

Report No. 12 from Alto Cayma - 30 Apr 17

On My Way

I'm starting this report in the Lima airport, where I have 6 hours to kill, and will finish it when I get home at noon on Mon, 1 May. After a prudent rest, I'll try to hit the ground running to get ready for events I've programmed for the rest of this home stay.

It was really tough to leave Arequipa this time, now that the rains are gone, leaving the mountains capped with snow, and the weather has turned



absolutely beautiful in this beautiful city. My absence this time will only be 2 months (until the beginning of July).

Association "Serving Alto Cayma"

We had a series of meetings with the staff this week to try to figure out how to integrate Briza, our new professional Social Worker, into our



organization. We wanted her to center her work in the Acercádonos sponsorship program, in a position of authority to direct the work of the other ladies in the program office, but at the same time, we didn't want to lose the benefit of all that Victor brings to that program. John was the one who found the solution that everyone was comfortable with. We are naming Briza and Victor as Co-Directors of the Acercádonos program - Briza as Director of Field Work and Victor as Director of Special Projects. In her new position, Briza will direct the work of the office staff, while Victor will continue to work on the cases that fall outside of the normal, and require creative and energetic solutions. In her new position, we're increasing Briza's work hours from 1/2-time to 3/4-time, effective 1 May.

Acercádonos ("Coming Together") Sponsorship Program

I'll be bringing very few letters back with me this time. For reasons I don't fully understand, the Cultural Center is taking way longer than in the past to translate the letters the "ahijados" (sponsors) wrote to their sponsors this time. Even as I was leaving, they had only translated a fraction of the letters. Now, as letters come out of translation, someone in Alto Cayma will have to scan them and e-mail them to me to forward on to the sponsors.

Please remember this if you are a sponsor and don't get a letter from your sponsoree immediately this time.

Victor and I had a pleasant surprise this morning when Juan Pablo, the first double amputee we helped get prosthetic legs, showed up



unexpectedly at mass. Now that Juan Pablo is "back on his feet", so to speak, he's working in an agricultural area outside of Arequipa, and he isn't always around on Sundays, which explains why his appearance was such a pleasant surprise.

I'm returning home with data on all the people who are on our waiting list for a sponsorp. I'll begin sharing this information shortly after I reach home.

Bed Project

We're still delivering beds under our project to provide 100 beds to people who need them. This week we delivered a bed to a very personable



young man named Stéfano, who had just turned 7. From the looks of things, I



think he's really going to enjoy his new bed.

Mujeres con Esperanza ("Women with Hope") Settlement

Little by little, we're advancing with the furnishing of our new building up in Mujeres con Esperanza. We now have venetian blinds on all the



windows, which will help keep the sun out, as well as the prying eyes of anyone who has altogether too much interest in the contents of our building.

Sra. Yudy, the President of the Junta Directiva of Mujeres con Esperanza, had asked to meet with Nataly, our lawyer, to ask Nataly to give



a talk in her community about the consequences of violent behavior in the home. It seems that neither the men nor the women are aware of how severe the penalties for family violence can be. Many men think they can beat their wives with impunity, and many women aren't aware of all the consequences that can occur when they report their husband to the Police. The husband can be arrested and thrown in jail, leaving the wife and children without their breadwinner, thus trading one problem for another. Yudy's idea is to make the men aware of the consequences, to prevent violent behavior and the chain reaction of adverse consequences which violent behavior can trigger.

Rotaract Projects

On Friday afternoon, I had a meeting with the Rotaract Library committee to evaluate how the library is working now, under the leadership of Lia, our Initial Education teacher. The consensus was that it's working



quite well, with the Rotaract volunteers learning from Lia how to manage and motivate early primary school kids, which is mostly what we're drawing. We need to attract more kids to take advantage of what we're offering. We

typically get 12-13 kids each afternoon, when we could well service twice that number. We will take new initiatives to reach out to the nearby community.

The Rotaract club held an "adobada" on Sunday to raise money. "Adobo", which is a pork cutlet marinated in BBQ sauce, is a traditional Sunday breakfast dish here in Arequipa. Whenever the Rotaractors hold an



"adobada", I like to buy some to share with the most needy elderly people in our program, and Victor always facilitates this for me.

Labor Day

Monday, May 1, is Labor Day in Peru, as it is in much of the rest of the world. The long weekend (Sat-Mon) brought our activities to a temporary halt, which was helpful to me in getting packed up and ready to leave. On



Friday, we had a nice lunch in the office - arroz con pollo (what else?), expertly cooked by the ladies in the Acercándonos office

Remembering Gloria

Thursday marked the 4th anniversary of Gloria's passing. We asked Padre Pedro to celebrate a mass dedicated to her memory. As he gave his homily, he invited anyone who wished to come up and share their memories of Gloria. No one else appeared to be ready to accept the challenge, so I went



up and related how Gloria didn't much concern herself with the poor of the world until she came here to Alto Cayma. Here, somehow, the poor became "real" to her, and she reacted with great compassion, helping the people and teaching them a better way to live. Everyone who was present at the mass had had their lives influenced by Gloria in some significant way, and she is remembered with great affection. As it says on this poster that hangs in our



Acercádonos program office, "You will always live in our hearts, Mamá Gloria

"Love God, Serve Neighbor/Serving Alto Cayma",

Jim