



Corner Of Love
An Outreach To The People Of Nicaragua
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Dear Friends,

23,000 Nicaraguan refugees have poured into Costa Rica over the last three months.

We just completed an exploratory trip to see how Corner of Love can best respond to this migration crisis. Our objective was to see if we could potentially get set up to serve those fleeing persecution in their country.

In all we spent 13 days in country, 8 days near Penas Blancas, the border crossing town at Costa Rica's northwest tip, and 6 days in San Jose, the crowded capital city five hours to the south. Our trip was a very challenging one with respect to what we learned about the trauma Nicaraguans are suffering.

We listened to one heart-wrenching story after another. We prayed with parents, children, and young adults who had run for their lives. We helped process paperwork at the border and gave people something to eat and some clothing and supplies for their onward journey. We paid for bus tickets, hotel stays, and rides to safe houses. We looked Nicaraguans in the eye and said, "God cares about you."

Three veteran Corner of Love team members joined us, each with a specific purpose for this mission. The refugees we met were brave. Many told stories through tears but exhibited hope for the future. Most spoke of their faith and knowing their strength comes from the Lord. All were willing to share their pain. They seemed desperate to talk to us. Every single one of them wanted to be HEARD.

Injustice. Repression. Arbitrary arrests. Government workers shooting citizens. Narrow escape.

What they recounted confirmed what family, friends, and Corner of Love Nicaragua employees and pastors tell us: Nicaragua as a country has become a prison. Despite laws on the books that claim to guarantee freedom of speech and freedom to peacefully protest, Daniel Ortega's Sandinista government is killing unarmed citizens who dare to exercise those rights. People stay inside their houses. Streets are bare. Few go out unless absolutely necessary because the brutal Sandinista police continue to round up students, fill jails, and terrorize people. Those who are unwilling to stay silent cannot sleep in their own homes. Paramilitaries hunt for innocent citizens and use community-watch lists to find all those participating in peaceful marches and freedom rallies.



Here are some of the stories we heard:

A young man whose 25th birthday was on the day we met him, was from Masaya. He spoke at length about the "clean-up" operation in his town, where 2000 paramilitaries descended upon them to clear out the barricades. "People are being killed outright, or taken up into trucks and never seen again," he said. "The numbers reported and the reality of the actual government count do not match. It is way worse than what is reported," he told us. He showed us a wound on his arm where a bullet grazed him.

A woman from the same town left with her two children because all her neighbors were being killed and the police were threatening and scaring her two little girls by banging the butts of their guns against their front door. The girls were crying themselves to sleep every night. She told us the government turns off the electricity at night so that the paramilitaries can operate under cover of darkness and break down front doors to get into homes and take people.

Men were offered the equivalent of 31.00 USD per day to join the paramilitaries go out and kill people.

A seventeen-year-old fled the barricades (created by citizens in an effort to protect their city) on the day his best friend was killed. The friend had been shot by paramilitaries and the police prevented anyone from helping him so this young man had to watch his friend die. After escaping he lived in the forest for one month before secretly moving to another city and then onto the border of Costa Rica where we met him.

One person witnessed people being dragged along the streets attached by handcuffs to motorcycles (both dead and alive).

Three church workers ran from their evangelical place of worship when paramilitaries arrived and began shooting. They arrived in Costa Rica with less than \$6 U.S. between the three of them. They never even stopped at their houses to get clothes before making the journey to Penas Blancas because one of them was receiving constant texts on his phone threatening all three would be killed that day.

A teenage girl from Chinandega shook uncontrollably as she told us of the numerous "days of murder" carried out by police. We could barely understand her because she cried so hysterically.

One woman from Monimbo recounted how she had to slide down the side of a mountain slowly for three days until she found a safe place to hide. She was fleeing because Sandinistas added her to the community hit-list. Her "crime" was having given food and water to those protecting her city at the barricades.

A group of people from Leon described how armed groups stand on almost every corner of their city 24 hours a day, stopping every person who walks by and demanding to see their cell phones. Two had their cell phones confiscated.

An older gentleman who had worked for the Managua mayor's office for numerous years was targeted because he refused to join the paramilitaries. The mayor's office repeatedly forced him to attend meetings where instructions were given on who to kill and how to do it. Not wanting to cooperate, he was labeled a traitor and Sandinista gangs told him his whole family was going to be wiped off the face of the earth.

A 21 year old young woman who is a Costa Rican citizen was trapped and held by FSLN paramilitaries in Ometepe. For days the masked men armed with AK47s kept a circle around her and physically assaulted her. Though she escaped and made it to Penas Blancas she was clearly experiencing a full blown panic attack when we found her. Both Nelson and I had to physically hold her upright as she kept almost collapsing while uncontrollably shouting what they had done to her. We ran to get Costa Rican authorities who transferred her to a trauma center.



If you'd like to help Nicaraguan refugees, please consider these three points and join us in prayer about:

1. Corner of Love's role at the border.

Soon we will share our plans for a Relief Center there. This will require man power, resources, and new skills. At this location we will basically replicate Corner of Love's mission stations (medical, prayer, clothing, shoes, pharmacy, distribution, etc.) and add areas dedicated to immigration paperwork and help with housing options. There is NO SUCH PLACE currently.

2. Corner of Love's involvement in San Jose.

In the capital city Nicaraguan families are sleeping on sidewalks, in parks, and under bridges. The situation is desperate! Our idea is to further connect with more shelters and arrange direct sponsorship of a number of rooms. People we help at our Relief Center near the border will be sent to these hostels, accompanied in groups with Corner of Love employees who also assist with refugee paperwork. It is necessary for refugees to stay in San Jose because that is where all immigration proceedings take place.

3. Provision of funds to do this work.

Our plans require us to legally establish Corner of Love Costa Rica, follow the law, and create facilities that are deemed appropriate by local officials. For our first year of operation in Costa Rica, a preliminary budget of \$245,000 is needed. This amount will allow us to intercept the most vulnerable, channel families to safe shelter, and connect refugees with vital services needed to help them integrate in Costa Rica. Between now and Aug. 1, 2019 Corner of Love will feed, clothe, and care for THOUSANDS.

In addition to setting up Corner of Love Costa Rica, we continue to:

- Provide milk, food, and medicine to children and the elderly in San Ramon and surrounding villages
- Offer clean drinking water to the public at our Plaza at La Lima River
- Support our employees at the Quinta and in the rural communities, all of whom continue to receive wages/salary from our mission
- Mobilize medicine and doctors to points of conflict and patients in need in Nicaragua (note that we are unable to report further on these activities because Daniel Ortega has criminalized humanitarian work like what Corner of Love carried out prior to the civic insurrection)
- Work on diplomatic efforts in Washington D.C. where Tanya is acting as a Civil Society Representative for the Organization of American States and contributing in numerous circles where peaceful solutions are being discussed

As we have said before, where there is this much loss of life, there is a role for every world citizen.

We hope you'll get involved today by praying for us, donating, organizing a fundraiser, or planning to join one of the upcoming mission trips to Costa Rica. Nicaraguans are much the same as all of us. They want the right to pursue happiness, live peaceful lives, help their families live free of sickness, and work towards prosperity.

Please partner with us to help them today. Donate online at www.corneroflove.org/donate or download GivePlus+ app on your phone. Donate by mail to: Corner of Love, 22142 SE 237th St #100, Maple Valley, WA 98038. All donations are 100% tax deductible. Corner of Love is a registered charity, EIN no. 36-4612230

In His service,

Nelson & Tanya Amador

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