

Quotes from Past STM teams members

When I went overseas I thought that I would be making a real difference in people's lives by helping to build them a new home. Instead, they made a difference in my life and in the life of my church by being examples of God's love to their families, and to me. I hope to carry that example home with me and affect my own church in the same way. – Bethany, Avenue Road, Cambridge, ON

I realized afresh that believers in Bolivia and Canada have much in common, even though on the surface it appears that our countries, societies, lives and churches are very different. God's heart for believers and not yet believers is the same regardless of where we live; and His call for Christians to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Him applies globally. My heart was touched and my spirit was challenged by how faithfully, beautifully and humbly our Bolivian brothers and sisters serve others and fulfill God's word. They blessed and taught me - I am changed and grateful. – Merry, Glen Acres Baptist, Waterloo, ON

My most memorable experience was hearing a woman in church say: 'I know there is a God because I have rice, and because I have rice and love God, I give rice to my neighbors who have none. Not just so they can eat, but so they can know there is a God, too.' I realized my trip wasn't just about building houses, but also to help people see and meet God. How do I do that at home when we have everything, though? – Norma, Emmanuel Baptist, Victoria, BC

Poverty is an affront to the human condition, as well as being a major threat to peace... in India though, the poor taught us about faith and joy and generosity. Though they have nothing they offer you a cup of chai, or kill their last chicken for you. We need to fulfill our Biblical mandate to walk with them. Because the needs are so enormous it is easy to say: 'It's too big, any help I can offer won't make a difference, it's just a drop in the bucket.' My new mantra is "Every little bit helps. It ALL makes a difference. Love changes EVERYTHING. – Ellen, Knox United, Kenora, ON.

I've often quoted Gutierrez as saying that the only place to do theology is sitting in the pastoral seat among the poor. This trip gave a good opportunity to sit among the poor of Bolivia and do some theology: theology of calluses formed and tortillas shared and finding from God's words the source of hope and life. One of my challenges is to find the language and framework to draw together these aspects of the reign of God so we can coax more to find the whole of the gospel. – Sandra, First Baptist Church, Charlottetown, PEI

I had reservations about going right up to the moment we left Toronto, but my faith brought me to the airport. What a reward I was given for that faith! Since coming home, I have committed to a life of service, ...but my life is not set up to serve at all, only to consume. God is going to have to turn it completely upside down and that's fine with me... I will take Christ's words to heart – 'Do not fear, just believe,' so that's what I'm doing for the moment – just believing. – Kari, First Baptist Church, London, ON