

## **Bishop's Sabbatical Blog**

Follow Bishop Bob on his sabbatical travels! The following entries are from Bishop Bob's Facebook and Twitter posts that began on December 30, 2012, the beginning of his sabbatical, though to March 8, 2013.

**March 8, 2013**

Safely home!

**March 7, 2013**

Last day in Taiwan; we visited St. John's University with a beautiful chapel/parish church (see the stained glass / mirrored ceiling above the altar), and the National Palace Museum. Tomorrow early -- very early -- we're off to the airport for Tokyo and then for home. We begin our journey at 6:30 am on Friday and arrive home at 6:30 am on Friday. Trans-Pacific travel is so much fun.





**March 6, 2013**

We visited Trinity Church and St. Stephen's Mission, Keelung, today. Though the harbor community is struggling economically, the congregations are reaching out to children from distressed families.



We were greeted with smiles and song. It was a blessing to see vibrant ministry.



**March 5, 2013**

It was a full day. Good friends and good food. We had time to visit a large Buddhist temple, and a massive Taoist temple with shrines to the gods of traditional folk religion and one to Confucius. It has been a fine day. We're now back in Taipei until we return home on Friday. Tonight included a trip to Taipei 101, currently the 2nd tallest building in the world. We have been well cared for by the Diocese of Taiwan.





**March 4, 2013**

Fun day visiting a local attraction celebrating the indigenous people of Taiwan (linguistically related to the indigenous peoples of the Philippines and Polynesia). This reminded me of great movement of people through the years and the domination of the recounting of history by the colonial cultures through the centuries. It was a worthwhile day! (At Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan)



**March 2, 2013**

With Bishop David Lai and the clergy of the Diocese of Taiwan



**March 1, 2013**

Today at the Convention of the Diocese of Taiwan, I was given a very special gift. The Chancellor of the Diocese gave me a Chinese name using the prime consonants of my last name and his sense of my character. He determined that "Fuh" (to help) "Jyh" (determined) "Ping" (peace, balance) fit me. He said my name best be understood to mean "A person determined to bring peace and balance to things." Bishop David had a chop or name stamp created for me with my Chinese name (see the attached photo for the imprint of my Chinese name). Somehow "Robert LeRoy Keali'ikoaokeakua Fuh Jyh Ping Fitzpatrick" is a mouthful. I am honored to have been given both a Hawaiian name and a Chinese name. My Ohana -- my family -- keeps expanding--



**February 28, 2013**

After trips to visit wonderful congregations in the area, Bea and I have settled

into the hotel for tomorrow's Convention of the Diocese of Taiwan. We have been put up in an amazing suite thanks to Bishop David and this most gracious Diocese. (At the Grand Hotel Kaohsiung)



The wonderful people of St. Paul's Kaohsiung, and All Saints' Church, Gangshun.



**February 27, 2013**

I was reminded yesterday of the close link between the Dioceses of Taiwan and Hawai'i. First, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, I looked up to see a building dedicated to Bishop Lani Hanchett and then in the evening at the Cathedral, I find a building named for Bishop Harry Kennedy (Bishop Kennedy is considered the first Bishop of this Diocese). Taiwan is part of our Ohana.



**February 26, 2013**

Safely in Taiwan under the care of Bishop David Lai. (Drinking tea.)



**February 24, 2013**

Thanks to the gracious invitation of the Most Rev. Edward P. Malecdan, Prime Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, I preached at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John, Quezon City, this morning; and yesterday, we joined a medical mission of the Philippine Independent Church in Cavite (Bea took vitals and referred patients and I held the heads of patients as the dentist pulled teeth - not kidding). Our time in the Philippines concludes tomorrow as we fly to Taiwan in the morning.

**February 21, 2013**

These past few days have been full, but it's Friday and pouring rain in Manila. I have some time to catch up. Our time in Baguio included their Diocesan Convention (the Episcopal Diocese of North Central Philippines) and visiting different regions of the Diocese. While in the Province of La Union, we were able to visit a joint IFI/PEC church and school.



We also met a remarkable young priest (Padi Yvette Gemal -- standing in the photo with a "retired" priest who still serves full-time in a church without pay because of the shortage of priests) with a five point mission area. Her first Sunday service is at 7 AM and she returns home at 9 PM -- by motorcycle when she can borrow one having been with each congregation. Her vicarage is in the basement of one of the churches, and the basement space is also the sacristy and Sunday School. The churches are growing and she is a respected community leader. All this while her husband is away stationed in Mindanao serving as an army chaplain.





## February 18, 2013

Bea and I were driven into the mountains of Benguet Province (into the highest places in the Philippines).

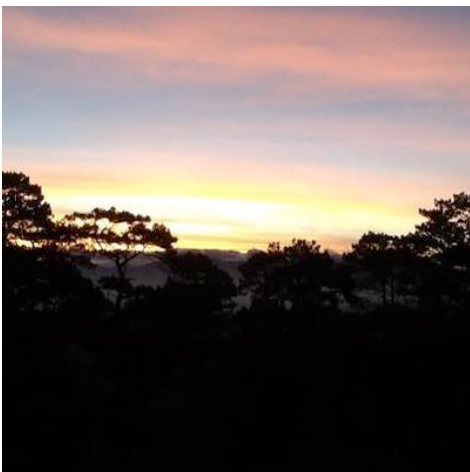


The roads were treacherous, but the gracious people of Christ the King Church (Sayangan, Atok) and Rogation Church (Madaymen, Kibungan) with its Preaching Station, Stephen's Church, welcomed us with flowers, coffee and hot cakes.



## February 17, 2013

Sunrise from our room in Baguio at The Forest Lodge, Camp John Hay, Baguio City.



## February 14, 2013

We have arrived at Aglipay Central Theological Seminary and have been warmly greeted even though the hour is late.



## February 13, 2013

Bea and I visited Batac today. We were warmly welcomed by the congregation. The church is the resting place of the Most Rev. Gregorio Labayan Aglipay (May 8, 1860 - September 1, 1940), the First Obispo Maximo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. In the Episcopal Church calendar, he is commemorated on September 5.



"Eternal God, you called Gregorio Aglipay to witness to your truth in the renewal of your Church in the Philippines: Help us, like him, to be guided by your Holy Spirit, that people everywhere may hear the saving words of our Savior, so that all may believe and find eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."

For his biography, go [HERE](#).

**February 12, 2013**

Today we visited communities along the northwest coast of Luzon, north of Laoag all the way past Pagudpud. At the Parish in Bacarra, we saw the Church where Canon Albano served as an acolyte, and the well wherein he and the other acolytes used to throw rocks.



While in Pagudpud, we stopped for a picnic on the beach -- at Villa del Mar. Bea was able to change into beachwear. I stayed in the shade to talk story with local clergy. Lunch was wonderful (the owner is a member of the local IFI Church).



**February 11, 2013**

We are now staying in a Marcos era resort. It is nearly empty and the photos on the walls of the lobby are from 20 years ago. This photo looks out from our lanai. (Fort Ilocandia Resort and Hotel)



**February 10**

The statue of the Patron Saint of the Cathedral and the City, ready for procession. It is the feast day of William the Hermit.





**February 9, 2013**

We have arrived safely in Laoag. We were even greeted by drum corp from a local school. We feel at home already. Blue skies and familiar faces. I will be preaching tomorrow at the Cathedral in Laoag City.



**February 8, 2013**

Our Obispo Maximo, The Most. Rev. Ephraim Fajutagana (Left) together with Bishop Robert Fitzpatrick of Hawaii (Center), and ECP Presiding Bishop, The Most Rev. Bishop Ed Malecdan during the Asia-America Theological Exchange Forum 2013, (February 3 - 6, 2013)



### **February 7, 2013**

Bea and I just finished dinner at the home of the Most Rev. Ephraim Fajutagana of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente with his family, and Bishop Bart Espartero and his family. We were joined by the former and the current chief chaplains of the Philippine Armed Forces, Fathers Acacio and Cimat.

Lake Taal from Talisay, south of Manila.



### **February 3, 2013**

With Bea as we begin our time in the Philippines. The Second Asia-America Theological Exchange Forum begins tomorrow. Others known to Hawaii who will be with us include Fred Vergara, Peter Ng, and Jenney Te Paa.

**January 31, 2013**

Blessed to have another beautiful day at Camp Mokule'ia! A wonderful corner of Oahu!



**January 27, 2013**

The retirement announcement of Senator Harkin reminds of past Midwestern members of The Senate who have informed my political perspective: Paul Simon (Illinois), Birch Bayh (Indiana), Gaylord Nelson (Wisconsin), and Tom Eagleton (Iowa), for example. Senator Harkin will be missed.

**January 26, 2013**

End the NRA's dangerous idolatry of guns. Click [HERE](#).

**January 22, 2013**

A true thrill and honor to watch Hawaii's island son, President Obama, take the oath of office today. Now let's get to work!

**January 21, 2013**

"The best way to honor his memory is to continue the struggle for human dignity, worker's rights, racial equality, peace, and social justice." ([Peter Drier on Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. - Huffington Post](#))

**January 19, 2013**

Thoughts on history, family and guns...As part of my fun sabbatical reading, I have been enjoying Robert Morgan's *Boone: A Biography* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2007). As the title suggests, it is the life of the frontiersman with a complex character and covered with myth.

While reading, I was reminded that my family's (Fitzpatrick) journey in North America followed that of the Boones and the family of Abraham Lincoln. The first Fitzpatrick to make it to North America was William Fitzpatrick (born c. 1680 in Ulster, Ireland, and d. August 9, 1764 in Albemarle County, Virginia). He married Sarah Jane Breckenridge in about 1720 in Ulster, Ireland. The couple first settled in Pennsylvania (1728) with other Scotch-Irish Presbyterians and dissenters (the Boones were English Quakers). Soon (1729) they moved to Augusta County, Virginia with Alexander Breckenridge (Sarah's brother and whose great grandson would be Vice President and a Confederate General). Like the Boones and the Lincolns, the descendents of these Fitzpatricks moved through Virginia, Kentucky, southern Indiana and Illinois, and Missouri (and then some further west to Colorado).

Reading the biography and reflecting on history, my family home growing up had an old shotgun in the closet used in times past for hunting. There were certainly no assault rifles or even handguns. The shotgun was just there. There were hunters in the family, but no need for automatic weapons to bring down ducks or deer. Hunting was for sport and guns were tools. Certainly, the farmers in the family used guns for other animal predators.

I do not remember talk of the need for guns to protect "us" from the government. I also have no childhood memories of the need or desire for guns for protection from our neighbors. Now, I did have parents who were solidly New Deal, working class Democrats. Something shifted in our nation beginning in about 1980, and many seem to have become increasingly angry and fearful. While apocalyptic prognostications have been a staple of American life, we now have the means for destruction readily and personally at hand. The gun for Boone and my ancestors was a tool for survival – to gather food, the means for get cash (through pelts and hides) and for immediate protection. This is not the frontier of the 18th or 19th century.

I don't hunt and have no need (and never have had) for a gun in my home. It just is not allowed. I do not fear the government. We have a well-regulated militia – the Army and local police – and there is no need for me to keep a gun for that purpose. While gun use is a part of my history and family identity, it seems to me anachronistic and something I would hope could be reserved for hunters and museums. I do not understand the need or desire for private ownership of



assault rifles or even handguns. The threat to our wellbeing is the fear and the anger that seems to have infected much of our body politic that provokes the desire for such destructive weapons.

### **January 11, 2013**

I'm reading the *Common English Bible* for my study during sabbatical. I recommend it. I think this translation will be a good addition for congregational study and worship. [Common English Bible](#)

### **January 10, 2013**

Bea and I spent a wonderful time today at the Honolulu Museum of Art. Well laid-out galleries and interesting special exhibits. [Honolulu Museum of Art](#)

### **January 7, 2013**

It's good to have time to catch up on reading books I've been saving. I just finished "Marx's *Das Kapital: A Biography*" by Francis Wheen (2006, Grove Press) in the *Books That Changed the World Series*. It offers a wonderful (and short at 120 pages or so) walk through the literary and historic roots of Marx's Victorian masterpiece. I may be ready to re-read volume one after a couple (ok over three) decades on my shelf with an older and more critical eye. After the past few years, it might still offer some insights. At least now I'll get the quotes and literary references. For an extract from *Marx's Das Kapital: A Biography*, click [HERE](#).

### **December 30, 2013**

And so my sabbatical begins...