

Manos de Dios...

God's hands and feet



ManosdeDios.org

Encouraging pastors, families and prisoners in Sonora, Mexico

January 2008

In this newsletter read about:

- Medical Clinic in the prison
- A baby's first bath
- Visits with Pastors
- Upcoming work trips



Dr. Rod treating a prisoner

Medical clinic in prison in Puerto Peñasco

On January 18th, Lucy and I were back in Peñasco to hold the first medical clinic in the prison for 2008. Our group consisted of Dr. Rod and Dr. Troy (fluent in Spanish) as our volunteer doctors; Dave, our volunteer translator; Lucy taking blood pressure, heart rates and praying with the men before they saw the doctor; and me, helping with the intake duties. The prison nurse (also a prisoner, trained in the Mexican navy) assisted our doctors and had the opportunity to receive some valuable training. The doctors treated many men with a variety of ailments. One prisoner, after being treated, asked Dr. Troy if he and I would pray with him for his spiritual and physical healing. It was a special time for us all! The prison guards would not let the women come into the clinic area so Lucy and Dr. Troy went to their living area to treat them and minister to their needs. We were able to take in much needed medication for the flu, colds, and asthma along with ibuprofen and vitamins for use by the prison doctor (who was not there that day) on an 'as needed basis'. After the clinic we purchased \$200.00 worth of medicine that was prescribed by our doctors for inmates. Once again the inmates, and even the guards, asked if we could bring in a dentist to pull teeth. We told them we would pray about it and if we are directed to do a dental clinic, we are sure the doctors and medication will be provided by God's grace and through His blessings. By now they know we are servants of the Lord and are guided and directed by Him.

After the clinic our group went out to dinner and were able to discuss the day's activities and how the prisoners had touched our lives. We prayed that we touched their lives with God's love as well as with physical healing. When we met at church the next morning the doctors advised us that the casita they spent the night in did not have heat or hot water (no one knew the propane tanks were empty)! They empathized a little more with the prisoners they had spent their day treating. In spite of really roughing it Saturday night, they said they would return for future clinics!

These are true servants of our Lord!

jGloria a Dios!.....Dennis



Prisoners and Dennis



Prisoner being seen by Dr. Troy

More photos online at www.ManosdeDios.org

Baby's first bath...Angela and baby, Jafet

Genesis 6: 10 Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. Génesis 6:10 Tuvo tres hijos: Sem, Cam y Jafet.



Jafet before bath (with one of his madrinas or Godmothers, Lucy)



Angela and her son, Jafet, after bathing

One of our precious friends and a sister in Christ, Angela, had her first baby on January 7, 2008 in Peñasco. Angela and her husband, Rafael, traveled from Honduras on trains and buses to reach Peñasco. (It took 3 months!) Angela was about three months pregnant when her husband went on to the US to find a job. He left Angela with Pastor Lupe and Rafaela.

Unfortunately, it has now been 3 months since Angela has heard from her husband (last known to be working in Las Vegas). Angela has a sweet spirit and is focusing on lovingly raising her precious baby boy. She loves singing praises to our Lord and often sings for church services at El Sembrador. Angela lives in a small room off the church sanctuary. The room has no heat and there is no hot water in the bathroom. Jafet had not had a true bath (they don't bathe babies at the hospital in Peñasco...how strange!) so we brought them to our trailer for warm water on a cold day in January.

After a ham & cheese sandwich and potato chips, Angela took a long shower in our trailer shower, while I watched Jafet sleep. Angela enjoyed washing her hair and stepping out into a warm bathroom! Next we filled the kitchen sink with warm water and between the two of us we held the squirming Jafet to bathe him and shampoo his hair. Angela dried him and put him in a new outfit. It was a cute yellow PJ's and 2 layers of socks. (Eric's sister, Cory, had sent them to Angela along with a handmade baby blanket!). She combed his hair and we all danced around the trailer to our new favorite CD by Liset, "Volver al Padre" (Return to the Father).

What a blessing to be a part of this new baby's life!

Thank you to all who have donated material to Angelita to make clown costumes and puppets! Angelita and other women in her church are busy sewing clown costumes and puppets (like the ones shown here) to sell to fund their travels to small communities where they lead children's ministry conferences. Clowns are VERY popular with children in Mexico and therefore draw a crowd at any ministry outreach. Each church loves to have a clown costume to use for their Estudio Verano (Vacation Bible School), Sunday School classes and community outreach events. Puppets are very helpful to tell Bible Stories as they capture the children's attention.

May God bless you for your generous giving!



We need your help!

Manos de Dios is making a difference in the lives of families, pastors and prisoners in Sonora. Please prayerfully consider making a monthly or one time financial contribution. Donate online at www.ManosdeDios.org . Contact us to schedule Dennis and Lucy to show their informative DVD to your church or community group. (520)-975-7356

Thank you! Dennis and Lucy Smith, Manos de Dios (translated: God's hands)

Upcoming Manos de Dios work trips in Sonora

Building a home for the Via family in Puerto Peñasco

April 24-28, 2008

Tony, Norma, and Edwin (6) Via live in the "invasion" area outside Puerto Peñasco. They currently reside in a one room home made of plywood with a tarp roof. There is no electricity or plumbing. Tony is a dependable construction worker. He often works for Missionary Pat on house building projects. Tony is an honorable man, a dedicated husband and father, and helpful member of his community. Norma is learning to bake and decorate cakes through a government (DIF) program. She dreams of opening her own pasteleria (cake bakery) someday. Edwin attends school and was the recipient of one of the Manos de Dios uniforms & backpacks provided last fall.



Via family current home



**Tony, Norma, & Edwin Via
with Dennis and Pat**

House building project needs:

- Additional donations to finish home (\$5000.00 has been donated to build the basic structure , a 15 x 22 home) Funding needed for insulation, drywall, plumbing and electrical supplies for a "complete home"
- Skilled and semi-skilled builders (cover your own expenses for accommodations, gas, breakfasts/dinners and Mexico Travel Insurance) Build for all or part of the weekend. Mandatory trip team meeting March 24th at 7pm.

Community Health Education Outreach

El Diamante, Sonora, Saturday, June 7, 2008

The community leaders have requested education about preventing diarrhea and diabetes in this ejido of about 1500 people. Doctors and community health educators will be teaching about health as well as sharing the Good News about our Creator. We will also be providing refreshments and a children's outreach program. Volunteers will be camping (roughing it!) at Campo Animo.

Contact Manos de Dios to volunteer and/or donate

Visit to El Diamante and “Desemboque, get ready for change” January 22, 2008

Lucy and I had a long visit with Pastor Alfonso and Angelita in El Diamante. Many things were discussed and prayed about. We learn something different on every trip and this was no exception. While we have been arranging to get the men and women in the Peñasco prison tested for TB, we found out that in 2007 two men died from TB and currently two other people have (without medication) TB in El Diamante. There is also a serious problem with Typhoid Fever in their community! We are praying about how Manos de Dios can assist the community in getting treatment for those infected with TB and how the community can address the problem of Typhoid Fever. Medical clinics, educational classes and community awareness of diseases are a few things that were discussed.

We also discussed our upcoming trip to Huatabampo, Sonora on February 7th.

Huatabampo is a community about ten hours south of Puerto Peñasco. There is an American Missionary couple living there. They provide training and supplies for children's ministries FREE of charge. (www.Pro-vismex.com) Pastor Alfonso's car would not make the trip so they asked us if we could take them down for the training. After praying

about it we said “yes!”. It will be a wonderful way to assist Alfonso and Angelita become better equipped to spread the message of our Lord to their own people of Mexico. And, as a special blessing to Lucy and me: we will get to see a part of Mexico that we have not seen before, learn more about the culture and spend valuable time with these pastors!

Work on Campo Animo has been halted for a few weeks (we hope only a few weeks) because of a snag in getting the title of our land changed to Pastor Alfonso's name. It seems that the previous owner has died before the title was changed. Alfonso will have to get a copy of the previous owner's death certificate, a copy of his marriage license and a note from all his living children (he has 6, fortunately all living close: in Peñasco) stating the property in question was not left to them by their father. Alfonso said he will get this taken care of. We are praying for God's timing here. We would like to have electricity and water before the heat of the summer!

Before lunch we unloaded the donations of clothing for the migrant workers that Pastor Alfonso requested. Thanks to many generous donors we were able to give about 150 pair of denim pants, 200 long sleeve shirts, 2 dozen pair of shoes, 140 sheets, 20 blankets and 100 towels. These small tokens of our excess will have a major and positive impact on the lives of the migrant workers and their families. Thank you again to all that have donated and prayed for these children of God.

Later in the afternoon we headed for Desemboque to visit Pastor Rubén and his wife Erika. Being late in the day Lucy and I decided to stay only a few minutes and then head back to Peñasco before dark. The road back to Peñasco is very dangerous after dark and we try not drive it late. It is narrow, has no shoulder, and is bumpy with pot holes. Lots of farming equipment and semi's use it and we have even seen people walking down the road dressed all in black where the speed limit is 65mph and there are no street lights. Needless to say when we use it after dark, we pray all the way to Peñasco.

Well, our few minute visit turned out to be a few hours and we headed back way after dark. As you can tell, our prayers for safe travel were answered.



Our conversation always starts off with checking on each other's family, their health and new things going on in our lives. We give praise and glory to our Lord and thank Him together for our blessings. I had the most fun. I played with the kids. We shot each other with rubber bands, played monkey in the middle and catch with a tennis ball, and in general just goofed off. The kids loved it and I kept warm! Their family lives in one room that is attached to the back of the church so all of the activities are held outside. And did I mention, when we arrive other neighbors, relatives and children show up to visit with us? We had quite a crowd.

There was some serious conversation, though. Pastor Rubén asked us if we could provide an outreach program to the people in the community at his church. We have talked about some kind of program in the past and this is the first time he has wanted to act on the idea. We said we would pray about it and see what we could do. Lucy and I are constantly aware of enabling and the damage it can do to a community so prayer and discernment is very important to any decision we make. We had recently talked with Pastor Ernesto (from Grupo Unidad church in Puerto Peñasco) and he stated his church was going to do four outreach programs in Peñasco in the next six weeks and they also wanted to do outreach programs in other communities. We talked to Pastor Ernesto about Pastor Rubén's request and THEY will decide what type of program to have and will work together to put it on. Manos de Dios will help facilitate, physically work, and make a small financial donation. The most important part (and one of our goals) is that it will be Mexicans helping Mexicans. But the praying is not over. Please pray that the dates, times and program can be agreed upon.

The change I mentioned...it has started! There has been a new Telcel phone tower installed right behind the church (cell phone access soon to be available), a new liquor store (and one of the cleanest and brightest buildings in the community – but not open yet) built next door to the church, and just four miles north of town there is construction of the new coastal highway that will run the entire length of the state of Sonora. And that will bring change! Desemboque has a beautiful beach and will soon be inundated with tourist, condos, hotels, bars, money and excess like they have never seen. The people in Desemboque, for the most part, have been sheltered from the spoils and sins of the big cities. When progress comes, and it is coming, they need to be equipped to handle the change in their physical, spiritual and financial lives. Most live day by day with little money and very few things. For this reason we ask you to start praying for the people of Desemboque...for maturity, spiritual discernment, and the ability to resist sin and temptation. Also, that when excess comes they will be able to handle it in a way that would be pleasing to our Lord and they will share the blessings they receive with those less fortunate. Please pray for the people that will be coming into the community either as tourist or developers. Pray that they will not take advantage of the local people in any way, that they treat them with respect (some of the people can't read or write) and honesty. And most importantly for a strong spiritual presence to take hold of the community and it's people. Amen! This is just one of the many reasons we believe in under-girding the local, indigenous pastors!



Typical home in barrio of Puerto Peñasco

Manos de Dios **Needs:**

Monthly financial support for Dennis and Lucy as they continue to travel to and from Mexico each month. They have committed to spend on the average two weeks a month in Mexico in the coming year. Please prayerfully consider committing to give a regular monthly gift to support this life changing mission work.

(suggestion: set Manos de Dios up as a monthly payee on your online banking)

A dependable vehicle for Pastor Alfonso.

Between 1985 and 1997 van, 4 cylinder pick-up or economical mid-sized car.

Funding for medicine for medical clinics in the prison (\$400 needed for each clinic)

Community Health Education Event funding:

to cover medication, transportation, refreshments and educational material and supplies.

Rental Sponsorship to enable Dennis & Lucy to spend extended time in Mexico (RV park fee for trailer space is \$500/month)

Donate online at

www.ManosdeDios.org or

Contact us at GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org
or 520-975-7356



For lots more info go to:

www.ManosdeDios.org

Partner with us to offer hope...

Manos de Dios is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization that partners with local pastors and missionaries in Sonora, Mexico to assist the poor with immediate relief efforts and long-term self-sustaining projects.

Work projects are staffed with volunteers from the Manos de Dios Life Group of Pantano Christian Church plus other volunteers. Please prayerfully consider supporting our work to help the poor in Mexico.

Go to our website for details:

www.ManosdeDios.org

Prayer under-girds Manos de Dios Ephesians 1:17-19

We seek the Lord's spirit of wisdom and revelation as we plan future projects, build relationships and minister in the prison. Please pray with and for Manos de Dios.

A prayer guide is now available with daily prayer requests for Mexico, Manos de Dios and our Manos de Dios Life Group, along with the appropriate scripture to pray. Email us at GetInvolved@ManosdeDios.org to request a copy of this prayer guide.