

...by Faith ...not by sight

January 2022

Lily Ortega
serving in Nicaragua



Happy 2022! It is a pleasure to share with you what I have experienced during these past six months. I am very happy to give you good news and not so good news, but we know that everything works for our good. Praise God for that! First of all, I am now in Bolivia after two years in Nicaragua and I will be here for a couple of months. I am spending time with my family, meeting with some friends, and enjoying time with my new nephew. My time here is just starting, I'm looking forward to what God has for me here in Bolivia.

One of the good things this past year was having Mallory in Nicaragua. She was one of the interns from the USA we received last year and we got along very well. We both share the same interest in music and she is a very creative and talented girl. I missed her in the music band when she left -- she was a good support for me in that area. We were able to get to know each other pretty well during her time in Nicaragua.

Another visitor I had for just one week was Ricki Anne Zanella. It was so refreshing to have her with us. She reminded me of how faithful God is to his daughters as He knows us from the inside out. His love is never ending! In total I had about 15 students in my guitar class during these two years but four of them remained, finished, and learned very well -- two from church and the others from school. I was able to see them play in church and learn guitar from zero. Some students played special songs in the church. I felt so blessed by that.

We were able to graduate two students from the Bible institute this year and we have other young people studying. We hope they

continue until they finish. We love to see them preparing for the ministry. We were also able to start the ministry in the municipal garbage dump -- we cook and share the gospel with them every Tuesday. It is a blessing to see some of the people from the dump attending church and even the Christmas program at the end of last year. To see the youth helping and preparing the food and putting effort into this is a real blessing for us. One of the great things was sending three young people to Costa Rica for full-time missionary training for three months. Now they continue leading their ministries. This year they are going to start overseeing some projects they have in mind. We are very blessed with their lives in the church.

Despite the situation we have experienced in recent months with COVID in Nagarote, where some of the missionaries were sick, we managed to do the youth camp at the Arraigados facility. God blessed us with 30 young people committed to learning about and remaining in Christ, in His love, and in His Word. It was a very encouraging time for all of us. In these last few semesters we have been doing women's conferences. We were learning about the good and bad women of the Bible -- reminding all women that despite our origins, good or bad, God wants to do something with us. He doesn't see our appearance or the bad things we did in the past, he sees our heart.

Last year we received two teams from the USA, one was the EXITE team in the middle of the year, and the NY team almost at the end of the year. They were both a great blessing and a great help to us in ministry. The EXITE team did a great job during the Kids Games program. The NY team was at the right time in

the church. They stopped a thief from stealing all the cables from the well. They helped us to reinforce and repair what was broken. Regarding the construction, we finished the court! We have a very nice court where the young people can come and play. We also divided the lower part of the main house into rooms. Now we have the well open, so the entire property has its own water. Thank you very much for supporting these projects. Finally, I got my license, something that makes me proud!

Another thing that makes me very happy is that I received an ukulele as a gift so I am now learning how to play. I have already been playing in church, so thank God that He blessed me so much in that way.

One of the bad news items is that Arraigados was recently broken into and the thieves took around \$8500 of sound equipment, guitars, piano, speakers, and tools. They first broke the camera, poisoned the dog, Zeus, then tied up Yilber, one of our leaders who stays to take care of the church. We are very sad about all this. But we are happy that nothing happened to Yilber and Zeus. We are planning to reinforce the security in Arraigados.

This month marks two years in Nicaragua, working in Arraigados. I know that I am not the perfect missionary nor daughter of God. I had days when I missed my family, I lost patience with things in the ministry or life in Nagarote. Sometimes I felt sad about personal things, but every time I felt like this I found God telling me through people, things, situations or even His creation that He knows me better than what is around, despite how I feel. He is a God of opportunity to see His forgiveness, grace, and mercy. I love the ministry at Arraigados

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Praise band



Mallory and Lily



A guitar student

and I know there are great things to come for this place. I am more than grateful and happy that God in His perfect plan brought me to Nicaragua to mold my heart, attitude, and everything that He sees that I must change with His work.

Thank you very much for keeping me in your prayers. Sometimes it is not easy but I choose to do God's will every day. Thank you very much for supporting the ministry, and for being part of this team. Something that excites me a lot is that this year I plan to visit the States. One of the purposes of visiting Bolivia is to have the visa interview. If everything goes well and it is God's plan, I'll be around visiting the States later this year. Also during my time here in Bolivia I will be visiting the mission field in Paraguay for a couple of weeks. So there are many things that will happen for me this year.

I know that nothing I just told you could happen without your support and prayers. Thank you very much for letting God work in your life in this way. My prayer is that you have an encounter with our God who gives us the opportunity to see His love and mercy every day.

Please keep these requests in your prayers:

- Pray for Arraigados church and that we can trust in Him in all situations. And additionally, wisdom to know how to proceed after the theft.

- Please keep in mind my residency in Nicaragua. The dates with my visa interview and to renew my residency are very close. I'll be a little late for that, so may God work in all this.
- For my time here in Bolivia. I want to use it wisely to recharge my battery, to have an open heart for whatever God wants to do in my life or through me here.

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the Waters, I will be with you: and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God... Isaiah 43.1-3.



Ricki Anne and Lily

Any information or support that you want to make to this ministry you can visit the page from GMI: gracem.org or to sent an email: lily.ortega@gracem.org – bethlily.og125@gmail.com or visit the page in Facebook: Arraigados

Hopefully, I'll see you soon!

Your sister in Christ,
Lily



All 3 photos - Spending time with friends