



... 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

August 2009 Newsletter

This Newsletter includes...

- Paying it forward: Women sew school uniforms
- Encouraging and Equipping Pastors
- August in Mexico
- Swing set for Church Children

Paying it forward: Women sew school uniforms

When the Pantano Quilters group gave the industrial sewing machine to Margarita for her micro business, 'Creaciones Maggy', they requested that, sometime in the future, she give a hand up to someone else. When we started to collect for this year's school uniform distribution, Margarita offered to sew some skirts for some children's uniforms. One of the children who needed a skirt was Mayerli. Her parents didn't have the funds to purchase the required school uniform for her to attend first grade at Nueva Creación elementary. So, Margarita measured Mayerli and we went to the fabric store to purchase the necessary plaid material. We purchased two meters of fabric, enough for two skirts.



Edwin models his *new-to-him* school uniform

Margarita sewed one of the skirts. Mayerli's

mom, Nati, expressed an interest in learning how to sew. Margarita

offered to teach her some about sewing and they would sew the second skirt together. (Nati has yet to take her up on the offer.) Manos de Dios provided two red polo shirts and a pair of black shoes, as well as a new backpack to put with the handmade skirt. Mayerli was ready for school!

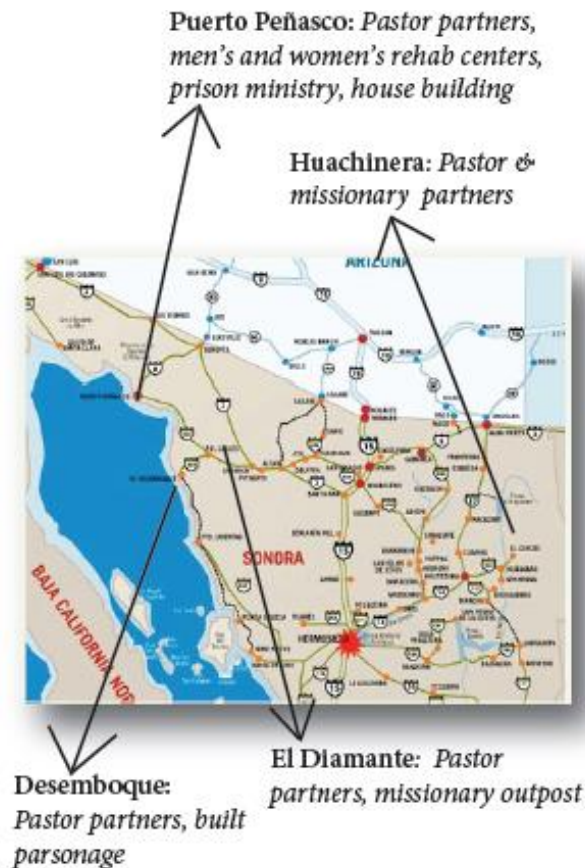
This year's school uniform drive and distribution was different than the previous two years. The drop in the economy affected the amount of funds donated. And the churches had MANY families who needed assistance with school uniforms. This caused many of the churches to work to extend the funds that were provided. 'Thank you, Lord!' The women in some of the churches purchased fabric and volunteered their time to sew the necessary skirts and pants. Manos de Dios provided 150 new, white polo shirts; numerous gently used pants, shorts, skirts and shoes; and new backpacks. Six churches received help with their student uniforms. Many, many children are now attending school wearing their required uniforms. Thank you for your generous support.

We are blessed to be a blessing!



Margarita with Mayerli, wearing her new school uniform.

Update on 'encouraging and equipping pastors'



Here is a map showing the part of Sonora Mexico where Manos de Dios currently works with partner pastors. Our mission includes:

Encouraging, equipping & empowering these evangelical, indigenous PASTORS to advance the Kingdom. This includes encouraging and assisting them in working toward their God-given vision. Activities include praying; partnering in evangelical outreaches; providing educational training, Bibles & resources; stocking food banks (one currently); building & repairing homes & buildings; and school uniform distribution. We currently have an active relationship with eleven (11) pastors and their wives in northern Sonora, Mexico.

In August we met with eight pastors and their wives! Each of these couples has dedicated their entire life to serving God, their church and their community. They have a multitude of gifts and different callings. They all have a heart for the people in their neighborhoods, city and the country of Mexico. We have grown to respect and love them and are humbled each time we have an opportunity to spend time with them. Each time we meet, with we try to include two questions. "What is God placing on your heart?" and "How can Manos de Dios come along side you to help you fulfill this God-given vision?" This month the responses were as varied as the couples we visited with. Here is a partial list:

- We want to develop a stronger worship portion of our church services. We have gifted people, but lack musical instruments and sound equipment.
- Please pray for us. Our church is under spiritual attack.
- God has called us to do feeding programs in three locations of our community. Please pray with us for the provision of the food to feed so many hungry people.
- We need to raise up strong leaders in our church. Can you help us with leadership training?
- Many in our community know God, but are choosing to live 'in the world' i.e. gossiping, criticizing brothers and sisters in Christ, committing adultery, spousal abuse, and more. Please join us in prayer walking our community to call down God's Spirit in a powerful way on our church and community. We need a fence around our property for security. We need a room in which to hold Sunday School classes.
- God has placed a dream of building a large church building in our community. Can you help us with this?

- We want to reach the youth in our community. We would like to plan a youth concert. Do you have a group that can come and help us with this project to reach youth for Christ? A Christian brother in a wheelchair needs a home for his family. He publishes a Christian newsletter. Men in the community will build the two room house for him. A church in Phoenix has committed to the funds for the floor and walls. Can you help with the remaining \$500 for the roof materials?
- The Lord has laid it on my heart to mentor two couples to become Pastors. I have committed to teaching them weekly until they have the knowledge that they need to start a church. This will take about 2 years. I don't know where they will go, but I know that God will call them when the time comes. Can you help us by providing Crown Financial manuals (in Spanish)* so I can include a good foundation in Godly finances with this training?
- God has given us the vision of providing "Restoration Ministry". Each location He calls us to, needs restoration from hurts and difficult situations. We use the gifts He has given us to facilitate this process. He has given us Psalms 126 as one of our guiding verses. We have a piece of land, but have not been able to save money (from our small salary) to build our own home. Our dream is to have our own home.**

We then prayed together. We thanked God for each couple, God's provision and His plan for their lives. We presented their requests to our Lord and asked that the Lord bless these couples, their marriages, their families and their churches. We asked for more than the gifts...we asked for more of The Giver! They often prayed for us. Mexican Pastors pray powerful prayers! We were blessed by simply being with them.

Please join us in praying for these Pastors here in the state of Sonora. Thank you for your support of Manos de Dios, that enables us to help provide for some of these needs.

*Manos de Dios delivered six student manuals, one leader manual and three Su Cuenta books to this pastor in September. Our home church in Tucson, Pantano Christian Church, donated a portion of these supplies.

** The Rock of Sahuarita Church will be building a home for this pastor in October 2009!!

For the King and His Kingdom, Lucy@ManosdeDios.org

Church receives new Playground Equipment!



A Manos de Dios supporter asked us to talk with one of our pastor partners about what her Youth Group might provide for their church. They wanted to do a fundraiser to help children in Mexico. The pastor replied that they did not have any where for the children to play outdoors at their church. They dreamed of a swing set/play equipment for the children to use before and after Sunday School and during Vacation Bible School (when they average 120 children per day). They didn't have room on the church property, but they offered the front yard of the parsonage, only one house away from the church. Our supporter donated an amount sufficient to purchase a multi-stage play equipment for this small church. We received permission from the Mexican Border guards to cross the border with this and other necessary donations in August. The pastor and one youth worked for five days putting this play set together! The children were able to enjoy it the very next Sunday.



The donors received a handmade card/poster expressing the church's thanks for the gift. The names of all the church children were listed on the card and photos were included from the dedication ceremony they held around the new play set!



Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' **Matthew 22:37-39**

August in Puerto Peñasco



Playa Bonita campground on August 15, 2009.

August is not a time to be in Puerto Peñasco. Heat and humidity are to the extreme and so is the wind. It can be 106 degrees with the humidity at about 80 percent. Then, you hope for a breeze because you begin to sweat before you can walk ten feet. If a breeze does come up, you are blasted with sand and that sand sticks to the sweat that is covering your body. About this time you hope that the breeze will stop because it is so uncomfortable, but it is too late! The wind has glued the sand to the sweat on your body and clothes. You are starting to develop jock itch even though you are not playing sports and if you are wearing shoes your feet feel like they are in a furnace. Your hair has become wet, then covered in sand, then turned stiff and wind-blown into a hair style that cannot be duplicated. Other than that, August is not a bad month.

As I said, August is not a time to be in Peñasco; that is unless you are a resident or serving our Lord in the community. Then it is your home, a place where your friends and family are, and a place you will love in spite of its hostilities. And, I have not even mentioned the worry about violence; high unemployment; and the lack of food, water and basic necessities. Add all these things together and you will have a glimpse of what life has been like in Puerto Peñasco (and countless other communities in northern Mexico) this past summer.

Through the adversity of the summer, the people of Peñasco have shown hope, determination, community spirit, and shared the love of Jesus with their fellow community members. There is prayer on the mountain overlooking the Malecón every Friday morning at six am (when it has cooled off to 90 degrees) and community prayer held at a different church every Saturday morning (also at six am). Lucy goes out into the barrio to pray with and for many people that she has befriended. I have even been known to do

small work projects (as early in the day as possible). The prison ministry is in full swing no matter what the weather conditions. (Lucy and her team have an especially challenging time because they meet with the women in a small room with little ventilation and no air conditioner). The school children start school in August and laugh and play as if it were seventy degrees.

One of the many things I like about the Mexican people is that they don't complain very much. When you talk about the weather, it is in passing. If you comment to a person about their not having a job, they mention on how hard it is on *so many other people* that are out of work. Food:

they will share their last with you when you are visiting and you will do the same when others come to visit you. In the summer, life goes on and you make the best of it because 'it could be worse' and often is for others.



Sign on Pastor's door declaring "In Christ there is no 'economic crisis'...only Victory" and "God loves you!"

**Scripture tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 "Be joyful always; pray continually."
And that's what gets us through the summers in Peñasco!**

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Delivering through the Gate

Lucy went to Mexico ahead of me so she could get the paperwork in order for me to bring down the supplies that were needed. Getting the paperwork in order was no small task. We had all the items listed and where they were going. The dates and times were set and all the information was taken to the office of the Mayor of Peñasco. After five days of delays, setbacks and ‘come back tomorrow’ she was able to get the letter of request for entry. She took it to the border and presented it to the Mexican Border Commander and it was approved. I came the next day and was treated respectfully and courteously and passed through the border check point without a hitch. Patience and persistence and the Lord came through!

The donations were a blessing to many. The Rehabilitation Centers received much needed air conditioners (2), clothing plus office and kitchen supplies. Their numbers are growing and their equipment is limited. Three bicycles went to locals that will help with transportation. Many items went to help small businesses, prison ministry, local schools and community churches.

There were also bags of school uniform shirts, pants, shoes, and backpacks given to local pastors for those children unable to afford them. Several boxes of school supplies were also provided for the children. You can read the entire list below, if you wish.

The donations were a blessing to the community and appreciated by the pastors, families and the Mayor of Peñasco. These items provide both immediate relief and sustaining value for the recipients. And Manos de Dios is blessed to be a part of this community, a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ and carrying out His calling on our lives.

Dennis

Praying...

Dios (God), help us to listen to Your voice and to carry out Your plans. We pray for Godly transformation of us personally, for our marriage, for the mission of Manos de Dios, and for the people of Mexico! Come Holy Spirit; wash over us in Spirit and in Truth!

Padre Santo (Holy Father), carry out your plan for the house to be built for Pastors Carlos and Maru Garfel by The Rock Church of Sahuarita October 12-13. Protect this work team as they travel, build and evangelize.

Bendito Padre (Blessed Father), carry out your plan for Pantano Church's Amor Ministries House Building trip November 12-15th. Please direct Manos de Dios' plans as we put together evangelical outreaches for children during this work weekend. Help us to communicate Your Love and Grace clearly and in culturally sensitive ways.

Espiritu Santo (Holy Spirit), develop each Christian brother and sister (pastor, man, woman, youth, child, prisoner) into who you have purposed and planned them to be. Show us, as Manos de Dios, how to encourage those You would have called us to come along side with Your divine strategy to be all they can be in You, Lord.

en el nombre tu unico hijo, Jesucristo (in the name of Your one and only Son, Jesus Christ), AMEN

Donations taken to Peñasco and El Diamante on August trip

1 box office/school supplies (Women's Rehab Center)
39 backpacks (school children/pastors)
5 duffel bags of youth softball equipment (local small business)
3 box of kitchen supplies (Men and Women's Rehab Center)
2 air conditioners (Rehab Centers)
1 interior door (Women's Rehab Center)
1 large fan (local primary school)
1 box of food (family in need)
2 bags of sewing supplies (local micro small business)
4 box of shoes (Rehab Centers, churches, prison)
2 boxes of tools (Men's Rehab Center)
3 large bags of clothes (1 Rehab Centers and 2 local pastors)
1 box feminine supplies (female prisoners)
1 large playground swing set (church)
School uniforms (150 shirts - new, 170 pants/shorts/skirts, 100 gently used shirts, 20 pair black shoes)
4 bicycles
1 TV and 1 laser printer-in need of repair (young man starting a small business, electronic repair)



From Dennis.....

What I am reading right now is: When Helping Hurts by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (I don't agree with their concept on helping the poor, however I am reading it with an open mind) and With Christ in the School of Prayer by Andrew Murray (1967). It is a book that was in the "free bin" at a antique shop we stopped at in Clifton, AZ. It is a book about "Thoughts on Our Training for the Ministry of Intercession." It uses some of the King James Version when quoting scripture. It is a different take on prayer but founded and backed by scripture so I can't argue with his premise.

I am also working on writing weekly scripture messages that I will post on my blog. And starting to learn more Spanish words!

Check out the New Blog: <http://manosdediosmissions.blogspot.com/>

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Needs for gently used or new....

- Copier (laser)
- Printer (laser)
- DVD player
- Large keyboard
- Drum set
- Trumpet
- Microphones (good quality)

All the above equipment is needed by the local pastors and will assist them in their ministry. If you have any items to donate, please let me know.

Your support is valued and is a blessing to others.

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From Lucy....

I am overwhelmed with the concept of God's Goodness. (Read Psalm 145 s-l-o-w-l-y!) I am realizing anew...He is not like us! (see Isaiah 40:25-28) I am re-reading Chip Ingram's book, God: As He longs for You to See Him. It goes through eight of God's characteristics in a powerful way! Also, Dennis and I are reading The Bait of Satan by John Bevere. One of our precious supporters gave us this book and it is so true and helpful! I am singing *Alabanzas* (praise and worship music) by Spanish artist Annette Moreno. I am praising God for quiet time to listen for His voice. I am thanking God for wonderful supporters and friends! May God bless you and reveal His plan and purpose for your life!

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Manos de Dios

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God will do His part....We will do our part!

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