
NOVEMBER 2021

COMMUNITY IN ACTS

NEWSLETTER



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PRAYER REQUEST



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PRAY FOR THE "WALKING TOGETHER" KID'S CLUB IN SAN NICHOLAS

PRAY FOR THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF OUR STUDENTS IN SAN NICHOLAS

PRAY FOR THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF THE CELEBRATE RECOVERY MINISTRY

PRAY FOR NECESSARY FUNDING FOR FUTURE MINISTRIES IN MEXICO



NOVEMBER IN PICTURES





VICARIOUS CHURCH PLANTING

DR. THOMAS BASILE

Thirty years ago, Sandy and I moved to Puebla after a year of language school in Costa Rica. We arrived in Puebla ready to plant a church. Even though, we had years of training, language acquisition and learning the culture it seemed like everything was new. Church planting is tough enough in one's own culture. Church planting in a different culture and language is ten times tougher.

The difference in culture is a major factor that often does not get addressed. Tylor Edward defines culture as follows: "Culture is an umbrella term which encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human behavior, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups." ¹ The collective aspects of culture and the impact it has on the world view is pervasive and incredibly important to each culture. They are deeply held convictions that often times are not verbalized. Because they are not verbalized the emotiveness behind those convictions is huge. Not understanding those differences could be devastating and quite insulting.

One does not even need to leave one's own country to see some of those differences. Northerners are different from Southerners; West coast is different from East coast. Years ago, I read a book entitled *Nine Nations of North America*. The thesis was simply the United States could be broken up into nine different cultures that were very distinct. Since my wife and I represent two different cultures I will use these two to illustrate.

Generally speaking, New Yorkers value truth, hard work and time; Texans value politeness, relationships and etiquette. This is not to say that Texans don't value truth, hard work or time. Nor is it to say that New Yorkers aren't polite or don't care about relationships or etiquette. However, certain regional areas do get reputations. I personally believe those reputations are earned by those who do not understand the culture of each region and therefore misinterpret motivations which are then followed by labels. Labels are not very helpful in building relationships.

Throughout the years, I have met some very hard working and very honest Texans. I have also observed the 'truth' soft-pedaled in order to not offend. I believe the cultural value of relationships was being expressed. I hope I am not offending anyone here. I have seen the opposite with my New York friends who are willing to sacrifice a relationship so that the truth comes out. I am not asking for a judgment call as to who is right or who is wrong. My point simply is we need to understand the differences and with that understanding we ought have some compassion. Transfer those differences to a different country, and the depth and number of differences multiply, making church planting that more difficult.

Those relational differences are trivial in comparison to the different worldviews and understandings of eternal truths. We must have deep, responsible understandings for those who believe, act and speak differently when it comes to belief in God and His Word. Doesn't it make more sense to work with an insider?



Learning a language as an adult has many challenges. The reality is less than 5% of the adult population can learn another language at a level 5. Level 5 is speaking the language as if it were your native tongue. Very few of us ever get to that level. Albeit my Spanish is at a high level, I would not consider myself a level 5. I would be at a level 4 when it comes to theology, ministry and church. My level drops when I am talking in areas outside of my expertise. So, when communicating the intricacies of theology, grammar is a challenge. When I am in a counseling scenario it is also a challenge to pick up on the nuances. Why one word was chosen rather than the more common word is telling. The same is true when teaching the eternal truths of God's Word - precision is needed. Working with those who speak Spanish as their mother tongue is essential. However, the combination of an outside (yours truly) with the insider is a dynamic combination that holds multiple levels of accountability and healthy perspectives.

So, this gives insight as to why we are dedicating so much time and effort into equipping our Mexican co-workers in church planting. Church planting in Mexico for our Mexican brothers lowers the variables of misunderstanding and offences and heightens the effectiveness. Their mastery level of cultural awareness is intuitive. We want to enable, equip and empower our Mexican brothers to go out and plant churches in their backyard. In 2022, we are planning on increasing the amount of church planting conferences. We want to start off with one per quarter and work our way up to one per month. We will be accumulating a team of teachers as well as increasing resources. We appreciate your prayers and support in these endeavors.



HADIME TESTIMONY

ELEAZAR DÍAS



On October 14, 2021, we travelled to three different cities to do our service project with a group of students from our discipleship program HADIME (Making Disciples in Mexico).

The first stop was in CDMX. We spent 4 days serving in the CIMS church. We did different activities that included a bazaar, preaching, a missions festival, and spending time with different families from the congregation. The next stop was in the indigenous town of Zoquiapan Puebla, where we spent 6 days of cultural immersion. We learned about church planting in rural contexts through the work of two missionaries living and serving there. We were able to support them in door to door evangelism, praying for the families of the different plantation works, doing different activities for children, and sharing both the Word of God and our testimonies. Finally, we spent 5 days in the city of Cholula, Puebla with Community in Acts. We were participating and supporting them in the different urban ministries that they have, as well as in a church planting project. Our students really enjoyed getting to know so many different ways of serving God, from working with children in orphanages, as well as in the church planting project. They got to know and learn about the 2T2 ministry and practice it with a puppet show. We also learned how martial arts can serve as a means to share the gospel.

One of our students said that one of the ministries that had caught her attention the most was one called "Temas y Tacos" where they met with a group of university students to discuss certain topics of interest. This time the topic was about money. Our student said that she loved how she could share her opinion and then listen to different opinions always in an environment of respect. This made her own understanding of the subject grow. She found it a great way to build relationships and open doors to sharing the gospel. Another thing that as a training school we really enjoyed was hearing Tom Basile's testimony and philosophy of ministry. It opened our staff's eyes in terms of looking for ways not to depend only on donations as an organization, but to look for ways to do things that can help support our ministry. It was a very blessed time, even though we had never met; the Community in Acts team was extremely generous and hospitable to us.

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PUEBLA, MÉXICO

