



Coat of Arms from the flag of the Dominican Republic



THANK YOU TO...

our newest Together in Mission partner congregation, Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Collinsville, Illinois. Holy Cross has made a two-year commitment to support our work in the Dominican.

To learn more about the TIM program visit the website...

<https://www.lcms.org/TogetherinMission>



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joel.fritsche@lcmsintl.org

And so it begins...



The faculty of *Centro de Misericordia Seminario Concordia el Reformador* at our installation this past Sunday in Palmar Arriba, Dominican Republic.

Greetings in the name of Jesus from the Dominican Republic! Things are getting real now! We've been reporting on the progress of the new seminary for several months now. Ready or not, here we go. As Director, I am so thankful for the dear brothers you see standing next to me in the above photo. For months, these men have been working on everything from curriculum writing to making plans for daily chapel and to the minute details of student life.

When I was on staff at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis ten years ago recruiting students, I took for granted all that goes into receiving students and caring for them so that they can be formed for ministry. Of course, teaching theology is the biggie. But someone also has to make sure that they have food, a roof over their heads, a place to study, a library to resource them, congregations to assist them in their practical experience, etc. There is so much that factors into their formation.

This past Sunday the seminary faculty was installed. Pictured from left to right: Rev. Joel Fritsche (Director), Rev. Sergio Maita (Coordinator of Student Life), Rev. Roberto Bustamante (Academic Coordinator), Rev. Dr. Arthur Just (Associate Director), Rev. David Preus (Pastoral Coordinator), Rev. Sergio Fritzer (Provost), and Rev. Dr. Jonathan Naumann (Professor). In addition to teaching, four of the professors continue to serve as missionary pastors/church planters and will work alongside our students in that capacity as well.

Students begin arriving August 25. Due to delays with visas, the arrivals will be spread out over the next few weeks. Nevertheless, by God's grace, we will begin classes on September 11. I will be teaching Biblical Interpretation and Exegesis of the Pauline Epistles this fall. Please continue to pray for our faculty, students and their families in the midst of this huge transition for us all.

Other News and Highlights from the Field

The two months since our return from home service have flown by. The summer months on the mission field are usually filled with a flurry of activities, especially as we welcome visiting short-term teams to the field. Just after our return from home service, a team from Shepherd of the Hills in Pewaukee, Wisconsin came to work at our group home in Palmar Arriba. A few weeks ago we hosted a small team from Faith Community Lutheran Church in Las Vegas. They conducted eye glass clinics at a psychiatric hospital outside of Santo Domingo. As the summer came to a close, we hosted three young people who came to work with our missionary kids at our annual regional retreat. Before the retreat began, they spent a weekend shadowing Vicar Paul Flo and myself for a weekend of missionary work in Santo Domingo.

For the last few months, the members of our congregation in Las Americas have been studying a book on the history of the Reformation, written in Spanish for the 500th anniversary this year. They learned about Luther and the 95 Theses, the Diet of Worms, The Augsburg Confession, The Book of Concord and all of the history and theological distinctive of the Reformation. We finished the study last night and our people are hungry for more.



2017 LAC Regional Missionary Retreat Group Photo

In early August we travelled to Punta Cana on the east end of the island for our annual regional missionary retreat. It's always a great opportunity for missionaries and their families from around the region to gather for worship, study and fellowship. We look forward to this every year because it is our one opportunity to visit with fellow missionaries from as far away as Uruguay and Spain.

Pan de Vida, our small Santo Domingo mission is a bit quiet these days as we wait and hope for another missionary pastor to arrive soon. In the meantime, Vicar Paul Flo continues to do visits and a catechism class in a nearby community. Once our many seminary students invade the capital, we pray that the Lord will bring more activity there.



Clarion with church member, Maritza and visiting CTS deaconess student, Kate Phillips



DOMINICAN SEMINARY SUPPORT

Inside Basilica Cathedral of Santa María la Menor, the first cathedral of the Americas located in Santo Domingo, there's a statue of a seminarian with a collection box that reads, "Help the Seminary." With this being the initial year of our seminary, we have a lot of start-up expenses. Please consider a donation to our seminary to assist us with important projects such as our library project (providing theological resources for our students), solar panel project (providing long-term energy needs for our facility), or a general gift that will assist us with furnishing single

and married student residences. You can donate online through the following link... <https://www.lcms.org/givenow/seminary-support>.

By mail, make a check payable to Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and specify "Dominican Republic Seminary" in the memo line. Mail to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Mission Advancement
PO Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861



Joel with Seminarian Idjon Fritz at his graduation.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

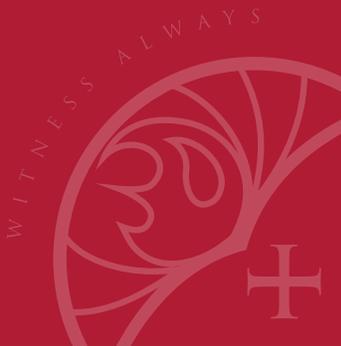
- The arrival of students in late August and early September, especially as they adjust to living in a different country..
- Seminary professors as we balance their teaching load while continuing to plant churches.
- Family and friends on the TX gulf coast in the path of a major hurricane.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- God continuing to bless and care for us, especially as we adjust to living in two cities.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The fruit that His Gospel is bearing in the DR and throughout Latin America.
- The graduation of Idjon Fritz, our next Dominican pastor and his upcoming ordination in October.



Updates on Family and Life



Sergei got to celebrate his birthday in Punta Cana at our regional missionary retreat.

The Fritsche family has been going full steam ahead since returning from home service.

Clarion and the boys have taken on the challenge of home schooling. Thanks to Memoria Press, each boy has a curriculum designed for their specific grade. Clarion has all the plans and materials she needs for each child and simply has to follow the schedule. It does have it challenges. However, we are very pleased with the progress the boys have made. We really do love the materials from Memoria Press. We have already completed 7 weeks!

Adding to the fun and adventure of missionary life is the fact that we now live in two cities. This makes things a little hectic for Clarion, but the boys absolutely LOVE Santiago and their missionary family there.

The boys have more opportunities for fellowship in Santiago. They get to spend time with friends, go to the pool, and even take the dogs for walks.

We have had the opportunity to get to know some of the families in Santiago a little better. This is such a blessing! It is so nice to be a part of the gatherings that occur in Santiago. Clarion still feels more at home in Santo Domingo but really enjoys the time in Santiago.

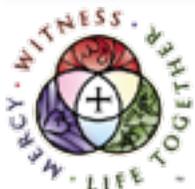
Things continue to be busy and lively here in the Dominican Republic. We are actually renewing our visas for the third time and will have completed three years in the field in February of 2018. Time flies when you are having fun!

We thank you all for your support. It makes our life here possible. Your prayers and thoughts are felt and appreciated. We pray God holds you in His loving care until we can see you again.

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. 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

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.

Mission Central
40718 Highway E16
Mapleton, IA 51034