

Joseph and Zulema Kotvas, Missionaries to the Deaf in Peru, South America

March 2019 Ministry Update



Pastor Frank Chavez has assumed responsibility for the work in San Juan.



Pastor Jonathan Ramirez Preaching at Deaf Camp



Deaf camp was impacting to all who attended. Many Thanks to you who helped!



In Indiana, our children's first experience with snow.



My brother James and his wife Ann are also starting deputation. Their daughter, Elsie, was born in January!
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Greetings in the blessed name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Thank you for your prayers, and for taking the time to read this ministry update. I write to you from West Baden Springs, Southern Indiana. Two weeks ago, on Monday, February 25th, **we returned in the US to finish deputation** after completing our first full four-year term on our mission field.

As I mentioned in our last letter, **our final ministry project in Peru was the annual Deaf camp**, which we held this year from Monday, January 28 through Friday, February 1. The groundwork for the camp was much prayer and many months in the making. I thank God for everyone who participated and gave to make the camp a success, to God's great glory. We had 108 campers present, **five people made professions of faith in the Lord, and seven young people surrendered their lives to the Lord's service.** Several of our missionaries working with the deaf and hearing around Peru were able to come and participate in various teaching roles.

Our main speaker for the camp was Pastor Jonathan Ramirez, our missionary in Ecuador. Jonathan did a wonderful job, and it was a joy to have him and his family with us. Jonathan is my wife's cousin, and he served at Efata Baptist Church as the pastor for the deaf for years before leaving to plant a church in Ecuador. Both of Jonathan's parents are deaf.

Several months ago, **Jonathan was diagnosed with a serious medical issue**, and just after camp, he underwent an invasive operation there in Lima. He is now going through a painful time of rest and recovery, but praise God he is doing well. We were glad to have him and his family with us during the weeks just before we returned to the States. **Please pray for Jonathan's ministry in Ecuador and for his continued recovery.** He will be returning to Lima for another operation in about six months to complete (Lord willing) his treatment.

Please pray for my wife Zulema as well. She has been struggling with a non-contagious skin condition since last December that eventually spread across almost her entire body, discoloring large swaths of her skin and provoking considerable discomfort. We went to four different doctors and dermatologists in Peru throughout January and February, and they gave us three different diagnoses. **It appears that the correct diagnosis is Psoriasis Rosea**, Thankfully, the virus seems to be receding. We appreciate your prayers!

As we prepared for camp and dealt with Zulema's health, we have been getting ready for our deputation. **Over the next two years, we will be visiting churches across America sharing our vision for the deaf and for Peru.** Deputation is never easy, but I can certainly testify that, "I being in the way, the Lord led me." Our God has prepared our way before us and has provided for us at every step of the way, and we thank him and praise Him for it.

We are currently at a home for missionaries provided by the team at Shepherd's Bethel in West Baden Springs, Indiana. We have been blessed beyond measure, as despite our (very) limited resources, **God continues to use His people to meet our every need.** As we get started traveling in the States, our financial needs are the basics: we are trusting God to provide for our car payment, utilities, and health sharing costs this month, as well as our daily bread and gas money to get to the next meeting.

Our prayer is that throughout this time God would continue to open doors and move hearts, giving us grace in His sight and the sight of the brethren as we seek support not only for our personal ministry, but also as a channel of blessing for the Efata church, school and home. As the Lord allows us to return to Peru and minister, we will be investing in young men and women in the Bible Institute and Bible college and preparing the next generation of Deaf and hearing leaders to reach the Deaf in Peru and beyond, **planting churches and ministries across Peru.**

We covet your prayers for our ministry and our family. Pray that God would keep in me a humble, servant's heart and allow us to be good examples for our children and for you as your missionaries, **"looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."**



God bless,
Joseph and Zulema Kotvas, JJ and Esther

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