



Volume 16, Issue 2

Easter 2016

Dear Friends,

I sat at the kitchen table one late afternoon a few weeks ago. Sitting across from me was Demaisia, a mother of seven, her wet hair pulled back in a ponytail. She looked older than her 44 years. She had walked in the rain the hour and a half from the corn fields where she had worked for most of the day to stop at my house.

“I came to say good-bye,” she said, as I was leaving for the United States the next day. “How are you?” I asked. Her husband was ill with a foot fungus which I suspected might be infected. “Why don’t you take him to the area nurse?” I suggested, but she responded, “We have no money, and there is no medicine in the village health clinic.”

“Do you have food?” was my next question. I asked this to everyone who came. It has been an exceptionally difficult time economically here. In addition to corn, the people grow cardamom, a plant with aromatic pods and seeds that is exported and used as a spice. Cardamom is their only cash crop. Unfortunately, cardamom prices have dropped dramatically so most people don’t have any money. Even so, if there is corn, their main staple, they can make tortillas. In the scarcest of times the round patted corn dough is cooked and eaten with salt or chili.

The corn wasn’t ready for harvest yet (there are two harvests per year in the Ixcán) and for those with no money, hunger is a daily threat. It is even more serious for those who don’t own land to grow corn.

In the face of this urgent need, we started up our corn project.

In the village is a man who buys and sells corn that comes from other parts of the Ixcán and Mexico. His



name is Candelario, a good, faith-filled man who I trust. I spoke with him and he agreed to deliver corn to the people I and/or Javier Gonzalez (our on-site administrator) would indicate via a list. We would pay for the corn.

Demaisia and her family was one of those people on the list.

She shared, “I was praying to God, *‘No hay mi maiz.* There isn’t any corn. *No hay que hacer.* There’s nothing I can do.’ And then Carmen (her sister who lives nearby) called me. ‘Come here! There’s something here for you!’ I hurried to Carmen’s house,

and there was 100 lbs. of corn!" Demaisia began to cry. "Thank you. Thanks to Ixcán Ministries. Thank you." Before she left we hugged and I gave her money for her husband to get some medical attention.

Later, Carmen told me how timely the corn had come for them. She lives with her son and her daughter-in-law, Milcar. Carmen recalled, "We had bought 25 lbs. of corn Sunday and it was gone." Milcar had been fretting, saying, "What are we going to do?" And then the corn arrived, and Milcar cried, "*Dios mio!* My God! A miracle has happened! A 100 lbs. of corn just came this morning to our home!"

Carmen smiled. "I told Milcar, 'You just have to pray and trust.'"

I am reminded in this season of Easter how resurrection happens. How we can be the instrument of life for one another. How Jesus acts in us and through us when we do whatever for the least of these. How both giver and receiver are "fed" in very different ways.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support of Ixcán Ministries. Our ministries for and with the poor, like the corn project, happen because of you!

May you and yours be blessed with resurrection in these 50 days of Easter! Jesus is Risen, He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

Sincerely,

Kathy
Kathy Snider



Mission Update: Kathy returned to the United States on March 8. She will be attending to family needs as well as reverse-mission activities. The outreach ministry like the corn project will continue to feed the most poor supervised by Javier Gonzalez, our on-site administrator, and Candelario. Our other mission activities – the women’s textile and jewelry products, scholarships, and library programs – are active and thriving and are led by their local committees.

Please check out our website and recent blog post at www.ixcanministries.org.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Ixcán Ministries provides a prayerful, pastoral presence through lay missionaries living in solidarity with the poor of the remote Ixcán jungle of Guatemala to learn from as well as to assist both spiritually and materially the people with whom life and ministry are shared. The organization strives to be a bridge between two cultures and nations allowing for the exchange of varying gifts between the rich and poor for the ultimate purpose of empowerment and transformation of lives and society.

Ixcán Ministries is a 501(c) 3 organization. Your contributions are tax deductible. You may contact us at:

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