



HOLDEN NEWS JAN/FEB/MAR 2019 (Part 2)

We hope the following highlights will help you read find and read what interests you!

- * Main Topics
- * Main Points
- * Prayer Requests/Praises



DEAR PARTNER, ENCOURAGER, FRIEND,

MARCH - SINTIA'S VISIT

In early March Sintia came to our home for an overnight visit. She lives in a one-room apartment with her 2 sons, and rides the bus 1½ hours because she can not afford to live in an area closer to HCJB Radio Ecuador where she works as a cleaning lady. Sintia came to our home that night without pajamas and an empty stomach so I (Sondra) loaned her a pair of my mine and we filled her stomach with a huge supper and then breakfast the next morning. She was filled with such happiness because in this culture, many people who live in the middle or upper-class parts of the city don't invite lower-class people into their homes. But we and Sintia are friends, so social class has no place in our relationship.

The evening Sintia came we had a surprise visit from Rosita, who stopped by to pick up the money we give her each semester to help her with the cost of her university classes. **Rosita brought her daughter, Leisha (13) along with her.** **After introducing the three ladies to each other, a wonderful conversation ensued between the mothers.** Sintia's son, Sebastian (17) has been in a drug treatment program for a cocaine addiction since November, and Rosita has been struggling to maintain a family atmosphere in a home with alcohol abuse and violence. It was amazing to see the heart connection develop between them. Near the end of the 2-hour chat, I pointed out that it was interesting how the Lord brought together 3 mothers, including myself, who have all had addiction issues in their families. Leisha's eyes widened as she began to listen to the remainder our conversation and even engage in parts of it; prior to that, she had been staring at her iPhone. **We began to share with each other not only our sorrows and our concerns for our children's futures as adults, but also our faith in the Lord regarding our situations. We all agreed that this meeting between us was no coincidence; that surely God had planned it. Leisha smiled widely and agreed.**

MARCH - ISAAC'S ACCIDENT

Isaac (6) is the son of Andreina, a single mother and teacher at the Zambiza After-School Program. Isaac had spent the weekend at his father's house and was playing on the roof of a structure when the roof gave way and he fell 12 feet onto a pile of large rocks. He acquired several broken bones in his arm and shoulder and a number of cuts, bumps, and bruises. Isaac is an active little boy, always jumping, bouncing, dancing and smiling. So, it broke my heart as I listened to Andreina, through her tears, tell me how much pain he was in and how long he would be in the hospital. They had to put a metal plate in his arm, restrict his arm to a sling, sedate him with pain medicines, and later will repeat the process when they remove the metal plate. Also, the doctors are very concerned that the growth plate near his shoulder was damaged to the point that Isaac's one arm might not grow properly. Isaac is a tiny, skinny, small-boned little boy so this concerns us deeply. **I hugged Andreina assuring her that the Lord is faithful and will heal Isaac** and then explained to her how some specific natural supplements could aide in the healing. She was very interested but of course cannot find the supplements in Ecuador that are needed nor afford the cost because the father does not financially support her or their 2 sons. So, we contacted our Naturopathic Clinic in the U.S. We have purchased the 6-month supply of supplements they have suggested and asked our Missionary Personnel Director to transport them when she would return to Ecuador from the U.S. in April. Isaac will soon begin taking the supplements. **Please keep Isaac and Andreina in your prayers.**



Isaac at Zambiza Christmas Fiesta

MARCH/APRIL - OUR BIRTHDAYS

At the end of March we decided to make a day-trip to Otavalo, 2 hours north of Quito, to celebrate our birthdays enjoying a full day away from the city. Upon arrival we enjoyed breakfast out and then hopped bus which took us another 30 minutes north. Our destination was San Antonio, a quaint little town filled with marvelous wood carvers. My friend, Verito, and I visited there last year during our weekend in San Pablo and had found a beautiful hand-carved rocker that I hoped to own some day when I could save up \$200. This day Darrell and I visited little shops filled with antiques, various hand-carved items, and unique artwork. On our way to find the store with the rocker we discovered another we liked much better - for \$50 less! After making much conversation with the clerk (which is customary here) we walked away having made a down payment on the rocker and an offer from the clerk to deliver it for free the next time she comes to Quito. (Normally the delivery would be very costly due to the distance).



Sample of hand-carved furniture in San Antonio

We returned to Otavalo eating dinner at a restaurant on the square enjoying the view of the local merchants selling their hand-made goods in the world-famous indigenous market. Afterward we headed to the Shanandoah Pie Shoppe which we had heard about but never visited. Darrell was quite happy with his 2 monster-sized pieces of mora pie, and I, with my chocolate meringue pie with vanilla ice cream.

Afterward we decided to spend the other \$50 on other items we liked, including a small statue of an indigenous woman dancing. Darrell really liked the life-sized wooden statue of the firefighter but was content just to have his picture taken with it.



We had such a great day!

Thank You Lord for our special day together.

Later, in mid-April, my wonderful husband held a surprise birthday party for me at the Zambiza After-School Program site. We, the children, and teachers shared cake and cola and the kids prepared a large birthday card. It's so heart-warming to be able to celebrate with these children - most who receive little or nothing for their own birthdays. The teachers had prepared a short video with photos of Sondra and the children with sweet words thanking her for the time, love, hugs, and patience that she gives them weekly. In many ways we consider them as our own children or grandchildren so we were blessed to be able to share this day with them.



ONGOING - MEDICAL OUTREACH TO VENEZUELAN REFUGEES

Beginning in March, the Nazarene Church, where we attend, decided to provide medical care for the Venezuelan refugees living in our community. Every other Saturday, doctors, nurses, psychologists, and dentists set up stations in our church and provide care for between 25 and 75 people. Darrell, a paramedic, helps out on some of those Saturdays. The thing that we think is special about these clinics is that it's not about 'how many people are seen' but the quality of care and the extended time spent with them that the 3-12 medical professionals provide. Praise God for the impact it is making on these families! Our church is working toward planting a church for Venezuelans in our neighborhood.

ONGOING - PAN DE VIDA (PDV) UPDATE

Since early last October, Pan de Vida has been responding to the needs of some of the 250,000 refugees that have crossed Ecuador's border recently, mostly from Venezuela.



Every other Thursday 225-275 refugees/immigrants begin to file outside the doors where 10 - 15 volunteers are waiting inside to welcome and serve them.

Up to 220 are allowed inside. The remainder then wait outside for up to 3 more hours for the chance of receiving some leftover food. PTL a visiting team from the U.S. took the PDV staff shopping for \$900 worth of food which will serve and feed up to 825 refugees in the coming weeks.



Adults, teens, children, babies, pregnant mothers, and the elderly line up longer than 1 city block, sometimes in the rain.



Classes are held informing them of their legal rights as a refugee in Ecuador, or teaching hygiene/health issues, or addressing issues of discrimination, self-esteem, or other relevant topics.

Each time songs of praise are sung and the saving grace and love of God is explained in simple terms with people following along in Bibles, asking questions, and at times crying tears of repentance.



The pastor from a local church shares scripture, Bible stories, prayer, and other forms of encouragement with them.



They listen intently and begin to understand we truly care about them, want to help them, and want to help others to understand them and their situation. Often volunteers share their own life-changing testimonies, hoping to touch their hearts.

Sondra sharing hers - >





Two missionary women plan activities for children of all ages. Some days as many as 80 children attend.



Onilda, Cuban Reach Beyond missionary and Sara McMillan, a N. American missionary pastor's wife teach the children.

My privilege is to be the 'welcoming host' warmly greeting people as they enter and directing them to where they can wash and dry their hands.

I am available to answer questions, explain the rules and services, and direct them to the appropriate staff. I'm also there to comfort the children who are afraid of their new environment, console tearful women, and assure the elderly. Once everyone is inside and has found their appropriate classrooms, I visit with the people, listen to their stories, dry tears, give lot of hugs, and offer to pray with and for them.

Sometimes I also help out in the clothing area or help to hand out meals.



Each time the doors open over half of the people are newcomers. Family members are registered by name, age, and the name of country from which they have come. The newcomers select 5 pieces of donated clothing per family member and the children are able to pick out some toys with their parent(s). Notes are made regarding the families with the most critical issues and are directed to Juan Carlos, Pan de Vida's social worker. He, too, was once a Venezuelan refugee.

As the beneficiaries leave each one receives a hot meal prepared by a Venezuelan cook and a handful of volunteers. Adults receive adult-sized portions and children ages 3-12 receive child-sized portions. Most of them eat the food even before leaving, because of their level of hunger. Most parents feed their children first and themselves last.





Our prayer is that you and others will respond to God's call to bring more financial resources and volunteers so that we may be able to meet the needs of those we serve even better, and by God's grace, open up the program more days per month in order to serve even more refugees.



Each time we open our doors we see the weariness and desperation on the faces of those we are about to serve. Some are exhausted from their long journeys, and all are hungry and looking for a better way of life for themselves and their families. The needs are overwhelming, but our God is a God of the impossible.



Usually after just one visit to Pan de Vida, the faces of the refugees change as their hearts receive the love that is given and as they learn of the love and grace that Jesus offers them.



When we visit Wisconsin this September we will be speaking more about this ministry. We also will be looking to collect a large suitcase full of new, donated socks (ankle-length and of all sizes) to take back with us in October to give to the refugees. Many have come here with only the clothing on their backs. Meanwhile Pan de Vida needs your prayers for more volunteers and more financial resources to continue serving these families. Pan de Vida's desire is to be able to serve these families even better and, by God's grace, be able to open up the doors more than twice monthly. But this cannot be accomplished without much prayer and the manpower and financial resources to do so.

At this time, we ask you to consider helping by contributing toward our Psalm 68:10 Special Project Fund through Ripe for Harvest. Up until October 15, 2019 we are offering a matching fund donation up to \$500. So, for every two dollars that is donated, we will match it with 1 dollar of our own (from our personal salary, not from our ministry fund). When we return to Ecuador mid-Oct we hope to purchase at least \$1,500 worth of food for the refugees at PDV.

Simply click on this link: <https://www.reachbeyondthemountains.com/partnership> which takes you directly to our partnership webpage where you can find the info to send your gift via mail or by credit card. These 2 options are on the bottom (left and right portion) of the page. For those of you without email, send to: Ripe for Harvest, P.O. Box 487, Monument, Co 80132-0487. **PLEASE** memo your gift to **20099 - Psalm 68:10 Special Project Account** (not Acct # 20319 which is our regular ministry account). **Gracias Lord for the great things You'll do with these gifts!**

PRAISES: 1) For God's provision for free family counseling for Rosita and her children

2) For Isaac's release from the hospital and progress in healing

3) For the amazing work that the staff and volunteers of Pan de Vida are doing to serve the refugees

PRAYER: 1) For Sintia's son, Sebastian, to remain drug-free, return to complete his education, to know Christ; he returns home from the treatment center May 5

2) For the complete healing of Isaac's body, for the growth plate to function properly

3) For a miraculous healing of Patricio's heart, for his salvation



DARRELL AND SONDRA HOLDEN



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