

El Pozo Changed My Life

Angeles (Angie) Mendoza, 21, is a student at the University of the Americas in Puebla, Mexico, and part of the community at Globalscope's El Pozo campus ministry. This summer (2008) she is serving as a REACH intern in Nairobi, Kenya. In preparation for the trip to Kenya Angie shared her testimony with her fellow REACH interns. Here is her story:

I was born in Puebla, Mexico, and am now a chemical engineering major at UDLA. I've just finished my eighth semester. My life hasn't been an easy one. My mother and her family are Christians, and my father was Catholic. Because my parents never agreed on what religion I should profess I was not raised in a specific religion. When I was 13 or 14 my grandmother taught me some things about God and the Bible and I began to understand more about the gospel and the meaning of being in a Christian community.

My parents separated when I was young. My relationship with my father was very complicated because he is a very hard and complex man. I only saw him one weekend a month because his work was far away from my house and he had to travel to other cities. I didn't really have a relationship with him and I think he doesn't know me very well. When my parents separated my mother had to solve some problems with the house where we were living during these years. One day we had to leave our home and move into another house that was very primitive. My father was never interested in our problems or in our lives.

While my family had some problems, my grandmother kept encouraging my faith in Christ. I went with my grandmother to her church sometimes and I felt happy to know more about God, but I wasn't very comfortable with the form; it was very traditional and I did not like that. I wanted to feel emotion or express my feelings about my new experiences, but most of the time I felt like an alien. Sometimes I tried to go to a Christian church or community but other things got in the way. One day when I was at lunch with one of my best friends in the Social Center of my university a girl gave me an invitation that read, "If you want to practice English and learn about the gospel, come to El Pozo." My friend and I decided to visit El Pozo. I met Angie Stryker (member of the

Globalscope team), who invited me to be a part of this community. I was very busy with University life and attended only sporadically. Then one day the staff members of El Pozo invited me to go to a retreat and that trip changed my life. That was the first time that I felt the presence of God and I really wanted to be part of that community. Since then I kept going to El Pozo and I became part of the leadership group.

One day the leader of El Pozo, Nathan McDade, told me about REACH internships, and in that moment I liked the idea of doing something like that. An intern of my community, Elsa, went to Tanzania last summer with REACH and it was very exciting for all the community to hear about her experience. Last fall I decided to apply to be a part of REACH this summer and now I am here.