



... Partnering with the Holy Spirit to empower Mexican people to grasp all of God's full purpose

Dennis and Lucy Smith, missionaries to Mexico

www.ManosdeDios.org

February 2009 Newsletter

This Newsletter includes...

- *Berta's house building project*
- *Women's Rehab Center update*
- *Parsonage to be built in March*
- *Praises and Prayer requests*



Jose Louis and Berta inside old home.

This February newsletter started off to be shorter as we are aware that you just finished reading the January newsletter! But, we are leaving for Mexico to build a home in

Desemboque with a church group from Medicine Lodge, Kansas and then returning to Peñasco for prison ministry and the presentation of a motor home to a family to be used as a house! And, we wanted to share the many of the blessings from the month of February (complete with much requested photos) and to ask for prayer coverage for the March projects before leaving....so it is long once again!

.You never know!

In early February, Manos de Dios and Peñasco Christian Fellowship decided to partner together (labor and cost) to replace a roof for a well deserving member of their church. We only had two weeks to organize and get volunteers lined up from our group and local church members in



Berta stands where her home once stood

Peñasco. No problem! It is only a roof and "we have power tools"!

Pat and a crew from PCF started tearing the roof off on Monday morning and that is when the problems started. (Our Manos de Dios group planned to come down on Thursday to construct the new roof.) The interior walls and the center support walls were riddled with termite holes and the entire house was very unstable. A new roof on that house would just make the walls collapse. Pat discussed this with us and Pastor Stan and we all decided that the Lord would provide (which meant Berta was getting an entirely new house). Pastor Stan had a few extra dollars he could add to the project and he was

confident that there would be another group that could help finish the project. I then contacted our group of volunteers to let them know they would be building A WHOLE HOUSE, not simply replacing a roof! “No problem” was the reply.



Lalo (PCF) lays foundation for new house.

benefit of a person in need, to make drastic changes in their plans and expectations... all without a word of complaint. Even though there was a language barrier (causing mistaken hand signals and wrong answers given when questions were asked in Spanish), we all had a wonderful time and many bonds were formed between the two groups.

And the rest of the story goes like this. We got the house built! This included installation of

The men from PCF stepped up to the challenge and completely demolished the house, removed the rubble and then poured the concrete slab. Fortunately, they had a mixer but we still had to load 80 shovels full of gravel into the mixer by hand. I know there were 80 because I had to shovel 40 of them per hopper!

By the time the Manos de Dios crew came down to Peñasco on Thursday night, the slab was dry and they had three walls already up. It was a blessing to see the teams from Mexico and the United States working together for the



Dennis prepares to install ceiling light.

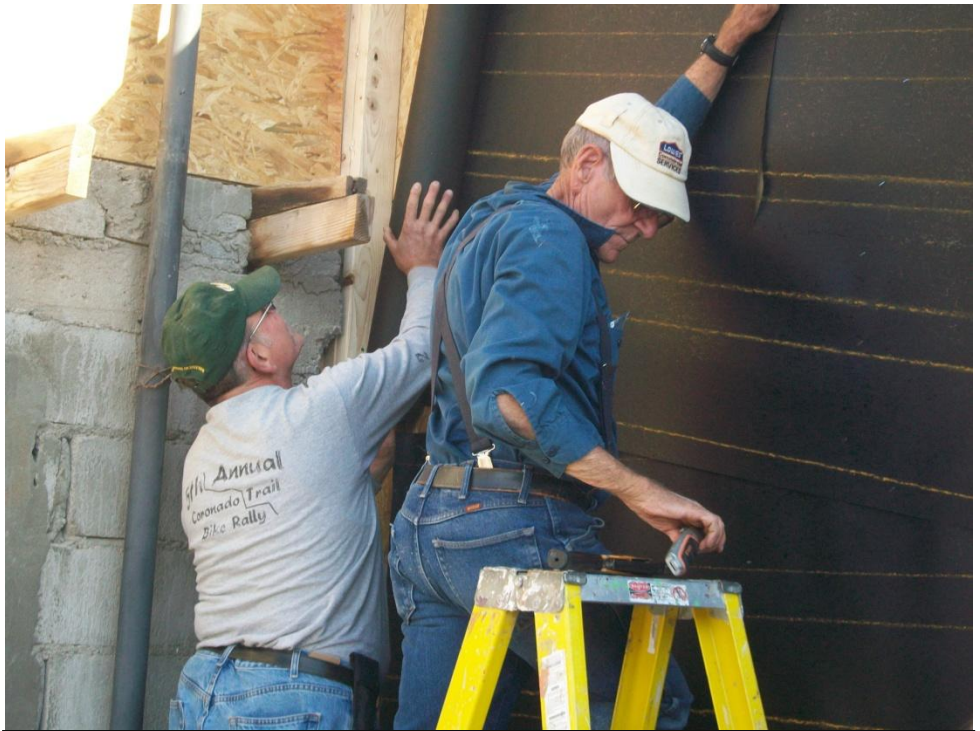


Terry and Paul installing roofing material.

electrical wiring and light fixtures, interior and exterior doors, windows. We also papered and chicken wired (in preparation for stucco) the exterior. To finish it off, a team was coming from Canada to assist in another project with PCF and they volunteered to install the insulation and drywall and stucco the outside of the house. This was a complete project that came together by coordination from our Lord with assistance from His servants of three different countries! This was truly an **international house build project.**

Thank you, Pastor Stan, for allowing us to partner with your church and for the additional financing on this project. And thank you to the Canadian group for your extra effort and funding!

Manos de Dios was blessed to have Marty and Cathy, Albert, Jack, Debbie and Terry, Paul and Vicki, and Brian from Pantano Christian Church and Arden from The Rock Church in Sahuarita helping us on this project. They were an excellent group that worked hard, laughed, cried and served the Lord in so many ways. We were blessed to have them!



Albert and Arden prepare walls for stucco



Enrique (PCF) installs electrical wiring.

Thanks again team! We could have not done it without you! Lucy and I also want to thank the people that stepped up and made financial donations toward this project. May God bless you for your generosity!

We learn or are showed something by God on each project. On this project we were reminded that we are not in charge, to accept changes without complaining, to have faith, and to rely on the Lord to help us accomplish His goals. We did and they were. You can't ask for more than that. Thank you, Lord, for blessing us and using us to bless Berta and Jose Louis.

As we continue to struggle with making the right decisions as to who receives a blessing, how to spend our time, how to reach out to the hurting and lost with God's Good News...I rely on going to Scripture for guidance. These verses help me in many ways. Check them out. They may help you with your decisions, too.

- **Galatians 6:9-10 reminds me not to give up.**
- **Philippians 2:3-4 helps me to keep the right attitude.**
- **Colossians 3:1-17 helps me remember that all I do must be done in a manner that brings Glory to Christ**

Dios te bendiga, Dennis
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"I will show you what he is like who comes to Me and hears My words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears My words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete." Luke 6:47-49

It was an international gathering that Saturday afternoon. Gathered together to dedicate and bless Berta's new house were:

- the many men from Compañerismo Cristiano de Peñasco (Peñasco Christian Fellowship church) that had voluntarily worked the entire week on tearing down and re-building Berta's house
- the twelve volunteers from Manos de Dios that had driven down from Tucson to re-build the house
- a few representatives from a Canadian group that were going to work on the house during the coming week
- Pastor Stan and Becky Tedrow
- Missionary, project foreman and translator, Pat Rico

Dennis spoke about the importance of building a house, as well as our lives, on a firm foundation. He read Luke 6:47-49 in English and Lalo read it in Spanish. This house building project was a vivid example of how important it is to have a solid, strong foundation at the base of every home and every life. We agree that Jesus is the Rock that we build our lives on. We praised HIM for being our Savior and cornerstone. We rejoiced over the new home that would give shelter and security to Berta and Jose Louis. We prayed in English and Spanish to dedicate the home to the Lord and asked Him to bless it and all who contributed to its construction.



Thank you, Lord!

First time team members tell their story...

Trip to Puerto Peñasco: (Marty) Where to begin? This trip has been such a blessing to Cathy and me and it is very hard to describe. Thank you, Dennis and Lucy, for your hospitality and prayers. I haven't worked so hard or laughed so hard in a very long time, and I plan to let you in on some of the laughter a little later. Friday went well, Paul and Vicki showed up just on time and we loaded all our bags in our truck. We then met Jack, Brian, Arden, Terry and Debbie at McDonald's on Kenny Rd and Ajo. After prayer, we got underway. I prayed for green lights at the border so that we didn't have to wait long getting into Mexico, First prayer answered, three greens for our three vehicles. Then, to get through Sonoyta without getting a speeding ticket. I found that my truck will not idle at 15 kilometer per hour and I had to ride the brakes a lot. Second prayer answered, no tickets. Now, just to find the place we are going.

So much desert and so little time! We found our way just fine and found Lucy and Dennis waiting and ready to help us settle in at our places for the weekend. It couldn't have been better. We had never met Debbie and Terry, but in such a small trailer (the one Dennis and Lucy set up for us), you get to know each other real well and what a pleasure they were. We were especially pleased to find that our coffee taste were very similar. We all lined up 'mummy style' shuffling to the coffee pot each morning, rising much earlier than we would at home.

After coffee we were ready to get in there and put a roof on, but first breakfast and a praise meeting at Dennis and Lucy's casita. The breakfast, praise meeting and prayer time were needed and exceptional. Of course, the news from the work place included the information that as the other group had been removing the roof for us they found the whole house eaten away by termites and the other team had taken everything down, poured a foundation and reframed the whole house. We assisted in finishing the framing, wiring, roofing, installing doors and windows. This all sounds so easy, but believe me when I say, "it is much easier said than done!"

The first night we all went to bed aching and wondering if we were up to the task of completing this home before Sunday. By Saturday evening we were again exhausted, but the roof was on, lights on and doors locked, and a set of keys passed to the owner of an old bathroom, with a new home built around it. We had a dedication service at the home with Berta's pastor and all the builders, Mexican and American, together. Jose and I embraced after he had picked on me all weekend about my feeble attempts at speaking the language and saying something like "good day" to his question of "how are you doing?" There was lots of laughter from them and from the group that understood their language. We had many more occasions like this to laugh and fellowship and if Jose invites you to have fish that he prepared, do not hesitate. It was a taste of heaven, even if lunch was served a little late in the day (3pm) for us gringos.

Marty and Brian cut lumber for house.



Cathy holds Alejandra on our visit to encourage Margarita in her casita.



(Cathy) I didn't know what to expect and hadn't spent time with 'just' women in a long time. Marty and I are so use to doing everything together and making sure the other is being cared for. I have to admit I felt guilty knowing the guys were working so hard and I felt useless, just hanging out with the girls. We visited many families in the barrio to encourage, take little gifts, and pray. After lunch on Saturday we laughed so hard and I had so much fun just being there I finally understood why I was there. It was as much for me to learn how to get in touch with women again and not feel guilty for doing it. Everyone had a job to do and God was and is so good to me. I learned that there are 13 shrimp in a dozen, and Marty explained what BIMBO (the Mexican bread company) means in English.

(Some of our 'inside' jokes!) Once we got back to the states, Marty informed us he couldn't speak English. Then, when we were getting ready for bed he learned how to drink his pills. We were so tired we were ready to call it a night and Thanked God for bringing us back home safely.

(Marty) Another praise that we would like to share with you and is the greatest blessing our Lord could have given to Cathy and me. We have had a strained relationship with our daughter, Charity and her husband, Dan for at least nine years and haven't seen or spoken with her for at least five years. She has referred to us as Martin and Cathy and has not allowed us to see our granddaughters.

On Monday, after our return from Mexico she called asking us to forgive her and called us Mom and Dad. We made plans to meet the next weekend. Our families have been praying for this for all these years! God is Good and He keeps blessing us every time we turn around. We are trying to learn to just go and God will be there with arms open wide.

As I said, "We can never out give God!" We just thank you both (Dennis and Lucy) for the opportunity to serve Him and this family. There was one more opportunity for service near the conclusion of our trip home. We had a chance opportunity to serve an angel unawares, and God knows what we did and has blessed it. A cold drink of water, food and place to sit, it is too much to explain in a letter.

May God reach out and touch you all with the Holy Spirit and then may you go in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is none like Him, to save and heal, a God of restoration and peace beyond comprehension.

Martin and Cathy Parker
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Thank you, Desert Son Community Church, for becoming one of Manos de Dios partner churches. We look forward to being God's hands and feet together in Mexico. Desert Son plans to help us under gird pastors in Sonora, such as Pastor Manuel. They have already committed to provide craft supplies and refreshments for a Vacation Bible School in July. They hope to send a small team of volunteers, as well. They have set a goal of building a home for a family in need in October. Women in their church are already making quilts and knitting sweaters (see photo here) for precious families and children in Mexico. Thank you, Pastor Tim, Diana and Desert Son Church for your support and prayers!

Esperanza Women's Rehab Center in Puerto Peñasco has a new director, Ana Krause Bravo. The center serves women who need help breaking away from the chains of alcohol, drugs, or prostitution. Ana and her staff use God's principles to restore and rejuvenate these women's lives. Their days include Bible Study, chapel, crafts (see photo of donated yarn used to crochet scarves and purses), household tasks, cooking, gardening and singing. Pastora Rafaela of El Sembrador church comes regularly to share the Word and to encourage the women in their sewing. Please pray for Ana and the (8) women who are currently living in the rehab center. Ana assists with our ministry to the women in the prison, also. Thank you, Lord, for Ana's caring heart. Encourage her as she serves You, Lord, by serving these women!



Leo (Leonora) is a 'quiet servant' who is constantly assisting Pastors Lupe and Rafaela of El Sembrador Church. She and her husband own a lot in the 'invasion' area outside of Puerto Peñasco. They have not been able to build a home and are paying rent for sub-standard housing. Manos de Dios has received the generous donation of motor home. God has led us to give this motor



home to Leo and Miquel to place on their land. The motor home will be delivered March 21st. Watch for photos in our March newsletter.

Margarita is working hard at building up her client base for her seamstress business, "Creaciones" Maggy. She sewed 'dresses' for Vicki's dogs, Chopper and Carly. The dogs will be participating in the children's outreach planned for Desemboque in March, dressed as 'clowns' alongside Vicki. Thank you, Margarita, for providing their costumes. (And Lucy's new clown costume, too!) Watch for photos in the March newsletter.



Pastor's family to receive a home!

Pastor Ruben, Erika, Yamiletzi and Caleb live in a small room at the back of the Amistad Cristiano church in Desemboque. Manos de Dios has watched for the past two years as they faithfully serve this fishing village about 2 hours south of Puerto Peñasco. We have seen their need for a home and have prayed that God would provide. The United Methodist Church of Medicine Lodge Kansas contacted Manos de Dios about partnering to build a house in Sonora. They wanted to do something 'outside of the box' and had the funding and time to devote. Thank you, Lord, for providing a team that will build a parsonage on the church property in Desemboque! March 15-19 a team of adults and youth, along with 2 Manos de Dios volunteers will devote their spring break to blessing this pastor's family. Please under-gird this project in prayer. **Pray:**



- that God be glorified by this entire project. That He will direct us to do exactly what He has already planned to be done. That we will be sensitive to His will as we undergird the local pastor.
- for safe travel for the entire team as they travel to and from Desemboque, Sonora. They will be traveling down March 13 and 14th and be returning March 20 and 21st.
- draw the children and parents to yourself as they hear Your Good News through the drama, song and videos presented. May they see you, Jesus, in our smiles, faces and hugs. May we show your love in our actions and words.
- bless this unique opportunity of using this group from Kansas to share your love and may everything we do be in alignment with Your Vision for this church (Amistad Cristiano) and this community.

Lucy's notes:

Currently reading [Intercessory Prayer](#) by Dutch Sheets. Wow! A must read for those seeking to learn more about praying for others. Preparing for upcoming short term mission teams by singing with The Newsboys' "The Mission" and Michael W. Smith's "A New Hallelujah".

Seeking to know God's will **daily** for my life and our mission. Constantly asking the Holy Spirit to direct us to where God is already working, that we might know how He would have us join Him. Thanking God for His awesome love and seeking to love Him with all my heart, soul and mind!

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Donations delivered in February

To Sonoyta:

Pastors Julio & Lucy Vargas, Nueva Creación church:

- 4 bags women's clothes
- 2 bags of shoes
- 8 bag children's clothes
- 1 box children's pants
- 1 box children's athletic uniform shirts
- 4 boxes medical supplies
- 200 pair children's scissors
- 100 pillow cases
- 200 towels
- 2,300 pencils
- 48 pencil sharpeners
- 10 soccer balls and bag
- 1 case crayons
- 1 box juvenile athletic sport shirts
- 1 blanket and 1 handmade quilt
- 1 box of softball equipment
- 7 handmade children's sweaters

To El Diamante:

Pastors Alfonso & Angelita,
Templo Peniel

- 1250 pencils
- 5 handmade children's sweaters
- Funding to stock church food bank



Karla models her new handmade sweater & cap

To Desemboque:

Pastors Ruben & Erika, Amistad Cristiano

- 1250 pencils and 48 pencil sharpeners
- 48 children's scissors
- 5 handmade children's sweaters
- Funding to stock church food bank

To Puerto Peñasco:

- 1 large box of yarn (Women's Rehab Center)
- 2 boxes women's clothing (Women's Rehab Center)
- 1 Box of women's shoes (Women's Rehab Center)
- 2 boxes of men's clothing (Men's Rehab Center)
- 2 boxes children's clothing (Women's Rehab Center)
- 156 children's scissors (Pastor Manuel)
- 48 pencil sharpeners (Pastor Manuel)
- 4000 pencils (local churches)
- 1 box sport athletic shirts (Pastor Manuel)
- 4 soccer balls (Pastor Manuel)
- 1,250 pencils (Peñasco Christian Fellowship)
- 5 handmade quilts (Pastor Manuel)
- 25 handmade children's sweaters (local pastors)

Manos de Dios encourages and equips families, pastors, prisoners and communities in Sonora, Mexico. We are trusting in God totally to provide for our needs and the needs of those we reach out to. Please consider partnering with

Manos de Dios, a 501 c 3 not-for-profit corporation. Your tax-deductible donations will have ETERNAL value as they impact lives for Christ in Sonora, Mexico!

Donations can be made on our website www.ManosdeDios.org or with checks made payable to Manos de Dios, NFP. Contact us for our mailing address and/or online banking donation information.

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