



Issue 4

August 2022

Dear Friends,

I returned to Guatemala in early July and immersed myself into life and our various mission outreaches. It is said, "A picture is worth a thousand words." So, I thought I would share more pictures in this newsletter and use fewer words...

We couldn't do what we do without our donors. One of our donors jokingly said, "Like the rich and famous, I always wanted a building, named in my honor. I will fund a latrine (with our organic latrine project) and would like it named in my honor." I smiled. It was built. In a hidden spot in the Ixcán jungle stands a wooden organic latrine with the name Maria Dorotea hung above it. I love Maria's humor and her concern for the poor in providing this important but humble basic need structure.

Our scholarship program helps children and youth in our village to study. One of our brightest university scholarship recipients, Denilson Villatoro Morales, is studying law. He brings hope for the future.

Our librarians, Rolando, Santos, and Bonifacio, are focusing on reinforcement of both reading and math with primary students. Due to the Covid shut-down of school and limited time in the classroom, there are a number of children who are 'behind' in basic reading and math skills. A regular group of children come to the library for that extra help.

Marta came by to visit and thanked me for the tinaco (water holding barrel project) that was installed on her property months ago. "Is it helping you?" I asked. "Oh, mucho, hermana, mucho," she said. "Thank you so much."

Due to the hurricanes in 2020 that changed fertile land into rocks and sand along the Xalbal river where the communal crops were planted, the land will no longer sustain corn production. Many who grew their own corn now have to buy it. Corn prices are at an all-time high: a 100 pound bag of corn that used to cost Q160.00 is now Q250.00! To make matters worse, the prices of cardamom (our cash crop) have plummeted. Our corn project is helping keep families fed during this time of crisis.

Las Luchadoras women's group meets twice a month for emotional and spiritual support. These single mothers are *luchando* - fighting- to provide for themselves and their children. They are the 'poorest of the poor' in our village, but show amazing resiliency and faith. Ixcán Ministries provides them with corn, wood for cooking and education for their children.

Our women artisan group, Ixcán Creations, is working to establish business contacts here in Guatemala.

I meet monthly with the Catholic women in San Antonio Tzeja, a nearby maya Q'qechi village, to encourage and inspire with scripture and prayer.

My children's outreach happens here at home with the neighboring little ones who grace my life with their exuberance and presence. I have a one day a week evening dedicated to them for coloring pages, puzzles, toys and a movie.

I have no photos of my pastoral work with the sick and dying. However, a day after my arrival, I was able to still attend the 9th day memorial following the death of a woman in our village. After a mix-up of time, I arrived late, but one of the family members said to me, "No worries, hermana. You're here."

Then he said, "*Presencia*. Presence."

The suffering that occurs here doesn't overshadow, in most cases, the beauty of the faith, and goodness of the people. Thank you for being a part of this ministry that I am honored to be on the ground and present to.

Sincerely,

Kathy Snider



Ixcán Creations Women



The Children



Doña Maria Dorotea Latrine



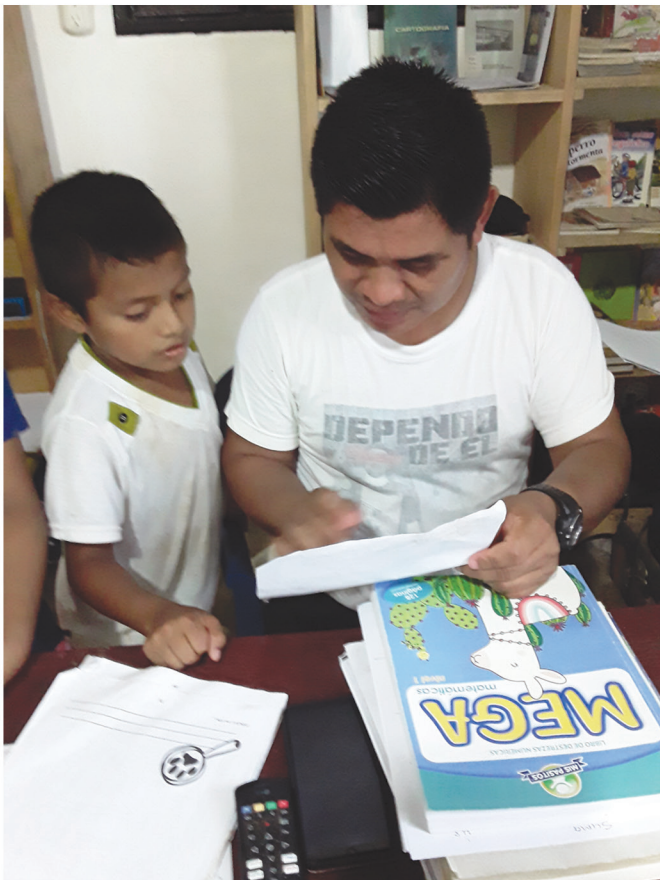
**bridge between
cultures**



Marta, Tinaco Project



Denilson, Scholarship Recipient



Rolando and student in the Library

**exchange
of gifts**



Q'qechi Women's Group



Rosemary, Corn Project



Maria, Luchadora

**transform
lives**

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Ixcán Ministries is a Christian lay mission serving as a ministry of presence with the Maya people in the Ixcán jungle of Guatemala. We act as a bridge between cultures for the exchange of gifts to transform lives and society. Our programs include- Scholarships, Community Library, Women's Micro-business, Medical, Housing, and Food Assistance, Spiritual and Pastoral Accompaniment, and Promotion of Peace and Justice.

Ixcán Ministries is a 501(c) 3 organization. Your contributions are tax deductible.

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