

## GREETINGS HOUSE BUILDERS!!!

Your outreach to YOUTH WITH A MISSION CENTRAL BAJA (HEART MINISTRIES) – The House Building Missions Center, in Vicente Guerrero, Baja California Mexico will be here sooner than you think....these instructions will prepare you for what to expect and answer some questions you may have about how and what to pack. Put this sheet in a safe place, (where you will be able to find it again!) so that you can refer to it when it comes time to pack for the trip.

You will be meeting your Youth With A Mission Team Leader AT THE SAN DIEGO AIRPORT...NO LATER than 11:30 A.M. the first morning (Sunday). Please do not book your return flight any earlier than 5:30 P.M. on the last day of the outreach (Saturday)

Remember you will need a passport if you are 18 years of age or older.  
ALL foreign nationals need a passport and a valid visa or green card.

PLEASE PACK LIGHTLY. LUGGAGE SPACE IN THE VANS IS LIMITED. ONLY ONE average size suitcase or duffel bag and a sleeping bag per person!  
Remember to have your name and address on your suitcase and your sleeping bag.

Be sure to bring the following items:

Bible, sleeping bag (We will be sleeping in bunks with comfortable mattresses). Pillow (either carry your pillow or roll it inside your sleeping bag) a jacket and /or sweater. It can get real cold there in the evening hours, as we are only 2 miles from the ocean. During the summer months the evenings are warm....most of the time!!!

Bring a towel, soap, shampoo, and any personal items...like your tooth brush, your camera, and some ear plugs!! (Even if you don't, others sleeping near you may, snore!!) A flash light, alarm clock, swimsuit, (girls...no bikinis...guys no Speedo suits)...sun screen, tennis shoes or work boots, some grubby work clothes, extra socks, and a pair of work gloves. Have a clean pair of long pants or jeans for church and outreach (dress/skirt NOT necessary - nothing fancy, everything will get dirty!!) A hat or bandana is recommended when working out in the sun.

Bring U.S. currency in small bills, nothing larger than a ten if possible. (U.S. currency is accepted everywhere....Credit Cards ARE SELDOM accepted. The exchange rate fluctuates daily (you may get 17 to 17.5 pesos for one dollar)...There is a bank in town where you can use your ATM card....they charge \$5.50 per transaction and usually only give you Pesos!!

Vicente Guerrero, the town to which we are going, enjoys a pleasant, temperate climate, very similar to San Diego; it's just three miles from the Pacific Ocean. BUT temperatures can range from 45 degrees at night (due to fog conditions) to 80+ degrees during the day. Rain is rare - 4 to 5 inches of rainfall a year! Because of the limited rainfall, it will be dusty and it's often very windy. Contact lens wearers, bring a pair of glasses too! It is

often cold in the mornings and evenings due to the fog, and none of the buildings are centrally heated...so please bring that jacket and or sweater!

Dress Code: The local Christian community adheres to a very conservative dress code. We ask, therefore, that you comply with the following:

- #1. YOU MAY WEAR SHORTS WHILE WORKING, BUT THEY MUST REACH DOWN TO OR BELOW THE KNEES!!!...NO EXCEPTIONS!
- #2. SCANTY SUNWEAR IS NOT ACCEPTABLE...NO TANK TOPS FOR GIRLS. GUYS, IT IS INAPPROPRIATE TO REMOVE YOUR SHIRTS WHILE WORKING.
- #3. BATHING SUITS NEED TO BE MODEST PLEASE! NO BIKINIS, TANKINIS ARE OK.
- #4. GIRLS, PLEASE DO NOT BRING TOPS THAT BARELY MEET THE TOP OF YOUR JEANS - NO TUMMIES SHOWING!!! NO LOW CUT, TIGHT FITTING OR SPAGHETTI STRAPS.
- #5. NO BARE FEET – THERE ARE NAILS, SCREWS ETC. - OUCH!!!

We will be sending you another letter about a week and a half before your trip. That letter will have emergency phone numbers, info about our meeting location at the San Diego Airport, etc.

Please be praying that God will direct our every word and action and that all we do and say will bring honor and glory to Him and further His Kingdom work in Mexico.

We look forward to serving with you in Mexico. Feel free to call our office if you have any questions about your upcoming trip: 800-841-0739 ext. 214 or 530-893-6750 ext.214

God bless you,

Your Outreach Coordinators  
Mexico Adventures  
Youth With A Mission  
Chico, California

## HOUSE BUILDING GROUP LEADERS' INFORMATION SHEET

At breakfast, we will usually have a leaders' meeting for about 10-15 minutes.

**DEVOTIONS:** – some options: At the base or at the job site, individually or corporately, with other groups or just with your own group.

You may use the sanctuary but please no food/or drinks.

### **VANS:**

- Before leaving for the job site each morning please make sure that each van has: the team's lunch, a large water cooler, a trash bag, and a first aid kit. Clear the trash out of the vans daily.
- When returning from the job site, please bring the water jug and the lunch boxes back to the kitchen. Make sure all the trash is taken out of them.
- Check passengers for wet paint and tar on clothes or shoes before getting in the vans at the end of each day.
- You are responsible for the keys to your vans...if the keys are locked in a van your YWAM leader will have a spare key....but it will take a long time to get to you....so hold on to your keys!!!
- Return radios to YWAM leader for batteries to be recharged or replaced.

### **SAFETY:**

**\*\*DRIVING CAUTION:** In Mexico a left turn signal may mean a left turn or may be indicating that it is safe to pass. Don't assume the latter...**ALWAYS** check before you pass. And **ALWAYS PUMP YOUR BREAKS AND CHECK YOUR REAR VIEW MIRROR BEFORE TURNING LEFT!!!** We have had a couple of close calls.

- When driving to the beach please make sure to stay on the packed road and **NEVER DRIVE UP OVER THE DUNES ON TO THE BEACH** (the vans are not 4-wheel drive jeeps!! The last tow charge was \$150.00 US: **paid by the driver.**)

-Morning joggers, evening walkers: we ask that women always have a guy with them during these times.

### **PURCHASES:**

- Paint money should be turned into your YWAM leader on Monday morning, so your paint can be purchased and at your site as early as possible.
- The decision to purchase additional items, such as: out house, bath house, stove, electricity, extra windows, bunk beds, etc., must be made by Tuesday but no later than Wednesday AM. Record your items on your extras sheet and give it to your YWAM leader. If the item you want is not on that sheet, please ask your YWAM leader.
- Optional Purchases: (If you feel led and have the funds)  
You may shop on Thursday, to buy blankets, clothes, pots and pans etc for your family. This can be done with your family or just a couple of team members. Or you may buy these items at the store on any day of the week.
- Bonfires: You can purchase wood or bring the cut ends and scrap pieces back from the job site.

**FOOD:**

- Due to the size of our groups we are sorry we are not able to prepare special meals. The kitchen does, however, try to accommodate special food needs/intolerances/allergies. Inform your YWAM leader of any special dietary needs and allergies. BUT please advise any vegetarians, vegans and people with lactose intolerance or allergies to bring some of their own food because most of the meals have meat, cheese or dairy. There is usually fresh fruit available at breakfast, salad at dinner and peanut butter and jelly at all meals.
- If you have a Birthday in your group, let your YWAM leader know at the beginning of the week and we can order a cake, and or buy a piñata. Cakes are \$25-30 and piñatas with candy are \$15-20.

**WATER:**

- There is clean drinking water available. Please have each team member bring a large mouthed water bottle to refill each day. Drink plenty of water: Wash your hands at every opportunity.....or use hand sanitizer.
- Baja is a desert area; water is very scarce: showers need to be limited to 3 minutes not more than once a day. Some teens may need to be taught about military showers!!!

**OUTREACH:**

- Be prepared for outreach during the week - usually Tuesday and Thursday evenings. You may have opportunity to lead worship, share testimonies, or preach through a translator.
- There will be an Orphanage tour on Friday morning for those who wish to go.

**ALCOHOL/DRUGS:**

No alcohol/drugs at any time during the week.

**PICTURES:**

The families love to have a picture of the group that has built their house. You can give the family a small photo album and a picture in a frame when we dedicate the home on Thursday. If you put your pictures on a USB stick or you have a device with an SD card, pictures can be printed in town. (Make a quick trip to your local Dollar Store to get an album and a frame.)

We trust this helps you prepare...if you have any questions, do not hesitate to call us before the trip.

May God Bless you for reaching out and responding to the needs of the needy in Mexico.

Barry, Asher, Taylinn, Jill and Debi  
Mexico Adventures  
Youth With A Mission  
Chico California

## PROPER DRESS CODE:

Since the fashions have become skimpier in the U.S. and Canada we thought it would be easier to address this prior to coming to Mexico.

1. No underwear showing at anytime (Guys and Girls)
2. Girls: No Bikinis, (Tankinis are okay) or a t-shirt over your bikini top  
No tight fitting shirts, tank tops, low-cut necks, and no exposed mid- sections.
3. Guys and girls may wear long pants or knee-length shorts **but no shorter**.
4. Guys must keep shirts on at all times.
5. No skimpy clothing worn to and from the dorms to the bathrooms.

The reason for this dress code is that the indigenous Oaxacan people we interact with are very modest and conservative; the staff, at both the orphanage and house building ministries, follows these guidelines. Therefore, so as to not offend others, we too need to comply with these standards. We realize that this is hard, especially for teen girls, but if they know ahead of time, they don't need to even pack inappropriate attire.

## SMOKING:

There are designated smoking areas at each ministry location. There is no smoking allowed in the rental vans, on outreach or at the house building sites in the community. The minimum smoking age is 18.

## CANCELLATION POLICY:

Full refund if you cancel 60 days prior to the trip date.

Groups may be reduced in size and deposits applied to the rest of the group provided that the group does not fall **below a minimum of 10 participants**.

If you cancel your trip or reduce the size of your group by the deadline - which is 60 days prior to your outreach - we will give you a full refund or apply the deposits to your balance due, provided that your group size does not fall below the required minimum number.

Please note: There will be no refund of deposits for trip cancellations made after the deadline. Exceptions may be made for very unusual circumstances.

Thank you so much for your help and for your willingness to serve our brothers and sisters in Mexico. Please feel free to call with any questions you may have.

Barry, Asher, Jill & Debi  
Mexico Adventures  
YWAM CHICO  
1-800-841-0739 or 530-893-6750 Ext. 214

## **TO ALL TEAM LEADERS GOING TO BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO**

### **Financial Matters:**

Ground fees for the week at the Orphanage .....\$275.00 per person

Ground fees for the week of house building: .... \$325.00 per person

The cost for building materials to build a house is \$4,000.00 U.S.

Please remember that your deposits of \$100.00 per person are needed by the dates specified in your “**Outreach Confirmation Letter**” Please request an extension if you are not able to send the deposit by the required date. If you do not ask for an extension and are late with your deposits....you may lose your reservation for your week.

The balance of all fees must be sent in to us 45 days prior to your trip.

Please reserve ONLY the number of spots that you know you can fill....and if it looks like the group will be smaller or larger....please CONTACT US RIGHT AWAY.

Housebuilding teams....Remember that paint and the other extras for your house(s) that you are building must be paid for in US currency when you get to Mexico. Please bring that cash with you. You will not be able to pay by check or credit card.

### **IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

ALL US citizens must have a passport, unless they are under 18 years of age and then they MUST HAVE their birth certificates or a “certified” copy of their birth certificate.

ALL FOREIGN NATIONALS will need a passport and if applicable, a valid visa or green card in order to reenter the US...if in doubt please ask us

### **Mexico visas:**

Because you are there for only one week a visa is not required.

### **VACCINATIONS:**

No vaccinations are required into Baja Calif. A current Tetanus Booster is highly recommended. Suggested vaccinations are Hepatitis A and Typhoid

# *Suggestions on How to Build a Y.W.A.M. home in MEXICO*

- 1) Find the cement slab and meet the family. Shake hands and learn their names and tell them yours. Even the children. – Gather your group and pray on the slab, with the family for the week of building and bonding.
- 2) Take inventory of the materials that are there. Lumber, roofing materials, etc. Notify leader if anything is missing.
- 3) Your Ywam leader will talk to the family about the paint color they are choosing and then get paint for you.  
(you will need to give money to your leader from the 'extras' for paint.
- 4) Set up a cutting station
- 5) Cut all boards for the first long side wall (you have plans to follow BUT DO NOT CUT if you do not understand the plans completely ...ask your YWAM job supervisor if in doubt !!!). Get people building the side wall.
- 6) Cut all the boards for the other long side wall- set aside in an organized manner.
- 7) Cut all boards for the house, all walls and roof panels.
- 8) Build all the walls. After the walls are built set them aside to be painted.
- 9) Build 4 roof panels. It is easiest to do this on the cement slab. Square panels on ground by attaching safeds and by sheeting one piece of OSB on opposite side of roof panel from safeds....this will save you tons of time!!
- 10) After roof panels are built, paint the safeds on the roof panels the house color.
- 11) Determine front door location and frame the door. (the door may be in a corner for better use of floor space in the house...BUT ask the family WHERE THEY WANT THE DOOR.)
- 12) Determine the number of bed rooms and the floor plan needed.
- 13) All trim and fascia board should be painted
- 14) Stand all four walls and nail corners.
- 15) Build center support wall inside the walls.
- 16) Stand and attach wall
- 17) Install roof panels and then sheet
- 18) Install fascia boards and the metal flashing
- 19) Install roofing material
- 20) Determine window locations and how many. Cut holes for windows. Install windows and window trim.

## COMMON FOODS

Ensalada	Salad
Sopa	Soup
Huevos	Eggs
Pescado	Fish
Carne	Meat
Pollo	Chicken
Verduras	Vegetables
Queso	Cheese
Papas	Potatoes
Frijoles	Beans
Arroz	Rice
Pan	Bread
Tortillas	Tortillas
Fruta	Fruit
Postre	Dessert
Refresco	Soft Drink
Café	Coffee
Te	Tea
Leche	Milk
Salsa	Hot sauce
Mantequilla	Butter
Azucar	Sugar
Sal	Salt
Pimienta	Pepper



- 21) Cut and install trim for house corners.
- 22) Hang Door.
- 23) Build and install interior bedroom walls.
- 24) Make beds (build them)
- 25) Build kitchen counter. \* take note of what they have an plan room for stove, refrigerator-sink.....whatever.
- 26) Use extra wood for building more kitchen and bedroom shelves.
- 27) Hang curtains-cut dowels as rods.
- 28) Dedication of house with bible/ keys when house is completed. Thank God
- 29) Take a group photo of your team, with the family and their beautiful, warm, safe, dry home.
- 30) Praise God for the honor of being a part of this!!

## THINGS TO DO LIST AND WHO IS DOING IT

Somewhere after the walls and roof panels are completed it is the habit of some of the most efficient teams to make a list.

This list can be posted on the jobsite for people to choose an item to do and write their name by it.  
EXAMPLES BELOW (you can list whatever items need to be done.)

\_\_\_\_\_ CUT HOLES FOR WINDOWS  
AND INSTALL

\_\_\_\_\_ PAINT OUTHOUSE

\_\_\_\_\_ PAINT SHOWER HOUSE

\_\_\_\_\_ INSTALL WATER TANK

\_\_\_\_\_ MAKE BEDS

\_\_\_\_\_ HANG CURTAINS

\_\_\_\_BUILD KITCHEN COUNTER  
\_\_\_\_TRIM WINDOWS  
\_\_\_\_INSTALL TRIM ON HOUSE  
\_\_\_\_INSTALL FASCIA BOARDS  
\_\_\_\_CLEAN UP PROPERTY  
\_\_\_\_Build shelves in bedrooms  
\_\_\_\_Pour Patio and Plant palm trees  
(just kidding)  
\_\_\_\_INSTALL SOLAR KIT (IF  
THERE IS ONE.....)  
\_\_\_\_PUT IN ELECTRICAL  
PACKAGE.

*You get the idea....hope this helps you.....*

# **Tentative Schedule for Home Building Outreach Vicente Guerrero, Baja California, Mexico**

(Subject to Change...be flexible...be very flexible!!!!)

## **Sunday**

- 10:00A.M      Meet Drivers at airport. Drivers get vans.
- 10:30 AM      Load m' up head m' out to IN-AND-OUT BURGER for lunch  
(this is **not** included in your fees).
- 12:00 PM      Leave for the border.
- 2:00 PM      Stop in Ensenada for a restroom and snack break (approx.  
30 minutes). At WalMart or Soriana
- 5:00 PM      Stop at the Pemex Gas Station for a restroom break.
- 5:30 PM      Dinner at Pollo Loco (Papa Ruben's) – included in your fees,  
this is an all-you-can eat meal – "clean" & "safe" taco stand.
- 7:00 PM      Pull into IDT – get room assignments and settle in.
- 8:00 PM      Meet together for a short orientation.

## **Monday**

- 8:00 AM      Breakfast (Desayuno)      **(EVERY OTHER MORNING  
BREAKFAST IS AT 7:00)**
- 8:15 AM      Breakfast Duties – Kitchen Clean Up & Sandwich Crew.  
Morning Duties – Bathroom Checks & Cleanup
- 8:45 AM      Devotions – Group mtg
- 9:30 AM      Start loading up vans – water jugs, lunch boxes, etc.
- 9:45 AM      Leave for jobsite. (You will eat your lunch at the job site)
- 5:00 PM      Return from jobsite.
- 5:30 PM      Dinner (Cena)
- 5:45 PM      Evening Duties – Kitchen Cleanup
- 6:30 PM      TBD Options include: Outreach ...Free Time.....Group  
Time.....Beach, etc., etc..

## **Tuesday**

- 7:00 AM Desayuno
- 7:15 AM Breakfast Duties – Kitchen Clean Up & Sandwich Crew.  
Morning Duties – Bathroom Checks & Cleanup.
- 8:00 AM Devotions / Group mtg.
- 9:15 AM Leave for the jobsite.
- 3:45 PM Return from jobsite. Get cleaned up for cena & prepared for Outreach
- 4:15 PM Cena
- 4:45 PM Evening Duties – Kitchen Cleanup
- 5:15 PM Leave for Outreach. Be prepared with testimonies, bible lessons, worship, etc. Dress appropriately – long pants. Bring a sweat shirt (just in case.) Location TBA.
- 9:00 PM Return from Outreach – Personal Time or Group Meeting etc. Taco run...

## **Wednesday**

- 7:00 AM Desayuno
- 7:15 AM Breakfast Duties – Kitchen Clean Up & Sandwich Crew.  
Morning Duties – Bathroom Checks & Cleanup.
- 8:00 AM Devotions / Group mtg.
- 9:15 AM Leave for the jobsite.
- 3:45 PM Return from jobsite. Get cleaned up for cena & prepared for church (optional).
- 4:15 PM Cena
- 4:45 PM Evening Duties – Kitchen Cleanup
- 5:30 PM Leave for Open Door Church (optional). Service is held in Spanish; however, translation headsets are available.
- 8:00 PM Return from church – Personal Time or Group Meeting (check with your leader).

Optional Taco Run or Ice Cream (\$ your responsibility)

## **Thursday**

7:00 AM	Desayuno
7:15 AM	Breakfast Duties – Kitchen Clean Up & Sandwich Crew. Morning Duties – Bathroom Checks & Cleanup.
8:00 AM	Devotions / Group mtg.
9:15 AM	Leave for the jobsite.
12:00-4:00	Complete house and have dedication ceremony. Return from site and get cleaned up for cena & IDT church service or outreach – location TBD.
5:00 PM	Cena
5:15 PM	Evening Duties – Kitchen, Bathroom
5:30 PM	IDT Church Service or outreach

## **Friday**

7:30 AM	Desayuno
7:45 AM	Breakfast Duties – Kitchen Clean Up (No sandwiches needed) Morning Duties – Bathroom Checks & Cleanup.
8:30 AM	Devotions / Group mtg.
9:15 AM	Tour of Orphanage – Foundation for His Ministry (optional). Shopping for souvenirs / hand-made crafts – bring cash in small denominations.
12:30 PM	Return to IDT for a sandwich lunch.
1:15 PM	Drive to beach (optional).
4:00 PM	Return from beach. Get cleaned up for cena at special restaurant.
5:45 PM	Leave for dinner at restaurant. (6pm)
8:00 PM	Return to IDT Base – bonfire, smores, pack suitcases etc.

## **Saturday**

6:00 am      Rise and shine...and pack up to leave.

Breakfast will be available at this time. Eat when you wish. You may pack a lunch for the road or eat in Ensenada where we will stop for an hour and a half.

6:30 AM      Have bags packed and out to the trailer.

### **PASSPORTS IN CARRY-ON!!!!**

Clean dorms, pick up trash, empty trash can.  
Stack donations neatly on the designated dining room table.

7:00 AM      Leave for Ensenada

10:00 AM      Arrive in Ensenada for lunch and shopping. Have fun!  
(Don't wander off alone. Stay in groups. And don't stray out of the main "touristy" area.)

11:30 AM      Leave Ensenada and head toward the border.

2:00 PM      Wait in line at the border – you can do some last-minute shopping right from your window! Souvenirs, snacks – you name it! Prayerfully we'll make it across by about 4:00 PM or so...

5:00-5:30      Arrive at the airport – unload the trailer and vans.

Have a great trip home!

## **¡Hasta La Próxima Vez!**

## **The Ten Commandments for the Tourist**

### **I**

Thou shalt not expect to find things as thou hast them at home,  
for thou hast left home to find things different.

### **II**

Thou shalt not take anything TOO seriously,  
for a care-free mind is the beginning of a fine holiday.

### **III**

Thou shalt not let other tourists get on thy nerves,  
for thou art paying out good money to enjoy thyself.

### **IV**

Remember to take only half the clothes thou thinks thou needs  
and twice the money.

### **V**

Know at all times where thy passport is,  
for a person without a passport is a person without a country.

### **VI**

Remember that if we had been expected to stay in one place,  
we would have been created with roots.

### **VII**

Thou shalt not worry, for he that worriers hath no pleasure.  
Few things are ever fatal.

### **VIII**

When in Rome, thou shall be prepared to do somewhat as the Romans do.

### **IX**

Thou shalt not judge the people of a country by the one person  
who has given thee trouble.

### **X**

Remember thou art a guest in other lands  
and he that treateth  
his host with respect shall be honored.

## 7 REASONS TO GO ON A SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP

1. Jesus commanded us to go! Matt. 28:19 (& empowered us to do so) Acts 2:8
2. It makes us "Christ Like". Phil. 2:5
3. If we don't go, how will they know? Rom. 10:14 & 15
4. Helps us discover our spiritual gifts.
5. Appeals to our sense of adventure. I Cor. 2:9
6. Makes our faith come alive. Phil. 2:14-16
7. Causes us to love the world like God does. John 3:16 (There is no favoritism in the family of God.)



### **Bonus Reason:**

**Builds incredible memories and friendships of a lifetime. John 17:22**

**Please pray that our mission outreach will:**

- \*Help us meet the practical and spiritual needs of the people we are going to**
- \*Help us either plant seeds for the Gospel, or harvest those planted by others**
- \*Help them begin to see what God has planned for their lives**
- \*Help us learn to work together both physically and spiritually**
- \*Help us learn to cope with one another in difficult situations**
- \*Help us gain a deeper understanding of who God is**
- \*Help us gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a family in Christ**
- \*Help us develop a more thankful heart for the blessings God has given to all of us**
- \*Help us gain a new perspective on Scripture as we see the world through the eyes of the poor and within another culture**
- \*Help us discover new dimensions to our personal relationship with God**



## Attitudes of Outreach

Go now with a servant spirit! Here's some last minute advice:

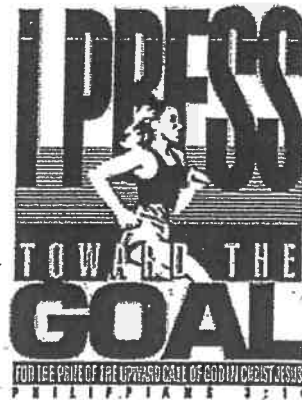
**Remember** that you are going as an ambassador for Christ and as an ambassador for the country we represent. Guard your attitude and the way you respond to unfamiliar situations.

**Prepare yourself** to fit in....for last minute changes....for a change in expectations, for what you hope to do may be different.

**Prepare to serve**, even in areas you don't like. Give of yourself, even in ways you haven't given before. Volunteer for things, making yourself available when others will not!

**Prepare to care** for others. Be sensitive to other's personalities, age differences, energy levels, sleep time, and language differences.

This outreach will change you. Your attitudes will determine how that change will express itself to God and others.



Pray once again for all areas of immediate concern that we have covered.

Pray that God would help you remember everything to bring on the trip.

Pray for safety in travel. Memorize Phil. 2:5-8?

Now memorize the verse below as an encouragement, and "focus" verse. And **KEEP PRAYING!!!**

**Col. 3:22-25**

***"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."***

***Bon voyage!***

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## HELPFUL TIPS ABOUT MEXICO AND THE PEOPLE.

The population of Mexico is approximately 100,700,000. There is a large disparity between the upper class and the lower class. An average of 45% of the nation's income goes to the richest 10% of the people, and 15% of the people live in absolute poverty. The average income in Mexico provides for few luxuries. Most poor are just trying to keep food on the table and clothes on their backs.

Mexico has over two hundred distinct ethnic groups, each with its own language. Because of this, although Spanish is the official language, a huge language barrier exists and many of the indigenous population suffer from discrimination.

Most of the people we work with and serve are native to Oaxaca, (wah-HA-ca) - a state in the southern part of Mexico. As a general rule, most of them are courteous, hospitable and hard working. They are very family oriented, proud, patriotic and artistic. They are a generous people, and they delight in giving and receiving gifts. The size or cost of the gift is not important. When invited to someone's house it is customary to bring something (e.g. food, flowers or even candy for the children). Gifts given and received confirm friendly relations.

There are some difficult differences that you should be aware of. Punctuality is not a value. It is not unusual for them to be late or to completely overlook an appointment. They do not regard the clock as a master to be obeyed but rather, they put a priority on relationships. Don't take this personally.

Truth bending is common. They prefer to make you happy by telling you what they think you want to hear at the moment. It is difficult for them to be honest and forthright, when they believe that to do so would hurt or offend someone.

Throughout history, Mexicans have learned how to survive no matter what government is in power or how bad the economy is. They have a fatalistic outlook on life and have learned not to expect much reward in this life; as a result they do very little long term planning. Alcoholism is prevalent in all levels of society (just as it is in the U.S.) but especially so among the poor. It primarily affects the men and carries with it all the ugly consequences for the family.

While the majority of Mexicans identify with the Roman Catholic Church, their beliefs are a confused blend of Christianity, folklore, superstition and pagan rituals. Idolatry is widespread, and religious symbols abound everywhere...in the home, workplace, construction sites and even automobiles. They are quick to seek the blessings of God and have deep spiritual convictions, although their religious practices may seem pagan and superficial to most Evangelicals. In their homeland, they hold to their traditional beliefs, however, when they move to the Baja, there seems to be a greater receptivity to evangelical Christianity.



## **MIGRANT WORKER POVERTY AND EXPLOITATION**

The San Quintin Valley in Baja California Mexico and specifically the towns of Vicente Guerrero, San Quintin, Zapata and Camalu are filled with migrant workers originally from the state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico – over 2000 miles away. These people were brought to Baja California with promises of housing, plentiful work, good working conditions and fair wages. The reality that confronted them was a far cry from the promise.

Housing: The workers, regardless of the numbers in a family, were given one room (dirt floor, single window,) in a multi-room structure made of corrugated metal. They cooked their meals in that one room and used a common lavatory area. They payed for utilities and bought their food from the, “company store,” (which charges more than the regular grocery store.)

Over the years much has changed regarding living conditions. While some people permanently live in work camps, others rent a room in a neighborhood or live with relatives. The more fortunate have managed to purchase a small lot on which they have built shelters made of pallets, cardboard, plastic, or whatever other material is available. Over 75% of the people have no electricity, or running water and use a make-shift outhouse.

Labor: Those with steady work can earn approximately \$10 a day for a 10 hr. work day. Those who pick crops can earn more but have no assurance of daily work. It all depends on the growing season. Sometimes they work seven or more days in a row. Sometimes they have no work at all or work only one or two days in the week.

People say that labor conditions vary widely in the valley. Some growers treat their workers well, pay them on time and provide them with health insurance. Other workers are treated harshly, fired for missing one day of work, and are payed irregularly.

A health department survey of 1,947 children in the region, found that 1,162 suffered from some degree of malnutrition. Another study by Baja California University found that the San Quintin Valley has the highest infant mortality rate in the state.

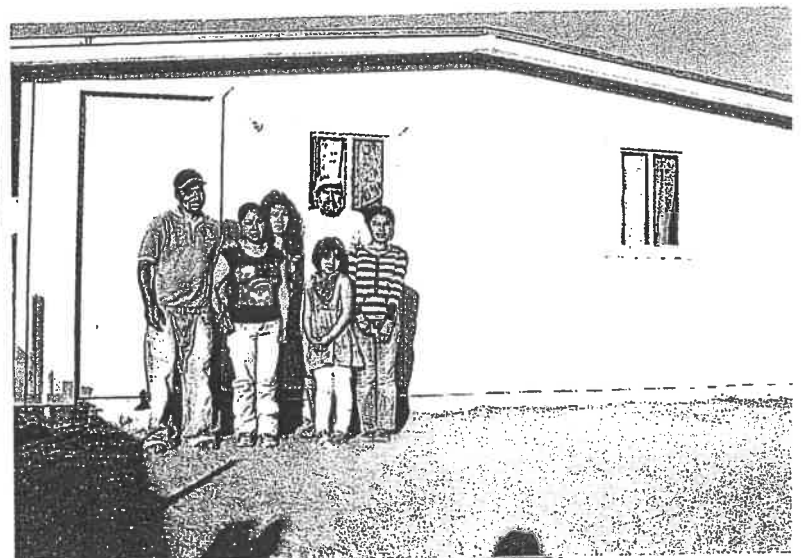
For many children there is not a future beyond what their parents are doing. They don't envision anything other than a hand-to-mouth, daily survival type of existence. They have no dreams for the future. Most children don't make it beyond the sixth grade and cannot get any job other than working in the fields. One mother, pregnant with her fourth child, said, "You work from sunup to sundown and you only make enough for beans, rice and tortillas. When we came, we told ourselves we would only be here for three months. Look at us. We have been here six years now."

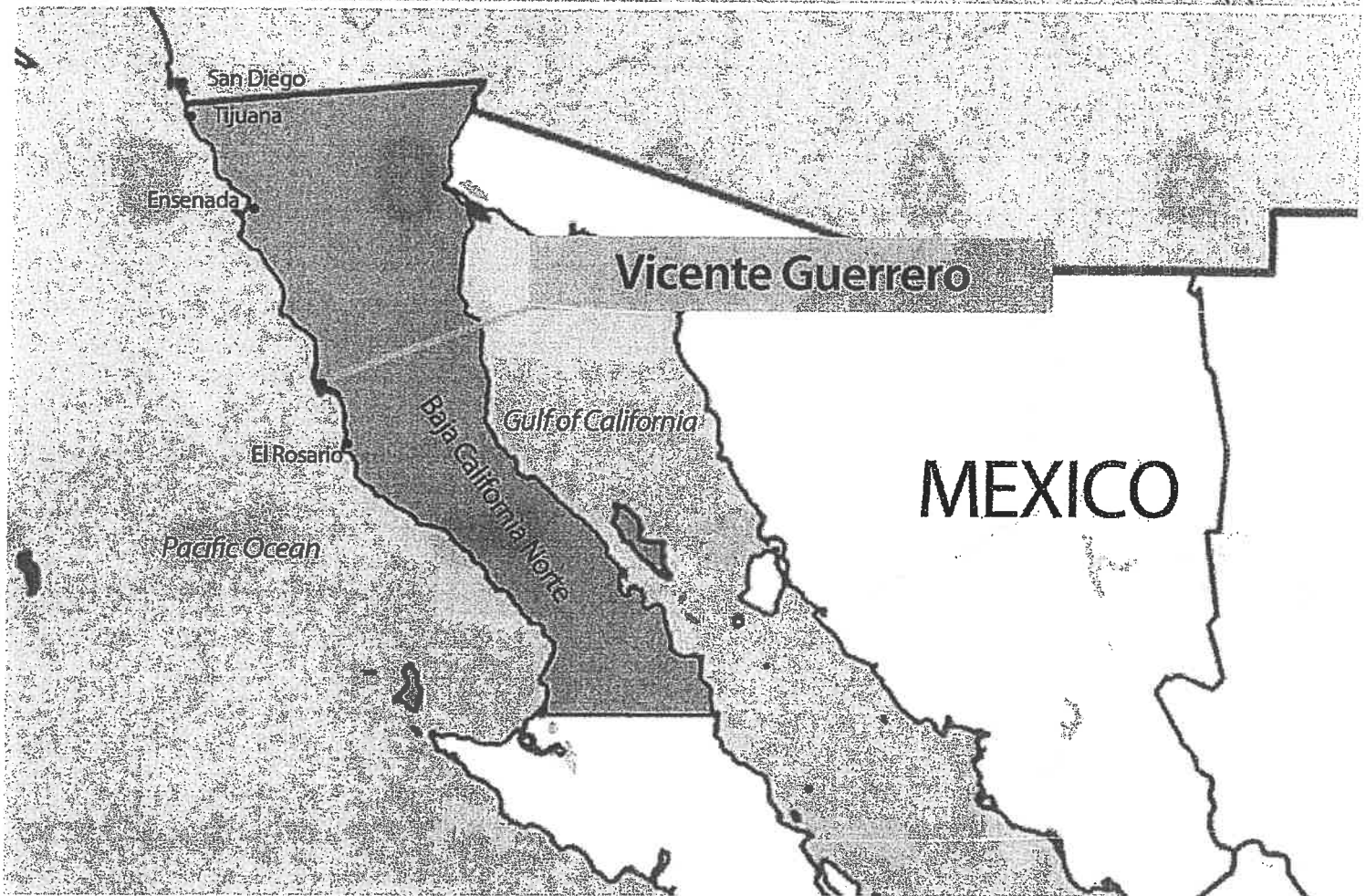
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### **When a Family in Mexico receives a Home:**

1. It breaks the cycle of poverty in one generation, by setting them ahead economically.
2. Children of parents, who own a home, are three times more likely to stay in school than those who don't.
3. Health benefits: Home ownership reduces respiratory diseases and other sickness... (concrete floor vs. a dirt floor).
4. Socio-emotional health: It changes the parents' and children's outlook on the future. Much of poverty is the result of the inability to think long term and plan for the future (implicational thinking).
5. Spiritual Impact: People are ministered to with the two handed gospel - physically and spiritually.

**Together we can make a difference.**







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## Dying to Work



*Rita sighed as she trudged up the road from the camp toward the tomato fields. The sun was just beginning to rise, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. The blazing heat made tomato picking even more difficult, and if her eight year old son was unable to fill his basket, she would need to work twice as hard. Rita peeked down at her six-month old and wished again that she had been able to leave her with relatives in their village in the South. The little one was always crying and she wasn't as active as Rita thought a baby should be. Rita was also worried about her husband. Jose was coughing up blood and she knew that despite promises, there would be no doctor at the camp this year. She wondered uneasily about the airplanes that sprayed pesticides on neighboring fields while her family worked. There were meetings in the town about this, but the meetings were in Spanish. Rita and Jose spoke only the indigenous Mayan language of their village. Rita pushed the thought out of her mind. This was the only income they earned all year. At least it's better than starving to death, Rita told herself.*

## **An Ancient Culture**

When the Spanish conquered Mexico, many of Mexico's indigenous peoples intermarried with their colonizers. But the poorest of the native Mayan, Aztec, Zapotec and Mixed people kept doing what they had always done....farming the lands, living in the small remote villages where their ancestors had lived for thousands of years and speaking the indigenous languages of their ancestors.

As the Mexican government modernized and Mexico became important to North American international food markets, indigenous people were left out of decisions regarding what would happen to the land they farmed. Land was privatized and sold to large agribusiness companies and indigenous farmers found themselves unable to compete with the demand for produce grown with fertilizers, pesticides, and expensive drought and insect resistant seeds. Those farmers who did manage to obtain fertilizers were soon left with land that would no longer produce because the fertilizers they could afford rendered the land infertile after a few seasons of use. Seasons of drought further deteriorated the indigenous lands in Southern Mexico.

## **Migrating to Survive**

For Mexico's poorest citizens, it is no longer possible to make a living in their native lands. Indigenous people make up an overwhelming percentage of the country's most poverty stricken, with the largest populations existing in the southernmost regions. Because they can no longer grow food of their own and there are no jobs where they live, many indigenous people travel North, where hundreds of agribusiness corporations grow everything from tomatoes to tobacco. With the promise of good wages, decent housing and regular work, thousands relocate in hopes of surviving one more year. What they find is low pay, housing that is devoid of plumbing and prone to fire, and employers who often disregard the human cost of their methods. Sadly, most of these workers cannot afford to go back home until the season is done.

## **Deadly Consequences**

The biggest danger for the indigenous peoples isn't substandard housing or lack of nutrition. Many remain unaware that the pesticides they work with every day, though designed to help the plants grow, are deadly to the thousands of workers who touch and inhale them.

Over 80% of all field workers in North American agribusiness are exposed to dangerous pesticides, and as a result the indigenous populations of Mexico have higher cancer and lung disease rates than the rest of the population.

Because of extreme poverty, it is not uncommon for woman who are pregnant or nursing to work in the fields alongside their husbands and children. At any given time, up to 25% of the field workers in Northern Mexico are children younger than 14 and well over half of the migrant workers are women. Because of pesticide exposure, birth defects, stillbirths and low birth weights are more common. Many workers also report rashes, weakness, dizziness, blurred vision, vomiting, diarrhea, chest pains and breathing difficulties. Pesticide use has also been linked to extremely high rates of leukemia in migrant children.

Companies rarely attempt to protect workers from pesticide exposure or educate them about the dangers of exposure. Non-profit organizations have launched campaigns against pesticide use in the U.S. and Mexico but the vast majority of indigenous workers do not speak Spanish or English. This language barrier prevents them from learning about the chemicals they work with. When health complications do arise, workers have nowhere to turn. Few companies provide their seasonal workers with health clinics or any sort of health insurance. Most families use their earnings for food, housing and other immediate needs - they cannot afford medicine of doctors.

## A People Forgotten

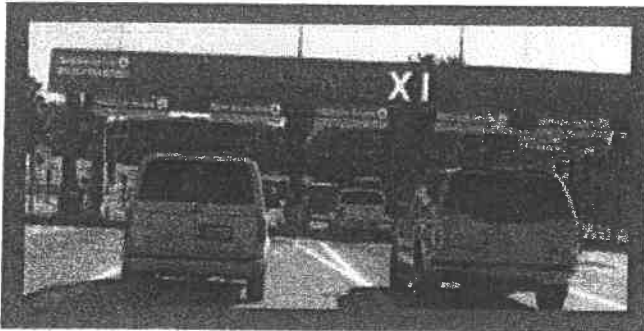
Life for many indigenous Mexicans consists of working, sleeping and hoping that there will be work and food tomorrow. Treated as less than human by their government and their employers, most do not know how precious they are to God. While many may overlook these people, God sees their plight and cares for each one - each baby who is born malformed, each child who works long hours in the fields in order to eat, and each father and mother who struggles to keep going one more day. This is not the life God desires for His children. He longs to see His kingdom come among them.

## PRAY

- \* that God's kingdom will come in Mexico*
- \* that God will bless efforts to educate and protect Mexico's field workers and their children*
- \* that consumers, business leaders, and governments will love their neighbors as themselves*
- \* that Jesus will show you His heart for the abundant life He longs to give each person*



## Is It Safe to Visit Mexico?



The media has been working overtime in recent months spreading exaggerated reports of violence and criminal activity in Mexico, thereby engendering great fear in North Americans about traveling into Mexico. Based on this type of misinformation, many people, both tourists and short-term missionaries are avoiding Mexico.

This is a very sad situation on many levels. The financial impact trickles down through the Mexican society, hurting an already-struggling economy. But, even more devastating is the loss of assistance which mission's teams bring to the poorest people of this state.

**We would like to set the record straight: life in Vicente Guerrero where your group will be going, and on the Baja peninsula is normal, safe and calm.** People are going about their normal business, going to work and school, shopping and playing. We are bringing teams down at least twice a month and we have crossed the border at Tijuana many, many times in the past several months. We do not go into Tijuana at all....we stay on the main highway. Our shopping at the end of the week is in Ensenada...where five cruise ships a week allow 1000's of people to disembark and stroll around the city - with no problems at all. We have never, ever witnessed even a hint of violent activity in all of our travels. Nor have any of our teams reported ever hearing or seeing anything of that nature.

The level of crime that the news media is so quick to inflate and report is, for the most part, between drug cartels and between the cartels and police/military. Mexican President has pledged to fight the drug cartels. If anything, we are seeing increased police and military presence - which we feel is a good sign. It makes us feel safer. The major areas of violence are Ciudad Juarez across the border from El Paso Texas, portions of some southern states, and the Mexico City area. Each of these locations is 1500 to 2000 miles from Vicente Guerrero where we minister. **The area of Baja California and in particular the town where we minister (Vicente Guerrero) is in the green (safe) area on the U.S. State Department violence map.**

The U.S. State Department site also notes that, "Millions of U.S. citizens safely visit Mexico each year, including thousands who cross the U.S. land border every day for study, tourism or work."

Please feel free to email us (sto@ywamchico.com) with any questions or concerns. If you would like further reassurance from any of the many group leaders who have led teams to Mexico in the last few months, we can provide you with contact information.

Barry, Asher, Jill, and Debi  
Mexico Adventures  
Youth With A Mission – Chico, California

## **Mexico Adventure...one family's perspective**

If you are considering the amazing opportunity of taking a short-term mission trip to serve in Vicente Guerrero; Baja California, Mexico and have serious concerns regarding safety on your trip, then this letter was written just for you.

I have been sitting in my living room going through photos for my oldest son's 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation montage. When I asked him which photo he wanted to submit for the category, "A picture of graduate doing something that shows his character," he immediately answered, "It has to be one from our Mexico trips! That would be so awesome!" Both he and his younger brother tell my husband and me that these experiences have changed their hearts forever.

Our family has had the privilege of participating in short-term mission trips, hosted by YWAM Chico, in the Spring of 2010 and again in 2011. As always, before every trip, we have read the U.S. Department of State's latest travel bulletin which includes warnings and suggestions regarding travel to Mexico ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)).

As we were reading the current travel bulletins, we found little change from the ones issued in 2010 and 2011. For a majority of Mexican States, the listed warnings are "...defer non-essential travel..." This warning includes the city of Juarez, which is 1,500 miles from Tijuana (which is where you will cross). This notice is accompanied by general safety suggestions to travel during daylight hours and on main toll roads.

On our trips to Vicente Guerrero, YWAM Chico has been our gracious host. We left San Diego airport well before noon and traveled in a convoy of vans connected by walkie-talkie radios. We crossed the border into Tijuana and immediately proceeded south. We stopped at two military checkpoints on the toll road heading south and arrived in Vicente Guerrero at dusk, just in time to enjoy the true treat of Papa Reuben's tacos.

Once at our destination and during all of the following week's outreaches and activities, we were in contact with and guided by our facilitators. My husband and I did not feel unsafe at any time during our adventures.

On our way home, we left early in the morning and stopped briefly to shop in Ensenada – a cruise ship destination. We were instructed to stay in groups and not stray from the main tourist market area. We then drove through Tijuana and merged into long lines of slow moving

## **Mexico Adventure...one family's perspective**

traffic headed for the border crossing. This area had a lot of security - police officers and their dogs were patrolling between the cars. My husband and I were nervous about approaching the border but had no sense of imminent danger.

I am not making light of the concerns my husband and I share when we plan our trips to Vicente Guerrero. I have to keep in mind, however, that YWAM Chico makes this trip, following the same route, on a regular basis. They have associates in Mexico that cross even more often and are ready to assist outreach teams. Every YWAM leader that I have spoken to in the last 3 years has been aware of the latest developments and possible challenges that may be encountered en route to Vicente Guerrero.

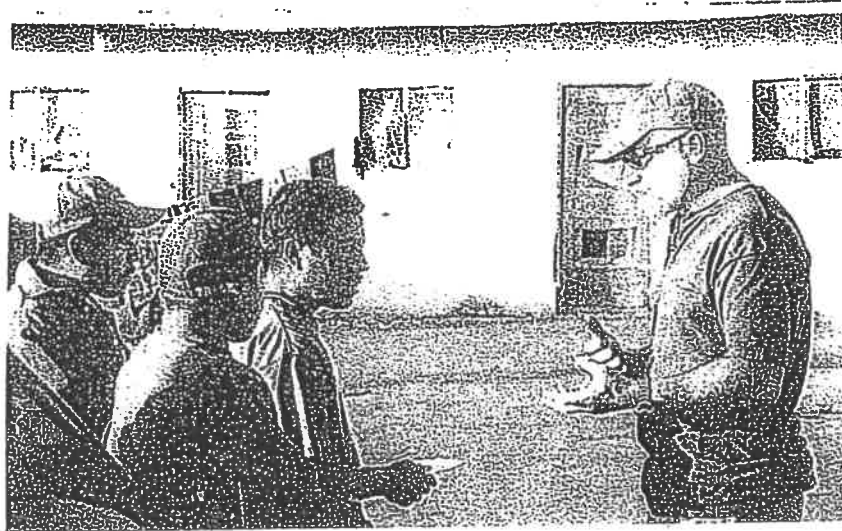
After researching, taking into account the experiences of our past trips, and realizing the responsibility of the hosting organization; my husband and I are ready to leave the few "unknowns" in God's hands. We claim His promise in Psalms 91:11: "For He will give his angels charge concerning you; to guard you in all your ways."

We, as a family, have witnessed changes in ourselves that are directly related to our short-term mission experiences. My husband and I are touched by how our boys have developed a new desire to serve. We have gained a fresh perspective of how truly blessed we are and how many resources we have that we can share with others. As an entire family, we have experienced that giving to those in need brings deep satisfaction.

This brings us back to my living room. Each photo we took from our past trips now brings back amazing memories and warmth to our hearts. There is a sense of closeness in our little family, a special bond we share from serving together side-by-side. It has been so powerful that we plan to make this trip again in the very near future. I would strongly urge you to experience this adventure with your family or your spiritual family. It is sure to bless not only you but also someone who truly needs what you can offer.

Sincerely,  
Dani Farris

# COMMUNICATING IN *SPANISH* FOR MISSIONS



## VOWEL PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

In Spanish, if you can pronounce the vowel sounds correctly, you will usually be able to say the word correctly.

A - like A in FAtther

E - like A in Late

I - like EE in FEET

LL = sounds like ya in a word

O - like O in Over

U - like OO in SOOn

## SOME USEFUL PHRASES

Si	yes
No	no
Por favor	Please
Gracias	Thank you
Muchas Gracias	Thank you very much
De Nada	You're Welcome
Donde Esta la bano	Where is the bathroom?
Habla espanol?	Do you speak Spanish?
Habla Ingles?	Do you speak English?
No hablo mucho español	I don't speak much spanish
Me entiende?	Do you understand me?
No entiendo	I don't understand
Entiendo un poco	I understand a little
Entiendo todo	I understand everything
Repitalo, por favor	Please repeat it

## WHEN YOU LEAVE

Here are some things you can say when you are leaving.

Tenemos que ir nos	We have to go now
Espero que nos encontremos otra vez	I hope we meet again
Hasta luego	See you later
Hasta mañana	See you tomorrow
Adios	Good bye
Que le vaya bien	May it go well with you
Egualmente	Same to you
Voy a regresar mañana	I will come back tomorrow
Cuando va estar aqui otra vez?	When will you be here again?
Con permiso	With your permission (I'm leaving)
Andale	Go ahead

When you leave a room it is proper to again shake hands with everyone and say "con permiso" as you walk out.

## NUMBERS

Uno	One	Dos	Two	Tres	Three	Cuatro	Four	Cinco	Five
Sies	Six	Siete	Seven	Ocho	eight	Nueve	Nine	Diez	Ten
Once	Eleven	Doce	Twelve	Trece	Thirteen	Catorce	Fourteen		
Quince	Fifteen	Dieciseis	Sixteen	Diecisiete	Seventeen				
Dieciocho	Eighteen	Diecinueve	Nineteen	Viente	Twenty				

## IN CHURCH

Here are some of the expressions and instructions you will hear during a typical church service.

Gracias a Dios	Thanks to God
Gloria al Senor	Glory to the Lord
Aleluia	Aleluia
Gloria	Glory
Levantense	Stand up
Ponganse de pie	Stand up
Sientense	Sit Down
Puedan sentar	You can sit down
Vamos a orar	Let's Pray
Vamos a leer	Let's read
Vamos a cantar	Let's sing
El Senor le bendiga	The Lord bless you
Dios le bendiga	God bless you
Capitulo	Chapter
Versiculo	Verse
Culto	Service

## EATING

Usually when you go to someone's house, they will offer you something to eat or drink. Don't be worried about the food, eat at least a little, so you do not offend them.

Tengo	I have (I am)
No Tengo	I don't have (I am not)
Tiene usted hambre	Are you hungry?
Tiene Usted sed	Are you thirsty?
Ya comi	I already ate
Ya comiste?	Did you eat?
Que quiere comer?	What do you want to eat?
Que quiere tomar?	What do you want to drink?
Desayuno	Breakfast
Almuerzo	Lunch
Cena	Dinner
La cuenta, por favor	The check please
Donde Pago?	Where to I pay?
Quiero una coca	I want a coke
Quiere una coca?	Do you want a coke?

## MONEY AND SHOPPING

In Mexico, the money is called pesos. When shopping in Mexico, it is generally a good idea to compare prices in several different stores before making your purchase, as prices can vary quite a bit from store to store. Many times you can bargain with the shopkeeper for a cheaper price.

Casa De Cambio	Money Exchange
Quiero cambiar dolares Dinero	I want to change dollars money
Donde esta la panaderia La carniceria La farmacia La papeleria La libreria El Mercado	Where is the bakery butcher shop pharmacy stationary store bookstore the market