

Report No. 10 from Alto Cayma - 12 May 19

Happy Mother's Day

A Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers in my reading audience. I'm finishing celebrating the day on an airplane to Lima, and then one on to Miami. I'm on my way "home" for 6 weeks, and will then be going right back to Peru. I say I'm going "home" in quotes, because during those 6 weeks I'll also be traveling to Michigan (school reunion), to Germany (Rotary International Convention), to Atlanta (Peruvian Consulate) and to Oregon (visiting family).

Student in Distress

Miguel Yucra, the young man I've been writing about who lost his sponsor, Lee Wensil, in an auto accident recently, is now seeing a psychologist every Monday, along with his parents. All 3 are very pleased with the services they're receiving in Father Alex' Family Center. Miguel's



brothers may join in the therapy as well, because communication in the entire family needs improvement. And Miguel, of course, needs a new sponsor.

Jesús the Builder

We are very worried about Jesús. He's been in the hospital, as I reported earlier, and gangrene in his foot has made it necessary to amputate one of his toes. His condition is now being monitored to see if more of his foot will have to be amputated. Needless to say, he is very distressed. Please pray for Jesús and his family.

Humanitarians Without Borders

Gregorio, the head of this volunteer group, is engaging with us more and more. Briza is reeling him in with challenging and interesting work. In



addition to carrying out programs in Mujeres con Esperanza, which I've reported on in earlier reports, he is participating with us in a new initiative to identify exceptionally gifted children in our area and to develop their talents. With the addition of this program, Gregorio is now working with us half time, with a regular schedule of MWF afternoons and TuTh mornings.

Exceptional Children

To illustrate the new initiative to develop exceptional children, this bright looking fellow is Walter. He lives in Mujeres con Esperanza, is



exceptionally bright and, even by Alto Cayma standards, is exceptionally poor. He is on our waiting list for a sponsorship, but meanwhile, he is also the first child to enter the program for exceptional children mentioned above.

There is another young man named Gonzolo who will soon enter the program, along with a young lady named Mariluz. You'll be hearing more about these exceptional children in the future, as Carmen and Briza collaborate with Gregorio to nurture and accelerate the development of their capabilities.

Office Swap

The office swap to colocate Briza with the women she supervises has now been completed. The two offices have been repainted, and Carmen and Briza have now moved into "each other's" offices. Briza converted Carmen's old office downstairs to look like a California orange juice stand (she needed a bright color to keep her spirits up as she helps people struggle with their problems), and Carmen has restored the color purple to the second floor.



Nothing Like Having Friends

We had a real stroke of "luck" (aka the Hand of Providence acted) recently. Jonathan, one of our students, has a huge legal battle on his hands. His father was recently killed in an accident, and Jonathan's uncles have been attempting to "jump his claim", and deprive him of his inheritance. To fight them off requires a long and complicated legal process, for which one lawyer downtown quoted Jonathan a price of 5,000 soles (nearly \$2,000) to undertake. However, our lawyer, Carmen, talked Mack, a Law School



classmate of hers, into taking the case pro bono. This will save what is, for Jonathan, a huge amount of money which he needs for other purposes in getting on with his life in the wake of this family tragedy.

Padrino (Sponsor) to the Rescue

One of our students, Isabel, has been struggling for years to get through Law School with a sponsorship in our Salir Adelante program, but at the same time work enough to be able to support her two younger sisters and her disabled mother.

2-1/2 years ago, Isabel took out a loan for 3,000 soles for an eye operation for her mother. To take out such a loan as a 19-year old



college girl, who owns nothing she could put up for collateral, she had to go to a so-called "bank" which turned out to be nothing other than an institutionalized loan shark operation. She made payments as best she could, but every time she missed a payment, the exorbitant interest rate caused the balance still due to increase by leaps and bounds. After 2-1/2 years, she had paid 2,500 soles towards her 3,000 sol loan, but she still owed 6,000 soles. (That's right, $2,500 + 6,000 = 8,500$ soles to pay off a loan of 3,000 soles.)

When Isabel's padrino found out about her predicament, he intervened and pulled her out of this quicksand by paying off a negotiated settlement of just over 5,000 soles. Now she can go back to concentrating on her studies with her mind at peace.

Perhaps you're wondering how the Peruvian government can permit vultures like this to prey upon their poorest citizens. I'm wondering the same thing, and so are all the Peruvians I work with in the ASAC.

Letters

On Wednesday, I picked up 47 translated letters from the Cultural Center. That's not very many, but it's a help. My contact there indicated that if I can give them more time, they can do more letters. I'll give that a try, to see if they've recovered the capacity to perform like they used to.

Kaizen

We continued to work intensively with our Kaizen consultants right up to the end of my stay, focusing on capturing the culture of our Association and learning how to make that drive our performance. Even as we were working on this, I could already see the creative juices of our Directors



flowing faster and faster, with new ideas springing forth at a great rate. We've got to be careful to make sure that we have the means to carry out any new ideas we undertake, however.

Mother's Day

Every year we give food baskets to all the families in our Acercándonos sponsorship program on 2 occasions - Christmas and Mother's Day. The ladies in the office worked very hard to prepare the baskets ahead of time.



Then they distributed over 250 food baskets on Friday (in Mujeres con Esperanza) and Saturday (down the hill, in ENACE). Many of the people



came up to me with big smiles on their faces, and asked me to convey their



special thanks to their padrinos (sponsors). Anything like this that comes to them out of the ordinary brightens their lives more than you can imagine.

Teambuilding

Lidia and I got together with Briza and her team on Saturday for a meeting to share what's coming down from the top of the Association regarding our Philosophy, Values, Vision, Mission and Operating Principles. After the meeting, we all had lunch together. The ladies had cooked up a local



delicacy, but in an effort to clean out my refrigerator before I leave, I had brought my own ham and cheese sandwich. They wondered how anyone could survive on just a sandwich for lunch.

Rotarct/Interact

On Saturday evening, the Rotaract and Interact clubs joined forces to invite all their mothers to a Mother's Day reception, in advance of all the family festivities that would be taking place the next day. We had a nice



turnout, and the kids were really proud to show their mothers what they had



accomplished in their clubs this year. Once again, our Rotaract club was



given the highest degree of recognition from Rotary of all the 15 or so Rotaract clubs in the Arequipa area. I hope the mothers are as proud of these kids as the Rotarians from downtown (4 of whom were in attendance) and I are. Since I was traveling in less than 24 hours from this event, they gave me a nice going-away card with messages from them which I will long treasure. I love these kids. They energize me, and at my age, there isn't much that can do that any more. :-)

Farewell to Arequipa

When I left on Sunday evening, several of the students from the Salir Adelante program came out to the airport (on Mother's Day, no less) to say



goodbye. I must say, I enjoyed that more than just waving from the escalator.

Reports

As I am leaving Peru, Carmen has agreed to take the lead in getting special reports generated on significant projects during my absence. When I return in early July, my own weekly reports will resume. Until then, I'm going to give my keyboard a rest.

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

Jim