



NEWS FROM SPAIN  
1 NOVEMBER 2011

The pilgrim route is called the Way of St. James. Covering some 800 kilometers from Roncesvalles to Santiago de Compostela, it can be walked in about a month. When priests in the northwest corner of Hispania announced they had discovered the corpse of James the apostle, son of Zebedee, in the early 800's, the news provoked a wave of religious sentiment all over Europe. Santiago de Compostela became the third major destination for Christian pilgrims, after Jerusalem and Rome. It proved to be a major influence to draw Europeans together and laid the foundation for what later became the European Union.

Today some 125,000 pilgrims make the trek every year. Most are seeking some sort of spiritual transformation through the experience. Following a route marked by scallop shells, they get their pilgrim passport stamped in shelters along the way. When they arrive at Santiago, religious tradition promises full forgiveness of sins if they present their pilgrim accreditation, recite a certain prayer, bang their forehead three times against a statue in the "Doorway of glory", and then hug the image of St. James.

How different the message of salvation through Jesus Christ! British missionaries reached Galicia in the early 1800's and announced the amazing news of pardon and eternal life through simple faith in Christ. Through faith, not through hiking miles or hugging statues. It was not about banging one's head, but allowing God to change one's heart! People put their trust in Christ, new churches began, and now Galicia has some of the most thriving evangelical work in all Spain. This is where I recently spent two weekends opening God's word to hungry hearts.

At a missions conference in Marín (Pontevedra province), I shared the platform with Guillermo and Rosa Mary, a Spanish couple our MPI association (Spanish churches committed to missions in countries more needy than Spain) helps support. We spoke six times on Bible passages from the gospels where Jesus deals with outsiders ("the other sheep"), people from cultures outside the confines of Israel. The goal was to help people see how the gospel message is changing lives in North Africa as well as in Spain. People like Fátima, Mustafá, Mariam, Youssef: real people who have sought and found Jesus in the midst of untold difficulties, who persevere in worshipping Him and living out a witness to new life.

MPI churches are laying the groundwork for a summer project to help with literature distribution in neighboring limited-access countries. *Please pray with us for God's direction and wisdom as we coordinate with experienced local workers.*

Two weekends later I was in El Ferrol (La Coruña province) speaking four times from the book of Joshua on "The Christian Inheritance". Together we dug into God's word to learn about the Christian's rest, warfare, and inheritance from the experience of Joshua. Also included was a three hour workshop on discipleship. The leaders of this hundred year old evangelical congregation are eager to put "personalized spiritual care" into practice on a church-wide basis. Our experience working with believers in both the Vaguada and Duque de Sesto churches has given valuable insights. *Please pray for the leaders of the Ferrol congregation as they practice discipleship among their flock.*

The Coro Gospel de Madrid had the first outreach concert of





the season this past Saturday in Villalba, a town one hour north of Madrid. The concert was organized by a small local church to commemorate the Protestant Reformation, and the auditorium was filled with unchurched friends and family of church members. The Lord showed up, and the Coro gave a powerful witness to freedom in Christ through the gospel. The local pastor was thrilled with the clarity of the musical message. *Please pray for Pastor Daniel as he follows up interested friends who attended.*

Several aspects of the Coro Gospel ministry are functioning remarkably well this year: section leaders have frequent meetings with singers to work on notes, the band meets regularly to rehearse, members of the steering committee help Allyson with administrative tasks, Antonio is growing in his role as assistant director with Nancy. Constant prayer characterizes this ministry, and we sense that God is bearing it up on wings of eagles. A major Spanish newspaper recently published a videoclip on the Coro Gospel de Madrid in their online edition. To see it, click [here](#).



Music outreach is not limited to the gospel style! This Friday we are sponsoring a guitar recital in our home for all the neighbors in our apartment building. Pablo Ortiz, an accomplished Christian classical guitarist from Costa Rica, will offer a concert, and Nancy will put on a tapas-style supper. Five years ago at a similar event, about 15 of our neighbors attended and engaged in good conversation on spiritual issues. We are asking the Lord to guide the interaction this time as well. *Please pray with us this Friday, November 4, at 9 PM (3 PM EST)!*

One of our permanent commitments is to be there whenever a neighbor faces some kind of crisis. Our neighbor Manuel recently passed away. We visited his widow, Charo, with flowers and condolences. The next week we stopped by to check in on how she was doing. For the third visit, we asked if she would like to hear a promise of comfort from God's Word. She readily assented, and we were able to explain what it means to know the "God of all comfort" in a personal way through Jesus. Then I prayed for her. We continue to help her in practical ways as she rents out her flat and moves across town to be near her son. *Please pray with us for Charo, that she understand how to put her trust in Christ for salvation and find comfort in Him.*

At a recent literature outreach in the Plaza de Felipe II, a young woman turned pale when she received the evangelistic leaflet: "God is pursuing me" was her remark. She asked for the address of the Duque de Sesto church, but has yet to show up at a meeting. The anecdote confirms our passion to meet up with people whom the Spirit of God has begun to draw in, to introduce them to the message of full forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Christ. Faith in His finished work on the cross. Faith alone: no head-bumping, statue-hugging, or other human attempts to secure a plenary indulgence.

That is the glorious message, and we are deeply grateful for each of you who stand with us to make it possible for us to teach, preach, share and sing it out!

Serving Jesus –through you– in Spain,

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