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## ***A Renewed Motivation in Bolivia***

***By Sarah Corson***

***SIFAT Co-founder***

Benjo Paredes and Ken Corson started CENATEC, a Christian nonprofit, more than 42 years ago. He has led the way to take the Gospel to thousands of Bolivians, taught seminars, helped 85 villages get clean water and helped thousands of people have more food to eat. But, the years have taken their toll.

Benjo is 80 years old now. His son Isaac had taken Benjo's place as director of CENATEC, because Benjo was getting older and had back trouble. Some days, he could hardly walk. Dimmed eyesight. Joints swollen with arthritis. His whole body was just worn out from more than 40 years traveling a 500-mile circuit over the rugged Andes Mountains. He had given most of his life to help his people. He could do no more.

Last year, Isaac died in an accident on one of those isolated Andean roads. What would happen to CENATEC? There was no one to lead it into the future. Their board of directors met and decided they would have to close the organization.

In January, Benjo was in the city to see a doctor. He went to church with Huber Ramos, who had been Isaac's assistant at CENATEC. The minister preached on Moses, who was 80 years old when God called him to lead the Israelites out of slavery. During the service, a church

leader rose and pointed to Benjo. "Our visitor is 80 years old," he said. "The same age Moses was when he received God's call! Brother Benjo, God is calling you too! He has work for you to do!" Benjo heard these words.

Benjo is revived! He has spent this month praying and talking to others who have helped in the past. A number of them have joined him, including Huber and Angel Roman, a SIFAT graduate who works with our teams. They have a plan to make CENATEC self-supporting, so

that they can continue the work for the Kingdom of God started 42 years ago.

Benjo calls us weekly, telling of the progress they have made. He is so excited at how God is helping them and has given him new strength for the task. He talks for an hour, sometimes two. Each time, he tells us again in vivid detail about the experience in the church when God

called him back to work in CENATEC like he called Moses.

"Things have fallen in place so that we can work with success," he tells us. "We didn't have water to plant during the dry season before, but now Auburn's Engineers without Borders have brought irrigation systems into the area around Quesimpuco. Not only can we plant more food, but we can start a flower project, which will give food to the bees. That means we can expand the honey project, as well as sell flowers to make a profit to maintain CENATEC. The people in Quesimpuco are excited and want to join us in keeping CENATEC



alive! We will also start a guinea pig project for more food and profits. And, we have three more projects for the tropics in the Alto Beni. Now I am going to write up the projects as grant proposals. If we get seed money to start them, we can produce enough to keep CENATEC serving some of the most needy people in the world. We can make a big difference in hundreds of people's lives!"

We are amazed at the change in Benjo's health and strength. When we believe we can do something, it goes a long way to helping us do it. Jesus said that if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you can move mountains. Even Benjamin Franklin said, "You can do what you think you can. If you think you can, you can. If you think you can't, you can't." We welcome your prayers for Benjo's continued health and for CENATEC to be used of God for His purposes.



*Huber Ramos (above) and Angel Roman (below) are joining Benjo to continue the work of CENATEC in Bolivia. They are exploring ways to make CENATEC self sustaining in their work with the communities in the Quesimpuco area.*



## ***Thank You for Supporting the Paredes Family***



After Isaac Paredes unexpected death last year, many former team members and long-time supporters wanted to honor his legacy and help his family. One of the most important things to Isaac was his children and their education, so we accepted donations from you to help pay their school tuition, as the Paredes family began the next chapter of their lives without Isaac. The new school year began in early February, and because of your gifts, they are able to attend a wonderful school in La Paz.

If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund for Adrian and Alessandra, please designate your contribution *Paredes Family*.