

The apostle Paul exhorts us to *“rejoice always, pray continually and to give thanks in all circumstances”*, and this we do. And we do so not because it is convenient, but because it is correct. And by this I do not say that things are always good, but that God is always good.

The latest news from just about any social media source are not all that encouraging – hurricanes, earthquakes, politics, drugs and destruction. That is the reason why we look up to the meaning of “Gospel” – the Good News. What an inspirational perspective of how to look at what the Lord is doing in our midst!

Maranatha: We continue to share the gospel of Jesus Christ at church and through our Life Groups. Needless to say that progress has been slow, but the facilitators are not backing down from the task. We meet for prayer, feedback and lesson exposition every Monday night and facilitators teach Tuesday through Friday. We are greatly encouraged by the progress of the each of the facilitators and by the load that they help me carry, like visiting, encouraging, counseling, etc. and I’m called in when the matters are beyond them. We are following the Jethro principle of Exodus 18. Other than the lesson preparation and teaching on Monday nights, I supervise all except my wife’s Life Group, which consists of all women.



Facilitators enjoy some fresh pastries before starting with their Monday night lesson prep.

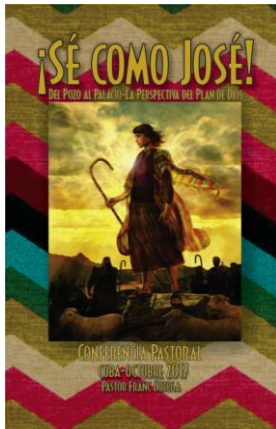
Speaking of women, about 44 of them will be having a beach retreat on October 13 and 14. This is something that they have been working on since last year. When our women set out to work, our Jr. worship team will be leading them in their music ministry at the beach, and of course, enjoying themselves as well.

On July the Lord helped me to officiate in three different wedding ceremonies and one young lady’s 15th celebration, something that is a major social event in our culture. Of course, every wedding required several hours of premarital counseling. This means that May, June and July were very busy for me. Of course, we also joined our own daughter Priscilla when she married Brad Wright in California. We were so glad to stop by for a very brief visit to Mary’s spiritual parents, Paul and Pat Dye in Arizona. What a great couple they are to our hearts.

Please help me pray for our facilitators and our Life Groups, that we would all be able to experience a great revival and to reach out to new people with the saving message of the Gospel. Please also pray for our ladies’ retreat and for their

conference speaker, Sylvia Ake, and our Jr. worship team, as well as for our 4 recently married couples, including our very own Priscilla.

Cuba: My last trip to the Pearl of the Caribbean took place in February and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Pastor Chris Whited from our friendly Mitchell Evangelical Free Church joined me, along with other friends from Wyoming and Tulsa, Ok. What a great experience that trip was. Now, with the Lord's help, Pastor Chris will once more join me. We are going returning to Pinar del Rio Province, the western most part of the island nation. In fact, we are going all the way west to Mantua, until we find no more land. This will be a brand-new place even for me. My contact is a man by the name of Emilio Crucea. You may recall him from a couple of years ago as the murderer and ex convict who turned to Christ and is now a missionary in a rural fishing community. Yup, that's him. Pastor Brache is my main Cuban contact in Pinar del Rio. This is a man with both passion and vision for God and his people. In fact, he and two other brothers from his church are currently enrolled at Frontier School of the Bible in La Grange, Wyoming. His long-term plan is to somehow get a Bible



My "Be Like Joseph" teaching material

school or training center in his home church, that others may attend and benefit, since coming to America is practically impossible for them. My desire is also to see this happen soon. As mentioned before, this is by far the best group of believers that I have ever encountered in Cuba in the last 10 years that I've been going. Our departing day will be October 9 and returning 19 and we will do a conference in two different locations. I will be speaking on the life of Joseph and Pastor Chris will be doing seminars on how to do Bible study aimed at house groups. Along with our teaching materials, we are also taking medicines and other hygienic items that Cubans are always so short of. I'm kindly requesting prayer for good health, protection and good weather, as well as for the different pastors who will be attending.

Family: Sylvia, as incredible as it may seem, is a junior at the Science Academy. She's got her plate very full, staying up to 2 and 3 am just about every day. Sarai is still teaching in San Antonio while Priscilla and Brad live in Dallas. Mary continues to wrestle with chronic pain but continues to carry on, keeping the house in order, especially on Wednesdays when we host our Life Group. I am not getting any younger and realize that I take longer to physically recover when I get exhausted or sick, but fully convinced that Maranatha and Cuba are where the Lord wants me to be to this day. Please continue to pray for Mary, our girls and for my health. Please also pray for Mary's mother, as she continues to have frail health, that her children close by may help her out. Please also help us in prayer that God would provide the means for us to visit her in March.

Please help us in prayer for those who have lost loved ones, homes and valuables as a result of the last hurricanes and earthquakes in Houston, Corpus Christi, Florida, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

Before closing, I'd like to thank you so very much for your prayerful and financial support that some of you have given us for many years. God has used it in many ways in our ministries in Maranatha and in Cuba. We are very grateful to be partners with you in what He is doing.



In Him,
Franc & Mary Ortega

