

# Robertson Review

December 2007

## Church Planting with MTW in Guadalajara, Mexico

Dear Friends,

Happy belated Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe! Ok, not really. Instead let us wish you a Merry Christmas. Tuesday, December 12, was the anniversary of the date in 1531 when a Mexican Indian claimed to have seen a vision of the Virgin Mary, except that rather than a vision of a Jewish Mary, she was a Mexican Indian Mary. The acceptance of this legend enabled rapid spread of Roman Catholicism in Mexico. The indigenous people more readily accepted an indigenous Virgin, and at the same time were able to continue practicing some elements of their indigenous religions under the guise of Roman Catholicism. "Coincidentally," the Spanish monarchy was able to establish stable control over the people once they were united in their religion. The ill effects of this legend have carried forward to today. Much of the so-called Roman Catholicism is actually a mixture of Roman Catholicism and other superstitions. And the people carry on an exaggerated devotion of the Virgin. The festivities began at least a week ago with fireworks being shot up at all hours. Tuesday a group appeared on our street dressed in Indian attire (most people normally wear clothing very similar to what we wear in the U.S.). Soon a parade of pilgrims began to form. A priest led a prayer, and then the people marched along behind Indian dancers and a pickup truck that had a shrine to the Virgin setup in the truck bed, all the while saying prayers and singing praises to Mary. The Virgin is one of the biggest stumbling blocks for Catholics when it comes to believing the gospel. Please pray that the message of Christ would grip the hearts of Mexicans.

Please be in prayer for Amy and her sinus situation. Surgery is scheduled for Friday, December 21. Four days before Christmas is not the most desirable time for a surgery, but we believe that everything has come together to make this the right time. The surgery is not as invasive as it could be, but the procedure does go pretty close to her eyes and brain. Please pray for her protection and that God would guide Dr. Badial's hands.

Christmas time gives us extra opportunities to share the good news of God's love for us in Christ. Please pray that we would have many open doors for sharing with friends and neighbors.

This Sunday we're having several friends and neighbors coming over to eat (American) chili and to decorate Christmas cookies. Please pray that this event helps solidify relationships and gives opportunities to share about Christ.

As the new year approaches, there are a couple of items worth noting on the financial front. One is that we expect various adjustments to go into effect in January that may bump our monthly needs up \$200-\$300, due to cost of living and the decline of the US dollar. This is money that we haven't raised, so if you or your church would be able to take this on, it would help us greatly. Also, if you are planning a year-end gift, the MTW office will accept any checks mailed prior to December 31. Instructions for how to contribute are at the bottom of this letter.

### **A few more prayer requests:**

- Continue to pray for health. Aside from Amy's sinus problems, it seems that at least one of us always has something going wrong health-wise. Pray for our strength and protection.
- Pray that the Lord would continue to open doors for us here, giving us new opportunities with unbelievers and drawing more believers to be part of the church planting effort.
- Surgery 4 days before Christmas means things may not be as special or fun for the kids. Please pray that we will have time and energy to give them a special first (well, first this time around) Christmas in Mexico.

**Here are some tidbits about life in Mexico:**

- Christmas is a really, really big deal here. Christmas displays went up in stores at the end of the summer. Many houses have lights, reindeer displays, and Nativity sets. On December 15, Mexican employees receive a double paycheck as an end of year/Christmas bonus. There are many Christmas parties called posadas, based on the story of Joseph and Mary seeking 'posada' (shelter or inn) in Bethlehem, and the highlight of the season is a Christmas Eve (Noche Buena) party that culminates with an elegant dinner at midnight.

We pray that you have a joyous Christmas. We love visitors, so remember that there is a place for you here in Guadalajara. Please stay in touch.

In Christ Jesus,

Steve (for the Robertsons)

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Mailing Address for LETTERS ONLY – packages/items of value will be rejected/stolen/or will cost us:

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Our phone # from the USA: 011-52-333-855-8824

MTW donations address: PO Box 116284, Atlanta, GA 30368-6284. Mark payments Robertson 016521