

# Merry Christmas!!!



# XM Field Report

## Planting Churches & Training Leaders

### Relationship Takes Time

Like Saul/Paul in Acts 9, there are testimonies of people who have had immediate encounters with God that started a relationship with him through this one encounter. These instant encounters are incredible, but they aren't common. What we see on the field here in Brazil is that relationship is the key to reaching the unchurched.

One of our leaders called us, "Keith and Marsha", very excited, "Nonato brought his Bible to church and his reading glasses". Why is that so exciting? Nonato wouldn't step into a church when we met him. The last five years we've been building a relationship with Nonato. We've gone to

where he lives and works (a difficult to reach location). Nonato started feeling like we cared about him as a person. He started attending the Pacaja church with his wife. We kept building this relationship outside the church walls and he kept growing closer to Jesus.

Relationships take time. Our lives as followers of Christ speak louder than our words. To reach the unreached, we need to be authentic in our everyday living. We need to value the individual. We need to find ways to love and care for our neighbors. It is after these relationships are built that Jesus is seen and they come to worship the One that loves more than we do.



Keith, Marsha, Nonato, Betânia, Fernanda and Ferreira



Nonato and Betânia

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## Serving the Marginalized



*Ministering to the homeless in the streets of Pacajá*

Here in northern Brazil, people have a respect for God and the people called missionaries, but don't see the church as relevant. Those outside the church want to see authenticity. They want to see a church that serves their community outside their walls.

In the center of Pacaja, there is a pavilion that the horse drawn carts use as shelter until they get a load to haul. At the same location a group of heavy drinkers use that as their "home". For about a year now, Keith has led a group from the Pacaja church to take a pot of soup to this group once a week. They bring chairs, sit, listen, eat and pray for this group where they are. At first they were very skeptical as to the authenticity of this act, wondering what this church wanted from them, but our church kept going, offering true concern and love for them as individuals.

These people are marginalized. Many have written them off as unreachable and unworthy in the lifestyle they live. Jesus served the marginalized. He went to them, sat with them,

talked with them and his presence healed them. Truth be told, this group is difficult, but no less worthy of receiving God's love than ourselves. It helps to always keep in mind what we were like before God's transforming power. Our own journeys remind us of the hope we have in Christ, and that hope is worth sharing with everyone.



## Together We Are Stronger

Missionaries need a team. This is not empty rhetoric. On the field we tell others of the team that makes it possible for us to be here. On the field we include you as one who is part of the work in our various locations in Brazil. We need your prayers. We need the phone calls. We need the encouragement. We need the financial support. We need those who are as passionate as us about reaching the hard to reach in Brazil through planting churches and training leaders.

Recently a couple decided to share about this mission here in Brazil with their small group. There were no missionaries present. What they did was share their excitement about what God was doing in a place they aren't present, but are a part of through their support. Their excitement sparked in their group. This is a simple example of being part of a team. We as missionaries can't spend lots of time

off the field; it would hinder our being relevant. We need others to stand in the gap for us as we continue building relationships and sharing the gospel here.

There is a song I, Marsha, used to sing as a little girl that had the words: "I'm a missionary's helper, praying every day; I'm a missionary's helper, my dollars go God's way; Winning precious souls to Jesus, my heart is all aglow; I'm a missionary's helper, pray and give and go." (to the tune of I've Been Working on the Railroad) Every believer isn't called to go overseas, but every believer is called to participate in reaching the whole world. If you are part of our team, thank you, and we ask that you think about simple ways you can share with others about the work here. If you aren't part of any team, pray about with whom you should partner. Together we are stronger in bringing God's love.



*Vineyard Columbus Team 2017*



*2017 Vineyard Columbus Team Reunion Back in the USA in 2018*