

## Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency

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**"Share with God's people who are in need."**

Romans 12:13

**"A Step Forward in Faith"**

April 2018

Lent is past, Holy Week is gone, but Easter lives on in our hearts as we celebrate the grace of God who loved each and everyone of us so much that He was willing to pay the ultimate price to redeem us, pay the price we couldn't begin to pay, so that He could spend eternity with us celebrating this joyous relationship that He envisioned since before the creation of the world.



Crown Him with many crowns,  
The lamb upon the throne:  
Hark! How the heav'nly anthem drowns  
All Music but its own!  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
Of Him who died for thee,  
And hail Him as thy matchless King  
Through all eternity.



I wonder how long it will take us to get as excited about this as He is! I think we have to begin living it to experience it to begin to get and feel the excitement of this relationship. When I become excited about something I want to share it with others. To get excited you have to experience that which you have become excited about; not just hear about it.

Some years back, precisely on July 28, 1994 the day before our 33<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary, my daughter Julie took my wife, Marty, and me to see a Rangers' baseball game. Kenny Rogers was pitching. Maybe you know or remember what happened on that night. Kenny Rogers pitched a perfect game; nobody even got on base. That was only the fourteenth perfect game ever pitched in the history of the major leagues. Do you think I was excited? I want to tell you, I was so excited I couldn't wait to tell someone about it the next day! What made it so special was not necessarily the fact that a Ranger pitcher pitched a perfect game but the fact that I saw it, I experienced it!



And that, my friends, is what KIMA is all about; giving people like you a chance to experience the joy, the excitement, that comes with sharing the Good News of what God has done for us with others, especially those who don't have a clue as to what this relationship with God through Jesus Christ is all about.



It all begins with hearing the Word, receiving faith, encouragement, forgiveness and empowerment through the Sacraments, and then actively living out that new relationship by loving God above everything else and loving our neighbor (those you meet, hang with, are related to, work or go to school with), as ourselves (having an unselfish concern for others and doing things for their benefit).

How excited do you want to get? How much do you want to get involved? You can read this newsletter and think, that is nice. You can say a prayer for what others are doing, that's cool. You might even give a little to help out financially, that's admirable.

But, if you really want to get involved, how about praying daily for the ministry that is being done in Mexico; ask your congregation, your circle of fellow believers, to include in their prayers the special needs of specific people involved in this ministry in Mexico; adopt as a personal friend and coworker one or more of the people leading ministry in Mexico; write to them, encourage them, remind them of their importance as people, members of the Body of Christ, who are joining Jesus on His mission of making disciples of all people. (Google Translate does wonders in helping translate from English to Spanish) and depending on where your heart is, who or what is really the god you put your trust in, give financially to assist lay-pastors and new or reborn missions, provide Spanish Portales of Prayer, VBS materials for the children, transportation for seminary students, help repair an occasionally broken-down van used for transporting people on missions or to church, and/or purchasing Spanish Bibles and copies of Luther's Small Catechism.

You have to be careful because if you get too involved in the Word, Sacraments, and actually getting involved in ministry your life is going to change. The good news is if you really get involved with these spiritual things your life will be so exciting that you will have to tell others about it.

Last year our ministry expenses were approximately \$75,000. We received donations of approximately \$62,000. Except for the blessings we received in 2016 we would have been in the hole by \$13,000. We operate on the assumption that we will receive on a regular basis \$2300 a month from the people who give on a regular basis. Our expenses to just cover helping out the seven pastors and their congregations is \$4100 a month. So each month we are looking for additional special gifts to cover the \$1800 that we may be short. Are you beginning to see how this ministry is an ongoing work of faith? The joy of this is that the Lord has always provided through special people like you, the many who give even if it is a small gift but give as they are moved by the Holy Spirit to share this exciting news.



What bothers me is that as time goes by too many people become unconcerned, or just forget as they become interested in other things. Time goes by and people move, pastors change congregations or just retire. Prayers and donations gradually slow and finally cease. But the ministry, the needs haven't moved on or gone away. The need for ministry, sharing the Love of God, goes on and on. That last thought reminds me of the Praise Song "One Thing Remains":



Higher than the mountains that I face  
Stronger than the power of the grave  
Constant through the trial and the change  
One thing remains, one thing remains

Your love never fails, it never gives up, never runs out on me.  
Your love never fails, it never gives up, never runs out on me  
Your love never fails, it never gives up, Never runs out on me. Your love.

On and on and on and on it goes. It overwhelms and satisfies my soul.  
And I never, ever have to be afraid. One thing remains.

God's love never fails. Let's not let our love run out for the ministry that is being done in Mexico! Remember this ministry in your prayers, individually or corporately, and help us find the financial means to not only maintain this ministry work throughout Mexico but also to expand it through new vibrant missions.



Sorry, I missed you last month. My computer went on strike so I now have a new computer, new operating system, new frustrations in trying to make it work.



Hopefully, I can share with you some of what I think are exciting and informative about the ministry of the Lutheran Synod Lutheran Synod of Mexico (SLM) is the in Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with the Lutheran Synod of Mexico is also a Council, a worldwide association of



Hopefully, I can share with you some of what I think are exciting and things, new information of Mexico. Were you aware of the fact that the only Lutheran church body in Mexico that is Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod? The member of the International Lutheran confessional Lutheran church bodies.

The Reverend Isaac Guadalupe Garcia President of the Lutheran Synod of founder and current pastor of Iglesia Church) in Rio Bravo, Tamaulipas.

Castillo (Pastor Isaac) is currently the Mexico. Pastor Isaac Garcia serves as Luterana Betania (Bethany Lutheran



Rev. Isaac Guadalupe Garcia  
Castillo

Under his leadership the Synod has once again begun to work in conjunction with the LCMS especially in the theological education of pastors. The SLM has been establishing or reestablishing new missions, and with the help of Rev. Daniel Conrad, career missionary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, they have been building up the national resources for the church by training pastors to serve in these existing and newly established missions and churches.

Rev. Danial Conrad told me this morning that he is training men and women to be in ministry as pastors, deacons, or deaconesses in the city of Chetumal in the state of Quintana Roo, and in the states of Oaxaca, and Chiapas. These are all locations in far southern Mexico that are new for the Lutheran Synod of Mexico.



Rev. Isaac Garcia and Rev. Daniel  
Conrad

Pastor Isaac Garcia told me last night that just recently they had only 3 ordained pastors in the SLM. Now they have 7 with 2 more who are studying and will be ordained next year. That will make 9 native ordained pastors. They also have introduced a program to train lay-pastors in such a way that they will be eligible to administer the sacraments at their mission sites. There are also at least two men who will soon begin a program through Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne called Pastoral Formation for Hispano America. What is so exciting about this is they are all native men who live there and will remain there. LCMS missionaries will help for a while but they will eventually move on. So the real

resource to the SLM is the native ordained pastors. Praise God!

Did you know that the program for financing and supporting missionaries in the LCMS has changed, at least from when I was growing up (that's been a long time ago)? When I was active in the pastoral ministry missionaries were sent to various parts of the world. They were supported by the Synod through donations that came from Districts, congregations, and individuals. Not so today. Today if you want to be a missionary for the LCMS you have to raise your own funds by means of help from congregations, friends, or individual members. So, before you can go to be a missionary you have to be able to show that you have adequate support. This continues year after year.



*Erin Mackenzie*

Some of you may know Erin Mackenzie who worked as a marketing manager at Editorial Concordia, the Spanish division of Concordia Publishing House. She was so helpful to me as I tried to order the Spanish material that many of the congregations and missions in Mexico wanted. I, unfortunately, do not speak Spanish so she would decipher for me what was needed or wanted. If I couldn't get it straight she would pick up the phone and call the pastors in Mexico and get the order straightened out. She will now be serving the Lord in the Dominican Republic as a Volunteer Coordinator. She will coordinate the short-term team strategy for the LCMS Latin America and the Caribbean regional mission team and its local partners. I say she will be going to the Dominican Republic but only after she has been able to raise sufficient funding. [www.lcms.org/Mackenzie](http://www.lcms.org/Mackenzie)

So even men like Rev. Daniel Conrad, who has been such a blessing to establishing this theological education, has the ongoing task of continually raising money so that he can continue as a LCMS missionary to the SLM in Mexico. He has an interesting story.

Rev. Daniel and Kathy Conrad serve the Lord as career missionaries through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Mexico, based in Mexico City. In this role, Daniel served as the interim pastor at San Pedro Lutheran Church and is the coordinator of theological education for the entire country. He works with and mentors national pastors and pastors in formation who are serving throughout Mexico. With the challenges of Mexico City's population being 25 million people and the shortage of national pastors in this country, Daniel provides assistance in sending out workers to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Daniel was born in Saginaw, Mich. He earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and received his Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (1984). He is currently working on his thesis for his doctorate in missiology from Concordia Theological Seminary. Before serving in Mexico, Daniel completed his pastoral vicarage and was a missionary for 20 years in Venezuela (1984-2003). While serving in Venezuela, he focused on the formation and mentoring of national pastors in that country. Daniel served as the pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, Terra Bella, Calif. (2003-2014) prior to receiving the call to serve in Mexico.



*Rev. Daniel Conrad, Kathy, Ana*

Kathy was born in Dearborn, Mich. She also received a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She worked as a teacher's aide and served with Daniel in Venezuela before heading to the mission field. Daniel and Kathy have a beautiful daughter, Ana, who is with them in Mexico and is finishing high school. The Conrads enjoy traveling, reading and learning everything they can about the Mexican culture.

You can also make a donation towards these people's ministry. [www.lcms.org/conrad](http://www.lcms.org/conrad)

Or, mail your check, made payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and designated with their last name, to: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

(Or call 888-930-4438 to speak with someone.)



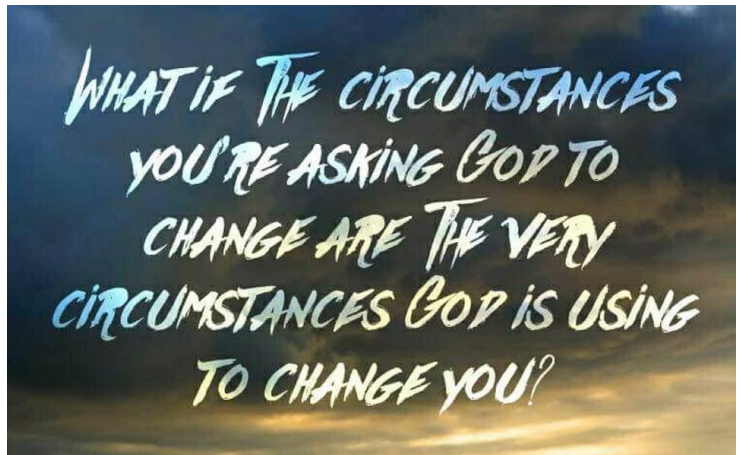
*Son, Andres Garza, wife, Leticia Davila, son, Omar Garza, and Omar Garza Martinez*

Here is some of that exciting news I was talking about.

Lay-pastor Omar Garza Martinez who is presently in the “Formation Pastoral Hispano’ program, is in the process of taking his last course before ordination. He presently serves at Iglesia Luterana “La Santísima Trinidad” in Matamoros, Mexico and is scheduled to be ordained May 20, on Pentecost Sunday. Omar has worked very diligently on his studies, in his local parish, and as treasurer of the SLM. May the Lord bless his ministry abundantly!

Keep Omar Garza and his wife Leticia in your prayers.

I have another amazing story to share with you! I don't know if you remember me talking about Job Jiménez. He was one of the five students that went off to study at the Seminary in Argentina. Job had been raised under the tutelage of his father Rev. Filiberto Jiménez. After completing his college education with a degree in psychology, he served as lay-pastor of San Mateo Lutheran Church in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico. He also served as secretary of the Synodical Council of the SLM. After one year at the Seminary in Argentina, for some reason or another someone at the Seminary decided to take away his scholarship thus effectively blocking his return to the Seminary. As might be expected Job became a very bitter young man and for about three years sought to find himself and unravel the mystery in his mind about his relationship to God and the church. Well, God began to move in some powerful ways these last six months or so, and after many prayers, trials and errors, conversations with Pastor Isaac Garcia, Lay-pastor Omar Garza, and even me, the Lord got his attention, pointed him to Tijuana and here is a letter I received from Job today.



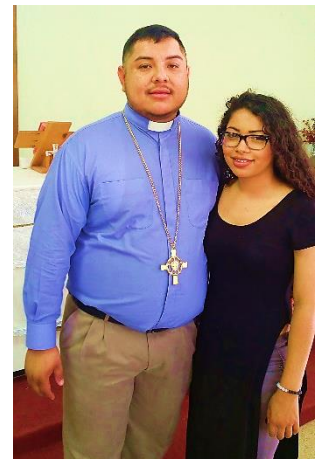
Greetings in the name of the Lord.

It is nice to greet you once again after perhaps a long time without you knowing about your servant.

The last almost three years were difficult times in my Christian life, however, by the grace of God and his love and infinite mercy I am here, with a new call to serve his church.

These past days I was visiting the church in Tijuana where there is currently no pastoral work by our church. A small group of members of some churches in Tijuana who are without a pastor invited me to collaborate with them and help in the pastoral area.

I am very happy because God has put everything in the way to confirm this service call to Tijuana, a city with more than 2 million inhabitants, a fertile field for the preaching of the word. There are many needs that exist, insecurity, poverty, murders, children living on the street, which tells us that there is also a great need to proclaim the Gospel.



*Job Jimenez and Diana*

I thank God for the support of KIMA to this project, to be able to attend this town. I am happy because the brothers, despite being a small group damaged by the multiple attacks of Satan, have remained firm, the call is to attend a church that has gone through multiple problems and even remained closed for a short period of time; It is also contemplated to attend another area in El Florido to start a mission in this place where there are families that are not being served through the pastoral ministry.

This small group of brothers will provide me with a place to live, a church to work, a community and their support for the ministry. However, the economic help comes from you, what a blessing to be one in the Lord and together proclaim his reign of mercy.

This weekend, when visiting the church and seeing their needs, I had to participate in activities already, since God has led us to that.



A funeral on Friday that I arrived, two Bible school groups that Brother Sadoc and his wife Tere and Legna have attended with support from siblings and themselves.

On Sunday, after a few weeks of being closed, the Lily of the Valley Church was opened once again to proclaim the beautiful Easter story.

This next Sunday I will not be with them, but is such an encouragement to serve God that my brother Sadoc and family will help with the Services, is this not a reason to give glory to God?

Preaching at Valle de los Lirios Lutheran Church. Wonderful building, a big challenge to bring community to Christ and his bride, the Church.

I invite you to pray and be part of this project.

I am leaving for Tijuana on Monday or Tuesday of next week, to start serving full time, I ask for your prayers that God will give us guidance and prosper our way.

I also want to ask for your prayers for Diana, she is my girlfriend, she will stay in San Luis, I am sad to leave my city and especially my family, however I know that it is the Lord's call and he will take care of everything. I ask for your prayers because it is our wish, if it is God's will, that we can marry this year and at the end of this she will be moving to live with me in Tijuana and be able to serve together in the ministry.

Job Jiménez

WOW, tell me that's not a powerful example of God at work!!!

On and on and on and on it goes. It overwhelms and satisfies my soul. And I never, ever have to be afraid. One thing remains. Your love never fails, it never gives up, never runs out on me.



Kyrie Eleison! This guy was killed by narcotrafficker, was sad to see the needs and pain. These people are friends and part of the Bible classes given by Tere and Sadoc, and Legna. They are doing a wonderful job.

LIFE IS SHORT  
AND WE DO NOT HAVE  
MUCH TIME TO  
GLADDEN  
THE HEARTS  
OF THOSE WHO  
TRAVEL WITH US  
SO BE SWIFT TO LOVE  
MAKE HASTE TO BE KIND  
AND GO IN PEACE  
TO LOVE AND SERVE  
THE LORD  
PAPA - FREDERIC AMIEL



We are pleased to announce once again that Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency - KIMA continues to receive Choice Dollars designated by you through Thrivent Financial's Thrivent Choice® program. Last month we received a total of \$436 from people like you. I just want you to know that when those kinds of unexpected funds come in we can help fill some of the unexpected needs like Job was talking about. By directing Choice Dollars®, eligible Thrivent members can recommend Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency to receive charitable grant funding from Thrivent.

If you have Choice Dollars available to direct, please consider directing them to Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency - KIMA. It's easy to do. Visit [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice). Or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" when prompted.

### *Special Missions Fund*

Each of the past two years we have designated \$6000 for the Lutheran Synod of Mexico to use in establishing or reestablishing a mission in some part of Mexico. This past year they decided to reopen the church in Mexicali and the former church in Tijuana. Due to unforeseen problems they were not able to reopen the church in Tijuana. This has nothing to do with the churches Job will be working with in Tijuana. The churches he is working with are seeking to become members of the SLM. The ministry in Mexicali is progressing nicely.



This year we again gave \$6000 to the Lutheran Synod of Mexico and they have designated it to help the churches in Tijuana that are not yet a part of their Synod. Job will be the contact person with these churches emphasizing the need to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with these people and how God can and will help them.

We intend to do the same again next year so we would ask for extra or new gifts to the Lord to fund once again some new missions in Mexico.

We indeed need your daily prayers and I am sure that will lead others to give of their gifts that God has given to them to continue to reach

out to the weak and lost of Mexico.

Thank you for your love and patience for reading this long epistle. Please, pray about it and consider how you might become involved as a mover and a shaker.

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We can be contacted at 109 Noel, Waxahachie 75165 or by phone at 972-935-8017  
KIMA is a 501 C 3 Public Charity

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