

# MISSION OF HOPE, BOLIVIA

## NEWSLETTER

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**Johan after surgery**

On May 6, 2017, **Surgery Team #28 arrived** at the Mission of Hope hospital in Santa Cruz, Bolivia to provide a week of **free ear, nose, throat, and thyroid surgeries**. Patients came from all over Bolivia to receive the blessing of a life-changing surgery! Here are some of their stories.

### Johan's Story

**Johan** is a 16 year old Mennonite boy who lives with his mom and dad and 3 younger sisters on a farm about 3 hours from Santa Cruz. He enjoys helping his father out in the field, riding the tractor and harvesting the crops.

About 4 years ago, Johan started having difficulty breathing through the left side of his nose. He felt like he was continually having colds. His parents gave him many different medicines at home, but nothing seemed to help. The left side of his nose became completely blocked, and he felt a sensation of pressure on the left side of his face. This went on for several years. One day, his parents looked into his nose and saw something that did not look right. They searched for a doctor who could help them. After 3 months of making many trips to the city of Santa Cruz and spending a lot of money on medicine, they found a doctor who told them that Johan needed a surgery. They did not have money to pay for a surgery. Then Johan's grandmother, who is one of our patients, told them about Mission of Hope where everything is free.

When the ENT surgery team from the US operated on Johan, they found a ball of fungus in the sinus cavity beneath his left eye about the size of a racquetball! The fungus had already spread down to the gum line of his upper teeth, and upwards it was pushing on his eye socket. It had also spread into the cavity just below his brain, which could have become very dangerous with time.

After the surgery, Johan felt immediate improvement! He could breathe freely on the left side for the first time in years, and he said his head felt "lighter." Johan and his parents are so very thankful for Mission of Hope and the doctors who came!



**Guadalupe after surgery**

### Guadalupe's Story

**Guadalupe** is a 34 year old lady who lives with her husband and 2 young boys. She has suffered with chronic ear infections for more than 25 years. Growing up as a child, when she would have ear pain and inflammation, her mother would make a juice from onions and put drops of onion juice in her ear.

The many years of chronic ear infections resulted in the growth of a large cyst behind her eardrum, which had eroded one of the bones used in hearing and the inner ear. She went to a specialist who told her that she needed a complicated surgery that is not done in Bolivia. Guadalupe felt very discouraged, but her mom kept telling her not to lose hope, just to keep on praying and have faith that God would answer their prayers.

Then Guadalupe's aunt told her about Mission of Hope, and she was put on the list for surgery. She had an excellent surgery with an excellent result. She is now pain free and her hearing has improved. Guadalupe says that having the surgery here in Bolivia was a miracle! She is very thankful!



**Concepcion before surgery**

### Concepcion's Story

**Concepcion** is a 52 year old lady who lives in Sucre, Bolivia. She and her husband have grown children but are now raising an 8 year old boy. When he was born, the birth mother did not want him, so Concepcion took the newborn baby home and raised him as her own. Her husband is a gardener but does not have work. Concepcion supports the family by gathering and selling flowers and greenery.

Concepcion had surgery to remove an enormous goiter. It was so large that she was having difficulty breathing and swallowing. We asked her how she heard about Mission of Hope. She said that God told her in a dream that there was a place where people got healed. In

her dream, God told her to walk the streets and look for a line of people, and there she would find healing. She had this same dream over and over for about a month. During this time, she would walk the streets selling her flowers and looking for the line of people.

One morning about 5 am, she was walking along a dirt road, and she saw a line of people. She asked someone in the line what they do at that place. The person replied, "Here, they heal people." Concepcion got in the line and went in to see the doctor. She was at the Mission of Hope clinic in Sucre! The doctor told her that she needed to go to the Mission of Hope hospital in Santa Cruz to have surgery. So, she got on a bus at midnight and rode the bus for 16 hours to Santa Cruz.



**Concepcion after surgery**

Concepcion's life has totally changed! She looks and feels like a new person! Praise the Lord!!



**Aly after surgery**

### Aly's Story

**Aly** is a 44 year old man who lives with his wife and children in LaPaz, Bolivia. When Aly first came to the Mission of Hope clinic 3 years ago, he was completely deaf in both ears from otosclerosis. He had to read lips to understand what anyone was saying. He was on the verge of losing his job as an office assistant because he could not hear anything during staff meetings. Aly rode the bus 16 hours from LaPaz to Santa Cruz on very dangerous roads to have the surgery.

That surgery 3 years ago completely changed his life! He could hear out of the operated ear. This year, he came back to have surgery on the other ear. Now, he says that his hearing is so good that

everything seems very loud! He is hearing the birds singing and the traffic outside for the first time!

### Celebrating 15 years!

Mission of Hope, Bolivia opened a free medical clinic in Santa Cruz, Bolivia on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002. To date, more than 300,000 patients have passed through our doors to receive free medical care! The anniversary celebration will take place on **Saturday, July 8<sup>th</sup>** at Church on the Hill in Fishersville, VA. A short program will begin at **2 pm**, followed by a time of fellowship. All are welcome to attend this Mission of Hope "family" reunion and celebration. Please email Cindy Thacker at [cindy@missionofhopebolivia](mailto:cindy@missionofhopebolivia) to let her know that you plan to attend. We hope to see many of you there!

**Mission of Hope, Bolivia**

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