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**¡Feliz Navidad! Merry Christmas!**





KETLY & VITAL PIERRE



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

When Jesus came to our broken, rebellious world in the body of a baby, the angels sang,  
December 13, 2017

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those with whom He is pleased!” They knew that hope had been restored for all of creation for all of eternity. In this season of celebration, we too, sing with the angels, praising and thanking God that He did not leave us in our sin, but once and for all provided the way of reconciliation and wholeness.

We have much to be thankful for as we see God bringing hope to the Haitian-Dominican community in and around La Romana. What a joy to accompany so many new ministries and ministers! What a joy to see lives changed as the God of hope draws all to Himself in gentleness and love. God is good! As we have stated in our previous letter, we will be highlighting a different ministry in each of our letters this year.

We arrived in Batey El Salado around 5:00 p.m. Immediately as the bus pulled up, the children ran to greet us. After unloading our mattresses, bags, cooking stove, pots, pans, food, and other supplies, we sat down and started registering the kids. We then went into the church to sing and entertain the kids. The next morning, the kids arrived bright and early and we grouped them according to age and began our program.

After singing and a short Bible lesson, the teen leaders took their respective groups and began the lessons.



One young lady, Leidy, even put on a dog costume which she wore all day, mesmerizing the little ones for hours. She emerged as a particularly gifted teacher. Using only styrofoam cups, she had the 2-3 year olds repeating the story of Saul becoming Paul.

Meanwhile, the women were furiously cooking rice and chicken in the “kitchen.” There we witnessed what we dubbed, “The Miracle of the Rice.” The women put the rice on at 9:00 a.m, but no matter how long it cooked and boiled, the rice remained hard and raw. We

had 175 very hungry children milling around and causing trouble. Finally, around 2:00 p.m.,

a mother came to the kitchen and called the cooks "abusers!" The rice was still not cooked. However their response was, "Fine. We will serve the rice raw. Pass us the plates."

As I helped to pass out the plates of rice and chicken, I noticed that the rice looked done, so I tried a bit. Sure enough, what had been raw only moments before was cooked! We decided that sometimes even if you're not ready, in faith, you just have to put the rice on the plate! When we left on Sunday, we carried more faith in our souls!

To run this program, we need funds. We need money for the food, supplies, transportation, and gifts that we leave with the families and children. When we go to the bateys and spend time with these families, it tells them that the Church sees and values them. We bring the hope of the God who is Hope. Since many of our teen leaders come from families that once lived in the bateys, cutting sugar cane and living in subpar conditions, they bring the hope and proof of a better, more economically stable life. But most of all, they bring the Hope of the Gospel which changes hearts and minds to love and serve the Living God.

Please consider sending a Christmas gift to support our VBS ministry. Also, consider to come and join us in this effort. We feed, give gifts, and serve a lot of kids. Will you join with us and angels as we sing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace!"



Thanks for your continuing prayers and support as we build the kingdom together!