



Railson & Heidi Gil

developing Brazilian community; building the Body of Christ

News from the Field
3rd Quarter, 2010

Railson & Heidi Gil, CP 142, Monte Dourado, PA 68.240-000 Brazil
www.brazilministry.com

(55) (93) 3735-3181
gil.77brasil@hotmail.com

Nutrition Mission: Food for Thought



The staff of each of six health posts (nurse, nursing tech, and community health agents) is responsible for identifying and referring patients to nutritional care.

As a nutritionist and missionary, I love to reflect on the many excellent parallels between physical and spiritual nutrition. Take the problem of malnutrition, for example, where an inadequate quantity or quality of nutrients is ingested. This can be compared to the believer who chronically eats too little of the Bread of Life, leading to spiritual weakness and discouragement.

Another parallel can be seen in the case of micronutrient deficiencies, where a certain nutrient is lacking in the diet, leading to a specific disease, such as goiter, anemia or rickets. Here, we see the believer who has failed to internalize a pertinent promise from the Word, and for that reason is suffering discouragement, depression, disease or some other detrimental effect.

And then there's the case of dehydration. Well, that one's obvious—everyone needs plenty of the Living Water!

In the end, we see that physical nutrition is conveniently correlated with spiritual nutrition, and that fact often helps in ministering the Gospel.

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Connected

In the past few years Railson has been working on raising funds for missions through his work with wireless Internet networks, satellite links, and equipment sales. In 2008, after suffering a sharp business loss, Railson invested all we had—and even some that we didn't, by faith, in a second business. (It's a difficult story to tell because we still haven't figured out how we came up with the capital, but God provided.) In 2010 the word of the Lord for us was NEW THINGS, and we took this to heart for the business. Within a few months, Railson had two new contracts to honor, one with a mining company in Monte Dourado, and the other with the city of Porto de Moz.

We are pleased to report that both projects have been completed. Although the revenue was less than projected, Railson is satisfied with the new doors that have opened for the business as a result.

Recently, he has taken his service one step further. Through a number of divine contacts in quick succession he has begun developing a project for bringing in a higher quality Internet link

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Shall we still call coincidence what God calls providence? Beth Moore

“Faith is the mirror of the heart which reflects the realities of an invisible world—the reality of the Kingdom of God. Through the prayer of faith we are able to bring the realities of His world into this one.”

Bill Johnson

Prayer Agenda

Thank God for letting us participate in eternity through prayer. Please take a moment to stand together with us on these issues.

1. **Physical protection.** Life in the Amazon is not without its risks. There has been a dramatic increase in armed assaults in Monte Dourado (where we reside), as well as bank robberies across the region. Also, we’re in the height of malaria season, so pray for protection from that, as well as from other tropical diseases. (We can’t take anti-malarials because of their long-term detrimental effects.)
2. **Providence for the Paz church in Monte Dourado.** We are meeting in an old office building located in a strategic district of the town (there are no other churches nearby). Since the church’s funds are very limited, we haven’t been able to invest in any instruments, and we have very few children’s resources. But slowly, needs are being met. The local paper pulp company sponsored plastic stackable chairs for our services—praise God for His favor! Pray for salvations and training for lay workers. Pray also for the multiplication of cell groups (family Bible studies) which meet throughout the week.
3. **Success in Business.** As we have had to look to local sources of financial resource over the last few years, Railson has been working tirelessly on developing his own business, Priminet. We have spent a long time investing; now, with several completed contracts in his portfolio, we are asking the Lord for increase, both financially and professionally, as a means of providing for Kingdom work.
4. **Direction for Decisions in the Near Future.** Our focus has always been advancing God’s kingdom through the skills He has given us. For the past four years we have resided in Monte Dourado, participating in two church plants. In that time, we have become more self-sufficient financially and proficient in our respective professions. However, we believe our time is limited in Monte Dourado, mainly by three factors: first, the children’s current school offers classes only through 5th grade (Tim will finish 4th in December); Railson’s business is officially registered in the port city of Macapá (8 hours away by bus); finally, we miss the fraternity of the Vineyard and are anxious to return to ministering within Vineyard priorities, style and strategies. If we lived in Macapá we would be able to participate with the Vineyard there. Pray for clear direction for our residence in the next year.

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More than 4,800 moms and infants in Porto de Moz have been attended by the Exclusive Breastfeeding Program since 2000. They continue to receive nutritional counseling through a follow-up program for up to 5 years.



On morning walks with the elderly, together with the occupational therapist (center), we sing popular church songs, stopping at the CAPS (center for social-psychological support) for nutritional orientation and prayer.

It is a pleasure to work in the Brazilian community through nutrition skills, offering real solutions in moments of physiologic change or distress. Every month, I make the 8-hour trip to Porto de Moz, “commuting” across the mighty Amazon, in order to develop and supervise projects in nutrition within the public health system.

Despite dwindling city resources and ongoing concerns about the level of training of the health care team, we have been able to make some headway. For seven months, we have maintained a satisfactory menu at the 50-bed hospital as well as conducted in-patient and out-patient visits. One of our newest projects is the implantation of the National Iron Supplementation Program as a key strategy to combat the long-standing problem of iron-deficiency anemia. All pregnant women and small children can now receive free iron supplementation for a course of 6-8 months.

I am happy to report that the breastfeeding program we implanted ten years ago (*PROAME—Programa de Aleitamento Materno Exclusivo*) is continuing to reap excellent results and has been expanded from the central hospital unit to six health posts across the city. Once a month, I visit each post to provide continuing training on breast feeding promotion and the identification of at-risk moms and infants. As such, we have been able to lower the incidence of early weaning, infant diarrheas, and complications during pregnancy related to abnormal weight gain or loss. While I’m there, I also provide nutritional consultations for pregnant women and patients with chronic or degenerative diseases which can be improved with diet therapy.

Another component of my work is with diabetics. Thanks to the donation of a blood glucose monitor from the States, I am able to perform blood screenings during my consultations, something which would take up to a week or more through the public hospital. This way, I am able to help detect glucose fluctuations and refer patients quickly for the adjustment of medications when necessary, something which immediately translates into increased longevity and a better quality of life. My diabetics are truly grateful!!

Since representing Christ in all we do is a key value for us, I’d like to repeat something I shared in July. After re-initiating work in Porto de Moz, I have seen an array of nutrition related problems, including those stemming from emotional and mental disorders. It is common for these patients to come into the consultation room rather moody and reserved, but after a good visit followed by hands-on prayer, they almost always leave happy and smiling, visibly touched. The best part is that they usually come back the next month for a follow-

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up visit—and another dose of prayer. Now, that's what I call a nutritional double-whammy: physical and spiritual nutrition!

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to my health work over the years, and invite you to continue to donate to this area. The needs are still great.

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to serve the needs of the our region. It's a complicated project involving radio towers, solar panels, and a lot of other specialized equipment. However, we are both amazed at the relative ease with which this project is taking shape. It's like God is teaching us to just *rest* in Him and he does the *rest*, which is a relief after so much effort and struggle in the past few years.

As we involve ourselves in tentmaking projects such as these we are constantly conscious of the Lord's benevolence. We are reminded of His word in Luke 19:13 *'Do business with this until I come back.'*



It's Easy to Get Involved

Health projects such as the ones mentioned in this newsletter depend on funding and resources. We can do a better job with more resources, for instance, breastfeeding replicas, food models, handouts and posters. Donations towards professional development and ADA dues are always a blessing too. And if you're into dreaming big, there are tons of projects waiting to be developed and funded: soup kitchen, emergency food aid, emergency cooking gas, reform of hospital food service, health clinic, etc.

We invite you to be a part—donate as you feel led! If you want your donation to be used for a specific cause, just let us know. We always strive to honor your intent! Our desire is to be an avenue through which you can bless Brazilians, so we're eager to hear from you.

For more information or giving details, see the information below.

the Gils

*The giant step we
take in the walk of
faith is the one we
take when we decide
God no longer is a
part of our lives. He
is our life.*
Beth Moore

Get involved. Help implant the Kingdom in the Amazon region through local churches, health and communication.

Financial Support

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