

LIGHT OF HOPE

This could be the strangest Christmas ever in the strangest year ever. 2020 brought us a pandemic, lockdowns, disease, fear, hurricanes and Zoom meetings. Many of us experienced anxiety, depression and uncertainty. Is there even a reason to celebrate?

The prophet Isaiah ministered in a time of darkness for Israel. Many invasions and attacks from their enemies were experienced by the people. However, in the midst of those difficulties, the prophet boldly proclaims "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Is 9:2). Light? But Zebulun and Naphtali were suffering in "anguish" (v 1). The sign that the people of God needed to see was: "For to us a child is born" (v 6). Yes! The answer was a child sent by the Lord. He was a great light for them. A ray of hope from Heaven in the middle of their fear and stress.

In this 2020, Christmas represents a reminder: God has not forgotten this world. Although we have seen darkness in the form of limitations, health threats and fear, we have seen "a great light"... the Light of the World (John 8:12). Even today, we can sing carols and celebrate the glorious Encarnation of Jesus Christ... an Emmanuel God who came to suffer with us... and to give us the light of Life. Hallelujah!

FACING A TRAGEDY

Fear seized Lucia (Dorys' cousin in Nicaragua) when she saw how her house was reeling caused by the terrible power of the hurricane lota. "This time, we will not make it", she thought when she heard how her roof sounded like a useless old can. "Lord, have mercy on us" she cried out. And so she kept crying out competing with a howling of a strong wind, and frightened animals. It was a terrible experience. Finally, a sudden calm indicated that it was safe to leave the house, but when she went outside, she could not believe her eyes. She witnessed great destruction around. She started to cry, but not because of the devastation, but because she understood that God had protected her life, her family and also her fragile home. "Glory to God because He heard my cry" she said over and over, when she testified to her family. This is how Lucia learned and taught us about the fragility of the human being and the greatness, mercy and power of God.

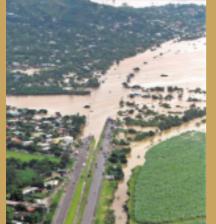
Lucia experienced first hand the unconditional Love of God, which was manifested through the Encarnation and allowed us to see his glory as that of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). That is something that we can demonstrate in practical and specific ways with hundreds of people in need. It is said that more than 2 million Hondurans have been impacted by these hurricanes. We decided to help in three specific ways:

1) World Reach Honduras team has decided to donate money, clothes and food to a shelter in a church in San Pedro Sula.

2) Our local church has raised money to help several families in extreme need. We had the privilege to donate for this effort.

3) The Seminary in which we have been teaching is helping two graduates and their families in this hour of tragedy. We have donated clothes and money to this effort.

Praise the Lord for the solidarity that we are witnessing even in the midst of these hard times.





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