

MISSION OF HOPE, BOLIVIA NEWSLETTER

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On February 9, 2005, we celebrated our **five-year anniversary** as a mission and **five years of walking by faith!** On February 9, 2000, Mission of Hope, Bolivia officially became a non-profit corporation in the state of Virginia. Only six weeks later on March 23, 2000, Mission of Hope, Bolivia received 501c3 tax-exempt status from the IRS!

With \$100 in our bank account, we printed a brochure to give out to friends, and we began receiving donations to purchase a hospital that was for sale in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. We determined from the beginning to be a **debt-free mission**. We would not borrow money. **We would wait on the Lord** for the full amount that we needed.

On July 25, 2001, we purchased the hospital that was for sale for \$600,000 cash. After extensive renovation, we opened a free, outpatient medical clinic on July 4, 2002. To date, we have taken care of **more than 55,000 patients free of charge** and **more than 30,000 have prayed to receive Christ in our waiting room! Praise the Lord!!**

From the beginning, we determined to **network with other Christian groups** that were **already working in Santa Cruz** and the local medical community. In 2002, we began networking with **South America Mission (SAM)**. SAM's excellent medical personnel and cooks have provided invaluable support for the medical and surgical teams that have come from the US to work in our mission. They have also helped with several local outreaches into the Santa Cruz community. Mission of Hope is now providing **free lab analysis for SAM patients** in the Ayore Indian villages, and Mission of Hope patients who need dental services are able to use their dental clinic without charge.

In the fall of 2004, we had the privilege of networking with Alberto and Judy Swisher-Nunez to distribute wheelchairs, walkers, and crutches. Their ministry, **Friends of the Disabled Latin America, Inc.**, is affiliated with the outreach of "Joni and Friends." In order to receive a wheelchair or walker, patients had to present a medical certificate verifying the need. Mission of Hope doctors helped to provide the **required medical certificates at no charge**, and two of our patients also received services.

Luz, a 6-year-old girl, lives with her mother and father and five siblings in Santa Rosa, which is several hours from Santa Cruz. Luz was **born with deformed feet** and legs and **has never walked**. Until she received her wheelchair, she had to scoot around on the dirt floor of their house using her hands. She was always dirty. Luz wanted very much to go to school, but her parents could not carry her to and from the school. Receiving a **wheelchair was a life-changing event** for Luz, and she is now a first-grader!



Luz and her mother



Mission of Hope patient with Judy



Mission of Hope Staff

The Mission of Hope clinic in Santa Cruz is staffed by 34 local Bolivians, who receive a monthly salary, as well as several volunteers. Many of our staff are living in sub-standard housing without indoor plumbing. The majority of our patients also live in **housing situations that adversely affect their health**. Many of them have dirt floors, and the children become sick from playing in the dirt. Windows are often without screens, and doorways are often

without doors. We are now **networking with the Santa Cruz affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International** to encourage our staff and patients to apply for a Habitat home. Also, Mission of Hope staff have volunteered to help build Habitat's 5000th house in Bolivia this spring!

The **Mission of Hope clinic also networks with the local church**. When we find out that a family has **no income** and is **unable to buy food**, the mercy ministry of the local church comes to our aid. These needs are often revealed during the prayer and counseling ministry that we offer in our clinic.

When Mission of Hope, Bolivia was formed in the year 2000, we determined to be **financially accountable** to our supporters. To that end, we have had **yearly, independent financial audits** performed at our clinic in Santa Cruz. We also determined to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to us. We have just completed our first professional financial audit here in the US, which showed that **97% of all the donations received went into our program in Bolivia**. The remaining 3% covered the printing of our newsletter, postage, and administrative costs. All of our US staff work as volunteers.

Since opening our clinic in 2002, we have been privileged to host several **teams from the US** (a painting team and a surgery team in 2003, followed by a medical team and 2 surgery teams in 2004). We are now preparing for the arrival of a second medical team and 2 more surgery teams, including our first ear, nose, throat surgery team, in 2005. These teams not only **donate their gifts and talents to serve the poor**, but they also donate their week of vacation time and pay their own way. They are a **great blessing** to the mission and to the people of Bolivia.

As we reflect on these first five years of Mission of Hope, Bolivia, **we want to thank all of you** for your support and give **glory to God for all the great things He has done!**

Mission of Hope, Bolivia

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Mission of Hope, Bolivia is a
501c3 tax-exempt organization.



Dr. Charles Gross screens patient for ear, nose, and throat surgery