



January 5, 2009

Happy Holidays from Rivers of Mercy Children's Home! We hope that you all had a wonderful, blessed Christmas. December was a fun yet busy month and full of visitors! We would like to thank the many different groups of people who made this Christmas unlike any other for our children. These organizations spent months preparing special Christmas gifts for each of the children as well as collecting supplies and donations for the orphanage. The children received new clothing, shoes, toys and personal items. However, what fills us with joy most of all is the fact that our children truly understand that the best gift of all is God's gift to us, our Savior Jesus Christ. In the midst of the presents and holiday activities, we rejoiced over the birth of Jesus, the Son of God who came to save us from our sin.

We currently have fourteen children here at the orphanage...just last week three of our children were adopted by Mexican families and are no longer with us. We were sad to see them go because we had grown to love them dearly, but we hope and pray that they are with families who love them and that the children can be a witness for Christ to them. We are so accustomed now to having an average of twenty children, so we are looking forward to receiving at least five more soon! Full-time volunteers Mary from Albuquerque and Evan from Canada continue to work diligently here at the orphanage, and we are also thankful for short-term volunteers who have come down to help during the past couple of months. Unfortunately, Danny and Lily, the young couple who was living here and helping with the children in the evenings, had to return to Chihuahua. As a result, we are currently training two new evening workers.



Us girls LOVE to play "princesses"!!! (Me and Jaleesa, Evan's girlfriend, with the girls)



Martha teaching the Bible story of the angel telling Mary the good news

Emmis, Joel, and I were able to spend several days in Las Cruces with family for Thanksgiving, as well as a couple of days in Rio Rancho for Christmas. While we are gone, Martha, one of our employees, lives here at the orphanage with the children. We praise the Lord for her as she is very capable with the children and the ministry. Our son Joel is now a year old and is walking!!! The poor little guy has been catching all the kids' colds this season, so we are hoping he is building up his immunity. Emmis and I are doing well—it has been a challenge to train new evening workers in the absence of Danny and Lily, but we are hopeful that these new workers will soon be capable of managing all the children without Emmis or I needing to be there with them.

We ask that you please pray for God's protection for us in the midst of the violence and danger in

the city of Juarez. We believe that most of the violence is directed toward people involved in the drug business, but in our human nature it's difficult not to feel nervous or fearful. We will continue to do what God has called us to do and will trust in Him. We certainly understand people's fear, but we sure appreciate those of you who continue coming down to visit us and support us despite the danger in the city. Thank you to all of you for your love, prayers, encouragement, and support.

With love, Emmis, Kristin, & Joel

kristina85@gmail.com
<http://RiverOfMercy.org>



**Joel (1) and Isabel (2) playing together
in a cardboard "boat"**