

Ambiance

Dry Season.

All I can say is that if I *had* to snap my ankle and be laid up, God's timing couldn't have been kinder

April and May—the hottest time of the year in Honduras—is, like in other Third World countries, a test of endurance. Unlike in other months, the evenings do not cool off. To be confined to home with a fan in exchange for the misery of travel in the skin-searing, breath-sucking heat has been a great grace.

In the city, the atmosphere is chokingly thick with smoke from burning fields and forest fires. One cannot see the nearby hills encircling the city. Going outside to run errands provokes smarting eyes and burning nose and throat. At night I keep the apartment closed up because much of the field-burning goes on then (I presume it is easier to keep an eye on where the fires are burning) and the house smells full of fresh smoke. Flakes of black ash settle on the back porch while a greasy black film collects on interior surfaces.

But as my ankle heals, there are signs that the late Rainy Season may be on its way. Our first rain in months scoured away the city smog. Breezes begin to blow. The days mellow. Evenings cool by a few degrees. Though not yet bringing rain, clouds gather, and thunder and lightning rattle promisingly.



Marches and Protests

Recent soaring gasoline and food prices spark political unrest and protest against perceived government corruption. The ICLH contributes an official presence in marches, demanding justice, particularly for the poor, who suffer the most from sudden cost-of-living rises.

April/May 08_{/yr. 2}

in Honduras

– Janet Alcántara

“Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet (Heb., “ankles”) did not slip.”

2 Samuel 22:37

Herminio quoted the above text to me, paused, and then added dryly, “...I guess that didn't work this time!” (*Herminio Suazo is the ICLH Development of Communities of Faith program coordinator*).

Although it is true that my convalescent ankle set the pace for the past two months, April nevertheless saw me attending various meetings (including part of a Pre-Assembly to deal with details of changing leadership in the ICLH), planning the content and schedule of the upcoming Youth Conference with Rubí and Xiomara, developing materials on liturgy for the training and use of our pastors, and coordinating upcoming plans with two of our sister synods. And if unable to travel to the communities, I could encourage some leaders via periodic cell phone conversations.



Common styles used when we visit the sick and dying may not reflect God's model of presence and unconditional love. They may give us a sense of control or may quiet patients so we

do not have to listen to them and share their pain. I used cartoon images to teach better visitation styles in a workshop with our health care volunteers. Our enthusiastic *promotoras* were surprised to discover it is not always easy to let go of our old patterns!

I'm out of the moon boot, toddling around fairly well, and into my Physiotherapy Stage. Daily treatments and exercises at home, and twice weekly at the Telethon Center, consume hours each day. I will not be able to accomplish as much work this month. I do appreciate the energy of your prayers for my swift recovery.

In faith and service in Christ,

--janet

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