



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
2012

KATIE'S KORNER

NEWS FROM EQUATOR

Greetings!



Me and my new roommates who are also missionaries. (me, Kirsten, Kat)

I am very excited to announce a new edition of my monthly newsletter "Katie's Korner".

Thank you so much for your continued prayers for me as I carry on my missionary work here at Alliance Academy International in Quito Ecuador. I hope to be able update you monthly on my walk with Christ here in South America.

Blessings in Christ,
Katie

A BRAND NEW SCHOOL YEAR



Greetings from Quito! I continue to love my job here at Alliance Academy International. On September 3, I welcomed a brand new group of second graders into my classroom. I am excited for a new school year and know that this year will have its blessings and challenges just like the last one. I think they will surely keep me on my toes.

This year seems to be a year of much change. Many people left the Alliance Academy International for personal reasons over the course of the summer, so we have a plethora of new staff this year. God was faithful in filling every position and

need at school.

Last year, I was spoiled. Although my class last year had its fair share of behavior and attention problems, I started the year with 15 students in my class, gained a new student, and then lost 2 due to their families needing to relocate. I finished the year with 14 students (every classroom teacher's dream!) This year, I have 22 students - BIG CHANGE!

I think the difficulty this year will be the different English levels in my classroom. I have one student who speaks no English, and another student who reads and comprehends on an 8th grade level. Academically speaking, that will be my biggest challenge this year, I think. In addition to academics, my goal (and really my main focus) will be to make the Bible and the gospel come alive for them in all I do and say.



I have individual challenges this year, as well. I have a student with pretty severe Asperger's Syndrome, another who is neglected at home and starving for attention, and many who have difficulty focusing. I pray I can be Christ to each one of them and meet them where they are and love and accept them just as they are in every moment. It will be difficult, I know. But I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

AND AS A SIDE NOTE...

I have not only taken to eating like an Ecuadorian, but I have also started cooking like one. I have been making some delicious dishes (if I do say so myself J) like "seco de pollo" (South American Chicken Stew) with rice (which is a lot more difficult to cook at high altitude), avocado, and fried ripe plantains. I have also been tapping into my Italian roots with some chicken tetrazzini, chicken cacciatore, and the ever-so-popular spaghetti, taking after my mom who makes the best spaghetti sauce in the world. I have been trying to get into the habit of cooking, although it is much more difficult to motivate myself to do it since school has started up again.



So if you find yourself heading to Quito, let me know, and you will have a home-cooked meal waiting for you when you get here. I also love to play tour guide!

PRAYER NEEDS HERE IN QUITO

Recently the weather has been perfect here in Quito - 75 degrees and sunny. But it has also been perfect for forest fires. In and around Quito, since June first we have had over 2,300 wildfires, which have destroyed more than 2,850 acres of land. Lately it has been a normal daily occurrence to be able to see them out my living room window. We have not gotten much rain at all here. It has been much drier than normal and very windy, making it difficult to control the blazes. Please pray for rain and that God would hold back the flames.



This is a picture I took in late August of one of the forest fires. The picture was taken from the entrance of a museum in the historic center of Quito.

In addition I ask that you would please lift up the Alliance Academy International and its ministry. We are in a presidential election year here in Ecuador, and I think the current president has started to get very anxious because of that. He has been trying to control everything, including private schools and institutions.

In the past year, his Ministry of Education has shut down a number of schools and universities. At AAI we have been forced to comply with some of their requirements even though we technically operate outside of and independently from the Ministry of Education. In addition, the government did not renew the visas of many missionary families who work outside of AAI and whose children had been attending the school, so enrollment is down, posing other threats to us as an institution and a ministry.

This school and its ministry have been around for decades serving the city of Quito. Please pray that it continues to be a place where children grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.

FIELDS OF LENTILS - 2 SAMUEL 23

A passage that the Lord has been putting on my heart lately is in 2 Samuel 23. To give a little bit of background, in 1 Samuel 22 David is fleeing from King Saul. He leaves Gath and goes to the cave of Adullam. When his family heard, they all went to him. Scripture tells us that "all those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him (about 400 men) and he became their leader." Mighty King David started out leading a band of 400 "Debbie-Downers," basically. They were beaten down and distraught.



Let's jump ahead now to 2 Samuel 23. The heading right above verse 8 in my Bible says "David's Mighty Men." From that group of 400 men who were distressed, in debt, and discontented, God raised up a mighty army for His glory. He does that in our lives, too.

Their stories are incredible, and I would encourage you to read them. However, right now I would like to focus on one man, in particular. In verses 11 and 12, we read about a man named Shammah.

"11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. 12 But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the Lord brought about a great victory. Imagine, God had given the Israelites this land, which included this piece of ground full of lentils. Now, if you have eaten lentils, you know they are not anything special. In Genesis we read that Esau traded his birthright for a little plate full of lentils."

So, back to the story, here are the Israelites in this field with this little plot of lentils. Then,

enter the Philistines. The Philistines - the enemy of Israel - banded together to overtake the land. The whole army of Israel that's there flees, except for one man, who defends that plot of land against the Philistines and defeats them. And the Bible says that "the Lord brought about a great victory."

The Lord has been showing me recently that He gives me daily blessings, both big and small. But so often, Satan tries to convince us that it's nothing. It is nothing more than a little field of lentils. It's not worth fighting for.

Many times we even hear that from people around us, perhaps even people really close to us. "_____ is not worth it. Just forget about it." But we need to be discerning, wise, and prayerful in those moments, because if it is a blessing that has come from God, something He has entrusted to us, then it is not up to us to decide when we give up and throw in the towel. If we know that it is something from God, then we need to stand firm and defend it, trusting and knowing that God will have our back. We need to choose to fight and not allow Satan to rob us of the victory.

RAIN DOWN

Since I started writing this update letter a few weeks ago Quito has been blessed with a little rain. Just yesterday we had our first rain fall since July. So praise the Lord for that. It is still very dry, though, and the fires are still a problem.

I believe that spiritually we go through droughts, too. Ninety percent of the forest fires that have occurred here have all been cases of arson, intentionally set. The Enemy tries to do the same thing. He creates droughts in our lives provoked by feelings of not being worthy or good enough, not being valued or loved. When we begin to listen to that voice our spirits become dry and we can lose hope. Rather we need to listen to the voice of God that whispers "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart..." (Jeremiah 1:5) and "Fear not for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are Mine...Since you are precious and honored in My sight and because I love you I will give men in exchange for you and nations in exchange for your life" (Isaiah 43:1, 4).



Friends from church took me out to celebrate by ice skating, eating ice cream cones, then playing in the ice-cold fountains. (Marco, Vanessa, Galo, me, Antonio)



Rain Down - Delirious Video song

Last night in church we sang the song, "Rain Down" by the worship group Delirious. I was struck by the lyrics in that song "Rain down/my heart is dry but still I'm singing/Rain down." After a drought when it rains, the earth just soaks it in. May God rain His love, peace, joy, and hope into our hearts, and may we soak it in. And after our hearts are drenched with Him, may His rain continue to fall on us until it is running off and flowing over. May we all be refreshed, renewed, and revived in Him.



Stay Connected

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