

November 2000

Dear friends,

Here we are almost at the end of another year. It seems like only a brief time ago that we were all looking with anxious anticipation to the Y2K event, uncertain as to what may lie ahead in the future. Now this is all *ex post facto* and we await the turn of the year to 2001. However, although we may go along in cavalier and nonchalant disregard, at times God pulls the reins short and we are caused to take a closer look at life and realize once again that "life is a breath", a "mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes". I was caused to take a new look at this recently as we all grieved with the Maria Jesus Lopez family as we watched her literally wither away before our eyes with liver and pancreatic cancer. One day she was a vibrant, mothering sister in the church, full of energy and love, and almost the next she was struggling for her last breath. Yesterday we buried her. On earthly terms, a sad defeat. In heavenly, a roar of victory. Not only is she in a much better place, worshipping her Lord face to face, but through the testimony of her life and death her unbelieving family has given their lives to the Lord as well. Praise God that he always brings victory out of what may appear to be defeat.

I apologize to those of you with whom I have not kept in e-mail contact. Despite best intentions I have had a computer crash and have been out of contact for the past month or more. Now, however, I believe that I will shortly be on line again and can keep in touch more easily. Just a note here - please send me a quick e-mail to make sure that I have your address. My hope is to send off a brief update on the work every couple of weeks to those of you who wish to receive it. I will continue to send out a regular news letter as well for those of you who don't have e-mail access. My address is: steve_frey_74@yahoo.com

As I have already mentioned, we are nearing the end of the year 2000. The year ends with many exciting things taking place here in the ministry in Cd. Valles and the Huasteca. The church is growing with new mission churches springing up all the time. Ezequiel and Veronica continue to be powerful, and faithful ministers of the Gospel here in the region. Tomorrow we have a baptism down at the river where we will celebrate with new believers as they publicly declare the death to their old sinful natures and resurrection into new life with Jesus Christ. Souls are being won on an almost daily basis, and men and women are being freed from idolatry, oppression, fear, and darkness and are having the glorious light of Jesus Christ shine into their lives.

We are excited at the plans of having a group of pastors from Oregon, Washington, and Canada come to join us in February for a pastor's conference. There is much that these brothers can impart to the pastors here in the Huasteca, but perhaps, even more that they can learn from the pastors here to take back to their respective churches in the States and Canada. Pray with us that this will be a time of value and blessing for the churches and pastors involved.

Our food pantry is finally no longer a dream but a thing of reality. This week we put the door on the room, built the shelves, and placed beans, rice, corn, and other commodities into bags so that the deaconesses can distribute them to the needy in the church and the community. The Bible as a whole, and certainly, Jesus personally, is very emphatic on how God feels about the poor, and specifically the widows, the fatherless, and the orphans. God has given us the opportunity to do something tangible about these needs. However, we need your help. I have been able to find places where I can access some foods for this outreach up in Texas. The problem is that we cannot always get the staple foods in the quantities that we need: rice, beans, cooking oil, sugar, lentils, etc. We desperately need you to help us to continue this ministry of mercy and love. We need money which is sent specifically to cover the purchase of these basic, nonperishable foodstuffs. This will allow us to purchase what is needed locally. If you feel God tug at you for this need please

send money as usual, but make sure that you make a note on the check that it is for FOOD MINISTRY, (MEXICO). I know that you will be mightily blessed as you reach across the miles to serve the needy in the Huasteca in this way.

One of the little things on my plate is conducting an English class for those interested in learning the language. Certainly, I need to learn more Spanish, but it is also a blessing to be able to help those interested in furthering their education by offering them English as well.

Praise God that there have been some churches in Canada who have taken the challenge and are raising money in order to build churches on some of the mission outposts. You know my feeling of urgency in this area, and so many more are needed to help this work. For only several thousand dollars a church building can be built in a place which currently has no evangelical church. This becomes the focal point of worship and outreach within these isolated areas. Please pray about getting involved in this great need personally, or as an outreach of your church.

We are excited to see how God continues to use the clinics as an evangelistic tool. During every clinic men and women, boys and girls give their hearts to Jesus in a step of faith. Through the expression of love that they see, along with the witness of the spoken message of the Gospel – the Good News of Jesus that they hear, their hearts are stirred and they reach out in faith to receive this Jesus as their personal savior. What a privilege it is to be a part of this. Certainly it is often not "fun" or what one would choose to do if given the choice. The work is hard, the hours long and the mud deep. The climate is harsh, the conditions are awful, oh, but the joy of seeing lives changed and men and women no longer struggling under the weight of sin, darkness, and fear.

I am still waiting to hear when the dental team will be here in the new year to train me into this new skill. Please pray for me that I will be able to quickly learn the necessary nuances of this new profession so that I can serve those who are so much in need of dental care.

To update you on the awaited move of Luis and Patti Jimenez from Baja California to Cd. Valles: we still are waiting for God's timing in this matter. Luis and I are in contact and continue to be excited about what God is doing both here in the Huasteca as well as there in the Baja. God has his hand in this and I am neither frustrated nor worried. Please pray with us that God will work out his perfect will and timing in their move.

For those of you in Canada, you have long since been shoveling your cars out in order to get to work. Our American friends have just recently finished off all the Thanksgiving turkey leftovers, but all of you are beginning to bring the dusty boxes of Christmas decorations out of closets, garages and attics in order to trim the house for yet one more Christmas season. May your hearts be full of joy and gladness, and your homes full of family, friends, and laughter. Most of all, however, may your Christmas be full of Jesus – the one whose birthday we celebrate, and the one who is truly the reason for the season.

Please remember our needs here in Mexico:

- money for the needs in the food ministry.
- finances so that church buildings can be built in isolated villages.
- a one ton van for me for the clinic outreaches so that I can get into villages presently inaccessible with my current vehicle. Also a small car for Ezequiel to allow him a more economical vehicle when he travels to minister in the far-flung churches that he is responsible for.
- the continuing, and on going financial needs of running medical missions.
- the upcoming challenge of learning basic dentistry.
- pray with us that many souls will be saved and come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I covet your prayers. Please remember me especially over this Christmas season. Truth be told, this is often a lonely time as one is separated from friends and family and is in a culture that is foreign.

May God bless you richly as you partner with us in the work here in the Hausteca region of Mexico. Without your prayers and giving none of this is possible.

May yours be a very Merry Christmas and a Christ-filled and happy New Year.

Your missionary,