



# THE LEAST OF THESE MINISTRIES

MATTHEW 25:40

*March 2016 Newsletter*

## **Christ's Love in Action**

The scene was a familiar one, one which has played out many times over the last 18 years, albeit with a different cast of characters. On Saturday, January 9, Pastor Bill, Jessica, Marty, Ricardo, and Carlos waited patiently at the Las Americas International Airport in Santo Domingo for 12 team members to arrive on three flights from different locations. Ted had arrived on Friday and joined in waiting for the new arrivals. In what seemed like no time, everyone had arrived, eaten a late lunch, and boarded Jacobo's Barahona-bound bus. Thus began our most recent mission trip to fellowship with and serve our friends on the mountain and in the bateyes.

The team was comprised of a good mix of veteran participants and first-timers. Two of the experienced team members brought along teenaged grandchildren with whom to share the experience. Most of the participants were from Maryland, but team members also joined us from Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and North Carolina!

Our project for this trip was to install concrete floors in homes in Batey 8. We initially planned to do eight floors during the week, but were able to install 10! Several men from the batey helped with the work, giving them ownership in the project. This provides a great example of community members helping one another, which ultimately strengthens the community. The families are always so appreciative of the work and materials provided, but the real joy is when team members are able to connect with residents on a personal level. It is in those moments when the team can share the love of Jesus and his gospel message with people face-to-face, offering an opportunity for true life-change through a relationship with Jesus.

The team also held a Bible School for kids in the batey. Team members did a wonderful job preparing for the school, and working with the translator to tell stories from the Bible and bring them to life through dramas. Kids also were given an opportunity to do a craft, and each received a small treat on their way out. Attendance for the Bible School averaged about 75 kids each of the three days. Several team members also were able to play ball with some of the local kids throughout the week.

On Thursday evening, the team returned to Batey 8 to show the movie, "Courageous." Pastor Ramón started the evening with a brief message and prayer, followed by a few songs led by his family. Prior to the movie, the young adult group from Ricardo's church presented a powerful drama to the 150-200 batey residents who had gathered.



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It is always a blessing to take part in these trips. It is encouraging to see God working in and through the team members as they seek to be obedient to his direction. We are thankful for the many people who join us for these trips, and we are always looking for new team members! If you're interested, look for details about our next trip in this newsletter.

## Meet Our New Manager!

Many of you know Ricardo Beltre, a young man who has grown up with The Least of These Ministries. We are excited to announce that in December, Ricardo became the new Manager of our operations in Barahona!

Steve and Ann Hull first met Ricardo about ten years ago, when he was only 11 years old. When he was 13, Ricardo began working with our teams as a translator. He was hired to work full-time with the ministry in the summer of 2014 to assist with the food distribution program. Ricardo is nearing the end of his first year of studies at UCATEBA - Universidad Católica Tecnológica de Barahona (Catholic Technological University of Barahona). He plans to major in law, and has aspirations of becoming a Judge in the Dominican Republic.

Ricardo tells us his favorite aspects of working with the ministry are being involved in bringing food to people who are in need, and working with the ministry's staff to help them do the best job that they can. In addition to assisting with the food distribution several times a week, his responsibilities include purchasing, bookkeeping, payroll, and preparation for and support of mission teams.

When he's not working or doing schoolwork, Ricardo enjoys listening to music, watching sermons online, and spending time with his nephew, Josmar. He is very active in the young adult group at his church, and is their current Vice-President. He has two older sisters and one older brother, a younger sister, and a younger brother.

Please join us in congratulating Ricardo! Pray that he continues to seek and do the will of God not only in his new job, but also in his life. And finally, pray for his family, that they would continue to grow in their faith and relationship with Jesus.



**“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”**

**Matthew 25:40 NIV**

## June Mission Trip

Our next mission trip to Barahona in the Dominican Republic will be from June 18 through June 25. These trips are a wonderful chance to meet some of the families whom we serve in the bateyes, and to share the love of Jesus with them. No experience is needed – just a heart for serving! Requested donation to participate on the trip is \$700 plus airfare. Contact us for more information!

## Feed My Starving Children

Many of you know that The Least of These Ministries is a partner with Feed My Starving Children (FMSC). We were able to begin food distribution in five additional bateyes several years ago, through the use of FMSC's "Manna Pack" product. Today, we continue to provide the Manna Packs to those five bateyes weekly. Once a month, when we distribute eggs with the food, these Manna Packs are given to all of the bateyes we serve. The food is donated to us by FMSC, however, we must still pay to ship the food from the U.S. to the Dominican Republic. It currently costs us \$9,000 to ship the containers, which we are receiving four times a year. At that cost, we are able to distribute this food at a cost of only 6.7¢ per serving, which means your gift of \$100 provides almost 1,500 servings! We thank God for this partnership with FMSC, and for your partnership with us. For more information on Feed My Starving Children, visit [fmsc.org](http://fmsc.org).



## Prayer Needs

We hear every week from friends of The Least of These Ministries who let us know they are praying for the ministry, our staff in the Dominican Republic, the people we are serving there, and the administrative team here in the U.S. It is humbling to know that many of our brothers and sisters in Christ are praying for us, and we are so grateful for that support. Here are some specific things we ask that you pray for over the coming weeks:

- That our staff in the DR would be encouraged and strengthened in their faith.
- That Pastor Ramón would continue to boldly proclaim the gospel in the bateyes, as well as in his home church.
- For the Board of Directors to have wisdom and discernment as they plan for the future.
- For the spiritual and physical preparation of those who will be serving on our mission teams in June, and that they would not have unexpected schedule conflicts.

## E-mail Update



Last fall, we mentioned plans for an e-mail newsletter offering in the future. With that announcement, we asked you to send us your e-mail address if you would be interested in receiving a paperless newsletter. The response and the notes were very encouraging! We plan to be ready to launch the e-mail version of the newsletter with the next edition. So, if you are interested in making the change to digital, and haven't yet submitted your e-mail address to us, you still have time.

Just send a message to [leastofthesemin@gmail.com](mailto:leastofthesemin@gmail.com) telling us the e-mail address you'd like us to send the newsletter to, and we'll add you to the list!

## Ways to Donate

This ministry is made possible through the generous gifts of people like you! Please prayerfully consider supporting us financially in one of the following ways:

- Online at [leastofthesemin.org](http://leastofthesemin.org). Click the "To Donate" link.
- Set up an electronic donation through your on-line banking or PayPal.
- By mail:     The Least of These Ministries  
                  170 Airport Drive  
                  Westminster MD 21157

## Join Us on Social Media

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