



## We Have Seen

by Julie Zaragoza

I love God's Word and the fact that the Author Himself helps us understand this love letter that He penned throughout the centuries so that we could have the keys to His abundant life both now and for all eternity!

Recently in my devotional time, the Lord drew me to several verses in the book of Proverbs.

*"Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.*

*If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?*

*Does not he who guards your life know it?*

*Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?"*

Proverbs 24:11-12



These verses reaffirmed the call, the motivation, the reason for all that the Lord leads us to do in and through Fishers of Men! The words renewed my energy and strength to do all that the Lord asks of us! We can no

longer claim ignorance! We know that children sleep every night under bridges; they tremble every day under a constant fear of abuse; their tummies growl, fighting back against hunger pains. We know that entire communities live under the shadow of idolatry, religious lies and a constant pressure to earn their salvation. How do we know this? We have seen it, we are witnesses and we cannot choose to be blind, because what we have seen will one day witness against us when we stand before our Creator!

Jesus clearly tells us that "whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." (Matthew 18:5-6). So many children are being "led away to death" through abuse, neglect, abortion, lies, hunger and rejection.

We have seen adults "staggering toward slaughter" in drunkenness, violence, idolatry, materialism and loneliness. Each Evangelistic Medical Mission Crusade fills our minds and hearts with images of people such as these.

These verses clearly reminded me that I have *seen* and that the Lord has *allowed* me to see so that I may act – no matter how incapable I may feel, no matter how insurmountable the financial challenges may appear, no matter how overwhelming the situation may seem!

God's Word provides its own

perfect balance and challenges us to live a perfectly balanced life. While our salvation comes only through God's grace, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast," (Ephesians 2:8-9) God also teaches us that, "as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:26) and that



"the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." (Matthew 16:27) While our salvation comes through grace by faith, we must then work out that salvation in rescuing those being led away to death and those staggering toward slaughter.

Thank you for helping us to do just that through prayerfully reading this newsletter, giving in obedience to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and participating on work teams to Refuge Ranch and as volunteers on the Evangelistic Medical Mission Crusades. You have also now *seen*! May the Lord give you grace, direction and valor to act on what He has shown you!

## Family Fun and Celebration

“The family that plays together stays together.” Ever heard that saying? Another similar saying says: “The family that prays together stays together.” I’m not sure which saying came first, but at Refuge Ranch and in the Zaragoza family we try to do plenty of both!

August gave us lots of opportunities for playing together as we celebrated five birthdays! Our blessed cook,

Rosa, celebrated her birthday by going on the crusade to El Chilar and cooking over a wooden fire in 90 degree heat for 30 people! Staff member Adrian celebrated his birthday too! Adrian is Victor’s right-hand man in just about everything, but especially on crusades. However, here at the Ranch, Adrian is known for his playful spirit with the kids – soccer games and impromptu Karaoke parties, complete with strobe lights, are just his



style. So, true to form, we had to have some fun with him and took the Mexican tradition of taking a bite out of your birthday cake to a whole new level!

Of our children, Ana turned five, Carolina turned six and Fatima turned 11 years old. It was our first year celebrating Carolina and Fatima’s birthdays, while it is hard to believe it has been five years already since I was breastfeeding one day old Ana after adopting her.

My parents, Grandpa and Grandma Claassen, came to visit and we took the opportunity for a special outing with the kids to the zoo and a famous castle-turned-museum that was once inhabited by the French Emperor Maximilian in Mexico City. For some of the kids it was the first time they had ever been to a zoo!

As a belated celebration for

Angie’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, which was in June, Victor and I took the five older girls to a small amusement park in Mexico City and enjoyed time with them without having to attend to the constant needs of the younger children. That day was truly priceless as we clung to each other in the haunted house and raced against the clock to ride as many times as possible on our favorite roller coasters before the park closed.



We also enjoyed a visit from Joy, a high school student from Michigan, who spent a week at Refuge Ranch learning firsthand about the everyday realities of living for Jesus on the mission field.

## Daniel

Our three year old son, Daniel, from the state of Veracruz, was born with half of a heart, as well as numerous other heart/lung defects. Since he became a part of our family nearly two years ago, we have been searching for a doctor and hospital in the U.S. willing to take on his case. Each response that we have received has begun with a version of the following statement: “Daniel’s case is extremely complicated.”

According to our pediatric cardiologist here in Mexico, Daniel could pos-



sibly be a candidate for the Glenn procedure (a three surgery process) that the doctor refers to as a “plumbing job” – reconnecting veins in order to compensate for the half of a heart that Daniel is missing. That surgery *could* be performed here in Mexico. However, our trust level in the Mexican health care system is quite low!

We are not even sure that Daniel is a candidate for the Glenn procedure as his echosonogram showed his veins to be smaller than ideal. He needs a heart cath in order to determine his eligibility for surgery. However, even the heart cath carries great risk for him! Besides the risk, it is not logical to have a different doctor perform the cath than the

one who would do his final surgeries. In the U.S., nobody wants to even do the heart cath, because if something goes wrong during the heart cath the hospital would have to commit all the resources necessary to save his life, which translates into a lot of charity money invested in a patient with a low chance of survival.

So, for now, we feel much peace in waiting on the Lord. What are we waiting for? We aren’t sure! Are we waiting for a hospital to open its doors? Are we waiting for God to heal Daniel? Are we waiting for Jesus to take Daniel home to heaven? We don’t know! We DO know that we are waiting on a huge and powerful, almighty and in-control God who loves Daniel and us deeply!

## Truly Seeing in El Chilar

*“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.” Matthew 9:35*

Once again Fishers of Men had the opportunity to follow Jesus' footsteps visiting the village of El Chilar in one of the poorest states of Mexico, the state of Oaxaca. While every crusade offers at no cost the same basic elements such as medical and dental appointments, haircuts, children's ministry with clowns and Bible-centered activities, eye-glasses, pharmacy and personal evangelism for each attendee, each crusade also has its unique qualities.

That proved true once again in El Chilar. The core crusade volunteers are nearly all Mexican, but this crusade was blessed by the presence of several new volunteers from the U.S. Nora, Becky and Robyn joined the team from Pennsylvania, while Jacob, Soonwook and Ting came from the Washington D.C. area. Those from the U.S. interested in volunteering on an Evangelistic Medical Mission Crusade (EMMC), but without any medical experience, many times wonder what they could possibly do on a crusade. Nora's experience in El Chilar proves that when God calls He knows exactly where you will fit into the puzzle. As

the crusade got underway, Victor realized that Nora was going around giving individuals massages while they waited for their appointments. The Fishers of Men team “happened” to have a professional massage table that is normally used for the gynecologist. Victor offered the table to Nora and she jumped at the chance! She blessed person after person with massages! Each massage began with her asking the individual's name. As she carried out each massage, she prayed over and for that person. We heard numerous testimonies of people that experienced physical, emotional and spiritual peace after their massage – a peace much greater than Nora could give, but a peace that flowed through her experienced fingertips and her heart owned by Jesus Christ. The ladies, even with limited Spanish, also blessed the children through their ministry, once again proving that the love of Jesus Christ is communicated through more than words.

Another unique aspect to this crusade was the fact that this was our second crusade held in El Chilar. The Fishers of Men team rarely visits the same village in two consecutive years. However, by doing this the team had the opportunity to witness firsthand the fruits from last year's crusade. The crusade held in 2010 in El Chilar impacted individuals from 12 different communities! Of those communities,

one in particular had been quite hostile toward Christians and the Gospel. Several members of that village attended the crusade last year and accepted Jesus Christ. There is now a small mission in that village!

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1185 individual appointments  
123 children ministered to  
210 people accepted Jesus as  
Lord and Savior

Thursday had been a long day for Isabel, the crusade optometrist. She had caught up with the team in El Chilar after taking an all-night bus ride from Mexico City. By three o'clock in the afternoon her strength began to wane as recent family problems, the extreme heat in Oaxaca and a lack of sleep began to catch up with her.

About that time, Vero, the crusade receptionist, told Isabel that although all of the optometry appointments had been given out, she had more individuals waiting to get glasses. This included a very special elderly couple. They had left their home up in a mountain village at 3:00 a.m. and walked 12 hours to get to the crusade in need of glasses! Isabel gave Vero the O.K. to continue sending her patients. Late Thursday night, Isabel finished after having given out 130 pairs of glasses!

The following Sunday I saw Isabel at church and asked how the crusade had gone. She responded with a huge grin from ear to ear: “I don't understand, Julie, but the harder I worked the more energy I had!” The joy of the Lord is truly our strength!



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fishersofmenmexico.org

fishersofmenmexico.blogspot.com

fishersofmenmexico@gmail.com

**Contacting Us****In the U.S.:**

P.O. Box 352016  
Toledo, OH 43635  
(734) 206-2392

**In Mexico:**

Prolongación Niño Perdido #7  
Cuecucuautilta, Edo. de México  
C.P. 56880

To call from the U.S. dial:  
011-52-597-109-2155

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**Easy Giving in a Hard Economy**

Did you know that you can earn money for Fishers of Men when you buy groceries or do a search on the internet? It's as simple as that! The economy may be hard, but giving can be easy...especially when it's not even your money, but corporate money just waiting for you to access on behalf of Fishers of Men!

For those of you who live in Ohio, Fishers of Men participates in a program through the Kroger Corporation. With a few seconds on-line at: [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com), you can identify Fishers of Men (NPO# 82464) as your chosen charity so that each time you swipe your Kroger card a percentage of your purchase is donated to Fishers of Men.



For those of you who spend any amount of time on the internet, each of your searches, and even your purchases, can produce revenue for Fishers of Men. Go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and follow the easy step by step instructions to start earning money right now for Fishers of Men!



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Do you know of any businesses that support non-profit organizations? Let us know!

So, giving is just that easy, creative and productive! Even in the midst of these hard economic times, let's use creative ways to support all that God is doing in and through Fishers of Men!