



May the Lord answer your prayers and send you help from the Throne of Grace. May He hear our Great High Priest on your behalf to bless you and your loved ones!

April 1, 2015

Dear Ministry Partner,

I'm writing to you today with real joy! Joy for this great year of ministry we're in . . . and joy that you're in such a fruitful partnership with us!

But I'm also writing to you today with a sense of *anticipation*—I'm looking ahead, my radar is on "red alert"—because even as we witness huge harvests around the world, we are also seeing huge events of prophetic significance . . . signaling the culmination of the ages!

I believe we're in the "final six miles."

Let me explain. . . .

For a few years in my youth, I ran marathons. To finish a marathon—a 26-mile race—you need to learn some crucial lessons. One key truth is this: A marathon has two "halves." One half measures 20 miles; the second half measures six miles.

Bad math? Yes. But here's what it means: It's not until the 20th mile that you "hit the wall." When you have spent your energy for 20 miles, all the parts of your body take a vote, and they decide unanimously that they are "DONE!" (In that moment, you imagine that if anyone mocks you for not finishing the race, you'll just invite them to run 20 miles!)

So the experts advise marathon runners to prepare mentally as well as physically for this 20-mile threshold. As Mile 20 approaches, you remind yourself that you're really just making the "down payment" that gives you the privilege of running the *final six miles*. Those six miles become the entire focus—they become everything—they're why you're running—they're what you prepared for.

I can tell you firsthand, when you step into those final six miles, you feel you're on sacred ground. This is the territory that relatively few have ever trod. Yes, tens of thousands of people have run marathons down through history, but they're still only a tiny fraction of humanity. Running those final six miles, you are *elite*! The glory is for the finishers!

Friend, this is where the Church of Jesus Christ finds itself today. These are the final days. The apostle Paul spoke of “running the race”; we’re in the final six miles.

It is painfully clear because of the way world events are churning. Israel is running out of friends. Isaiah 63:5 NIV is unfolding prophetically before our eyes:

I looked, but there was no one to help,
I was appalled that no one gave support;
so my own arm achieved salvation for me,
and my own wrath sustained me.

It felt the same way during the American Civil War. Composer Julia Ward Howe, desperate for hope in the midst of the carnage, looked ahead and trusted God to move. In that moment of anguish and faith, she penned the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, envisioning Jesus the Messiah trampling out the vintage of the grapes of wrath.

Today, we again live in dark times. We’ve seen the moorings of our ideals eroding away. It can feel as if little can be done to prevent the deterioration.

But God sees things differently. He sees the day approaching where Messiah will “loose the fateful lighting of His sword.”

And in the meantime—we run. *The final six miles.*

You and I must not be overwhelmed by world events, dragged down by the despair of our age. *We are in the final six miles—and then the finish line!*

And when people around us are overwhelmed, dragged down, we have the joy of pointing to the Savior.

“In times like these,” a worried shopkeeper asked me in Toledo, Spain, “what can we do?” I quoted Proverbs 18:10: “The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run into it and they are saved.”

“The problem,” I explained, is that “there is none *righteous*, not even one.”

It was a simple conversation about a simple concept: pointing up, out of the despair, to the Light.

Moments later, that shopkeeper prayed to receive Jesus as Savior.

In times like these, people need a Savior, an anchor that will grip the Solid Rock. *We must make Him known.* The more turmoil and trouble, the more hunger and need for the Lord is evident in the hearts of people around the world. You and I have an awesome responsibility, an awesome opportunity: *We can meet that need!*

Our role is not simply to wait for the day of the Lord's return to save us from all this chaos and tragedy. Our calling is to get busy—to be motivated by the acceleration of end-time events to *run the rest of the race with boldness, with determination, with faithfulness, with joy!*

This is what Jesus was talking about in Acts 1 when He issued his great charge to the Church. His followers wanted to know if He was going to set up His kingdom right then and there. But Jesus knew the race wasn't over yet. "It is not for you to know the times and periods," He answered (Acts 1:7). In the meantime, He added—until His kingdom would be established once and for all—He had work for us to do. A race for us to run:

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you," He declared; "and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

We have a Helper—we have a source of energy and inspiration—the Holy Spirit. But the work of witnessing is ours to do. The race is ours to run. It's not "waiting and watching" time. It's "running and working" time. "Men of Galilee," the angels demanded, "why are you standing looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into Heaven."

In other words, *He's coming back! Get busy!* There is a compelling force behind the realization that the day of Jesus' return is approaching! Today, more than at any moment in our lifetime, there is a mood on earth that the time is ripe . . . major world events tell the tale . . . and we must realize: This is our moment to act; to focus our energies on the mission we were given; to reach Jerusalem, Judea, and the ends of the earth!

But the great question before us today—the great question before any marathoner—is *HOW TO FINISH?*

To answer this question, let me introduce you to an acquaintance of mine. His name is Jeff. He, like me, wanted to be a marathoner.

He plunged into his first marathon with high hopes. But of course, at about Mile 20, he hit the wall. It felt like the end. It felt hopeless. It felt impossible.

But then—out of nowhere—there appeared a friend of his. He didn't just wave from the sidelines—he jumped into the race!

"He was suited up!" Jeff remembers today. "But he was only in it to run alongside of me for the last six miles!"

To hear Jeff tell the story today, you have to smile at how delighted and amazed he still is today.

"He came fully prepared!" Jeff says. "I was spent, but he was beaming! And he began singing hymns to me. I felt I began to soar! I couldn't hold back the tears! He kept me energized like a huge booster rocket until the end!"

That's the way to finish a marathon. Not on your own. But rather, *in good company*.

Today, I'm inviting you to the marathon. Not the whole marathon. Just the last six miles. Our workers are in the race. They're running. But the end is nearing. They need encouragement.

Through the prophetic voice of Isaiah, Jesus says, "I looked, but there was no one to help, *I was appalled that no one gave support.*" When we jump into the race as helpers, when we come alongside to give support, we gladden the heart of God.

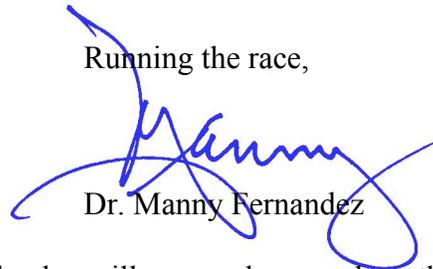
And multitudes will rejoice in eternity because we reached them in these final six miles.

Crossing the finish line, Jeff and his friend both savored the moment of victory. You and I will both savor the moment of victory as we stand with those dedicated marathoners in the field. Please help them.

As you read these words, we have a huge marathon under way in **India**. We have a huge marathon under way in **Cuba**. We have a huge marathon under way in **China**. And in **Spain**. And in **Liberia**.

Don't let them hit the wall without help. Jump in. Be an encourager! Run these last six miles with them! This is what the Church was meant to be and do! Give generously. Give joyfully. The finish line will be glorious!

Running the race,



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. The glory goes to the finisher! The day will come when you hear the winner's announcement: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Thank you in advance for giving as generously as possible today. God bless you!

Mine eyes have seen the glory of
the coming of the Lord;

He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall

deal";

Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,
He is Wisdom to the mighty, He is Succour to the brave,
So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of wrong His
slave,
Our God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Our God is marching on!

