

Joseph & Zulema Kotvas



MISSIONARIES TO PERU, SOUTH AMERICA, AND BEYOND
REACHING AND TEACHING DEAF AND HEARING SOULS FOR CHRIST



February 2023 Prayer Letter

Joseph & Zulema Kotvas

Dear Friends and Family,

God has been so good to us and our ministry over the past few months. We have been able to lead souls to the Lord, encourage the church and minister across Peru.

August 2022



In August, we led a missions trip to the jungle city of Pucallpa, Peru, where we ministered to the Deaf and hearing congregation there.



We also continued visiting and encouraging our church members in Lima. Pictured here is our son JJ with Flor, the Deaf and blind lady who suffered a terrible accident last June. She was still bedridden in August, and we weren't sure whether she would ever walk again.

September 2022



In September, our daughter Esther was baptized! We also had several activities at Efata recognizing the contributions of our faithful interpreters and thanking the Lord for the Deaf in our ministry.



Efata Baptist Church has been growing here in Villa El Salvador, and the auditorium was no longer large enough for the congregation to meet together. We've gradually been converting our sports area into a "gymnasium," and in September the Lord provided the funds to enclose this space with metal siding providing much-needed protection from the elements.

This was just in time for our church to host a pastors' conference organized by our friends from Team Peru, with lots of great preaching and many young people surrendering to full-time Christian service.

Also, our little Grace turned two in September.

October 2022



October 16th was Esther's birthday; she's already five! Both of our princesses are growing up so quickly. We made a quick trip to the US in October to attend a family wedding and take care of some checkups.

Lord willing, we will have another brief trip at some point over the next few months for follow-up appointments, especially for Grace. Praise the Lord, she is doing well and her throat condition has become less pronounced, but we still want to get the doctors to take another look and let us know if there is anything else we need to do to help her as she develops.

Also In October, I had the opportunity to lead two Deaf young men, Brandon and Aaron, to the Lord. Please pray for Brandon as his family is moving away from Lima this month and he will be without a church or school for the Deaf in his area.

Later that month, we took our Bible institute students and staff on a missions trip to the northern cities of Chiclayo and Ferreñafe to encourage our missionaries Cesar and Leonor Quiroz and their family in the work they are doing for the Lord there. Several of our new institute students taught their first Bible class on this trip.

Efata has been supporting Cesar as he has been reaching the Deaf and hearing in that area for years, and it was a joy for us this month to accept them as missionaries sent out of Efata Baptist Church. Please pray for them and for the Deaf of Chiclayo and the surrounding towns.

November 2022



Our annual Bible Conference was in November. Pastor Wayne Van Gelderen came and spoke for the hearing, and Pastor Bill Schutt Sr. was our guest speaker for the Deaf.

Zulema worked hard to make sure we had great dramas and special music for the Deaf, and Pastor Schutt brought clear, powerful messages in Sign Language.



Several more Deaf and hearing people were saved, including Deaf teens Sebastian and Fernando. Four-year-old Cesia, who can hear, is Deaf Pastor Frank Chavez's oldest daughter. Cesia paid close attention to the messages and told her father she wanted to be saved.

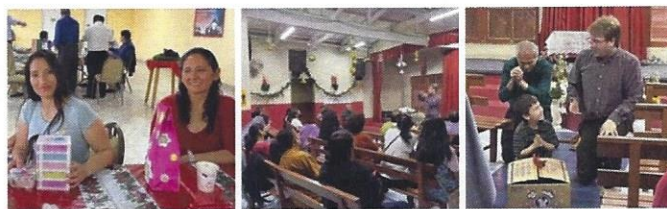
Pastor Frank witnessed to her in Sign Language, and Zulema was able to help explain the Gospel in Spanish as well to make sure that Cesia understood everything. Little Cesia then asked Jesus to save her!

December 2022



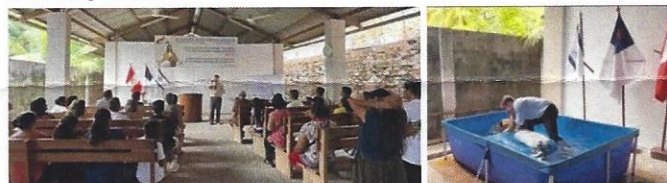
December always brings a whirlwind of activities and celebrations. Esther finished K5, and JJ turned seven.

Our Deaf youth group prepared a special dramatized song for the Christmas service, and I brought a message on living out the Christmas story.



We also hosted a special service and gift exchange for the Deaf, and as you can see in the first photo above, Flor was able to join us for the first time in six months after her accident! She is now walking independently and attending church faithfully! This is a major answer to prayer.

January 2023



The ministry in the jungle city of Pucallpa is currently without a Pastor, and leaders from our church here in Lima have been taking turns traveling to minister to the congregation there. Please pray that God would provide His man for that place.

I was able to return to Pucallpa in January with Zulema, and it was a joy to teach the simple truths of God's Word there. Rachel, a young teen whose sister was one of our former students at Efata, responded to the message, and Zulema was able to lead her to the Lord. What a blessing it was to baptize her the following week in that ministry.



At the very end of January, we held our first Deaf camp since 2019! As it was only for two nights, we called it a "Deaf retreat," and to be honest I thought we would only have around 35 or 40 people attend. Praise the Lord we had over ninety in attendance, and two of the campground staff team members, including the ice cream vendor, made professions of faith that week!

We look forward to the year ahead, May the Lord be glorified. Thank you for your prayers and your faithful support. God bless you!

Sincerely,

Joseph and Zulema Kotvas

Joseph and Zulema Kotvas
JJ, Esther & Grace