

Blizzards and Typhoons Remind People that There Is God

By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

***JGL Eye Column***

CHICAGO (*jGLi*) – The Blizzard of 2011 that engulfed Chicago and environs once again reminds us that there is God.

Maybe, God is jealous that people no longer consider Him the center of our attention. And dumping tons of snow all over the vast swath of the United States sends a signal that everyone should take a breather and focus his attention to Him.

## Blizzard Vs. Typhoon: Will You Take Your Pick? - MabuhayRadio

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Because it is very hard to travel when there is blizzard or snow storm, it tells us that we need to stop what we are doing and stay at home and meditate.

Even the Archdiocese of Chicago has noticed it that many Catholics have abandoned their church that's why they have been campaigning for Catholics "to come (back) home (to the church).

After all, there is really nothing else to do if you are "stranded" in your home for two days of snow and cold weather but to watch outside your window the howling winds blow away trees and houses along with the heavy rains that turn into snow.

Of course, your attention will be glued on the weather updates on television of the massive destruction and the immovable road traffic on the wake of the blizzard -- all day and night long. The newscast will only be broken by foreign news like the People Power Revolution in progress in Egypt.

During the nearly quarter century that I have been living in the Midwest, I can say that I have seen some of the Acts of God that visited not only here but also in the Philippines.

## **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TYPHOON AND HURRICANE**

For some strange reasons, meteorologists or weathermen had called storms by different names depending on where it developed and landed.

If a storm develops in Western Pacific, like Guam, the Philippines or Japan, it is called a typhoon.

If a storm begins in the Atlantic or eastern Pacific Ocean, it is called hurricane.

If a storm forms in Southern Pacific, it is called cyclone.

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There is even a more subtle difference between a hurricane and a cyclone – the hurricane turns to the right (clockwise) while the cyclone turns to the left (counterclockwise).

If it is true that if a storm that begins north of the equator rotates clockwise and since the Philippines lies between 10 and 15 degrees north of the equator, then, it is safe to assume that a typhoon turns clockwise also.

A special education teacher by the name of Dahloan Hembree posted a question on the Internet and answered her own question that stomped scientist – can a storm cross over the equator and if so, does the rotation change? Ms. Hembree says, no, as “air currents will not allow a storm to cross over equatorial lines.”

As to the question as to which wind packs a stronger wallop, is it a typhoon or a hurricane?

**NO DIFFERENCE**

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F or me, it really does not have any difference.

When I was young and living in a wooden home in the Philippines, after every typhoon, our home was always flattened. It did not matter if it was *habagat* (southwest wind), *amihan* (northeast wind) or *kanaway* (northwest wind), the same typhoon would destroy our home.

I always thought maybe the people in my neighborhood or town were sinners. That's why, we were reminded by the visiting typhoon to say a little prayer.

We were like Sisyphus, every time we were about to re-build our home, another typhoon would come along as if she (typhoon in the Philippines is usually named after a woman) would never leave us anymore.

After every typhoon, we would clean up the fallen banana, coconut and bamboo trees. We had to contend with the mud and flooding from our nearby swollen river.

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Those were grim reminders that we really needed to pray harder, asking God, the Mother Nature, to spare us from frequent typhoon visits.

Of course, as a farmer and a teacher, my father would always pray for rain to nurture and irrigate our small farm. But he would never pray for a typhoon because it always wiped clean every meager income he earned from his teaching. I never heard of anybody in our town buying home insurance.

Perhaps, because of the frequent typhoon visit, insurance companies were not offering to sell home insurance to anybody.

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If given the choice between a typhoon and a blizzard, I would choose none of the above.

During typhoon, you will be pelted by stinging heavy rain that will create instant flooding. While during blizzard you will be stabbed by a biting cold that calls for sweaters, coats, gloves and other thermal wear for somebody who wants to venture out.

But whether you are visited by a typhoon, hurricane or blizzard, you always have to be ready.

### **ACTS OF GOD**

A fter all, nobody is safe from the Acts of God.

My friend in Northern California might not be visited by a blizzard that we have in the Midwest. But he also has to contend with the visit of the Big One, a reprise of the 1906 Earthquake that

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flattened San Francisco and the coast of Northern California.

In other parts of the country, there are tornadoes that tear apart and collapse homes and buildings.

There is really no escaping from any disaster that visits us from time to time.

These disasters are just reminders of our vulnerability. Perhaps, we have been pampered by the blessings God when we don't thank him for giving us free solar energy, free air that we breathe, the water that we drink and the good health.

And people had forgotten to express their gratitude to God or to whoever made this world we live in.

Disasters, like blizzards, typhoons, earthquakes, flooding and raging fires, are just a fact of life. They are the teasing that we get from the Supreme Being and they are something we cannot



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