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Pray with Mexico on Sunday, January 6, 2019

BY [CARA MCKINNEY](#) ON DECEMBER 31, 2018

Lectionary Selection: Matthew 2:1-12

Prayers for Mexico:

Mother and Father God,

Today, we thank you for the gift of the wise men, who showed such courage not only in taking the steps to begin their journey but also in deciding to not return to Herod. Let these wise men be our guiding star this holiday season as we attempt to continue to discern what is good and right in the world.

Dearest God, help us to continue to do what is right and not what is easy. We ask for your blessing as Mexico goes through this time of transitioning to a new president. We also pray for Melel Xojobal and the educators there who tirelessly fight for the rights of children in Chiapas.

Thank you, today and always, for giving the wise men, who listened to your voice and followed their hearts.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Mexico:

This past summer, one of the young women who has been coming to Melel since she was 10 wasn't accepted to any of the universities to which she applied. Teary-eyed, she came to Melel looking for guidance. She was met with emotional support and a plethora of ideas. One of the educators told her about the university he attended in Sinaloa, in northern Mexico. He helped her with the application, the entrance requirements, and found 4 scholarships that would pay her tuition, room and board, transportation to and from school, and give her a monthly living stipend. Coming from a family with no extra money to spend on college for one of their six daughters, if she had received just 3 of the 4 scholarships, she would not have been able to attend. Thankfully, all her expenses were paid. Knowing that *fiscally* she would be able to attend, the next challenge was convincing her parents. With a little extra help from the same educator, they gave their blessing. After all that work and all the obstacles crossed, the final step was the most difficult: convincing herself. Two weeks before the semester began, she still hadn't completely committed. Finally, the week before classes began, she came to Melel with her bus ticket in hand and tears of joy and anticipation in her eyes. She was going to college. So, with heartfelt goodbyes and well wishes, we sent her off on her adventure.

What does it take to break the cycles of poverty? It takes one courageous 18-year-old girl who has never left the state nor traveled alone three 15-hour bus rides through eight states, two time zones, and 60 degrees of air temperature change to a university in northern Mexico. It takes years of support and mentorship from strong women and it takes dedicated educators who are willing to take phone calls at midnight to help find plane tickets, hours of advice about living in a new place and dealing with homesickness, as well as helping research for scholarships. It takes a community of encouragement and well-wishes and somewhere close to 100 hugs goodbye.

Without the years of support and encouragement from Melel she would not have had the courage to leave home and go so far away from everything she knows. Thanks to the support of Melel, this young woman sets an example for her 4 younger sisters and generations to come that anything is possible if you just believe in yourself and have the courage to take that first step out the door towards chasing your dreams.

(Prayer and Mission Moment by Cara McKinney)

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in Mexico:

Cara McKinney serves with Melel Xojobal in Mexico. Her appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, WOC, OGHS, and your special gifts.

More information on Mexico:

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Mexico

Mexico is bordered on the north by the United States; on the south and west by the Pacific Ocean; on the southeast by Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Sea; and on the east by the Gulf of Mexico.

After 70 years of one-party rule, Mexicans elected a president from the opposition party which has promised to end corruption, lead the country to better times, end the abuse against the indigenous peoples and bring peace to Chiapas.

Pray for: The Ecumenical Bible School in Chiapas as it seeks to end the tensions between Catholics and Protestants in the region.

Population (2014 est) – 120,286,655

Area – 1,220,000 mi

Capital – Mexico City

Ethnic Background

Mestizo – (Amerindian-Spanish) 60%

Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian – 30%

White – 9%

Other – 1%

Exports – manufactured goods, oil and oil products, silver, fruits, vegetables, coffee, cotton

Imports – metalworking machines, steel mill products, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, car parts for assembly, repair parts for motor vehicles, aircraft, and aircraft parts

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 73 years F 78 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 12.58 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 6.5%