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**To:** Steve Henry <shenry@christscovenant.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 2:32:22 PM  
**Subject:** Prayer Update--February 17, 2009

***Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.—Psalm 116:15***

For those of you who have ever visited us here in La Poza, you know our good friends, Victor and Andrea. You have sat at their table for authentic Mexican meals. You have pitched your tents in their ‘yard.’ You know their son and daughter-in-law, Carlos and Sandra. You’ve gotten hugs from their granddaughters, Vicki and Cassandra. It was Victor and Andrea who together repented of their sins and professed faith alone in Christ as their Lord during a visit we had here in 2005. When the Lord directed us to move to La Poza in 2006 it was Victor who told us, “I own some land right there that you can build your house on.” Since that time our relationship with them and their entire family (11 children and their families) has grown even deeper.

With that as a brief background, it is with sorrow over the loss of an earthly relationship but with joy in knowing that a dear friend is in the presence of his Savior, that we tell you Victor Rangel went to be with the Lord this past Thursday night, February 12. As long as we’ve known him, Victor has had problems with his heart. Over the last few months his health has been up and down but never to the point of what would be classified as gravely ill. Because Victor and Andrea had lived most of their lives in Monterrey, Victor’s doctors were all there and they would make regular trips for check-ups. On a regular visit in January, one of his doctors had more concerns about his health and scheduled him to return to Monterrey for more testing about a week and a half ago. They were still there this past Thursday when Victor passed away. While he has been weaker in recent days, his death was unexpected to the family. Thursday night about 9:00 p.m. Victor had called La Poza and talked by phone with his son, Carlos. He told Carlos he had been tired that day but wasn’t in any real pain. Shortly after that phone call, he began having problems breathing. The ambulance was called and he was taken to the hospital. He died about 10:00 p.m. at the hospital. His death was quick and with very little suffering.

In God’s providence we had returned to Texas Thursday afternoon with plans to return to La Poza Friday afternoon to celebrate Vicki’s 10<sup>th</sup> birthday with the family. Vicki is Carlos & Sandra’s oldest daughter and a granddaughter of Victor & Andrea. When we arrived back in La Poza about 3:30 Friday afternoon, we were told of Victor’s passing. We immediately got back in the truck and made the 5 hour trip to Monterrey. Funeral and burial customs are different in every culture. In Mexico the *velorio* (what we would call the ‘wake’ or the ‘viewing’ in the U.S.) doesn’t just occur a few hours the night before the funeral or a few hours before the funeral itself. It begins the night before the memorial service when the body is brought to the home of the deceased or to the funeral home (in Victor’s case it was the funeral home) and lasts all night and all day until the time of the service and burial. So when we arrived in Monterrey about 9:00 p.m. on Friday night the *velorio* had already begun. We spent the night talking, crying, praying, and reading Scripture with family and friends. *What an opportunity for ministry!*

About 1:30 a.m. as we were talking with Andrea, she began expressing her desire that she wanted a Christian service for Victor. Victor and Andrea have 11 children. None are professing believers and most of them would claim to be Roman Catholic. Andrea asked me if I would do the service. She made it clear that she wanted prayer, Scripture and a presentation of the Gospel. I told her that I would be more than willing to do whatever she desired. While I’ve preached several times in Mexican churches and teach weekly Bible studies in Spanish, it’s always with plenty of time for preparation and thinking through the best way to communicate the biblical truths in Spanish. Knowing that I did not have the luxury of much advance preparation, Saturday morning I enlisted the prayers of my dearest friend and life’s companion for nearly 30 years. Robin assured me she had already been praying that God would give me the ability to communicate His truth in Spanish. Hoping to add a little support to her prayers, I made quick phone calls to 5 dear friends in the States who I knew had a love for God, a love for us, a love for the ministry here in La Poza, and a commitment to prayer. I asked them to pray specifically for the opportunity at hand, that God would manifest His greatness, and that He would give me the ability to clearly present the Gospel in Spanish.

To make a very long story a bit shorter—He did exactly that. The Spirit of God granted that liberty to speak His truth for about a half hour without the aid of a note. In addition to the service itself, Robin and I both had numerous opportunities to share the Gospel individually with a number of folks. Wow! What an absolutely draining, yet exhilarating 48 hours we had! Here’s how we’d like you to pray:

1. Pray that the seed that has been sown will take root and we’ll see a harvest come forth. In particular, pray that God would work in the lives of the family that we have the closest contact with who are not yet believers. That would include Carlos and Paz who are Victor & Andrea’s son and daughter and David who is their grandson.

2. Pray for Andrea. She and Victor would have celebrated their 53<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary on February 28<sup>th</sup>. While she sorrows, she does not sorrow as those who have no hope. But there is the loss of her dear husband that leaves a large hole in her life.

Some of you might like to send a note or card of comfort and encouragement to Andrea and the family. If that is your desire, we have 2 ways we'd suggest doing that. If you'd like to send a card you can mail it to our home address in Brownsville . That address is 943 Pueblo Court/Brownsville, TX 78526. If you can, we'd suggest looking for a card in Spanish. They can often be found at Wal-Mart or a Hallmark store. We will translate for Andrea and the family whatever note you might like to write. Of course, if you know Spanish, by all means, write your note in Spanish.

If you prefer, you are welcome to send your note of encouragement via email to me at [shenry@christscovenant.org](mailto:shenry@christscovenant.org). Again, we'll translate your note and be sure that the family receives the note. Whether you choose the post office or email, there is one other suggestion we have. Could you include a picture of yourself and/or family? If you send your note via email, just attach your picture and we'll print them out here. Victor and Andrea have had hundreds of Gringos pass through their house over the last few years and if you send the picture with your note, we know it would mean so much to Andrea. Even if you've never personally met Victor and Andrea, you are more than welcome to send a note as well.

Thanks for sticking with us through this longer than usual note. Thanks too for your prayers during this opportune time for ministry. We are having more opportunities here in La Poza to share the gospel as a result of Victor's death. He was known by all here and everyone we talk to brings up his passing in conversation. It is an obvious open door to proclaim the Gospel truth. Our hearts are full. We're rejoicing in the opportunities for ministry. Pray for the harvest, Friends.

Humbled and Amazed Again by Grace,  
Steve & Robin