

**November 2018: The Venezuela Relief medicine project is saving lives!**  
**by Elianeth Pineda**  
*Trad: James Tino*

“This program is really saving lives”, Luz Maria de Ernst says without hesitation. Luz Maria is a deaconess in La Epifania Lutheran church in Barinas state, whose members are among those who have benefitted from the Venezuela Relief project, a strategy developed by GLO Chile and supported by the Confessional Lutheran Church of Chile to help Lutheran communities in Venezuela with pharmaceuticals.

Luz Maria recalls that other organizations showed an interest in helping in a similar fashion, but backed away from their plans after learning about the requirements the Venezuelan government established for sending or receiving international shipments of medications.



***La Caramuca,  
Barinas***

Up to this point, we have sent four rounds of medical relief with medicines for patients in Venezuela who are suffering from a variety of chronic ailments, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, respiratory ailments, epilepsy, Alzheimer’s, dementia, and other illnesses. In the most recent relief shipment, sponsored in large part by LCMS Disaster Response, a total of 630 people (416 women and 214 men) received medications, which were distributed in 23 different congregations. The map shows the location of these congregations/distribution centers:



The number of beneficiaries is increasing – in the prior shipment there were 432 beneficiaries. The people are thankful for the persistence of those who have made this program possible because may have been able to stabilize their health situations due to the dosages that they receive through the Venezuela Relief project.

“In our country it is difficult to obtain medicines because of the high cost or because they are unavailable. I suffer from arthritis, arteriosclerosis, and high blood pressure. With the help that you provide, my pain is alleviated somewhat,” commented Zulay Franco, Cristo es Amor. Barquisimeto, Lara.

“The fact that we can continue our treatments without worrying is what makes your assistance so important.” Ginnatriz De Mendoza, Cristo es Amor. Barquisimeto, Lara.

“I use Prednisone to enable me to continue with my regular activities. I am thankful for the help received.” Rubén Darío Uranga, patient with arthritis. Cristo es Amor, Barquisimeto.

“I suffer from migraines. This program – which helps many brothers and sisters to get the medicine they need - is very important to us to alleviate and control the chronic illnesses that people are suffering from.” Zugeimar Aranguren, Cristo es Amor. Barquisimeto, Lara.



The beneficiaries made their requests on the basis of a list of 25 of the commonly requested medications. At the same time, we responded to individualized requests which were supported by a prescription, as in the case of Adonay Tarazona, from Barinas, who was operated on in November 2017 to rebuild his digestive tract. The operation was not successful, and in addition, he contracted an infection. He is still fighting the infection. The required medications are out of his reach and his sister-in-law, Lusveidis Pinzon, assures us that the medicines we sent have helped to improve his condition. "Thanks to you, he received in this shipment colostomy bags with their bases, adhesives, and gauze, and now he can even walk to the church for services."



**Barinas,  
Barinas**





From the same region, Luis Tarazona, a member of Corpus Christi Lutheran Church, suffered cerebral paralysis which has affected half of his body and also his ability to speak. He is the father of three youth and the grandfather of two. His physical limitations prevent him from working, so making ends meet is a challenge. Through this relief Project he received pills to help with his high blood pressure.



Milagros Palomo, a member of the Cristo Rey congregation in Maturin, (Monagas state), is dependent on a medication to keep her cancer in remission. She – along with 39 other families from her church – was helped by the medications sent.



**Maturín, Monagas**

The reality in Venezuela is so crude that the majority of the population must decide between eating or taking care of their health, seeing as their income does not allow them to cover both food and medicine.

“I am an oncology patient and also am diabetic which makes for a complex pathology. On top of it all, I have no source of income other than my social security pension, which is not enough to buy both food and medicine. I live alone. My brethren, I pray to God for you and I do not have the words to express my appreciation.” Mercedes Hernández, Cristo es el Camino. Barcelona, Anzoátegui.



**Barcelona, Anzoátegui**



“This is a congregation that is located in a poor area of Miranda state which lacks many things, and receiving this donation is a great help to the brethren.” Elsy Machado, La Paz. Los Teques, Miranda.



**Los Teques, Miranda**



“At times like these, this is of great value, and from the bottom of our hearts we thank you for this generous gesture, knowing also that it is not easy for you to gather the resources.” Pricila Quereigua, Rey de Gloria. Maturín, Monagas.



“Thank you for thinking of us with this gesture of generosity and solidarity.” Belkis Castellano, La Fortaleza. Maracay, Aragua.





“In the name of our entire congregation we send you an embrace of love and thankfulness. We beg God to provide all that you need and to bless you greatly.” Reverendo Omar Martínez, El Salvador. Caracas.

**Caracas,  
Distrito Capital**



“The donation received benefitted many people of scarce financial resources and is a great incentive to continue to engage in social causes.” Laura Restrepo, El Paraíso. Barquisimeto, Lara.



**Barquisimeto, Lara**



“We thank God for the work that you are doing for our benefit, your Venezuelan brethren, and we pray that the Lord will provide the resources for this labor.” Reverendo Abel García, Cristo es el Camino. Barcelona, Anzoátegui.



“From the bottom of our hearts, we ask that you would continue this program for the good, which supports so many patients in our area. For our part we will continue to pray to the heavenly Father so that this work may continue.” Reverendo Félix Zamora, Cristo Vencedor. La Pica, Monagas.





“Knowing that it is God who has conquered your hearts to do this labor and even more in these difficult times, God will also give you the perfect recompense in His time. We are very happy with this!” Miembros de Príncipe de Paz. Sierra Caroní, Bolívar.

### ***Sierra Caroní, Bolívar***



“We encourage you in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ to continue and that it would be our God who continues to produce in your hearts both the will and the way to continue, and that His mercy overflows in you, your families and your projects.” Reverendo Elías Lozano, La Ascensión. Ciudad Guayana, Bolívar.



Some of the people involved in the program have shared with us that the Venezuela Relief project has helped with their evangelism in their neighborhoods, as neighbors have come to church to listen to a word of comfort.