

"GOOD NEWS"

Missions Update

April 2019



Bryan and Molly Canny with Liliana, Adelina, and Cecilia
Missionaries to Bolivia, S. America

HERE'S MY "NOTHING" MATTHEW 9:12-17

Bryan and Molly Canny - Santa Cruz, Bolivia

April 2019

"Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."

He replied, "You give them something to eat."

They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish-

unless we go and buy food for all this crowd." (About five thousand men were there.)

But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." The disciples did so, and everyone sat down. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basket fulls of broken pieces that were left over."

Have you ever been in a situation like the disciples in the story of the feeding of the five thousand? You come to Jesus with what you think is basically "nothing" and he transforms it into something incredible? I think these kinds of miracles happen everyday if we are attentive enough to see them. We would love to share of three such transformations that we witnessed recently in our ministry here in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

We have only a patio...



We pulled up to the church property and saw a simple patio and an overgrown yard with a pile of sand and some scrap lumber. In a little over an hour we were supposed to host a neighborhood outreach on this property and to be quite honest, I was having a hard time envisioning it. Thankfully, I had a team around me that chose to see the potential rather than the problem. Molly and I, along with Ken and Star Jackson and Dave and Sara Ruff (two couples who were visiting from our Faith Evangelical Church in Billings, MT) rolled up our sleeves and in no time the property was being transformed into a Family Carnival. Many game stations, a face painting booth and a prize table seemed to appear out of nowhere. The patio was later transformed

into the perfect stage for a hilariously dramatic interpretation of the story of Jacob and Esau (you can guess which one I played...). Around 60 children plus other family members from the community came that day to play games, have fun, laugh, receive prizes and a free snack and have a chance to hear about God's forgiveness and our forgiveness of others.



This same patio is also transformed each week into one of the tutoring centers we work with, called Amigos de Paz, and a church sanctuary on several evenings and Sunday mornings. They were blessed to be able to extend the patio as well by adding on more roofing due to a generous gift by the same church in Billings.

We have only a park...



Vacation Bible School holds a special place in the hearts of our family. From great memories from our childhoods to many recent memories of helping with VBS at churches while on deputation, getting to watch the Bible come alive for many children, including our own. We were overjoyed, then, when asked to partner with a church here to host a Vacation Bible School in December! Esperanza de Vida (Hope of Life) Church has been leading a children's outreach in a local park every Saturday for the better part of the last year. They decided it would be a great idea to expand that ministry to a full week of VBS during the Bolivian school summer vacation. Equipped with a portable-battery operated speaker for music, park benches and a cement slab for games and coloring, and kids; the park was

transformed into a vibrant and life giving place of worship every afternoon. Up to seventy children came and about forty of those children are now attending Sunday services regularly. Praise God.

We have only a bench and some bricks...



I recently had the privilege of traveling with some of our local pastors outside of Santa Cruz to visit some churches in rural communities. At two of the locations I was able to lead a Sunday School lesson and craft time. The first was on Saturday night after 8 pm at a fairly remote village. It was pitch black and the church had just two light bulbs with wires strung across the property. I looked at my surroundings and my first thought was, "I might have to adapt the plan...". Yet this time God used a couple of 10-year-old boys to

show me the transformation that was possible. When it was time for the children to split off from the main service, these two boys grabbed some simple wooden benches and headed for the "light pole". After giving the lesson, for which they were incredibly attentive, I handed out some coloring pages and crayons and felt bad that it looked like they would have to just color on their laps. These two 10-year-old boys went over to a pile of bricks, grabbed a few for each child and made little chairs so they could then use the benches as their tables. I smiled at their ingenuity and thanked God again for his transformative power even in the simple things. Where I saw "nothing" God made a classroom.

These are just a few examples from our lives, but I would challenge each of us to look a little closer every day to see where God is taking our "nothing" and transforming it into "something beautiful". The key is in following Jesus' example. We have to look to Heaven, give thanks and be broken. In our brokenness God will multiply.

Bryan and Molly Canny are career missionaries with Evangelical Church Missions serving in Bolivia, South America. Molly (Treiber) served from 2006-2009 in Bolivia working in children's ministry and teaching at the Santa Cruz Christian Learning Center. Bryan and Molly met in July 2009, married in May 2010 and arrived in Santa Cruz, Bolivia in April 2011 to follow God's call to serve together.

Bryan and Molly work closely with the Bolivian Evangelical Church. In 2012 they led the way in opening Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) Tutoring Center. In the first couple years the Canny's served as directors in charge of recruiting volunteers, lesson planning, buying materials, and day-to-day operations. As the ministry has developed, With the help of the Cannys, Bolivian directors and instructors have learned to design and implement programs that not only minister to children but also help local churches get involved with families who don't yet know Christ. In February 2017, a second center, Vida Nueva (New Life) Tutoring Center was opened and many more children were able to get assistance needed to succeed in school, emerge from poverty, and live eternally with Christ. In the coming years the Canny's will be working to multiply this ministry model in different neighborhoods in Santa Cruz and eventually across Bolivia.

Bryan graduated from Vennard College in 2006 with degrees in Pastoral Ministries and Bible. Molly graduated from Grace University in 2006 with degrees in Elementary Education and Bible. Bryan and Molly have three beautiful daughters, Cecilia, Liliana, and Adelina.



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