

Issue 1

Jan/Feb 2008

Peace Through Service

Alto Cayma Update



A Message from Father Alex

Hello friends,

I hope this Alto Cayma update finds you all in very good health and spirit. Since the first news letter was sent out a lot has been happening in the mission. This is the main reason why this update is reaching late. I am sure that all of you who have come in touch with our mission have an idea of all that goes on every day and time just flies! Here we say that time is our biggest enemy. Since I do not see that this can change in the very near future, I think it will be a better idea of sending regular updates instead of a monthly newsletter. It is not nice for a Catholic priest to promise a news letter every month and then not fulfill the promise!!!

For Christians around the world Holy Week (the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) is an invitation for meditation on one's life and an opportunity to reconcile with God. Though we may vary in our ideas about God depending on our different beliefs, I think that all of us need to put a time aside and meditate about real important issues in Life. The issue of true happiness is definitely the concern of all humanity. In various opportunities in the Gospels we find Jesus giving a teaching and then continues by saying words like "I have told you these things so that your happiness will be complete..." True happiness is a sign of holiness. It is the real joy and peace that flows from the heart as opposed to happiness that humanity tries to buy. Most of the visitors that visit Alto Cayma comment about how is it possible that the poor in our community can be happy. Though they are burdened with so many problems like that of providing the daily bread to the family, they still smile and are considered as happy people. Perhaps they have discovered the secret of happiness by putting their dependence on God and not on things that money can buy. Perhaps they discovered that it is true that when you share the little you have brings you a lot of joy. Perhaps they have learned about the beauty of living in community and always be there when one is needed. Perhaps they have learned that even if the Word of God is very different then what the world preaches, it is the real answer to move ahead, live in peace and achieve true happiness. Perhaps it is an eye opener to many people who have not yet discovered the secret to true happiness. Let us all make the effort and take courage in opening the Word of God and take the challenges that it proposes. It can take a lot or it can happen the very next moment... but all it takes is the decision to take God seriously. When people look at all that has been "achieved" in Alto Cayma one cannot but confirm that God's Word does work. It works from all the angles that one looks at it. One can see the hand of God in the daily bread that is provided, the care of the sick, the children, single mothers, the elderly and the extremely poor, opportunities for a better quality of life on one hand and the Spirit that moves the hearts of so many generous people to make it all happen through different ways of being part of it all. When one looks at all that happens in Alto Cayma one cannot not believe that it is possible to build God's kingdom on earth and that true happiness and long lasting peace is possible.

Let each one of us put some time aside and meditate what is God's will for him. Let each one of us discover what is our role in building God's Kingdom on earth. As a result God's promise is fulfilled and the peace of heart and the secret to true happiness is discovered.

News from the Mission



"The Medical Clinic staff group photo shortly before Dr. Alberto's departure"



Computer class during the C.F.C.A. summer school

- ◆ The eye clinic opened in the beginning of January. Every Wednesday and Friday afternoon ophthalmologists examine patients. Everyone is very excited the specialty is being utilized with the new equipment.
- ◆ Dr. Alberto has temporarily moved to La Plata, Argentina to study ophthalmology for four years after which he will return to the clinic. The staff, patients and the rest of the mission miss him tremendously.
- ◆ Dr. Bob Gehringer, a pediatrician from Michigan, will be supporting the clinic in the afternoons for the next several months. He has served the clinic in past as well.
- ◆ Dr. Margaret Byers, an Ob/Gyn doctor who spent a year working with the clinic in 2001, returned to Arequipa for several weeks in January and returned on February 20th to continue seeing patients during the next 6 months
- ◆ For the first time, CFCA, the children sponsorship program held a summer school (summer vacation runs from end of December until March in Peru). Children took Math, Language, English, Computers, Dance and Arts & Crafts classes.
- ◆ CFCA is in the process of choosing thirty new children to be sponsored by the program.
- ◆ A container shipment arrived January 31st from North Carolina and everyone is excited to distribute the donated items.
- ◆ Thanks to Fr. Patrick Zammit and the parishioners of St. Vincent in Dartford, Kent U.K., a shipment of toys arrived in time for Christmas and was distributed.
- ◆ Thanks to Bishop Richard Monnie from the Mormon Church in Portland Oregon, the shipping container continues to be distributed.
- ◆ In conjunction with the Rotary Club of Arequipa-Cayma, Serviendo Logrando La Paz and the Mission a four wheel drive vehicle and five communication radios were lent to the Police under an agreement renewable every year. This is to contribute to the safety of the Alto Cayma people.
- ◆ Thanks to Cape Fear Garden Club of Wilmington, North Carolina and Floralties-Arequipa, Peru, Garden Club progress continues to be made preparing the garden in front of the Sector 13 Church.

Recent Visitors to the Clinic

Chris Connelly and Frank Printz came for one week from January 12-19 from Charlotte, NC. Despite landing in Tacna, arranging a ride to Arequipa and enduring several days of nonstop rain, everyone was very glad they made the visit. It was Chris' fourth visit to the mission and Frank's first time. Frank, a Thai massage therapist was able to treat and introduce patients to the wonderful benefits of Thai massage. He also taught basic massage, breathing and stretching techniques to the staff of the clinic in the afternoons.

The following week Dr. Michelle Stowe Ong's group from North Carolina arrived. Her group included Dr. Scott L. Smith, a orthopedist, Dr. Royce Syracuse, ophthalmologist, Wendy Renedo a medical surgical registered nurse, Heather Bell, a certified ophthalmology technician and Maggie Moore, a registered nurse. Raul and Norma Echevaria served as translators. They are originally from Lima, Peru but have lived in the States for almost 30 years now. Again, despite flight cancellations (which kept them an extra day in Arequipa) and weather delays the group managed to keep an up beat perspective and was thrilled to see patients in the clinic.

Dr. Wayne Centrone had a short visit the last week of January to begin planning new projects. An upcoming event is a 2-day medical conference and training symposium in Alto Cayma to be held on April 15-16.

Long term volunteers, Susan Tang and Dennis left January 31st for a month's adventure exploring Chile and Argentina and will return mid- March.

Dwight Hartsell returned for his fifth visit. Spending three weeks teaching wood turning classes, making beautiful pen & pencil sets amongst other items.

Kelly Morris, returned for another visit bringing for the first time his brother, sister-in-law and a friend. They are very beautiful people and we enjoyed making their acquaintance.

A group of 10 Rotarians from Charlotte, North Carolina came for a five-day visit. They were able to see the mission as well as brainstorm future projects for the community.

Ralph Lopez, Linda Horton, Bob and Bonnie Ackerman from Portland, Oregon returned once again to visit the mission and will continue doing so in the future bringing so much joy and happiness every time they are around.

End of February, ER doctor Beverley Kraszewski from New York Hospital of Queens and her daughter, Jessica Silverman came for one week. Beverley was able to support the clinic and start Ultra Sound training. They enjoyed learning about the clinic and everyone was pleased to meet them.

Karen Falkenstein, a long term volunteer remains in the house and is quickly getting familiar with all that goes on in the mission.

Pauline Bartolo and Chrissy Borg Cunen from Malta, have been here since July. Likewise they are continuing to help in many different parts of the mission. They are definitely a big asset to the C.F.C.A. sponsorship program. Karen Azzopardi, who had arrived with them in July, left on January 23 to return to Malta. We will miss her presence here.



Frank Printz teaching a massage, stretching and breathing class to the medical clinic. All participants enjoyed the experience.

Christmas at the Mission by Karen Falkenstein



The Christmas Pageant presented by the Senior Group."

Christmas is one of my favorite holidays. Memories of baking cookies with my mom, Christmas carols and sharing time with family and friends make it a special time of the year for me. Having only been in at the mission a little over a month, I was not too sure what to expect. However, I should have realized how special it would be. During Advent, parishioners donated food to be distributed to those in need. Thirty baskets of food items were made and delivered soon after the New Year with the large amount of donated items. I could not believe the generosity of people who have so little and are so willing to give to the "poor people" of the area.

Father Alex gave a large Christmas party, which was attended by over 65 members of the staff from the different projects that the mission runs.

Finally on Christmas Eve, the evening Mass was filled with people standing along the perimeters of the church. Father Alex's homily was a beautiful reminder of the true gifts of Christmas. Children carried signs representing the universal gifts of Respect, Honesty Love, Peace, and Forgiveness and placed them on the Christmas tree. Father Alex ended the Mass by passing out candles and singing songs together. The church looked and sounded absolutely beautiful. Afterwards all shared hot chocolate outside.



"...ended the mass by passing out candles and singing songs together. The church looked and sounded absolutely beautiful."

Focus of the Month

Each month we will highlight a part of the mission, its history and its future, as well as some of the organizations that work closely with the mission. This month we are focusing on The Policlínico Maria de las Misiones, CPR (Center for Personal Restoration and HBI (Health Bridges International).

Policlinico Maria de las Misiones by Lilia Alvarez

The Policlinico Maria Madre de la Misiones has seen a tremendous amount of growth since its inception in 2000. Since the early days of a small community health center treating predominately acute medical concerns to a multidisciplinary healthcare center that addresses the complex needs of the Alto Cayma area, the program has held strongly to a mission of serving the most marginalized populations.

Many of the patients seen in the Policlinico Maria Madre de la Misiones are directly from the community that immediately surrounds the mission. They are the frequent utilizers of the extensive compliment of social and healthcare services that the clinic supports, and the quality of their lives have been remarkably changed by the care they have received. However, people from all over the city come and are seen in the clinic.

Gradually in the past six years it has developed thanks to the effort of many supporters, donors and the hard work of the professionals that work in the clinic daily. Simultaneously thanks should be given to the work of Father Alex for organizing and making the clinic grow to the benefit of so many people in need.

Everyday the clinic is providing better assistance and services to the patients with the opening of new specialties that cover the needs of a growing population and constant improvements to the building. The attention the patient receives is equal in all aspects regardless of social or economic status. Furthermore nobody leaves the clinic without having been seen, evaluated and granted access to the proper services

The clinic is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the mornings, and from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the afternoons. The program has fulltime medical, dental, psychological, laboratory, nursing and pharmacy staff and serves over 100 patients per day for a broad base of healthcare needs. In the past 6 years the number of patients seen has grown incrementamently, with 22,004 patients seen in 2007.

At times offering the specialties of ENT, Endocrinologist, Pediatrics, and Ophthalmologist with plans to increase the availability of more specialists in the future.



"The new eye clinic seeing one its first patients. Everyone is excited for the new service the clinic is able to provide."



Mission Partner-Health Bridges International by Dr. Wayne Centrone

2007 was a fantastic year of growth and development for Health Bridges International (HBI). The focus and mission of HBI continues to be the development of partnerships and collaborations around health care and social needs. To this end, HBI participated in a variety of activities - some of our projects are highlighted below.

Our medical and dental campaigns involved 3 outreach trips in 2007 - 2 projects directly facilitated by HBI and 1 project in collaboration with Medical Ministry International (MMI) (see: <http://www.mmint.org/>). During the MMI project, Dr. Wayne Centrone (HBI Board President) participated as the campaign medical director and helped to build bridges between U.S. and Canadian campaign participants and local clinics working in the Pueblos Jovenes of Southern Lima. Both of the HBI medical/dental campaigns focused on helping our Peruvian partner organizations better facilitate outreach. We worked with Union Biblica del Peru in their abandoned boys outreach program (a project we have supported for over 10 years) and with Father Alex Busuttill in his Alto Cayma Mission.

Perhaps what was most significant for HBI in 2007 regarding our outreach programs was in November of 2007. In November, we led a team of 18 medical and dental professionals (five were from the Alto Cayma Clinic and three long-term volunteers from the mission) to work in the province of Ancash. The team of medical, dental, nursing and psychology professionals was almost entirely **PERUVIAN** (see the HBI Blog for a write-up from the campaign: <http://hbint.blogspot.com/2007/11/hbi-team-to-ancash-update.html>). It has been a goal of HBI from our inception to develop health care outreach programs and campaigns that are directed and staffed with local providers. In 2007 we made this goal a reality.

Another project that was initiated by HBI in 2007 was the placement of water filtration units into communities of need. The Water Filtration Projects, a partnership with Living Waters for the World (a synod of the Presbyterian Church USA; see: www.livingwatersfortheworld.org), placed the first unit in the Parish of Father Alex in June. The filter is designed to provide clean, potable water for the community and to act as a microeconomic enterprise for the church. 2008 will see additional water filtration projects in Nicaragua and Peru - all under the collaborative relationships of HBI and our in-country partners.



Dr. Choquehuanca seeing patients during November's medical campaign in Ancash.

Mission Partner-HBI (Cont'd)

In accordance with our organizational mission to "facilitate sustainable improvements in people's health through collaboration with established resources," HBI started a scholarship fund for students studying for health professions programs in under developed countries. Our first scholarship recipient is a young dental student in Lima. She has been involved with HBI projects for the past 4 years and will continue to be an integral part of the future of HBI in Peru.

Following the massive earthquake in Ica and Pisco, HBI helped to mobilize relief and financial support for in-country organizations working in the most devastated areas. HBI has plans for continued partnership with organizations providing housing, food and community development in Ica and Pisco - and will lead a schools outreach program to some of the smaller communities affected by the disaster in June of 2008 (for more information, please visit our website at: http://www.hbint.org/images/Peru_2008.pdf).

A big part of the work that HBI is committed toward is the development of collaborative partnerships. To this end, HBI helped to place 4 medical students and 2 physicians in clinics in Peru in 2007. We also helped to structure research and development projects with U.S. institutions. A big part of our work is around consulting and advising - in 2007, we helped over 10 groups, institutions and organizations regarding providing health care in Peru and other countries. Our goals for 2008 include a significant increase in information and resources that will be available through our website and our professional lectures.

In 2008 HBI plans to continue to develop programs and projects that connect resources and build alliances. In April 2008, we will be convening the "First Annual Alto Cayma Medical Conference and Training Symposium" in the Policlínico María Madre de la Misiones - with the goal of supporting and training the next generation of Peruvian healthcare professionals. In addition, HBI will be involved in the next phase of planning and growth for healthcare outreach programs being developed by Union Bíblica del Perú, the Mission of Alto Cayma and the Anglican Church of Peru.

Finally, HBI will continue to work in innovative ways to create connections and build collaboration for in-country partners and organizations. For on-going information about HBI and our evolving partnerships - please visit the HBI website at: <http://www.hbint.org/>

"A big part of the work that HBI is committed toward is the development of collaborative partnerships"

"In 2008 HBI plans to continue to develop programs and projects that connect resources and build alliances."

Mission Partner- Center for Personal Restoration by David Krier

2007 was a terrific year for CPR. We had only one campaign - to Alto Cayma, Peru - and grew tremendously in terms of our capabilities to provide care for the people of two continents.

Our campaign to Alto Cayma in October included 24 unique individuals with highly varied backgrounds. Geographically, we had representation from all parts of the US, including the west coast - Washington, Oregon, and California - as well as the Midwest (Ohio), the south (Texas, North Carolina), and the northeast (Massachusetts, Connecticut). With 9 Physicians, a Clinical Psychologist, a Physician's Assistant, a Wilderness EMT, 5 RNs, and 7 that were designated as "non-medical", we had as much diversity in skills as we did in geography.

Over the course of the week we spent in Alto Cayma we were able to provide care to just over 1,000 patients, including those we saw in their homes. As in previous years, our home visits were some of the most meaningful parts of the trip for our volunteers. Our focus was primarily on the age extremes - children and the elderly. We were able to donate over US\$ 3,500 to Padre Alex's pharmacy to cover the cost of the medications we prescribed. If that figure is any measure of the impact we had on the community's health, I hope we can spend more each year.

By spending time in intimate contact with the people of Alto Cayma we were able to grow in ways none of us could have predicted. I think I can speak for the entire campaign when I say that this was a very beneficial growth opportunity for each one of us. I, for one, gather new insights, understanding, and appreciation for the people (residents, hosts and volunteers) on each trip. Quotes from some of our volunteers such as, "Our trip was by far the most emotional, educational, and enlightening experience of our lives," and, "...I came home grateful that I have a skill that can be of use to others and with renewed enthusiasm for my profession." reveal glimpses of personal enrichment.

New Projects: As a result of the 2007 Campaign, we at CPR have several new projects. First, responding to Padre Alex's requests, we are collecting funds to build a Women's Multipurpose Educational Center in the complex by the workshops, kitchens, and day-care areas. Of the anticipated US\$ 20,000 that is needed to make this project a reality, we have already collected a bit over US\$ 15,000. That means we need less than US\$ 5,000 to bring us to the goal.

"Over the course of the week we spent in Alto Cayma we were able to provide care to just over 1,000 patients, including those we saw in their homes."

Mission Partner- Center for Personal Restoration (Cont'd)

Another project is funding a new school lunch program for one of the schools where we worked near the clinic. This will be an ongoing need that will provide the necessary nutrition for these children to learn at top capacity so their generation can rise above the poverty that holds their parents captive. All donations are welcome for that project as well.

We sent a very small delegation to the Northern Peru city of Cajamarca at the end of the campaign in October. As a result, we now have one firm and one potential project waiting for us there.

In 2008 our first campaign will occur April 28 through May 13. We will be going to Cajamarca to work in the Centro Medico "Padre Luis Tezza" In the fall, from the October 13 through 28, we will once again be working in Alto Cayma.

Don't miss the website, www.cprestation.org, for more details of how you can be involved.

David Krier, MD, MSPH -- President, CPR

Keep Us in your Thoughts and Prayers

As the devaluation of the U.S. dollar continues, the cost of living has increased by over 30%. This has substantially increased the cost of the mission activities, especially the food program. Help is needed in that area. An easy example is that while we used to buy a dozen rolls for 1 sol, now we only get 6 rolls for the same price.

A project we are undertaking at the moment is the purchase of new trucks and cars to replace our aging vehicles.

To have the wisdom to understand God's will in all that we do and say guiding us to make the right decisions.

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Specials thanks to
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Wayne Centrone
and Karen
Falkenstein

Peace Through Service

A special thanks to Walter Bachman for his very substantial donation to build the pastoral center. Special thanks as well go to the parishioners of St.Vincent's in Dartford, UK and other friends who helped us getting it up and running.



C.F.C.A. parents collecting their monthly food baskets



Preparing the food baskets



Jessica passing out shirts to C.F.C.A. families



Catechist meeting



Exhibition of crafts



Arts and Craft Class during summer school



English Class during summer school



C.F.C.A. monthly birthday party



Waiting in line in the C.F.C.A. office

Some of the many uses of the Pastoral Center

Peace Through Service



The Mission Staff and Volunteers after the Christmas party



The Police Vehicle



The Blessing and Presentation of the Police Vehicle and Eye Clinic



The Police Vehicle Donors



The Blessing and Presentation of the Eye Clinic