

July 18, 2020

POPSICLE IN THE FIRE

The evening of Monday, December 17, 2018 saw the second worst fire in the history of Manaus, a city of 2.1 million located in the heart of the northern Brazilian Amazon rain forest. About 600 houses in a very poor neighborhood were destroyed, leaving 2,500 people without shelter or personal belongings.

On the evening of the next day, local Adventist churches and ADRA had already served 300 meals and given 500 basic food baskets, clothes, bedding, shoes, and other necessities to those who had lost almost everything.

While many residents stood in line to receive help from the church or government for their basic needs, one Haitian popsicle seller thrilled the relief teams, said Fernando Anversa Borges, one of the ADRA workers. Even though most of Haitians living in Brazil struggle to survive as refugees after an earthquake ravaged their country in 2010, this man decided to sacrifice. Walking up the line of the survivors, he gave away all the popsicles remaining in his box, which were his only source of income—a small act with huge import. As a modern representative of the poor widow, this man was moved to help

others, giving all that God had placed in his hand.

APPEAL: Whether we live in poverty or affluence, do we need to experience some loss before being able to sympathize with those who are suffering? Or do we instead allow the Holy Spirit to change our heart, giving us empathy and true love? Are we ready to imitate Christ, sacrificing all, even our lives, for the redemption and well-being of others?

Of course, tithes and offerings do not represent all the popsicles in our box! But they are a token of our desire to help others, feeding with spiritual food those who have been ravaged by the fire of sin! As we partner with Him in this holy work, we may be sure that He will provide for us (Prov. 3:9, 10). There is nothing to fear!

PRAYER: Dear Lord, make us instruments of Your grace and love, using what You gave us to bring spiritual nourishment to those who need to know You through us!

