

Joseph & Zulema Kotvas



MISSIONARIES TO PERU, SOUTH AMERICA, AND BEYOND
REACHING AND TEACHING DEAF AND HEARING SOULS FOR CHRIST



May 2020 Ministry Report

Joseph & Zulema Kotvas



Watch this video report online:
reachandteach.org/May2020

Hi there! I'm Joseph Kotvas, missionary to the Deaf in Peru, South America. In Christ Jesus, we have victory.

The Bible says in I Corinthians 15:57-58,

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

God has work for us to do in these uncertain times, and in Christ we have the certainty that our service to him is both valued and valuable.

Coronavirus Update

Like most of you, my family and I are under quarantine orders right now. Peru has seen more than its share of infections and fatalities; as of this recording there have been over 100,000 cases and over 3,000

deaths. Peru has responded by instituting universal quarantine and curfew for the past two months.

In spite of all the restrictions, the food markets continue to function. People have to eat! Recurring outbreaks in each major market have fueled one of the fastest growing contagions around the world. Peru is now facing over four thousand new cases each day, and over 100 new deaths. The contagion curve hasn't showed any sign of flattening as of yet; each day brings more new cases than the day before.

Our church members and students, their relatives, our friends, and national pastors; all have been touched by plague and death. Please pray for the Lord's hand of healing, protection and comfort for our people. As of right now, there has not been a single case of the coronavirus among those of us who live on the mission campus here at Efata, and we are praying that it will remain so. It's really in God's hands.

I want to especially mention a few cases for which I would like to request prayer. Gisela, the sister of one of our dear ladies here, Ellie Cherre, is in critical condition in the local hospital. Because of the overwhelming crisis, the hospital here is not taking phone calls or providing regular updates to family members. Of course, no visitors are allowed either. All the family can do is wait and pray. They need your prayers.

Pastor Jairo Villaseca is a national missionary on our team here whose brother and uncle are in the hospital with

the virus as well. Please pray for them. And American Pastor and former missionary to Peru Austin Gardner in Georgia, a friend and mentor of mine for years, is now in an induced coma in ICU battling the virus.

Also pray for the jungle city of Iquitos, where my wife was born. Iquitos has been particularly hard hit. Several national pastors have already gone home to be with the Lord, and more are in intensive care.

Please pray for these dear people, and for all those affected here and around the world.

Family News

I am currently staying in an apartment on the grounds of Efata Baptist Church here in Lima, Peru. Our ministry is in a walled facility including the church building, classrooms, dormitories and a play area, as well as a number of apartments housing the pastoral and maintenance staff. So quarantine within Efata isn't as bad as it might sound.

I'm still amazed at the opportunity to be here; I wasn't even supposed to be in Peru right now! Or so I thought. God had other plans. We were traveling on deputation in the US, raising our family's support to come back to the field, but a death in Zulema's family and our pregnancy brought us to Peru just before the virus struck. So here we are! With the borders closed right now through at least October, it now looks as though our baby will be born here in Peru this September.



My parents and Zulema's mother are all here at Efata, and they have been such a help for me with JJ and Esther while Zulema has been under the weather.

Please pray for Zulema right now. Pregnancy has never been easy for her. With each of our children she has had a lot of difficulty, and this time has been no exception. She has morning sickness all day long, and is confined to her room, for the longest time surviving on a diet mostly of citric fruit and mint tea. With that said, over the past few weeks she has seen noticeable improvement, so we are praising the Lord for that. Hopefully, the worst is behind us. Please continue to pray for her.

Ministry Video Production



Because of our unique location on campus, even though we are under strict orders to stay at home, I have had incredible flexibility to record and share messages, children's programs, and special music over the internet for our congregation and around the world.

I have been working with our incredibly talented people on the ground here to try to spread the Word and feed our sheep.

Our church has had significant fruit this past month. As a result of our online preaching and evangelism efforts, and the dedicated outreach of Deaf Assistant Pastor Frank Chavez, at least seven deaf people have accepted Christ as their Savior during this time. What a joy to see these people

come to the Lord for answers and hope in these trying times. It's not in vain, folks.

Over the past two weeks we hosted two online Bible Conferences in Spanish and Sign Language. Preachers from across the country joined in to share messages of challenge and encouragement "For Such a Time as This." You are welcome to tune in at fb.com/IglesiaBautistaEfata as we continue to preach the Word in season and out of season.

Feeding the Hungry



Our ministry has also been heavily involved in feeding the hungry, and it's been such a joy to be used as a channel of blessing, with a portion of our monthly support going to purchase rice, beans, sugar and milk for distribution to families in our church and community who have found themselves suddenly unemployed and destitute.



Operation Renewed Hope, with Brother Jan Milton, has also given generously toward this cause. There are multiple families in our church who would have nothing for their children to eat were it not for blessings such as this.

Thank you

Finally, thank you to all those who have been so faithful to give and support our

family and ministry even as economic turmoil and uncertainty abound. As we are at around 30% of our support right now, and saving up for childbirth and travel expenses, God has been so good to us to allow me to find some extra work on the side designing and developing websites. This is something I have done professionally for years as my way of "tentmaking" to supplement our income and provide for our needs on the field.



If you are interested in hiring me to build a website for your business, blog, church or ministry, reach out to me at projects@josephkotvas.com, and I would be happy to look at your project. I'll give you a competitive rate, and the additional income allows me to do more take care of my family and people here.

Prayer Requests

- **Pray for God's protection and healing for those who are threatened by the coronavirus** in our ministry, our nation and our world. Especially pray for **Gisela, Jairo's family, Pastor Austin Gardner**, and the jungle city of **Iquitos**.
- **Pray for wisdom for those in government** who are guiding the country through the coronavirus crisis.
- **Pray for Zulema's continued recovery and health** throughout her pregnancy.
- Pray for our **online outreach** to continue to bear fruit for the Savior.
- **Pray for those who have been left with no income or savings** during this crisis.

Thank you, and God bless!

Joseph and Zulema Kotvas, JJ and Esther

