



Wow, time passes so quickly! I didn't realize that I hadn't written a newsletter for quite a few months now until my dad reminded me! I do always update our blog on a regular basis, so please subscribe to have each new blog post emailed to you automatically—this is really the best way to keep up-to-date about what's happening in our ministry!

We've been so busy this year...where to begin?... Well, most of you probably know that ever since we started the orphanage, we felt God also calling us to start a private Christian school for our children so that they could receive an excellent, individualized education. As I shared in the last newsletter, the Lord brought several people into our path (among them, Jerry Quick and his ministry *Amigos en Cristo*,) who had the same vision as us, and God led us to work together to begin a private Christian kindergarten this fall. In the midst of much planning and prayer, we are excited to share with you that *Colegio Esperanza* (Hope Academy) will begin in August! This kindergarten will be for children at Rivers of Mercy, as well as for needy children in the community. Our mission statement is simple—to provide an excellent, Christ-centered education to the children of Anapra. We are committed to having a focus on greater individualized attention and support in academic learning, encouraging higher academic expectations for the children and their families, and targeting children in the community who are most disadvantaged and needy. If all goes well, we hope to possibly begin construction of a school building on the land behind the orphanage next year with the plan of expanding the kindergarten to the other grades of elementary school. This is a huge undertaking, but one that we feel God has called us to. In many ways we have seen how God has provided and orchestrated circumstances to enable this school project to happen. Please, please pray for us as we take a huge scary (but exciting!) step of obedience and begin the kindergarten class this fall. Pray that God would make His will clear to us, give us wisdom, guide us and direct us, and help us to be able to balance all of the responsibilities that He has entrusted to us.

We continue to give thanks to God for our two wonderful, full-time volunteers—Mary and Patty. They are both God-sent blessings to our ministry! Mary is always very busy making breakfast, doing laundry, cooking on the weekends, baking and decorating birthday cakes, and



Patty with Joel and Danny

doing favors of all sorts for me—baking snacks for our vacation Bible schools, preparing refreshments for our informational school meetings with parents, and much more. She is even making the wedding cake for Martha, a good friend of ours and long-time worker here at the orphanage who is getting married this weekend! Patty has fit in here perfectly and is such a valuable, necessary addition to our team. She has her own group of children that she does school with every afternoon and twice a week in the morning. She has the lower group of kids, so she is teaching them fundamental academic skills like how to write their name, numbers, letters, sounds, basic reading. She is a hard worker and is very dedicated. It is so neat to see how God brought her here and developed her into such an essential, helpful member of our team, making it possible for me to help with the teaching at the new kindergarten.

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16



Recent Photo of All of Us

During the past couple of months, we have had quite a turnover of children at the orphanage. Some that had been here for years have left, most of them because they were adopted or were able to return to their families. We have many new children, and as I write this we have a total of 34 kids—more than we've ever had before! It's exhausting and challenging, but honestly, we love what we do. It brings us so much joy and fulfillment to experience first-hand how the children change while they are here, as the genuine relationship that they develop with God truly begins to affect their outlook, attitudes, and lives.

I'd like to share a brief, personal story. About a week ago, we received an 11-year-old boy named Alvaro. He did not come to us through DIF (the social services), but had been recommended to us by them, because his mom absolutely was at her wit's end with him. He was very angry, aggressive, rebellious, didn't want to go to school, etc., and she needed help with him. At first, I was a little nervous about him being here, however, shortly after he arrived, I saw that he was just a kid who was deeply hurting and had no hope. In open, emotional conversations with me and Emmis, he cried and shared with us that his real mother hadn't wanted him at birth and had given him away to his aunt (she and her husband have raised Alvaro, and he calls them mom and dad). He said he saw his real mom for the first time several years ago, but she didn't even bother to turn and look at him. He has never known his real father. This is an open scar in his heart—knowing that he wasn't loved or wanted by his real parents. Then, two years ago, his father (stepfather), who was a police officer, was killed. Alvaro misses him so much. At one point he told us that he had wanted to be an assassin when he grew up in order to avenge the murder of his father, and at another point he told us that he just wanted to die in order to be with his dad. He was so depressed, so hopeless. Enter—the message of the love of God for him and the hope and purpose that God brings to life. This message changed him. The day after he arrived, Alvaro prayed with Emmis to receive Christ. He is now a changed boy. He knows that God loves Him and is His Father, the Father who will always be with Him. He understands that knowing God and living for Him is what gives life meaning and purpose. Alvaro will probably only be with us for another week or two, but a change has taken place in him that will make an *eternal* difference.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support. We couldn't do this without you! May the Lord bless you.

With love, Emmis & Kristin Robles



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<http://riverofmercy.org>
<http://juarezkids.blogspot.com>