

March 16, 2010

Dear Friends,

I'm back from Costa Rica! How can I say THANK YOU enough for the opportunity you have given me to be a part of this mission trip. God has been so good, to Him I give the praise and glory.

As many of you know, when I left I was concerned about the unity of our team. We were a group of 11 individuals whom had not all met each other, yet gathered together for a week to function as a team. God answered your prayers! We interacted as if we had been together for a long time – even though we were challenged by some of us being totally ignorant regarding the construction of a wall and shelves!

Sunday – church at a Spanish speaking church in Grecia, lunch at the church, then an afternoon of touring and interacting with several Casa Viva families (families desiring to give a home to an orphan child).

Monday-Wednesday – building walls and shelves in two of the Casa Viva family homes. Imagine the challenge of doing construction while the delicious smells of garlic and other aromas are coming from the kitchen! (Makes my mouth water just to think about it!)

Tuesday – our most challenging day. Cleaning, serving food to children in a very poor barrio – then off for a walking tour of the area. Very scary! A drug infested tent city area – just dangerous to walk. And . . . HOT! HOT! HOT! (I have never been so hot in my life!) Tuesday afternoon and evening – meeting the Casa Viva staff and enjoying a delicious meal at the Casa Viva director's home. (Also an opportunity to telephone home – a surprise for all of us!)

Wednesday evening – hosting a Fun Fair for the Casa Viva Families. Introducing them to some American customs for Easter crafts, American food (Hamburgers and Potato Salad). I had a real challenge of cooking hamburgers on what was supposed to be a gas grill (was a three burner gas hot plate with various sized skillets!)

Thursday – fun day of seeing the sights. The Rain Forest Waterfall, Poas Volcano, and a coffee plantation.

Not only did we prepare a home for a child, other spiritual desires were also met. Diogenes (the father of the home where we built the bedroom wall) told us, "You have helped our family so much, we want to help another family get their home ready for an orphan child". They have caught the vision of helping others!

It is hard to put into words what this week has been like for me. I have been challenged physically, socially, and spiritually. God has been so good. We have sensed His presence in keeping us safe and well, protection in travel, and given us the chance to discover a spiritual walk in another culture.

Once again, Thanks to each of you. You have been a HUGE part in this mission trip. I am looking forward to sharing with you in more detail.

God's blessing on you.  
Judy Palmer

