

PRE-FIELD ORIENTATION FOR MINISTRY TEAMS

This document has been prepared for the purpose of helping those who are preparing for short-term ministry in Venezuela. It is my desire as a missionary that your ministry here will prove to be a positive and enriching experience. My goal is that each team member have such a positive experience that they will want to be involved in missions for the rest of their lives. My prayer is that while your team is here in Venezuela that God would speak to each team member and they would sense a burden and call to ministry here in Venezuela.

I also hope that you will be prepared for your cross-culture missions trip in the best way possible. For this reason, I have put together this manual to help your team achieve the goals you have.

ATTITUDES

It is important that every team arrive in Caracas with a “flexible” mindset. Though the national church is prepared for the team and its ministry, you will be in Latin America, not North America. Every team returns home with great stories and memories but often times with frustrations as well. If you are not flexible in dealing with everyday situations and “Latin time” your attitude will easily spoil all the ministry you accomplish. Group prayer times starting long before the trip are crucial. Your church might even consider a prayer chain while you are in Venezuela so that there is prayer for you every hour during your trip. Remember, you are perceived by the local people as missionaries. The work that you accomplish is secondary to the example that you as a group portray. You minister through relationships as well as actual ministry times. For this reason, the Missions Trip is not to be a time to bring your friend and hope he gets saved while in Latin America. Each person must have a relationship with Jesus and living for Him.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PEOPLE

As soon as you arrive in Caracas, you will certainly notice the warmth and friendliness of the people. The “Venezolanos” are always eager to express their kind hospitality and help you with their culture and language. They love it when you try to speak Spanish words.

You will probably note several cultural differences during your visit to Venezuela. Nothing is more important to a Venezuelan than relationships. Much of their time is spent on building and maintaining relationships. You will notice this during ministry time among the nationals that you will be working with. It is important to take time daily and greet the Venezuelan co-workers. A handshake or even a hug will mean a great deal to these brothers and sisters in the Lord. It is a custom here to greet one another with a cheek to cheek kiss. Even male-female friends will greet one another like this. If a Venezuelan greets you in this manner, offer your right cheek and know that you have been accepted as a true friend. There is nothing wrong nor any hidden messages with this greeting.

Because of the emphasis on relationships, time is considered with less importance by the Venezuelans. Events and people are very important while goals and time are of less importance. You will notice this during the day of ministry. Although, we will be aware of time frames and schedules, please take time to develop relationships with the national brethren.

Although many people in Venezuela can speak some English, for the most part language barriers will limit your ability to communicate. Again, you can say many words through a smile, a hand shake, a hug and a positive attitude. Your Christian witness can shine through without speaking a word. Included with this information is a list of Spanish words and phrases that will help you with conversation. Remember, the Latinos love it when you try to speak their language.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MISSIONARY IN CHARGE

All of your correspondence should be directed to the missionary. The missionary will be in charge of all of the logistics of the trip (after your arrival in Caracas) while in consultation of the team leader. The missionary and the team leader will determine the daily schedule, places to eat, etc.

Your group will be functioning as a unit both for work and activities. The missionary will arrange activities that will enable you to have the best possible opportunity to get a taste of the life, culture, and beauty of the country and people of Venezuela.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH

For many of the Venezuelans, they have never had the privilege of working with North Americans. They will be excited about the opportunity to be with you. You will make new friends and will want to stay in contact with them. When giving your address to them, do not use your personal address but the church address that you attend.

While spending the week in Venezuela you will become very attached to certain friends. You will notice their needs and want to help and bless them, for example by giving them and offering, a pair of your shoes, etc. Please do not give any person a gift directly. Always advise the team leader so they can discuss it with the missionary. At that point the missionary can give your friend the gift. This will avoid hard feelings by others and help you not to be taken advantage of.

One question that is always asked is, "What can we wear?" Venezuela is not yet as open to some styles of clothing and I know you are coming to be a blessing and not to offend anyone. A safe rule of thumb is to plan on jeans for street ministry and dress up for church services. Modest shorts may be worn during free times. The Venezuelans love to dress up so they will come to service looking very nice. Many AIMers will buy t-shirts, jeans and other clothing here so don't over pack. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum because of the temptation of thieves to take it.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOTEL

We will be using the Hotel Eurobuilding/Raddison in Caracas. The telephone number is 58-212-902-1111. In the hotel is a business center where you can check and send emails. They also have a very nice and reasonable gift shop. For emergencies your family can call the cell phone of the missionary at 58-414-321-1004. While the hotel is not new it is very nice, safe and clean. Please don't come expecting the hotel standard to be the same as in the States. If there are any problems, the staff will be glad to help.

Remember, that you are coming as "missionaries". Your behavior in the hotel will reflect your testimony and the reputation of the missionary. Please try and be a positive witness to the hotel employees so that they will want to become a Christian, too. A small tip at the end of your stay in the hotel for the cleaning people will be appreciated.

AND FINALLY

I as the missionary will be doing everything possible on this end to make your time here a positive and fruitful experience. But please remember, in Latin America everything doesn't always go as planned. There are interruptions to the best-made plans. Please be patient and understanding if the schedule or plans change at the last minute. It will only be because of circumstances beyond our control. This will give you a small taste of living in Latin America.

Thank you for coming to be a part of what God is doing in Venezuela. You will not only be blessed by coming, but you will be a great blessing to the national church of Venezuela. Although we have not yet seen the great outpouring of God's Spirit in Venezuela as in other Latin countries, WE WILL. God is going to give us a great revival. I believe it. As you minister here through your team you will have a part in this beginning stage of revival.

Sincerely,

Gary Heiney

SPANISH WORDS FOR SURVIVAL

TO GREET SOMEONE

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Buenas días | Good morning (before 12:00 noon) |
| Buenas tardes | Good afternoon (between 12:00 & 6:00 p.m.) |
| Buenas noches | Good evening (after 6:00 p.m.) |
| Como estas? | How are you? (How you doing?) |
| Como le va? | How's it going? |
| Dios le bendiga | God bless you |
| hermano | brother |
| hermana | sister |

RESPONSES

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| for (Como estas?) | bien gracias (Well or good thank you) |
| “ “ | que chevere (everything's great! ...this is a popular word used mainly in Venezuela) |

TO SAY BYE

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Dios le bendiga | God bless you |
| Chau | popular word here for goodbye |
| Hasta luego | bye meaning until later |
| Hasta mañana | bye meaning until tomorrow |

IMPORTANT AND COMMON WORDS

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Por favor | Please |
| Muchas gracias | Thank you very much |
| Permiso | Permission to pass by or do something |
| Ayudame | Help me |
| No hablo espanol | I don't speak Spanish |
| Disculpe | Excuse me |

QUESTIONS

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Donde esta el bano? | Where is the bathroom? |
| Como se llama? | What is your name? |
| Cuantos anos tiene? | How old are you? |
| Cuando nacio? | When were you born? |
| Puede ayudarme? | Can you help me? |
| Tiene hermanos, o hermanas? | Do you have any brothers or sisters? |
| Le gusta este trabajo? | Do you like this work? |
| Donde esta el hotel Hilton? | Where is the Hilton Hotel? |
| Dode esta La casa de cambio? | Where is the place to change money? |

RESTAURANTS

Puede darme un vaso con agua puro por favor? sin gas (without carbonation)
con gas (with carbonation)

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Agua | Water |
| Refresco | Coke, sprite, pepsi, etc. |
| Pan | Bread |
| Leche | Milk |
| Queso | Cheese |
| Azucar | Sugar |
| Mantequilla | Butter |
| Vaso | Glass |
| Cucharita | Spoon |
| Tenedor | Fork |
| Cuchillo | Knife |
| Servilleta | Napkin |
| Café Negro | Black coffee (not many people drink it black Because it is VERY strong) |
| Café Maroon | Coffee with just a little bit of milk (very good) |
| Café con leche | Coffee with a lot of milk |
| Me gusto la comida de hoy | I liked the food today |
| Estuvo muy rico | It was delicious |

CHURCH

| | |
|--|--|
| Me siento muy feliz en su pais Venezuela | I am very happy to be in your country of Venezuela |
| Es un placer poder visitar esta hermosa ciudad de Caracas | It is a pleasure to visit this beautiful city of Caracas |
| Todos ustedes son muy amables | Everyone is kind and nice |
| Deseamos que nuestro trabajo aqui sea de gran bendición | We hope that our work here will be a great blessing |
| Gloria a Dios | Glory to God |

MONEY

The money here is called Bolivares or Bs. for short. So if you bought a t-shirt you would pay for example 5000 Bs.

| | | | |
|-------|-----------|--------|------------|
| 5 Bs. | cinco Bs. | 500 | quinientos |
| 10 | diez | 1000 | un mil |
| 20 | vente | 2000 | dos mil |
| 50 | cincuenta | 5000 | cinco mil |
| 100 | cien | 10,000 | diez mil |