



Greetings beloved brothers & sisters in Christ,

Happy Holidays! The joyous time of celebration of the birth of Jesus, our Savior, is here. We are so thankful for you. The Lord truly uses your prayers, your love, your support, and your encouraging words to strengthen and embolden us to do the challenging work that God has called us to.

Here at Rivers of Mercy, we currently have around 30 children, ranging in ages 2-11. As usual, these are children from the Mexican social services (DIF) that have been removed from their families due to neglect, abuse, or abandonment. We also have several children that are not from DIF but come from unstable, needy circumstances. Not only do we meet their physical needs, but we are also invested in working with them spiritually. Our children are taught about God directly from the Bible several times a week. Continually there are children hearing and understanding foundational Biblical truths, recognizing their sin and accepting Christ as their personal Savior, growing in their knowledge of Him, and learning to trust Him despite their difficult life circumstances. This is our ultimate purpose as a ministry, and we are living it and fulfilling it on a daily basis. We know that many of these children will be our hope, our joy, and the crown in which we will glory in the presence of the Lord when we stand before Him one day (1 Thess. 2:19). This makes it all worth it!

As you may remember, we explained in our last newsletter that we were going to be starting a private Christian kindergarten (for our children and children in the community), *Colegio Esperanza* this year. Well, *gracias a Dios*, it's in full-swing, and we're already nearing the end of the first half of the school year! To describe this endeavor in a few words, it's been good, but very challenging for me personally. It's been hard to find the balance between all of my responsibilities as a wife and mother, responsibilities at the orphanage, and responsibilities at the school. Just like at the orphanage, we teach Bible lessons several times a week at the kindergarten, and it's been exciting for us to see how God is working in these children's hearts and lives as they come to know Him. We also have a mandatory parent workshop once a month where we teach the parents different ways that they can work with their child at home to improve their learning, and where we also share the message of the gospel with them! Academically-speaking, the children are doing excellently. We (me and Raquel, one of our partners in the ministry and fellow teacher) have seen outstanding progress in the children, and their parents have as well. This truly is a very different education that we are offering at *Colegio Esperanza*, with much higher expectations and standards than what is customary here in Mexico.



**Celebrating Mexican Independence Day
at the Kindergarten**

We are currently analyzing and praying about whether the type of school that we currently have (one that includes children from the community) is the best option for our children from the orphanage. We have seen such a huge difference between our kids and the children from the community—our children truly have severe behavioral, emotional, and psychological problems, as well as learning difficulties and other disorders. We think that our children need even more one-on-one attention than they are currently receiving. Please pray that God would guide and direct us as we seek His will and listen to His voice regarding future plans for the school.

One of our regular challenges here at the orphanage has been finding reliable, committed help with the children. We are so thankful to God as we have seen how He has recently provided us with just the help we need. Martha continues to be an indispensable person here. Mary is a hard worker and does so much for us including the laundry, cooking, shopping, picking up of donations, and much more, and doesn't get near enough credit for it. Patty is an essential, valuable part of our team also. She is a great fit here! Patty has been a substitute teacher for me several times at the kindergarten, and I am learning a lot from her. In September God

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

brought us Minerva. She works in the morning and afternoon getting the kids ready for the day, teaching the Bible lesson, working with the toddlers, and more. And just before one of our evening workers, Bere, told us that she wouldn't be able to work after December, God brought us two great young women. Sisters Alejandra and Oralia joined us and they work during the evening shift picking the kids up from school, doing homework with them, and putting them down for the night.



Josue and Job

I ask that you especially pray for two of our boys here at the orphanage, 5-year-old identical twins Josue and Job. They were brought to us several months ago by their grandparents, along with their 2-year old brother Mario. These boys' mother had just abandoned them for at least the third time. The elderly grandparents work to make a living by walking along the bridge, selling popsicles and CD's to all of the people waiting in lines in their cars. They often took their three grandsons with them, where they spent all day in the scorching heat of the summer sun. We knew we **had** to receive them, and we did. However, Josue and Job have severe problems regarding their speech/communication, social interaction, behavior, ability to focus and retain information--possibly autism, but we're not sure. We don't have a diagnosis yet. We eventually opted to not send them to our kindergarten anymore and instead are teaching them one-on-one for a short time at the orphanage each day. We are currently seeking professional help for them. Please pray that God would give us patience with them and wisdom and guidance to find the right help for them.

We hope that you have a very joyous holiday as you celebrate the true reason for the season—Christ, our Savior, the fulfillment of God's promise!

With much love,
Emmis, Kristin, Joel, & Itzel Robles

P.S. We encourage you to visit our blog at <http://juarezkids.blogspot.com>. This is a great way to keep informed about what's going on here at Rivers of Mercy. You can even sign up to receive the blog automatically--every time I write a new update, it will be automatically emailed to you! Super easy!



Rivers of Mercy Children's Home (July 2012)

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6

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