

Feed My Lambs International

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a monthly newsletter written by Gary Sandmann
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*He calms the storm, so that the waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet;
so He guides them to their desired haven. Psalm 107:29-30*

Dear loved ones,

Looks can be deceiving. Although this looks like a great time on the water (upper left), I didn't even want to look at this picture, or any water for that matter, for a couple of days. In my lifetime, it now stands Marlin 3 Gary 0 for those keeping score. This last loss was by bone-crushing, gut-wrenching knockout! By the time we got back to shore, I was begging for land, so seasick that I needed medical attention at shore and almost went to the emergency room as a result of our Saturday morning diversion. I didn't need to go to the emergency room...that day. But I did need an emergency room visit right before we flew out of Los Cabos in route back to Cuernavaca. The mission to Cuernavaca- Los Cabos- Cuernavaca and back home to Monterrey turned into the most physically and emotionally draining mission that I remember. It's amazing how things we can anticipate so much, don't turn out at all how we might expect. I mentioned to my brother-in-law Chayo and friend Alex that I'd like to go marlin fishing for a 50th birthday memory. What a memory it was! It wasn't how I thought it would be, but I learned a lot, and my favorite memory was how my friends took care of me when they realized my worsening condition. I couldn't even walk without assistance when we, finally, got back to shore.

All that being said, we had a great mission! We brought a van load of blankets and supplies down for the kids club, church, and outreach efforts. The ministry in Cuernavaca is growing. Pastor Chayo asked me to come to the family's restaurant and give my testimony before they opened the restaurant for the day. They have service right there every week. Chayo said they started with a couple workers, now they have 25-30 every week! After service, Monica came up to us in tears, recognizing her opportunity for a new life in Christ. One more soul. I preached in Cuernavaca a couple times, and then we flew out to Los Cabos.

We wanted to visit our friends in Los Cabos for some time now. After Alex and their oldest daughter were abducted in 2012, they looked for a safer place to live and ended up in the tourist friendly confines of Los Cabos. We visited the churches they are connected with. The view from the pulpit is the greatest one in Los Cabos. One of my favorite moments came after one of the services. A poor, elderly woman came up to us and gave us some gum. She sells them just to get by. Her legs were bad, her clothes were thin and tattered. She started crying. I put my arm around her and we prayed for her as she wept. We let her know she was important, and not alone. Another praise was the marriage conference that my brother and sister-in-law led. 33 couples attended (pictured above right), what a beautiful time we had. I also met Martin in Los Cabos, he's an ex-con that founded a half-way house. He said many of the people that stay there are rich Americans. It didn't surprise me, I wondered how many of them put their beach house in Cabo as their ultimate life goal, and then found it empty.

I really wanted this trip to be encouraging to Mati and Alex, who have been through so much and have so many responsibilities to many. I think we accomplished that too, they picked up all our expenses in Los Cabos, including 6 nights at City Express Hotel and the marlin search. I do have some bad news though, Chayo caught the fishing bug, and oh how he lamented that nice tuna that got away at the boat! "He was right there, I then I lost him!" Welcome to fishing.

On the actual day of my birthday, we were back in Cuernavaca and I was preaching. I preached on God's perfect plan and how His plan so often is not what we would have expected, or thought that we wanted. Earlier this year, I was hoping for a vacation, Minnie and me alone in Los Cabos. That was the perfect plan, or so I thought. God turned it into Minnie and me, my brother and sister-in-law, and our little Sophia on a 2 week long mission with lots of travel, delays, traffic jams, illness....(and did I mention the baby?) well, you get the idea. He alone has the eternal vantage point. As I invited the brethren for a time of worship, I reminded them that God wants three responses from us and that these are also most healthy for us. I trust You. I believe in You. I love You (even when I don't get it). Sometimes it is extremely difficult to conform to God's eternal plan for our lives, but I was reminded of the response Sophia gave me the other day when I told her "No." and that she couldn't have what she thought she wanted. She ran back to me and gave me a kiss. I thank God for His eternal plan to save every last soul that will come at all cost to save us. Thank God for His plan to save Monica in a restaurant service in Cuernavaca.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone.

Praise reports

Prayer requests/ upcoming events:

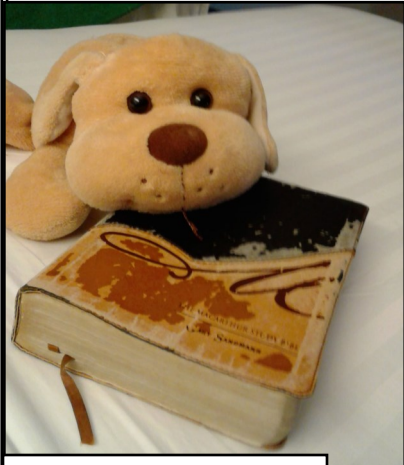
We are thrilled about the growing ministry in Cuernavaca. Pictured is a special celebration at Club Victoria. (Victory Club) Betty holds Bible classes, helps with homework, life skills...3 times a week with 2 or 3 of her own baby grandchildren in tow. My nieces are also helping this effort.

Chayo and Betty have found some land in Cuernavaca on which they'd like to build a children's home. It would be another great undertaking for them and a lifetime commitment. Please be praying for God's will regarding this vision and how we might come along side to help if they move forward with it. I'll keep you posted. Either way, we are seeing some great victories in Cuernavaca.

After the message on God's perfect plan, one young lady came weeping to the altar. She came back home to God that night! She left home and married an extremely abusive man that nearly killed her, she literally had to flee and go into hiding to save her life and that of her 4-year-old son.

After service, her 4-year-old reminded her, "Now you have to come to church with me." I just wanted to mention that this same 4-year-old rebuked his grandfather for not listening to music that was God-honoring. My niece Acsa is his favorite teacher.

"She teaches me about God!" May he continue to grow in wisdom and stature! Please pray for Pastor Chayo and Betty and especially for wisdom and healing regarding Chayo's sight. You and I are a vital support to this ministry and Pastor Chayo wanted to thank all of you that support us and them.



Two things I cannot live without; My Bible and Sophia's doggie that she brings everywhere!

Our next missions this month will be the opposite accommodations of City Express! We'll be headed SE to different regions in San Luis Potosí in November. One of the missions is another 1st time visit requested by a longtime pastor friend that is helping out an area whose pastor recently died. The other mission will be with our dear friends Pastor Cesar and his wife Hilda. some of you may remember Juanita's story or the 9-wheelbarrow line from past missions there.

We are also preparing for a return to Cuernavaca and then to Guerrero at the end of the year to do a teen camp as well as some other events.

And as you know, Christmas time is busy at Los Canelos and we continue our ministry to our local missions in Hormiguero and Berlanga Garcia as well...

I am pleased to report that Sophia's transition back to our care went seamlessly (at least for her!). She did good on the long mission trip, but sure had a hard time understanding why she needed to be in that car seat so much. It was fun to see her so happy to be back home running around!

I thank God for the birthday celebration the brethren surprised me with in Cuernavaca, and then there was another the following Sunday (pictured right) when we got back to Monterrey and preached at our little church in Hector colony. What a blessing. Thanks to many of you as well for all the cards and greetings. It was great turning 50, and truly, the best is yet to come.

God bless you all.

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Love from Gary and Minnie and all your family in Mexico.