

Omar Roberto Alvarado Gurdian

DOB: February 14, 1975

Born: Matagalpa, Nicaragua

Wife: Ruth Yasmina Ruiz Garcia

Daughter: Ruth Jasminas Alvarado Ruiz

My name is Omar Alvarado. I was born February 14, 1975, in the northern town of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, into a poor family. My father was a tailor, and my mother a seamstress. This was the time in which Nicaragua was living in great turmoil due to the civil war and the growing opposition to the Somoza family, who had governed Nicaragua for the previous four decades. During this time, my family lived through difficult events that, in many ways, shaped our lives.

In 1978, due to the support my parents provided to those who opposed the Somoza family, a “capture order” was issued for both of my parents by the Somoza Regime. We were exiled to Honduras, where my youngest brother, Jorge Issac, was born. During these days, my oldest brother, Rafael, and I were very much aware of the dangers our family faced because our parents challenged one of the most brutal dictatorships in Latin America when they joined the quest of the Nicaraguan people for liberty and justice.

After the overthrow of Somoza, like many other Nicaraguans, our family returned home, in hopes of rebuilding our lives and our nation. Sadly, civil war broke out again in the context of the cold war. My father, like many other men, was ordered to serve in the Sandinista Army to defend a revolution many supported. As the war continued, those in power fell into corruption and forgot the people. Many Nicaraguans lost the will to support and fight in the war, including my father who began to help young people desert the army. This led us to seek asylum in the United States.

My family and I left Nicaragua again when I was 11 years old. Like many in Latin America, we were faced with the decision to enter the United States illegally. My older brother and I were smuggled over the border, crossing the Rio Grande in Texas. (I guess we were what many called “wet backs.”) For the next nine years, the United States was our home. Many difficulties and hardships waited for us during those years, as we moved from California to Michigan. In Michigan, I was able to graduate from high school and study in a junior college. In 1995, our political asylum was denied, and we were faced with the necessity to go to Canada, where we stayed a year before making our decision to move back to Nicaragua.

In the middle of the hardships and difficulties, as well as the uncertainty, the one thing that held our family together was the relationship that each one of us had with our Lord Jesus Christ. My father and mother grew up in evangelical homes in Nicaragua. My grandfather came to accept our Lord and was one of the first members of the Baptist Church in Matagalpa. The values that we learned from our parents and from the Gospel helped our family confront the problems that many other families faced ... and more. We trusted God as we decided to come back home, where we would have to start from scratch.

Two years after coming back to Nicaragua, in 1998, our family, like thousands of Nicaraguans', was damaged by Hurricane Mitch. Our home was flooded, and the little shop we had opened was almost destroyed, but not our faith in God. It was during this time that a calling from God, one I had felt in my heart ten years earlier, grew more and more. In the midst of the great tragedy we were living in Nicaragua, I made the decision to serve God in full-time ministry. I left behind my job and my university studies to enroll in Baptist Theological Seminary in Managua. From 1999 to 2000, I studied and served in my local church. In January 2001, I pastored my first church. During these days I met Ruth, who now is my wife. She is the daughter of one of the most respected pastors in our Baptist Convention. I had met both of them at one of our national conventions. From the first moment we met, we knew that it was God's will for us to share our lives and ministry. After two years of dating, we were married December 25, 2002. Ruth is my best friend, who in her heart has the same desire to serve God wherever He leads us. We have been blessed with our first child, Ruth Jasmina, born on April 16, 2004. Our prayer is that she will, like her great-grandfather, grandfather, father and mother, dedicate her life to the service of our Lord.

Today, we are part of a wonderful and precious ministry – El Ayudante. In 2003, I coordinated a citywide crusade in Leon. At this time, El Ayudante had started operations on their new property in Leon and Ruth and I were able to see first hand what God was doing there. From that time on, we continued to help coordinate the crusade, but we also helped with the mission teams that came all that year. By December 2003, God had put in our hearts ... and in the hearts of the board of directors of El Ayudante ... the possibility for us to work with this ministry, which led to my appointment as administrator of this ministry in Nicaragua.

Since our coming to be part of El Ayudante in December of last year, we have been able to see the hand of God move in this city, as teams have come to serve God. His love has been made known to the people of Nicaragua through the ministry of the different mission teams that have come to Leon.

Today, I can look back and thank God for all that my family and I experienced. I can see how God delivered us and protected us in the midst of wars, natural disasters and family crisis.

Today, I am blessed to have a wonderful and beautiful wife, who has been supportive and who, on different occasions, has helped me see things from a different perspective. The love God has given me for her, has led me to be a different man, one who has a greater commitment to keep a close relationship with Him, to be a better and more loving husband and father. For me, it is here... at home with our family ... that we live and practice our calling from God. Our close relationship has led us to be able to work as a team, with our only purpose to serve our God and our fellow man, and, by doing this, to bring glory, honor and praise to our God.

After serving in our Baptist churches for the last seven years, as the national youth president in our Baptist Convention and as a board member for the last three years, I am excited about what God is doing and what He will do in the following years. Ruth shares in this joy of this work. We hope and pray we can continue to be a part of El Ayudante for many years to come, and we pray that God continues to bless this ministry that has led many to see the Love, Grace, Mercy and Hope that we have in God.