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God's Power Touches Lives in Cuba

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[EDUCATION NEWS]

God's power touches lives in Cuba

Michigan—The great transforming power of Christ was evident on the Cuba Study Tour organized by the Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. During the spring tour, 50 people decided to be baptized and another 200 accepted the Lord for the first time. Great things happen when youth work for the Lord serving other youth.

“I had the privilege of being an instrument of God through the evangelistic crusade ‘Hope for Today.’ The transforming power of God was visible in the lives of many people, including Mitchel, a 20-year-old man who came to one of our six evangelistic meetings. Mitchel came the first Friday night and said he had told his friends if they were true friends and loved him they would come with him. Several youth came with him night after night to hear the word of God,” stated Ruth Rivera, an M.Div. student at the Seminary.

The meetings started with the importance of the Bible as the source of truth and continued with the Sabbath as a special day, among other crucial truths about the gospel of salvation.

“Day by day, I surrendered myself to God as one of the speakers, asking for his help and guidance to be able to work for the people. On Wednesday, we went to Mitchel’s home to talk with him. He was not in, so we visited with his mother. When we asked if she would come to the meetings, she was hesitant, but when we asked if she had seen any change in her son since he began attending the meetings, a smile shone on her face,” Rivera said.

“Yes!” she said immediately. “Before he went to the meetings, we had serious arguments. Now, every time we disagree, instead of fighting with me, he goes to his room and reads the Bible.”

Reflecting on her son’s change allowed her to see the importance of attending the meetings and supporting his decision to change his way of life. That



The great transforming power of Christ was evident on the Cuba Study Tour organized by the Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.



During the spring tour, 50 people decided to be baptized and another 200 accepted the Lord for the first time. “The same Spirit of God that moved many lives in Cuba will move many hearts here if we allow him to do his work through us,” said Ruth D. Rivera, an M.Div. student who appealed to the people to give their lives to Christ.

night Mitchel and his mother attended the meeting together.

“Night by night, as I appealed the people to give their lives to Christ, the Spirit of the Lord was telling me I had to keep calling. As I made the final appeal, I saw Mitchel struggle to give his heart to Christ. Then I asked those who wanted to surrender their lives completely to Christ to stand up during my last prayer,” Rivera said.

Mitchel stood up that night, but he did not do it alone; his mother also decided to give her heart to Christ.

“After that night, we visited Mitchel and his mother again. I encouraged them on the great decision they had made, and we had a special prayer for God to seal their decision. Throughout the week, Mitchel invited friends to the meetings. But because God knows our deepest

needs and does not give up on us, the last Friday of the evangelistic meetings Mitchel could not run away from God’s call anymore.

“I remember that day I asked God to use me to reach the deep fibers of any human heart so God could make them feel the freedom they needed. As I started the appeal, God kept showing me the people I needed to look at and call. I prayed within me for God to tell me the things his [children] needed and, one by one, even the struggling ones started to come to the front. When Mitchel came up front, he was crying as if he was in pain. We prayed over him for the great freedom God wanted to bring into his life,” Rivera commented.

On Sabbath morning during the last appeal, Mitchel was so happy to come up front as a sign of his desire for baptism.

He even decided to share his testimony of how much he had won by accepting Christ to more than 70 youth that attended a Sabbath afternoon program for youth.

Mitchel invited his brother, Roberto, to go with him to share the testimony. “When they came up front, I asked Roberto how he had seen his brother change. He said that the meetings had changed him into a peacemaker. Then we asked him to read 1 Peter 2:9–10,” Rivera said.

Roberto used to attend church two years ago but, due to relationship problems, he stopped attending. However, that Sabbath afternoon as he read that Bible verse, he decided to give his life back to Christ.

“As we were saying goodbye to beautiful people in Cuba, Mitchel told me he wanted to serve the only true God. He admitted it was hard for him to accept the appeal at first but, as I continued calling, he heard the words of God calling him

and could not run away anymore,” Rivera commented.

The same Spirit of God that moved many lives in Cuba will move many hearts here if we allow him to do his work through us.

Ruth D. Rivera, M.Div. student, as told to L. Fernando Ortiz, director of the M.Div. program, Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

[LOCAL CHURCH NEWS]



The fourth Sabbath of each month, Glendale (Minn.) Church members volunteer at People Serving People.



Volunteers from the Glendale (Minn.) Church have volunteered at People Serving People for the past five years. They serve meals to residents.

Glendale Church serves at community shelter

Lake Region—People Serving People is the largest, most comprehensive, family-focused shelter in Minnesota. What distinguishes People Serving People from other emergency shelters is the broad range of on-site programs and services designed to address common barriers facing homeless families. Its ultimate goal is to permanently end a family’s homelessness with one visit to the shelter (see <http://people.servingpeople.org/>).

Every fourth Sabbath of the month, Glendale Church members in Minneapolis, under the leadership of Michael

Gilbreath, volunteer in the PSP dining room by serving meals to the residents. Glendale has volunteered at PSP for the past five years. “We are very excited to give back to our community and to honor God’s Word,” stated Gilbreath.

As they serve, Glendale Church volunteers are reminded of Jesus’ words in Matthew 25:34–40: *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.’ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and*

gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?’ And the King shall answer and say unto them, ‘Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me’ (KJV).

“By the Lord working through us, we are willing and able to do what the Lord requires of us,” stated Gilbreath.

John R. Sconiers, communication director, Lake Region Conference with Michael Gilbreath, elder, Glendale Church

Note: The Glendale Church in Minneapolis is a constituent church of the Lake Region Conference.