

"REFORMARTE" PRIZE-WINNING MURAL

As I mentioned in our last newsletter, in June at the Theological Community where I teach we had a Symposium on Worship and Liturgy titled "Reformarte." This verb represents a combination of the Spanish words "Reforma" (Reformation) and "Arte" (Art) and might be translated, "Reformation yourself through art!" Prior to the event, it was announced that a prize would be given for the best design for a mural that would reflect the Symposium theme.

The winner was Abel Gutiérrez, a former student of mine who is a life-long Lutheran. He divided the mural into three parts: past, present, and future (see photo below). On the left side, the images of Martin Luther, his wife Katy, and John Calvin appear on the door of the Wittenberg church. At the bottom, the phrase "Sola Scriptura" is reversed as if on the movable type of a printing press. In the middle, the continents formed from "Pangea" are drawn together by virtue of the Reformation message of "Sola Fide," which according to Abel made the earth shake. On the right side, "Soli Gratia" underscores the conviction that all people are equal and that salvation is not for sale. A stream of rainbow colors proclaims the inclusivity of the doctrines of "Solo Christus" and "Soli Deo Gloria" and serves as the means by which God's Spirit unites past history and present reality with future hopes.

The mural was brought to life by participants in the Painting Workshop under Abel's guidance during the three days of the Symposium. A plaque with the names of all who had a hand in creating the mural now hangs alongside of it on the wall of our school's library.

The prize? Thanks to a gracious gift from the Lutheran World Federation, next week Abel will be walking through the doorway of a well-known church in Germany.

**TAKING RAMONA TO THE MOVIES**

For as long as we have lived in Mexico, we have employed someone to help clean the house every week. "Ramona," who is from a rural area outside of Mexico City, barely spoke Spanish when she began working for us a number of years ago. Her first language is Náhuatl. She is about 50 years old (she is not sure of her exact age) and does a great job.

A few weeks back, when Alicia got back home from a quick trip downtown, Ramona said, "Oh, I wish I could have gone! I have never been downtown!" So when our daughter who was visiting us last week wanted to go downtown to see the new Mexican movie, "Aquí Sigo" ("I'm Still Here"), we asked Ramona if she wanted to go along. It turns out she had never been to the movies. When Alicia got popcorn for Ramona, she thought she had to finish it before entering the seated viewing area of the cinema.



The film presents interviews with people who are over 90 years old. About half of the scenes are from Mexico (see image above), and the other half are from other countries around the world. When the movie was over, Ramona got to look around downtown Mexico City for the first time ever. As you can imagine, words could never describe the delight and wonder radiating from her face that afternoon and evening.

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