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Pray for Denise and Juan Aragón empowering leaders emotionally and economically in Chiapas, Mexico



BOB SANTILLI

Juan and Denise serve in partnership with the Council of Rural Indigenous Evangelicals of Mexico (Consejo Indígena Campesino Evangélico de México, CICEM) in Chiapas, Mexico. They both work in training, prevention and education as they learn the community needs and look for ways to emotionally and economically empower leaders in their communities. Juan focuses on theological education and leadership training as he accompanies, coaches and disciples new church leaders. Denise's ministry seeks to empower women, especially those who are victims of domestic abuse.

They write – This past September was our first year since our arrival to Mexico. So, for me (Denise), it was very important to review our family's first year in Chiapas. September is a month with special dates for the Aragóns: our anniversary of a new life in Mexico, our wedding anniversary and Juancito's birthday. Perhaps some of you might remember that Juancito had a rough start when we moved to Mexico – he got sick for his seventh birthday in September 2017.

Recently, I was reading some notes and journals written prior to our relocation. What made me tear up was reading what I had told Juancito. I encouraged him "to pray for a friend he could play soccer with, a friend he could go swimming with, a friend at each one of the churches, great friends and teachers at school and that whenever he felt sad or worried about Chiapas, to just talk with his best friend Jesus."

The Lord answered our prayers!!! Juancito and Ziba have amazing teachers who encourage and care for them. They've made good friends not only at school, but also in the communities we serve. They've even had school friends for a sleepover at our house twice already!! What a difference a year makes!

Visit to West Virginia

In October, I traveled to West Virginia to attend the 153rd Annual Meeting of the West Virginia Baptist Convention "Bearers of Hope ... Doing Christ's Work Together!" in Parkersburg. It was such an uplifting time to be among family. People who have prayed for us, given us wise advice, cried with us, hugged us, shared bread with our family. It was amazing, and a bit overwhelming, to feel so loved by God and his children. It was a refreshing time for my extrovert soul!

An Invitation to Pray

While in West Virginia, I had the opportunity to share something that has been in our hearts and minds. As we visit the communities, we've found out that a large majority of the women don't know how to read. During church services only men have the Bible. We sense the Lord is leading us to do something so that these women can learn to read and experience God's Word for themselves.

How can you help us? First, we'd like to invite you to pray with us for guidance and wisdom as we discern what to do. Second, pray that the Lord will lay in the hearts of women in the communities the desire to learn how to read. Please pray that those who show interest will be able to persevere till the goal is reached. Lastly, the first Sunday of every month CICEM churches across Mexico are fasting. If you're able, we invite you join us.

We can imagine some of the obstacles: "I can't see small print," "I am too old," "I don't have time," and so on. But we can also envision the tremendous impact learning to read will have in their lives as they discover the beauty of God's Word by themselves.