



# Institute Information

November 2009

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## Reformation Fiesta

**Inside:**

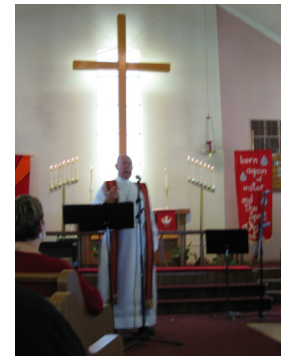
<b>Conversations of Grace</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Getting to Know One Another</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Internet Classes Take Off</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Meet the Students</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>From the Director</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Support our Mission</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Admission Requirements</b>	<b>4</b>

On Saturday, October 31st, the people of the churches in the Las Cruces/El Paso/Juárez area got together to celebrate our belief in salvation through grace by faith alone that Martin Luther first set forth in his 95 Theses.

This celebration was a beautiful blending of past and present. As we celebrated Luther's work, we did so in the languages that are prevalent in the border area—English and Spanish. Choirs and musical groups from four different area churches lifted praises to God with

their beautiful music. We were blessed with two choirs, a praise team, a bell choir, and a mariachi group.

This service, held at San Pablo Lutheran Church, brought nearly 100 people together to worship the Lord and celebrate our heritage as a "Mund Haus" (Mouth House) as Luther called the Church.



Above - The Ascension and Zion Lutheran Church choirs join together to end the service with a rendition of "A Mighty Fortress."

Right - Pastor Howard Patten of Zion Lutheran Church preaches the sermon.

**For more information:**

- Call us at (915) 790-2300
- Send an email to the Executive Director, Rev. Richard Schlak [rschlak@missionaryinstitute.org](mailto:rschlak@missionaryinstitute.org)
- Send an email to the Administrative Assistant, Sue Lozano [slozano@missionaryinstitute.org](mailto:slozano@missionaryinstitute.org)
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- Send a fax to (915) 790-1845 (please call first as this is not a dedicated fax line).
- Write to us. Our address is:  
 301 S. Schutz Dr. #7  
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- Go to our website. [www.missionaryinstitute.org](http://www.missionaryinstitute.org)

## Class Schedule

The Missionary Institute has just started a new session of classes. The courses currently being taught are:

The Mission of God in the New Testament (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings)

Biblical

Interpretation (Monday evenings)

Preaching (Wednesday evening)

The current session will continue through the middle of January. Then a new eight week session. Tentatively, the new courses will be The Life

and Mission of Jesus in the mornings, Worship and Song on Monday evenings and Church Planting on Wednesday evenings. Then an intensive course is planned, followed by another eight week session and the semester will end with another one week course.

# Conversations of Grace

The Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute participated in the Rocky Mountain District's evangelism conference, Conversations of Grace, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The Missionary Institute's Executive Director, Reverend Richard Schlak, led the Spanish opening worship, led a session on the work of the Missionary Institute, and interpreted for two of the keynote speakers. Executive Assistant, Sue Lozano, also

interpreted for one of the keynote speakers.

Although Conversations of Grace was a primarily English event, there was one session in Spanish for each breakout period, there was an opening worship service in Spanish, and interpreters were provided for the keynote speakers.

Three regular students of the Missionary Institute (Spanish-only) attended the conference as well as three students who have taken classes on an irregular basis.

All the students were encouraged by the conference and felt it was a blessing to them and would help them in their ministries.



**Rev. Richard Schlak (in yellow) participates in a panel discussion on Hispanic Ministry**

## Internet Classes Take Off

The classes that are offered by the Missionary Institute via the internet have had a large increase in enrollment. In June, Sue Lozano, taught the Evangelism in the Hispanic Context, to ten students, all of whom took the course via the internet. These students came from varied places such as Nebraska, Iowa and Peru.

The current classes have internet students from

different states: Texas, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Indiana. Students also connect from different countries: Mexico, Columbia, and Peru.

This way of studying has been a great benefit to the students. They are able to study without having to leave their jobs, their homes, and their families. Nor do the students have to apply for visas and wait for them to

be approved. In addition, they are able to apply their new knowledge in their home congregations.

This does not, however, mean that students no longer come to the Institute to take classes. There are still many students who do so; this is just another option available for those who wish to study.

**It is important to understand the culture of the people with whom you intend to share the Gospel. See below to learn more about the Hispanic and the American cultures.**

## Getting to Know Each Other

Let's suppose that you receive two invitations to two different Christmas parties that are at the same time on the same day (one is an office party and one a family party), how do you decide which one to attend?

The answer to this question may depend on your culture. Many Anglos may choose to go to the office party on the hopes

that they will make a good impression on their boss or even on their boss's boss. They may feel that it is important to network with clients or other people in the company.

Many Hispanics will base their decision on relationships. If they have good relationships with the people at work, they may choose to attend the office party. However, they will

probably feel much pressure to attend the family party as those are the primary relationships in the Hispanic world.

Whatever decision you make is influenced by your culture and your priorities. Neither is right or wrong, but we need to understand others and why they make their decisions. It may have nothing to do with us.

## Meet the Students - Vianey Guzmán

Vianey Guzmán is a single mom who lives in Acuña, Mexico, across the border from Del Río, Texas. She came to the Lutheran Church through the work of Pastor Gary Martin and their social ministry program.

Currently she serves her church in the area of children's and women's ministries. She has a children's ministry for kids ages 9-12, a youth

ministry for ages 14-17 and a women's group.

Vianey says that the internet courses are extraordinary and have been a blessing for all of the students. She says that when one is taught better, then one can teach better.

Expanding the children and women's ministry programs to different parts of Acuña is one of Vianey's goals. Her

studies help her to share her faith better with the people with whom she works.



Vianey Guzman with children

## From the Director

What do you remember most about Thanksgiving Day? When I close my eyes, I can almost smell the turkey basting in my mother's oven. I seem to hear again my grandparents talking in the other room. I can almost taste the pie set out for desert. But what I most remember is this: no matter how much work was waiting in the kitchen or what parades or games were on TV, our family always went first to church on Thanksgiving Day.

Today, many churches have moved their Thanksgiving worship services to Wednesday evening so that they don't

have to compete with the family, food, and football that crowd the hours on Thursday. And perhaps it is better to give thanks to God first, before the long weekend and its frenzied activities – certainly before braving the lines and sales pressures of Black Friday!

Recently I've been cramming my calendar full: teaching classes all week long and traveling on the weekends. There is way too much to do! And yet... Thanksgiving Day is calling. It's time to stop running and give thanks to God for how far he has brought us. By God's grace, three students are finishing their coursework this semester,

and a whole lot more are working their way through the curriculum! By God's grace, new ministries are being planned and launched and led by these students! We thank the Lord for his protection, particularly for those who serve the Lord in Juarez! We thank God especially for you who are mission partners with us, for your generosity and encouragement which have sustained us!

When I think of all the reasons we have to thank God, the remaining challenges don't seem quite so daunting. What time is Thanksgiving worship, again?

**At the Institute, the Word of God is shared with us in such a great way that we learn better how to share better with the people with whom God has permitted us to work.  
- Vianey Guzmán**

## Missionary Institute to Seek RSO Status

The Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute, at its recent Board of Director's meeting, decided to seek Recognized Service Organization (RSO) status with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

This status would cement the relationship that the Missionary Institute already has with LCMS

World Mission.

Currently, LCMS World Mission calls the Missionary Institute's Executive Director, the Reverend Schlak, and has assigned him to the Missionary Institute.

Previously, Pastor Schlak was a missionary in Venezuela for 17 years, called and sent by World Mission.

Since the Missionary Institute already has a relationship with World Mission, it was decided to apply for RSO status, relating to the Board for Mission Services.

We are just beginning the process, so look for us to receive RSO status sometime next year (assuming that our application is approved).

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multiply healthy,  
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[www.missionaryinstitute.com](http://www.missionaryinstitute.com)

## First Annual Golf Tournament

The Valley Mission Task Force held a golf tournament to benefit Ysleta Lutheran Mission and the Missionary Institute. This tournament raised funds of \$4800 and is applying for Thrivent Matching Funds of \$1600.

Eighty percent of the funds are to support YLM and twenty percent is dedicated for the Missionary Institute.

Currently, Ysleta Lutheran Mission is suffering financially due in large part to the violence in Juarez. For more information about this situation, please contact Stephen Heimer at (915)

858-2588 or at  
[sheimer@ylm.org](mailto:sheimer@ylm.org).

The El Paso/Las Cruces/Juarez area churches got together in the form of the task force to facilitate cross cultural ministries in the Rio Grande Valley area.

The second annual golf tournament is already being tentatively planned for Friday, October 29, 2010. Once again, this will be held on Reformation weekend a bilingual service will be held on Reformation Day, Sunday, October 31, 2010.



## Enrollment Requirements at LHMI

Interested students who would like to enroll must first complete the following requirements:

- Be a member of a Lutheran Church.
- Be an active member in their congregation
- Be able to speak, read, and write Spanish
- Be a high-school graduate or equivalent
- Fill out the registration form
- Have their pastor send a letter of recommendation
- Complete an interview with the Executive Director.

Once the enrollment process has been completed, the student may then register for classes. The cost for classes is \$50 for a single course, or \$35 each course if taking at least two courses at a time. The student must also pay for the required books (usually

\$10 - \$20 per course).

If you would like more information on the classes or enrollment requirements, or if you are interested in the resident option, please contact the Executive Director, Rev. Richard Schlak at (915) 790-2300 or email us at [info@missionaryinstitute.org](mailto:info@missionaryinstitute.org)



**The Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute in El Paso, Texas**