



*Warm and happy greetings to you at the beginning of the summer!
May the season be like a new lease on life and health for you and your loved ones!*

June 1, 2020

Dear Ministry Partner,

Maybe it seems strange to see the words “pandemic” and “rejoicing” in the same sentence. . . .

But today, I am indeed rejoicing in the wonders brought about by the health crisis!

In our ministry today, we are using technology we did not know how to use, or whose power we did not understand. Now it is our **new normal!** And it is proving to be a powerful “strength multiplier”!

We are reaching and teaching four or five times more students than ever before.

- Yesterday I preached Sunday services in a large auditorium in San Sebastian, Spain, on the border with France . . . from my home here in the U.S.! They saw me standing at the coast on the island of Patmos, where the apostle John received the book of Revelation!
- At the same time my message was going forth in that morning service in San Sebastian, I was actually attending Sunday services at my home church! Wonders never cease!
- Meanwhile, as I’ve been teaching students in various corners of Spain over the past two weeks, I’ve spent my afternoons learning new lessons—like **how much lard you can get from a pig.**

It’s true. Cuba is in crisis, and we are feeding 750 families just to keep them alive. There is no cooking oil available—so we have sought out the next best thing: lard.

A group of farmers can sell us pigs, harvesting the lard and the meat for our families: 800 pounds of meat—and 800 pounds of lard! By adding rice and beans, or yucca or sweet potatoes, we can stretch this much food to last nearly three weeks.

This is urgently necessary work. In normal times, rice costs four Cuban pesos—20 cents a pound. Three weeks ago, it was up to 20 pesos—that’s a dollar a pound. Today, three weeks later, it’s \$2 a pound. A well paid sound engineer or sugar cane expert makes just ***\$15 in an entire month.***

This is James 1:27 in action: “Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”

This ministry to people in distress was not unique to James’s ministry. It was so common in *Jesus’* ministry that when He told Judas, “What you are about to do, do quickly” (John 13:27), the disciples thought He might be telling Judas to go give something to the poor.

As the days of human history grow shorter, I believe God is showing us that we must speed up the pace of ministry—and multiply it using the resources He has given. When we engage in these divine opportunities, it’s exhilarating! Half the day, we’re discussing high-minded theology and ministry concepts—and then spend the other half of the day strategizing how we can help keep body and soul together for very poor families who have nothing.

Satan may love the coronavirus, but *God is winning!*

This is how the score sheet reads so far:

- In **SPAIN** we just finished the school year. Students are ending the year in uncertainty as the economy seems at a total standstill. Even seasonal jobs have disappeared. It is doubtful whether there will be a tourist season this year. This is huge for Spain, a country of 47 million which normally hosts *55 million tourists*. Trillions of euros will go missing. Yet we’re adding online teaching to reach new regions. People are hungry for God!
- **CUBA** is closed at present, but there is a lot of ministry activity. Because of their severe needs, there’s a lot of relief work going on—and our teams are preaching the Gospel to multitudes. The churches we’ve planted are hard at work distributing food to the needy. Needy Christians are helped, but the primary focus is to unbelievers in the name of the Gospel.
- In **MOROCCO** our team was just two national leaders 25 years ago when we began; today it has grown to a great force of 20 strategic leaders. And they have been supporting themselves financially—until now. This crisis has forced them to cry out for help. So, we’re giving relief to workers who are getting absolutely no help from government programs.
- **BRAZIL** is having a hard time with the pandemic. The people are aware that it’s lethal. There are many people with preexisting conditions at great risk, and not only in a certain age bracket. In many regions hospital capacity is totally insufficient, with not a single bed available. Many people are simply being sent home to die—which spreads the infection further. Pray for Brazil!
- **INDIA** continues to thrive with evangelism. As food is delivered, the Gospel is being preached at the point of distribution. We’ve had a couple of waves of outreach in the north, and now another wave is underway in the south. The need is great, but God is greater—getting people’s attention, and opening their hearts! The ministry in India is making amazing progress!

Amazingly, a Hindu priest has come to faith through the ministry of the distribution teams. In this culture, as a former Hindu monk once told me, “We know that Christianity is right . . . but the family pressure is big.” When someone comes to Christ, there is a huge need to save face. But this enormity of people’s needs—and their gratitude for the help they’re receiving from the Christians—is overwhelming their culture reluctance!

India’s coastal states rely on beach tourism, and some of these areas are opening. The summer season may not be totally wiped out. But so many areas remain closed, many of our conventional ministry opportunities have been canceled. It might seem like a disaster, but . . .

. . . God never leaves Himself without a witness!

Paul declares it in Acts 14: “**. . . And yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.**”

Our ministry teams are sharing the witness of God’s love by providing “**food and gladness**”!

Meanwhile here at home, YOU are His witness. You are empowering our teams to go and to share . . . a ministry of food and gladness. They are joyful in this outreach, thanks to you, as they reach out to their people on a magnanimous mission as ambassadors of the goodness of God in Jesus’ name!

This is not an expression of “superiority.” The blessings we share, the physical aid and the message of new life in Christ, do not proceed from us personally. God is our source. You and I can only share—and our teams overseas can only share—with grateful hearts, remembering that He is the source of “every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17).

We are merely like the lepers of 2 Kings 7: We found the booty, and we get to enjoy it! Yet this is a day of good news, and we can’t keep it to ourselves!

I think of Peter and John, after they healed the paralytic, in Acts 3:12,13: “Why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?” they ask the people. “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus. . . .”

These are the same disciples who once argued about “who was the greatest”! By this point, they had a new, clearly informed mentality. They knew God had clearly glorified His Servant in their midst.

*Our work—the work of our teams, which you are enabling through your prayers and your giving—is not a work of self-glorification. . . . It is the work of **glorifying Jesus!***

We must keep glorifying Jesus in whichever situation we find ourselves. We must not rest. We must not be fooled into paralysis. COVID has paralyzed enough activity already.

COVID cannot paralyze anything that the Lord intends to prosper. God allowed the virus for His eternal purposes. (One large church forced to minister online has led more than 15,000 people to make decisions for Christ in the last six weeks!)

This summer season is crucial. Summer is ALWAYS harvest season for the Gospel. We have standing orders from our Commander: “A wise son gathers in summer. One who doesn’t is a disgrace” (Proverbs 10:5).

Yes, summer is a time of “slowing down” for many. Rest and restoration are important for us and our families. I do not minimize this importance. But as we slow down, ministry speeds up.

Our teams are “essential workers.” We must empower them to keep things moving from “farm to table.” This is their job today—and yes, it is essential, physically now as well as spiritually!

As they serve with joy, let us support them with joy. It’s a privilege to be about the Lord’s work. And I consider it a real privilege to serve in partnership with you. As you bloom where you are planted, as you pray and give, you offer an answer to the great biblical question: “How can they preach unless they are sent?”

In this summer season, this time of relaxation, let’s keep alive the flame of vigilance for the lost.

Please keep our essential workers working. Please give generously today, as the Lord enables you.

Thank you in advance! God bless you!

“Orders remain unchanged,”



Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. I imagine for all of us, after the terrible springtime of COVID, every summertime activity will be cause for relief and celebration. But let this also be a season for celebrating what God is doing, so unexpectedly, through our ministry around the world. Your gift today will help it keep happening! Thank you again!