

merry christmas

2019



“FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD.” LUKE 2:11

AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, WE WANT TO **THANK YOU** FOR HELPING SIFAT SHARE THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO SO MANY PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD. WE SING THE SONG “CHRISTMAS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR”, BUT WITHOUT PEOPLE LIKE YOU THAT HAVE SUPPORTED SIFAT IN 2019 (AND FOR THE LAST 40 YEARS) WITH YOUR TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURES, THERE WOULD BE HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD THAT LOOK AT DECEMBER 25 AS JUST ANOTHER DAY OF STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE.

I AM SO AMAZED AT THE GENEROSITY OF YOU THAT KNOW AND PRACTICE **IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE**. BECAUSE OF YOU, SIFAT HAS BEEN ABLE TO GIVE TRAINING SESSIONS THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR BOTH IN ALABAMA AND IN COSTA RICA. BUT, WE WERE ABLE TO DO MORE THAN TRAINING. MANY OF YOU PERSONALLY SERVED ON MISSION TEAMS. OTHERS HELPED US GET SEED MONEY FOR OUR GRADUATES TO PUT INTO PRACTICE THEIR OWN PROJECTS WHEN THEY RETURNED HOME.

IN AUGUST, I WENT WITH AUBURN UNIVERSITY’S ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS TO INSTALL AN IRRIGATION SYSTEM NEAR QUESIMPUCO, BOLIVIA. THIS BROUGHT FOOD SECURITY TO A VILLAGE WHERE BEFORE PEOPLE OFTEN DIED OF STARVATION DURING THE DRY SEASON. I BOUGHT A LITTLE JAR OF HONEY FROM THE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF QUESIMPUCO TO GIVE TO MOM AND DAD. THEY SURPRISED ME WHEN THEY WERE SO EMOTIONAL OVER THAT LITTLE JAR OF HONEY. I UNDERSTOOD WHY WHEN THEY TOLD ME THIS STORY.

SIFAT WAS ONLY TWO YEARS OLD WHEN CENATEC, OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATION IN BOLIVIA, ASKED US TO SEND A MISSIONARY TO QUESIMPUCO TO TEACH THEM MORE OF THE BIBLE AND HOW TO RAISE BEES. SIFAT SENT STEVE MURPHY, A STAFF MEMBER AT THE TIME. ACCORDING TO BENJO, THE COMMUNITY IN QUESIMPUCO HAD A VERY SUCCESSFUL WEEK LEARNING FROM STEVE. SOME OF THEM BECAME CHRISTIANS AND STILL ARE TODAY. AFTERWARD, THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO MAKE THEIR OWN HIVES AND GET THEIR OWN BEES. I HAD NOT THOUGHT TO TELL MOM AND DAD THAT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, THE HONEY PROJECT IS STILL GOING STRONG IN QUESIMPUCO. IN SOME OF THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES, ALMOST EVERY HOUSE HAS A BEEHIVE.

IF A PROJECT LASTS 10 YEARS AFTER THE MISSIONARY LEAVES,





Benjo works with our team and the Quesimpuco community on the new microirrigation system — in the background are white beehive boxes that still provide 38 years after beekeeping was first introduced here by SIFAT.



Participants in a SIFAT training held in Costa Rica learn how to monitor waterways. Our Central American Training Center in Costa Rica is providing more accessible conferences and workshops to those unable to travel to Alabama.

IT SHOULD BE SUCCESSFUL LONG TERM. BUT IF IT IS STILL WORKING AFTER 20 YEARS, THEN IT IS A PROJECT THAT HAS BECOME PART OF THE PEOPLE'S LIVES. IT HAS AND WILL CONTINUE TO BLESS THEM. HONEY HAS HELPED THE IMPOVERISHED PEOPLE OF QUESIMPUCO HAVE BETTER HEALTH AND NUTRITION, AND IT HAS GIVEN THEM A WAY TO HELP SUPPORT THEMSELVES BY SELLING THE SURPLUS! NO WONDER MOM AND DAD WERE THRILLED TO SEE A JAR OF HONEY THAT WAS PRODUCED THIS YEAR FROM THE PROJECT THEY INITIATED 38 YEARS AGO. AND IT HAPPENED BECAUSE PEOPLE LIKE YOU PRAYED AND PAID FOR STEVE MURPHY'S TICKET TO GO TO BOLIVIA TO TEACH. THOSE WHO BECAME CHRISTIANS ARE OLDER NOW AND ARE STILL SERVING OUR LORD. THE BEEKEEPING PROJECT HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN AND TAUGHT TO THE THIRD GENERATION. IT HAS STOOD THE TEST OF TIME. THE PROJECT IS THEIR VERY OWN, AND THEY WILL WORK TO KEEP IT GOING.

WE ARE THANKFUL FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT HELPED SUPPORT SIFAT INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES' PROJECTS COMMITTEE THAT IS WORKING TO HELP RAISE FUNDS, SO THAT OUR STUDENTS FROM POOR AREAS CAN RETURN AND PUT INTO PRACTICE WHAT THEY LEARNED AT SIFAT. YOUR GENEROUS GIVING HAS HELPED US HOST THE TRAINING SESSIONS AND HELP SOME GRADUATES WITH SEED MONEY TO GET THEIR PROJECTS STARTED. WE PRAY AND TRUST THAT THESE NEW PROJECTS WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO DO GOD'S WORK AMONG PEOPLE IN NEED INTO THE FUTURE AS THE HONEY BEE PROJECT IN QUESIMPUCO STILL DOES. WE HOPE THAT AS YOU CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS, IT WILL BRING YOU JOY TO KNOW THAT WE ARE USING YOUR DONATIONS, AND RELYING ON YOUR PRAYERS, TO KEEP SIFAT SERVING INTO THE FUTURE. YOUR GIFTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOW, AND LIKE THE HONEY IN QUESIMPUCO, MAY THE THINGS YOU STARTED THROUGH SIFAT CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN LIVES MANY YEARS FROM NOW. WE WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW THAT JESUS IS ALIVE TODAY AND THAT HE CAME TO BRING US LIFE MORE ABUNDANT! MERRY CHRISTMAS!

LOVE,

**TOM AND THE ENTIRE
SIFAT STAFF**

happy new year