

**Allowing people to see who Jesus really is;
Short-term team assists Spanish church in evangelism**

By Kenneth D. MacHarg
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Chinchon, Spain (LAMNS)—It took a short-term missionary from south Florida to communicate with a woman on the street of this small town southeast of Madrid. The homeless woman was trying to explain her plight to a member of a local church, but language got in the way.



“I just saw the woman talking to one of the guys from the church and I realized that he could not understand,” explains Eileen Morales of Miami who was in Spain with a team organized by the Latin America Mission. “I found out that she was from Poland and speaks Italian. She had no place to live and was on the streets with her three kids looking for someone to help her,” says Eileen who speaks English, Spanish and Italian. Through her intervention, the local pastor was able to offer her some assistance.

The incident was just one of many experienced by the five-member team that spent two weeks in Spain working with full-time LAM missionaries Ken and Rosalyn Steinmueller who are from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The group was involved with presenting music and drama in city parks, passing out Bibles and Christian literature, and assisting local churches in their evangelism efforts.

Much of the group’s ministry took place in city parks around Madrid and in the Mediterranean town of Valencia. “We’ve reached out to the people,” says Yvette Irazarry of Ft. Lauderdale. “We have taken God outside, into the streets and into the parks. We have ministered to people’s needs,” she explains. “We have allowed people to see who Jesus really is.”

Members of the team reported that one highlight was meeting and talking with Muslims who live in Spain or were passing through on their annual vacations in North Africa. “It was a challenge to respect their culture while sharing a Christian message with them,” says Silvia Fernandez of Miami. “I speak French, so they understood a lot of what I said. Many of them thought it was a moving gesture that a stranger would give them a book (the Bible),” she reports.

Nubia Novoa Morena of Bogota, Colombia agrees. “I’m here because of the love of Jesus,” she explains. “He put into my heart the desire to come to Spain, a country where it is difficult for the people to understand what the purpose of Christ is in their life. My best experience was to give material to Muslims who are on the roads.”

The short-term missionaries found people very responsive. “The people are very, very open,” says Julie Gross of Pompano Beach, Florida. “One evening we had the opportunity to witness to people in the park. They opened the door for me to talk to them about Jesus and an older man and two boys accepted the Lord. That’s the first time I have been able to do something like that.”

Local pastors said that they appreciated the team’s willingness to spend time with them in Spain. “They are a blessing,” says Jaime Suarez who is assistant pastor of the New Life Christian Center church in the Madrid suburb of Mostoles through which the group worked. “It is a blessing for them to come and to receive them in our homes. It is a blessing to the homes and to the church.”

Suarez says that the coming together of short-term missionaries from the United States, Colombia and Spain in a joint project was a sign that “the church is one and international.”

Jaime Villareal, who is the senior pastor of the church, says that his congregation needs missionary help. “The problem in Spain and Europe is the problem of indifference among the people to spiritual things. We are excited to receive all short-term groups because the church here is growing and we need assistance. We need to prepare the Spanish church to do ministry in the local churches.”

While helping local churches in ministry, team members reported that they benefited from their experience as well.

“I think that God is really stretching me in a lot of ways and showing me things about my character,” reports Julie Gross. “He is showing me how much happier I am when I can serve others.”

“God is showing me that he is calling me to join him in what he is doing in Spain,” reflects Morales. “He wants me to pray for the people of Spain, witness the revival here and encourage the church in Spain.”

“We were led to minister to the people on the streets to and invite people into the churches, and help the local people build a church,” says Eric Fiori of Ft. Lauderdale. “There is such an open door to meet and greet these people,” he says.

Fiori was asked to preach to the small, crowded church in Mostales. “I felt comfortable preaching, I just asked the Lord for help,” says Fiori who had never preached before. “We all have a testimony of some sort and I felt moved to talk about the empty void in our hearts that only God can fill.”

The short-term team was put together by Calvary Chapel church of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and sent out through the short-term department of the Latin America Mission. The group was in Spain from July 27 through August 9.

The Latin America Mission works in partnership with churches and Christian agencies throughout Latin America and supports missionaries and projects in many Latin countries as well as in Spain. LAM is seeking to place new missionaries throughout the region. The U.S. headquarters can be reached at Latin America Mission, Box 52-7900, Miami, FL 33152, by e-mail at info@lam.org, or by calling 1-800-275-8410. The mission's web site may be found at <http://www.lam.org>. LAM's Canadian office is at 3075 Ridgeway Drive, Unit 14, Mississauga, ON L5L 5M6.

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