

Season's Greetings from Mexico!

December 2013

As I write there are twinkling lights from our tree and soft Christmas music in the background. It is a peaceful moment...in the midst of flurries of activity! Our hearts are full of gratitude for this year of blessing, for the ups and downs, for His provision through every moment, for the many miracles. *"all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."* Ephesians 3:20

We thought of writing a highlight of every month – but that would be basically sending you a book! So we decided to keep it simple! Pablo shares that "...one of my highlights has been the conversion of a man named Eduardo Lozano. He accepted Jesus during the first week of August when a group came to Ensenada and shared with the "Evangecube" down at the soccer field. He is the father-in-law of one of my soccer players who accepted the Lord a couple of years ago. With Eduardo's salvation, I began to disciple him and his wife, his daughter and son-in-law. They are growing steadily. Eduardo has also begun coming to the men's Bible study and is very participative. He is in his "first love" and a revolution is happening in his home and in his workplace. He always comes with stories about how people are responding to his conversion...he doesn't do drugs anymore, he doesn't drink anymore...what happened to him? Jesus!

"Another highlight of mine is that I have been privileged to be able to teach the Discipleship curriculum to students at the Ministry Training Institute this fall. What I love about that is that the students are eager to disciple new believers as well as implementing it in their churches when they return home after the semester is over. Mexican churches (especially in the southern states) don't usually do discipleship in their churches. There is no follow-up with new believers. They just think that if the believer comes to church, that is how they grow. But there is no systematic way of teaching what the Christian life is. For me to teach leaders how to teach is exciting because I know that generations of new believers will be strong disciples, and in turn their lives will be fruitful and reproductive."

Martha shares that "...my ministry highlight is our pre-marital counseling. The couple that most touched my heart this year is Benjamin and Laura. Laura is the young lady that lived with us several months a couple years back and is very dear to us. Benjamin has wiggled his way into our hearts also through the 4 months that we spent going through the many topics and concepts of a Christ-centered marriage. They were married on November 22<sup>nd</sup> and we pray the Lord's blessing upon their lives as now they put into practice all that they have learned!"

"In February we traveled around the western states and saw people and loved ones that we hadn't seen for years. We were working on raising more support as things had been tapering off and financially things were very difficult. The Lord has provided over and over in ways that we couldn't have imagined. There is much more stability financially – and the extra blessing was getting to see so many of you! In addition to our trip, throughout the year many of you have come to visit and serve alongside us. Truly, YOU are our biggest blessing!

"Our home seems to have revolving doors. There is not many a meal that we don't have people at the table with us or knocking at the door. All day long the phones are ringing and within the community there are endless needs that we are made aware of. In my spiritual walk this year the Lord has challenged me to love, to give grace, to love some more and to not criticize the

journey of growth that every person is on. On my mirror every morning I read the quote by Pastor Deborah Cobrae “Don’t judge people to death, but rather love them to life!” We [I] as humans and Christians have the tendency to jump all over people who are living outwardly less than “obedient Christian lives” when in reality we are all in process and what happens on the inside is truly what will produce change – and is so much more important. Loving and giving grace will get me much farther in relationship and will challenge others to grow and change by lifting up rather than beating down. I am reminded of this and challenged with every knock on the door... It has been a sweet but hard lesson to learn and is modeled every day by our pastor and his wife. *Help me love them to life Lord...*”

#### Family highlights!

- ♥ Pablo and I are going to celebrate 29 years of marriage in just a few days! It's pretty special to know someone so well, to love them so much and get to live and serve together!
- ♥ Our daughter in law, Jeanelle just received her immigration status on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>! Wooooohooooo!
- ♥ Our granddaughter is the joy of our lives and we love playing with and loving on her every chance we get!
- ♥ Benjamin's job is going great! He loves being a plumber and is EXCELLENT at it! They are now living in the U.S. and just moved into a sweet apartment. We love to watch Ben and Jeanelle parent our sweet Mischa. They are wonderful parents: creative, energetic, loving and firm. We are so proud of them.
- ♥ Jacob has now been working at Summit Machine in San Bernardino for over a year. He is praying for some major changes beginning this next year and in February, Lord willing, he will be able to delve into his first experience with legal interpretive training.

*“When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.” Ephesians 3:14-20*

We realize that this is much more personal and less “newsy” regarding ministry. Being a Christmas letter, we wanted to make it this way! In January we will send out another newsletter through email regarding several of the projects and ministry stories that we have lived these last few months! If you are not on our e-list, and would like to be, please let us know at: [losgarcia4@gmail.com](mailto:losgarcia4@gmail.com)

Allowing Christ to make his home in our hearts is why he was born that starry night in Bethlehem...

Celebrating Him and giving thanks for you, Pablo and Martha