

Dear Friend, Encourager, Partner-in-Mission,

It is incredible how five months can pass by in a blink! Not only has time passed very quickly, but God has been moving so rapidly these past few months that at times we feel like we can't keep up! We've often thought, "Whoa God, slow down or give us the stamina to keep up with what You are doing!" Come along on this five-month/five-part journey to see what the Lord has been up to!

**The Zambiza Dump Workers
and the Quito Family Resource Center (QFRC)**

In January, I, Sondra, began teaching English to five children of the Zambiza dump workers who attend the before/after school program at the QFRC. Four of my students are 12 and 13 years old and one is four. Ten years ago, parents working in the dump needed the extra hands of their children to work along-side them.



Now, because of the QFRC, the parents are learning alternative work skills and are making extra income allowing the children to attend school. Many of the parents are uneducated or under-educated and unable to help their children with their school work. The missionary staff help the children with their homework, offer special classes to enhance their education, provide them with Bible teaching, feed them a hot meal daily, and assist them in hygiene care.



Praise God for the QFRC and their ministry to the families of Zambiza !

I also work with up to 50 female dump workers who attend the QFRC weekly. The women participate in exercise (Zumba classes), nutrition classes, crocheting /knitting classes, as well as Bible study. **In early January, I was able to obtain 50 free books of the Gospel of John (in Spanish) for the women to study at the QFRC.** Back in December, I “happened” to meet an Ecuadorian woman, named Marta, who volunteers for the United Bible Society which gives away free books each year. **We thank the Lord for putting Marta in my path!**



At Christmas time, Reach Beyond gives all of their missionary families a Christmas gift. This year, ours was a large fleece blanket. Since we already have enough blankets, Darrell and I decided to donate ours to a family who works in the dump. None of the homes in Ecuador have furnaces and many of the homes of the dump workers have windows without glass, leaky roofs, and dirt floors. **Please continue to pray for God's provision for the families of Zambiza.**

The Women of Casa de Confianza (House of Trust) and the Free Soul Prison Ministry

Last year, I helped teach English to male and female parolees from the Latacunga prison. This year, **I am now working “inside” the Casa de Confianza women's prison, assisting and encouraging female prisoners (all of whom have small children or are pregnant) during Bible studies.** My Spanish is not yet at the level of teaching a Bible study class alone, so, for now, I assist the women with finding books, chapters and verses in the Bible, listen to them, encourage them, and pray with and for them.



Pray that the women will continue to open their hearts to the Free Soul ministry workers and to a relationship with Jesus so that He may set their souls free!

Two Women and A Few Free Afternoons

Rosita, our indigenous Indian friend, and I have been making time every few weeks for some 'charlas de mujer-a-mujer' (woman-to-woman chats) at our home, giving Rosita an opportunity to share her heart in concern with marriage issues and raising two teenagers. Rosita, a Bible-reading Catholic, and I discuss Scripture, pray together, and this month, I loaned her a Spanish copy of 'the book, 'Love and Respect' for her to read in concern with her marriage. **Please pray for unity for Rosita and her husband, Patricio, and that he would come to accept Christ as his Savior and Lord over his life!**

Away From The City Enjoying God's Creation

This month we made a day-trip to a community called 'Mindo' with Carmen's family (our adopted Ecuadorian family). We, Carmen, her oldest daughter Verito, and her four children visited a butterfly reserve, traveled by cable car across the top of a tree canopy over the tropical grasslands to the other side of a canyon, and then hiked some challenging trails to a couple of waterfalls. Spending the day with them gave us time away from the city as well as time to converse and pray with them about their family concerns. Before heading back to the city, we topped off our day with an awesome trout lunch with shrimp soup and ice cream for \$3 a meal.



Another opportunity for reprieve this month was when Darrell participated in the annual Reach Beyond Men's Weekend Retreat at Papallacta. Our mission staff knows that time in green space is important for its missionaries who live in a city of cement and more than 2.5 million people. While Darrell was away, I spent some time, walking through El Ejido Park with a friend.

We thank God for providing us with opportunities to restore our bodies and our souls in God's creation!

**Be sure to check out the Feb, Mar, April, and May newsletters
coming your way this week!**

**Thank you for being patient with us
as we work to help you "catch up" on our news!**

Darrell and Sondra Holden

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