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Dear Friends,

Christmas is a short form for “*Christ’s mass*”, which in the ancient church was the time to commemorate Jesus’ birth. With all the distractions that surround us, we need to remember that **the reason for “Christ’s mass” is...Jesus Christ** and keep centered on Him!! “...*behold, I bring you good news of great joy ... today in the city of David*

there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Lk. 2:10-11 NASB). May God bless you with a Merry *Christ-centered* Christmas!

Puebla del Río Church and ministry. Things have changed at church since the Bennetts left to the U.S. in August. Their absence, rainy weather on many Sundays in Oct.–Nov., people traveling, or changing jobs, has affected our Sunday attendance from the “high” 35-40s range of most of this year, to the 25-30s of the past 3 months. The time change in Oct. also affected our Thurs. prayer meeting from 8-11 people down to 4-7 most weeks. ***Please pray for those who get discouraged to be faithful in attending church.*** We thank the Lord for Jairo Mendoza, our deacon. He rotates on preaching and presiding with Frank and encourages the church too. He’ll preside our Sun. service on Jan. 1st. For 20 years, the 1st Sunday of the year, is our Thanksgiving service to thank God for all that He blessed us with in the year just ended. This year it falls on New Year’s Day, so we’ll see who shows up!



Most of you know that ***on Nov. 16th we had a “historical” special prayer service*** for the persecuted church in the world, ***with the new Catholic priest and some of his parishioners*** who joined us. In Sept. he asked me for us to do something together as Christian churches. I told him that Nov. was the prayer month for the persecuted church. The actual prayer day was on Sun. Nov. 13th, but we set it for Wed. Nov. 16th and ***he announced it in the Sunday, Mon. and Tues. masses*** telling his parishioners, “go to the Evangelical Church to pray for persecuted Christians”! ***He came with 14 people; none of them had ever been in our church before.*** I prepared the service with 4 Scripture readings, each one followed by a prayer for the topic in the verse. The pastor from the Coria del Río Evangelical Church, José María Santos, came and did the 1st reading and prayer, the priest did the 2nd one, a lady from his church did the 3rd reading and Salud the prayer, and I did the 4th reading and prayer. We had 3 praise songs and hymns which Jonathan played on the piano. The visitors were moved by the testimony, music, and a short video about the persecuted church from the Evangelical Alliance. Some of them commented on how “authentic” our Christianity was and that we should repeat a special service again. On Dec. 2nd the priest had Jonathan give a medical presentation on alcoholism to 60 teens in the confirmation classes. ***We thank God that a barrier which has existed in the minds of many Catholics here has been knocked down*** and they now know we are not a cult as word spreads in town. We’re committed to keep on building bridges to explain the gospel more clearly. ***Please pray for God to open the hearts and minds of those who don’t know Jesus Christ personally as Savior.***

Family news: Jonathan and Elisabeth continue their studies at the universities in Seville and Granada and both of them are doing well. Elisabeth is quite involved with the Inter-Varsity Christian group. On a more difficult note for all of us, but especially for Jonathan, he decided 6 weeks ago to end his engagement to Clara, after 14 months (and even longer as a steady couple). We are proud of his maturity and recognizing the importance of marriage, and to not continue on just to “save” appearances. ***Thank you for praying for God to help Jonathan and Elisabeth to keep growing spiritually.*** On Nov. 30th Salud had a neurology check up for her RLS and the doctor kept her meds at the same level. She has her gynecology and oncology check-ups in January. ***Thank you for praying for the Lord to keep her healthy and cancer-free.***



We thank all of you who pray for and/or support us financially to serve the Lord Jesus here in the Puebla del Río church. God bless you with ***a Merry Christ-centered Christmas and a safe and blessed New Year in 2017!*** It will be the 500th anniversary of the Reformation



In Jesus’ love and service,

Frank, Salud, Jonathan and Elisabeth

