949, Medina married Elisa Roxas, who was from Taal, Bocawe, Bulacan, Philippines. She was a teacher by profession. Their union was blessed with five children: Lemuel, Merosalie, Elizabeth, Misael, and Merely.³

Ministry

Medina's passion for sharing the gospel was very evident throughout his life of service. He joined the literature ministry as a colporteur in the Northern Luzon Mission from 1935 to 1939.⁴ After spending several years in literature evangelism, Medina realized that the Lord was calling him to be a pastor. In 1939 he pursued a degree in theology at Philippine Union College. He supported himself by working in the college's poultry farm. Medina was not able to finish his bachelor's degree at that time, and he worked as an evangelist at the South-Central Luzon Mission (SCLM) from 1941 to 1947.⁵ However, the call to the ministry was still in Medina's heart, and so he went back to Philippine Union College to finish his degree in 1949.⁶

In the same year, the Central Luzon Mission hired him as an assistant publishing secretary from June 1, 1949, to November 1, 1949.⁷ After six months, Medina was appointed publishing secretary for the Northern Luzon

Mission (NLM), where he served from November 1949 to May 1952.⁸ While serving in this capacity, he was ordained to the ministry in 1951.⁹ In 1952 he assumed leadership of the Sabbath School (SS) and home missionary (HM) departments. He supported the work of the lay workers while they were conducting thousands of Bible studies and cottage meetings that brought many souls to the Savior.¹⁰

Aside from his services as the secretary of the Sabbath School and home missionary departments that lasted until December 31, 1963, his ministry was extended to secretary of the publishing department from March 1956 to March 1957.¹¹ During 11 years of Sabbath School leadership, he participated in ingathering and Sabbath School association rallies in northeast Luzon districts.¹² This activity strengthened the church officers and Sabbath School delegates.

In 1964 Medina was elected president of the Mountain Province Mission.¹³ His passion for souls did not wane as he personally participated as the speaker in evangelistic meetings. The meetings recorded an attendance of 700 people, where 33 souls accepted Jesus through baptism.¹⁴ For the first six months of his leadership as the mission president, the mission reached 117 percent of its baptismal goal. From a goal of 120, there were 141 precious souls baptized.¹⁵

In 1966 Medina was elected president of the NLM. His incessant burden for souls led to his belief that there was a pressing need for more evangelistic efforts to be conducted. The lack of finances, however, was a hindrance. Medina accepted this challenge and, together with the mission committee, formulated the “Centavo-A-Meal” plan, which was initiated on January 1, 1967.¹⁶ This is a system of giving where individual members of every family give their one-centavo thank offering every meal, putting it into a nipa hut-shaped box. The funds were used for evangelism, resulting in 286 baptisms.¹⁷ During his leadership, there was evident progress in the productivity of the mission, especially in the areas of publishing, education, evangelism, and finances.¹⁸ In December 1973, Medina left NLM to answer the call to be president of the South-Central Luzon Mission (SCLM).¹⁹

While serving SCLM as president, Medina engaged in various evangelistic activities. He traveled to Manamlay, Occidental Mindoro, for an evangelistic crusade.²⁰ The reaping of souls for Christ yielded 51 souls for baptism. This is the highest number for a single event that Medina baptized in his 32 years of preaching.²¹

He was also engrossed with the establishment of Lipa Adventist Academy (LAA) in Lipa City, Batangas—the first academy under the supervision of SCLM.²² His passion for Adventist education greatly influenced his decisions in making the dream academy come true. His health degenerated as he worked on accomplishing the various aspects of the mission’s vision. However, his efforts were not in vain. LAA started offering Adventist education to young people in June 1975.²³ Due to his physical ailments, he left SCLM on December 31, 1975,²⁴ for treatment and recovery. He applied for temporary sustentation, but he continued to fulfill his ordained ministry in any capacity that he could while residing in Pangasinan.²⁵

Later Life

After 32 years, Medina retired from denominational employment. When his church service under the North Philippine Union Mission culminated in 1987, he traveled to Hawaii and pastored the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Maui. He stayed in Kahului until his death on April 3, 2011.²⁶

Medina made significant contributions to the development of the gospel work wherever God led him. He was a valiant evangelist and church planter. He was a hands-on leader to various evangelistic crusades in his territory. Moreover, the vision to establish an academy in SCLM was also realized during his time. His life is a mirror of deep commitment and dedication to the gospel work.

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