



Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency

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

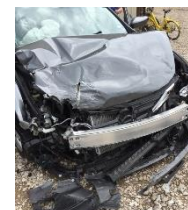
Romans 12:13

"A Step Forward in Faith"

July 2018

Ups and Downs, Highs and Lows

What comes to mind when you hear or read those words? Life? Love? Relationships? I think back on the last month and those words or words like them come to mind. Unfortunately, all too often we tend to focus on the negative part of those words rather than on the positive. It's easy for me to remember June 1st, a sudden crash, a jarring of the body, an ambulance, ER, doctors, nurses, friends, family, prayers, comfort, and ultimately a feeling of being loved. The crash, disorientation, hurting, fear, and uncertainty were the low points which only got better as we quickly realized we were still loved by God and that God is still with us and in control. Now, this morning, I still hurt a little and I keep my dear Marty in my prayers as she heals and her broken bones mend, but I find myself focusing on other things, the overwhelming love of God for each of us, you and me, and His Church in Mexico.



My 2017 Nissan Altima



Participants of the Luther Academy presentation

May 20, Pentecost Sunday, was certainly a day of celebration for all of us. In Matamoros, Mexico it was the culmination of an extended weekend of fellowship, edification, and celebrating the gifts of our Heavenly Father. During that week many of the pastors, deaconesses, and leadership of God's Church in Mexico from Matamoros to Tijuana, Chile and Belize to Pflugerville & Waxahachie, Texas, gathered together at Santisima Trinidad Lutheran Church in Matamoros. The Luther Academy sponsored a three-day workshop led by Professor Rev. Carlos Schumann on Sanctification. Future plans for the Lutheran Synod of Mexico were discussed, Carne Asada with all the trimmings was prepared on Saturday evening by Leticia and Yolanda, cooked by Pastor Isaac, served by Omar, and enjoyed by all. A great three or four days!



President Rev. Isaac Garcia praying over Pastor Omar Garza

The highlight of the weekend was the ordination of Pastor Omar Marin Garza Martinez into the holy ministry. Rev. Omar Garza has been studying for years under the leadership of various entities assisting the Lutheran Synod of Mexico. He has recently completed the necessary courses that were offered in the program "Pastoral Formation for Latin America" offered by Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana under the tutelage of Rev. Daniel Conrad who serves in Mexico City. Rev. Garza is bi-lingual and has served the Lutheran Synod of Mexico and me through his translation skills. Rev. Omar Garza currently serves on the Executive Council as treasurer of the Lutheran Synod of Mexico. Rev. Omar Garza is also bi-vocational serving as Production manager at Universal Lighting Technologies in Matamoros.



Andrés, Leticia, Rev. Omar Garza, and Omar



1 Peter 5:2-4

²Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve;³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.



Rev. Norman Finke (KIMA)
&
Rev. Omar Garza

If you didn’t know this from any other way it says in John 1:14 that “The Word (Jesus) became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” The Lord is always at work among all of us, wherever we are, preparing ways that will enable us to spread the Good News of our salvation.



If you don’t believe that then you need to talk to Job Jimenez and see how God has been working in his life, and not always in ways that you would necessarily think, expect, or even desire. Here is a young man raised in a parsonage, maybe something like the prophet Samuel, was being groomed to be a pastor, served, loved, rejected, rebelled, till God wrapped His arms around him and said “Don’t be afraid, I’ve redeemed you. I’ve called your name. You’re mine. When you’re in over your head, I’ll be there with you. When you’re in rough waters, you will not go down. When you’re between a rock and a hard place, it won’t be a dead end—Because I am GOD, your personal God, The Holy of Israel, your Savior.

Here is a report that Job Jimenez recently shared. (next page)

Missionary Report of Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico
Lily of the Valleys Church

Greetings in the name of the Lord.

It is a pleasure to write you one more time to let you know the work we have done over the past few days.

I am happy to be able to work with the Iglesia Lirio de los Valles congregation in Tijuana Baja California, Mexico, located south of San Diego, CA.

It is a new call through the congregation and the church of the Lutheran Synod of Mexico. I am happy and encouraged to work on this new missionary challenge.

I am grateful to KIMA through the Rev. Norman Finke for his invaluable support to be here. Well, it is, thanks to your love and financial support that I have been able to move here to work in this new area in which we work to restore the unity with the ecclesiastical body of SLMAR (Lutheran Synod of Mexico).

God is good! The church Lirio del Valle had remained under multiple attacks from the enemy. Finally, after legal proceedings, we were able to reopen the church to the public on April 15, 2018.

Beginning our official work with only 7 members, God has been great and good and in less than 2 months we have managed to grow as a congregation, as old members returned, as well as new people, currently having an average and constant attendance of 20 adults, youth and children.



1000 GENERACIONES
SERVIR. INSTRUIR. JESUS. TRANSFORMACION

I am also grateful to 1000 Generaciones (Nonprofit Organization) [Deuteronomy 7:9; “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.”] because they have provided me a temporary place to stay, as well as continuous support with a borrowed car to move and perform the ecclesiastical work.

Thanks also to God for the evangelistic and missionary work that we have done in the company of my 1000 Generation brothers and also sister Melissa Solomon, where we have received brothers in the faith of Sacramento who with their work and love have been a blessing to others. Thank God for being able to collaborate a little in this great project.

We continue to visit members who have been affected by the many attacks of Satan. I ask for your prayers for God to supply what is necessary to visit, attend, and be able to bring words of encouragement and unity to begin or reopen new ministries in this area.

I also thank God for the possibility of working with the brothers of the Concordia Center, where they are an example of faith. Esperanza sells used clothing to support a ministry of 60 children who receive a breakfast every 15 day. I invite you to pray and if is your willingness to contribute to the development of this beautiful ministry. Likewise, we pray to God to be able with the Family of Juan Manuel Garcia (Carmelo) and his wife to begin a mission in this area.

Part of the missionary work I do is to have contact with the community, thanks for the life of my brothers Sadoc and Tere who have been the gateway to reach the sick, people in need and be able to carry the word of the gospel.

Part of the initial work in this community has been to catechize some of the members who are ready to be received and soon to be able to participate with the community of the saints in the bread and wine. Let us pray that this will soon be a great reality!



Another reason for joy is the beginning of musical classes among some young people of the Christian community. I pray God will supply everything necessary for our classes, as ability, availability, instruments and encouragement to participate in the Sunday service. They will be Wednesdays at 5 pm such classes for young people.



I thank God because last week God has done something wonderful! He has joined us in a worship service where Diana, my fiancée, along with 3 other people were confirmed in our faith GLORY TO GOD!

This unity was reflected in the visit of Rev. Isaac García, president of SLMAR, Rev. Samuel Pérez Pastor of San Juan Parish in Mexicali, Pastor Silva Yeomans of San Mateo and I presently Pastor of Parish Lirio de los Valles. Where we all participate, we live and celebrate the confirmation of 4 new members of San Mateo. Thank God for this.



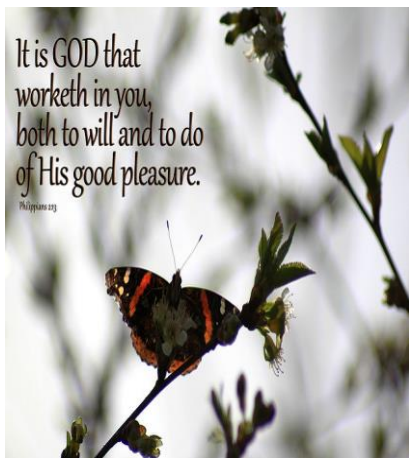
Let us pray for San Mateo and his Pastor Saul Silva who begins his studies in September. Let's pray that God will meet his needs because he does not have enough time to attend congregations and studies because of his work. It is the purpose of our national church to prepare him and be ordained, however his work absorbs all of his days now to work in the ministry, and now that he is enrolled in the FPH program of Fort Wayne Seminary through the Dominican Reformer Seminary, it will be even more difficult for his time. Pray for God to provide a salary for him while he prepares and is ordained.

Finally, I ask for your prayers for my future marriage. We have decided to change the date to March, this for economic reasons. I ask for your prayers that God will cover our expenses in order to have a party where everyone is invited. Also, for God to supply everything necessary for the transfer of Diana to Tijuana and be able to serve in this community where God has called me.

I also ask for God to supply everything necessary to finish my theological studies and be able to be ordained.

We are in contact to continue together in the work of the Lord.

Job Jimenez
Lay-pastor Job Jimenez



These are beautiful stories of God and faith in action!

These things that we have just heard about didn't happen by chance. They were the will of God and He uses people like you and me to implement His will. Listen to the words God has given us through the Apostle Paul in Romans 10:14-17 The Message (MSG):

But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? And how is anyone going to tell them, unless someone is sent to do it? That's why Scripture exclaims, A sight to take your breath away! Grand processions of people telling all the good things of God!

But not everybody is ready for this, ready to see and hear and act. Isaiah asked what we all ask at one time or another: "Does anyone care, God? Is anyone listening and believing a word of it?" The point is: Before you trust, you have to listen. But unless Christ's Word is preached, there's nothing to listen to.

God loved the world so much that He willingly gave His Son so that whoever, wherever they may be, believes in Him

would have everlasting life. That is a pretty astonishing love. Where is your love centered? On Him and His will? On self and wealth? Or are you seeking His righteousness? Matthew 6:33 (ERV) ³³**What you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what he wants you to do. Then he will give you all these other things you need.**

Reality! It's not just going through the motions, showing up at church every Sunday morning, or saying our prayers before each meal. Are we doing these things to have a relationship with God because we think we have to do something to be in a relationship with God, or is it wanting to be there to do those things that please our God, our friend, our best buddy?

The people in Mexico that I have met are really in to it wanting to share the Good News with others in their communities. They, as well as a lot of people, are hampered by how much time they can spend doing this while taking care of their own needs. That's a problem we all face. But there are some who are stepping forward to share that Good News with others because they see the overwhelming need to share that Good News with people so that they will be among those eagerly awaiting the return of the LORD.

So, the question continues to jump out before me, what are we, what are you, willing to do as we join Jesus on His mission as He provides the way to eternal salvation to all people? My wife and I have currently decided to give \$200 a month to KIMA to help in this project. I am writing to you to ask for your support to help these dear people in Mexico who are now getting it together. They love their LORD and want others around them to feel the love from the LORD that they themselves are experiencing.

They have one man who works in a casino during the week, leads worship on weekends, and at the same time is trying to find a way to study to become an ordained pastor. Another man used to make his living cooking and selling meat on the streets but now serves three mission sites in a town hundreds of miles away from his extended family. There is another man who worked in construction and was helping in the Praise Band at one of our churches who felt a calling to start a mission in a town that was highly controlled by the cartels. He literally puts his life and that of his family in God's hands as they go out there each week to share the Good News of Salvation. There is another man who finished college and was trying to establish his own construction business, got married, has a beautiful new daughter, and now wants to begin studies to become a pastor.

I'm not talking about people who earn \$30 an hour or \$60 to \$100 thousand a year, I'm talking about people who wouldn't make it above our poverty line. But they have a love for the Lord and are willing to do what they feel is necessary to share that Good News of Salvation.

So, the question goes around and around. What are you willing to do? What does God want you to do? Where does He want your priorities to be? Only you can answer that as we will all have to do some day.



I think that Matthew 25: 31-46 is very interesting. You know, that is the story of the sheep and the goats on the last day as we all stand before our Heavenly Father. God speaks to both groups and they both respond with basically the same answer, **'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?'**³⁸ **When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?'**³⁹ **When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'** And the LORD gives them both basically the same answer, ⁴⁰**"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'** The one group is making

excuses as to why they didn't help while the other one thought their actions were just a part of the way God made them to be. Love, love, love!

⁸Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I

became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. ¹³So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13



We are pleased to announce once again that Koinoneo Independent Mission Agency - KIMA - continues to receive Choice Dollars designated by some of you through Thrivent Financial's Thrivent Choice® program. Last month we received a total of \$101 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. 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 \$6,000 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 others will be lead 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 shaker.

If you would like to donate, please go to this URL:

<https://app.moonclerk.com/pay/3npxmz29g32a>

We can be contacted at 109 Noel, Waxahachie 75165 or by phone at 972-935-8017

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