



June 1, 2016

*The Ortegas June Newsletter*

P O Box 160  
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Dearest ones in Christ Jesus,

We send you “warm” greetings from our hot and humid Rio Grande Valley in Southwest Texas. Our summers down here often remind me of what the Lord has spared us from in eternity. Of course, we have also been blessed with some very good showers, and for that, we are thankful. Heat and humidity, however, in no way takes our joy from what God is doing in and through us in Maranatha and in Cuba.

On this brief letter we’d like to highlight two important items:

1. Health: For the last 6 weeks I have been experiencing certain physical challenges such as, major weakness, fatigue, body aches, a drop in iron and lingering effects from dengue fever that I picked up in Cuba. Of course, the pace at Maranatha, especially starting our small groups ministry since the first week of January, has also taken a toll on my body. After a series of exams, special time in prayer and counsel from godly men I admire and respect, I have decided to take three weeks off from ministry. I have chosen this coming Monday June 13 to be my first day to leave town, probably to San Antonio. During these days, Mary and I will take advantage to celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary (June 14) and other special B’days, like on June 17 and 26. My dear wife deserves a medal for putting up with me. I am eternally thankful for her, as my wife and ministry partner. Sylvia’s b’day is on August 6. By the way, her aortic dilatation has further increased, especially with her growth spurt. We would greatly appreciate your prayers. The time away from ministry responsibilities should greatly help me recover and to reenergize, especially in preparation for my next trip to Cuba in July (I know, I don’t learn, do I?). From July 14-26, I will be helping a group of students from Frontier School of the Bible (Wyoming) have a cross-cultural ministry experience in that island nation. One of my greatest joys has been to encourage and take along some of our own church people to Cuba. This time, I have the pleasure of taking under my wings our beloved Genesis. Some of you may recall 9 years ago, when I wrote about a young mother from our congregation who lost her life in a terrible car accident and having to break the sad news to a 9-year-old girl. Genesis is that girl. In



Cruz (a newcomer), Marissa (host) and Diana participate in my animated lesson on Daniel.

the absence of her mother, God has done great things in this young lady's life. In fact, at 19, Genesis is our youngest small group facilitator, and one of the most passionate ones, also. She is also one of our vocalists in our praise team. Our church has contributed \$1,000 toward her travel expenses and we are praying for the other outstanding 50% that is yet to come in.



A Life Group in action at the Rodriguez home.

2. Decisions: For the last 9 years, Abisai Ahumada has been serving at Maranatha as our worship director and youth pastor. He has felt of the Lord to pursue a ministry that deals more specifically with him performing as a professional musician and working under the Rio Grande Bible Institute. As a church, we are now left with two major positions unattended. Please help us in prayer concerning these ministries that

will be in need. While our worship team will carry on with that aspect of the ministry, our youngsters will be spending too long a summer without pastoral care. This, of course, also weighs heavily in our hearts.

Please also pray for those who will be lending a shoulder to carry the weight after Abisai's departure and my three weeks away.

Once again, thank you so very much for your vital and valuable ministry in our lives.

Please pray for the following requests:

- ~ *For my health and a quick recovery, especially during our time away from ministry.*
- ~ *For those who stay behind holding the ministry running while we are gone.*
- ~ *For our friends from the Fellowship Bible Church Jr. High group who will be conducting a great VBS ministry and doing some construction work. Pray for a safe trip and a great time to share the gospel in our neighborhood and safety as they work.*
- ~ *For my trip to Cuba in July.*

With Grateful Hearts,  
***Franc & Mary Ortega***  
Ps. 48:14