

Don't say, "I'm going to do such and such tomorrow," as we don't know what tomorrow will bring.

(Paraphrase of James 4:13,14a)

This very well describes our trips to Mexico in 2007. I had gone to Puebla, expecting to work on Genesis with Gabi. However, in January there was a tragic accident on the road to San Juan, and 11 Mixtecs were killed and 5 badly injured when the bus went over the cliff. Shortly after that, Crecencio brought his 34-year-old wife Flavia and three daughters to Puebla, as Flavia had not been feeling well for some time. Tests were done, and she was diagnosed with advanced uterine cancer and died a week later. We made a quick trip out to San Juan for her funeral.

In February Efra finally got a court order to see his three older children, whom he hadn't seen for almost 2 years after the divorce. When the children arrived, Keila (8) had a big lump on her leg. She had it surgically removed in July. Her biggest delight was having her daddy carry her around, since she couldn't put any weight on her left leg for 10 days. The tumor was rheumatoid; so she went through a lot of blood tests checking for rheumatic fever, lupus, etc., all of which were negative. She'll be needing checkups every 6 months for a while.

Keila had just gotten back on her feet when the pastor of Rios de Agua Viva Bible church in San Juan came out to Puebla with his wife, son and daughter. His wife had lost about 30 pounds in 4 months. Having experienced the loss of Flavia to cancer a few months before, we wanted to have her checked out. The doctor only ordered a pap, but I took her for blood work, too, and found out that she was cancer free but had completely out-of-control diabetes. But the son, 23-year-old Fulgencio (better know as "Chili"), was in worse condition, with bacterial endocarditis, kidney infection, enlarged liver and infected sores all over his face. The doctor wanted to put him in the hospital for IV antibiotic therapy, but neither his parents nor we could afford a 10-day stay. So I asked the doctor if we could take care of him at home, as we have 4 nurses in the family. The doctor agreed; so we hooked Chili up to an IV, and by the end the 10 days of antibiotics, he was raring to go home to San Juan. They left just two days before I returned to the States in August.

This time down we celebrated Caleb's birthday on December 24th. He was delighted – this 5th birthday is the only one he can remember, as his mother left with the kids before he was two, and her family didn't celebrate their birthdays. On Christmas day we had our annual turkey dinner for the Mixtecs who live here in Puebla. At least 60 showed up. Pris arrived shortly after Christmas, and we had another fiesta on January 6th, Kings' Day, when Mexican children get their presents. (They each write a letter to the magi, requesting 3 gifts, attach the letter to a helium-filled balloon and release it on January 5th. The "kings" leave their gifts for them on the morning of January 6th.) Then we celebrated my birthday the next Saturday, when most were off work. The 26th we went out to Gabi's nephew Donato's house to a fiesta for his son's 8th birthday. I think that's the end of the fiestas until Gabi's birthday on the 27th of February.

Gabi and I are both getting some needed dental work done and hope to be able to spend some time in San Juan after that. The church there is doing fairly well, though reeling from the fact that their youth pastor ran off with one of the married ladies of the church. This has left all the work for pastor Gonzalo, who feels overwhelmed and discouraged at times. Please pray for him especially, and for the congregation. Several of the Sunday school teachers have left, too, to work in the city. However, the Lord continues to work and to bless. One large extended family has come to the Lord as a result of the loving care they were given during the medical caravan that our Puebla church sent out to San Juan almost two years ago. And a good number of Crecencio's family have accepted the Lord as a result of the love shown them when Flavia died. We were able to send Mixtec New Testaments, Talking Bibles, and Jesus videos back with their relatives that live in Mexico City.

Two new members added to our family: Efra and Nadia's baby girl, born January 13th, and NaKe, an iguana.

So, thanks so much for being partners in your concern, prayer, and gifts. God is using you to bring more Mixtecs to Himself.

In His love, Jan (and Pris)



Nine new graves in San Juan from the bus accident



Flavia's funeral



Keila's transport



Chili "hooked up"



Caleb's birthday



Christmas dinner



Nancy and NaKe



1-day-old Baby Campanela