



**Ortiz Family
Serving in Arandas
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DEEPLY THANKFUL

I am convinced that in the majority of cases, if missionaries tell all of the difficult things that happen to them, they could make people feel sorry for them, but if they told all of the great things, they could make people feel envious. I usually try to tell both sides so that it balances out.

Fact is, we are all so very blessed, whether or not we recognize it. Considering that 2020 has been extra difficult, it may be hard to recognize it. On Thanksgiving we are often told to compare ourselves with people elsewhere who are not as well off as we are. "Millions of people in other countries around the world would, in a heart beat, change places with any American," we are told, and it probably is true. However, comparing ourselves to others is not the best way to be grateful. That, alone, would be a superficial reason for gratitude. God has been teaching me this lately.

What if God, in His providence, allowed me to be the one on the bottom of the ladder, and no one in this world would want to change places with me? What if I were the Job of this generation? Would I then have the right to curse God and die? If my understanding of gratitude is solely based on my physical or economic success, I will fall into ingratitude. Yet if I believe God's Word, and live in the light of His promises, I will always have motivation to be thankful.

God has reserved a place in heaven for all who put their faith in Him. Just that should change our perspective on everything! The "sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared" to living eternally with our God! But this is not only a future thing; He also said that "all things work together for good to them that love God." He says so because He is determined to conform us to the image of His Son (**Rom.8:28,29**). If we believe that, we can give thanks in everything (**1Th.5:18**) and for everything (**Eph.5:20**).

I could complain about how some have not agreed with me on pastoral decisions we made. After much gossip, a family has left and written the entire church off as hypocrites. One very promising young man who helped me in ministry ended up falling into sin. I could tell you how our family van's engine got totalled. I could tell you how we haven't been able to register our newborn yet. I could tell you how in San Miguel we have had several of the folks move to other towns, leaving us almost back where we started. All that is true, but the fact of the matter is He works it together for our good.

I could complain, or I could rejoice. I know which one God wants. So with His help, I choose to rejoice.

I want to spend the remainder of this letter telling you how God does things that remove any reason for you to feel sorry for us. Hannah and I decided before we began deputation to avoid asking people for things. We had both read about George Muller and sought to imitate his faith. The result has been amazing! Through the years, churches and individuals have randomly sent gifts or asked if we needed anything just at the times we

PRAISES:

- Needs taken care of
- Blessings everywhere
- New opportunities
- New Van
- 4 Baby dedications

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Nena and her family
(backslidden)
- Hannah's paperwork
- Babies U.S. papers
- Erica and Jessica (Salvation)

had asked God to supply a specific need. That is what happened this last month as many financial needs had recently piled up.

Let me start with a quick story. A couple months ago, our van started having problems. On the day we “happened” to have a scheduled zoom call for a missions conference, all the oil dumped out of our van suddenly, for the second time, through the loose oil filter. We bought a new filter this time and headed back to San Miguel, but more engine problems were manifesting. As soon as we arrived, Maricela called in tears telling us that she had caught her finger in machinery at work. They wouldn’t help her much in town but told her to make her own way to the city, an hour further. With a failing vehicle, we didn’t know if we would make it but decided to help her and hoped to make it an hour even further to where proper repairs could be done. It’s a good thing we live in the highlands; that helped us coast most of the way. We dropped her off at the hospital and made it all the way to the right mechanic, very slowly, and my parents came to pick us up. By the time all of this transpired, it was time for the meeting. We pulled over and had the call from their van, on 1% battery, trying to keep my failing phone charging. The call was successful.

The repairs on the van ended up being far more than it was worth. God used that incident to put it on this dear church’s heart to help us, and they ended up doubling! what we could pull together (selling the broken down van and such) to help us buy another, insisting that it be something nice that would last us for years. God helped us find a great 2013 van within the price range.

Two other churches sent random gifts in that time frame. One gift is set aside to cover paperwork. The phone has been repaired. The church ceiling is done. The church van is running again. Our trip out-of-state to preach in a conference was possible. These, along with several more small expenses, are provided for. Thank you for your faithfulness to serve God!! It has been of huge encouragement to us! Now we just need to make an appointment for Selicia’s paperwork and, later, Hannah’s.

Because this letter has gone long I will have to say more on another occasion. I will simply finish by saying happy late Thanksgiving and early Merry Christmas.

Rolando and Family