



INSIDE EDITION

A Newsletter for Friends of Nicaraguan Prison Ministry

August 2011

NPMI holds 501(c)(3) Non-profit Corporate status in Kentucky,
and NGO Status in Nicaragua, Central America



La Esperanza Women prisoners--participants in REC 2011 July 7-9



Team members from Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the United States
US Team included Anne Harr, Jimmy Garcia, Mike Warren, Mark, Laura and Sarah MacDonald

Reflections on REC 2011

By: Anne Harr

Once again, we faced a multitude of challenges as we prepared for Residentes Encuentran a Cristo (REC) 2011 for 50 women of La Esperanza federal prison in Managua, Nicaragua. Additionally, we coordinated team members from 3 countries and cultures. There are always complications as we try to communicate across cultural and language barriers, and this year was no exception; however, the dedication and desires of all volunteers (6 from Kentucky, 11 from Costa Rica, and 22 from Nicaragua) enabled us once again to come together as a united team. There were some added twists as “ol’ Scratch” did his best to detract us from our ministry: cancelled and delayed flights/buses, a major US airport with a temporary loss of all radar, difficulties with fund-raising, delayed meetings and team formations, downpours of rain and a major leak in the roof, etc.

Following some last-minute special circumstances and a great deal of support and planning by the government officials and our local NPMI representatives, our full team of 39 volunteers + 3 resident team members were able to provide a wonderful and meaningful experience for 36 women of La Esperanza. Once again, it was evident that God’s plan was carried out, and we just muddled through with some of the details on His behalf. I watched in wonder as everything came together at just the right moments--as the women smiled, frowned in concentration, engaged in conversation, laughed, cried, hugged, sang, and prayed. Even more wondrous was the fact that this did not just include the residents, but the 9 beautiful officials who accompanied them each day.

I wish I could provide visual images to support what we experienced, but can only try to give a few “snapshots:” ...of everyone lining up to give hugs and well-wishes to 2 women who celebrated birthdays on the same day (1 resident, 1 official)...of every resident, every team member, and 4 officials participating in an ecumenical communion service ... of one official asking for a songbook so he could join in the singing through the barred window from behind the building ...of each table of residents sharing their posters, songs, and skits relating to themes of the talks given...of the laughter and tears of joy as 40 children and their Sunday School teachers came to sing and give a gesture of love to the residents...of each woman receiving a cross and certificate of participation...of 8 officials receiving a cross and sharing how their lives were changed by the experience.

By the end of day 3, it was evident that something miraculous had happened, and we were blessed to be part of an encounter not just for the residents of the prison, but for the residents of God’s Kingdom....all of us. Dios es bueno, todo el tiempo. (God is good all the time.)

I was struck by 2 truths that day: the children of the world will carry the light of Christ forward in His kingdom, and the love of Christian community cannot be denied.

An additional experience that I want to share from this REC had to do with WATER & LIGHT, two essential elements that Jesus frequently talked about. It will remain with me forever, and perhaps sums up this REC’s impact: A sudden onslaught of rain caused an instant downpour of water inside the building and the creation of a small river of water that divided the grounds between the parking lot and the building. I perceived it as an effort by “Scratch” to cause disorder and disruption of the two most powerful REC events—the Communion service and the visit of the Christian community at large. The service was completed with little disruption; everyone just moved their chairs over and unplugged the electric fans. The rain then stopped suddenly. After assisting with the distribution of the bread for the children’s service (what a privilege!), on my return I stood over the “river” and was soon joined by another volunteer, Luis. Together, we helped the children and their teachers cross the water safely as they held lighted candles aloft.

Imagine the dark, trusting eyes of a 3 or 4-year-old and the shining candle so carefully held while being lifted over the water that had been meant to divide--or the confident leap of a 12-year-old as they proudly held the candle high.

De Colores!



Sarah MacDonald dancing a jig with her new Nicaraguan friend (a prisoner who helped with the REC)



Mark MacDonald serving water to thirsty La Esperanza REC participants as their spiritual thirsts are quenched through "Residents Encounter Christ"



Front L to R: Laura and Sarah MacDonald (from Lexington, KY), two prisoner team members;
Back L to R: Mike Warren and Jimmy Garcia, both from Elizabethtown, KY

FATHER AND DAUGHTERS SERVE TOGETHER IN LA ESPERANZA WOMEN'S PRISON

By: Laura MacDonald

My father, Mark MacDonald and I first went with NPMI to Nicaragua six years ago. Since then, I have had the opportunity to travel and work in several other countries. Still, I have always had a special place in my heart for Nicaragua and have wanted to share the experience with my sister, Sarah. The three of us served together on the REC team this summer and it was an experience that we will never forget.

Thank You Supporters

Once again you have made it possible for us to take Christ to Nicaragua's prisoners. We could not have done it without your help. As is true all over the world, costs have skyrocketed. The price of gasoline has tripled. Food, lodging, airfare, equipment rental, in-country travel, and other necessities for this year's REC totaled \$13,906. Of that amount Costa Ricans contributed \$1,420 plus their own travel expenses. Needless to say, NPMI's funds are as depleted as they have been any time in our 11-year existence.

Please consider making a donation to help replenish the coffers, or better still, pledge a monthly contribution. Starving children appear on our computer and television screens every day. Their pictures make us weep even. Less visible are the thousands of adults around the world who are also physically and spiritually starving. When we visit those in prison, it is just as if we're visiting Jesus himself. See Matthew 25: 24-35. We solicit your prayers and if you can, send a donation. Make checks payable to NPMI and mail to: NPMI, PO Box 4560, Lexington, KY 40544. All donations are tax deductible. May God bless each of you.

Are You Looking For A Way To Use Your Skills And Gifts To Make A Difference In The World?

NPMI needs dedicated, committed volunteers with REC experience to serve on the Board of Directors. We also need volunteers (not necessarily Board members) to fill the following roles:

Webmaster
Writer
Photographer
Fund Raiser
Graphics Designer

If interested in any of these positions, e-mail Wanda Goerz wandagoerz@aol.com, or phone 859-277-6863