

The Ortegas August 2021 Newsletter



P.O. Box 160
LaGrange, WY 82221
Phone: (307) 223-9400
Fax: (307) 224-1555

*For from Him and through Him and for Him are all things.
To Him be the glory forever! Amen. Romans 11:36*

This powerful verse has captured my attention for over a decade. It comes from a dear missionary to Cuba and Venezuela many, many years ago. Although she has been promoted to heaven for some time, her vivid memories have been permanently etched in my head and heart.

Maranatha Church: Since March 2020, we have been shaken down by COVID-19, but we are far from being down for the count. Actually, the pandemic has seriously challenged us to become more resourceful to better face the demands of the ministry. We've had to carve out new ministries and ministers just to stay in the fight. How has God responded? **WONDERFULLY!** In fact, we have been blown away by the optimistic response by those we've challenged to step up to the plate. Moreover, some of



them have taken it upon themselves to start other ministries. One very specific area where we've really had to step up has been technology and social media. We are now sending our service transmissions to Barbados, Mexico, Panama and Ecuador, among other countries. Of course, we are also transmitting to our local viewers. The shocking news is that many of these local viewers have dared to contact us and have recently started to attend our church services on a very regular basis. Newcomers who immediately come to my mind, that is who have joined us in the last 2 to 3 months are Marcela and Mia Zeferino, Tony Mendoza, Abimael and Mariana, The Mireles Family, the Cortes Family, the Veras, the Alvarados, the Perez, the

Bernals, the Rodriguez, the Valadez, the Vasquez, the Pequeños, the Serranos, and several others. For some, this is the first "protestant" church they have attended and we are very appreciative of the opportunity to connect with them all and share the gospel of the living Christ. Some have started out as visitors, then they have become friends and now they are our brothers and sisters in the Lord. So, as far as this is concerned, COVID has done us a great favor – it has brought people a sense of awareness on spiritual matters. Now, as to the negative effects, a very few of our members have become cold and numb in regards to their relationship to the Lord. But then again, we are only talking about 2 families. So, for the most part, we are extremely excited about the wave of newcomers. Our audience has definitely and greatly increased. In fact, I've had to take a few Sundays to introduce our new families with our philosophy of ministry, our beliefs and practices in order to properly introduce ourselves to them. So far, everybody has decided to stay, even those who come from a Roman Catholic background. Another great ministry I've had to start is that of personally meeting with all the new families who have been lately attending our church services. Some are in desperate need of marriage counseling; others need help on how to deal with their children and still others with different situations. I am also involved in premarital counseling with 4 different couples that have definite plans to tie the knot. The other great news is that we just had a great baptism service this past Sunday, where 13 believers were baptized.



Family: For many of you who have gotten to know my wife Mary, you've heard that her health has not been the best, but you've also known that she is quite the trooper, always so ready to serve. I can also state that I could not serve the Lord at the level that I do without a woman like her. She continues to deal with chronic pains in her legs, arms, chest, etc. She has been found with osteoarthritis. Me, for being 60, I consider myself to be quite healthy and vibrant, although, to be perfectly honest, my body is beginning to tire more easily and the recovery taking longer. Our beloved Sarai continues to struggle with lupus and fibromyalgia, but is still working from her home in San Antonio, where her specialists have their clinics. Sadly, most of her small earnings go to cover the multiple meds and surgeries she continues to undergo to have newly tumors removed. When she has too much month at the end of her check, we often cover groceries, meds and other pressing needs. Sylvia has moved once again to the Dallas area and is now on her sophomore year online. She will have to once again see her specialist in Houston next month to get her 6-month evaluation on her enlarged aorta due to her genetic deficiency called Loeys-Dietz Syndrome. Priscilla and her husband and their 2 year Ollie are getting ready to move from just about 5 minutes away from us to a little over 5 hours from us, into the Austin area of Texas.

Missions: Some of you have been asking and others have been wondering about our involvement in **Cuba**. Yes, we continue to be very involved there and get daily updates from those whom we've ministered to for a number of years. I am so very sad to say that some we will not be able to see anymore. Just two days ago I got word that a beloved brother by the name of "Manolito" has gone to be with the Lord. We did personal evangelism together on several occasions last year. He came into contact with COVID and in a matter of a few days, he was gone. The same has been for several other dear men and women in our beloved Cuba. We pray for these precious souls every day. Yesterday we were able to send financial resources toward the purchase of COVID medicine. The way we managed this was simply a perfect example of divine and very international orchestration. In order to protect our associates, I am not in the position to disclose details. Please help us in prayer over this very heavy burden. **Ecuador** is another country that is very much deep in our hearts. Our beloved Lourdes Calva (Guerrero) was back from Ecuador to visit her parents and us all at Maranatha. Before our short last visit with her, she asked me not to forget to visit and support them, especially next July, when they will once again hope to have me as their main speaker to encourage and challenge the several pastors and church leaders they work with.



Meds for COVID cases in Cuba

Prayer Requests: 1. For the many different families who have joined us at Maranatha, that they will be firmly grounded. 2. For the new leaders, that they would continue to grow and serve 3. For Mary, that the Lord would continue to grant her the grace she needs to keep honoring Him. 4. For Sarai's health, that God would work a miracle in her life. 5. For Sylvia, that she would be able to have yet another favorable report and be able to juggle work and studies. 6. For Priscilla and her family and their move to Austin, once their house is fully finished. 7. For me, so the Lord would continue to bless me with good health and wisdom for several more productive years. 8. For our Cuban people, that God would preserve their lives and that soon we may be able to see and to serve them once again. Specifically, pray that the box of COVID medicine we are preparing may arrive safely and soon. 9. For Ecuador, that God would especially keep the national pastors and missionaries through this horrible pandemic.

Before I close, I must express a profound sense of appreciation to those few individuals and 3 churches who have been committed to pray and financially support our ministries at Maranatha, in Cuba and in Ecuador. What a wonderful and masterful plan of God to bring about unity in our lives to accomplish His will.

By God's Grace; For God's Glory,
Franc & Mary Ortega
Psalm 48:14