

I hope that all is well for everyone since the last time I sent out an email. I am happy to report that things are continuing along really well. The weather has been a bit challenging with both of the hurricanes that went through as well as the temperature going up significantly. Typically, August and September are the hottest months of the year, and they have not failed to impress. Our temperatures are around 33°C as a high and with the humidity it feels like 43°C. I am beginning to understand why people here are not as concerned with moving really fast and are constantly moving into the shade. By the afternoon it is really hot and can be very exhausting and draining in the sun.

Fortunately, this has not stopped us from getting a lot done! I have had the opportunity to work with a number of teams in the village building houses. St. Joseph the Worker was a large team that was split into two weeks so we were able to accommodate them all. They worked in Samaritano 2 on ten houses that they sponsored and we had a great time working with them and getting to know them. They also helped sort through boxes of donations they brought with them and even painted some houses in another village, Progreso. The two weeks they were down here was definitely a highlight of my trip so far!

We had another group, which was a family, down here for a vacation who wanted to help for a day, so we gladly accepted! They worked with us in the shop building bunk beds that we were building for a new drug rehab center, as well as doing a lot of painting. I was able to get to know them over lunch and hear about the ministry they have in Israel, which was very interesting to learn about. Most recently a team came down to work on the drug rehab center in Severet. They financially supported and worked on a new outdoor pavilion for the men in the program to use and painted the entire building top to bottom, inside and out! It has really brightened the building up and the men in the program were really happy with the new improvements.



We have accomplished a lot in the past few months but we also have a lot of new projects starting soon. We have the new medical center that we just broke ground on, the renovation of an ambulance center and, of course, our normal tasks of more houses.

I have really enjoyed meeting the teams that have come down to work but also the other missionaries that are here working with other charitable groups. Everyone has such an interesting story about their life and why they are there. I have met some very fascinating people to say the least and have developed a lot of new friendships.

I have had many people ask me what my favourite part of being in the DR has been and I have always said it's the differences I love. I have thought of a couple of examples and will send more as I think of them.

1. I was getting a haircut in a little addition of a man's house in Paraiso village. As I was sitting there in the barbers chair looking in the mirror I saw two chickens running around outside of the house which is not something one typically sees while having their hair cut.

2. I regularly get stopped on the street by cattle or other livestock crossing the road or by people randomly stopping in the middle of the road to have a chat with a friend.



3. To carry on with the livestock theme, I saw a man riding a horse down the road, which is a fairly common sight, but this guy wanted to follow the law strictly and had a license plate tied to the saddle of his “ride”.

4. Everything can be bought individually. This includes eggs, small bags of sugar, a sprig of parsley, a single nut or bolt, etc. You name it, you can buy it in a single format.

5. And finally, I love the culture. People are very friendly and willing to help if you ever have a problem. They are some of the nicest people you will ever meet. They look out for each other and take care of each other, not out of obligation but rather desire, and they can constantly be seen visiting with each other or playing a game of dominoes on the side of the road.

Anyhow, that's all I have for this particular letter. I hope to see you all when I am back in Canada at Christmas time and thank you all for your continued support!

Sincerely,
Matt

Bonus Pictures!!!



This is my ride around the Dominican, a classy 150cc Loncin. Posing in this picture are my fiancée and I. Yup, it finally happened!

This is a view from the mountain top of Mount Isabel de Torres where the statue “Christ the Redeemer” resides.



And a wedding donkey... Honestly, your guess is as good as mine.

