

PLANTING AND ASSISTING CHURCHES IN **URUGUAY**

Our move to Uruguay in September of 2014 was unforgettable. We didn't sleep the night before because of packing, we hardly slept the night of travel, and our Uruguayan friends on the night of our arrival celebrated by serving dinner at 11 p.m. and dessert at 1 a.m.! Welcome to the night culture of Uruguay.

### Celebrating 10 Years

*Friends.* One of the challenging dynamics of moving to another country is the change one experiences in relationships. A different language and different culture often make it hard for missionaries to really feel assimilated in their new home country. Micki and I praise the Lord for how He has provided godly friends and co-workers for us here in Colonia. They have been patient, accepting, and encouraging, and our combined gifts have helped strengthen and grow the ministries here.

*Personal Growth.* Micki and I are not the same people we were when we moved here. I am more aware of my need to "abide in the vine" than ever before (Jn. 15:5), and I have a deeper sense of the challenges associated with ministry in an atheistic culture. Micki came with preconceptions about what a ministry wife should be. She has since learned that every woman and situation are unique, and that God will use her based on her own giftedness and abilities. We thank God that Owen, too, is learning to "abide in the vine."

*Opportunities.* We were able to acquire a seminary building within two years of moving to Uruguay (2016). This was *much* sooner than we anticipated. That same year, I began our seminary YouTube channel, which became the base for our first published book (2018). The institute and seminary have graduated 10 students, and we currently have 17 students. Our channel has acquired more than 300,000 views and our books have raised \$3,308 for our seminary. We believe these are just the first fruits of what God is doing here.

*Answered Prayer.* Stepping out of our comfort zone into Uruguay has also been an opportunity to see God answer prayer. Some of you may still have the first edition of our prayer card that has our requests on the front. We asked for excellence using the Spanish language (we could barely communicate upon arriving), a deep and abiding love for God and the Uruguayan people, and wisdom to use God's resources well. We still need prayer in these areas! Even so, God has been answering. Let me quickly tell you about Marcelo Ortiz, and then I will close with a few more prayer requests.

### "Believing, you shall receive"

- On August 23, I received a text message from Marcelo Ortiz, the Catholic priest of a prominent church in a neighboring city. His online seminary in Miami directed him to our YouTube channel for Biblical Greek resources, and then he bought one of my books! I went to meet him, and we conversed about salvation, baptism, and even marriage! Please pray that Marcelo better understands Biblical truth and embraces it.
- Last month we discovered Micki was pregnant, but the doctors told us there may be complications. Last week, she miscarried. We appreciate prayers for strength during this emotional time.
- Our full-time summer seminary is right around the corner, along with our camps and annual mission trip. Thank you for praying for wisdom in admitting the right students and that these become impactful leaders for the local churches of Uruguay.

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