

Dave Quintana: A Man for All Nations

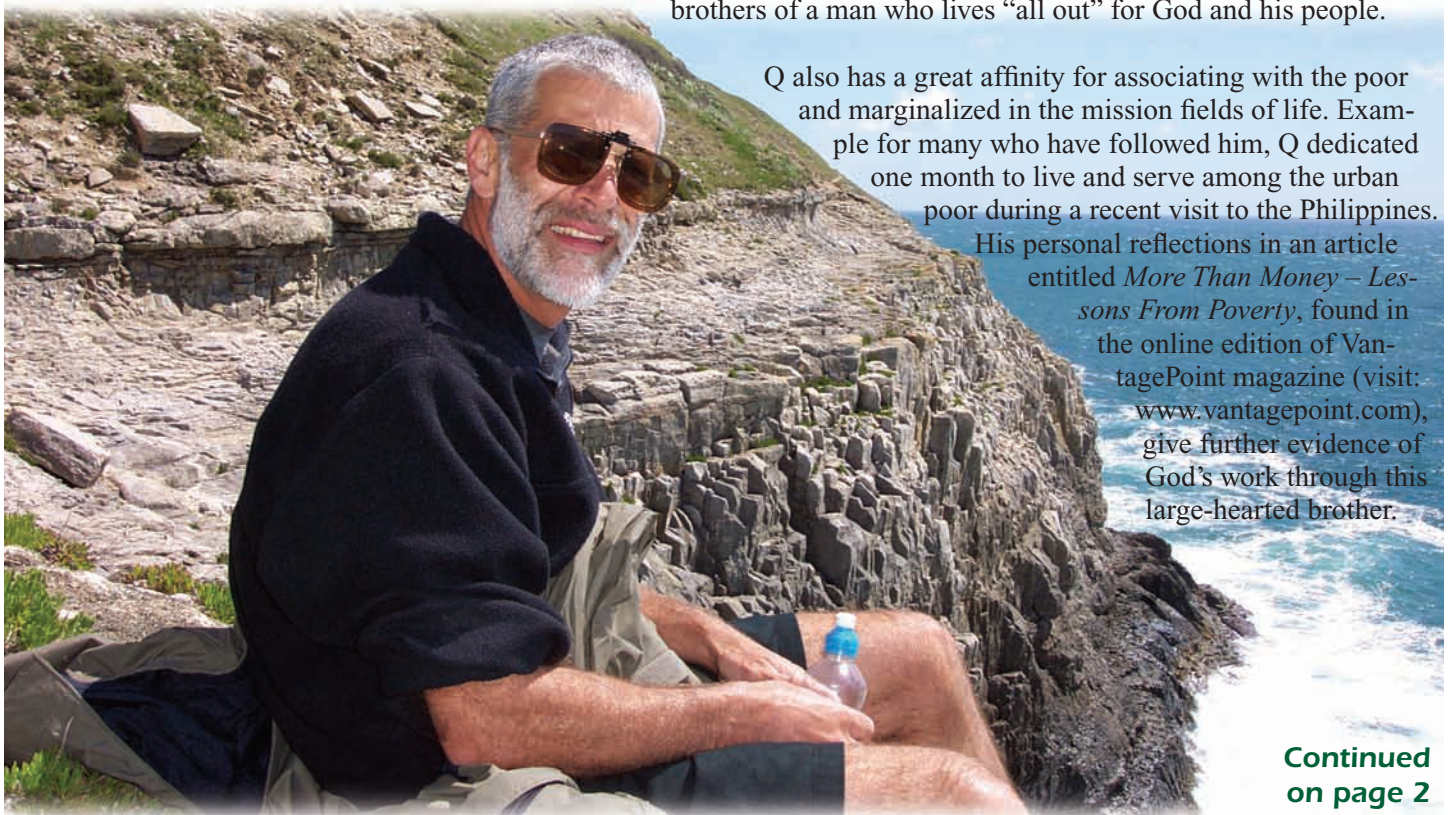
Dave Quintana – or “Q” as he is popularly known – is widely travelled and widely loved in many parts of the world. With family of Spanish descent who live in the state of New Mexico, he fits easily into Latin American culture and once led our Servants of the Word household while living in Costa Rica. Q is also an adopted Asian, having served for many years with our university outreach to Asian students at the University of Michigan. He has also lived in the Philippines and frequently visited Singapore and Hong Kong.

According to his passport, Q is genuinely American: He has lived in California, New Mexico, and Michigan, and for ten years he led our North American youth outreach program called Christian Youth Challenge. But, not to miss out on any part of the world, Q has now become a European! In September 2004, he moved to Belfast, Northern Ireland, where he now serves as the regional elder for our two households in the London and Belfast and is involved in the leadership of the European Region of The Sword of the Spirit. In his spare time, Q travels to the Middle East to help our new household of Servants of the Word affiliates in Beirut. Even in the Middle East he finds a way to feel at home – no small surprise to those who know Q well.

In our Servants of the Word ideal, we pursue the high calling of “loving God with all that we are, and serving him fervently.” Q truly exemplifies this ideal and gives himself fully to it. Not one to do anything halfway, he is widely known, in all the regions he has lived, to call young men and women to give themselves fully to what God is asking of them. There are some who would say that Q really only has one message: his warning to young people throughout the world not to commit the second greatest tragedy in life, that is, “not to give yourself fully to what you believe in.” The first greatest tragedy he intones is “to believe in the wrong thing.” Q lives what he preaches and is an example both to young people and to his brothers of a man who lives “all out” for God and his people.

Q also has a great affinity for associating with the poor and marginalized in the mission fields of life. Example for many who have followed him, Q dedicated one month to live and serve among the urban poor during a recent visit to the Philippines.

His personal reflections in an article entitled *More Than Money – Lessons From Poverty*, found in the online edition of VantagePoint magazine (visit: www.vantagepoint.com), give further evidence of God’s work through this large-hearted brother.



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Come, Let Us Adore Him

Beloved family and friends,

All of us in The Servants of the Word wish you a joy-filled Christmas, and an abundance of God's grace in the coming year. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Creator and Master of the Universe, God Almighty has taken flesh and become a man, so that men and women of flesh might become true sons and daughters of God. Come, let us adore him!

The year 2006 was truly a year of great blessing for us. We are especially grateful for the addition of Joseph Piquero (from the Philippines) to the ranks of our lifelong brothers, and for the one-year commitments made by Brian Laba, Brian Lalonde, Peter Jess Legaspi, and Marlon Castro. We are also very thankful to have been able to establish a one-year household in Beirut, Lebanon, in September, where a number of young Lebanese men are living with us and more seriously investigating our life. I hope to share their Christmas celebration with them in Beirut this year.

And we are ever grateful for you, our loved ones – our families, our friends, our faithful supporters. We thank God for you, and we pray that his blessing may rest upon you richly! ▲

In Christ the Incarnate Son,



John Keating



Q with friends at a squatter area beside the dump in Payatas.

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During that visit, Q lived among squatters in Payatas, an area comprised of thousands of families who survive by picking through piles of foul-smelling rubbish in search of food or something worth selling. Of this experience, Q says, "I found the raw need and pain and suffering of so many deeply disturbing. And perhaps above all, I found the experience incredibly humbling." Summing up this experience, he now asserts, "Less for self, more for others, enough for all." Sounds like a motto well worth living out. ▲

—Doug Smith

Lebanon: Our Newest—and Most Diverse—Household

Greetings from Lebanon! We are now almost three months into the life of our Servants of the Word affiliates household in Antelias, a suburb of the greater Beirut area. These months have been a rich time of experiencing the Lord's blessing in our relationship with him and our service of him as a household and as individuals in the midst of various personal and corporate challenges.

The seeds of this household began to grow following a three-week Servants of the Word temporary household in Antelias in January 2005. It was then that we strongly sensed God calling us – and me in particular – to invest more substantially in Lebanon, possibly in the form of a one-year household in 2006–2007. There were many reasons why this sense seemed surprising, even crazy, not least of all the fact that there were no affiliates in Lebanon at the time. However, the conviction steadily grew over time, resulting in our discerning that God was calling us to step into this new territory he was preparing for us. A further visit to Lebanon in May 2006 revealed glimmers of this new territory, and in a later visit in October five young men became affiliates, living together in a household for the next academic year.

The affiliates have chosen to live this life for this year in order to respond to the call of discipleship

Ultimately, the plan evolved into the decision that I and Toufic El Ramy, our Lebanese brother in training in London, would move to Lebanon to start the household by mid-September. Our numbers were strengthened by Brian Shell, an American affiliate in Belfast who discerned that he should move to Beirut to continue his university studies there as part of the household. The eruption of the war in July was certainly a grievous shock and was the situation which Brian and Toufic faced upon their arrival there. However, the war only increased the conviction that we should be there.

On 23 September we launched our household life as we articulated vision for the year and came before the Lord in worship, intercession, and dedication of ourselves to him and his purposes. The affiliates have chosen to live this life for this year in order to respond to the call of discipleship they have experienced from the Lord and to discern the shape of that call in relation to The Servants of the Word. In the very strongly family-oriented Lebanese culture, where it is rare not to stay at home until marriage, it has cost these brothers no small price to follow this particular path of discipleship this year.



Our household with visiting regional elder Dave Quintana at a Lord's Day celebration during the autumn retreat.

The conflict and adversities that often appear when the Lord initiates a new work were certainly in evidence in the first week of our life together in the household. On one level, the spiritual and relational tone of the household was excellent as this fine group of young men manifested serious and eager desire to grow as disciples. However, we also witnessed a series of challenging events, some more minor, some more major but all with the potential to sap motivation to invest in the household through irritation, discomfort, shock, disorientation, and anxiety. We had to live in pools of water and with a lack of water for a week because a water tank cracked the day after I arrived . . . we received anonymous abusive phone calls at 1:15 am

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the night of our household opening . . . one brother's workplace came within a minute of blowing up that same day through an equipment malfunction. These events were crowned at the end of that first week with a serious car accident involving three of our brothers – mercifully, none were injured and the one pedestrian hospitalised escaped grave injury. Yet through these adversities, we experienced God's provision, protection, and inspiration to bind us together in deeper bonds of brotherhood.

Indeed, we have quickly experienced the blessings of a life that embodies a rich diversity of national, cultural, and professional backgrounds and of church traditions as well as a wide range of personalities. Anis Naim, Joe Fahd, Salim Baz, and Brian Shell are all university undergraduate students hailing respectively from the Greek Catholic, Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholic traditions. The professionals in our life include Samer Khalife, a medical doctor in his third year of specialising in internal medicine; Jad Azzi, a recent dentistry graduate pursuing a Masters part time; and Boghos Boyajian, an Armenian Lebanese goldsmith. Boghos is a member of the Armenian Orthodox tradition, and Samer and Jad, the Maronite Catholic tradition. Toufic likewise is Maronite, and alongside his various Servants of the Word responsibilities, he is serving on staff in our university outreach (UCO) work here. The Fijian from the Methodist tradition completes the picture.

All of our brothers are involved in Christian outreach or renewal service and in the life and initiations programs of our two Sword of the Spirit communities here, The People of God and Illuminator's Lamp. Activities range from substantial participation in UCO's evangelism and discipleship programs to serving in the outreaches and renewal programs for post-student age-groups in both communities. Of the brothers in the household, four (including Brian) are members of long-term community families, while the rest have entered the life of our communities through the outreaches.

At the present, it is safe living in Lebanon. However, both the present and the future are shadowed by the uncertainty of the complex and volatile internal and external politics that have plagued Lebanon's painful history over the last few decades. Yet this painful history has also witnessed the reality of the light that cannot be overcome piercing this darkness again and again with fresh faith, hope, and love. Indeed, the greater the darkness, the more brightly that light is manifest, and our communities continue to be a deeply inspiring witness to the light in their steadfast resolution to remain in Lebanon and be vessels through which the light of Christ may shine. It is a great privilege to be living and serving alongside these *saints in the land*. *They are the noble, in whom is [truly] all my delight* (Psalm 16:3). ▲

—Eroni Sotutu



Our household is located on the upper balcony level of the People of God Community Center.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

The Servants of the Word gets its support through the financial earnings of the brothers as well as by donations from our benefactors. Many of our brothers work for sacrificial wages or for no pay at all. Please consider if you can become a financial sponsor of The Servants of the Word. Your prayers and support are appreciated in our work with young people and our community development work.

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