

Free Methodist Window to the World
December 2008
Missions Focus: Missionary Appreciation

Scripture: The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners ... *Isaiah 61:1*

Story: The Aftermath by Pat Cruce, Peru

I have never visited a war zone, but I'm told that it would look like Pisco, Peru, after the earthquake of August 2007. The quake registered 8 points on the Richter scale and killed 595 people. Only shells remained of homes, churches, hotels and the hospital.

My first visit to this area was two weeks following the earthquake. The Peru Free Methodist churches were not affected by the destruction, but had sent food and clothing to their brothers and sisters who had lost everything. I was a member of the delegation delivering these items, along with help from the Bishops' Famine and Relief Fund. While I was there, I constantly prayed that God would guide me to places where I could make a difference.

One woman working at a community kitchen was six months along in her pregnancy. I felt directed to hear her story, take her blood pressure, arrange for her to get more protein in her diet, and encourage her to seek medical help. Three weeks later, on a return trip with my husband, her face glowed as she recounted God's blessings since my visit. Her husband was able to get regular work, she was eating three meals a day, and the doctor told her that her unborn son was progressing at the normal rate.

On a bus ride, I was seated by a mother and her 6-year-old daughter. Leaning over her little girl, I asked to hear the mother's story. She confided in me that she didn't know how she and her four children were going to survive. I offered to pray with her and gave her a flyer that tells of the love of God. I was able to share with this mother that the gospel of Christ gives us hope. She didn't seem to want to let go of my hand as we left the bus.

Another young girl, sitting on a wagon in an area so dusty that we had to wear masks to breathe, drew my attention. Her face was sad, and she clung to her puppy. Her parents were alive, but their home was destroyed, and she didn't know where to find any of her friends and school classmates. Our group prayed with her. She received Jesus as her Savior that very day!

The people in Peru desperately need salvation in Jesus Christ, but they also need to know that God cares about all their needs. Pray with us that God will continue to show us concrete ways we can share His love.

Action Steps:

- Thank the Lord for all FM missionaries who, like Garry and Pat Cruce, strive to share God's love with those around them. As an individual or a local church, find ways to express your appreciation to the missionaries you support for their dedication and faithful service.
- Each FM missionary needs your prayers. Use the following resources, available through FMWM (1-800-342-5531), to help you pray: missionary prayer cards, ministry prayer directory, *World Mission People* magazine (including the prayer calendar), weekly Missions Hotline prayer update, missionary bulletin inserts and FMWM Web site (www.fmwm.org).
- Seek to develop strong personal relationships with the missionaries supported by your conference or church. Give regular updates about these missionaries in church services. Include excerpts from missionary letters in worship bulletins or church newsletters.
- Pray for these aspects of the missionary's life:
 - Their relationship with God: awareness of God's presence, refreshing times in prayer and Bible study, the Holy Spirit's guidance, growth in their Christian walk, and protection from spiritual attack
 - Effective ministry: open doors of opportunity, contacts with people who need to know Jesus, discernment, and genuine love for people
 - Their relationships with people: positive relationships with other missionaries and nationals, care for extended family near and far, close friendships, and healthy relationships with immediate family
 - Their daily life: health and safety, cultural adjustments, time management, language acquisition and financial needs
- In addition to praying for our missionaries, this file lists practical ways to support your missionaries emotionally, financially and spiritually – http://www.fmwm.org/cms_media/files/Missionary%20Care.pdf