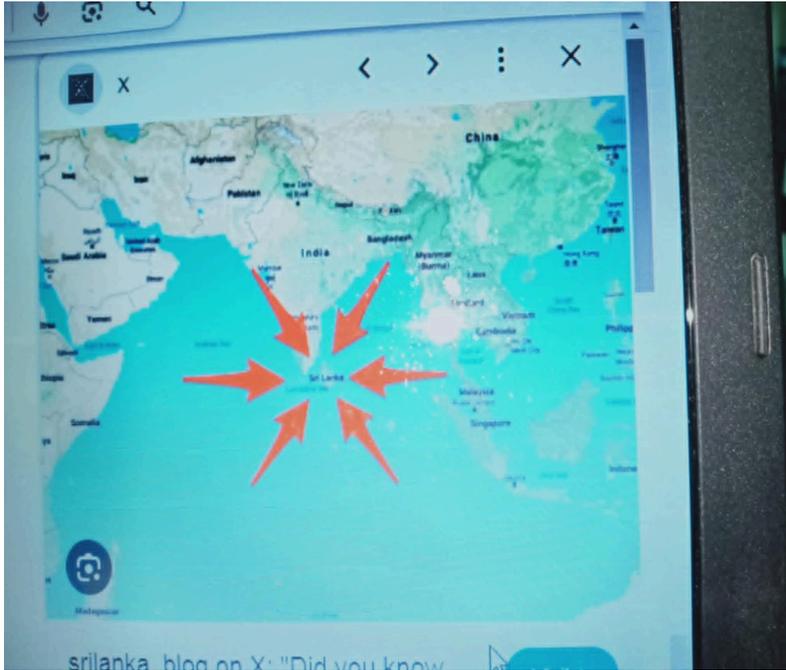


## My Faith Journey With GOD During Our Mission Trip to

### Sri Lanka



Map showing the location of Sri Lanka.....inside the red arrows

Sri Lanka is located at GPS coordinates of  $7.8731^{\circ}\text{N}$  and  $80.7718^{\circ}\text{E}$ . The country is positioned above the equator, therefore in the Northern Hemisphere. It is located between latitudes  $5^{\circ}55'$  and  $9^{\circ}51'\text{N}$  and longitudes  $79^{\circ}41'$  and  $81^{\circ}53'\text{E}$ . It is an island country situated in the Indian Ocean, off the southern coast of the Indian subcontinent in South Asia.

It has an area of  $65,610 \text{ Km}^2$ . The population is 21.2 million as of 2024 according to World Bank. It has official languages: Sinhala and Tamil. Its currency is Sri Lankan Rupee in which one USD is equivalent to 300 Rupees.

Buddhism is the predominant religion in Sri Lanka with approximately 70.2 % of the population identifying as Buddhist. While Buddhism is the main religion, Sri Lanka also has significant populations of Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. In Sri Lanka Christians make up approximately 7.4 % of the population. This includes both Roman Catholics and other denominations like Protestant and Evangelicals. The 2012 census indicated that roughly 6.2 % of the population identifies as Roman Catholics, while 1.4 % belongs to other Christian denominations, according to the World Dictionary of Minorities and Indigenous people.

There's a big Buddhist School and Muslim School in Sri Lanka especially in Colombo which is the Capital. Grade school and secondary school kids are really bound to their religion....this is the reason why it's hard to reach out Sri Lanka for CHRIST.....but nothing is impossible with GOD. Everything is possible with GOD! Christians there....most of them came from the Buddhist background now they are Christians and became Missionaries. Praise GOD! Glory to GOD in the highest.

It's a great blessing and a great joy that GOD brought Cru Philippines CrossRoads Team to conduct a Teachers' Training there at its capital which is Colombo. CrossRoads is a character-based program and strategy to win, build, and send educators while addressing youth issues like: teenage pregnancy, mental health, HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted infections (STI's) and other risky behaviors. We (CrossRoads) envision to Teach, Train, Empower Academics (or educators) to Change Hearts – so they can be Great Commission Educators, says Rey Ibasco, director, CrossRoads Philippines. Addressing the felt needs of educators, CrossRoads initially conducts a three-day Professional Training where they present the "Life at the CrossRoads (LATC) Curriculum and the Gospel.



Cru Philippines CrossRoads Team at the Manila International Airport waiting for our flight to Kuala Lumpur

## Our Journey to Sri Lanka

We flew from Manila to Kuala Lumpur for four hours, then waited for another four hours to have a connecting flight from Kuala Lumpur to Colombo, which is the capital of Sri Lanka for another four hours.

There's joy and excitement in my heart for I know that for me this is a dream come true to step and see the beauty of GOD's creation in Sri Lanka. Praise GOD! Glory To GOD in the highest!

When I was at the Philippine Immigration counter, the officer asked me what am I going to do there....I said I'll go there in Sri Lanka as a tourist....it's hard to reveal that I'm a Missionary entering a non-Christian country. He was surprised....he said there's no beautiful places in Sri Lanka. Then his next question was what is your job in the Philippines....I said I'm a Cru teacher coz as a Missionary we teach.....then he asked for my credentials....it just happened that our Cru ID has not been processed yet so I showed my PCCC ID still he's not satisfied with my answer.

Silently, I told GOD "Dearest LORD, I firmly believe with all my heart that you will bring me to Sri Lanka". Then finally I said, I'll go to Sri Lanka to conduct a Teachers' Training. Then he said show me your schedule. When I opened my phone to check our Training Schedule...my phone hanged.... I refused to worry but deep inside there was fear in my heart ....fear of what will happen if I can't open my phone to check our schedule....but when I turned around, I saw my team mate Dr, Paolo, he is a Medical Doctor 4th year resident of Practice-based Family and Community Medicine was there in the area waiting for me...What a joy! What a relief! He didn't proceed yet to his counter....he let others went ahead of him.....then I approached him and asked for his help to check my phone.....he connected my phone to his mobile internet and has a screen shot of our Training schedule. The Immigration officer was satisfied to see our training schedule with my name written there as one of the facilitators. Praise GOD! Glory to GOD in the highest!

GOD met me at a moment of fear and confusion! Though the Immigration officer saw my visa for Sri Lanka still he made it difficult for me to proceed. With this experience, I've realized that the Philippine Immigration is just concerned for the safety of every Filipino citizen who will go out from our country. Indeed, JESUS Was There All The Time! Praise GOD! Glory to GOD in the highest!



With me is Dr. Paolo

## What A Victory!

Finally, we landed safely in Colombo the capital of Sri Lanka.

Praise GOD!

Glory to GOD in the highest!



## Touching Down Sri Lanka

Cru Philippines CrossRoads Team finally, safely landed in Colombo the capital of Sri Lanka

From left to right:

Rey, Terry, Dimple, Janet and Dr. Paolo is the one taking the picture.



The Training Team. From left to right:  
 Dr. Paolo, Janet, Dimple, Chandri and Suman a couple both are Lead Trainers from Cru CrossRoads Sri Lanka, then another couple Rey and Terry, the CrossRoads director of Cru Philippines.

## Our Housing

July 25 at dawn we arrived in Colombo.

It's a great blessing to have Suman and Chandri as our host in Sri Lanka.

We are so blessed by their hospitality, humility, their labor of love, their hard work in preparing everything for our coming.

It's not easy looking for housing with a cheaper rate. Hotels in Sri Lanka are very expensive....so Suman and Chandri booked us at the Salvation Army National Headquarters Guest House

Praise GOD we had a place to stay at a cheaper rate. We are so happy about it. Praise GOD! Glory to GOD in the highest!

## The Teachers' Training

July 26 was the first Day of our Teachers' Training. There were 27 who joined the training in which 14 are full-time staff of Cru Sri Lanka.

In this Teachers' Training, we discussed with the delegates about the Life At The CrossRoads Curriculum (LATC). We tackled with them the problems of our Society today which has a great impact on the life of the youth: Drugs, violence, poverty, alcoholism, HIV/AIDS, Teen-age pregnancy, and STI's. Risk Behaviors led to consequences for our Youth. The major Risk Behaviors are: Alcohol Use (gateway behavior), Smoking (gateway behavior), Drug Abuse, Early Sexual Activity and Violence. Here are the consequences: Alcohol and Drug Addiction, Injury / Pre-Mature Death, Violence and Crime, Adolescent Pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Education Failure, Economic Failure, and Unfulfilled Dreams.

### How Can We Protect our Youth? Is There Hope ?

HIV/AIDS is largely a behavioral epidemic – we can halt its progression by teaching our young people to make wise decisions.. HIV/AIDS and other STI's for the most part can be prevented by making healthy behavioral Choices.

### Dimensions of a Person:

Health is more than the absence of disease. "Wellness" involves health in all dimensions. Our dimensions are interrelated. Decisions in one dimension can positively or negatively influence the other areas.



*The Delegates*

**Teachers'  
Training in Sri  
Lanka**

### **CrossRoads Foundational Beliefs:**

The best way to solve the problems of STI's and adolescent pregnancy is to choose abstinence before marriage and fidelity within marriage; Abstinence and fidelity are behavioral choices; Healthy behavioral choices are outcomes of one's values and character;

*The best way to influence values and character is through a relationship with Jesus CHRIST.*

### **Five dimensions of a person's life**

What affects us in one area of life, affects all the other dimensions to one extent or another. We function as a whole, not as a sum of our individual parts. Something needs to make the pieces work together – a center.



**The Delegates Doing their Workshop**  
**Interactive Type of Learning**

## *JESUS as the Role Model for Character.*

People from many nations and different religious backgrounds agree that the historical Jesus is an exemplary role model for character. CrossRoads training and curriculum initiates discussion on character qualities found in the life of

# JESUS



**The Delegates Doing their Workshop**  
**Interactive Type of Learning**

### **Life at the Crossroads**

Judeo-Christian Worldview

5 units

1. Relationships
2. Character
3. Sex in Perspective
4. Life Skills
5. Navigating Your Future



Janet facilitating the topic on “Journal Reflection”

### **Health Perspective of the Curriculum**

CrossRoads believes that the spiritual dimension is at the core of every person – a spiritual center. Only the spiritual center is adequate to integrate all the dimensions of life. CrossRoads believes that this spiritual center is best filled by a relationship with

*Jesus Christ.*



**Cru Sri Lanka National Headquarters**

**The Cru Philippines CrossRoads Team with the Cru Sri Lanka Leaders**

### **Cru Philippines and Cru Sri Lanka**

After the Teachers' Training, the Cru Sri Lanka Leaders invited the Cru Philippines CrossRoads Team to visit the Cru Sri Lanka National Headquarters.

Praise GOD for our Wonderful time together as

Cru Family!

*Praise GOD!*

*Glory To GOD in the highest!*



**Rest and Recreation**

**Team Fun Time**

### **What a Refreshing Time!**

After our three days succeeding Teachers' Training, after our hard work of the preparation and facilitating the training, we are so grateful and thankful to GOD for such a refreshing time, time to chat with our team mates, time of enjoying our walk exploring some places of Sri Lanka, enjoying our dinner time, enjoying our trip from one place to another.

This refreshing Time pays off all our hard work for the Teachers' Training!

*Praise GOD!*

*Glory to GOD in the highest!*



**Team Fun Time**

**Team Fellowship Time**

### **The Elephant Feeding /The Elephant Walk / The Elephant Bath**

It took six hours for us to travel from Colombo to reach this place just to watch the Elephants' way of life! In this photo behind us we can find the elephants feeding themselves. It's so amazing how they can chew and swallow big portions of plant parts. The elephant manure are also big. This is what we discovered in Sri Lanka.....they can make money out of the elephant manure. In their manure we can see the shredded part of the plants that they ate. Out of their manure they can process it and the end product is that they were able to produce paper, they were able to come up with notebooks of different beautiful designs. What an amazing creation of GOD!

As mammals, am really wondering how the mother elephant feed her young. As these huge number of elephants marching down the street going to the river to take their bath, I had a closed observation....am so amazed that I found out that the female elephant has two breasts one on the left and one on the right.....now I discovered how the mother elephant feed her young. Praise GOD for such a discovery!

*GOD's Creation is so Amazing, so Wonderful, So Beautiful!!*



### Enjoying the Beach

### Saying Goodbye to Sri Lanka

The hardest thing to do is to say goodbye! As we said goodbye to the delegates...It's a great joy to hear from them that they were so blessed by the Teachers' Training and that they are so excited to implement the principles that they learned from the training.

Our host Suman and Chandri gave us a tour and brought us to the airport before we said goodbye! We don't know when will we see each other again.....Praise GOD for the technology that we can continually communicate and update each other. Praise GOD! Glory to GOD in the highest!

*To GOD be all the Glory!*