



December 2020

QUÉ PASA

What's Happening

A Publication of International Children's Care
P.O. Box 820610 Vancouver, WA 98682-0013

(360) 573-0429 • (800) 422-7729
VISITOURWEBSITE ForHisKids.org

YOU Can Provide HOPE

The Christmas Hope Matching Challenge Doubles Your Gift



Hope is the theme of this special Christmas edition of the *Que Pasa*, because right now, we face a difficult and uphill struggle.

Donations have not kept pace with expenses.

Reserve funds are depleted.

The health, safety and well-being of the children is threatened.

We are coming to YOU, our ICC family, with the hope that you will give generously to provide for the children this Christmas. And we've been given a wonderful "ray of hope" that you can experience as well! Dedicated family members have offered a special **Christmas Hope Matching Challenge** to ensure that the children receive the care they need.

From now until December 31, your "extra gift" can be matched to provide a double blessing for children like the newly arrived children in Mexico.

Just recently, these kids were without hope. But, now they've found a refuge at the El Oasis Children's Village, where they depend upon the love, prayers and financial support of ICC family members like you.

This matching challenge is for a limited time, so please, participate right away. And as you do, please pray for the children, many of whom have come from hopeless situations.

All the children on these first two pages are newly arrived at the El Oasis Children's Village in Mexico – 16 in all since June. Because El Oasis is equipped to take in sibling groups, the child protection authorities have



What a year this has been! COVID-19, firestorms, hurricanes, civil and political agitation, and ongoing uncertainty about what the future holds. **What the world needs now during this Christmas season is Hope. And where can hope be found?**

Rick Fleck, ICC president, recently shared that *"In the chaos, the suffering, the 'new normal' - whatever happens - our God is in control! 'God will be what holds things together, fast and firm during these times.' Isa 33:6"* Voice

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YOU Can Provide HOPE

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placed a priority on sending us multiple children from the same family.

All the children have sad stories of families that have experienced the tragedies so common in that part of

Mexico. Lives torn apart by poverty, substance abuse and promiscuity. The brokenness these children feel may be hidden beneath their guarded smiles, but it is real – and it will take time to heal.

What is important to them now is that they have a safe, nurturing environment. A home. A family. Food. A quality education. An opportunity to learn about Jesus. And thanks to ICC family members like you, they have these things. They have hope.

It was 23 years ago this Christmas that the first group of children arrived at the El Oasis campus. Wide-eyed, shy, eager to explore their new surroundings, full of hope that this place would be different – in a good way.

Recently we shared the story of Ricardo who was part of that “first family” of El Oasis. This summer he graduated with his degree

in dentistry, and his brother, Manuel, will also be graduating next year with the same degree. What a wonderful difference hope made in shaping the future of these brothers. And their hope was realized because of caring ICC family members like YOU!

And now, a new generation of children looks up to YOU. Just now, while you have this *Que Pasa* in your hand, please fill out the reply from and send it in with your gift or donate online at:

www.forthiskids.org.

**Thank you so very much
for your gift that instills
Hope this Christmas!**

A Message From Los Pinos Director

Thank you for Inspiring Hope During the Pandemic

This year 2020 started like any year at Hogar Los Pinos as well as anywhere in the world. The children and young people prepared to start their classes and the adults to attend to the operation of the Children's Village and caring for the kids. However, by the month of March we were all locked in the campus not knowing what to do.

The news of what the pandemic was causing in the world was terrible. We were afraid. We strengthened the measures to close the entrance gate so no strangers entered the campus, and the employees who left did so by taking extreme measures of biosecurity.

The borders of the world were closed, the planes were on the ground, the ships without moving, companies closing their work

and many people without jobs. It was not a safe environment to attend to almost 70 children in a children's village where it is totally dependent on donations.

Yes, there was fear for the future, and we clung to the only thing that could give us security at a time like this – God. The months went by and the funds needed for the operations kept coming in, and we realized that despite the fact that the world scenario was sad, we had everything we needed for each day.

October of this year, the children's village celebrated 41 years of serving the Guatemalan society, caring for children who, for various reasons, the authorities have requested support on their behalf. We decided to dedicate this anniversary to each of the

sponsors, donors and those who make it possible for the work of Hogar Los Pinos to continue and who collaborate in various ways.

We have much to thank each one of them, asking God that His blessings continue with them. Thank you so much for allowing the children to have a home.



Joel Carpio is the Director of Los Pinos Children's Village in Guatemala. Because of you, the children have hope for the future.

Hope is Making a Difference in the Lives of Patmos Children – Thanks to You!

“A picture is worth a thousand words.” You can see in the before and after pictures on this page what a difference you are making in the lives of these children at the Patmos Children’s Village in the DR Congo. They have Hope, because of YOU! Thank you!



Julien 2017



Julien 2020



Lucas 2017



Lucas 2020



Obi 2017



Obi 2020

Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the children.

Her Greatest Hope was Realized

Mother Reunites with Children

Four years ago, a young, single mother brought her four children to the Las Palmas Children's Village. She was desperate! Her children were very small – the youngest about one-year old. The story tumbled out.

The father of the children had abandoned them. He did not believe they were his. There was no possible way the mother could care for the children because she didn't have an education or a job or a family. You see, she was also an orphan. Not knowing what else to do, with a heavy heart she brought her children to Las Palmas with the hope that they would be well taken care of and she could get her life together.

The children were taken in and soon adapted to their new surroundings. Sponsors were assigned to the children and they began to thrive. As for the mother, after leaving the children at Las Palmas, she determined to prepare herself and do something with her life.

She hoped that maybe she would one day be able to take the children back to live with her. So, she went to school and finished her secondary education. Then she enrolled in and completed vocational training as a hair dresser.

With that skill, she was able to rent a place to live and start a

business right in her own home. As she made progress in improving her life, hope increased that one day she would be reunited with her children.

That day came recently. And it was a bitter-sweet day when she arrived at Las Palmas with the request to take her children home. Yes, as you can imagine, there was deep emotion on the part of the mother, the children and the house parents.

Being permanently reunited with their mother didn't happen immediately for the children. The court had to approve, and the Las Palmas director, Samilin, needed to visit the mother's home to evaluate the living conditions. Samilin was happy to find the home to be a suitable place for the children, complete with beds prepared for all the children and a new puppy dog. This she got for them because of their love for pets. She wanted the dog to be waiting for them when they arrived home.

When all arrangements were set, the mother came for the kids. It was a time of joy and sadness. The house mother cried for three days because of the deep bond she had established with the children.

This is the nature of the ICC model – deep bonds that positively effect the growth of the children.

And YOU, the ICC family of supporters make this possible!

Sharon Fleck, ICC Children's Services Director, shares her perspective on this. "We don't know how long we have children under our care, but we hope that we make a big enough impact on them that they will always have that in their minds later on. They have been introduced to Jesus, and we hope that the Holy Spirit will continue to work with them and that they won't forget what they have learned while they were with us even though they were little.

"I hope that the mother will realize that these children were well taken care of. She greatly appreciated the fact that we were able to help her through these difficult times when she couldn't care for her children. Who knows what influence that will have on her? We don't know what the end result will be. But hopefully her experience with us will be a positive one of knowing what true Christianity is. We don't know what the end of that story will be."

This Christmas, as that little family enjoys the holiday together, may we all remember that "hope realized" is one of the greatest treasures that God gives to us. Thank you for all you do to inspire and instill hope into the lives of "His Kids!"

Christmas Hope Matching Challenge

Your extra gift will be doubled from NOW until December 31.

When soliciting funds for a specific need, we occasionally receive more in donations than requested. In those instances when we do receive more money than solicited, those extra funds are placed in "Alcyon's Angel Fund." To protect the privacy of our children, ICC uses fictitious names in the Que Pasa when referring to minor children.

