



LATIN AMERICAN CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES (LACM)

Latin American Doctoral Program in Theology (LADPT)

*Forming gifted leaders for
greater service — Eph. 4:12*

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Dear co-laborers in Christ's mission,

It is always a joy for me to write to you and report on what the Holy Spirit is doing through your generous investment in the Kingdom by means of the Latin American Doctoral Program in Theology (LADPT).

Like so many others, Jean and I are in a stay-at-home mode in Holland, Michigan. We canceled our planned trips to Amsterdam; Chiapas, Mexico; and Paraguay between April and August. This February through August will be our longest time at home without traveling that we have had in over twenty years. I am getting some writing done, and in a way our life has not changed too much, since almost all of our work with the LADPT has been via the internet. Since our doctoral program has been structured as a distance-learning, on-line system of faculty mentoring and supervision, the stay-at-home situations of our students and faculty in the various countries have not impacted our doctoral program very much.

Personally, we are blessed by friends and family being nearby via the internet. Our children have been wonderful, calling every few days to find out how we are doing. Many of you on the mailing list for this prayer newsletter have also written us by email asking how we are doing. We are so grateful for your love and personal support. Just today we received some face masks in the mail!



We are in harvest season! Celebrate with us the three graduates we highlight here. Your investment is yielding fruit. Over the next 20 years each of these graduates will touch the lives of hundreds of leaders who will in turn influence hundreds of others! What a joy to see them graduate. Give thanks with us! Please know our deep gratitude for your partnership with us. We are humbled by your love. **Thank you so much for your prayers!**

Love in Jesus, Chuck and Jean Van Engen



"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. . . . Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God . . . will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

— Phil. 4:4-7 NRSV

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS.

April 7 — Dissertation defense of Christian Giordano held virtually at the Free University of Amsterdam.

May 5 — LACM Board of Trustees virtual meeting.

June 6 — Chuck & Jean's 50th wedding anniversary, WOW

June 7 — Chuck preaches at our son Andrew's graduation from the Pastor's College at Christ the Word Presbyterian Church in Toledo, Ohio.

June through September — Chuck and Jean at home. Chuck will work at writing projects.

PRAISE GOD FOR DR. PEDRO ROBLEDÓ FROM CHIAPAS, MEXICO

This past January 30 we had the dissertation defense of Rev. Pedro Robledo via an internet connection of 5 of us located in 4 different locations: Lima, Peru; Chiapas, Mexico; Colorado Springs; and Michigan. Pedro was one of Jean's and my students when we were missionaries in Chiapas, Mexico. After that, he went to the Presbyterian Seminary in Mexico City for his bachelor's in theology. He was then selected to be the President of the John Kempers Theological Seminary in Chiapas that Jean and I helped to start. While he led that seminary, he did a master's in theology at the Biblical Seminary in San José, Costa Rica. Recently, he founded the "Yobel" Center for Biblical Studies in San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas, my hometown. He began his doctoral studies with us in 2014. His focus has been to examine how Luke describes in Luke 1 to 15 the way the Holy Spirit changed the mind-set of the early Jewish Christians from a particularist view of God's mission as being only for the Jews to a universal perspective of God's mission for all humanity. I was Pedro's mentor and this defense was a huge milestone for him. Your prayers and financial support have made it possible for Pedro to do these doctoral studies. This coming May, Jean and I were planning to be in Chiapas for a couple of weeks. Our trip there has been postponed until perhaps next November. We look forward to seeing Pedro and his family then. Praise God with us!



"If only we could see Jesus in the fullness of who he is and what he has done!. Then, surely we would see how worthy he is of our wholehearted allegiance...and we would grow into maturity. Nothing is more important for mature Christian discipleship than a fresh, clear, true vision of the authentic Jesus.

— John Stott, *The Radical Disciple*, 45.



"Epaphras . . . has made known to us your love in the Spirit. For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light."

— Col. 1: 7



PRAISE GOD FOR DR. FELIX ABREU of the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

On February 25 we had the joy of holding the dissertation defense of one of our LADPT students. Four professors and the candidate, located in four different countries, met together via the internet for the 2-hour defense of **Felix Abreu**. Felix lives and ministers in the Dominican Republic. He is a pastor and also teaches in a seminary there. Felix is a psychologist, specializing in family systems. His research involved studying the life experiences of pastors' families. What factors, both positive and negative, impact pastors' families in the Dominican Republic? He interviewed over 20 pastors and their families belonging to five different denominations. He learned so much. He told us that what was especially touching was how the pastors, their spouses, and their children hugged him and said, "Thank you, thank you for asking us about our experience! No one has ever asked us what it is like to be a pastor's family." Flowing from his research, Felix has quite a list of recommendations he will be making to the various denominational leaders. Your prayers and financial support made it possible for Felix to do these doctoral studies. Please celebrate with us!



Pedro Robledo (far right, front) and Felix Abreu (4th from left) with other members of their cohort, Generation 2014, in San Jose, Costa Rica

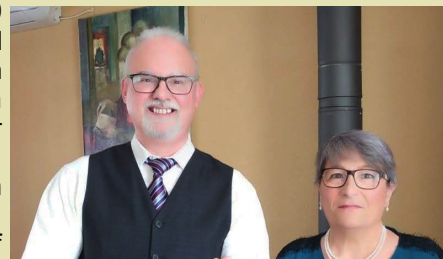
During this time of social distancing, it seems we are all making more internet purchases. Jean and I use **AmazonSmile** because it donates a percentage of each purchase to registered nonprofit organizations. Latin American Christian Ministries receives donations from every purchase in AmazonSmile when it is the designated nonprofit. Please consider using this as a way of supporting us. Go to [AmazonSmile.org](https://www.amazon.com/smile) to designate "Latin American Christian Ministries Inc." for donations.



Christian and Charo Giordano in his office during the virtual defense

PRAISE GOD FOR DR. CHRISTIAN GIORDANO FROM SPAIN!

In spite of the coronavirus complications and restrictions, in the LAPTD we are in harvest mode! Your personal and financial investment in this endeavor is yielding fruit! On April 7, we were happy to have the dissertation defense on-line of one of our LADPT students. Ten persons from 5 countries were together via ZOOM for a 2-hour dissertation defense. Christian Giordano, the candidate, lives in Spain. He directs a special training center for Latin American cross-cultural missionaries preparing for long-term ministry in Muslim contexts. Over 600 Protestant mission agencies in Latin America send more than 9000 international, cross-cultural missionaries all over the world. Many of these new Latin American missionaries are on their way to Muslim contexts. Christian has been pastoring a church in Spain. He and his wife, Charo, also run a small hostel for Muslim young people who end up in Spain with nowhere to live. Christian began his doctoral studies with us in 2008. He researched 12 Latin American Christian missionary development projects that sparked the emergence of local Christian churches in their contexts. He is the first to graduate from the Free University of Amsterdam, one of our partner degree-granting institutions. Please celebrate with us Christian Giordano's successful defense! Praise God with us!



A huge sigh of relief after the defense, and then it is time to celebrate!

"The Lord's Prayer consists of six petitions: three expressing our passion for the glory of God....followed by three expressing our dependence on his grace (for our daily bread, forgiveness of our sins and deliverance from evil)....The second half of the Lord's Prayer is a summary of our discipleship—our concern for God's glory and our dependence on his mercy. Dependence is a fundamental attitude for all of us whenever we say the Lord's Prayer.

— John Stott, *The Radical Disciple*, 101

Note: Your gifts and contributions go directly to fund the doctoral program itself.

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If you wish to receive this newsletter via email, write us at cvanengen@lacmin.org.