

From the Desk of Lisa Armstrong - January 2009

With All My Heart I Give You Thanks

2008 - A Year of Blessings and Profound Gratitude



Happy New Year from Honduras! It is such a blessing to be able to write to you today. I hardly know where to begin, but did not want to let 2008 fade away without taking the opportunity to write a few sincere words of gratitude for all you have done for us this past year. I also wanted to have the chance to tell you a little bit about how my own family is doing. It has been such an amazing year full of hope, joy and blessings!

My children and I are doing really well. It has been nearly two and a half years since I became a mother and yet every day is such a gift. I am infinitely grateful to our merciful God that He found a way to grant my heart's desire to be a mother while at the same time making a place for me in His plan to serve His children in need. Single motherhood along with trying to run a mission **and** a coffee business certainly keeps me very busy, but I wouldn't have it any other way. The frustrations of living in a developing nation are tempered by the sweet sound of "Momma" when I walk through the door at the end of the day. Somehow, just watching my kids do silly dances to Barney songs or reading *Where the Wild Things Are* before bed helps me to maintain a passion for God's work and hope alive in the face of what seems to be such insurmountable circumstances. Certainly I feel blessed beyond anything I could have ever imagined much less have the right to expect. Thank you to all of you who have encouraged me to follow this calling. I could have never imagined the abundance of God's blessings that were waiting for me in this tiny little corner of Honduras.



As I sat down a few weeks before the holidays to make out the list of employees who would be attending the annual Christmas party, I was utterly amazed to find a guest list of twenty-five people. Those twenty-five people have all worked for the mission or for me in one capacity or another during the past year. They represent twenty-five individual families who have greatly benefited from the living wages they have received. As I thought about the impact each salary has made on the lives of our employees and their families, I couldn't help but smile. Some employees used their salaries for advanced education either for themselves or to put a family member through school. Others helped to start small businesses for their families. Others still built houses this year. The amount of prosperity that living wage employment produces stands in stark contrast to the utter struggle for survival most families face whose salaries are insufficient to provide even the most basic of human necessities.

With regard to the impact the mission has had on those in need, the list of accomplishments is so extensive I would need an entire ream of paper to even begin to scratch the surface. The clinic continues to provide quality medical attention to the sick, regardless of ability to pay. The agriculture program has provided thousands of pounds of fruits, vegetables and proteins to the hungry. This year's enrollment at the grade school was the highest yet. A new school building is nearly finished to hold the number of young people who thirst for an education. Coffee farmers are filled with hope as coffee sales increase and plans for direct export of green coffee draw closer to being a reality. I want for you to know I am aware that non-designated giving is not nearly as exciting as being able to claim a project as one's own. However, I would say to you with all my heart, thank you for your trust, confidence and unprecedented generosity. Truly, I am in your debt. To be able to share the love of Christ in such a way as to empower others to dream, grow and serve is absolutely awesome. Thank you so much for affording me such a privilege. Please know that I am so grateful for your kindness and will always strive to use your gifts in a way that will always honor your sacrifice! In His Service -

Lisa

