



Greetings to all of our friends, family, and faithful supporters!

We hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas as you celebrated the birth of Jesus, our Savior, who is the fulfillment of God's promise. So much has happened at Rivers of Mercy within the last several months and we want to update you on what God has been doing.

Emmis and I and our son Joel were able to spend a couple of days before Christmas in Rio Rancho, NM, with my family, where we celebrated early with them and had a great time. We then headed



back to Juarez on Christmas Eve so that we could celebrate with our children at the orphanage on the 25th. This Christmas was truly special, as we had spent the couple of weeks beforehand acting out Bible lessons and doing activities with the children to reinforce in them the true reason for the celebration. We are so grateful to the many churches and other groups of people who so thoughtfully and generously provided many beautiful Christmas gifts for all of our children. They were truly blessed this Christmas to not only receive items that they needed, but also toys and things that they wished for!

Big news for those of you who haven't yet heard—Emmis and I are expecting a little baby girl the first week of June. We are so excited and thankful to God for this blessing, and we ask for your continued prayers of protection for me and the baby. About a month ago, I began experiencing signs of pre-term labor and was given medication and was told to rest as much as possible. It was obvious that I would not be able to get the rest I needed while living at the orphanage, so near the end of January, Joel and I came to Rio Rancho, NM to temporarily live with my parents. We've been here for about a month now, and we're happy to report that the baby and I are doing great. Here I have truly been able to rest and relax, which has caused the contractions to stop for the most part. My doctor is convinced that all of the hard work and stress of life at the orphanage is what caused the pre-term labor symptoms. If all continues to go well, Joel and I hope to move back to the orphanage mid-March. We also thank the Lord for the blessing of providing us with a larger personal vehicle – we got a great deal on a large SUV, which will not only serve to accommodate our growing family, but also will be extremely useful in transporting donated items to the orphanage!

Meanwhile, Emmis has remained at the orphanage, running the ministry and helping care for the children. Shortly before I had to unexpectedly come to Rio Rancho, the Lord answered a long-term prayer of ours for capable, responsible workers to work with the children during the evening shift at the orphanage. The Lord brought **Lili** and **Bere** into our path, two amazing young Christian women from Juarez whom we first met when they brought their church's youth group to the orphanage before Christmas to play and sing with our children. Both of these girls immediately felt a special connection to the place, and several weeks after Christmas, God worked things out so that we were able to hire them to work with the children in the evenings. They have been wonderful! Bere is a college graduate, while Lili is currently in her second year of college and actually had 2 years of experience working at a day-care center. We have made her the leader of the evening shift, and having these two girls allows Emmis and I and our family to rest or get away in the evenings if we

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." Proverbs 16:3

desire. Lili and Bere plan and lead activities, help the children with their homework, shower them, and much more.



The children are doing great. Every day they are taught from God’s Word and they grow to know and trust Him more. We also continue to teach them true, exciting stories about real-life missionaries with the purpose of inspiring them to be willing to obey God’s call to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. Finally, we continue teaching them school at the orphanage for a short period of time each day to supplement and enrich their education. We are thrilled with their academic advancements. Recently, some of our children have left the orphanage for various reasons—siblings **Danny** (9)

and **Michelle** (10) returned to their father; **Isabel** (4) was adopted; and **Azucena** (7) will soon be leaving through adoption. We never know when the children will be leaving, so when they do leave, it tends to be sudden and unexpected, and adjusting to their being gone is difficult. What ultimately reassures our saddened hearts is the knowledge that these children know and love Christ as their personal Savior.

We also thank the Lord for how He provided for our needs through the company Harman International, a U.S. corporation that has a plant in Juarez. They purchased and installed new gas heaters for all of the rooms inside the orphanage that were lacking one, keeping us much warmer this winter. They also donated funds for the construction of a fence around the piece of property behind the orphanage, and we are hoping that this project will be accomplished sometime this spring! We are excited to get a start on this land, which we know God has great plans for. Future plans for this property are to build a Christian school, install a commercial playground, and more. In light of the educational experiences our children have had, we consider the school to be our biggest need. As we work to fulfill the initial requirements for certification, we ask for your help in making this dream financially possible. **If you would like to make a donation specifically for the construction of the school, there is now a way to do so.** On your personal check made out to “Rivers of Mercy”, just note “school” on the memo line and send to P.O. Box 702558, Tulsa, OK 74170-2558. This money will be placed in a separate category that will be used for the school. Just as the Lord miraculously provided for the construction of the orphanage, we trust that He will do the same for the school.

To conclude, we want to share with you all how thankful we are for your prayers and support and we pray that the Lord will bless your lives greatly.

With love,
Emmis, Kristin, & Joel Robles

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