Sneak Peek

Next week's session focuses on the importance of friendship in the lives of young people. To help prepare for the discussion, watch the scene from the Scenes and Songs disc entitled, "They Were So Others."

Closing Meditation

Play the song "Raindrops" from the Scenes and Songs disc. Music and lyrics by Barclay Martin, from the CD Zamboanga: Poverty, War, Music (Copyright © 2009 CFCA).

Boulder by boulder we walk
over stones to your home
Through truncated rhythm of
rain as the hills turn to gold
Songs of the ages that reach to
the roots of the earth
And the empty space that
breathes in the hour just before
birth

Bless this child she holds the
ocean in her hand
And may she walk between the
raindrops
that shimmer on the land

Rest in the evening the earth
gives us all that we need
Ancestors live not in memory,
but in memory's release
And darkness descends on the
crowd as songs begin to
rise
Rebel soldiers and the starlight
slipping through evening's
disguise

Bless this child she holds the
ocean in her hand
And may she walk between the
raindrops
that shimmer on the land

... and may she walk between
the raindrops
that shimmer on the land

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'THAT INSTRUMENT, FOR ME, IS HOLY'

SESSION 2

Introduction

We are each the product of culture, but we don't usually think about it until we come in contact with the cultures of others. Throughout much of history the unfamiliar ways of others were too often viewed as threats to be vanquished, but today we know there is wisdom and richness in learning how to be true to ourselves while also allowing others to be who they are.

RISE AND DREAM
EXPLORING THE DREAM

Opening Reflection *(shared by leader)*

Digging Deeper

Read the following aloud within the group.

The group of islands that we now know collectively as the Philippines was gradually settled over hundreds of years by travelers from many parts of Asia and Oceania representing several ethnic groups. For most of the history of the islands there was no central government, and various cultures, religions and languages developed.

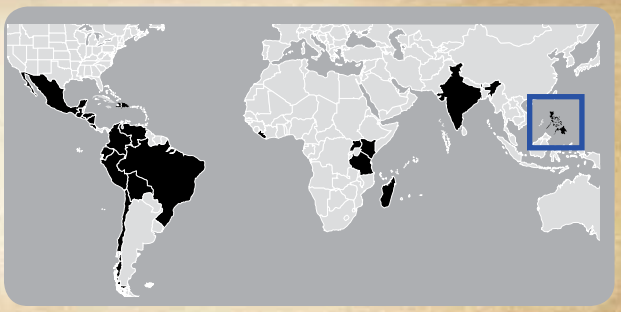
Spain conquered the islands in the 1500s and named them for the Spanish king, Philip II. This began an era of foreign control that continued through American territorial governance in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and Japanese occupation during World War II. Today the Philippines is an independent state but with strong economic and cultural ties to the nations that once dominated her.

Understanding this history helps one appreciate what it means for the young people in *Rise and Dream* to learn to play traditional Filipino instruments. The decision to set aside guitars and keyboards for the kulintangan and dabakan not only represented a personal challenge for these youth, but also a commitment to embrace a musical heritage that is undervalued in a society heavily influenced by Western pop culture.

Today, in a rapidly changing world, young people everywhere need to understand and appreciate who they are and where they came from while also respecting the ways of others. To help them do this, it is necessary to move beyond the cultural assimilation of the past and work toward a world in which variety in culture is perceived as enriching rather than threatening.

Did you know?

Did you know that the Philippines is one of 22 countries throughout the world where CFCA works to help people lift themselves out of poverty?



A Closer Look

Watch the scene from the Scenes and Songs disc entitled "That Instrument, for Me, Is Holy."

Questions for Group Discussion

1. The young people in the film worked hard to prepare for the concert, and their adult leaders didn't let up on them. What is the proper stance for adults to take when they want to help youth to achieve their best? When is it important to push and when is it better to back off? How does one find that balance?

2. Harold's comment about the kulintangan being "holy" reflects his deep appreciation for the music, culture and history of his people. In biblical tradition, holiness means completeness. In light of that, does Harold's statement seem fitting? Why or why not?

3. The United States is home to people from many ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Images sometimes used to describe the exchanges that take place in this environment include the "melting pot" (a blend of everything creating something new) and the "salad bowl" (a mix of individual flavors that complement each other). Does one of these metaphors resonate more with you than the other? Is there perhaps another image that best describes for you the American experience?

Call to Action

Choose one or more of the following, or develop other ideas within the group.

1. Discover how different ethnic groups in your local community celebrate their heritage. Participate in a cultural festival, preferably one with new foods and music for you to experience. If there are several such festivals, have the members of your group each attend a different one and then discuss what you learned afterwards.

2. Visit with someone who was born outside the United States. Ask them about how life was different in their native country. Are there customs they try to keep alive here in the U.S.? Are there American customs they find strange and are there some they enjoy?

3. Visit **www.hopeforafamily.org** and go to the "Our Work" section. Choose one of the countries listed and read the description. Bring back to the group a fact or a story about that country that made an impact on you and share why you found it compelling.