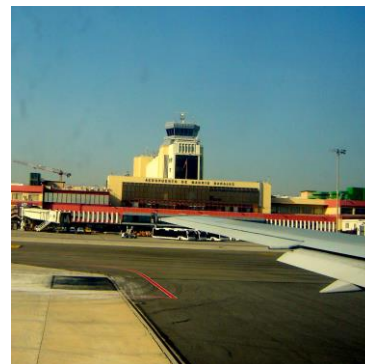


**TRIP WITH MARÍA HELENA TO SALAMANCA, FOR THE DEFENSE OF HER
DOCTORAL THESIS IN MEDICAL SCIENCES, AND VISITS TO MADRID (SPAIN), AS
WELL AS TO ORLANDO, DETROIT AND LANSING (UNITED STATES)
NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2009
(SECOND PART)**

Thursday November 19, 2009:

After the extraordinary adventure of the first two and a half weeks of our stay in Salamanca and Madrid, where María Helena concluded her doctorate in Medical Sciences, with a brilliant exhibition “Suma cum laude” in the Old Cloister of the first university founded in Spain in the Twelfth Century, we began the second part of our itinerary, very open to the new experiences that the Lord would have in store for us in the cities of Orlando and Lansing, in the United States.

The alarm clock reminded us that we had to get up to resume the trip. After an invigorating bath and a little time to pack the last things, I still had time to open the internet and answer an email from Eduardo Blanchet, asking me to confirm our arrival time in Orlando today. Furthermore, we noted that Costa Rica and Uruguay had tied 1-1, at the legendary Centenario Stadium in Montevideo, with which Uruguay qualified for the World Cup in South Africa, while we were eliminated, after having participated in the two previous World Cups, which it hurt me a lot.



With a lot of effort, we took our suitcases down, one by one, from the seventh floor, since the elevator was small, to say goodbye to Fátima and take the taxi that picked us up at eight thirty sharp, in order to transport us to the Terminal 1, at the airport of Barajas.

In fact, the taxi driver turned out to be a quite jovial guy, speaking with traditional accent and with a great sense of humor, telling jokes about what he imagined Costa Rica would be like, since he had heard that it was a paradisiacal tourist destination, although he had no resources to make the trip.

Upon arriving at the airport, we walked to the Delta Airlines counters and the official who attended to us did not behave nice. He even charged us fifty dollars for the third suitcase and made us take María Helena's thesis out of one of them, since it was one kilo over the maximum weight allowed, which would have meant paying another fifty dollars. Finally, we managed to check our large bag. Right then, and by surprise, we met Maritza Paredes, her husband Hermes Vilorio and her son Jonathan, who coincided to travel to New York on the same flight as us, after having been together in Salamanca.

We then took advantage of our time in the waiting room to pray three mysteries of the rosary and give Jonathan, with a good wishing dedicatory text, the little book of the “Journey of Friendship”, trying to encourage him, particularly in this year in which his car accident occurred (“The secret of the walker is to always move forward”). We also gave them, as a family, the CD “From Sense to Hope.” Once on the plane we settled in for a long journey, starting with me praying a little, filling out the immigration and customs forms upon arrival in New York, and then eating a delicious lunch of pasta with a very well-seasoned tomato sauce. Moreover, we also enjoyed a salad with two cheeses, bread with butter and crackers, as well as “chocolate chips” for dessert, with a good glass of wine.

Feeling quite satisfied, I set my watch to New York time, six hours earlier, so it was seven in the morning again and I settled down with my inflatable pillow for a morning nap of almost three hours. Lena also slept for a while and, when I woke up, around ten in the morning, they gave us a snack. She had her decaffeinated coffee while I drank apple juice, accompanied by a small bag of mini pretzels, which revived me to take out the computer and update the diary for the last day and a half. Then, I decided to rearrange the photos of Salamanca in two large files, enjoying evoking all those extraordinary experiences we have had during this time of travel.

Sometime later Maritza Paredes came to talk with Lena, because they are going through a really difficult year, and I, in turn, went ahead to also talk with Hermes and Jonathan, who was very interested reading our book “The Journey of the Amistad”. In fact, it is possible that they will visit us in Costa Rica during the second half of December. Later, I returned with María Helena to eat a mini pizza, which they served us with orange juice, about an hour before landing in New York.

At John F. Kennedy Airport, we said goodbye to Hermes, Maritza and Jonathan, and stood in line to go through immigration. There, a serious but at the same time pleasant agent spoke with me in English while checking our documents and we had no problem to enter the country. It wasn't difficult to pick up our suitcases and re-check them next door, to go through the security check area again and find our boarding room. It was a long way, but we found that our flight was delayed for almost two hours, which made me call Eduardo, from a coin-operated telephone, to announce the delay, feeling very encouraged to be able to talk with him and notify him that we were already here waiting for this new reunion.



While María Helena made her usual rounds of the little shops at the airport, I took out my computer and started looking at the photos of Salamanca until my batteries ran out. Afterwards, they told us that our flight was changing boarding halls, and Lena asked the lady with the cart to take us to hall 16, where we waited again for a long time, while I read the book “Survival Club,” which I still very interesting. María Helena took the opportunity to get her nails done, in a little place where they gave her an “express” service, in ten minutes, and, once again, they continued to delay the flight.

They then sent us to boarding room 27, while walking on the way behind a man who was more than two meters tall and his partner was less than five feet tall, as, in fact, she barely reached a little above his waist. In the end, our plane left from there after half past seven at night.

We were so tired that Lena slept almost the entire flight and I about the same, although at times I dedicated myself to thinking and praying, thanking the Lord for all the experience we had in Spain in these last few weeks. When we got off the plane in Orlando, after a very nice approach which allowed us to contemplate the endless lights of this extensive city, about 60 kilometers long. While we were heading to pick up our suitcases, a man offered us a taxi ride, but in fact it turned out to be my lifetime friend, Eduardo Blanchet, who is married to Silvia and they are parents of four children.



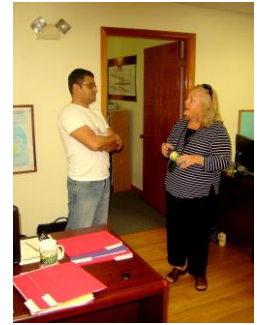
After making that joke, he accompanied us through the entire process of waiting and loading our suitcases to leave the airport and driving us, while talking about a thousand topics, until we reached his beautiful new house in Baldwin Park, at No. 4046 Lower Union Street. Road. There his wife Silvia greeted us smiling broadly, with that proverbial hospitality that characterizes them both.



After showing us his house, decorated with exquisite taste, we sat down to eat a light snack at midnight, which I found delicious, with a ham and cheese sandwich, along with fruits and a glass of milk. We updated ourselves on the latest news in our children's lives and went to sleep around one in the morning, very grateful, in a second-floor room with a splendid king-size bed.

Friday, November 20, 2009:

I started waking up quite early, around half past six, without being able to go back to sleep until almost eight; but, from then on, I fell into such a deep sleep that I continued straight until eleven o'clock. After a good bath I got settled with the time change and, now more recovered from the "jet lag", I had just a little fruit for breakfast, to go out later with Eduardo and Silvia.



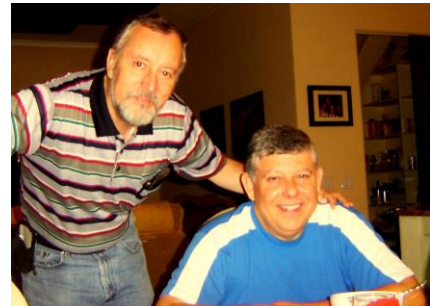
We visited the offices of the company they founded, “MI languages”, where they teach languages to the military, with million-dollar contracts, which have allowed them to expand rapidly, now including another center in San Diego, California, managed by their children Daniela and Gaston.



Afterwards, we had lunch at a super healthy food restaurant, called “Sweet Tomatoes”, starting with a very varied salad, buffet style, and a large glass of lemonade, followed by a chicken and vegetable soup. Besides, we had a biscuit, accompanied by a crusty warm whole wheat bread. as well as a small piece of pizza with melted cheese, and a dessert of chocolate mouse and chocolate chip cupcake.

We continued our journey to a “flee market”, where I found the coins from a collection of North American presidents, which I have been making for a year, and we saw all kinds of striking things, to return to the house with very beautiful views of the little lakes in this area of Orlando.

It was five in the afternoon, and we went to bed to take a one-hour nap, while Lena did so for three and a half hours, and Eduardo for two hours. Silvia, on her part, watched the news and then chatted on Skype with three different friends in Argentina. I, meanwhile, treated myself to swimming in the pool with super fresh water, combining swimming with breaks in the jacuzzi, which left me feeling refreshed. Later, I updated the diary, and we sat down to have a dinner of Campbell's chicken soup, as well as cheese sandwiches, accompanied by Iberian ham, and toasted chips.



To end the evening, we watched my photo-video of the “Friendship between the Little Prince and the Fox”, deciding to go to bed early to recover from the heavy demands of this last time.

Saturday November 21, 2009:

Although we thought we would get up a little earlier, María Helena was the one who got up for a little while to pray in the “Oval Room”, which is Eduardo's office, next to our room.



In fact, I also woke up around half past six to pray the rosary, but we both went back to sleep until after nine, going down to have breakfast with Silvia and Che, a cereal with fruit and very delicious orange juice. Then I checked the internet and answered emails before going out together.



Today they took us to a section of stores, called “Premium Outlet”, where I managed to find some t-shirts that will be very useful, Adidas brand, because they do not retain moisture, and some soft black shoes that I had been looking for a long time. Moreover, when we bought them, along with another pair of sneakers for Claire Marie, we found the second pair to be half price. Lena, meanwhile, managed to find the “naturalizer” shoes, of a special type that she needed to avoid hurting her feet during our long walks, as well as another pair for Mama Yolanda.



Very satisfied, we continued to the offices of Berlitz, whose franchise they bought about ten years ago, and we had lunch again at a “Sweet Tomatoes” restaurant, where you prepare delicious plates of healthy food. On the way back we stopped at a “Cotsco” store. There I bought some casual pants that I needed and some gifts for our grandson Felipe and his mother.

Back at the house, after that long shopping trip, we took a nap for an hour and a half. Lena got up first and went down to talk to them, while I tried on the pants that were a little short (I'll have to change them) and consulted the internet again. Our dinner was a roast chicken with rice and black beans, very Tico style, in a very pleasant atmosphere of conversation, to later decide to go for a long walk around Baldwin Park, along tree-lined sidewalks and beautiful houses with well-kept gardens, until we reached a little lake called Lake Susan, where we had a coffee at some outdoor tables. On the way back, with a very cool climate, we came through the central part of the little town, built less than ten years ago in what was previously a United States naval base. María Helena enjoyed talking with Silvia, and I later did that also with Eduardo, evoking memories of our high school classmates in Costa Rica.

Back at home, Eduardo showed us photos from his recent trip to Germany and Poland, particularly the images taken in the former Auschwitz concentration camp, and in the city of Dresden. For my part, I showed them a couple of tracks, with photo-videos, from our recent production in Mexico “Del Sentido a la Esperanza”, which we also gave them on CD.

Then, Jordana called from Shanghai. While Eduardo and Silvia were talking to her, I took the opportunity to finish the day's diary, and said goodbye to them to go to sleep, since María Helena had gone up to the bedroom for a while and I wanted to be with her before going to bed, both hoping to start earlier tomorrow to go to the famous John F. Kennedy Space Center, in Florida.

Sunday November 22, 2009:

Getting up was, as usual, with a very delicious bath and breakfast of cereal with fruit and orange juice. In fact, although we were going only with Eduardo, Silvia was kind enough to get up to make us a very tasty coffee and accompany us to breakfast. Subsequently, we left around nine in the morning heading east, talking all the way about the campaigns in which Che participated, promoting a team of doctors from the United States to reach places like Yucatan or Chiapas, in Mexico, and even now to the city of Misiones, in Argentina, to operate on children with cleft lip and palate.



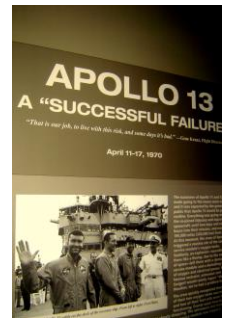
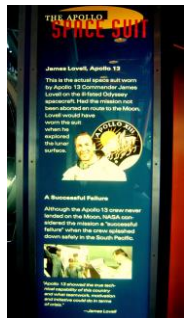
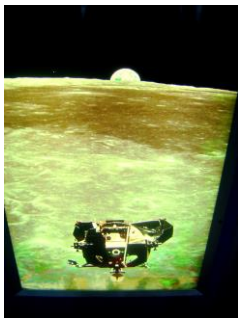
Thus, we passed a long bridge over the Banano River, approaching Cape Canaveral, where is located the “Kennedy Space Center”, from which many exploration missions to space have departed.



Eduardo invited us at the entrance gate, and we boarded a bus that took us to an open, multi-story building, where they gave us some first illustrative films. At that place, we could see in the distance the launch pad from which the memorable Apollo expeditions departed to the Moon.



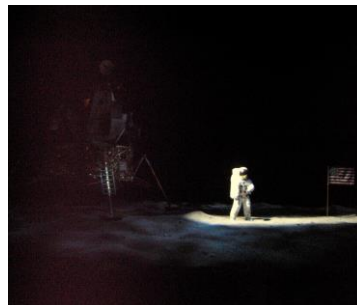
There I bought my souvenir keychain and, again by bus, we headed to the second exhibition point of the Jupiter rockets and the Apollo lunar modules, in an impressive exhibition of one of those monumental rockets, with its three different stages, for a total of about a hundred meters long.



All this was complemented with the stories of the main missions and the most renowned astronauts, being able to appreciate the vehicles and suits used by them in the lunar exploration.



After a very tasty lunch, this time at our invitation, consisting of a Cuban ham and cheese sandwich for me, as well as a huge salad in the case of María Helena and a cheeseburger for Eduardo, we returned on the bus to the point of departure of our tour this morning. There we visited a shuttle, in which trips to the stratosphere were made. In a vehicle like that, our former high school mate, Franklin Chang, served in seven missions, between 1986 and 2002, including three spacewalks and more than 600 hours in space. We also took photos with an astronaut, Winston Scott, who was serving the public.



We continued our tour going to the “Orbit Cafe IMAX Theater”, where we had a wonderful three-dimensional presentation, produced by Tom Hanks, which allowed us to really get closer to the experience of accompanying the astronauts, as if we had been with them on the lunar surface.

Later we returned to Orlando, where we stopped to change my pants at Costco, and to buy some electronic devices at Best Buy, getting to the residence at No. 4046 Lower Union Road, in the town of Baldwin Park, around five thirty. María Helena went up to the room, but I stayed with Eduardo watching a very exciting match in which Boca Juniors defeated their current rival 3 to 0. However, before finishing the game, we both went to pick up a couple of their friends, Eduardo and Inés, who were coming from Argentina to accompany them for several weeks, including a cruise in the Caribbean.



Back at the house, Silvia and María Helena came out to welcome us, organizing a welcome dinner of delicious food, which turned out to be a true banquet, impressing me with the friendship that they have cultivated over the years between both families, including her children, because “Inesota”, as they call her, has been a companion since they studied together as diplomats in Buenos Aires, and they have continued to interact throughout her career in the foreign service of the Argentine Republic.

At a certain point, Lena and I decided to go up to our room to rearrange suitcases, in addition to weighing them with a portable scale, which Eduardo lent us, since we intend to send one of them by advance ground transportation to Michigan, since it would be very expensive and cumbersome to carry all that weight with us. To slow down from that effort, I finally dedicated myself to reading an illustrated biography of Barack Obama, from Life magazine, before falling asleep almost at midnight.

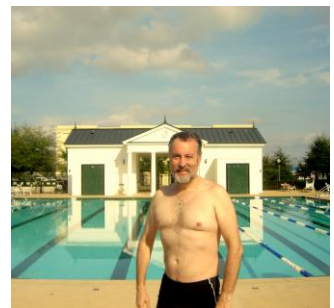
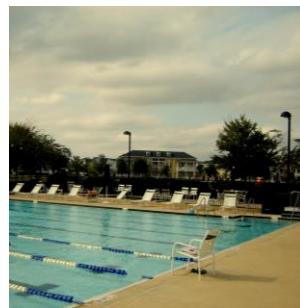
Monday November 23, 2009:

Che had asked me to be ready for breakfast at eight thirty. However, at that time, Lena and I went down to try to go out to the little back patio, which set off the alarm, and Eduardo had to go out to turn it off and answer the phone. the call from the security agency, which did not wait long.

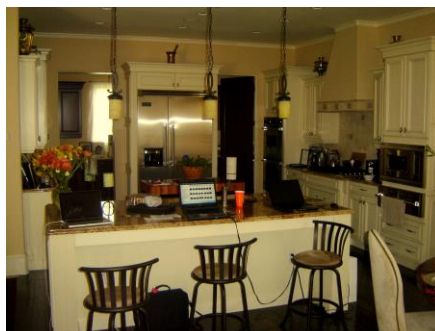
After a light breakfast of cereal, we went first to the post office and then to the Fed Ex offices, from where we shipped a 62-pound suitcase to Michigan for forty-one dollars, which gave us great satisfaction. On the way back, Silvia prepared for us another of her spectacular coffees, along with very delicious, toasted bread, which we covered with Brie, one of my favorite French cheeses, all very tasty. While the rest of the group also joined breakfast, I answered some emails and went back to lie down for another hour, trying, at the same time, to slowly pray the rosary.



I returned with them, later, so that Silvia could lend me the keys to the house, since Eduardo had meetings and the others would go for a walk, while I made the decision to stay alone for the very particular purpose of editing the photos of the trip. And, besides, go swimming at noon.



This was a very relaxing time of walking on my own, taking photos of the surroundings, until I reached the pool, where I was able to do my usual kilometer of swimming, both for physical and mental health, with enormous enjoyment of the moment that the Lord gave me here in Orlando.



Back home I warmed up a lunch of various foods, which I found in the refrigerator, accompanied by a glass of cold milk, while I edited certain photos, which turned out very nice.

She arrived for a little while at midday and managed to connect me on the Internet with the possible company that could take us by bus, next Wednesday, to the Miami airport. Nonetheless, they did not answer the phone, so I went to take my long afternoon nap without resolving it.

When I got up, around five thirty, no one had returned yet. Finally, I managed to hire the bus for our trip on Wednesday, which I triumphantly showed to them and Eduardo when they returned. María Helena, along with Silvia, Eduardo and Inés, spent a nice day visiting the University facilities, taking a boat tour on a lake, including a tasty lunch and several shopping trips. With Eduardo I was also able to purchase the books from Amazon that our children requested.



After some time of preparations, a pleasant barbecue was organized outside for dinner, with perfectly cooked meats, which we praised Silvia a lot, accompanied by roast potatoes, salad and wine, besides some sweet pastries for dessert, which were delicious. The conversation was very lively all night, especially about the world political situation, and, in particular, the Argentinian scene.

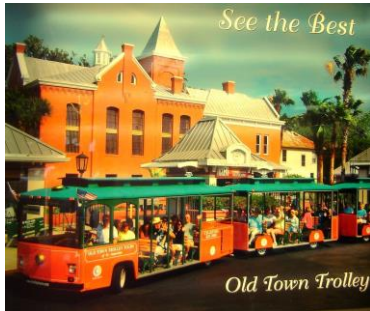
Although it was early, we decided to return to the room so as not to stay up too late. She fell asleep first and I wrote the diary for the last two days, leafed through magazines and closed another day of vacation in which we decompressed from the intensity of work experienced in Salamanca.

Tuesday November 24, 2009:

The day began more relaxed, as we went down until almost half past nine, with plenty of time for a good breakfast. I could successfully complete the online reservation for our hotel in Miami, and the six adventurers left in Silvia's wagon, heading to Saint Augustine, the first town founded by the Spanish in the territory of what is now the United States of America. It was a journey of about two hours, almost reaching Jacksonville, much further north in Florida.



We start with the sites closest to the beach, in a famous lighthouse, and a section of old houses surrounded by trees that are striking because of the twisted nature of their branches. There I got my keychain, and we headed back across a bridge to the center of the city, where we decided to hire a tour.



This consisted of a nice trolley ride that took us to see the primitive chapel, founded in the “Nombre de Dios” mission, in the mid-16th century, where mass was celebrated for the first time, very close to a more modern temple. which is today the Sanctuary of Our Lady of La Leche.



We also passed through where the Spanish explorer Don Juan Ponce de León believed he had found the fountain of youth and we stopped in the area where it was the old prison, to tour the historical museum. There I took many photos, particularly with the characters dressed as prisoners, the town sheriff, etc., including one of Lena and I stuck inside a cage.



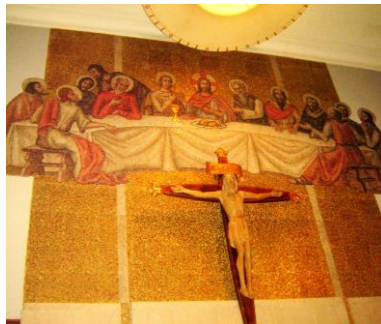
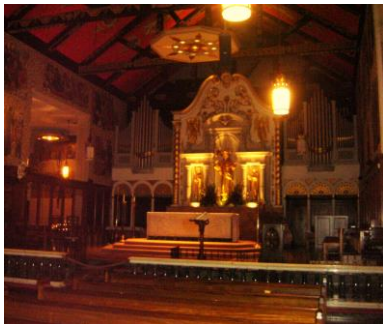
From there we continued, again on the trolley, to the city center. Thus, we passed by the first pharmacy and school established in the United States of America, leading to a pedestrian street full of tourist life, with multicolored shops selling all kinds of merchandise.



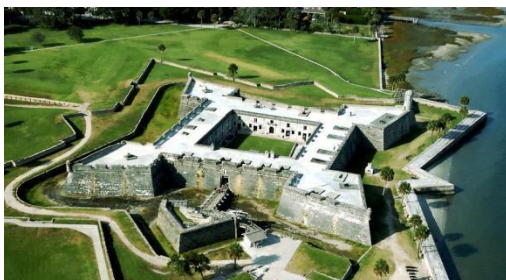
However, we decided to go first to a restaurant for lunch, since it was already past two in the afternoon, and the food was very good. In my case, I enjoyed a smoked turkey sandwich with salad and French fries, along with a cup of hot chocolate, because the day was rather cold and quite cloudy, making us feel much more revived after eating.



We then dedicated ourselves to walking along the pedestrian street, going in to see curious things in the different businesses, in addition to taking some very well-made snapshots to remember.



Later, we arrived at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Augustine, where there was Gregorian chant music and the altars, inside, were decorated simply, but with very good taste. Ma. Helena and I took the opportunity for a short time of prayer kneeling in front of one of the side altars.



We walked back, then, along what I would call the boardwalk, next to the sea, where we could see many little boats, until we reached the impressive fortress of San Marcos.



The fortress helped this town to defend itself from pirates, although on one occasion it did not prevent the pirate Sir Francis Drake from sacking and destroying it. However, they subsequently continued to repel English attacks throughout the period of Spanish rule.

At the end of our tour I helped the group, a little bit, in order to locate us, since we were walking in the opposite direction to where we had left the car, so that we could return, around five in the afternoon, on the way back to Orlando. Before getting home we rented some movies and I bought, on sale, the Apollo XIII movie, starring Tom Hanks, which makes me even more excited to see it again after having visited the Kennedy Space Center in “Cabo Cañaveral” this Sunday.



The two Eduardos had decided to enter the sauna bath and the jacuzzi. Consequently, I also prepared to do, again, my swimming routine, in lengths of the small pool with quite cold water, although refreshing for me. I alternated it with the enjoyment of the warm waters of the jacuzzi, where the jets that came out through different orifices allowed me to give myself a real massage on different parts of the body, making me feel truly relaxed. At times, I shared the jacuzzi and the pool with Che and Eduardo, which helped us comment on the importance of physical exercise in our lives. Once dressed, I consulted the Internet and we went down to eat taking advantage of the leftovers from these days, which allowed me to put together a very varied combination of delicious things, including chicken leg, salmon, ham, different cheeses, spinach pie and other etcetera, accompanied with red wine.

Back in the room, I wrote my diary while Lena finished packing her suitcase, preparing for tomorrow's trip to Miami, which we also put in the hands of the Lord, as we have been doing in this extraordinary time of our journey through Spain and the United States. Before midnight I went down to get water and Eduardo showed me how to play tennis on the Wii, and then I went to bed, while our Argentinian friends were just starting to watch a movie in the home's movie theater.

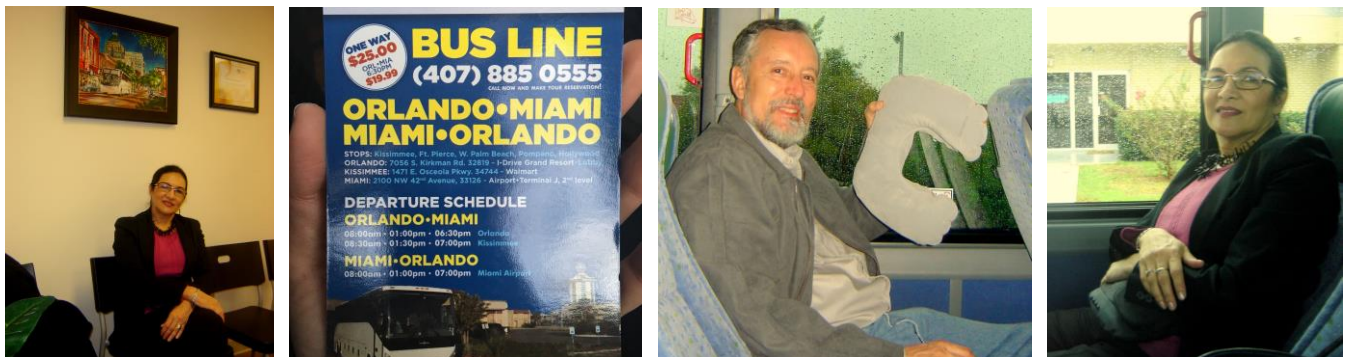
Wednesday, November 25, 2009:

I woke up some minutes after seven and dedicated myself to praying the rosary, lying in bed, to finally get up after eight. Bathed and ready we went down to make ourselves a good breakfast, in my case with cereal, orange juice, yogurt and fruits. The couple of Eduardo and Inés first appeared, followed by Che, who was returning from his appointment with the dentist, and, finally, Silvia, “very sad” because we had all found what to have for breakfast without her having to attend to us. So, Lena and I went up to close suitcases and weigh them, finding that they were quite heavy, which forced us to figure out how to transfer part of that weight to our carry-on bags.

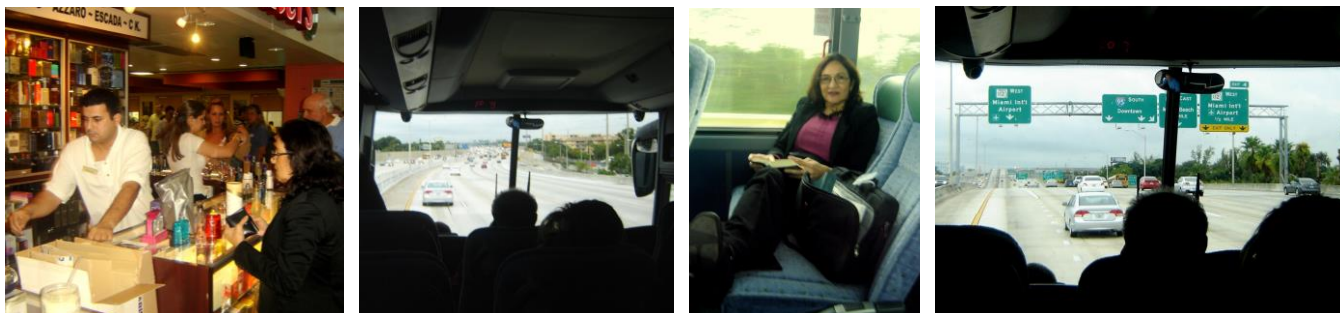


With Eduardo's support we established, from his “Oval Room”, an Internet connection via Skype with his sister Susie, in Buenos Aires, which turned out to be a beautiful experience of communication and shared affection, since we have felt her always like a sister. We left greetings to Doña Martha, Eduardo's mother, who had gone out to be with a friend. Finally, we finished packing and, with great effort and Che's help, we took the luggage down to his car. Then, we said goodbye to Silvia, Eduardo, and Inés, before leaving on a rainy morning, like we didn't have in the previous days.

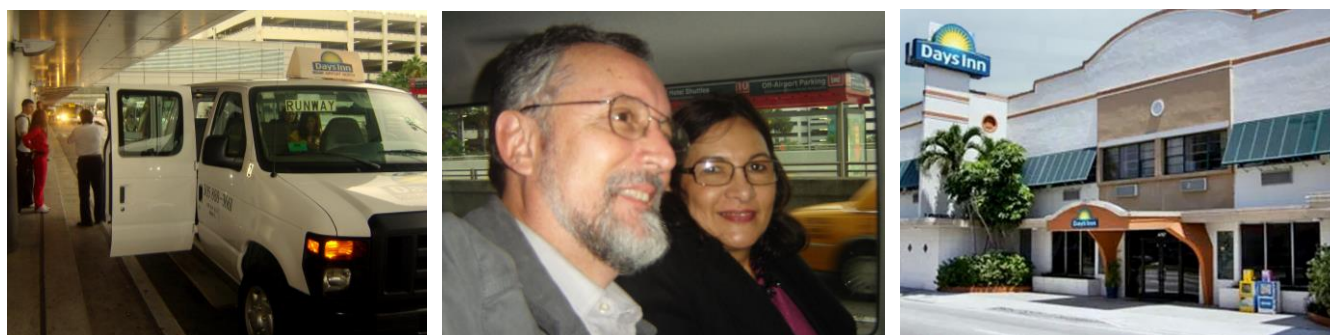
It was also raining heavily when we took our suitcases down the car at the “All Tours” bus station. Then I realized that I had left my winter coat hanging in the closet of our room and I told Eduardo this, just before saying goodbye. They later took us to a small room to wait for the bus to leave, and Che found his way to come back to us, suggesting a way to send us the coat. He asked us to give him John DeWitt's address in Lansing and kindly offered to send it by FedEx to Michigan.



We boarded the bus under a heavy downpour and said goodbye to Orlando, dedicating myself to praying for a while during the first part of the journey. I felt very satisfied with everything we had experienced, reviewing the events of the last week in my mind, and I gave infinite thanks to God for his wonderful providence with us. Around one o'clock we ate some things we had brought with us, while watching a very nice comedy movie, and then dozed for ten minutes, although just about that time the driver decided to make a routine stop and gave us about twenty minutes to get off.



It was a small shopping center full of people passing through and, in that short time, we decided to go to the bathroom and to buy a large bag, for fourteen dollars, so that María Helena could carry her things with her. Besides, we bought a large roast beef sandwich, a pop refreshment to drink and an oatmeal raisin cookie, which would be our meal for the night. Moreover, Lena still had time to look at some perfumes and bargain with the seller until she got four of them in an incredible offer. It was raining again, and we entered the bus last of all, fearing that they would leave us, due to our five-minute delay, in the time agreed upon with the driver when making the stop. We used the rest of the trip to Miami to enjoy a nap and, when I woke up, I started taking photos of our approach to the airport area.



There we had to wait, with all our bags, for a van to pick us up from the “Days Inn Miami Airport North” hotel, where I had booked in advance. But, just in a minute it arrived to take us over there, although they actually pick up Days Inn guests only once an hour, as we gratefully found out later.



Once the reception procedure was completed, upon entering the hotel, we took the suitcases up to the second floor, to our room 233, where we spent a good amount of time settling in, weighing the suitcases, again, with our new portable scale. We made several changes to ensure that we arrive tomorrow at the airport with the correct weight in each of them for our flight.

It was still around six in the afternoon and, although María Helena could not connect to the internet, I did manage to do so to check emails and, later, I downloaded all the photos from my camera to the computer. This allowed me to edit them for a long time, until they were beautifully done and ready to offer Lena a photographic show, while we had dinner lying in bed and listening to romantic music from the seventies. It was great to review together our entire adventure, since the defense of her Ph.D. thesis, in Salamanca, until today, now in Miami, before continuing towards Michigan.

María Helena went to bed early, around nine, and I stayed listening to classical music from masterpieces, while I copied all the photos for Lena on her “Maya key” (USB), to then dedicated myself to writing the day's diary and went to bed, around ten, trying to get enough sleep tonight.

Thursday November 26, 2009:

I started to wake up well before six in the morning and María Helena went to the bathroom first than me, then dedicated herself to checking the internet from my laptop, since hers has not been able to connect to the wireless since she left Spain. I enjoyed a good bath in hot water and, although I cut myself while shaving, I calmly prepared my suitcases with enough time to even take a couple of photos at the hotel entrance and get on the eight o'clock bus, heading to the airport.



There I needed help to get our boarding passes from the American Airlines self-service computers, since they couldn't read the code on my passport, although it was enough to give my frequent flyer number to identify me. Then, we checked our two large suitcases with the exact weight, although there was a pound left over, to deliver them to another section that would take them to our plane.



We then proceeded to be searched at the security checkpoint, after standing in a long line during which the power went out, and we took photos of a girl who was carrying a Chihuahua dog, the size of what was our beloved pet, “Missy,” stuffed in a pet bag.

Once inside the boarding halls, we walked a long way to gate 42, buying things for breakfast at a little stand where we got fruit, orange juice, chocolate milk and a huge croissant, which I am still savoring. Later they asked us to go to gate 50, and we started talking with Lucía, an Argentine lady, who was taking a trip abroad for the first time by plane, to visit her niece. Through loudspeakers we heard that they were repeatedly calling celebrities such as Ricky Martin, Will Smith, Shakira, Juanes or Gloria Stefan, in what turned out to be a joke by an employee, whose company had him come from New York to cover a four-hour shift, and he tried to take it with a little sense of humor, and, who knows, maybe one of those celebrities could suddenly appear there in response to his calls.

From before boarding and once we were on the plane I had a very satisfactory time of prayer, although I was falling asleep. Nonetheless, I continued trying to focus in praying a couple of decades of the rosary afterwards, until I actually fell into a deep sleep. I didn't even wake up when they left me a "Sprite", at María Helena's request, which I took between sleep and awake.



Towards the end of the flight, I dedicated myself to reading about Madrid and other destinations in the airplane magazine and, at the Detroit airport, we walked to pick up our suitcases. We also said goodbye to Lucía, our Argentinian friend, and talked to a Salvadoran woman whose relatives were waiting for her. One of them lent me his cell phone to call John DeWitt, who was also trying to contact us to pick us up. María Helena's large suitcase did not arrive, and, after the complaint, we finally met up with John to head towards Lansing, where I lived for almost five years in the seventies. We dedicated the entire way to catching up on our lives, with the same confidence in friendship as always.



Upon arriving at their house in Dimondale we had the great joy of meeting his mother, the much beloved "Mother" DeWitt, who remains the same as she has always been, despite being eighty-seven years old, and who now needs oxygen due to respiratory failure.



Along with John and Marcia there were also Tom, John's brother, my goddaughter Christy, and her husband Paul, with their children: Grace, Gabriel, Andrew and little Ava; Likewise, Paul's parents and sisters, whom I have known for several decades: Phil and Mary, Margot and Jennifer Brown.



In a very warm and loving atmosphere we talked until everything was ready to start, just this Thursday of our arrival, the traditional Thanksgiving dinner, starting with a family prayer.



This was a real feast of delicious things: Turkey with stuffing, mashed sweet potatoes, various vegetables, a cranberry drink, prepared by Mother DeWitt and Tom, all delicious.



We talked about many topics and, in the end, Grace, Christy's eldest daughter, asked us to tell her about details of her birth and how we met each other. She needed to narrate this type of family relationship, right now in "Thanksgiving", to fulfill an assignment from her school, in which the most notable thing was that we were having a great time, together, four generations in this celebration.



I took many photos and, after dinner, we went to the living room, where I told them about the presentation of María Helena's thesis, as well as about the CD "Del Sentido a la Esperanza", which we gave them, expecting that my goddaughter Christy can enjoy for having learned Spanish, when she lived with us eleven years ago in Costa Rica, just when she began her courtship with Paul.



Mother DeWitt said goodbye after a delicious dessert of pumpkin, apple pies and chocolate mousse, setting herself to drive the car all the way to Farmington Hills, near Detroit.

After sharing a little more, Lena and I decided to go up to bed early, so I could write the diary while she fell asleep, with deep gratitude to the Lord who blesses us so much. Tonight, I thank God, in a very particular way, for allowing me this wonderful reunion with the DeWitt family, who adopted me as one of their own, since my time as a graduate student at Michigan State University, and belonging, since its foundation, in the Work of Christ Community, sister of the Tree of Life Community, in Costa Rica.

Friday November 27, 2009:

We slept very well under enough blankets, and I felt very satisfied to wake up with María Helena, here in Michigan. So, I continued to lay there and pray the rosary before getting up, when I heard noise downstairs, with Christy and Paul's children to whom they were giving breakfast. We showered and got ready, to also go down to the kitchen, where John prepared some scrambled eggs, with the help of Grace, accompanied by a sweet muffin, as well as coffee with cream and orange juice.



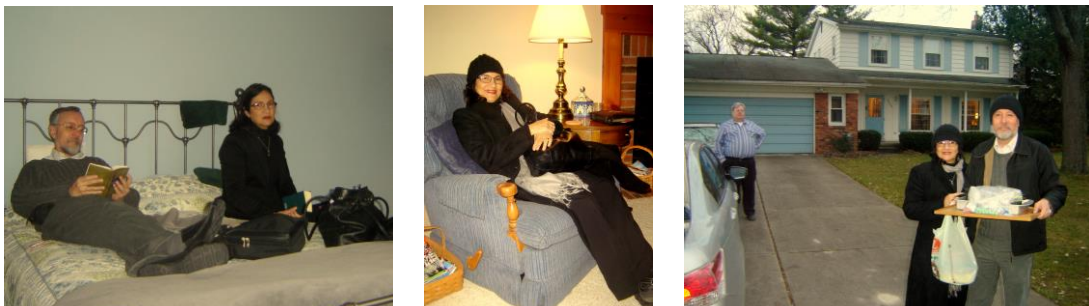
Before Paul and Christy left with their boys for Grand Rapids, we played with them for a while and took photos, which were very nice, in memory of this shared moment.



Then, Lena took care of making the hem of my new gray corduroy pants, which fit me very well, and we shared together, with simultaneous translation, about the miraculous adoption of Maria, the little girl of Joe and Sara DeWitt, who live in Pennsylvania, something that moved and edified us a lot.



Later, we went to the neighboring Luginbill house, where we shared with our friends Dave and Linda, while we ate turkey sandwiches and the rest of the many delicious things left over from last night's dinner. At the same time, we remembered their trip to Costa Rica, when their children were young, and we updated ourselves on our family and occupational lives at the present.



After saying goodbye, as they are leaving tomorrow for Mexico, we returned for a short nap to our room, before heading to Detroit, in different cars, with Lena and I accompanying John the entire way. This allowed me to ask him about the life of my acquaintances in the Work of Christ Community, while I reviewed their names with the help of his telephone directory. I have done this, too, on my previous visits, since I left the Community in July 1978, coming to the awareness that I am making my tenth trip back to Michigan after my graduation from MSU.



Arriving at Mother DeWitt's house in Farmington Hills, near Detroit, we dedicated some time to hearing about the trip that Peter, John's youngest son, and his wife Sara took to Europe, including our own anecdotes about Paris, the castles in the south of France and our visit to Rome in Italy.



At the dining room table, next to the kitchen, we each toasted with a different drink, in my case a "Margarita" and Lena a "gin with gin." We were just doing that when a call came in from Vern, Mother DeWitt's new partner, from Minnesota. This allowed me to talk to him on the phone, since we have both known about each other, through her, without communicating directly until now.



We then went to the table for a royal dinner of pork with salad and other delicious things from the Thanksgiving weekend, sharing past and present anecdotes from our lives.



I took many photos, including of the rooms of the house that remind me of very happy moments shared with this dear family. I especially recalled Father Joe DeWitt, a cameraman for ABC for decades, who died in the 1980s, whom I visited in the television studios a couple of times.



Likewise, Tom shared with us a framed drawing, made by Claire time ago, about the play “The Wizard of Oz”, with its main characters, and Grace was delighted to see him, while riding her unicorn, in addition to enjoying together when Christy brought the little girl Ava after dinner.

Tom left early to perform in his play and, while Lena shared with Christy and her girls Grace and Ava, I listened to a nice conversation between Mother DeWitt and Marcia, as she lovingly expressed everything she was grateful to her for, as a daughter-in-law, for the good example received from her, as well as for her maternal and grandmotherly presence in the lives of her children and grandchildren.



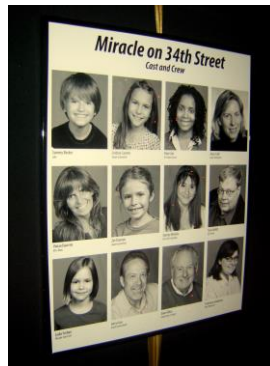
We also went to the “Barn,” a recently restored theater, to see the play in which Tom appears, “The Miracle on 34th Street”. I had already shared with Lena about the plot, which Tom and Marcia had told to me at home, before, so that María Helena would understand it better.



The parts in which Tom acted went very well and we quite enjoyed the plot and the performances of the different actors, as well as the Christmas message it communicates.



At the end of the play, we took photos with Tom and with some of the main actors, whom Tom was introducing us to, while he told them that we had come from Costa Rica to see them.



He was very proud of our presence, as well as of the entire large family group that accompanied him. For this reason, he insisted on dedicating our program in an autographed way, in which his photo appeared, and he also wanted us to take a group snapshot with him as a souvenir.

After dropping Mother DeWitt at her house, we said goodbye to Christy and the girls, to resume the trip to Lansing. I took advantage of almost the entire way, at the insistence of John and Marcia, to tell them in detail about the lives of our children Marcel, Claire and Jean, with which we complemented the sharing that they had been having with us about their own children Christy, Joe, Andy and Peter, their marriages, their families, and their current experiences. When we got home, at midnight, we went to bed quickly and fell asleep immediately, tired but happy after such an intense day.

Sábado 28 de Noviembre, 2009:

Although we set the alarm for eight-thirty, without wanting to get up, I dedicated myself to praying the rosary slowly, before going down to have blueberry pancakes for breakfast, prepared by John, around ten-thirty. We had a good conversation, in addition to downloading the photos of the trip, taken in Michigan, to the computer so that we could show them already edited and on the big screen.



Marcia and María Helena went to Target shopping, and I stayed with John, giving him the English version of John Paul II's "Roman Triptych" online, as well as my Eucharistic song "Presence and Mystery," to share later with the family. Marcus Luginbill also came to help us with Lena's laptop, so that it could automatically connect to the wireless internet, a procedure that we didn't know how to do. John then left to pray with some close people, which allowed me to be alone for a couple of hours, enjoying them very much, first in personal prayer, and then reading interesting things and even having some photos of the surroundings of the house, on a sunny and beautiful day, despite the cold.



When John returned, he dedicated himself to preparing the Christmas lights in order to decorate the outside of the house and I wrote yesterday's diary, until Marcia and Lena came, just as the mail arrived. So, we had a late lunch of a very tasty turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato.



Afterwards, John and I went to the basement to enjoy a couple of football games that were extraordinarily exciting, with plays that you don't see often, so Marcia and María Helena decided to join us when they heard us so excited. I even took a couple of photos with Lena participating in a sporting activity, something that almost never happens.

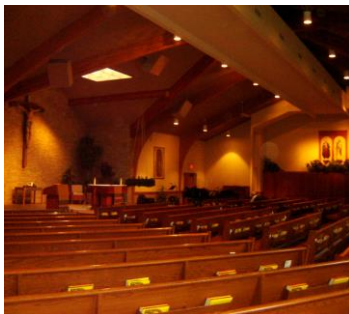


At the end of the games, we went up to the kitchen dining room to have the opening celebration of the Lord's Day together, which we always find edifying to experience in another language. We also talked during our dinner, which consisted of turkey pie with broccoli and a toasted stuffing topping, accompanied by red wine. Between Spanish and English, we understand each other very well, enjoying the depth of communication in friendship, in these intimate talks about important things in our lives. Lena recommended reading Anselm Grün, regarding “spirituality from below”, and, after washing the dishes, we went to the living room to share some of my recent projects.

María Helena felt tired and decided to go to sleep, but I stayed with them, showing them several “Del Sentido a la Esperanza” photovideos, then the “Roman Triptych” of John Paul II, with “instant translation” by John, while reading the Pope’s poem aloud in English, and finally the DVD of arias by Andrea Bocelli, precisely with evocations of the pontificate of John Paul II. I wanted to do all this to familiarize them with the resources we use in our work in courses for priests, religious and lay people. Around ten o'clock I went up to bed, finding María Helena deep asleep, so I also did the same, with great gratitude to the Lord for having brought me to Michigan again.

Sunday November 29, 2009:

We are sleeping very well throughout long hours every night, which is repairing our strength from all the wear and tear of the year. Still, we got up after seven-thirty to shower, get dressed, and have a light breakfast before heading to Sunday mass.



It was in the parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, closer to the center of Lansing, where we had a beautiful Eucharistic celebration that began the Advent season.

At the end, we met the family of our friends Marty and Nancy Greathouse, with their children Christopher and Marilyn, who visited our community for an entire year as a “gapper”.



Back at home, while I set the table and Marcia helped María Helena handle certain commands on the computer, John prepared us an excellent brunch-style breakfast of fried eggs with bacon, English muffins, and orange juice. Once again, it was a very conversational time, as has become customary among us. When we finished, I finally found the description of my Eucharistic song, which I had written in English for John more than four years ago, and I forwarded it to his email.



Later, we all went up to take a nap, which in our case lasted more than an hour and a half, before getting ready to receive the brothers and sisters who would visit us during the “open house with my friends”, organized by John and Marcia. We arranged a number of chairs in the large room, while Marcia and Ma. Helena prepared the sandwiches. Thus, in the middle of a rainy afternoon, the people whose friendship I cultivated very closely during the years of my stay in Michigan began to appear.



The group grew to more than twenty people, including Don and Cindy Quillan, Jim and Ginny Joy, Paul and Marsha Dinolfo, Dick and Pat Higley, Marilyn Greathouse and her uncle Fred Christopherson, Bob and Lynn Beard, Dick and Cathy Schaefer, Jerry and Jan Munk, Russ and Cindy Kogut, Mike and Barb Luea, as well as the hosts of the house, my beloved John and Marcia.



It was very nice to greet them one by one, with great affection, and share a few minutes about our children and our current lives, as well as remembering a particular event that brought us together in the past, while having the opportunity to take photos in small groups for future remembrances.



When everyone had arrived and helped themselves to their small plate of food, along with a drink, at John's initiative we sat down in the large room, with the purpose of giving them our testimony as a couple of the extraordinary things that the Lord God has been doing with us over time.



I began by telling them about my thirty-five years of covenant commitment, which I began with them in The Work of Christ Community, in 1974, as well as the way in which the Lord united me with María Helena in marriage, in the context of our Tree of Life Community, in Costa Rica.



Then, we narrated many of the things that God has been doing in our courses to priests, religious and lay people, in several countries in North, Central and South America, including the research and defense of María Helena's doctoral thesis on Burnout Syndrome in priestly life. She gave them her own impressions, which I translated, about the admiration she feels for the relationship we have maintained over time, and she told them about the ways in which God spoke to her and sustained her until the end of her thesis, as well as the repercussions that this can have for the good of the priests.

At the end, they asked us several questions, in particular about how they could specifically support us with their prayers, to which we asked them to pray for protection to faithfully serve the Lord, and for openness, on the part of priests, religious and lay people, to the work that God wants to do in their lives, through these courses and the spiritual retreats that he has asked us to offer them.



Once that dialogue was over, we said goodbye personally to each one of them, all of us grateful for this satisfying sharing that renewed our relationship of fraternal affection.



Ma. Helena decided to go up to sleep, but I preferred to go to the basement to watch with John and Marcia, as well as Brendan, the game between the Ravens and the Steelers, great rivals in the NFL.



The game was very exciting, although they left me alone. First John and Marcia, because he works tomorrow, and then Brendan to share with his girlfriend, Sophie Fountain, which I took advantage of to take a photo of them together. Therefore, I enjoyed another good time of “peaceful solitude” during the rest of the game, which extended into overtime, before going up to bed shortly before midnight.

Monday November 30, 2009:

María Helena got up hungry to eat some peanuts, before five in the morning, and I also stayed awake for more than an hour praying the rosary, and then fell into a deep sleep until nine in the morning, when I finally got up and went down to have cereal with milk, orange juice and grapes for breakfast.

I appreciated that Dick Higley was a little late in picking us up to advance yesterday's newspaper. Then, Lena and I went out with him and Pat to the northeast part of East Lansing, where we left María Helena at a Target, where she could do the shopping purchases that had yet to be made.



On my part, they took me to visit my good friend and brother Bob Swanson, whom I supported a lot during my university years, here in Michigan, after the car accident that left him hemiplegic and with significant disability consequences, which have worsened with the passing of time.



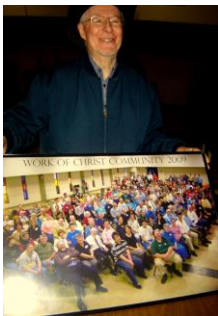
It gave me great pleasure to see the joy with which he greeted me when I arrived, and the way in which we were able to communicate with him, through sign language, when he spoke to Dick, Pat or me, in addition to the good sense of humor that he always preserves in such difficult life circumstances.



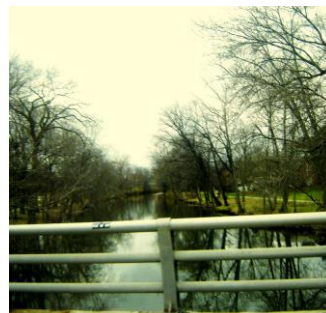
Now he is in this home, where they can take better care of him, while some brothers and sisters visit him with some frequency and take him to meetings, although his situation is quite delicate.



We said goodbye with great affection, after praying together, and we went to the offices of The Work of Christ Community, where I was also able to share with Yvonne Comstock and Jan Munk.



There was also a “gap worker” from Munich, Lissy, and the sister who works as a receptionist, in the same position that Claire Marie held when she spent a year here in Michigan in 2000. In addition to being a community center, a daycare center for preschool children has operated here for quite a while.



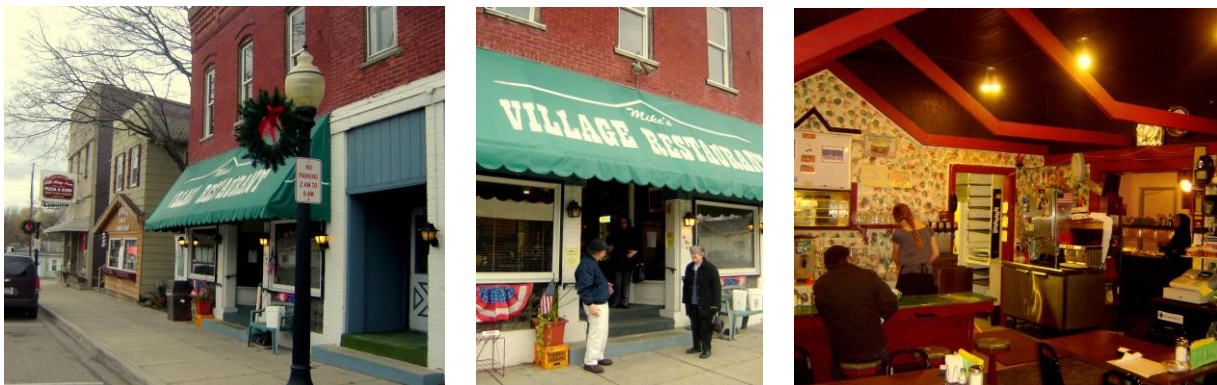
Afterwards, they took me around the Michigan State University campus, taking photos in the places that were most meaningful to me and that brought back so many memories. In addition to the buildings where I worked as a research assistant or took my master's and doctoral classes, I was pleased to pass the bridge over the Red Cedar River and the auditorium where I graduated.



Likewise, there are such emblematic places as the administrative building, the “Sparty” statue, the very symbolic “Beaumont Tower” or the “Union Building”, before leaving the campus to the university city of East Lansing and traveling along Grand Avenue River westbound toward Lansing.



So, we picked up Maria Helena at Target, after doing some very good shopping, and headed southwest to the little town of Dimondale, which is really like what you see in the movies.



There we entered “Mike's Restaurant”, a nicely decorated place, including lots of coffee cups hanging from the ceiling and walls. A waitress, who spoke in a small-town style, served us a lunch of meat with mashed potatoes, covered with gravy, as well as a warm broccoli cream, toasted bread and salad. We finished that delicious meal with a donut, also hot and very tasty.



We consider it a privilege to share these hours with Dick Higley, who was senior coordinator of this Community. I have known him for thirty-five years, as well as his wife Pat, such a feminine and affectionate woman of God, who is experiencing a condition of Alzheimer's that saddens us all, although they live it with great realism and courage in the marital and community context.

Upon returning to the house, Lena put away the purchases, while I uploaded the day's photos to the computer, and then we went for a relaxing nap of less than an hour, during which I fell into a deep sleep; but she just kept aware, although enjoying all that time. We got up again, at five in the afternoon, as John had to take us to the Schaefer house, where they were waiting for us to have dinner together.



It was a great pleasure for us to be back in the home of Dick and Kathy, along with their daughters Ann, Emily, Mary and Ellen, where they hosted us during our last visit, being able to see them all again, except this time Mary, while they offered us a delicious meal.



This included an extraordinary blueberry and ice cream cake, which I ate with delight, as well as a dynamic of each couple kissing, under a mistletoe leaf, for luck.



María Helena was able to converse in Spanish with Emily, who spent time in Monterrey, as well as with Patty, the guest who is staying here at the Schaefer home, as she is now spending a year in Lansing as part of the Gap. For me it was very important to share with Dick, since we have been friends for so long, and I felt happy to be together again, while he showed me the photos of a bicycle trip he took, together with Emily, to the “Upper Penninsula”.



At the end of dinner, Rick and Yvonne Comstock, with whom I lived as a family for a couple of years in the mid-seventies, also stopped by to see us. Nonetheless, we said goodbye early, since María Helena was not feeling well. So, we prayed for her and Dick subsequently brought us back to the DeWitt house, finding that John had already set up the outside Christmas decorations.



María Helena went right up to the room to go to bed early and I stayed with John in the basement to watch the “Monday Night Football” game together, which has been a forty-year-old tradition, today with the confrontation between the New Orleans Saints, led by the quarterback Drew Brees, and the Boston Patriots, led by Tom Brady. However, John decided to go to sleep when the first half was about to end, with the Saints ahead by a score of 17 to 10, which still did not allow us to predict who would win the game, and I decided to use the break to update the diary on the kitchen.

This allowed me to answer a phone call in which Piper Fountain left a message asking about us, on behalf of herself and her husband Jim, since they were unable to join us at last night's "Open House." Piper has always been a very particular sister about keeping us up to date with her family life, sending us a family photo card every Christmas for thirty years, so I was grateful for this call on the eve of our departure. In fact, I am very grateful to the Lord for having been able to renew contact with so many brothers and sisters in the Work of Christ community during our visit to Michigan.

Then I stayed writing the diary, in front of the television, until the conclusion of the game, in which the Saints triumphed resoundingly, beating the Patriots by 38 to 17, and Drew Brees drove his team for 371 yards, with five spectacular touchdown passes. The truth is that during this Thanksgiving weekend I was able to enjoy, after so many years, the tradition of American football on these dates, and I went to bed very happy around eleven thirty.

Tuesday 1st. December 2009:

Although we started to wake up around eight in the morning, we stayed in bed until nine thirty. This allowed me to pray an almost complete rosary and go down to breakfast, after enjoying a refreshing shower. John and Marcia had already left for their jobs, and we had the house to ourselves. We shared a breakfast of orange juice, cereal, and toast with custard, and went back up to the room to pack and weigh our bags. This took a long time and a lot of effort for me, equivalent to a weight training session in a gym, but we made sure that none of the four suitcases went over the required weight of 23 kilograms. Feeling tired, I spent a lot of time in the dining room downloading photos from the camera to the computer and editing all the photos taken yesterday, which relaxed me quite a bit.



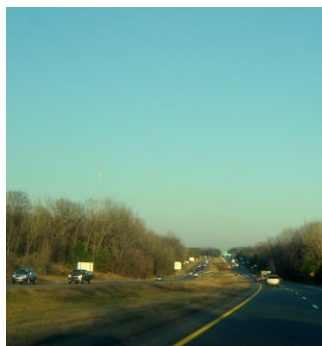
We waited until almost one o'clock, without no one calling us to go have lunch with the Koguts. In fact, when John arrived, he contacted Russ and took us in his car to his residence, since they live nearby. There, we spent a very pleasant time sharing in their cozy house, built and moved by Russ himself, now supported by his son Pete, with whom he is working on changing all the windows. He also joined us for lunch, along with Bol, the adopted son, originally from Sudan, whose story they told us in all its details. I also gave them our "Friendship Journey to South America" book, dedicating it especially to them to encourage their studying Spanish, which they want to do and visit us one day in Costa Rica, something that Russ already did once, when he came to my house for a Christmas, in the seventies.



At the end of a delicious lunch of sandwiches with homemade bread and many healthy things, prepared with a lot of love by Cindy, they both took us in their car to one of the famous “Noble and Gable” bookstores, where we were able to find the famous calendar that Margie, Claire's roommate, wanted. There we came across the surprise that the CD by Susan Boyle, the English revelation singer, had already been released, and an offer of DVDs of the television series “From the Earth to the Moon”, by Tom Hanks, which I was always passionate about, and that Russ wanted to give me as a gift. They left us back at the DeWitts, which I took advantage of to show Russ several photovideos that I had been making, including those of the “Friendship Journey”, to complement his reading of the book.



John was waiting for us to load suitcases and leave, together with Marcia, for Detroit. However, on the way she had to pass by a funeral home, because her mother's cousin had died, whom she saw closely as children, so she left us at an “Outlet Shopping Center” to entertain ourselves.



In a “Jockeys” store we found a great auction, which allowed us to buy a sweater for Jean, as well as thermal underwear for Lena, which will be very good for her when we travel to cold places, and other clothes for her and Claire that really were at “crazy” prices.

Then, we had to wait a long time for Marcia to pick us up, as she found it necessary to stay giving her condolences longer than she expected, and we resumed the route towards Farmington Hills.



We arrived at Mother DeWitt's house around seven, to take out some of the suitcases in the cold of the night. She was waiting for us with some Margarita cocktails and several plates of sandwiches ready, including one with the acorn-fed Iberian ham that we had given her. It was a very chatty aperitif time in the dining room that we enjoyed very much, along with jokes and witticisms from Tom, who never they could be missing. For dinner they also had a dish of goulash, that is, very soft pieces of meat in sauce, along with pasta and salad, finishing off with some delicious chocolate cookies.



While Marcia washed pots, we helped put the dishes in the washing machine and shared with Mother DeWitt and Tom several photovideos of the tracks “Del Sentido a la Esperanza”, in addition to making them a copy of the CD, which they could send to María, the Marcia's mother-in-law in Miami, who is facing cancer and was hospitalized this weekend. María Helena also prepared a dropper of flower essences, to raise her body's defenses, and helped Mother DeWitt learn a type of “oceanic” breathing, which may allow her to better oxygenate her lungs, given her respiratory restriction that forces her to use a tube that provides oxygen all the time.

Lena went to bed first and I stayed with them for a while longer, and then, in private, I wrote them a couple of cards, one of thanks to the whole family and the other, very comical, on the occasion of Tom's birthday, which will be the day after tomorrow. It was after eleven when I went to sleep in the same room that I used so many times when I was young in the past, during my visits to this family, which also became my own, something that I have been able to experience during this trip.

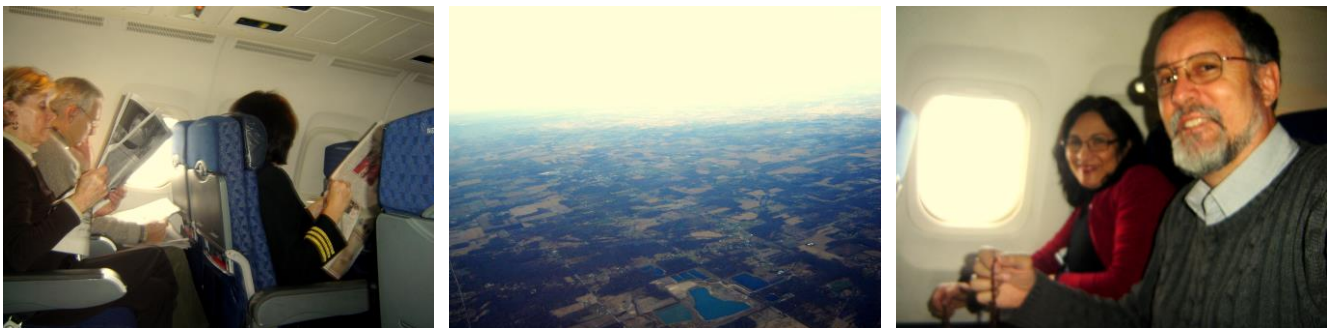
Miércoles 2 de Diciembre, 2009:

We started the day early, around seven, to take a shower and get ready before going down to have a delicious breakfast of coffee with croissant, orange juice and a plate of melon.



Later we closed suitcases and loaded them into Mother DeWitt's car, who at eighty-six years old took us driving to the airport, as she had done so many times before on our previous visits. Although we had already said goodbye to Tom and Marcia, John called us from Lansing on Mother DeWitt's cell phone while we were in the car. When we got off at the Detroit airport, I said an emotional goodbye to her, as it was the last time that we were together with her, and she passed away a couple of years later. Then the house was sold, which is why these images and experiences are so memorable to me.

We spent some time at the airport weighing the suitcases once more again and adjusting the contents so that they weighed exactly fifty pounds. Likewise, I learned to process our boarding passes on the AA computers, finishing checking at the counter, before passing inspection and heading all the way to our boarding room. Nonetheless, we made one last purchase, because Lena needed her bottle of water and I found my Michigan keychain, as well as a special edition about Mohammed Ali, celebrating his fifty years of public life, as the greatest boxer of all time.



Already on the plane, I had the pleasure of having a long time of prayer, accompanied by community songs and a grateful evocation before the Lord for all the blessings He has granted us during this time of travel. In the last part of the trip, I really enjoyed reading several articles about Mohammed Ali, until we landed at the Dallas airport.



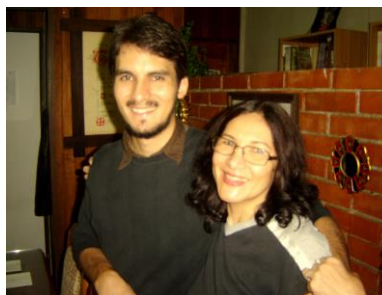
There we traveled a long way between terminals A and D, where we ate our lunch, she had a Thai wrap and I had a tuna sandwich, both with a cup of hot chocolate. Later, we sat next to door D 27, in one of the Samsung stations to connect the computers, and thus write the diary of the last two days.



Our flight to Costa Rica left at 4:10 in the afternoon, for a quiet journey in which only a snack was served, so I dedicated myself to meditating on the extraordinary experiences I have had. In truth, it was just two months ago, on October 2, that we began to travel, first through Mexico, offering three weeks of courses or spiritual retreats to priests, along with the launch in Monterrey of the CD “Del Sentido a la Esperanza”. Then, we spent five days in Costa Rica and resumed our trip to Spain and the United States. Now we return with the great satisfaction of María Helena's doctorate in Medical Sciences “Suma cum laude”, as well as a memorable visit to the Blanchets, in Orlando, and to the DeWitts and many other close brothers and sisters of the Work of Christ Community, in Michigan.



Around eight thirty we arrived at the Juan Santamaría Airport, and then went to our house, where we met Jean Gaston again, who was waiting for us excitedly with a large banner, prepared by our three children, as a tribute to Ma. Helena for obtaining her Ph.D. in Salamanca, Spain.



This made us feel very loved and happy to return to our normal lives. As always, we cannot find enough words to thank the Lord God for all his wonderful gifts.