

# Christmas in Ecuador with the FACES Ministry



## Hello Everyone and Happy New Year 2008

Everything that happened for Christmas 2007 was a real miracle, because just a few short weeks before Christmas we only had two promised offerings, one from Don Seeders of North Carolina (and I don't think he even had the offering raised yet!) and the other was from John Gann's Life Church at Mountain Creek in Chattanooga. Bro. and Sis. E.L. Turner of North Carolina were with us here in Ecuador this Christmas and helped out in so many ways. In the end, we blessed even more children this year than ever before! Praise the Lord!

### *FACES Ministry to Working Children—Ministry Center Christmas Celebration*



Our Annual Christmas party here at the FACES Ministry Center hosted around 90 children. Last year we had 50 signed up in advance...all child laborers who participate regularly in the FACES Ministry. This year we had 80 signed up in advance. After the evangelistic program there was a precious time of ministry and prayer and many children prayed to receive Christ. Each child received pants, t-shirt, nice new jacket, hygiene supplies, a special gift of their choice, and a candy bag.

Our ministry for working children has really started to get a name for itself here in the area. In other words, God is giving us favor in the local community!

- One youth group from a local Church of God came forward saying they would take care of the Christmas Party—the lesson time, games, dramas, etc. In addition they brought desserts.
- Another youth group came to help with decorating, serving and clean up and brought two cooked turkeys. (No, this year we didn't give the kids roast pig!)
- The "Queen" of the county came with her group of government representatives and offered candy bags for all the kids and did a photo shoot.
- One of the local Rotary Clubs came and delivered bags of hygiene products and a tee shirt for each child.
- Another group from a local private school donated jackets. (We won't mention that they also promised us 75 pairs of pants, but failed to deliver on that, causing us a lot of last minute woe and expense.) But nevertheless, we were very grateful.



**On the North American side:**

- We really got a surprise from a MWOA group in Kentucky headed up by Jane Roberts. Dan was there helping make them a video of their Appalachian Mission Trip. When the team of 27 people learned of our need here, they generously chipped in enough money to buy 40 Portable CD players plus an extra \$100! All this after they had done all that they possibly could there in Harlan, KY!
- Bro and Sis E.L. Turner brought 80 plus pairs of socks for the kids.
- Right before Christmas, the Alton Church of God of Mayo, FL donated a new Foosball Game to be placed in the ministry center for all the boys and girls. The kids were really surprised and happy.



As a not so "side note", some of the children in the ministry have also learned the joy of giving. Manuel, Patricio, Washington, Estuardo, and others asked for blankets or bedspreads to give as gifts to their mothers—rather than asking for a toy for themselves. Some of the girls, such as Maria and Pricilla, asked for a ten dollar set of cooking pots to donate to the family at home. Danilo asked for a set of bed sheets for himself, rather than something to play with. When Dennys received his portable CD player, he almost cried with joy. Why? Because he planned to give it as a gift to his father who is in jail. When was the last time you saw that kind of thing out of an American kid?

### Ministry to Quichua Indian Communities



To enable us to fill 630 candy and gift bags to deliver to our targeted Quichua Indian communities, we had been saving up small gifts all year.

- The New Life Fellowship Church in Pennsylvania sent 250 adorable "Prayer Bears" along with New Testaments in Spanish (thanks to my niece Amy for bringing them down!)
- Sister Elizabeth from North Carolina donated her entire collection of Ty Stuffed toys.
- Christian children's books were donated by Anna Schutt from Florida.
- Dozens of toy TIDE cars and sport bottles were donated by Bro. and Sis. Turner.
- New girl's gifts were donated through the Talbott, TN Church of God resale shop.
- Teams from all over had contributed something that ended up getting into those bags! Even my great niece and nephew in Virginia donated some nice little toys from their own toy collection.
- Thanks to Cooper City Church of God's "Paradise Boutique" we had picked up many Christmas gift bags that came in real handy.
- Our administrator, Fabian Valle was able to get us pounds and pounds of hard candy donations from the factory here in Quito. A local business donated 100 gift bags of candy. So with the help of the kids in the FACES ministry center and our own Drew Susong, who was visiting from the states, we got them all filled.

In the Quichua communities, we used the candy bag distribution as an evangelism tool to draw in community members who are not Christians. Dan was able to preach (Teresa translated!) and Lydia and Drew did a skit and played games with the kids. The Quichua children presented their own dances and everyone had a wonderful time! This small gift bag was the only Christmas the Indian children received. But were they ever grateful!

- Two Indian Churches were pleased to receive 15 new Spanish Bibles each to be used in the Church services. This was thanks to Bro. Benny Young.



### *FACES Extended Ministry in Alausi*



We have started an extension of our FACES ministry for child workers that is located 5 hours from Quito in the town of Alausi.

- Bro. Turner donated money to buy 30 soccer balls and the shoe shine boys there in Alausi got a real Christmas surprise. After the Bible story, three boys accepted Christ for the first time.
- Each boy will also receive a Spanish New Testament, thanks to Bro. Benny Young.



### *Bi-Lingual Church of God, San Rafael*

The Quichua church that we founded to reach out to the parents of the working kids of our ministry is called Bilingual Church of God, San Rafael. The Church members decided to celebrate with a huge Christmas Dinner and special service. Altogether, there were about 80 people in attendance.

- Thanks to a donation of nice stuffed animals from Bro. and Sister Turner, each child received a gift in addition to a candy bag.
- Bro. Turner also helped with a donation to buy groceries to fill 20 generous Food Baskets for each one of the church families.



**\*\*In September, part of our ministry team, a family of Ecuadorians, left Ecuador as missionaries to plant an extension of the FACES ministry in Bolivia. All during the month of December, we collected money in our Quichua church to be sent to Bolivia as a seed offering. Altogether we were able to send nearly \$400. The people getting a vision for GIVING!\*\***

## Volunteer Party

In addition to all this, we were able to host a nice Christmas party in our home for about 35 fantastic Ecuadorian folks who make up our local ministry team. These are the precious volunteers and workers in the FACES programs who make the entire ministry possible. They gathered to give God thanks for all he has done in our ministries this year and to pray for the vision to be advanced in the year to come.

So you see how everyone working together, doing your own small part that God wanted you to do, turned into a fantastic Christmas for literally hundreds of needy Ecuadorian children and families and an opportunity to proclaim the Good News of the birth of Jesus to all who would listen.

***Now THAT is the meaning of Christmas!***

