



# *The Richardsons*

## *Missionaries to Mexico*

Mike & Pam  
Samuel, Isaac, Anna  
Priscilla, Joshua,  
Timothy & Benjamin  
plus Jeremy, Michael &  
Misty (Marr)

## **GOD'S CALLING FOR THE RICHARDSON FAMILY**

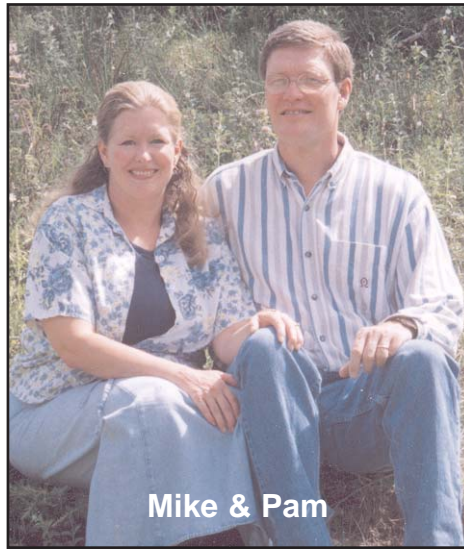
The following is our testimony. It explains how we came to Mexico, what we do, why we do it, as well as our vision for the future.

### **WHO WE ARE**

We are a family who, as believers, has chosen to serve the Lord as full-time missionaries in Mexico. We have nine living children - Jeremy (28), Michael (26), Misty (25), Samuel (10), Isaac (9), Anna (7), Joshua (6), Timothy (4), and Benjamin (3).

Michael and his wife, Jennifer, live in Georgia. Misty and Nathan, her husband, along with their two daughters-Rosy and Gracie, work with us here in Mexico. Jeremy is preparing to attend classes in Washington state.

We are working through the tax-exempt corporation Vida Nueva Ministries-a legal entity that was formed to advance the Kingdom of God in Mexico. Vida Nueva means New Life in Spanish. This name was chosen for two reasons. We are here offering people new life through our Lord and our Lord offered us a new life of full-time service for him in Mexico. It is with much pleasure that we can use our new life to bring others to a new life in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Mike & Pam

### **WHERE WE CAME FROM**

Pam and I have had a heart for missions since we first accepted Christ. When missionaries or traveling evangelists would come to our church, we

would always invite them to stay with us.

We had had a desire to go to the mission field for years, but God had given us a vision for going without raising support ahead of time. The only way I could see that happening was to work hard and save enough money to support ourselves - then go to the mission field later in life. God had a different idea - to be completely dependent on him and to trust him for our needs!

We moved to Mexico in August 1993. I had been the CFO for a large boat anchor and boat trailer manufacturer for seven of the last eight years that we spent in the United States. For several of those years, I also served as a member of the board of directors. After paying off our home, about a year before coming to Mexico, I left my job as CFO. I continued working in the accounting practice that I had started several years before. God used many circumstances, during that year, to purify our hearts and lives. It was the hardest year of our marriage. We later realized that God was using many of the trials and problems during that year to prepare us for the mission field.

When we met Alfredo DeHoyos, a Mexican, in July of 1993, he told us about the



The Richardsons

ministry of his local church in Mexico. The next day he asked us to consider coming to Mexico to help their church. After praying about it, we drove down and met with the pastor and the elders. While we were visiting, we agreed, as a family, that God was calling us to Mexico. We moved to Mexico fifteen days after our visit.

Upon returning to Georgia, we resigned from all our church responsibilities and began to prepare for the move. I gave my client list to a friend and wrote a letter to my clients advising them that we were moving to Mexico. After selling or giving away most of the furnishings in our home, we took a small U-Haul trailer of belongings with us. We turned our house over to the real estate agent that was going to manage it for us. He had it rented within one week.

During our first two years in Mexico, the rent we received on our house, our personal savings and offerings from the church in Mexico met our personal needs and the ministry expenses. At the end of our second year, we had less than four hundred dollars left in the bank. Though we had never sought after financial support, the Lord began to bring in the income required to carry on our work.



Each year, as the work expands, the Lord has been faithful to meet all of our needs both personal and ministry-related. When we have a financial need or a project to be completed, we pray. We have learned that God knows our needs even before we do and that he is faithful in supplying them. It is through the giving or withholding of finances that he gives us final direction.

So as not to mislead, I must tell you that several times I have been tempted to place my trust in people rather than the Lord. But he has shown me repeatedly that my calling is to become completely dependant on him - that if I will seek him and his righteousness

that he will supply my need from his abundance.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING

Our outreach ministries in Mexico include the following:

- Church planting, pastoring and evangelism.
- Sponsoring work teams.
- Building Projects.
- Publishing a home school magazine in Spanish. (It is sent out free of charge throughout the world.)
- Operating a printing ministry.
- Publishing books in Spanish.
- Translating and publishing of Christian home education material into Spanish.
- Translating and publishing of ministry cassettes into Spanish. (Nearly 60,000 tapes have been sent out free of charge throughout the world.)
- Home Education Seminars.
- Teaching in special meetings on the family.

All of our outreach efforts have one thing in common, families. Our desire is to see families come to know our Lord as well as grow in him.





## IN THE BEGINNING

In 1993, we began working with a local Christian school in Monterrey. I was responsible for teaching more than seventy children English and then teaching them every subject in English. My three oldest children worked as teacher's assistants in the school. I found that by having the children memorize large portions of scripture in English, God would bless their efforts and they would learn English faster. During the three years that I taught at the school, I had my entire class memorize the book of James, Matthew 5, 6, and 7, Romans 6, 7 and 8, Revelation 1, Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 100 as well as a few other shorter passages. Many of my former students are now actively using their English skills to minister and to earn a living.

In 1994, we moved into a poor neighborhood in Monterrey with the intent of winning it for Christ. About half the homes on this street had only one or two rooms. Many families only had

water from a faucet on the street and did their cooking outdoors. Our home was a small three-bedroom house that we rented for about \$130.00 a month.

Shortly after moving there, we began an outreach ministry by having two weeks of daily street meetings on the street in front of the house. Then we followed that with weekly street meetings for three months. Later, we moved the meetings into the house and began concentrating on Christian growth rather than evangelism. The meetings outgrew the house so we

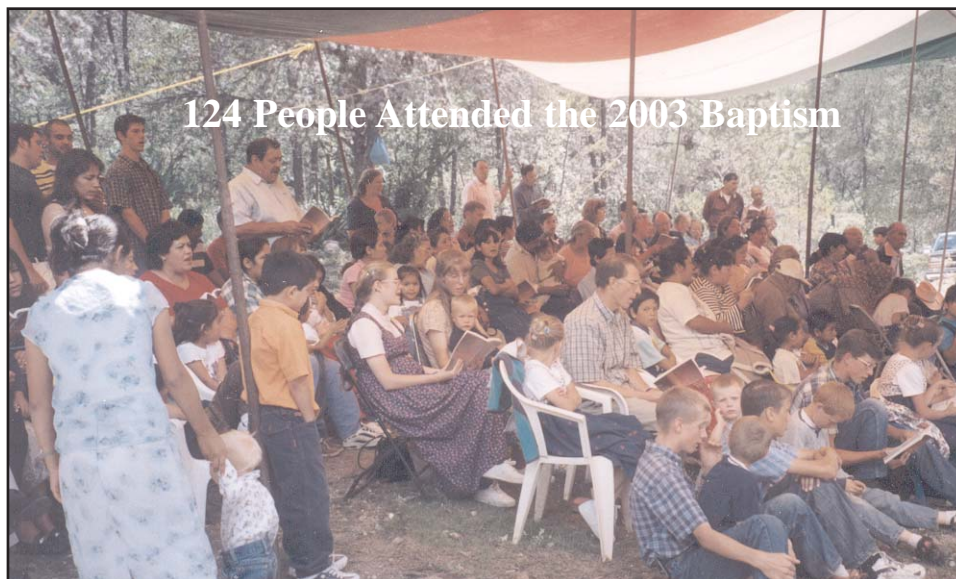
moved them to the back yard. A number of people made a commitment to Christ. Amparo, our first convert, committed her life to Christ at 82-years-old. She is now with the Lord. You might say she was the harvest of our precious first fruits! In late 1996, we turned the daily leadership responsibilities over to a Mexican couple.

In early 1998, we moved to a small "pueblo" called Arteaga. It is located in the Sierra Madre Mountains of the state of Coahuila, Mexico. At six thousand feet above sea level, it is one of the highest towns in the state.

The town was founded more than 300 years ago. With a population of five thousand five hundred people, the town does not have many of the conveniences of a larger city like Monterrey. Although there are no grocery stores, there are several one-room "tiendas" where we could buy produce, beans and tortillas as well as a large city nearby. The city water is diverted to various parts of the town throughout the day. Each house averages two hours of water per day.

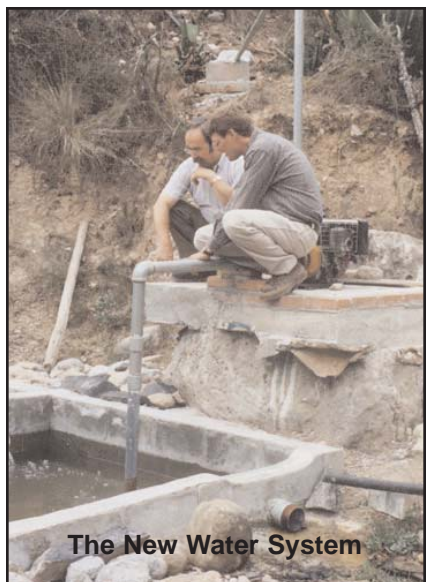


105 People Attended the 2002 Dedication



124 People Attended the 2003 Baptism





**The New Water System**

## NOW ... LA IGLESIA DE BARATILLO

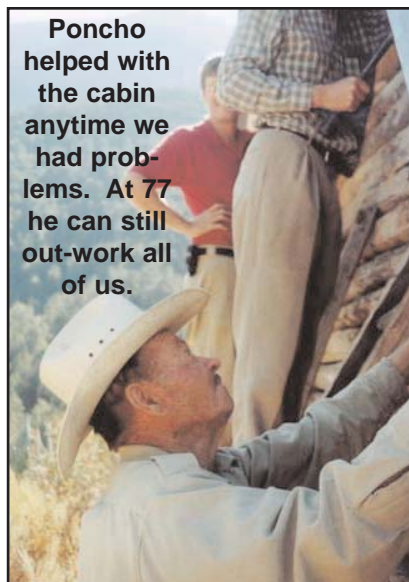
While living in Arteaga, we met Jose through the local church where we were helping. Jose introduced us to his parents, who lived in a small village called Baratillo. At seven thousand five hundred feet above sea level, Baratillo is nestled near the top of the Sierra Madre Mountains. It is located about an hour and a half from Arteaga. After getting to know Don Poncho and Doña Amelia (Jose's parents), we began a bible study in their village. It has now

grown into La Iglesia de Baratillo (The Church at Baratillo). Since the village has less than one hundred people in it, it will never be a large church - though the church is now averaging between thirty-five and forty people at each service. These are our people-the ones to whom God has called us. We are seeing God work, in amazing ways, in their lives. We are committed to bringing these precious new believers to maturity in Christ.

In order to spend more time with them, we have rebuilt and moved into a log cabin in the village. There has never been electric service or city water in this village. We built a water-holding tank in a close-by stream and use a gas pump to bring the water to the houses located up the hill. Not only does this



My first pulpit was a 55 gallon drum that Joaquin fixed up for me.

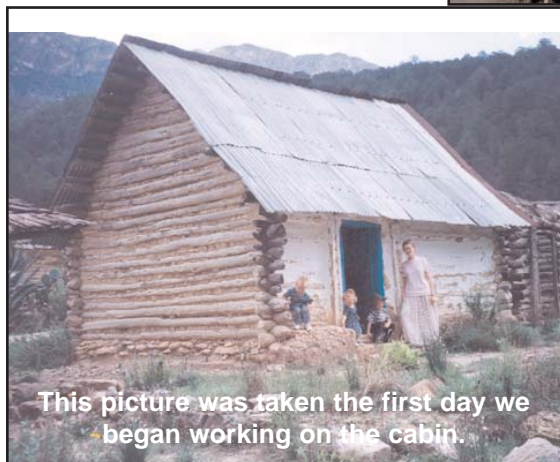


**Poncho helped with the cabin anytime we had problems. At 77 he can still out-work all of us.**

give our family access to water, but it also helps several other families. After living without electricity for two years, we installed a solar electrical system.

The canyon that we live in is about fourteen miles long. The government installed electrical lines in a three-mile stretch of the canyon. This brought electricity to Santos and Herminia, Poncho and Amelia, as well as eight other houses - this will be a significant blessing to those who live here.

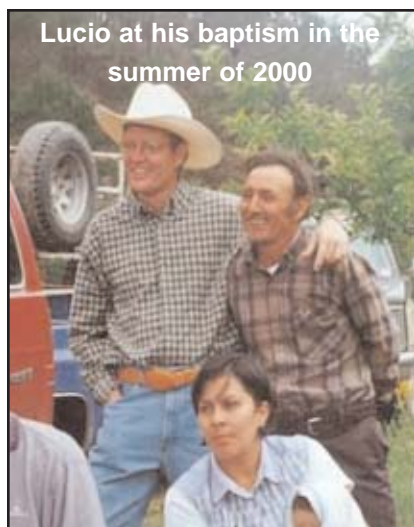
I would like to introduce you to a few of the people who have committed their lives to Christ.



This picture was taken the first day we began working on the cabin.



This is how our home looks now.



Lucio at his baptism in the summer of 2000

One Sunday morning, when I arrived for church, Joaquin looked very excited. As soon as I got close enough to hear him, he began to tell me that he had fixed up my pulpit to make it look better. I asked him to show me what he had done. He took me over to the fifty-five-gallon drum that I use as my pulpit and said that he had found some tile in his attic and made a top for the pulpit.

In late November 2000, at 87 years old, Joaquin went to be with the Lord. As I reflected on Joaquin's life, I thought about his baptism in May 2000. His face was shining after he was baptized. It was obvious that he loved the Lord, and now he will be with him throughout eternity.



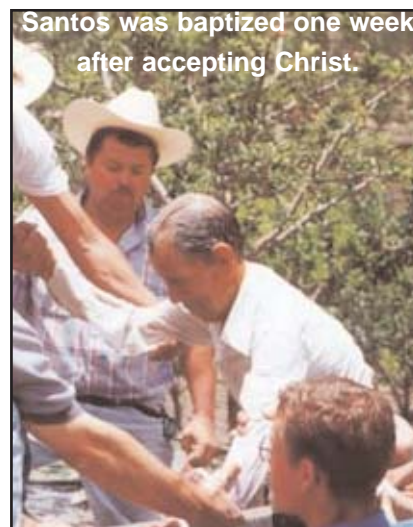
Ramón and Mike at the church.

Lucio has been experiencing tremendous growth in his relationship with the Lord. He is leading the testimony time and praying during the services. His prayers are simple and sweet. You can tell that he is talking to someone whom he knows well. He has also begun preaching occasionally.

The week before our first baptism, God was working in the lives and hearts of several people. On the Sunday before the baptism, Lucio publicly told Herminia (his sister) that he was sorry for the way that he had treated her before he was saved.

That afternoon God was also working in Herminia's life. When Lucio and I visited her, the conversation turned to Angelita, one of her daughters. They had not spoken in more than four years. That day she determined to make things right. When mother and daughter embraced for the first time in many years you could see God's grace and his goodness reaching out to both of them. They were both crying tears of joy and asking forgiveness.

Lucio and I walked outside to let the ladies catch up in private. Santos was in the orchard. When I walked up, he made a comment about his wife and daughter working things out. I then told him that only one thing was lacking. He asked, "What's that?" I said, "Your salvation! You've seen God working in your families life, are you ready to accept Christ for yourself?" He quickly responded, "Yes, I'm ready." I turned to Lucio and told him to explain the plan of salvation to him. Lucio hesitated at first, but then he clearly explained scripture to him and prayed with him. After they prayed, I turned to Lucio, who is fifty-five, and said, "Now you are Santos' (who is eighty-five) father - father in the faith." Standing there in the field Santos said that he wanted to be bap-



Santos was baptized one week after accepting Christ.

tized the following Saturday as a public testimony of his faith.

Nearly four years later, Marta, one of Herminia's daughters came to me. She said, "I have been watching my mother. I have seen the changes in her life. I want the same thing that she has. What must I do to be saved?"

The first time I rode up to Ramón's house, he stood at the doorway waving enthusiastically the whole time I was coming down his driveway. He is seventy-eight years old and has lived alone for more than twenty years. Since he became a believer, he has been very grateful to be able to join our church and worship the Lord with us. Ramón shuf-



Ramón at his baptism in the summer of 2001.





fles when he walks and has slurred speech yet he is always ready to come to church and sing to the Lord.

just finished their morning devotions. He was very excited about what he had read that morning and asked me to come in so that he could show me. After sharing two chapters with me, he said that he had been thinking about those passages last night while he was in bed. He had gotten up and decided to show his wife what God had been teaching him.

A Mexican lady that was visiting us at the village asked Pam, "Do you find it hard living among these people - people who are never satisfied with what you give them and always want more?" Pam was quick to let her know that she had a wrong impression of "village people." She told her that these people, although poor, were among the most generous people that we had ever known. She

went on to explain how Amelia had cooked for us for over a year while we were working on our cabin and how nearly every week someone gives us something they made. She also told how the people shared their harvest with us - sharing not from their abundance but from their lack.

The people in the church are also learning the importance of ministering to others. Several years ago, we, as a church, began supporting an orphanage in Romania called Hope House. We have missions giving on the first Sunday of each month. Many times someone will ask if this is the

Sunday "for the children." I was encouraged one Sunday when Poncho and Lucio both needed to be out. Both of them remembered about the orphanage and sent their offering with someone else! During the last three years these people, who have lived their entire lives in modest circumstances, have given generously to help "los niños" (the children) find hope at Hope House in Romania.

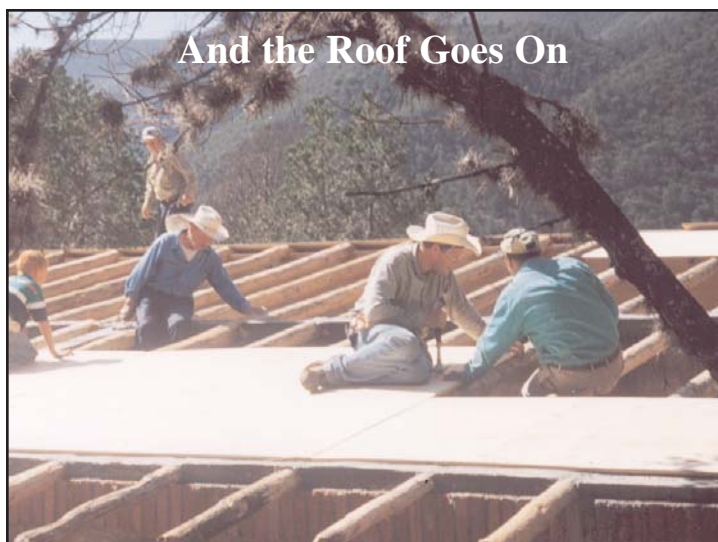
The church has also supported a Mexican family that was going on the mission field to the Fiji Islands in addition to the orphanage in Romania. It amazes me to see the generosity that the Lord has placed in the hearts of these believers.

We have met in a shed with dirt floors for over four years. Our seats include crates, concrete blocks, two pews, and a few chairs. My pulpit is a 55-gallon drum.

A few years ago I began thinking and praying about building a

The men of the church continue to grow in the faith and knowledge of the Lord. I stopped by Tito's house around eight o'clock one morning. He and his wife, Marina, had





## And the Roof Goes On

building-but had not said anything about it at the church. In early 2002, one of the men offered to give a piece of land to the church. His plot is about seven acres. He told me, "Pick the part that you want."

When I told the other men about it, everyone agreed that it was time to start building a "real" church building. When the question came up about what kind of building we would build Tito, who is 68, spoke up and said, "I will make 200 adobe blocks." Santos, who is 86, stated, "I can make 200 blocks too. Poncho, at 74, added, I can make 200, too. Then one of the men said, "Why don't all of us just get together and make them?"

When we began to talk about leveling the land with a bulldozer, Poncho (74) said that land is not very steep; we can do it with our picks and shovels. All the men who were standing around agreed with Poncho. Tito (68), Santo (86), Ramon (78). I must admit that I wanted to use a bulldozer!

Sunday, August 25, 2002, the church had a special dedication service on the new church property. We had a wonderful time of worship and fellowship with the other believers who gathered to praise the Lord for what he had done for the church and to dedicate the use

of this land to his glory.

After the service, we had a delightful time of food and fellowship. Since we would be having many visitors that day, some of the ladies had expressed a concern about whether or not there would be enough food for everyone. Not only was there enough food for the one hundred and five people that attended, but there was an abundance of food left over. Once again, I was reminded how the Lord supplies our needs over and above what we might expect.

At the end of the service Don Poncho and Lucio led the church in prayer not only for the construction project but also that we might be powerful witnesses to the unbelievers in this area. Their prayers, which were not only compelling and dynamic but also humble, not only reached through the open skies and touched the throne of God but also aroused great emotions in those who were present. Jose told me later that he had cried tears of joy when he heard his father, Don Poncho, pray with such sincerity and power.

The men have worked hard making the adobe bricks for the walls. The



## 21 Men Built and Installed the Center Truss

rafters will be made out of logs. Everyone decided that the men would cut ten logs each. Bucho and I do not own land here so we paid someone to cut our logs off their land. Santos, who is in his late eighties, decided to buy logs from the same man.

The day we were to pick them up Bucho was unable to go with us. Santos and I went to the man's house. His wife told us where the logs and her husband were. We drove about two miles up a mountain road. (Path would be a better name!) Finally, we found the logs but the man was nowhere to be found. After waiting for about thirty minutes, Santos decided that we should go ahead and take one load to the church then find the man on our return trip.

Santos and I spent about an hour loading the logs into my van and tying



the ends that extended out the back door. After we unloaded them at the church, we went back for the second load. That is when we found out that we had gone up the wrong road. We had gotten logs that belonged to his neighbor! We picked up a load of our logs, took them to the church, and then loaded the neighbors logs back into the van and took them back to him. Fortunately, Jeremy went with us this time, which made the job much easier.

In May 2004 the church dedicated the finished building and held its first mission's conference.

## NOW ... EL HOGAR EDUCADOR

After coming to Mexico, we began to meet a few families from all over the country who were teaching their children at home. They all had one

thing in common. They were struggling because of a lack of Christian education material and parent resources in Spanish. Having taught our children at home since 1986, we felt the Lord was directing us to help these families. In 1996, we began publishing El Hogar Educador as a three-page bulletin. It was being sent to seventy families. It was designed to help train and encourage Christian parents who are committed to training their children to be godly young men and women. It is now a twenty-eight-page bimonthly magazine and is being sent free of charge throughout Mexico, Latin America and the world. The list of families to whom we minister continues to grow every single week.

In addition to live recording of ministry tapes, we also translate, record and duplicate ministry tapes. We have produced ninety-six different messages so far. There are

messages by speakers such as Gregg Harris, Jonathan Lindvall, Mike Farris, Chris Klicka, Tedd Tripp, Daniel Thornton, myself, and others. We have distributed nearly 60,000 tapes free of charge.

For the last ten years, we have organized the only annual national home school conference in Mexico. Last year we had more than 2200 people attend. Families came from twenty of the thirty-one

states in Mexico as well as a few from five other countries. We have begun a second conference in Mexico City.

The Lord has led us to the decision not to charge for the magazine or conferences. We do not take up offerings at the meetings nor do we make our needs known through articles in the magazine. Instead, we seek the Lord's direction on what we should do and then we pray for the needed funds. His provision (or lack of provision) helps us to confirm his will and his direction for our work.

Because of the generosity of some Christian brothers, we have been able to share with many families - helping them purchase their school materials. I thought you would enjoy seeing two of the thank-you letters that were received.



**More than 175 people attended the**



**dedication service for  
La Iglesia de Baratillo**





Once again, God has proven that he is wonderful and provides all of our needs.

We left to come to the home school conference with just enough money for our room and food, and some left over for materials. On the way to the conference, our tire went flat. We put on the spare, but it also went flat. We had to buy a new tire, and we no longer had enough money to buy any materials.

When we arrived at the conference, we found a great surprise that the Lord had given us through you. He gives us more than we need.

Thank you very much for letting the Lord guide you. We are certain that God will bless and multiply this to you.

### *Jesus and Carmen*

First, I would like to say that I am very grateful that God has called us to home school our children. I must confess that sometimes I have felt that I can't do it, but God gives us the grace that we need. There is so much that I have learned that I need to apply in my life. All the testimonies that I have heard encourage me to continue. Sometimes I think that I am the only one that suffers and has financial problems, but hearing the testimonies of others encourages me to continue and increases my faith.

When we told our son, Salvador Alfonso, that we would begin to home school him this year. (He is in the fourth grade.) He thought that we would buy him his materials. We explained to him that we didn't have the money, and that we were going to the conference for spiritual blessings only. We just barely had enough gas in the car to get there. He was sad, but he understood. When we got to the registration table and found the



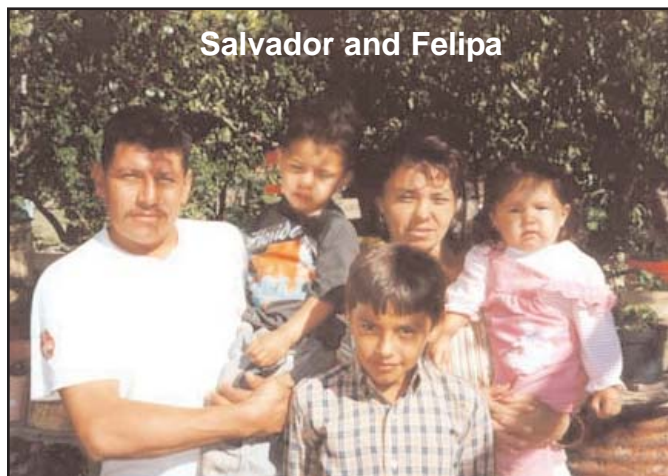
**We Home School Too!**

envelope with the donation in it, we couldn't believe it. We had never received a donation before.

We had prayed to God and told him that if it were his will for us to have materials, that he would have to supply them. We had thought that it was not his will. We were enthusiastic and very joyful to be able to hear the conference. We thank the Lord for allowing us to make the decision to home school, for the conference and for the donation - it was a great blessing.

Blessings and thanks from all my heart for those who gave it to me. Pray for us - that God will give us grace, wisdom, and provision to continue. May God bless you.

### *Salvador and Felipa*



**Salvador and Felipa**

We have begun a printing ministry. It will help to facilitate the other aspects of our work at the lowest overall cost. The Lord has already supplied much of the needed equipment.

We have now published three books in Spanish.

In addition to handling the printing side of the ministry, Nathan has become a valuable assistant in many areas. He has assumed full responsibility for the music ministry and provides a strong back and willing attitude for the multitude of other projects that we are doing.

With his farming background, he has also become a valuable resource for many of the people in the village.

## **THE FUTURE VISION**

God has called us to the Baratillo area and we are committed to remaining here-bringing the believers to maturity in Christ and reaching the others who live in the outlying areas including San Juan.

After months of seeking the Lord and his will in our lives, Pam and I have received clear direction from the Lord that it is now time to purchase land and build a house and office here in the valley. We have acquired land and are currently in the process of building.

In Mexico, most of the families live in a cramped city environment and rarely have the time or the resources to get away and relax as a family. Many churches also have a great deal of trouble finding a suitable place for families and couple's retreats.

The Lord has placed a desire in my heart that would help to solve both of

these situations-purchase land near our house and build a retreat center. It would be made up of rustic cabins spread throughout the property with a central meeting place. Once finished it would be made available to Mexican families and churches without cost. It would give families a peaceful environment to bring their families, relax, and learn more about the Lord. Not

only would the land be used for the retreat center, we would be able to build an office for the other aspects of our work. There are twenty-five acres available next to where we are building our house.

Our publication and seminar work continues to grow. We now send our magazine, El Hogar Educador, to thirty of the thirty-one states here in Mexico as well as twenty-eight other countries. The Lord has given us a vision for serving families in every Spanish-speaking country in the world through the resources that we are producing.

Our seminar ministry continues to expand. We now have two conferences each year. As the Lord leads, we would like to help make conferences available throughout Mexico and Latin America.

## MIKE'S HEALTH

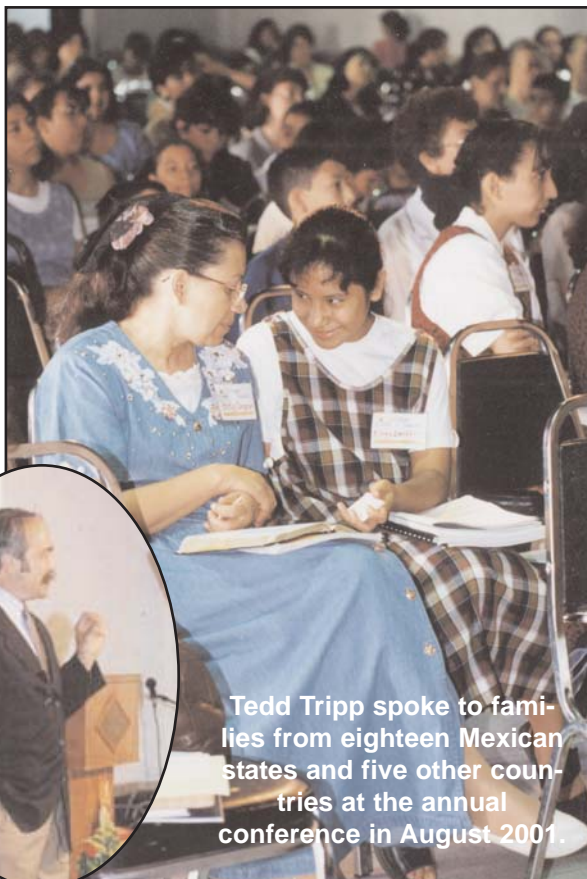
I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis about four years ago. On one hand, this is very easy to share because it shows the strength and grace of the Lord and how he has chosen to be strength in my weakness. On the other hand, it is hard for me to openly share some of these struggles.

I trust you will accept this writing as it was intended. First, to show what a good God we serve-a God whose mercies are new every morning-a God who gives grace for whatever situation we find ourselves in - a God who is involved in every detail of our lives. Second, I share this information so that those who pray for us will be able to do so more effectively.

I have been losing balance, coordination, and muscle strength. While these are not always present, they are becoming more consistent. Many times as I am walking, I will bump a wall or stagger and wobble a little. I am no longer able to do the level of

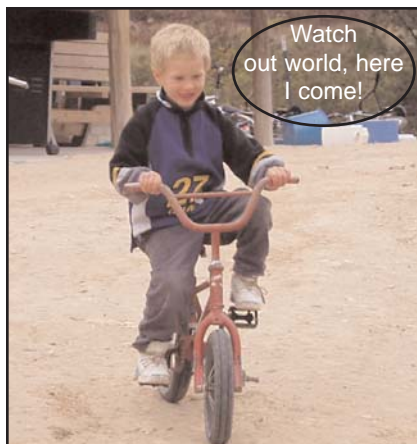


Over 1000 People Benefited from Daniel Thornton's Teaching

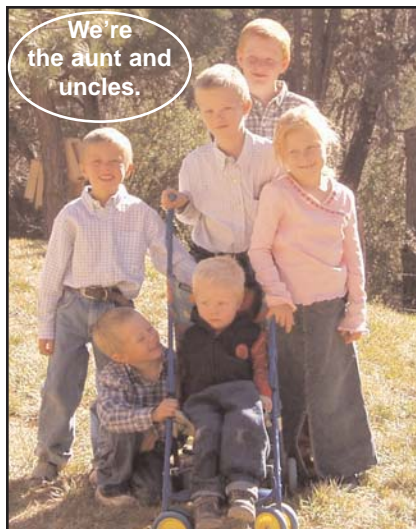


Tedd Tripp spoke to families from eighteen Mexican states and five other countries at the annual conference in August 2001.





physical labor that I once was. Working in the heat or sun saps my strength quicker than any thing else. After just a little while my energy and stamina are gone. I used to say that most of my symptoms were inside and



that someone looking at me would think that I was healthy and normal. With the loss of balance and coordination, that is no longer the case.

My arms and especially my legs, just don't work quite the way that they should. Many times, right after I stand up, my legs will buckle and I will stumble - sometimes falling. After a few minutes, they will work - more or less - normally.

Pam reminded me that I do have some struggles with my short-term memory. But since I rarely remember that I have a problem in that area, it doesn't bother me much.

I have also lost some high-tone hearing. Pam has noticed that our kids all talk very loud. Perhaps the reason is that they want their daddy to hear them!

Fatigue has become a consistent and constant symptom. It



is now my constant companion. It has become my friend - my friend that reminds me to slow down and enjoy my little children as they grow ever so fast - my friend that reminds to make sure that I use my time and energy wisely, making them count for eternity - my friend that reminds me that I serve a God that giveth and giveth grace. James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore, he says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Despite these things, God is continuing to work in mighty ways here in Mexico - in both the Church at Baratillo and with our publications and conferences. He has proven to me over and over again that his grace is sufficient and that he is strength in my weakness.

I believe that God can and does heal today, just as he did during the time that the Bible was written. I have asked the Lord for healing. His answer has consistently brought me back to the passage in 2 Corinthians 12:8-10. Concerning this thing, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weak-





Okay,  
I'm ready to go  
to work!



**Building Site for Home and Print Shop**



ness." Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

## WHY WE ARE DOING IT

We are serving our Lord here in Mexico simply because we feel he has called us to this country and the

Spanish-speaking people of the world.

The easiest way to describe our calling is to explain the logo that we designed for Vida Nueva Ministries.

It is made up of four parts. The foundation is the Bible. A family is standing on the left side of the Bible. The verse Malachi 4:6 "And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers" is on the right side. We include the saying "Reaching

Families for Christ" at the bottom.

Our logo sums up our work, our life calling. That we would help to win families for Christ and strengthen them by giving them a firm foundation in God's Word.

It is our prayer that God would make your life as rich and full as he has made ours.

In Christ,

Mike & Pam

**VIDA NUEVA MINISTRIES**  
**THE RICHARDSONS**  
Missionaries to Mexico  
**Home Address:**  
Apartado 487  
Arteaga, Saltillo 25000  
México  
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