



Coat of Arms from the flag of the Dominican Republic

## THEOLOGICAL BOOKS NEEDED!

Our seminary library project is in full swing. We have 3-4 pallets of books nearly ready to ship to the DR, but to make it more cost-effective, we could use a couple more pallets of books. Do you know of a pastor who has retired or is retiring who would like to put his books to good use? Are you interested in donating a box of books or funds to purchase a box of books? Please let me know ASAP if you are able to help us. Our library will be a mix of Spanish and English volumes and will provide future Latin American Lutheran pastors study resources for years to come!



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to [joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org](mailto:joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org) with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

[joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org](mailto:joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org)

## Walking the way of the cross!



Procession of pastors for the dedication service of a new sanctuary at our Licey mission.

Lenten greetings from the DR, dear supporters! We pray that your journey to Calvary during this season of preparation and meditation will be blessed, that you “may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.” That’s the last bit of the Ash Wednesday address that perhaps many of you heard at the start of Lent. Our saints here heard these words as well, but in Spanish. Together we’ve begun the journey to the cross. We have the opportunity to reflect on our Lord’s Passion anew, considering our experiences since Easter past, our sins, our struggles, our losses, knowing that they’re all answered for at Calvary and rejoicing over that New Life which is ours as we anticipate the empty tomb of Easter.

At Las Americas, after Christmas we jumped back into our routine of visits on Saturdays. We’ve been very intentional in who we visit on Saturdays. We visit inactive members, the sick and the

elderly, but we’ve also targeted extended family and friends of members. In January we visited two families with new babies. One is a member of the church, Delenia, whose daughter Berenice recently had a child. The grandmother is a member, but the young daughter is not. They all live under the same roof.

What does such a visit look like? We sit out on the front porch. We talk about what’s new. We talk about what’s going on at church. We ask about the new baby. Then I bring up the subject of baptism. I usually ask the question, “Do you know what Baptism is?”. I follow that up with a brief lesson on the four parts of Baptism from the catechism. It gives us a chance to hear four of the main Scripture texts about Baptism and then talk about them. Members and seminary students who are with me then chime in to reinforce what I taught. Then we answer questions and close with prayer.

# Spotlight on evangelism visits...

As we wrapped up our visit, I asked Berenice if she would like to have her son baptized. She asked, "What are the steps?". So I replied, well, we just did step one. But usually there is a question behind the question. Her real question was "What does it cost?" People ask that because usually a family has to pay something to have their child baptized in a Roman Catholic church. Many can't afford to pay. I was thrilled to tell her that they didn't have to pay anything. I just re-emphasized my encouragement about life in the Church after Baptism, hearing God's Word, receiving the Sacrament, and nurturing the child's faith.

Next time we came back I brought the rite of Baptism along just to walk

through it and explain what goes on. Through the course of the lesson, one of our other dear members mentioned that her two daughters were never baptized. So now two baptisms are scheduled for Easter and we have opportunity for more teaching, baptisms and catechism instruction.

After we left from that visit, we saw another lady who had recently had a child. We had visited her two months earlier before she had the baby. I basically repeated my Baptism talk for her. With a bit more follow-up, we just might have one more Baptism for Easter.

We just finished our bi-annual FORO, where our mission partners come for several days of meetings that include reports on our work, strategic planning,

overviews of our budget and finances. We also worship and study together AND they spend a Sunday worshipping at one of our missions. We had the joy of highlighting the blessings of "visitation" during the FORO and it was very positive.

During the FORO, we also dedicated a new sanctuary for our mission in Licey (see front page pic) and installed Pr. Sergio Fritzler from Argentina to be the missionary pastor of that congregation. Our Dominican Vicar, Yban Navarro, serves there as well and, we pray, 1 1/2 years from now that he will be the Dominican pastor of that church plant.

Earlier in February, I had the opportunity to conduct a wedding at Las Americas. The bride was Dominican, but not connected to our church. The groom is American, an LCMS member from Nebraska. His pastor is the father of Deaconess Katie Ziegler Webber, who served as a missionary here for three years. Small world! All in all, the Lord continues to provide us opportunities for preaching the Gospel of Jesus. God bless you for being our partners and may He bless your Lenten journey to Calvary. We'll report back in after Easter!

*Pastor Joel Fritsche*



Wedding at Last Americas



Evangelistic Visit in Las Americas, with Loira and her new baby, Perla

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR SEM STUDENTS...

We've been featuring sem students and church members so you can get to know those whom we serve. Last month was a church member, Jackie. This month meet Marcelo Rivas from Chile. Marcelo comes to the DR with his wife, Vania and 5 year-old daughter, Amanda. Just in the last three weeks, they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby girl, Ángela. Thanks be to God. This family has a wonderful story that ties together so much of the work that the Lord is doing through our LCMS mission work around Latin America. Vania came to the Lutheran Church after an devastating earthquake

hit their hometown of Talca, Chile in 2010. Lutherans ministered to those affected, Vania being one of them, and she was eventually confirmed. Marcelo met Vania in university classes and she invited him to church. He became Lutheran, they got married and now, here they are in the DR as Marcelo studies to become a Pastor in the Lutheran Church in Chile. Read their story in the Winter issue of LCMS "Engage" magazine...

<https://engage.lcms.org/dominican-seminary-winter-2018/>



# Updates from the Missionary Wife

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Missionary family Blake and Lizz Warren. Lizz is currently hospitalized as their unborn child is at risk for premature birth. Please pray God's protection for mother and child and His presence for the whole family.
- For our brothers and sisters in Bolivia who have been experiencing disastrous floods.

## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The safe arrival of our seminary students from Bolivia (Samuel, Benjamin and his wife, Karina).
- The continued recovery of Doña Marita Bautista from her broken leg. She is now at home and a bit more mobile. She should be back in church very soon!

## PRAISE GOD FOR:

- A healthy baby girl, Ángela, born to seminary family Marcelo and Vanía from Chile. She joins big sister Amanda.
- Our visits in Las Americas are bearing fruit. Two baptisms are scheduled for Easter Sunday. Please pray for the families, especially for Anthony and Willie, the two boys scheduled to be baptized.

WITNESS ALWAYS



Missionary children playing bells for the Licey dedication service

Saludos de nuevo! Once again it is time to catch up with the rest of the Fritsche family. I hope you are all well. I want to thank you for continuing to follow our missionary journey and supporting us with your prayers and gifts.

We have been very blessed as we begin our Lenten journey to the cross. School continues to go well. The boys continue to grow in their use of the Spanish language and we grow more adept at our routine of travel to and from Santiago. We can have our guagua packed and loaded faster than you can blink an eye! Believe it or not, even living in two cities can become routine.

Amidst the routine, there are the things we look forward to and enjoy.

Viktor is looking forward to enrolling in an online high school next year. We have enjoyed looking at and discussing options for him. He really enjoys practicing his Spanish with the seminarians and his good friends Martin and Enzo Fritzler. One thing he may not be looking forward to is getting braces!

Sergei is going to begin seeing a new psychologist this month to help him with some of his challenges. He also is looking forward to the study of "The Hobbit" with his older brother. He continues to amaze everyone with his Spanish skills. The Dominican suits him perfectly! I don't believe Sergei is excited about getting braces either.

Andrei is extremely excited to finally begin growth hormone treatment. He has been counting down the days to March. We see the doctor today and are anxious to begin the process. How fascinating it will be to see our "pequeño" grow and grow!

As for Mom, she just tries to keep up and keep the routine going. It is not always easy maintaining everything and sometimes I fail completely. However, through our failures and successes, God's grace and mercy come shining through!

*Clarion*

*We are blessed to be serving our Lord in the Dominican Republic. The Lord is blessing the preaching of His Word and the administration of His sacraments. We are grateful for your partnership in this work. God bless you all!*

*In Christ,*

**Rev. Joel & Clarion Fritsche  
Viktor, Sergei and Andrei**



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Joel & Clarion Fritsche, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 or

Mission Central  
40718 Highway E16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of Rev. Joel Fritsche." Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at [lcms.org/fritsche](http://lcms.org/fritsche).

CONCORDIA THE REFORMER SEMINARY

# Adopt a Student

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HOW THEN SHALL THEY CALL ON HIM IN WHOM THEY HAVE  
NOT BELIEVED? AND HOW SHALL THEY BELIEVE IN HIM OF  
WHOM THEY HAVE NOT HEARD? AND HOW SHALL THEY HEAR  
WITHOUT A PREACHER?  
ROMANS 10:14

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## Marcelo Rivas - Chile

I was born in Talca, Maule Region, Chile. I have a daughter, Amanda Lucia Rivas Arias, who is five and a wife, Vania Margarita Arias Valenzuela, who is pregnant with our second child.

I studied Theological Education for Hispanic America (online); Baccalaureate Superior in Theology (in person in 2015 and 2016) Concordia Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Pre vicar: January 2, 2017 to August 15, city of Constitución, Maule Region, Chile.

Why is a seminary scholarship important to me?

For me the scholarship is very important, because it is the only way through which I can have access to study theology and then be able to be a candidate for the exercise of the pastoral vocation. For me the scholarship is a great blessing and, I thank God and also all his people for supporting me.

Why I want to attend the seminary.

I want to attend the Seminary to formally prepare myself in Lutheran Confessional Theology, and after that to be able to be to exercise the pastoral vocation to preach the gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ and administer the means of grace (Baptism and Holy Supper).

Birth day:

Marcelo Rivas - March 11, 1975

For more information about our Adopt a Student program, email Jana Inglehart at [jana.inglehart@lcmsintl.org](mailto:jana.inglehart@lcmsintl.org).