



# EL PUENTE

**(THE BRIDGE) MAY 2003**

**“Yo soy el camino, la verdad, y la vida,” le contesto Jesus.  
“Nadie llega al Padre sino por mí.”**

**“I am the way, the truth, and the life,” answered Jesus. “No one comes to the Father but by me.”**

**--John 14.6**

**God’s Truth is the same in any language on earth, it’s absolute, and it’s timeless.**

Greetings from Costa Rica! For almost 3 months now we have been studying the Spanish language at the Instituto de Lengua Espanola in San Jose! At the close of our last newsletter we didn’t know if God would enable us through our supporters to be able to leave Savannah on the schedule we had set as our goal, but a great amount of support came in right at the end, allowing us to arrive on March 4. We’re full of praise to the Lord and thanks to you for your gifts and prayers!

One of the things we’ve been repeatedly advised to maintain in our future work as missionaries is great flexibility. We had a “pop quiz” in flexibility during the days bracketing our arrival here. Our team in Chile and the administration of the language institute felt that 3 months of study would likely be inadequate for our needs in transitioning and functioning well in Chile, and suggested that we stay for 6 to 9 months in Costa Rica getting a better grounding in Spanish. At present that’s the most likely possibility, putting our arrival in Santiago, Chile in early September or January ‘04. In the words of our Chile team leader: “we need you soon, but we need you prepared.”

So our focus now is to make the best use of our time in becoming as conversant in Spanish as possible. Chris and I have four 50-minute periods of classes each day in phonetics, conversation, and grammar. We have three more periods of personal study on campus and 2 to 4 hours of homework each afternoon. We’re in separate classes, since Chris had quite a bit more knowledge of Spanish already. The study is very challenging, but also enjoyable, and we’re making good progress. The children are all enrolled at the language institute’s “Sojourn Academy,” and are adjusting pretty well after the initial feeling of being out of place. Emma was able to visit over her spring break, and will be with us through the summer. The subjects the kids have now are standard class work, but during the summer months we hope they can take advantage of

**“Who has made man’s mouth? ...Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.”**

**--Exodus 4.11**

- The human speech apparatus can produce over 5,000 different languages & dialects!**
- It can create all the sounds any person in any culture could ever need to express his wants and communicate the most significant things of life.**
- If a missionary expects to be listened to, he must win the right to be heard by learning the ways and language of the people with whom he would communicate his faith.**  
**—Aulden Coble**

the focused classes in Spanish their school offers.

The Lord’s blessed us with a comfortable house in a fairly safe neighborhood (reasonable precautions needed) that’s about 15 minutes’ walk from school. Grocery stores are about the same distance, as is a Spanish-speaking church we attend on Sunday mornings. On Sunday evenings we attend an English-speaking international church that’s more distant by pooling our resources with others from the institute and hiring a large 15-passenger van to take us. In many other ways the Lord has given us pleasant gifts: new friends, great teachers, a very supportive mission organization (Mission to the World), and a pretty and welcoming host country in which to attend school.

One of the surprises the Lord has given us in the process of training for this work while in the U.S. and now in Costa Rica is a special measure of His grace in our marriage and family life. Chris and I have often reflected on how much we’ve learned about speaking one-another’s language as husband and wife, so that our personal communication has never been better. Some of this was helped along by classes we’ve attended, some by good counsel from godly men and women, and all by the Holy Spirit’s intervention in our hearts.

So we hope you’ll rejoice with us in these good things, and thank the Lord for His provision when you think of us. We value your friendship and the interest you’ve taken in our family and in the ministry God’s called us to in Chile. We’d love to hear from you! Don’t think your letter will just be another in “those great big mailbags the Marshall’s receive every day.” The truth is that we very rarely receive anything, so when a piece of mail arrives it’s a big event. Our mailing address is:

\_\_\_\_(first name)\_\_\_\_ Marshall  
Instituto de Lengua Espanola  
Apartado 100-2350  
San Jose, Costa Rica

(mark the envelope “AIR MAIL”)

Our e-mail address is: [dmarshall@mtwsa.org](mailto:dmarshall@mtwsa.org)

The Lord bless you in *your* mission! Love, the Marshall’s

------(please clip here and place PRAYER POINTS where you can view them)-----

**PRAYER POINTS FOR THE MARSHALL FAMILY:**

- \*PERSEVERANCE IN LEARNING SPANISH**
- \*PUTTING AWAY THE LANGUAGE OF COMPLAINT & ACQUIRING THE LANGUAGE OF GRACE**
- \*THE FAITHFULNESS OF THOSE WHO’VE PLEDGED SUPPORT**
- \*CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO COSTA RICAN NEIGHBORS & FRIENDS**
- \*SAFETY & HEALTH, PHYSICALLY & SPIRITUALLY**
- \*EMMA & ANNA AT COVENANT COLLEGE THIS FALL**
- \*THE SUPPORT OF OTHER MISSIONARIES WAITING TO GO**



