

September, 2017

Luis and I have been praying and very concerned with all that has happened along the Gulf Coast of Texas. I grew up in Corpus Christi, Texas, and now live on an island that is also in a hurricane zone. I am very familiar with the devastation that a hurricane can cause. The past few days have been surrealistic for me. I have just been able to contact many of our friends and financial ministry partners throughout the state of Texas, to find out how they came through Hurricane Harvey. Now, it seems, that it will be our turn to trust God for the category five Hurricane Irma, that is predicted to go through parts of the Dominican Republic. We are making all preparations possible, but will stay in our home. We do not live on the coast, but in the interior of the country, San Francisco de Macorís, where Luis was born and grew up. It is a big baseball town. The town is at sea level, but between two major mountain ranges. So this should lessen the high wind associated with this storm, but not necessarily the rain.

The pictures below tell the story of Luis and me being honored this summer by a surprise invitation. We were asked to be the ones to kick off the "Inauguration of the Summer Baseball Season" ceremony in our province. The press and television crew were there, took our pictures, and asked me to make an improvised speech. I spoke how the Gospel had changed my life and reminded the kids and others attending, that a few people had taken the time when I was young, to invest their time to help me understand and grow in understanding the meaning of the Bible and knowing Christ personally. I encouraged them to appreciate anyone who would do this for them. My talk was aired on television that evening, much to my distress, since I did not know that I would be asked to speak.

I was presented with an unexpected beautiful bouquet of flowers from the press. The father and uncle of a well known Dominican MLB player, Hansen Alberto, who is shortstop with the Texas Rangers, attended. Our picture together is below on the left and his father and uncle are in the middle. One of the honors of this type of inauguration is choosing the person to throw the first ball to bat. They gave this honor to me, although I didn't hit the ball very far!

How grateful Luis and I are for your prayers for us, financial support, and encouragement in so many ways. We could not be here without you. We do not take your love and contributions for granted.

Love,

Luis and Julie

Luis & Julie Añil

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