



Missionary Profile: Carlos Davila Cardena Bartender to Evangelist

A short twelve years ago, Carlos Davila Cardena had no idea he would live an extraordinary life. In fact, Carlos considered himself a typical young adult, spending his nights tending bar in a local dance club. But after a tragic automobile accident nearly took his life, Carlos started his ministry that over a decade later continues to impact the most desperate communities of Mexico and Latin America.

“I made a promise to God that upon my recovery I would serve Him for the rest of my life.”

The missionary has made good on his word. Beginning his day at 6:00 am, Carlos travels by moped or bus to one of 12 communities in a 300 kilometer area.

“My wife and two teenage daughters miss me very much when I travel, but they are proud of me and support my work for the kingdom.”

Carlos’ first priority as a missionary is to ensure physical needs are met.

“Families may need me to find a doctor, bring food, or seek out a social worker to help with a difficult situation. I follow up every day to see that they have what they need. We do not leave these families after a day or two as do many other missionaries. We stay with them and give them hope.”

Carlos recalls his time with a family of five in Cancun with three children (ages 17, 14, and 12), the couple doubted that a missionary could change their existence. But Carlos didn’t give up. He gave them a helpful hand, ensuring the family was fed and had proper shelter.

“This family was spiritually bereft and poverty stricken.”

But it didn't stop there. Carlos began teaching about the sacraments, praying and ministering to their spiritual needs. Over time he began to see a change in the family.

The transformation culminated with the sacrament of baptism.

“I can see the work of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism. An eternal change takes place within the human spirit, which is a moving thing to see.”

This spiritual movement led to the family's participation in the betterment of the community.

“They started working in the town,” Carlos recalls, “helping others and making the community a better place.”

Carlos ends his day at the local parish, helping the priest set up for Mass and training staff on customary procedures. He also trains hundreds of other Evangelizadores de Tiempo Completo, or ETC missionaries. This group of roughly 600 individuals devote their lives –as does Carlos– to God's work.

“Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did for me.”

Matthew 25: 40

We at Catholic World Mission are blessed with the opportunity to know Carlos Davila Cardena and are proud to stand behind this truly inspirational man and his fellow ETC missionaries.