



Día de Reyes

The holiday of Epiphany (Jan. 6) is a very big deal in Puerto Rico. It is known as *Día de Los Tres Reyes Magos* (Day of The Three Magician Kings) or just *Día de Reyes* (Kings Day). It is the commemoration of the coming of the Wise Men to Jesus, which, for Christians, symbolizes the revealing of salvation to the Gentiles. For many Puerto Ricans, the celebration of Three Kings Day matches that of Christmas. Children receive gifts brought by The Three Kings, there are visits from people dressed as The Three Kings, people sing special songs about the Kings, and there are parades and parties.



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<https://missioncentral.us/mroczenski/> <https://www.lcms.org/Mroczenski>

The Lord Provides a Hundredfold



Photo in front of St. Paul Lutheran Church (Bonduel, WI), one of our many supporters.

“Peter began to say to him, ‘See, we have left everything and followed you.’ Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.’” —Mark 10:28-31

This passage has been on my mind as we prepare to deploy in just a few days. Many of you have asked if we are nervous about leaving. There is of course some natural anxiety around packing and traveling and so forth, but generally the answer to that question is “no.” While we will certainly miss family and friends and certain things about our home in the US, there is really nothing we are *worried* about. For the Lord Jesus has conquered sin, death, and the devil by his cross, and he is risen from the dead. We trust that he shall bring us, his children, through every cross of this life, even death, until he brings us to himself in heaven. For us to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil 1:21). And the Lord has assured not only our eternal welfare but our temporal care as well. Though we leave behind homes and family and goods, the Lord will supply us with the same in Puerto Rico. Amidst the persecutions of this life, the Lord promises to provide. Indeed, He has already given us a hundredfold in this life, through you, his church. For many of you have become fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and children to us in the faith by your provision and support. And just as the Lord has blessed us here through his church, so too shall he bless us and provide for our every need through his church in Puerto Rico, and in the end, bring us to eternal life. To Christ alone be the glory.

La Paz de Cristo,

Paul, Courtney, & Jacqueline Mroczenski

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12 Days of Christmas, Culver's, and Final Preparations



really “gifts” but things that we bought for our upcoming travels and wrapped for ourselves. It’s simply fun to unwrap a present, and any gift, no matter how small, is a good reminder of the gift of Christ our savior and the many other gifts God gives us every day.

Party & Practice Packing

Preparations to leave haven’t been all work. We took some time to throw a little going away party on January 1st (which was also our 3rd anniversary). It was fun to see and say goodbye to many family and friends at one time. On the work side of things, we are thankful that we did some practice packing already. It has alleviated much of the anxiety about what we can and cannot fit in our luggage. Moving from a cold climate to warm has also been a blessing, since we can leave most cold weather clothes at home.

Culver’s

While many things from the US can be found and purchased in Puerto Rico, one thing they don’t have is Culver’s restaurants, a favorite of ours. A perhaps lighthearted but essential part of our departure preparations will be a visit to Culver’s to enjoy a final Butterburger for quite some time.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- For good health and good weather as we prepare to travel to the DR.
- For safe and smooth travels to the Dominican Republic.
- Quick adjustment to life in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.
- Diligence in our Spanish study, and that we would learn quickly and thoroughly. Especially for Courtney as she has to switch Spanish teachers.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The opportunities to share peaceful and pleasant goodbyes with family and friends.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The many congregations and individuals who continue to pray for, encourage and support us.
- The efforts of our missionaries in the DR and Puerto Rico who are facilitating our arrival.

12 Days of Gifts?

If not for the song, we might all forget that there are actually 12 days of Christmas, from Christmas to Epiphany (Jan. 6). Most of us are too tuckered out from celebrating for the whole month prior to Dec 25th to have much left for the days following. However, if there is any reason to celebrate for 12 days it’s the good news that *unto us* is born a savior, Christ the Lord. In an effort to uphold the joy of all 12 days of Christmas, Courtney and I decided to start the tradition of opening one gift on each of the 12 days. Sometimes it was a gift for her, sometimes for me, and sometimes for Jacqueline. Some of the things weren’t

Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people. He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the Lord!

—Psalm 113:5-9



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](https://www.lcms.org/service). Click on “Service Opportunities.”

Prayerfully consider partnering with the LCMS to support the work of Paul and Courtney Mroczeni. Make checks payable to:

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