

Her belief in God didn't happen overnight. It was a gradual thing. As time passed Esperanza Prada began to understand more of who the Lord is, and little by little she gave her life over to Jesus.

Esperanza was 20 years when her boyfriend told her about the person of Jesus Christ. In the beginning she had an unbelieving heart, but she wanted to know for herself if what Jose was telling her was true. She began to investigate the Bible, and that's when God's Word began to penetrate her soul. In faith she accepted Jesus.

Jose and Esperanza married, and it was during a church service in their hometown of Bogota, Colombia when Esperanza felt God stirring her heart, asking her to follow Him to the mission field. The congregation was praying and singing a song with the words, "Here am I, send me." She had no idea what missions was, but what she did know was that she felt the Lord's call in her life. Not long after that, Esperanza and Jose were asked to consider church planting in Peru.

"Being aware of our dependency on God is the most basic – but also the greatest – piece of advice that I could ever give anyone," says Esperanza. Prayers of people she has never met before have propelled Esperanza onward and encouraged her to trust Jesus during those times she wants to give up. "There are moments when I want to go back to my country," she says. "I won't lie. I love Colombia and I miss it a lot. But when people I don't know tell me they have been praying for me, for my husband, and for our ministry, it gives me great courage to go forward."

She continues on with a story that has given her the joy to persevere during difficult seasons: "There is this 90 year old woman," she begins, "and the first time that I met her she came up to me and Jose and gave us a big hug. She told us, 'I have been praying for you since before you were born. For years I have felt so much pain that there is no Mennonite church here in Lima. I prayed that God would raise up someone to start this church. When I learned about you I was so happy, and I asked God for the chance to meet you.' She was so grateful that she cried," says Esperanza. "The Lord gave me so much courage in that moment."

Have you, like Esperanza, felt God calling you to the mission field? Leaving behind your friends, family, and familiar lifestyle is a huge risk – but it's worth it. "I want to encourage you," says Esperanza, "that if you feel the call to missions, don't be scared. God will give you everything that you need. It is true that things will change; that you will have to leave your loved ones behind. But God will supply everything that you need – spiritually, physically, emotionally – everything! Be certain of this: the Lord is faithful and all powerful, and He will always be with you, wherever you go!"

*"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life." Matthew 19:29*

In Asia migrant workers are pouring into the cities like crazy! In a metropolis of 17 million, five million people – almost one-third of the population – have moved from the countryside to the urban area, making for the biggest demographic shift in the history of the human race! These workers are obtaining jobs in factories, construction – essentially whatever is offered to them – and they are bringing in a monthly income of only \$125. They come to the cities looking for a better way of life, but because they cannot get a residence permit, they are denied healthcare and education and are often found living in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions. Migrant workers are hungry for life, and the Body of Christ has an enormous opportunity to redirect their hunger toward the gospel of Jesus.

Five years ago a ministry began that is reaching out to the two to three hundred migrant schools scattered around the city. The relationships that have been built within these schools have resulted in an amazing 45 healthy church plants. Migrant schools are not government run, nor are they accredited institutions. They are simply thrown together for the sake of the migrant children, who are denied access to public education. Consequently, teachers are not professionally educated and curriculum is underdeveloped.

This ministry began when a group of missionaries started meeting with the headmasters of the schools to offer education seminars to increase their level of expertise. Every session concluded with a gospel presentation. Close to 60 headmasters accepted Christ as a result of this ministry! This was good news for the schools, which are independently run. In a predominantly Buddhist society, the doors are wide open to the gospel of Jesus Christ!

The church plants that have resulted from these schools have been an enormous blessing to the migrant workers. Full-time discipleship training centers have been established in two separate cities to train full time workers and leaders for the churches. Migrant workers who come into the city with no family connections are in desperate need of someone to reach out to them. These churches are doing just that!

The migrant school ministry is moving beyond educational boundaries to satisfy the needs of the sick, the lonely, and the poor migrant workers. Pray that as these people are connected with the church, they would delight in the food that will never leave them hungry – the promise of Jesus Christ!

*"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."*  
Isaiah 55:1

# May 2009



**MBMS International**  
transforming lives in mission

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Christoph & Antonia Hagele  LITHUANIA	2 Sandra Fender  THAILAND
3 Saji & Bindu  RESTRICTED	4 Mark & Amy  RESTRICTED	5 Amber & Amanda Griffioen  THAILAND	6 Jason & Andrea Edwards  BRAZIL	7 Robert & Marlene  RESTRICTED	8 Richard & Hazel Funk  AUSTRIA	9 TREK  WORLDWIDE
10 Doris Goertz  JAPAN	11 Berlin MB Church  GERMANY	12 Andy & Carmen Owen  THAILAND	13 Melanie Humphreys  LITHUANIA	14 Finance Team  ABBOTSFORD	15 Jose & Esperanza Prada  PERU	16 Phone Keo & Chansone  RESTRICTED
17 Tim & Denice Kuhns  BRAZIL	18 Phil & Carol Bergen  BURKINA FASO	19 Ricky & Karen Sanchez  THAILAND	20 Stacy Kuhns  MEXICO	21 Murray & Faith Nickel  DR CONGO	22 Liana Penner  PERU	23 MBMSI Office  WICHITA
24 Greg & Becky Ouellette 31 THAILAND Member Care Team ABBOTSFORD	25 Jen Schmidt  MEXICO	26 Dave & Louise Sinclair-Peters  THAILAND	27 Vic & Marty Wiens  WORLDWIDE	28 Kevin & Wendy  RESTRICTED	29 John & Geri Ervin  WORLDWIDE	30 Einer & Girlesa Zuluaga  PANAMA