



This is our Mother's Day newsletter and I would like to say thank you to all mothers, be you biological, adoptive, or just have that wonderful mother spirit for all.

I would like to tell you about a mother we meet on this trip to Brazil. Her name is Claudia, she has one daughter, Katlin 15, and takes care of her mother, who is 90.

(Mom)



She works very hard, sometimes 12 hours a day, at Christian school as their secretary. She does not make a lot of money and sometimes becomes very overwhelmed with her life. She has stayed faithful to God and the church and recently started attending our church at Maanaim. Katlin is also active in the youth. Recently life came crashing down in the form of the government. Someone from the Elder Abuse department was sent to inspect their house on suspicion of her abusing her mother. She in no way was abusing her mother, but their living conditions can be considered abusive. Abusive in that no one should live or have to live in those conditions.

You have to understand that they live in the Favela. Where there are no official services, like water, sewer or electricity. When it rains water does not drip down from the ceiling, it flows in from the street and through the holes in the roof. The "house" sits on just a dirt foundation, which allows moisture to seep in also from the bottom of the house.



(Bathroom mold)

This is an environment, despite how hot or cold stays at about 75-100%. **(Bedroom Mold)**



The mold has invaded the whole house and just spending any short amount of time inside is dangerous to your health. All 3 of the ladies have serious breathing issues. We did get them a machine that gives them a breathing treatment. **(Claudia with machine)**



These conditions are not brought on by Claudia's neglect, but by the difficulties of their lives. Most of her mother's medicine is not covered by any insurance and the mother does not get any government assistance. The entire financial burden falls on Claudia and so the majority of her salary is dedicated to her mother's medical bills. So Claudia has become the mother to her mother and still has all the responsibility of being Katlin's mom. Things like changing roof tiles, finding a way to divert water from your door or mold abatement is not even a thought. This did not stop the government from saying that she had to fix the house or they would take her mother to a shelter. A shelter that is nothing more than a bed among hundreds of beds and minimal care or concern.

This is where we come in. Claudia did not approach us for help; we became aware of her problem through Ana Paula, the pastor at our church. She also works at the school where Claudia works and one of the teachers asked Ana if there was a way the church could help. We learned that it would cost about \$4,000 to just clean and put the house in a state that would be acceptably inhabitable by the government. We cannot make any structural changes because the house would not withstand any moving of windows or walls.

(Bathroom Window)



Having the house fall down is not a good option. We are considering if her moving is an option. One advantage and this is why people live in the favelas, is if there is any rent it is very cheap. So the reality of her life collides with her dreams. Her dream of having a door on a bedroom or her daughter having people able to come to her house is not an option at this time. What is a mother to do and what can we do to help this family?

We have a couple Cris and Kesia who are part of the church team and our project managers for building projects. They are walking and praying with her through this difficult time. **(Cris & I Inspecting house)**



We are still ready to provide financial help whenever she decides which will be the right direction for her family. Cris and Kesia will help her do some mold abatement and clean as much as possible until we can start construction or move them to another location. We are also buying them new beds, since the ones they now have been destroyed by mold (they are still sleeping on them) When Claudia raised her mattress to show me the mold on the bottom, I had to leave the room because the smell was so bad. I just want to gather people up and escape with them sometimes. Please pray with us for this mother and her family.

Pray for God's direction and wisdom for their future. For Claudia to continue to be strong and trust in God for His direction. Pray that the government gives her time to make preparations and decisions that are the best for her mother.

Mothers come in many flavors, sizes and conditions. We celebrate their strength, joy and beauty and we love you all. Happy mother's day, love you moms.

