

PRAY FOR US CALENDAR - March, 2008

Hispanic Ministries - Mar. 1-16

Hispanic/Latino Ministries are a great need in the United States, where approximately 40 million Hispanic people live. The LCMS is seeking to expand ministry among and with Hispanics on many levels—including Spanish-language theological education programs and intentionally Hispanic-focused church plants. Millions of uncommitted Hispanic people are truly a field ripe for the harvest!

Remember the Lord's work among Hispanic people as you pray:

1. that they hear the clear Gospel from Christian witnesses. The Hispanic population of the United States is ever-growing and a vast mission field. Many Hispanic people have no church affiliation and lack an understanding of the true Gospel message.
2. that LCMS congregations would reach out boldly to the increasing number of Latino immigrants in their midst with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and deeds of mercy. Immigrants' separation from their families, language, and culture provide a great opportunity for hospitality, friendship, Gospel proclamation, and spiritual care.
3. for all Hispanic workers and their families and congregations—that they would not be discouraged by the poor conditions in which they and their people often live and work, the vastness of the ripe fields that lie before them, or by prejudice they might endure on the basis of race, accent, or other traits.
4. for the Lord to continually guide Rev. Richard Schlak as he prepares Hispanic leaders to share the Gospel with others. He is the newly-called and installed missionary who serves as the director of the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute (LHMI) in El Paso, Texas.
5. for God to lead the laypeople He has foreordained to enroll in LHMI for training. These lay leaders will be bivocational—leading congregations, Bible studies, and other ministry groups while working in more traditional jobs. Pray for their smooth adjustment to a rigorous program and rapid learning. LHMI also seeks possible candidates to be trained in pastoral ministry at one of the seminaries.
6. that God would bless the work of the Hispanic Ministry task forces across the nation to brainstorm and chart a course for LCMS Hispanic ministries at the local level.
7. that God would bless the Rocky Mountain District's mission society that raises support for LHMI. Boldly ask that mission societies and congregations in other areas would also be mobilized to fund Hispanic ministries.
8. for Rev. Dr. Leopoldo Sánchez and Rev. Eloy Gonzalez, director and associate director of the Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS) at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. CHS provides a route to ordination of qualified men that fits their Hispanic contexts linguistically and culturally. Pray for Eloy, Leopoldo, and CHS guest faculty as they work together to raise awareness of Hispanic theology and mission and form ordained and commissioned leaders for Hispanic ministry.
9. for the pastoral and deaconess students of CHS. These students study long-distance most of the year and come to St. Louis for intensive courses four times per year. Ask the Holy Spirit to sustain them as they study and work full-time.

10. that the Lord would raise up more leaders for church-planting, urban, borderlands, and other types of ministry among Hispanic people through the work of CHS regional coordinators across the United States.

11. in thanksgiving for the Krause family. They have established The Werner R.H. Krause and Elizabeth Ringger Krause Chair for Hispanic Ministries at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The first to occupy the endowed chair is current CHS Director and Seminary Professor Dr. Leopoldo Sánchez. Pray that the Krauses' generosity and commitment will inspire others to support Hispanic ministries.

12. concerning Resolution 2-04A, passed at the 2007 Synod Convention, which authorizes the Synod president, working with the Board for Mission Services and the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Hispanic Ministry, to appoint a director for strategic development of Hispanic ministries as soon as funding is available. Pray that God would guide those who are driving this initiative forward and that He would raise up a well-suited leader for this unique ministry position.

13. for various laborers in Hispanic ministry: Rev. Enrique Vallejo in the California-Nevada-Hawaii District, Rev. Benito Pérez in the Florida-Georgia District, Rev. John Durkovic in the Pacific Southwest District, Rev. Samuel Ruiz in the Indiana District, and Revs. Mark Junkans and David Kim in the Texas District.

14. for the third National Hispanic Lutheran Convention and its president, Rev. Samuel Gómez—that it would help produce a leadership group unified in missional spirit in the Hispanic community. Every three years, all Hispanic ministry workers meet at this convention for fellowship, idea sharing, and planning future strategy.

15. for Rev. Alex Merlo, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Aurora, Ill., and national facilitator for Hispanic ministries. Pray that he would be an effective leader while maintaining a strong relationship with his family and the congregation he serves.

16. for the work of Lutheran Latino Ministries, Inc. in Portland, Ore., which supports Miguel and Marta Luna and others as they bring the Gospel to Latinos.

The Baltics - Mar. 17-31

Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia are commonly referred to as the Baltic countries. These former Soviet republics' cultures are very westernized in some respects. As Lutheran church leaders try to unite believers and reorganize now that the yoke of communism has been lifted, there is a realization of the a spiritual vacuum the communist influence has left behind. LCMS World Mission sent its first career missionaries, Rev. Mark and Rose Krause, to the Baltics in late 2007.

Remember the Lord's work in the Baltic region as you pray:

17. that the Lord of the Harvest would open all Baltic people's hearts to listen to the Good News of Jesus as they struggle to live in a rapidly changing world with secular morals and values, along with a volatile economy and 11 percent inflation.

18. for Rev. Artis Eglitis, the chief administrative officer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia and the church's Finance Commission as they present strategic plans to LCMS partners and the Latvian church. May the Lord guide them in their efforts to secure funding for the church so that financial independence is achieved.

19. for blessings on the Latvian Sunday School Commission as they work with Concordia Publishing House and Latvian printers to print the "Growing in Christ" Sunday school materials. May these materials be a tool of the Holy Spirit in bringing children to the saving love of Jesus.
20. for the Lord to guide the Latvian Mission Commission as they plan to send a Latvian missionary to Ireland to plant Latvian congregations there. More than 40,000 Latvians live in Ireland as workers in the construction and farming industries.
21. for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania, a small church body with less than 35 congregations in a predominately Roman Catholic country. Ask the Lord to bless Bishop Sabutas as he leads the Lithuanian churches to reach the many people in his country who do not know about Jesus' love and forgiveness.
22. that the Lord would open up the doors needed to create a closer mission-minded partnership between LCMS World Mission and the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. This church body serves a country where more than 70 percent of the people are unchurched.
23. for the Lord to bless LCMS missionaries Rev. Mark and Rose Krause as they begin serving the three Lutheran church bodies of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. May they have wisdom and direction in their service to the praise and glory of God.
24. for the Krauses as they plant an English-speaking congregation in Riga, Latvia. There are a number of English speakers who live in Riga and work at embassies and foreign businesses.
25. for the many young adults living in Riga attending the universities and working for businesses. Ask that the Lord would bless the Mission Commission in Latvia in the development of a new ministry that would be directed especially at reaching young adults with the Gospel.
26. with thanksgiving for Orphan Grain Train, which ships clothing and medical supplies to the Baltic countries and Russia. They also sponsor a number of orphanages. Give thanks to the Lord for their loving work and pray that they would continue to touch the lives of people in need.
27. with praise for the support given to the Baltic region from LCMS districts, especially the Central Illinois District in Latvia and the Iowa East District in Lithuania. May the Lord provide continued prayer and financial support from LCMS districts.
28. with thanks to God for the affirmation the Krauses have received from the churches and families who have supported them in prayer and financial gifts.
29. in thanksgiving for the support the Krauses have received from the Baltic partner churches. They have experienced real joy in the short time they have served there. Ask the Lord to give the Krauses His Spirit so that strong and lasting relationships are developed as they serve the Lord with the partner churches in the Baltics.
30. that the Holy Spirit would give insight and direction to Mark and Rose as they work to develop long- and short-term mission opportunities for those who would like to contribute to God's work in the Baltic countries.
31. for guidance and wisdom as LCMS World Mission staff, the Baltic partner churches, and missionaries on the field consider how to incorporate short-term missionaries and team mission trips into the work in the Baltic countries.

Missionary Birthdays

- Mar. 1 Deirde Sloth, Asia
- Mar. 5 Michelle DeRozario, Asia;
Joel Klammer, Asia;
John Shmalcs, Macau
- Mar. 16 Jodee Filmer, Asia;
John Mehl, Hong Kong;
Shauna Strohschein, Hong Kong
- Mar. 17 Robert Hedtke, Thailand
- Mar. 22 David Baker, Kazakhstan;
Stuart McDonald, Asia;
Michael Weber, Asia
- Mar. 29 Anna Hu, Asia
- Mar. 31 Anton Lutz, Papua New Guinea

Military Chaplains with Birthdays in March:

Chaplain Robert Crossan, Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Chaplain Eric Ebb, Camp Atterbury, Ind.; Chaplain John Elser, Amarillo, Texas; Chaplain Steven Hokana; Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; Chaplain Wayne Lehrer, Arlington, Va.; Chaplain Craig Muehler, San Diego, Calif.; Chaplain J. Lee Precup, San Diego, Calif.; Chaplain Randall Russell, Norfolk, Va.; Chaplain David Schilling, Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Chaplain Michael Sneath, Milwaukee, Wis.; Chaplain Mark Steiner, San Diego, Calif.; Chaplain Gregory Williamson, Fort Meade, Md.