



Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Psalm 139:23 NIV

## Current Highlights

Pablo and I have both received our Carne de Extranjeria, we can now open a bank account and have things under our name such as the cell phone contract.

On April 30<sup>th</sup> Pablo and I celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. I had dreamed about going to Tahiti for this one, but plans changed. I am thankful for God's mercy and Presence in our lives these 20 years.

A location has been secured and plans are underway to host a retreat for all 14 pastors/leaders and their immediate family.

## Prayer Needs:

- The rainy season continues and besides the flooding and leaking into houses there's the challenge of the mosquitos and the diseases they can bring such as dengue, zika, chikungunya, etc.
- Continued opportunities and open doors to connect with the pastors and leaders.
- Pastoral Family retreat scheduled for June 23-25.
- The boys' continued adjustment in school, pray against discouragement and feeling overwhelmed.
- Still praying for an affordable and reliable car.



I was not doing well emotionally these past two months. However, things have recently started changing. I don't know exactly what changed – things didn't get easier – the weather didn't get any cooler, the flies didn't disappear, the mosquitos actually increased. We are at scorpion #16 inside the house. Now that the boys are in school, I wake up at 5:15 AM to prepare their breakfast and pack their lunch, I have to wash their white uniform shirts by hand, and use lots of bleach otherwise they will stay stained. My hands got burned with the bleach and all the scrubbing.

But yet something changed in me – and I am thinking that it's that I finally accepted that I am not only in a different country, in a different environment, I am also a different person. And I am starting to be at peace with that. My struggle was in feeling different and not accepting it – I desperately wanted to continue being the same independent and self-sufficient woman I was up to a few months ago. I prided myself in being determined, goal oriented, motivated and brave. I considered myself resourceful and thought that I could overcome almost anything. But now the person staring me back in the mirror is fearful, dependent and unsure of herself.

And that was not easy to accept – how could that be? What happened?

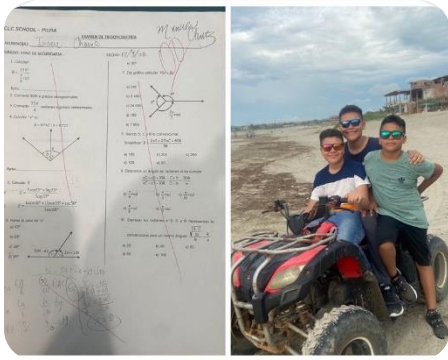
Let me tell you what happened: I moved to a new country – and in doing that I surrendered my house, my belongings, my car, my career, my church, my community, my family, my friends, my support system. My tortillas, my salsa, my cheese, my sour cream, and my carne asada! And I wanted to move on as if none of that mattered – as if all those changes and transitions were a “normal” and everyday occurrence. But did you know that according to research “Moving can be a significant life event, on par with other large life events such as having children, getting married, or meeting your partner. Even if you are excited about living in a new location, the energy of adapting to a new place wears on you in ways that could lead to mental health challenges”.

I think most people understand this and are sympathetic about it, except me. I was not patient with myself. I wanted to move from eating tortillas daily to eating Peruvian rice without missing a beat! My pride and ego were telling me “Of course you can do this, this is nothing compared to other challenges you have faced, or the challenges others face, come on put on your happy, brave and determined face and move on!”

The mask might have worked with others but not with myself or with Him who knows my heart and my most inner thoughts. I am learning to be patient with the new me –

What about you, how are you really doing? How are you treating yourself?

*Maricela*



## Kids' Corner

The boys enjoyed the trip to Lima. They got to drink Boba again and went to watch a movie in English.

They also presented their "lived experiences" in Peru to some of you – the judges had a difficult task choosing a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Isaac got first place, and was named "the great Llama". Joshua and Samuel tied for second place, and the title "the great Alpacas!"

Joshua celebrated his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 22. He received words of encouragement and affirmation for this new stage, teenage years. In our family we have the tradition that at 13 they will each receive a watch of their choice to remind them that there is "a time/season for everything" so there's no need to be in a hurry.

School continues to be challenging for them. And then due to the rains, there were days when the classes were completely canceled or they were virtual. The uncertainty was stressful because it was usually late at night or early in the morning when the decision would be made, or suddenly changed.

They were testing these past two weeks, they test monthly I hear, and some of their scores were as low as a 0!



Walking with people who are suffering is not easy. I would love to see everyone we are praying for be healed, especially those who don't know our God. I would love for them to understand the blessing that it is to be a child of God. When a loved one is sick most people want to see their relative be healed. It is very difficult to understand that the salvation of our souls is way more important than the healing of our physical being. Fighting for the lost souls though and witnessing the salvation of those that get it and accept the gift from God is such a blessing, a gift from God.

The most recent story of God's love and mercy involves a family from a very poor community, Buenos Aires. We started visiting a woman that was diagnosed with cancer, her name is Esmeralda. When we first visited her, she couldn't talk and could barely move, her digestive system wasn't working either and it seemed like she couldn't control her hands which were moving all over the place.

The reality in front of me said that she was about to die so all we could do was to pray and ask her if she wanted to invite Jesus to be her savior and at least die in peace. Esmeralda gave her life to our Lord that day. On the second visit, her face had gained some color and now she could control her hands almost completely. By the third or fourth visit her skin wasn't pale at all any more, her natural skin color came back and she could clap her hands in worship to our Lord. On the next visit which was Easter Sunday her two daughters, plus two sisters, and her mother gave their lives to Jesus. And in a consecutive visit her husband accepted Christ as well.

Now the church in Almirante Grau is visiting this family once a week and praying for this to be the birth of a new Mennonite Brethren church plant in Buenos Aires. This beautiful story is alive thanks to a humble woman with some nursing training. Hermana Rosa's philosophy is that with God, love, and some medication people get healed and saved. I also must acknowledge the different brothers and sisters from the church that give their time to go visit Esmeralda weekly. And finally, you are also part of this story by sending us, praying for us, walking with us, making it possible for us to be here in Peru walking alongside Esmeralda and her family.

### For Financial support:

Online - [multiply.net/give](https://multiply.net/give)  
Ministry code:  
C0773-Pablo & Maricela

You can also send your support to our  
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