

Special People in the Dominican Republic

"Hola! Hola," called out the pastor as he went door to door in his community near Puerto Plata with 25 American volunteers (including me and Steve) traipsing along behind. "Is now a good time? Do you have a bucket available?" When the person(s) in the home answered "Yes," he called out the name of one of our groups. "Estefani's group, come here!" Estefani was the translator for our team which consisted of me and Steve, and Jan and Colleen from Washington State.

We went out each morning and afternoon meeting up with the pastors in the community we would be helping that day. The people were very kind and welcoming to us and they were very happy to get the water filters. Most of the people we met live simply. Their houses were often small with tin roofs, laundry hanging outside, fruit on nearby trees, and animals moving about in their yards. We saw dogs, chickens, goats, a pig, and 3 young cowboys on horses driving a herd of cows down the road. The little children were very cute and often shy.



We remember Francesca, an 81 year old widow who had never had any children. She was so lonely and we spent our whole morning with her! We remember Emelia, a young gal who is studying Psychology at the University. One woman was caring for her father who was nearby in his wheelchair. So many precious people for whom Christ died. We were happy

to serve and encourage them in any way we could.

We realized how blessed we are to have clean water available to us at any time from the many faucets in our houses. In some D.R. communities the water from the tap is often

only available for certain hours in a day. They cannot drink the tap water as it is unsafe, and instead they buy 5 gallon bottles of drinking water which is delivered to them. Getting clean water that is available anytime is a big deal!

It was a privilege for our (Estefani's) team to get to meet 19 people, give out 13 filters, and share the Gospel 13 times! It was a joy to see the light dawn as we pointed out that God is like the filtered pure water and we are like the dirty water. We shared that it didn't matter how many good deeds we try to do to draw close to God, as we poured clean water into the cup with the dirty water, the dirty water was still dirty. They totally understood that illustration and no one was willing to drink the dirty water no matter how much pure water we added in! We told them we need a filter for our hearts and His Name is Jesus! We gave everyone a chance to receive Christ that day. Many said they had already received Christ into their lives, and some wanted to think about it.

At one home, the husband, named Manuel, prayed to receive Christ with us! (Picture at right) Hesitant at first, he decided there was no better time than the present to receive Jesus. I was especially blessed as Estefani asked me to read the prayer in Spanish and he repeated after me. What a joy and blessing for me. I still can speak some Spanish! Manuel's wife, Genesis, is a believer and a pastor's kid. She was so excited to see her husband turn to the Lord. Please pray for Manuel and Genesis to grow together in their faith and to get involved in the local church.

We also loved spending time with the main pastor and Filter of Hope leader, Jose Luis, and his wife Maria Elena and family and all the other translators and helpers! Please pray for the growth of the churches from the relationships built through Filter of Hope ministry



Thank you so much for praying for our group of 25 volunteers. In all we gave out 105 filters, shared the gospel with 135 people and saw 34 people put their faith in Christ! Please continue to pray that the local pastors and their church members may build on these relationships and see more fruit for the glory of God! We would love to go back again someday and help to reach out to more people in Puerto Plata.

Thank you so much for partnering with us in prayer and giving! We so appreciate your faithfulness to the Lord and to us!

With love in Jesus, Steve & Rochelle

