

Iron Rose Sister Ministries Newsletter

Winter 2017

Volume 5, Issue 3



Good News to Share!

- **Open doors in Cuba!**
- **Thankful for opportunities to equip**
- **Renewal Retreat with women from 12 countries in Guatemala**

Inside this issue:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2018 Plans | 2 |
| "It's all about Relationships" | 2 |
| What do I do with my human nature? | 2 |
| Conexiones Retreat | 3 |
| 2018 Calendar | 3 |
| And Be Thankful | 3 |
| Note from Michelle | 4 |

Doors Opening in Cuba

"The Cuban women are so hungry for resources and encouragement in their Christian walk."

Michelle was able to equip over 200 young women at the **National Youth Conference**, held in August. And more than 120 women, through classes over two days, were inspired by the

lessons shared at the local church building.

In a country where the church has grown in spite of opposition, Michelle, and others, were thrilled at the chance to build **lasting friendships with our Cuban brothers and sisters**. Michelle receives weekly emails of prayer and



encouragement from several of the women she met, hungry for Christian fellowship.

Please be in prayer for the ways in which God is leading us to continue to **encourage and equip our Cuban sisters!** A follow-up trip is planned next year, in April.



Young Cuban women who won IRSM Bible study books as door prizes to take back to local church

Second Destination Retreat a "Resounding" Success



Women from **eight states and twenty congregations** were represented (Denver ladies pictured above).

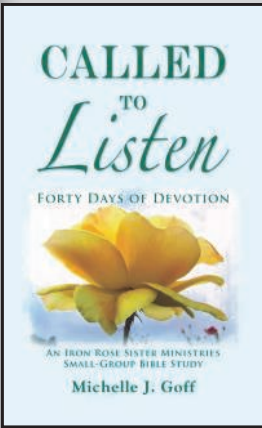
"Called to Listen," we were blessed with the opportunity to step away from the noise of life, listening to God and to one another.

The retreat also served as a kickoff for several small groups who continued the guidance through **Called to Listen: Forty Days of Devotion**. This book makes a perfect Christmas gift for someone who longs to focus on listening for the New Year.

Thank you to our tremendously talented and servant-hearted group of volunteers who made this retreat possible!

We were equipped, inspired, and transformed. And remember, ladies: **"Listening is Relationship."**





Forty days of devotion to listening with weekly reflections in small groups

“I am totally and completely renewed and in love with Jesus! Thank you!” ~Conexiones attendee



Michelle with former Venezuelan coworker Fabiola de Gómez in Guatemala

2018 Plans; Budget Goal: \$60,000

The IRSM Board of Directors, along with Executive Director, Michelle Goff, have been meeting and praying about where God is taking us as a ministry.

We covet your prayers for wisdom in the growth opportunities



and for God’s continued provision of workers and financial support.

THANK YOU for being a

part of making possible all that has been done thus far!

While we are **scaling back or pruning** in some areas, we are **expanding in others** for more **strategic growth**.

The international travel will continue, but a few less trips in 2018. New resources will be released, especially for **bilingual ministry** contexts, but we will pause on the publication of our next Bible study book for the time being.

Local and global equipping of women workers will characterize even more of our efforts and will be a greater focus of our time.

Please join with us in **prayer**, and **partner with us financially** to facilitate our vision to equip more women to connect to God and one another more deeply, in English, Spanish, and bilingual contexts, across the Americas. Thank you!

“It’s all about Relationships”

During the three days prior to the Conexiones retreat in Antigua, Michelle spent time with the **Zona 8 congregation Guatemala City**.

She was able to present **two seminars** on “How to work with the women in your congregation, specifically through small groups” and “Depression and Discouragement in the Bible.”

Also while there, Youth Minister in Zona 8 , Marvin Ixchop, interviewed

Michelle for a **radio program**. After the interview, and having spent one morning on an outing and in lengthy conversations with a few members of the church, Marvin accurately

summarized IRSM’s work, esp. our emphasis on small groups, in one sentence: “It’s all about relationships.”



What do I do with my human nature?

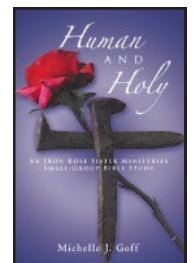
“Romans: The Righteousness of God” was the theme for the 94th Harding Lectureships. Inspired by the **struggle in Romans 8** between our human and sinful natures, Michelle taught a class



entitled “**What do I do with my human nature?**”

The audio from this class is available on our website and you can also find a link to an article in the **Harding Bison** highlighting Michelle as a Harding alum and founder of Iron Rose Sister Ministries.

This class emphasized many of the same points made in the first interactive small group Bible study produced by IRSM: **Human AND Holy**, a 13-week look at Christ’s example (available for order online).



Renewed and Refreshed, in Love

A team of nineteen women gathered in Antigua, Guatemala, to encourage and equip fifty-one missionary women from twelve countries.

The theme: **Falling in Love with Jesus**. The purpose: a time of **renewal and rejuvenation** for those women who are on the front lines in their respective mission points across Latin America.

Silence and Solitude (quiet time with God), daily lessons (taught by Michelle), Connection Groups,



Michelle's Connection Group: Belkis, Carla, and Lorena



Conexiones Women's Renewal Retreat, Guatemala

and free time provided a balanced schedule during the five-day retreat.

Each woman was refreshed by time in **connection** with God, with other missionary women, and with the team. Thank you to **Great Cities Missions** for the opportunity to partner with them in this event.

An added blessing from this trip was the opportunity to see many **Venezuelan sisters** and friends (pic on back), reconnect with missionary women and introduce others to IRSM.

**"From your class on thankfulness, I have been able to rephrase my narrative after some difficult life events this year."
~attendee in Baton Rouge**

2018 Calendar

Feb 9-10—WINGS Conference, Harding Univ.

Feb 23-24—Bilingual event, Antioch CoC, Nashville, TN

March 30—April 1—National Event, Quito, Ecuador

Late April—Cuba

May 1-5—Pepperdine Bible Lectures, classes and booth

June 28—July 1—Equip Conf. Bilingual, Orlando, FL

July 18-20—National Youth Conf. (Spanish), Rogers, AR

Mid. Aug—National Event, Panama City, Panamá

End of Aug—National Event, San Salvador, El Salvador

Sept 30—Oct 3—Harding

University Lectureships

Oct 13—Area-wide event, Bellevue CoC, Omaha, NE

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*Christmas shopping?
Don't forget to select
IRSM as your charity of
choice.*

And Be Thankful

Saturday, November 4, Michelle returned to her home congregation, the South Baton Rouge Church of Christ and shared with the women about how **being thankful is key to living the full life** (Col. 3:15b)

When we are thankful, we **Remember** who God is, **Rest**, knowing He is in control, **Reflect** on the big picture, and **Recognize** the countless blessings. The audio of this

class is available on our website.



Twisted Sisters in Baton Rouge



Michelle and Katie Forbess, IRSM Pres. at the Destination Retreat



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Women's Ministry Resources in English and Spanish:

- **Facilitate** Christian sister relationships that will be like iron sharpening iron, encouraging and inspiring each other to be as beautiful as a rose in spite of a few thorns
- **Provide** women's Bible studies simple enough for anyone to lead and deep enough for everyone to grow
- **Conduct** seminars, ladies' days, women's retreats, etc. teaching, empowering and inspiring women on their journey as Iron Rose Sisters
- **Create** a network of Christian women and women's ministries across the Americas

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Equipping to Equip... Passing the Torch (A note from Michelle)

I reached a point of intense burnout earlier this year. As a ministry, we have grown to the point where I cannot keep up with the opportunities God has provided and the doors He has opened.

Striving for perseverance, I was reminded of the verse in Galatians 6:9. **"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."**

Yet in seeking the context of this scripture, my eyes settled a few verses earlier:

"Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6).

Our primary purpose is to equip women to connect to God and one another more deeply. If you've heard me say it once, you've heard me say it a dozen times. But that **equipping takes on various forms** and I have been especially encouraged by our renewed focus to **equip teachers**.

Anita, a new Cuban friend, (pictured right) is just one example. She attended a class I taught in August.

For years, she has had the dream to be able to teach and equip women in rural Cuba. Inspired by the Lie/Truth Chart, from *Who Has the Last Word?*, and

equipped with other lessons from the classes I taught, she is carrying these tools to other women!

"These women don't have email nor do they know what the internet is, but they know that Satan lies and they learned to replace the lie with a truth and a biblical foundation."

What a blessing to be a part of that vision! **Thank you for helping make that possible.**

In Him, *Michelle*



Anita teaches women in rural Cuba



Current and former Venezuelan workers, in Guatemala