

September 2007- Greetings once again from all of us here at Rivers of Mercy Children's Home in Juarez, Mexico. We'd love to give everyone an update on the children that are currently here. In May of this year we began with eight children, five girls and three boys. For a short period of time, our numbers increased to nine children, but we currently have five. In July, siblings Karla and Angel were able to return home to their parents, and Luis returned to his grandmother. Just about two weeks ago, Rosa returned to her mother. This was possible because the families met the requirements of DIF, the Mexican social services, in order to receive their children back. Of course this was very difficult for us, since we quickly grew to love these children as our own. We have heard from DIF that these children are doing well, but we still constantly think of them and pray for them.

Here at the orphanage we currently have four little girls—Itzel, Yari, Leslie, and Jhoana--and one boy—Aaron. All of them but Jhoana were part of our original eight, with Jhoana arriving in early July. They are all five years old and very excited about having started kindergarten this week at a local school. They are all in the same classroom and attend school from 2:00-5:00 pm. We have paid the initial materials fee and have had their uniforms made, but we will still need to pay the registration fee as well as other fees per child. My desire was to teach the children kindergarten here at the orphanage, but we have been told that we must be certified as a school first. Therefore, I plan to supplement the children's education as best as I can. I prepared a classroom here in the orphanage and began teaching them for a couple of hours here every morning. The kids are excited to have "two teachers" and they seem to really enjoy school.

The kids are each so funny and precious in their own way and we enjoy them so much. Yari is the leader of the pack. She is very bossy but the rest of the kids all seem to be okay with following her lead and doing whatever she says. She is also very obedient, intelligent, and responsible. When Aaron first arrived, he hardly said a word at all, due to his serious speech problems. However, within the past month he has begun to talk so much more! It is such a joy to hear him talking with the other children or singing to himself. Jhoana is our tomboy of all the girls. She and Aaron are great friends, spending most of their time playing together. She is currently into catching lizards and bugs outside. She is extremely sweet and well-behaved. Leslie is our handful. She is very hyperactive and easily distracted! Leslie loves to hang around the necks of visitors that she's just met and make lots of silly faces for their cameras. Itzel really enjoys spending individual time with the adults and helpers here. For the most part she is well-behaved and really likes to please us. Emmis and I are also excited about our own baby boy who is due on January 18th!

Our daily routine continues here as normal, with the exception of our added swimming time every afternoon, which is very refreshing (see picture). Every day the children receive a Bible lesson, pray, sing songs, do fun crafts and activities, play, etc. We have a new employee, Ibone, a friend of mine from the church here, who helps me teach the Bible lessons and take care of the children. She works with us Monday-Friday from 8 am-2 pm. Our other new employee is Idalia, a Christian woman and good friend from the church here, who works most evenings from 5 pm-9pm. Thank you so much to Kara, Amanda, and Julia for the time that you spent here in July and August helping out with the kids. Also, thank you to Gary and Lavere and their church small group for helping to provide for so many of our material needs.

The good news is that a couple of weeks ago, the director of DIF came and officially certified our orphanage. This means that we will soon be able to receive a small monthly stipend for the children that we have. We will also be able to continue to receive more abandoned and abused



New School Uniforms



In The New Classroom



Playing In The Pool

children from them in the future.

Other exciting news is that God has answered a long-term prayer request of ours! For several years we have been praying that God would make it possible for us to buy the large, vacant piece of land behind the orphanage. We know that this land will be vital in our plans to expand and grow this ministry for the glory of the Lord. The Lord provided two generous donors, who donated the money for the purchase of this land and we were able to buy it in early August. We are hopeful to someday build a Christian school on this land for the children here at the orphanage to attend.

A couple of notes on operational issues:

First, we presently have about half of the monthly financial support we will need to operate the children's home. We are establishing a program which will allow you to sponsor a specific child if you wish. The food and basic needs for each child is \$75 per month. Sponsors would receive a photo of your child and quarterly updates on your specific child along with periodic correspondence from him or her. Even if you are not interested in the full sponsorship of a specific child, any commitment (no matter how small or large) for regular monthly support would be put to good use. You can visit the "How to Help" section of our web site for information on where to send donations.

Also, as most of you know, the Rivers of Mercy Family is growing as Emmis and I are expecting a baby boy in January. That fact, coupled with our long term plan to receive more children, has us looking for more help for the children's home. Please let us know if you feel God calling you to help out in either a short term or long term position (contact me or Pete Day at 479-381-7147). Also, Please contact Pete Day if you are interested in working on a missions project or planning a mission trip to the children's home. We have regular intermittent needs for larger construction projects as well as minor maintenance tasks.

We would again like to thank you for your prayers and financial support. The Lord continues to work in a mighty way! We are encouraged and motivated knowing that this place and ministry are His will. He is doing big things here at the children's home and will continue to do great things here in the future!

Our prayer requests:

- 1) That what the children learn about God would truly impact their hearts and minds and therefore affect their behavior; that they would grow in their knowledge of and relationship with Christ.
- 2) That the Lord would strengthen our marriage and this ministry and continue to bless Rivers of Mercy Children's Home.

**With love in Christ,
Emmis & Kristin Robles**

