

THE CERNAS NEWSLETTER



June 2019

Dear praying friends:

Even after a difficult last couple of months, by God's grace, we are able to write this letter with a spirit of gratitude. God is showing us, and our church, that we can find refuge in Him when unexpected things happen. All things considered, we are as excited as ever to serve the Lord, knowing that His promises will be fulfilled.

As many of you already know, from an earlier e-mail, Ricardo (the young man we baptized two months ago) was shot and killed while he was delivering bread. Mauricio and I went to the scene of the crime, and were shocked to see that it occurred only about a block away from my children's Christian school. The police told Ricardo's parents that they would have to wait more than a day to get the body for burial because there were other homicides that were still waiting to be processed. Some of our church members have become ill, to the point of not being able to attend church because of Ricardo's death. To say the least, these events have hit us quite hard.

By God's grace, my family and I are in good spirits. Coming into the country, we already knew it was violent. So, events like this don't come as a complete surprise. Fear is always something we have to battle but, because of God's Word, it doesn't have to control us. Psalm 138:8 says, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me..." I have chosen this verse, among others, for my refuge. God has promised that He will fulfill His will in our lives. We can't ask for more than that. Although we always have to be careful, and practice God's wisdom, Ricardo's death, and the violent nature of the country will not keep us from God's will.

The Lord is still greatly working in our church. We are thankful to inform you that José Escobar and Rolando Pacheco will be graduating from our Bible Institute next month. These men have been faithful to the Lord for years, and we're excited to see how the Lord uses them in the future. Also, God has given us a last little bit of money, and now we have saved \$20,000.00. After 14 months of transition, we have met our financial goal. What we are praying for now is that God opens a door, and we can buy a property that is worth much more than what we have saved. \$20,000.00 may seem like a little but, so were five loaves and two fishes to feed 5,000 men.

Thank you for your prayers for our family. We have seen spiritual growth in the lives of our children through the tragic events these past months. Although not how we would have chosen, the death of Ricardo has opened the door for many good conversations. Our kids see that what we are doing is impacting eternity. If we had not come to El Salvador, maybe Ricardo would not have trusted Jesus to save him. This was quite a sobering thought for our kids. They realize that Ricardo is now in a much better place, thanks to God's salvation. Please pray for them, as this event has brought some fear to their hearts. We are working with them through this. They know that there is nowhere safer to be, than in God's will. For Him,

Steve Cerna