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GREETINGS FROM HONDURAS !



November, 2006

Holiday Greetings!

Another year past, another year of God's blessings. It has been a year of "ups and downs", a year of testing, but beyond everything else it has been a year when we have seen the hand of God.

Last February we prayed that God would bring us the girls that needed to be with us this year. Because I had been in Canada during January due to a family illness, I hadn't been here to help with the screening process, so we weren't really sure what to expect. On opening day several girls arrived whom we had never met before. Some arrived alone on the bus, others with their mothers, but all with the same objective, to be enrolled in the Center. Thanks to you who support our ministry, most of these girls were enrolled and given the chance to study and to hear the good news of our loving Savior. Some of these girls accepted the Lord this year; others began to grow in their Christian walk, while others simply experienced the love of God for the first time.

God has also been opening our eyes this year to the needs of these girls' mothers. Yesterday we met with one of the mothers who cried as she told of the abuse both her daughter and she suffers at the hand of her husband, her daughter's step dad. She told us how he held a knife to her throat in his anger. She told us about his drunken rages. They are both suffering and we need to help. And she isn't the only mother who has opened up to us. Another of our girls has told us about the abuse her mom lives through every day at the hand of her step dad. He beats her with a machete. Although some of our girls have kind loving parents, there are also several others who have similar stories of abuse. We need to have more staff so that we can keep the Center open at all times so that they have a safe place to come to. We need more programs for our girls to keep them occupied over the winter break. These mothers want something better for their girls so they send them to us. What a great responsibility!!

God has placed this burden in our hearts. He loves these girls and their mothers. He has sent us to help and we could never close our eyes to these needs or turn our backs on them. Thanks to you and your prayers and support we are able to reach out to some of these hurting girls and women. But there is so much more we need to do.

Erica and I are now in the process of interviewing next years students. Six of our girls from this year will be returning for second year and the rest of the beds will be filled with first year students. Pray with us that once again the house will be filled with those girls God would place into our care and that we will have the wisdom necessary to teach them.

This has also been a year of struggle for Erica, and I would ask that you will continue to remember her in your prayers. As most of you know this spring she had surgery for glaucoma which she is still recovering from. She will have to go to the States in the New Year again for a follow up appointment with her eye specialist. She has also been suffering with a great deal of pain in her neck and arms. A few weeks ago she had an x-ray only to find that she has three fractures in her neck which have healed but are pinching a nerve. Several months ago she was jumping into our vehicle and bashed her head on the door frame. Apparently that is when she did the damage. Now she is suffering and the doctors say she will either need to have surgery to relieve the pain or live on pain pills, which not only reduce the pain but make her very drowsy.

Also as you know we have had the pressure of the court case over her house to deal with. Thank you for each one of you who have prayed about the case. We know it is in God's hands. Although it was supposed to be settled several weeks ago, when Erica, her husband Wilfred, and the lawyers arrived in the capital city at the Supreme Court building, the building had been taken over by thousands of demonstrating teachers. The building was barricaded off and they were unable to get near it, so as a result the case has been postponed again. This of course is another pressure that Erica has to deal with. Please continue to hold her up in your prayers. She needs the Lords strength to make it through each day.

I know this doesn't really sound like a "Merry Christmas" letter but it is reality. God is good; He has blessed us in so many ways. When I look at our girls and see the changes and growth in their lives I see that as a great blessing. When I see more opportunities to serve, I see that as another blessing. When I see God providing for our every need, I see more blessings. God has never failed us, He has never left us. He always provides what we need, exactly when we need it, another blessing. You too are a blessing. Thank you for being there, for your friendship, for your support, and for your prayers. I know He has great blessings in store for you as well.

Christmas and the New Year are always a time of reflection. As I reflect over the past year I see our loving heavenly Father's hand guiding and directing our lives. May you experience that same guidance and direction in your life.

With many best wishes for the season and much love,

Sharon