

Making Hispanic Ministry The Priority!



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Greetings from CHM Director David Byrne



There was a fascinating little piece in the Thanksgiving edition of the Houston Chronicle on illegal immigration. Rick Casey wrote that he was giving thanks for illegal immigrants! He wrote: "I have a particular group of illegals in mind, but I confess that my gratitude to them does color my view of most other illegals."

I refer to the liars, debtors opportunists and criminals who flooded into Texas in the first half of the 19th century, and then wrested the land from Mexico."

Yes, he is serious and provocative at the same time in drawing attention to the dynamic aspects of immigration over the years. Many voices today deliberately overlook the benefits of the people who come to live in our communities, like the thousands of immigrants who are rebuilding New Orleans and now Galveston.

As we enter into the Christmas season, let's not forget that our Savior's escape as an immigrant to Egypt was not exactly approved by the authorities. In God's sight, the value and potential of a person is not determined by immigration status.

Instituto ALMA News

During November, the Instituto ALMA hosted class sessions taught by Pastor **Oscar Toledo** who has his Masters degree through the Hispanic program of Houston Graduate School of Theology. The class was an intensive "Introduction to the New Testament" course. All the sessions were videoed in preparation for a new Biblical Studies track which will be offered online and through



Institute cell groups along with our regular leadership track classes. New Instituto ALMA director Jerry Clarkson is doing a good job of updating the Institute program technologically while developing new curriculum and classes. The challenge is to make quality Biblical and Leadership training available to Christian leaders wherever they are serving.



Coming Together in Mexico



Rich fellowship was enjoyed at the latest North American Hispanic Friends conference in Northern Mexico. Friends from around Mexico commented (in Spanish), "we need to do this again!"

A Few Things Left!!

It is not too late to get in on the cool antiques and collectibles. Check out our online catalog (InstitutoALMA.org/Catalog/) and order by email. All funds will go to our ministry development and leadership training.



Mexico Blessings Building Each Other Up in Love



One of the interesting stories that came out of our latest North American Hispanic Friends Conference in Coahuila, Mexico was from a small rural community made up of Kickapoo Indians and African im-

migrants who fled American slavery to Mexico.

Pastor Sulema (that's her above with her hand raised in their old sanctuary) praised God for offerings that were raised out of a previous conference that led to building their new sanctuary. In the new and beautiful sanctuary

(below) she thanked some of the leaders who had a part in those offerings and recognized the many hours of work by other Friends from EFC-MAYM in working on the building project.

The village church of Nacimiento illustrates the importance of Christians coming together to fulfill God's calling. Just as every Christian needs the fellowship within a church body, each church glorifies God in a fellowship between churches. In this case, the Nacimiento church received a new worship building, but in the process, many believers have been disciplined and inspired as they worked with Sulema and others who don't let material resources stand in the way of serving the living God.

That fellowship is a priceless gift.



News and Prayer:

☞ At this point near the end of 2008, CHM is operating in the red by about \$10,000. We have expanded our ministry and the economy has made funds scarce for everybody. Please pray with us as we watch for God to provide and please be obedient as you are able to give.

☞ Both CHM director, David Byrne and Instituto ALMA director, Jerry Clarkson will be more available in the coming year to share the vision for Hispanic ministry and leadership training. If your church is looking for ways to do cross-cultural missions in your own community, give us a call (713-922-3113) and begin to pray for God's opportunities for service around you.

☞ Pray for the 2009 North American Hispanic Friends Conference and the AMANA ministerial fellowship. Our conference location is still to be announced, but we'll let you know!

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Email: CHM@InstitutoALMA.org Web: www.InstitutoALMA.org/CHM/

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