



The EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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*Ken & Joan Jensen
Director*

ALONG THE WAY . . .

A few days ago Joan and I were sitting on the couch watching the news together. A short report came on stating that the average amount of money spent on one's sweetheart for Valentine's Day is about \$150. We both looked at each other and spoke at almost the same time. I said, "I'm sorry," while she was saying, "I feel shortchanged." We both laughed. Americans spend more on Valentine's Day than does any other nation's populous. We are such a loving people! The divorce rate in America is also around 50%. "Money can't buy ya love," nor is it a very good indicator of true love. On the other hand, true love is not selfish. When Jesus, on two separate occasions, said the words, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," He was speaking in the context of giving our wealth for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God and trusting God to supply our needs as we give to Him. The bottom line of both the Old and New Testaments' teaching is that the Lord wants our hearts in trust and love. What we do with our possessions is one expression of both love and trust in Him. But our time, pursuits, interests, conversation, obedience, and character also show where our hearts are. How much do our lives express our love for the God of love?

Incidentally, I was able to convince Joan that the rug we bought for the sunroom is our Valentine gift to each other. Nothing

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PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PRISON



*Julia Alvarez and Chicha Rodriguez
at the Workers' Conference*

*by Julia Alvarez, missionary in
La Charqueada, Uruguay*

Some days ago, Mrs. Lourdes Olivera, the secretary of the primary school in our town, came to my house to ask for help. She told me about an 8-year-old girl named Malena, who is very intelligent and has dominion over the class, but always for something bad. Her teacher and the other teachers cannot control her. Lourdes Olivera said that, although she doesn't believe in God, she has seen results from the work we have done with the children. The children tell the teachers what we are teaching them, and they sing the choruses we've taught them in their classes at school. She said that she sees something different in those children. She believes the work we are doing is very valuable, and therefore asked for my help. We are praying for Malena. We are planning an activity with our young people and hoping that they will bring her so she might get to know Christ as her Savior. I trust you will pray for her. Thanks.

This meeting with Lourdes was a good opportunity to present Christ to her. At the end of our talk she said, "Who can say that one day I will not end up believing." God can do wonders. May all the glory be to Him. ✝

*by Chicha Rodriguez, missionary in
Montevideo, Uruguay*

At our women's jail ministry, I was encouraging one of the prisoners to start reading the Bible, since she told me that she had repented and believed in the Lord. When I asked if she owned a Bible, she answered that she had a small New Testament, but many of the pages were missing. Then she said that she had been using the pages to put tobacco in for smoking. I begged her to stop smoking the Word, telling her it would be more profitable to read, believe, and obey it.

Another day we saw a sign in the jail office asking for help for one of the policemen, whose house had burned. They especially requested clothes for their two boys, 8 and 9 years old. I had clothes that had been given to me by 2 ladies of our church for a boy of the same age, who I had been bringing to our Sunday school. Since that boy lost interest and decided not to attend any more, I donated the clothes to the policeman's children. I put a new Bible in the package, too. The box was closely examined when I took it to the prison - they needed to be sure no drugs or weapons were included. I was happy that they didn't confiscate the Bible. In fact, they were very thankful for everything. Let's pray that the Bible will show the policeman's family the way to Heaven.

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ALONG THE WAY...

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says "I love you" like a floor covering! (Maybe I should get her a card, too.)

Joan and I will be together this Valentine's Day - unlike most years - and it will be summertime: we are flying to Uruguay on February 11 for a three-week stay. This is my annual pilgrimage south, but part of Joan's motivation (though she does like to visit Uruguay with me) is because of our guest speakers at the family camp and workers' conference. Brad and Peg Lapiska will arrive in Uruguay the day after we get there. Brad will be the Bible teacher in the mornings for the family camp at Camp Emmanuel and then will teach three times a day for the workers' conference that follows the next week (Feb. 23-26). The Lapiskas will be in Uruguay for almost two weeks. Brad is on the EMU Board of Directors and has been to Uruguay two times already to speak at Camp Emmanuel and in several EMU churches. Because Brad and I have become delicate little flowers health-wise, we will be staying closer to Camp Emmanuel on the weekends to rest up for the next group of campers and meetings. My major job will once again be interviewing our Uruguay missionaries to see how their ministries and families are doing. I will be directing the business meetings at the workers' conference, too. Joan and I will be staying longer in Uruguay for board meetings with the Uruguayans and for the opening service of FEBU on Saturday, February 28.

Pray for Matias Espinel, the director of FEBU, as he spends February working on teaching materials and class schedules for the college. Also, Kristine has a slight problem with her pregnancy. It is not a critical development, but her doctor wants her to have an ultrasound every two weeks until the baby is born in March.

John Mark Steel has been working at Camp Emmanuel with the youth camps along with our Uruguayan pastor Gabriel and his wife Rosanna Gomez and evangelist Juan and his wife Noemi Gonzalez, pastor Ovidio Acevedo, Graciela Pereira, and Vanessa Reyes. Pastor Carlos and his wife Mabel Olivera worked in the kitchen for all three camps in January. Carlos has a bad bottom-of-the-foot that naturally won't get any better as he works at camp, and Mabel has been having back pains that are severe at times. As the consummate Energizer Bunny, history says that Mabel will not take sufficient rest-time either. Pray for them please.

All of the camps have been smaller this summer for the children, adolescents, and Jovenes (16-25 yrs old). I talked to the camp director Pedro Donz  about this via Skype, and he informed me that there are MANY reasons for the decrease. However,

one of the major reasons was insufficient funds for would-be campers who wanted to attend the camp but couldn't because of money. The Sponsorship Fund was able to help several to attend, as you see in the photos, but because of some other expenses having to do with the staff, there just wasn't enough money to meet all of the needs. And from the interior of Uruguay, the number of campers who drove down to Camp Emmanuel was miniscule. The cost of transportation to get to camp is almost always more than the cost for a week of camp.

In spite of the Children's camp being smaller than usual, Pedro said that the spirit among the kids was wonderful, and they ended up having one of their best children's camps ever. (Every year, my dad used to say, "This was the best camp week ever!") Twenty-two of the children received sponsorship funds in order to attend the camp.

The Jovenes camp that started on January 19 had 15 fewer campers than were registered. These 15 are from a church in the Buenos Aires, Argentina, area and had attended Camp Emmanuel before. They travelled at night because of the heat during the day and so they could arrive at camp on Monday morning. Somewhere on a deserted stretch of highway between the Argentina capital and the Uruguayan border, the driver of the van suddenly saw an object in the road but was unable to avoid it. The object across the road was a spike strip used by police and the army to blow out the tires on an uncooperative vehicle. But this one had not been set by the law - as far as we know. With the tires

shredded, the driver stopped the van on the side of the road. Almost instantly a group of gun wielding bandits surrounded the van. The adult sponsor of the group of Jovenes begged the robbers not to hurt the young people. The thieves complied with the request, but showed no mercy in any other area. The bandits took all the suitcases, blankets & pillows, money, and even the travelers' legal documents like driver's licenses and sedulas (the identity card every citizen is required to carry). The van was completely cleaned out, and then the brigands disappeared into the darkness. The church group could go neither forwards nor backwards as the tires were in tatters. The traumatized group had to wait in the dark until another vehicle came by and took the news of the incident to the next town. Eventually, the tires were replaced. But since the would-be campers were without any of their belongings and could not have entered Uruguay anyway without their sedulas, they drove home.

The 37 Uruguayan Jovenes which did attend camp had a good week in God's Word, activities, and fellowship. We were able to sponsor four of these teens. Photos of the adolescent camp just arrived, and Pedro stated that the week was spiritually productive, too.

The year has begun bitter-sweet for the Donz  family. The January camps have been a success - the blessing. However, Pedro and Patty had to make a difficult decision concerning their hoped-for visit to the USA in May and June to attend The Wilds staff training weeks of camp and to visit individuals and churches who support the Donz s and Camp Emmanuel.

The Camp Emmanuel secretary and her husband were also scheduled to visit The Wilds with the Donz s. (Beatriz speaks pretty good English.) Because of Patty's health and having to dip into their travel savings for medical bills, the party decided to cancel their 2015 adventure to the States. Pray for Patty and her continuing medical needs.

Tim and Cheryl Chapman are back in Lima, Peru, as of January 6. They had a good furlough and were able to visit most of their supporters. In the coming year, Tim will be pastoring the church in Lima that he was helping with before their furlough, and he will be endeavoring to train and install another pastor to take his place. The Chapmans would like to begin their inner-city church plant in Lima in 2016. Joan and I hope to visit the Chapmans this summer. (We have tried to make this happen for the past 2-3 years, but something always delays our plan.)

Tom and Connie Chapman continue their ministry in Antofagasta, Chile. If all goes according to schedule, the two Salvatierra boys will be ordained on March 29. Matt and Susan (Chapman) Bixby and their children plan to be there for that occasion as the Salvatierra men received their undergrad degrees at the Bible College in Monterrey, Mexico, where Matt teaches. But before that, Tom and Connie's church will be holding their summer VBS February 17-22, which they have asked prayer for.

The Coles from France have begun their first furlough, having left Paris on January 20. The following Saturday, Joan and I had them at our house for lunch and an

afternoon of fellowship. I love Michael and Liz, but I had really missed their kids! Viviane (7), Adeline (5), and Mathieu (3) are so much fun. Thomas (born last May) didn't interact with me quite as much, but he's a good kid. The Coles are making the mission house at Cleveland Park Bible Church in Spartanburg, SC, their home base for their 6-month furlough.

While the Coles are stateside, Krista Colas, a young missionary lady, will be staying at the Coles' home in northern France. Krista, who spent her previous term in a different part of France, is relocating to the Sarcelles area to help the Coles and Bixbys start a church. Tim Bixby wrote that several people in the Saint Denis church are very excited about helping with this church plant.

Beginning their 5-month furlough, JD, Kim, and Nate Crowley arrive in Greenville, SC, on February 8 and return to Southeast Asia June 4. They will travel out of Greenville, SC, as they visit supporters and JD's parents, who live in Greensboro, NC. In May, their daughter, Jenna, will be graduating from Bob Jones University.

In March the Kanes will arrive in Greenville to begin their furlough, with the Farmers following their trek to the States in April. It will be great to see all of these families again. But for the first time in a long time, there will be no EMU missionaries in Ban Lung for a few weeks. However, the Hancocks and the Jensens will still be in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, taking Khmer language lessons.

For those of you who have not heard

about the truck accident of a non-EMU missionary family in Cambodia, I would like you to know so you can pray and/or even give financially. Henry Martyn, the Farmers' new baby, had not been gaining weight since his birth in November, so the Farmer family drove down to the capital to consult a doctor and take care of some other business. While in Phnom Penh, the Farmers stayed at the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) guest house, where so many journeying missionaries reside while in the capital. It was determined that Henry had a bacterial infection, which the doctor treated. Henry is doing much better now. Also at the CMA "hotel" were Jon and Kristen Smedley and their five young children. The Smedleys are missionaries with New Tribes Missions and live in the Ban Lung area. About four hours after the Farmers began their drive home to Ban Lung on January 27, the Smedleys started their journey home, too. At some point along the way, a drunk motorcycle driver pulled into Jon's path. He swerved trying to avoid the cyclist but lost control of his own vehicle (a king-cab pick-up truck), causing their truck to flip. The policeman who responded to the crash report told Jon and Kristen, "Your God protected you, that's the only explanation. Jesus protected you. Normally there would be at least 3 or 4 dead." However, there were some severe injuries, and it is possible that Kristen will lose the use of her right hand. News of the crash reached Ban Lung quickly, and Brian Kane drove to the site and ferried the family back to Phnom Penh for medical treatment. Pray for this family as they recover from this horrible accident. If you would like to help in a financial way go to <http://www.gofundme.com/jonandkristenfund>. An article and photos at this site will give you more information, and you can give an online donation for the family. This sort of incident reminds us of just how suddenly a life changing event can occur. Hopefully, we are in a right relationship with God in order to handle the consequences.

Steve Erkens has just finished a major project - redesigning the prayer cards for our missionaries so that they look more uniform. If you would like any of these, please contact the EMU office. He has also revamped his EMU display for church presentations. It all looks very good. Steve and I continue to meet and discuss mission issues - past, present, and future. His understanding of the workings and families of EMU is progressing well, and we are all encouraged. Currently we are working on having a Board of Directors meeting in May. With two of our board members living hundreds of miles away, it is a bit more difficult to work around everyone's schedules. Please pray for the office staff of EMU as we make decisions that we trust will help us better serve all of our missionaries.

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Above: Children's camp

Below: Children who attended camp through the Sponsorship Fund



Above: Adolescents who attended camp through the Sponsorship Fund

Below: Adolescent camp



Above: Jovenes camp

Below: Jovenes who attended camp through the Sponsorship Fund



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ALONG THE WAY . . .

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Last September I announced that several new men joined the Board of EMU, but also stated that there were pending additions. Though I failed to mention it at the time, **Dr. Greg Mazak** joined the team of EMU last fall. Greg is also on the staffs of Bob Jones University and Trinity Bible Church of Greer, SC. He succeeded Dr. Custer as the senior teaching pastor at Trinity. Trinity is the sending church of Matt and Becky Hancock, and the church has a strong missions program. Although Greg is much younger than I am, so I never had him as a teacher at BJU, Joan and I have sat under his teaching at several family and couples conferences. He's on my "Favorite Teachers" list. He is serving on the newly established Missionary Care Committee of EMU. We are honored to have him on board our Board!

Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez had a busy month with travel and visitors. Earlier in January the couple travelled to Limbano, Tabasco, to be with **Nacho's family**, and then drove south to Santa Martha, Chiapas, to spend some days with the **Ciro Alvarado family**. After returning home, Marco had the pastors he has trained, who live within a 2-hour drive from Cancún, gather in Cancún for several days of fellowship and Bible study. In the meantime a number of adults have made professions of faith at the church in Cancún and some of the other churches pastored by "Marco's men."

Valentine's Day is generally thought of in terms of romantic love. But many of you may feel left out of this season due to death, divorce, desertion, or maybe you are just too young to think of romance. (I thank God often that Joan has been my constant Valentine for 46 years – including pre-marriage dating. I don't take our

relationship for granted.) Interestingly, Saint Valentine was martyred because of his love for Jesus and his evangelistic zeal in the century before Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity. Nothing more is truly known about Valentinus except that he loved his Savior. No Christian should feel "left out" on Valentine's Day. Let your light so shine. ✝

Prison and Public School

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Just recently one of the guards showed us a section of the jail that had been painted and decorated by a group of volunteers. There they have a library, and we asked if we could donate some children's books. The inmates' children are allowed to visit their mothers, and now they have a recreation area to enjoy while they are there. I bought several Bible story books of different sizes and colors at the Christian bookstore and took them. They were very happy and thankful for the donation. May the Word work in the hearts both of the children and their mothers. ✝



Left: Nacho Sarao's church in Limbano, Tabasco, Mexico. Nacho at right; Marco at center-back

(l-r) Toño Alvarado, Tomas Noh, Marco, Pascual Balam, Christian Sarao, & Vicente Puc



Left: **Ciro Alvarado's** church in Santa Martha, Chiapas, Mexico. Marco at center; **Ciro** & his wife at left of Marco

