



# CRGA Newsletter

November | 2023 |

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*“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”*

*~ 1 Timothy 6:18-19*

## Our Christmas Project

Our October 2023 Vision Team trip to Cuba was a wonderful success and blessing as we continued the work we do together there with our partners. There were two unmistakable themes arising from that trip: 1) the church of Jesus Christ continues to grow very rapidly there and 2) the essential needs of the Cuban people continue to grow more and more desperate. Therefore, the Leadership Team of Calvary Road met recently to discuss the situation, and we reconfirmed that we simply must make it an urgent priority to get a basic food container there as quickly as possible. Consequently, we are aiming, with your support, to source, load and ship a 40' sea container by this Christmas filled with basic food essentials, primarily rice or beans, and also to include other urgently needed essentials including cooking oil, sugar, salt and medical supplies. We estimate it will cost \$55,000 to make this happen, so this is certainly a "God-sized" project.

The value of the Cuban peso, in which all Cubans trade and receive their pay, continues to sink like a rock (runaway inflation). In only the last year, the peso has lost half its street value and the cost of basic food, if it can be found available, is more than double the price of a year ago. Meantime, Cubans still receive the same basic rates of pay, so one doesn't have to be a mathematician or economist to understand that the Cuban people are facing economic challenges at least 4X what they were only a year ago. It saddens me to say that I have never seen such a high percentage of skinny Cubans during our visit last month. These are the realities of life there.

The good news is that with the explosive growth in the Cuban church, combined with the increasing scarcity of life's basics of food and medicine, the church has developed an efficient distribution network that gets urgently needed items to those broad areas and people where it makes the greatest impact. As an example of this, most hospitals in the areas we work now have no supplies, so if a person

needs medical treatment there, they are responsible for bringing all the supplies needed to treat them, including medical gloves, syringes, pain medications, bandages, sutures etc. In this area, the church now serves as the vehicle to receive these items from God's people abroad and get them to the people who need them when they need them.

Further, due to the wide scale of the challenges there, it seems that the officials may becoming more cooperative in expediting the usually painfully slow process of granting approvals for import and then release of needed essentials for the Cuban people.

Therefore, we have repositioned our usual December newsletter as an urgent November newsletter, so that together we can make our current container project our Christmas 2023 priority for our precious brothers and sisters in Cuba. Would you consider a special Christmas 2023 gift in support of an urgent food container to Cuba?

### Send a cheque to:

Calvary Road Gospel Association  
PO Box 571  
Moncton, NB E1C 8L9

### E-transfer:

CalvaryRoadGospelAssociation@gmail.com  
(Please indicate your name and email address in the transfer message)

### Via Canada Helps:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/4454>

Please designate your donation for "Food Container". Also, take note that all donations made by December 31, 2023, will be receipted in January for the 2023 personal taxation year.

Thank you so much for your continuing support of God's people in Cuba through Calvary Road. May you be greatly blessed for your faithfulness and generosity. It's ALL for Jesus!



## A Note from the President

~Dave Ross

While our immediate priority is to get a food container enroute to Cuba as quickly as possible, I want to reassure all our Calvary Road supporters that our overall #1 priority of supporting pastors and missionaries remains unchanged. And given the continuing explosive growth in the Cuban church, it seems that this is totally in harmony with God's plan for His Church in Cuba.



Overall, we have added approximately 20 new pastors and missionaries to our Cuban "payroll" in 2023. As we look forward to 2024, we aspire to do the same (we have zero payroll in Canada). Of course, there are more Cuban pastors who need support than we have Canadian sponsors, and that is the purpose of this focus.

The big picture is that only a few short years ago, the Eastern Baptist Convention had 400 churches and 500 mission stations (of which 300 were soon to become churches). During our October 2023 Vision Team trip, we were overwhelmed to learn that the EBC now has more than 700 churches and 1,000 mission stations. All praise, honour and glory go to God for this amazing increase. Through our pastor and missionary support program, it is clear that God has invited us to partner with Him in His work there, which is a very humbling realization.

In this newsletter we want to highlight a couple of our long-term sponsors (something we typically don't do) but more importantly focus on the pastors they support, so that all our readers have a good understanding of how our pastor sponsorship program works.



Pastor Orlenis (pictured here with his wife and daughter) is sponsored by John and Cathy Dam. Pastor Orlenis' church is located in

a rural area with a regional population of approximately 5,000. His church has 198 members, with 8 more to soon be baptized, and 250 attending. They have a children's Bible School where they feed them breakfast to encourage them as many would otherwise stay home because of hunger. They have 5 missionaries with over 20 attending in each mission station. Pastor Orlenis also oversees another church 4 km away, another 8 km, and another 9 km. He preaches in these once or twice a month. In our visit with Pastor Orlenis in October 2022, his church had one mission station. We praise God for this beautiful shepherd who is so faithfully, effectively and humbly serving our God there.

Pastor Manuel (pictured here with his wife) is a recent graduate from the EBC seminary and he has served in this, his first church for a year now. He is sponsored by Dona and AnnMarie Belanger. The general area has a population of 900 and where the church is located 600



live nearby ("nearby" means the 2 KM radius that puts churches within normal walking distance of the surrounding area). They have a membership of 60 with 90 in weekly attendance. Three were to soon be baptized and 9 were to start discipleship classes. On Tuesdays and Thursdays 20-30 people gather. They also have a Sunday School of 20-30. There is



an evening service every three months. One of the more difficult areas in which to minister in Cuba, this church was started 27 years ago, and people are only now starting to feel a connection to the church. But the church has a good testimony in the community and the challenge is to continue this and grow.

One of the things that our Calvary Road supporters can do, of course, is to join in on one of our (1-week) Vision Team trips to Cuba. Our upcoming trips include:

- February 9-16, 2024
- February 28 - March 6, 2024
- September 24 - October 1, 2024
- November 26 - December 3, 2024
- April 22-29, 2025

The above two photos were taken during our October 2023 Vision Team trip, and it is hard to know who most appreciated the opportunity to meet: our sponsored pastors or their sponsors. It is fair to state that all were greatly blessed. In fact, Vision Team trips are a major way that Calvary Road conducts its work in Cuba - taking supplies and other essentials to bless our sponsored pastors and encourage them in their work. Knowing that there are caring brothers and sisters in the Lord in Canada who support them and pray for them is a huge encouragement to them, as they labour in such difficult conditions there. So, if you would be willing to take a “vacation with a difference” (all trips are one week) and see life as it really is in Cuba, but in return be blessed beyond words as you share in our work there, please do contact us and let us know your interest in joining with us for one of these trips. Just email us at - [CalvaryRoadGospelAssociation@gmail.com](mailto:CalvaryRoadGospelAssociation@gmail.com) and let us know, and we will be more than delighted to provide all the details to you. May God lead you in all these things and thank you again for your support of God’s work in Cuba through Calvary Road.



## Christmas Offering



*Songwriter – Paul Baloche*

*Over the skies of Bethlehem appeared a star  
While angels sang to lowly shepherds  
Three wise men seeking truth, they traveled from  
afar*

*Hoping to find the child from heaven  
And falling on their knees they bow before the  
humble Prince of Peace*

*We bring an offering of worship to our King  
No one on earth deserves the praises that we sing  
Jesus, may you receive the honor that you're due  
O Lord, I bring an offering to you*

*The sun cannot compare to the glory of your love  
There is no shadow in your presence  
No mortal man would dare to stand before your  
throne  
Before the Holy One of heaven  
It's only by Your blood, it's only through Your mercy  
Lord, I come*

*I bring an offering of worship to my King  
No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing  
Jesus, may you receive the honor that you're due  
O Lord, I bring an offering to you*

Christmas Offering lyrics © Capitol CMG Publishing, Integrity Music



## “Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured...”

~Pastor Werner Peters

We always equate Christmas with joy. Family, feasts, and celebrations dominate the season for good reason! Our Creator became one of us! However, coming to this world that Jesus created was fraught with difficulty. As humans there are 2 great motivators in our lives: pain and pleasure. Jesus Christ Himself experienced these two dynamics.



The Incarnation of our Lord involved the pain of endurance and suffering on so many fronts. The pain of

- becoming a diaper-soiling dependent human baby.
- the pain and humiliation of rejection by his own people - even his own brothers.
- the pain of voluntarily emptying Himself
- the pain of the physical limitations that He experienced as the God-man.
- and of course, the pain and degradation of a barbaric Roman crucifixion. He drank the bitter cup to the last drop.

Why?

His Word says He bore it all “for the joy that was set before him”. That tells me that the pleasure that Jesus anticipated was so strong that it kept Him on mission - obedience to the Father, serving his disciples and suffering the shame and pain of the cross. While being tortured He was one small quiet, breathless prayer away from obliterating his tormentors and being rescued by legions of angels! Why didn't He?

For the JOY set before Him.

- the pleasure of glorifying God and settling the sin question for “whosoever will”
- the pleasure of defeating our enemy once and for all
- the pleasure of forging a path for forgiveness
- the pleasure of creating a people for Himself.

Pain, overcome by pleasure. Today, we are asking you to endure the pain of sacrifice for the people of God in Cuba. Their level of deprivation is approaching a threshold that the bonds of society will not be able to withstand for long. Will you recognize that the pain of giving sacrificially will repay you in compound interest in the form of great joy? And you will recognize that this small ‘pain (if it causes you any pain) is absolutely nothing in comparison to the Lord’s suffering for us.

We will always equate Christmas with joy. Let us never forget the price that was paid in order for both our Lord and ourselves to experience this joy. Have a great Christmas!





## Ways You Can Support CRGA

### Pray for our pastors

### Sponsor a pastor and his family

*For just \$70 per month, or \$840 per year, you can sponsor a pastor and his family. This provides them with much needed money for groceries, clothing and basic necessities.*

### Join us on one of our upcoming Vision Trips!

*Vision trip cost is \$1,800; this includes airfare from Pearson Toronto and accommodations, food travel in Cuba. We have limited capacity for our Vision Trips; first to sign up and pay the \$1,000 deposit are the first to be confirmed for the VT team. Come join us and experience the real Cuba and a beautiful change in your heart and life - blessings are guaranteed!*

## Ways to Give

### Send a cheque to:

Calvary Road Gospel Association  
PO Box 571  
Moncton, NB E1C 8L9

### E-transfer:

CalvaryRoadGospelAssociation@gmail.com  
(Please indicate your name and email address in the transfer message)

### Via Canada Helps:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/4454>



Donations by mail and post-marked on December 31, 2023, or earlier will be receipted for 2023. Donation receipts will be issued end of January 2024.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please advise us by way of email: [waltnoordam@outlook.com](mailto:waltnoordam@outlook.com)

