



DOMINICAN VISION INC. (DVI) CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2020



“Let us give glory to the Lord and praise His name in the islands” Isaiah 42:12

The Dominican Republic.....has been hit very hard

SCHOOL NEWS



Our school, Colegio Cristiano Divina Misión, in the village of Arroyo Seco, has continued to function, despite the pandemic hitting the DR hard. Students have been learning from home since end of March – with summer holidays in between. Our village does not have Internet and electricity is on an 8 hour on/off cycle. As a result, our students could not participate in virtual learning. The new government quickly found out that they also had the same problems in many of their public schools. They supplied tablets to their high school students (those schools are in areas where internet is accessible) and then ran out of money because (apparently) the

outgoing government had pocketed a lot of the tablet funds, which had been donated by the United Nations. Because the new government was unable to get their school program together, our students have started this school year over two months before theirs did.

Our teachers come to school Monday – Friday to prepare lessons and homework that gets distributed to our students at their homes and brought back to school to be corrected. The staff has divided our students into 4 zones according to where they live. In each zone, one centrally located home is chosen to be the distribution/collection center. The lady of that home acts as the courier, picking up lessons from the school and when the homework is done, delivering it back to the school. All of our grade 6 students passed their government-mandated exam in May, whereas over 90% of the students in government run schools failed that same exam.

Parents are co-operating well and are thankful for the efforts being made. Where parents cannot help their kids with lessons, our school has arranged for a nearby family to help. We have 90 students from pre-school to grade 6 with a teacher for every class as is required by DR government. The children and their families have been receiving food packs from us (DVI) since April.



www.dominicanvision.org

Charitable Req. # 81277 8702 RR0001

General Address: 307 Oakland Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2G 0B2
Sponsorship Address: 411-455 Edison Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2G 0M2
Enquiries to: Barb Hodgkinson – barb@dominicanvision.org



We are looking for sponsors for 12 children.

They are all attending school already, as we do not deny any child an education. Sponsorship pays for just over half of the school costs. Our costs have risen steeply in the past few years due to government upgrade demands for all schools. The DR government has helped us only with student workbooks the last 2 years, but there are usually not enough.

Would you be willing to sponsor a child at \$40/month?

Contact Barb Hodgkinson for info: barb@dominicanvision.org



2020 Summary:

- 2 homes built (bottom half of 2 duplexes)
- Much medicine, dried veggie soup mix and mp3 players from In Touch Ministries (with Spanish Bible and sermons on it) plus school supplies, socks and children's clothing brought to the DR by the groups that went in January of this year
- We thank God that we have been able to pay all our teachers and staff regularly every month
- DVI is finalizing the purchase of about one acre of land in Arroyo Seco behind Pastor Chalas house.
- We have chosen 8 co-workers in our greater ministry area, including Pastor Chalas, who is in charge of the overall food distribution. They purchase food in bulk and distribute it every 2 weeks to **about 1,500 people!** We have total confidence in our co-workers to properly handle the money for food and to seek out the most needy families in their churches and/ or communities where they minister.



KAREN'S STORY

We asked Karen C. (one of our co-workers) to help us understand how the last 8 months have affected an average family that earned enough to barely pay for rent, electricity, food, gasoline for their motorcycle to go to work and other bare necessities like soap, hygiene, etc. Karen writes the following about Ricardo and Evelyn and their children – Hayunda (a 6 yr. old girl) and her 4 yr. old brother, Samuel.

“The Dominican Republic, with no social backup systems, has been hit very hard.

The main industry here on the North coast, is tourism. A few individual tourists, not families, are coming now. The tourists, as well as the few Dominicans that come up to Sosua Beach for the weekend, rent inexpensive motel style housing that employ very few people. The few Service industries open, like restaurants, gas stations, etc., have only kept a maximum 25% of their staff. The little government help that was available at the beginning is almost completely gone. People are so desperate for work that when we hear an airplane coming in, we all run out to see where it is from. Almost always from the U.S.A.!!??

Ricardo had a fulltime job at the airport as a baggage handler. After no work for months, he now works 4 hours per day. Evelyn worked at a lottery ticket kiosk. Because of the complete shutdown of the country, she also had no work. In summer she was hired with less hours and now her kiosk is completely shut down and the company she worked for refuses to give her a “liquidation” fee.

With hardly any income, Ricardo had his small motorcycle re-possessed. Now they have to pay for transportation. Oh ya!! His mother and father are totally dependent on them. So they moved the whole family incl. parents into a 2 bedroom. apartment. Soon after, his father and one of his sisters died of the virus. His mother was able to move in with his other sister. But they too need help to survive.

Imagine yourself in Ricardo and Evelyn's shoes. Ricardo has to pay for transportation to go to work for a few hours and back, they have to take care of his extended family, they have to pay rent and electricity, his children have no entertainment, they live in small quarters, it is very, very hot and almost no water because the D.R. had drought conditions for most of this year and they live too far from the river. Those living close to the river, go there to wash their clothes, take a bath and then take a couple pails full of water back to their homes.



“No wonder,” Karen says, “that each time one of us comes with food that you help us purchase, (and perhaps a few meds) we are treated as exalted family members. Whether the country opens tomorrow or in a few months, the lower working class (that we would label as poor people here in Canada) may never recover. As you know, I have known these people for years and I know the living conditions of many people in the surrounding villages, yet one thing (for the most part) never changes – **THEY KEEP ON SMILING.**”

In the D.R., Ricardo's family, with all their responsibilities, would be considered to be in the upper poor class. If that is true, how would one label the hundreds of our friends (both Christians and non- Christians) that we, as DVI, have in the D.R. That is why we often talk about helping the poorest of the poor.

About 2 weeks ago we talked to Karen C on the phone and we asked her about how she deals with all of the emotional stuff when helping the poor and the sick. Her answer was that she often feels like crying. “In fact,” she says, “I really feel like crying right now.” We responded asking why she doesn't allow herself to cry. Her response was that she did not allow herself to cry for fear that she would not be able to stop.

www.dominicanvision.org

Charitable Reg. # 81277 8702 RR0001

General Address: 307 Oakland Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2G 0B2
Sponsorship Address: 411-455 Edison Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2G 0M2
Enquiries to: Barb Hodgkinson – barb@dominicanvision.org



DVI Coworkers (plus Karen C as shown on previous page with Walter)



Pastor Chala & Jenny



Pastor Antonio & Elsa



Pastor Alejandro & Jacie



Pastora Ramona & Rafael



Pastora Morena



Pastor Winston & Katy



Luilly & Yanny

We send our thanks to everyone who has donated this year!

\$131,000.00 to purchase food

\$60,000.00 to purchase the land in Arroyo Seco (about one acre)

Plus finances to cover our regular school and ministry costs.

This is amazing! Praise God for His provision!

**We are so grateful for all donations and gifts, including garage sale items that are given to us every year!
May you all have a blessed Christmas!**

The situation in the D.R. has not improved. We again are asking you to be generous (if you can) because, come Jan. 1, 2021, people will still need food and the school as well as the ministry costs will continue.

The Dominican Vision Inc. board – Walter and Carol Warkentin, Betty Giesbrecht, Ted and Esther Wogberg, Pastor Hipolito Chala.

2021 UPDATE: Build group and mission team will be Cancelled for January

To donate by credit card visit dominicanvision.org/donations OR
by cheque made out to Dominican Vision & mailed to 307 Oakland Ave. Winnipeg, MB R2G 0B2
For info contact Walter Warkentin by e-mail: walterw@mymts.net or by phone: **204-298-1297**