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EDITORIAL



Marcellus Francis L. Ramirez, MD

"The Cathedral"

Once upon a time, in a town no so far away, the town leader was walking along the park. And he came upon a construction site and saw three people working.

He asked the first, "what are you doing?"

"I am laying bricks", the man replied. And indeed, he was laying bricks, one on top of each other.

The town leader asked the second worker, "what are you doing?"

To which he replied, "I am building a wall." And it appeared to be so. He was laying bricks on top of each other, layer by layer, and slowly building what appeared to be a wall.

The town leader then approached the third man, "what are you doing?"

The man stood, smiling, looked up to the sky, and said, "I am building a cathedral."

The town leader then took a longer second look. There was no cathedral in sight. The sky and the skyline were empty except for a pile of bricks and some walls.

But beyond the walls, the third man had a vision of what the bricks would later build - a beautiful cathedral.

This is an old classic story about vision and purpose – the parable of the bricklayers – rewritten from the accounts of Christopher Wren who rebuilt St Paul's Cathedral, and retold multiple times and it is one of my favorite motivational stories which I came across while browsing the net [1].

The cathedral, of course, is a metaphor.

Let's go back to the meaning of the word, and what it represents- a very large building for Christian worship, usually made of grand, imposing, majestic and beautiful structures. These are also the structures that took a very long time to build, often taking hundreds of years of labor, by workers who oftentimes knew they would never finish the building. We marvel with awe the great and beautiful cathedrals in Europe, in fact, some of them took hundreds of years to finish. A number still haven't been completed fully. But they are sights to behold. These structures epitomize human dedication and efforts to an ideal that is greater than the individual.

In this parable, cathedral metaphorically represents an "over-arching vision".

And vision, is the WHY - or the answer to why we exist as cardiologists and as members of the Philippine Heart Association today. This is what defines our organization, and this is what we are and what we should continue to be - a leader in cardiovascular care, education and research in the Asia Pacific. But ultimately, it is all about decreasing the burden of cardiovascular diseases in the country.

The Philippine Heart Association turns platinum (70 years) this year, while the Philippine Journal of Cardiology also turns gold (50 years). In the last five decades of the Journal, a total of 765 original articles have been published, including 546 original research articles, 114 case reports and case series, and 4 clinical guidelines and consensus statements. Truly our founding leaders had the mindset of the third worker and saw a magnificent basilica when they set out to organize the premiere society of cardiology way back in 1952, and launched the official scientific publication in 1971. The lessons and wisdom of our past and rich history that spans seven decades enlightens us. The passion, hopefulness and determination of the present strengthen us. And the enthusiasm and excitement for a bright future drives us to do more.

As we continue to publish articles that will create a significant impact towards public health policies, and broadcast the scientific works of our colleagues, all efforts are underway for PJC to be included in research indices in the Asia Pacific and hopefully, internationally. From a purely print journal, we have successfully transitioned to hybrid print and online issues in the last two years. Equal commendations and gratitude go to the authors and the members of our peer review committee.

St. Paul's Cathedral and other great structures such as the Cathedral of Notre Dame and St. Peter's Basilica took centuries to be built and rebuilt. For the Journal, the cathedral remains unfinished. Every issue published, every scientific article printed, every peer review accomplished are bricks being piled one on top of the other, slowly forming a majestic structure that we envisioned it to be. And with the unwavering support from the Board of the PHA, the tireless dedication of our editorial team, and the unparalleled work set by our previous editors-in-chief, the right bricks have been laid.

As healthcare professionals under Team PHA, we are all working on the same wall and the same pile of bricks. But beyond the brick laying, let us have the vision of the third worker - to see the cathedral beyond the bricks, to see the future beyond the wall, to be cathedral builders, not merely brick layers.

Reference:

[1] Baker J. The story of the three bricklayers - a parable about the power of purpose. April 9, 2019. Sacred Structures. Available from: <https://sacredstructures.org/mission/the-story-of-three-bricklayers-a-parable-about-the-power-of-purpose/>