

TOGETHER FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Alicia and I are enjoying the visit of our daughters Elizabeth and Monica over the holidays. Monica was the first to arrive, flying in on Dec. 20 from Amsterdam, where she is half-way through a year-long Masters Degree program in Sociology at the University of Amsterdam. Elizabeth and her husband Matt spent Christmas with Matt's family in San Francisco and then Elizabeth flew in on Dec. 28. Elizabeth hopes to finish her PhD in Statistics Education at the University of Minnesota in the coming year. Like the girls, Alicia and I have a couple of weeks off before returning to classes in January. Alicia continues to teach at a primary school in Mexico City. It has been great to be together for the first time since last summer, though it would have been great to have Matt here as well.



UPDATE ON MISSING STUDENTS

Several of you asked me to keep you up to date regarding the 43 students from a rural teacher's college in southern Mexico who disappeared on Sept. 26, after the police arrested them and handed them over to a criminal organization operating in the area (see our previous newsletter). Although some still hope that the students will be found alive, the official version is that they were killed near a garbage dump and their bodies were then burned. DNA testing has identified the remains of one of the students. Numerous people have been arrested in connection with the case, yet there is still a great deal of outrage among the Mexican population and protests continue.

**FOR MORE NEWS AND INFORMATION,
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GRADUATION CEREMONY

This past December 15, we celebrated the graduation of 11 students from diverse programs at the Theological Community of Mexico and two of the seminaries of which it forms part. Among the students who graduated were Victor Ochoa, Juliana Alonso and Mario Medina, whose work I mentioned in the two newsletters from this past summer. All three of them have plans to continue their studies in addition to serving in the ministry, since one important aspect of our vision at the Theological Community is to prepare those who excel among our graduates to serve as professors in the future.



One special graduate was Karina Garcia, who graduated from our Lutheran Seminary. Karina (shown below with Seminary coordinator Angela Trejo and myself) has been helping out as my assistant with the Seminary's online course program since 2010. God-willing, she will be ordained in the coming months in the Mexican Lutheran Church, thus becoming the fourth woman graduate of our Seminary to become a pastor. She will continue to work with the Seminary, not only helping with the administration of our online course program but also teaching courses in that program and at the Diploma level at the Theological Community.

