

# MISSION OF HOPE, BOLIVIA

## NEWSLETTER

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**Evelyn after treatment**

### **Evelyn's Story**

On a Thursday afternoon about 4 o'clock, Evelyn came into the Mission of Hope clinic with 3 children in tow. She was so weak that **she could hardly walk**. She was **so very thin** that she looked like she was only skin and bones. She looked to be about 50 years old, but she was really only 34.

Evelyn went in to see one of our doctors. Evelyn appeared to be in the **end stage of tuberculosis**. The next day, a chest x-ray confirmed the diagnosis. **Evelyn was dying**.

Fabricio, our clinic administrator, accompanied Evelyn to her home, in hopes of finding family members or close friends who could help her. He found out that Evelyn's husband had abandoned her and **she lived in one room with 5 children**. They had no electricity, no water, and no bathroom. Before Evelyn got sick, she had earned money by washing clothes. When she became too sick to work, she began selling everything she had to buy food for her children. She had now come to the end. The only thing left in the room was a mattress, where Evelyn and the 5 children slept together. Seeing this, Fabricio realized that **it was very possible that the 5 children also had tuberculosis**.

Fabricio said it reminded him of the Bible story in 1 Kings 17:12 of the widow preparing her last meal and preparing to die because she had no more food. That night, Fabricio could not sleep. The next day, he arranged for an ambulance to take Evelyn to a public hospital. Then he started calling children's homes and orphanages, trying to find a place for the children to go when Evelyn died. **No one wanted to take 5 children who had been exposed to tuberculosis**.

Meanwhile, **no one at the hospital wanted to help Evelyn**, and she was sent home without treatment. Fabricio and one of our nurses went to her home that evening to administer intravenous fluids. Monday morning, the Mission of Hope staff took up an offering from their personal money to buy food for Evelyn and the children.

The Bolivian government has tuberculosis treatment centers where patients can go every day and receive free medicines. Evelyn had been in treatment months before but had not completed the treatment, which meant that she might now have a resistant strain. Fabricio convinced the doctor who oversees the program to give Evelyn one more opportunity, saying that he would take responsibility for her. Fabricio also arranged for one of the neighbors to cook for Evelyn and the children. Then he prayed that Evelyn would live long enough to receive the treatment!

With the prayers and support of the Mission of Hope staff, **Evelyn gradually began to improve**. Evelyn and the children did complete their treatment and are now well and healthy. Evelyn is so grateful for the love and care that she received. **She is now reaching out to others** who are in need, telling them about Mission of Hope. Recently, when a very poor mother died leaving her one year old son orphaned with no one to take care of him, **Evelyn took him in as her own!** He is pictured here with her children in the blue cap.



**Evelyn and her children**



**Miriam**

## **Miriam's Story**

Bolivia has the **highest incidence of cervical cancer** in all of South America, with more women dying from cervical cancer than any other form of cancer. It is estimated that **four women die every day** from cervical cancer in Bolivia.

**Cryotherapy is a very effective treatment** to prevent cervical cancer. By using special instruments, the abnormal tissue is frozen and destroyed, but this treatment is not available to the vast majority of women in Bolivia. Dr. Mixon Darracott, a gynecologist from the University of

Virginia, spent a week at the Mission of Hope clinic in Santa Cruz to offer cryotherapy to the women who needed it. Of the 67 women that he examined, some received the cryotherapy treatment and others received the good news that they really did not need any treatment. Such was the case with Miriam.

**Miriam** is a 41 year old mother of five children who teaches school. One year ago, she went to see a Bolivian doctor because she was having a lot of heavy bleeding. The doctor told her that she had **stage III cervical cancer**. He advised her to eat whatever she wanted, to go dancing, and to try to really enjoy life for the rest of the time that she had left. **Miriam was devastated!** She became very depressed, lost her appetite, and started losing weight. She **was very worried about what would happen to her children when she died**, especially her youngest son who was only nine years old.

After a year of living with this **death sentence**, Miriam's sister visited her and encouraged her to go to the Mission of Hope clinic. Miriam did not want to go. She was afraid of having more tests done and hearing more bad news. Then Miriam's sister visited her again to tell her that a doctor was coming from the United States. Finally, Miriam agreed to go. The Mission of Hope gynecologist sent Miriam for several tests and then scheduled her to see Dr. Darracott. **When Dr. Darracott examined Miriam**, he told her that **she did not have cancer** and that **her cervix looked perfectly normal!** In that moment, Miriam's life was changed! Miriam is so thankful to God, to Dr. Darracott, and to Mission of Hope!

## **\$100,000 Matching Gift Challenge**

The **\$100,000 matching gift challenge is now in effect** through December 31<sup>st</sup>. **Every dollar** that we receive between now and the end of the year **will be doubled** by an anonymous donor. This includes gifts from churches, individuals, businesses and foundations. The money that is raised through the **matching gift challenge will be used to operate our free medical clinic in Santa Cruz, Bolivia** during the year 2011. Mission of Hope, Bolivia is a **debt-free** organization and more than 98% of every dollar goes directly into our Bolivia program. Meanwhile, we are also continuing to finish the future medical clinic in Sucre.

**Mission of Hope, Bolivia depends on your prayers and financial support** to help women like Miriam and Evelyn. Evelyn is very typical of the many single mothers who come into our clinic. They earn just enough money for one day's food. There is no reserve. If these mothers get sick and are unable to work, the children do not have food to eat. Because of Mission of Hope, Evelyn's five children still have their mother and were not left as orphans to fend for themselves. Together, with your support, **we are making a difference!** Many are receiving **hope and healing in the name of Jesus. Praise the Lord!**

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