

July 2, 2007

Dear Friends and Family,

Sorry that this update letter is so late in coming...we are very busy, as you can imagine, and we are still learning how to use our time most efficiently! So much has happened since I wrote the last newsletter. As many of you already know, we now have children living here at the orphanage! It all was due to many answered prayers and several miracles that the Lord did for us. We are so thankful and so content to finally have children here.

To start from where I left off in the last newsletter, the dedication service for the children's home on April 28<sup>th</sup> was beautiful. It was great to have the board members and their families come and stay at the orphanage and help us prepare for the big day. We had a good turn-out of about 200 people, some from the United States and most from the church and community here in Juarez. Everyone was able to tour the orphanage, and during the program shared the story of how this whole project began. Ron Keith shared how he got involved in the project, Emmis and I sang, and Pastor Julian prayed a dedication prayer to commit this place and work to the Lord. Afterward, everyone enjoyed a delicious Mexican meal made by Beatriz, Emmis' mom.

In the following weeks we continued to work hard to prepare the orphanage for children to live in—painting, furnishing, and lots of legalities and paperwork. Every day we became more anxious to have children here--although this whole orphanage project has seemed to have happened very quickly to most everyone, it has been a lengthy, at times frustrating, process for Emmis and I, especially when it comes to legal issues and requirements. We had been hoping to be ready to begin receiving children in May; however, our hopes were crushed when we discovered early on in the month of May that in order to get certified by the Mexican government and begin receiving children from the Mexican social services, we needed to have a special permit from Mexico City. We were told that it would take a period of approx. two months in order for us to receive the permit. We were so disappointed and discouraged. Another two months of trying to arrange legal documents and continuing to long to begin carrying out our ultimate purpose of caring and loving for abused and neglected children. We prayed that God would give us patience, help us to trust Him, and that ultimately His will would be done. Well, God did have His own plans. A short time after we found out about needing to have this special permit, the director of the Mexican social services (DIF) came to meet us, talk with us, and to tour the orphanage. Before she left, she told us that she was so impressed with the facility and with how ready we were to receive children, that even though not all of our paperwork was complete, she was willing to send us kids. She asked us how soon we could receive them, and we received eight beautiful children the next week!!!



**Angel and Kristin**

All eight children were brought to us by the Mexican social services and came from an overcrowded government orphanage. These children were taken from their homes by the government for various reasons (abuse, neglect, etc.). We received five girls (Itzel, Yarisdi, Rosa, Lesli, and Karla) and three boys (Luis, Aaron, and Angel). Angel is our baby at three years old, while the others range between four and five years old. We were expecting to receive older children, but we have quickly grown to love this age since they are still so teachable and moldable. The children warmed up right away to Kali, Emmis, and I, and they are very comfortable and happy here at their new home. We have a daily schedule that we follow quite strictly, since we have discovered that these children need to have a routine. Our daily schedule includes meal time, outdoor play, crafts, Bible lessons, play time in the play room, nap time, bath time, etc. Our favorite part of the day is 11:00-12:30, when we teach them a Bible lesson, do a

craft or activity to go with the lesson, sing songs, and practice our Bible verse. The children are very attentive while we teach them about God, and they quickly learn the songs, verses, and are

able to answer questions about the Bible stories. Kali and I (Kristin) take turns teaching...Kali is a fabulous teacher, faithful friend, and trustworthy lifelong coworker, and we love her so much and are so thankful for her.

We spent the first four weeks giving the children the background that they needed in order to understand who God is and why they needed to be saved from their sin in order to live in heaven forever with Him someday. After they had been here with us for about one month, one day we acted out the story of Christ's death and resurrection, and we individually invited each child to ask Jesus to forgive his/her sins and to ask God to make him/her a part of His family. All eight children very sincerely asked forgiveness for their sins and invited Jesus to come into their hearts. They all know now that they are sons and daughters of God. After the children became a part of God's family, we celebrated by having a pizza party at Peter Piper Pizza. We told them that God was also having a party in heaven because he was so happy.

Summer has proved to be a very busy time for us, since we have many groups that come down to do mission trips here at the orphanage. In early June, we had a group from Faith Church in Rio Rancho visit. They primarily worked at Grace Church building a Sunday school room and doing VBS, but they were also able to help out here at the orphanage. Later in June, a large group of youth and adults from First Baptist Church of Rio Rancho visited. They worked very quickly, but with much care and excellence, and were able to accomplish quite a bit during their four days here, including cleaning and sealing floors, staining and varnishing bunk beds, etc. We are also expecting a youth group from Florida this Friday, July 6<sup>th</sup>. They will be staying with us for about a week and will probably continue with the sealing of the floors and with other work projects. Also, many thanks to Mesilla Park Community Church of Las Cruces, NM, for being so helpful in meeting our needs. Eric, Troy, and Walt, thank you for continuing to paint the orphanage and to make other improvements to the building. Jerry and Ratha, thank you for so generously providing everything we need for our kitchen. We'd also like to say a big thank-you to all our volunteer summer help—Jessica, Tara, Isaac, Dustin, Brittany, Amber, Sam, Mallory, and especially Nathan and Stefan, who will be here with us for the entire summer. May the Lord bless you for your willingness to help with whatever is needed, and for your patience with and love for the children!

Just yesterday, through a mix of circumstances, we ended up receiving another little girl here at the orphanage. Her name is Johana and she is 5 years old. Johana is very sweet and well-behaved and has already adapted to her new home.

*More big news*—we'll be receiving a baby here at the orphanage, but not until January ... Emmis and I are expecting our own baby! We are very excited! I am now about 12 weeks along in my pregnancy and I am feeling great. It has truly been a blessing from God in that I have not felt sick at all—no nauseousness, morning sickness, dizziness, etc. God knows I need to feel well in order to take care of my other nine children. 😊

We'd like to thank our board members, regular supporters, and all of our friends and family for always continuing to support us, encourage us, and pray for us. Knowing that you are behind us renews our strength and gives us great encouragement and confidence. We are so thankful to the Lord for what a blessing you are to us. We hope that you continue to be involved in this special ministry.

With love in Christ,

Emmis & Kristin Robles



Cooling off after dinner