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Gleanings
For The **Hungry**
A Ministry of Youth With A Mission

November 2019

Finding Eddies of Rest

At the beginning of the soup season in September, *Gleanings'* full-time staff attended a five-day mini-retreat, led by Steve and Becky Witmer. The content of the retreat covered the “deadly currents” of full-time ministry—unrealistic expectations, stress, and busyness—as well as the “eddie,” or rest pools, that every person needs in order to serve well and stay healthy in the process—doing things we enjoy, and practicing solitude, silence, and sabbath. These were some of the questions Steve and Becky asked. They asked us to answer honestly:

If you had a free afternoon, what would you enjoy doing just for you?

What is God more interested in, you or the ministry you do?

Can you think of rest as an important part of ministry?

God gives you permission to stop and rest, but will you?

What changes do you need to make to become the person God made you to be?

How will you guard the time you want to spend to become the person you want to become?

Even thinking about these questions and discussing the answers caused us to breathe more deeply and to consider each other with more tenderness. Steve and Becky talked about some of the struggles that people in ministry typically experience such as depression, childish behavior, inappropriate coping, losses of different kinds, and distress. Each topic opened interesting and intelligent conversation—as well as a few laughs and even some tears.

The retreat proved to be a time of rest and reflection that our staff needed. We have more to learn, and the biggest challenge may be to put what we learned into action. We are so very thankful to agree that we as *Gleanings* staff have permission to take time to rest and refuel.



Gleanings
For The **Hungry**

Discipleship Training School
To know God & make Him known.

January - May 2020
\$2800 lecture + approx \$3500 outreach
18 and over, singles and families

“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.” Psalm 23:1-3

Staff Country Report Mexico

Here are some pictures and impressions from *Gleanings* staff member Chelsea Rotunno from a recent trip to Mexico:

In September, we delivered soup mix, dried peaches, cleaning supplies, and New Testament Bibles to several organizations in Mexico. One church, *Iglesia Embajadores De Jesus*, located in the canyons of Tijuana, has become a housing facility for refugee families from South America and Haiti. These refugees have fled their countries and travelled through Mexico, mostly by foot, settling in the church building in Tijuana, as close as they can get to the US border. The two people groups—Haitian and South American—are in separate buildings, as their food preferences, languages, and cultural norms are very different from each other and from the Mexican culture.

The South American refugees live in tents inside what used to be the church's main meeting room—a true sanctuary for people in desperate times. Hundreds of tents sit side-by-side in the building. Children and their parents sit and wait for dinner to be served. A big pot of food boils over the fire on the stove. Two women, the designated South American cooks, took a moment to pray with us as we deliver the food. The woman in charge tells us that the church has suffered because they chose to help the refugees. Many people stopped attending the church, and the congregation shrank down in size, but they believe they are doing the right thing, helping the foreigners who have almost nothing left but a shred of hope. Yet the families we met were quick to smile and tell us a bit about their journeys. One family had traveled one year, and then lived in the tent in the church for one year. They were expecting their second baby. We were blessed to meet them.

In Ensenada, Mexico, soup mix landed in the kitchen of an organization called *Campo de Esperanza*, which provides after school care for children in the community. We took a tour of their facility and prayed with the director, as well as the cooks who will be making *Gleanings* soup. This organization also gives bags of soup mix to families in the community who need it most.

Another delivery arrived at God's Grace Foundation, thanks to our friend Christian who drove the shipment down to the border this month. It is amazing to see how God provides for his children in Mexico.



Director's Corner



Dear Reader,

Food, and a wide variety of food, is such a big part of our lives in America. To imagine that millions of people live without access to this basic need is troubling. Jokingly we call our organization *Gleanings For The Hungry* towards the needy, but *Gleanings For The Well Fed* for the volunteers. All of us are challenged with the knowledge of some crisis and the despair that it causes, while most of us have never missed a meal. I don't think God wants us to feel guilty about any of this, but He is giving us an opportunity to be part of His blessing and provision for the less fortunate. Would you pray about joining us in providing food for the needy by volunteering? Or maybe you want to support our food production with a financial contribution. May we all be touched by the heart of God for the hurting and express it by doing something!

Blessings to all of you,

Fritz Meier