

CHRIST IS THE ANSWER NEWSLETTER

Nicaragua, what a place!

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,



I pray you have a moment to spare as I share my heart. Paul Schafer and myself just returned from being with our teams in Central America. Over seventy team members came together.

Four tent teams Nicaragua, Mexico I, Honduras, El Salvador came together with their elders and deacons to work out some problems and to take steps to reinforce the works and to function more effectively. We also had a great time of fellowship and just loving one another in the Lord.

After an hour into our trip from Managua, the capital, we were met by Guido and another brother in the team, who came to get us in an old Ford pickup. Guido, who is the director of the work, was sent out by our Italian team after ten years of being a faithful brother here in Italy. Guido is married to a dear Mexican sister named Betty. He is suffering from Parkinson's disease but is believing the Lord to go forward.

We first stopped at the town of Masatepe to see pastor Victor who has worked closely with the team over the years. He made coffee that would make 'Starbucks' envious. Brother Victor grows his own coffee beans: dries, roasts and brews his own. Here in the middle of the jungle we were enjoying a true cup of brew! We then received a gift of mangos, avocados, plantain and tangerines to snack on.

As we passed pineapple farms and roadside merchants in shanty huts. I noticed that even in extreme locations in the middle of nowhere the women, somehow, find low rider jeans and belly exposing tank tops. All that was missing was a tattoos or two, and they would have looked like Modern women. Sinful fashion finds it's way everywhere, doesn't it? You realize even in such places the need for the gospel is great.



Finally reaching our destination, we arrived at camp which resides in the shadows of the great smoking volcano Altagracia Ometepe.

As I greeted to the team, I was impressed by their youth and zeal for the Lord.



The camp is small but it is amazing how orderly everything was.

The kitchen and eating area is also inside a tent.

The evening meeting was alive with excitement while the band led us in worship. They were so good and anointed! Some team members put on a drama and a special Worship Dance that was really edifying. It made me want to be young again as they moved so easily and quickly to the sound of the band's worship music.

It was beautiful and presented the gospel so well.



The next day, all the teams went to the island of the volcano for an open-air meeting and evangelization. They did just as well in the open-air plaza as they did in the big top. The people were very open to hear the gospel. There was a baptism service where five people were baptized in the lake. It was an emotional time, as once again, for me to see these young people sold out for the Lord. In that moment, I felt, "This is what life is really all about."

The team tried to make me feel at home by preparing 'pasta'. We came together in the eating tent and what I saw was an Italian's nightmare. They had ruined the pasta. It was the worst pasta I had ever seen that looked more like a twenty-pound clump of glue! The only thing that helped it go down was the love I knew they poured into it. As one sister watched me eat with a big smile on her face asked, "Do you want us to prepare pasta again?" As nicely as I could muster up I replied, "Oh, no...please... just stick to beans and rice as I want to eat what all of you normally eat, (with some under nourished chicken occasionally).



There was a big wedding and the tent was packed out as two team members got married. It was the first time for me to preach in a wedding outside of Italy.

The team decorated that old wore out tent, making it look beautiful. It was amazing what flowers and sheets can do for the appearance!



I have a real burden for the works there. They are so poor and needy as teams go.

However, even in the extreme heat and dust that is always present, I saw only joy and love in everyone's face.

They would go out during the day, walking up dirt roads with the horses and carts, preaching the gospel. It looked like a scene from the ancient past.

The single people live in barrack tents and the married couples live in tents and campers. Everyone does their laundry by hand, even the single brothers! Everything is very old and worn out.

It really breaks my heart to see some of the conditions they live in.

But, I did not hear one word of complaint or sadness from the team. They truly acted thankful to be able to preach the gospel and serve the Lord together.



We left the teams from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico with a greater vision for Central America.

There were tears as we pulled away and I knew I would miss each and everyone them.



I prayed that I could help them with the heavy cross they bare for the Lord in a greater way in that part of the world. When I left from Italy for Nicaragua, I was feeling the pressures and burdens here. My heart and mind was preoccupied with thoughts of our needs and for situations that had to be dealt with somehow. But after being in Nicaragua with the team there, I saw much greater needs and a burden for those who are sacrificing much more than myself to preach the gospel.

I guess my faith has to be bigger. Pray for me. Pray for us.

Love you all, **Brother Clark**