

OCT
2020

Lacoursiere Link

THE



Dear Friends and Ministry Partners;

Greetings & love in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We pray & trust you are well.

Christmas is just around the corner! What are your plans looking like?

While fall has come to you, here spring has sprung. As we look back, here, and worldwide, this year has been different, difficult, and darkened for many by the global COVID pandemic.

COVID has affected us personally through the loss of a dear friend. We also know many friends and their families that have felt the effects of this virus.

In Arequipa, just over 1,400 people have died from COVID, and in all of Peru, the number is more than 34,000. According to the local news, 40-60% (depending on the area) of Peruvians have now had it, most have survived. We are now out of quarantine, which lasted until the end of August, over 5 months!

People are now back to a controlled routine and the state authorities are working on getting the economy up again, vigilant of a possible second wave. Even though there are restrictions, and public meetings of any kind are not yet allowed, we daily see news of people taken to the police station where they have to pay a substantial fine.

So here we are! ...No friendly handshaking, hugging, or 'kissing the air' as cheeks meet (a Peruvian greeting tradition). Both of us miss interacting with others: adults and children alike. Some other differences we have experienced are that since September, buses are moving again, but with only seated passengers. Thieves are in abundance; they seem to be grateful to be able to wear masks anywhere, even in banks! Robbery & crime appear to be worse than ever.

A few Sundays ago, as a main church, we had a special ZOOM anniversary meeting, and Dennis had the honor of preaching (in a shirt and tie, and beneath the camera's reach, gym pants & running shoes!). Our first live meeting since the middle of March!

These last months have been mostly busy for us. We were packing 1,100 bags a week for a long time, which took a lot of people, coordination, time, and effort. We were pretty happy when the potatoes were taken out! Just imagine packing about three tons of potatoes week after week, often dealing with rotten ones. But we got better with time. There were glitches along the way. For example, one guy came to pack and he had a fever but didn't think it was important. He later told someone and was soon sent home. The next day we found out that he had COVID! So that whole packing team (12 people) was put on voluntary quarantine for ten days, and the rest of us had to pick up the slack with fewer people. During that time, a few of our packers got nicknames. For example, pastor Simon was 'the muscle man'. He only came that week of quarantine and was such a blessing! He moved the big sacks

for the gals. We also had one lady who's as quick as a machine! Hardly one bean escaped from her capable hands. Glendy was also a task master packing the big bags and setting the pace. Halfway through each day, we would have a much needed, and much deserved socially distanced break at 11 AM in the garden, including also a prayer time and devotional.

When more funds came in, missionary David J. opened an app for people needing help to sign up to receive a food bag. Within a day or two, we had over 2,000 more names of Venezuelans who had responded! Again, Dennis and I had a more personalized list of church people and others God had put in our paths. Since April, often with brother Juan, Dennis has been delivering around 60 to 80 food bags every week!

We have gotten to know people in these last months that we wouldn't have before! Tomorrow Dennis is going on another food bag run with Juan. And last week he also connected with the school director in "11 de Mayo" (a poor area in our city), and dropped off several food bags, bags of clothing that had been donated recently, as well as a few Bibles and Discipleship courses.



**Serving with
Christians In Action**

Our packing days with Alianza de Amor (the ministry we teamed up with to pack food bags) will come to an end in December. The list of Venezuelans has been whittled down to around 400 people. And though there are still so many needs everywhere, by now most people can find work in some form. I have also been telling people on our list that after this next time, we will be ending this epoch of help. Now we have to transition to helping the most vulnerable in both our churches; believers helping believers. We are not totally sure how to do that. So, guess what we need? ...Lots of wisdom! (**James 1:5**). Please pray for us!

Some people are in difficult situations. One friend basically had to leave her home situation with a young son and could not even take her Bible with her. She is also expecting a baby, so things are tough there. Please pray for protection, provision, and spiritual growth and strength for Maleonof!

Fanny and Fabián, mother and 19 year old son, received Christ with Sonia and I recently, praise the Lord! I've known them for over 10 years!

The number of weekly Bible studies (Discipleship) we are doing over ZOOM, WhatsApp and cell phone has grown. And a few groups have been inviting other people to join! We are also programming our first ZOOM meeting for the Seniors group. I have been slow on that one, we probably will be one of the last church groups to connect virtually! Most should be able to connect, either by themselves or with help from their kids. So we are going to give it a try!

I have lots of plans in my head for ways to share Christ with others, such as doing a Christmas walk through the park with hot chocolate, panetón, and the real story of Christmas. However, at this point, that seems unlikely to happen. Also, every year we do many fundraisers, mainly for the Seniors group and to send kids to camp. This year, we haven't needed funds for either. Then last week, three separate people asked me for donuts. Although I didn't relish the work involved in making them, I decided we could use the money to do something special for our Seniors group for Christmas. Many of them have not left their houses for over 6 months and are suffering the effects from that. Many are also no longer allowed to work in their previous positions as they are more at risk, so they don't have an income. So here come the donuts and jam. Anybody interested?

No socially distanced pictures this time. Masked people & ZOOM meeting pictures wouldn't be too meaningful.

Please pray for the petitions below, and a few others that can be gleaned from our letter.

We are grateful for Eden's continued presence and financial support in our ministry here. We pray for a blessed Christmas time for you! Bye for now!

With love,

In Jesus,

Dennis & Ruth

Support (Canada): Christians In Action Canada Box 344, Chilliwack, B.C. V2P 6J4 **NOTE: Mark 'for Peru Outreach'	Support (USA): Christians In Action USA 1318 E Shaw Ave #308 Fresno CA USA 93710 **NOTE: Mark for '695 Peru Ministry'
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- Prayer & Praise Items -

- **Bible and literature almost always accompanied the bags that were distributed. Pray that people will be more hungry for Jesus than just for rice and beans!**
- **For believers, old and young, to be encouraged and strengthened in the Lord!**
- **For our ZOOM meetings in both churches, Leadership, Youth, Kids, and from next week on with the Seniors!**
- **Direction and wisdom for leadership in both churches for weeks and months to come as things change!**

(Thank you!)

****Phone us in Peru at our Canadian ph.no!!
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