

SNAP-SHOTS

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José Emanuel was so excited when Hortencia delivered a brand-new shiny scooter for Christmas. José had always been an active listener and participant in the Bible lessons Hortencia taught at community days. For this reason, she thought of him when it came to deciding on a special recipient for the scooter, which arrived as a Christmas toy donation at our bodega. Looking around though, she noticed the rough terrain surrounding where he lived and asked, "But where will you ride it?" Without hesitation, José excitedly exclaimed, "My Dad will take me to the park!" Sadly, and unbeknown to everyone, Jose's eagerly anticipated day at the park with his dad and new scooter would never come to be.

Two days later, arriving at his workplace, after an unusual phone call from his boss, Jose's dad Pepé was confronted by two men demanding money. Confused and not realizing the seriousness of their extortion demands, he argued. In just seconds, he was executed, taking bullets that appeared to have been meant for his boss.

At 29 years old Pepé left behind a young wife and 3 kids that he loved very much. Their lives are now forever changed.

Tijuana has always been a dangerous city, yet these past few years have seen violence increase to the point where Tijuana is now ranked #1 most dangerous city in the world. On average, 7 people are killed every day. Residents learn to live with police sirens and crime scene tape as drug cartels kill each other as well as engage in extortion, theft, kidnapping, human trafficking, etc.

God has been gracious in protecting us and our ministry. We have so far never had an attempt on our lives. However, we have certainly witnessed all too often, the effects of those that have experienced tragic, cruel events like that of Pepe's family. Ministering in the aftermath is hard, and a sharp reminder yet again, how fragile and temporary life here on earth is. The need for the Good News to be heard is immense. This year will be a very difficult one for José and his family. Jose's pain has been evident in the understandable anger he feels towards these "bad, bad men" who killed his father. Please pray, that rather than becoming bitter and vengeful as he grows into a young man, he would continue to seek God and find He is able, and faithful to bring comfort, strength, and healing to his and his family's broken hearts.



José Emanuel (11) so happy with his new scooter.



Karla Vanessa (7) with her Daddy, Pepé.



(At the funeral home).

Jose's mom Karla comforts him and sister, Aitiana (4)

THANK YOU for your prayers for José and his family and for our safety as we continue to go about ministering and sharing God's word in the city of Tijuana.



José, (center) watches his father's casket being put into the hearse.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4



2000 Expedition, our "work horse" used for transporting people and larger loads of supplies and equipment when needed.

VEHICLES – essential and valuable tools!

V&O is committed to going to the needy, rather than expecting the needy to come to us. That means of course having reliable vehicles that can handle the rugged terrain where those in need usually reside. Being older, our vehicles fit well with the culture we work in, which is a plus. However, the balance between older *and* reliable can have its challenges at times! Last year our trusty little Honda became 'not so trusty' on several occasions,



Dodge Dakota, transports goods across the border.

leaving Hortencia and co. temporarily stranded. With high miles and a tired motor, it was time for us to look for a replacement. Although earlier in the year we had set aside funds towards this expense, a timely and very generous financial donation came in enabling us to increase our budget substantially to purchase a very tidy and low milage, 2015 Toyota RAV 4 AWD in Nov.



Pastor Von's 2010 Subaru Forester...

commutes regularly between SD and TJ. Still going strong.



2003 Honda CRV has served us well... now ready for retirement.



RAV 4, used daily in TJ for visitations, errands, shopping, deliveries, etc.

Thank you LORD and thank you again to the generous donor!

JAN 6, CELEBRATING THREE KINGS DAY (last Christmas deliveries)



Paty and Cristian slice Kings Day bread for the kids.



Giving thanks.



GRACIAS!



THANK YOU!



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As is almost always the case, this month's ministry brought highs and lows, joy and laughter, pain, and sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 3:4) we live in a fallen world, yet one thing we can know for sure, God never forsakes or abandons His children. This He has promised! (Deuteronomy 31:8) Your prayers and partnership with us throughout the good and the bad, are always needed, and much appreciated!

May God bless you and keep you! Until next month, Joyce, Philip, Hortencia and the Team!