

SNAP-SHOTS

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A TIME TO REST

For several months our team had been looking forward to a much needed break; a “paseo,” (leisurely excursion), for a few days to a peaceful place where they could take some time to rest, reflect and recharge physically and spiritually. As the weeks went by, dates for the paseo were set, and reset multiple times! Each time it looked like the coast was clear to get away, a tragic event, an important appointment, or an urgent case arose, to which they all agreed, the paseo would have to wait.

As in the words of Jesus, “The poor you will always have with you...” (Mt. 26:1), ministry opportunities in our barrios are endless. Working with the poor often requires sacrifice, patience, flexibility, and much compassion. With each of these delays however, it was clear that God was placing our team in the right place, at the right time. The following pictures show some of the happenings over those several weeks.



Noé & little brother put flowers on their mother's grave.



After the burial.
“Will you be my mom now?”
Jonathon B, asked Hortencia.

LEFT: A “close to home” funeral and burial. Noé’s mom was shot and killed on the street one night. Noé has been known to us since he was 5 years old. His mom had been addicted to drugs for years, leaving him as the main provider for his family since his early teens. He works odd jobs and often helps us at V&O. He and his brothers have lost several family members to the drug infested culture they’ve had to grow up in. Pastor Von, Hortencia, and the team have been the most stable influence throughout their young lives. Their situation is concerning and complicated, so please pray that God would give us wisdom and guidance in knowing how to help them best in the days ahead.

RIGHT: A mom seriously ill with AIDS. Her young daughter and son, (18 & 11), overwhelmed with the responsibility of caring for her alone at home. This family is also well known to us, but until their recent phone call, their desperate situation was not. With the family’s permission, Hortencia made arrangements with Director Antonio from Las Memorias Hospice, to transport Gabi* across the city where she is now being taken care of by experienced staff. Her case was the worst they had seen in some years. Hortencia also worked to acquire medications, equipment, and personal hygiene items for Gabi (and others), as finances and resources at the hospice are often stretched to the limit. Practical help, counselling, and a much needed fun day out for the kids, were also a priority, along with rallying other family members to step in and help.



Hortencia talks with Director Antonio outside.



Hortencia and Gabi wait for help to carry her to the car.



Gabi is carefully loaded in.



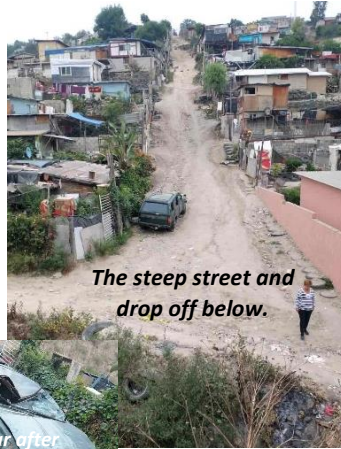
A few days later...Pastor Eric talks/prays with Gabi.

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive.’” Acts 20:35

*Not her real name.

Continued...

RIGHT: A tragic accident. While driving home several weeks ago, the husband of a longtime friend of Hortencia's was killed in an accident. As he began the descent at the top of the hill on which they lived, his brakes failed, sending him careering down the steep slope and plummeting over the edge into the canyon below. Just a few weeks beforehand, after years of resisting, he had committed his life to Christ and was encouraging his wife to re-commit hers also.



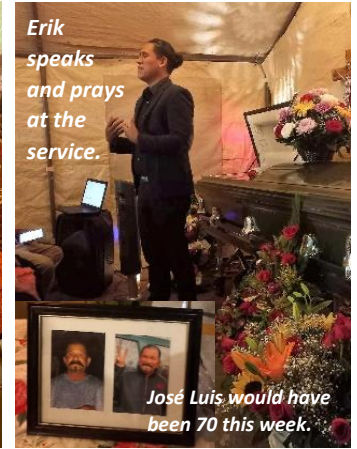
The steep street and drop off below.



The car after being towed out of the canyon.



Hortencia comforts her friend Marta.



Erik speaks and prays at the service.

José Luis would have been 70 this week.

"Death is only the door to Heaven... Death is indeed the only door to Heaven." Pastor Von.



Before the surgery...

Hortencia & Alicia pray together.



Alicia's son helps her out of the car as she arrives home.

She has to keep her head down for 10 days!

LEFT: An important appointment. Following on from Alicia's story from last month... her eye surgery went ahead last week. The doctors removed dead tissue from her right eye and said her retina is still in perfect condition. She has another appointment in 3 weeks, when they'll determine whether she needs an optic lens replacement. Either way it seems there is a good chance she will regain some of her sight. She has been overwhelmed with gratitude for this and for all the help she has received from V&O to make it possible. She also plans to share her testimony and give thanks to God publicly, as soon as she can, at Pastor Eric's church meeting, (just down the road from our bodega).

THE PASEO!! As you can see by these pictures, last weekend our TJ team of staff and helpers along with some of their family members, were finally able to take that rest, and thoroughly enjoy their long awaited paseo!



On their way!



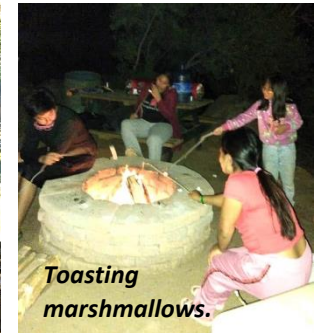
Getting set up.



Pool time!



Barbeque time!



Toasting marshmallows.



A boat ride in Ensenada.



Estrella 16,

Pastora Maria in background.



Leslie 15



THANK YOU!



Pastor Erik with daughter Fernanda.

MUCHAS GRACIAS!!

Thank you for your partnership and your prayers - especially for our safety and to all of you who invest in us and this work! **On behalf of us ALL at V&O!** A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25