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QUÉ PASA

What's Happening

A Publication of International Children's Care
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You Serve Those Who Serve the Children



Maniraguh, pictured in the middle, stands with her children. Thanks to the support of ICC family members like you, her own life has been blessed as she serves the children. Thank you!

Editor's note: Mothers and Fathers play a crucial role in the healthy development of ICC children. They are on the frontlines of this ministry tending to the physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs of the children. Your support enables the house parents to serve the children effectively. Not only do you help make transformations possible in the lives of children, you also contribute to the health and well-being of ICC house parents. Following is an edited excerpt from a thank you message recently received from Maniraguh, one of the house mothers in the DR Congo.

First and foremost, I greet you in the name of Jesus-Christ our Lord. Peace and grace to you from our heavenly Father. I am

writing to express my deepest gratitude for the profound impact you have had on my life. As a house mother at Patmos Children's Village, I have experienced a remarkable transformation, and it is all thanks to your unwavering support and compassion.

Twenty-one years ago, I lost my beloved husband, leaving me with four precious children and no means to care for them. Life was a relentless struggle, and I felt utterly helpless. Despite the challenges, I clung to my faith."

When I was recruited as a house mother at Patmos Children's Village, my life took an unexpected turn. Your decision to entrust me with this role not only provided me with employment but also gave me purpose. I became a caregiver, a nurturer, and a protector for the children under my care. Their laughter, their dreams, and their resilience filled my days with renewed hope.

Recently, I faced a severe health crisis. I was very sick, and the burden weighed heavily on my heart. I went to many hospitals, but I was told that my sickness had gone beyond recovery. I knew that God is the Father of orphans and widows. My faith convinced me that I will find recovery one day in the name of the

Lord. It was during this challenging period that you extended your kindness beyond the call of duty. You ensured that I received the necessary medical attention, even arranging for my operation in Goma.

Your generosity saved my life, and for that, I am forever grateful.

What makes my role as a house mother even more meaningful is that it aligns perfectly with my faith. Every day I witness the resilience and strength of these children, and I am reminded of God's grace.

Words cannot adequately express the depth of my gratitude. You have not only changed my life but also given hope to my children. They no longer face the bleak prospect of becoming street children. Instead, they thrive within the nurturing environment of Patmos Children's Village.

Thank you for being an instrument of transformation. Your kindness, empathy, and unwavering support have touched my soul. As I recover on campus, I carry your benevolence with me, knowing that I am part of something greater—a family bound by love and shared purpose. May God bless you abundantly for your selflessness and compassion.

Celebrating ICC Mothers and Fathers

By Kent Greve

Recently, I had the privilege of visiting the El Oasis Children's Village in Baja California, Mexico. It had been over 20 years since my first visit. That's a generation of children ago, and like our newsletter name indicates, I was eager to find out "que pasa" (what's happening)! Since you do so much for the children, I want to include you in some of the sweet experiences I had by sharing them with you.

Children's Praise and Worship

Our first full day was Sabbath. It was sunny, but cool. The children gathered at the campus church, and when our group entered, the ICC Mexico family was singing with gusto. How heartwarming and soul-stirring it was!

The various children's families sat together. As the program unfolded, it was amazing to see that each of the El Oasis families had prepared their own special parts to share. There were readings, group songs, and instrumental solos. It's a testament to the moms and dads and other staff of El Oasis that they were able to work with their children to prepare such a lovely service.



Mauro Reyes, newly appointed village director, has developed a band and a recorder ensemble for the children. These groups also participated in the worship service.



Thank you for helping to provide house fathers so young boys can see what it means to be a man of God.

It was also inspiring to see how attentive these young children were throughout the service that day. They were engaged actively as family units in worshiping and praising God. Their talents are being developed for sharing with others here on earth. And these are talents that can be used and expanded throughout eternity!

Someone to Look Up To

Juan and his wife, Eni, are house parents for ten boys aged 11 to 14. Can you imagine the amount of energy and potential mischief that resides in their home? I noticed during the worship service that there were several guitars that were laying on the platform. I was curious about what this could mean. On queue and at the appointed time, Juan and his boys walked up front and collected their guitars. Some of the boys sat in chairs while others stood. As Juan struck the first chord to the song, all the boys joined him. What a lovely song. What fascinating moments of unity and purpose.

But one thing captured my gaze as the song proceeded. Where were the boys looking? At their father, Juan! They watched the chords he was playing. They watched the

rhythm. They watched his mouth as he sang the lyrics of the song. They watched their father.

This is what YOU are helping to provide for ICC children. A father like Juan who is harnessing the energy and creativity of his boys and producing anthems of praise and beauty to the Heavenly Father. Juan is setting a positive example of what it means to be a man of God! He is giving his boys someone to look up to!

After the service, when Juan and his boys were outside, they played together again.



If you'd like to see and hear them, scan the QR code or type the following website link in your browser:

vimeo.com/935033476/29a2024ec3

Someone to Lean Upon

What Juan is doing for his boys is quite visible for all to see. Yet, there were also subtle things happening that may not have been noticeable to many. But even so, they were significant.

Celebrating ICC Mothers and Fathers

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One of the smaller boys was sitting next to Maria, his house mother. His Bible was opened on his lap. He wasn't just sitting by his house mother. He was leaning into her arm. I asked someone later about his story and why he was at El Oasis. I can only imagine how it would feel to have a family on the outside that has been torn apart by tragedy and suffering and the healthiest place is somewhere else. But for this little boy, he has learned from Maria what a mother's love is all about.

And he was leaning in. Not only that, with his Bible open on His lap, he was being directed to his Heavenly Father and His love, too. Seeing this reminded me of the old gospel hymn "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." He was leaning into the arm of his house mother while learning to lean on the arms of the Almighty.

This is another fitting example of what your support is providing for ICC's children. It gives these children the love of a mom and dad and knowledge of their Father in Heaven.



FACES BLURRED IN ONLINE VERSION TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THE CHILDREN

Your support enables little children to experience a mother's love and nurturing care. Thank you!

The Song Says It All

The rest of the weekend passed quickly: Sabbath afternoon walk and evening vespers, Sunday morning tour of the farm animals and an afternoon dedication for this year's vegetable crop followed by a lively soccer game. Monday morning came. It was almost time to leave. Shortly before departing, I witnessed yet again another example of the good things ICC parents are doing for the children. This time it was Clemente, father of the littlest boys and girls on campus. While his wife was busy inside the house, he had taken the little ones outside and was watching over them and interacting with them as they played. The two youngest ones are boys probably not more than two years old.

Clemente took them on a walk and as he did, I could hear him whistling "Jesus Loves Me." This song is probably sung (and whistled) to children in most every country that has heard the gospel.

The little boys may not know much about Jesus now, but be assured that Clemente is doing what he can to not only tell them about Jesus' love, but he is also demonstrating through his gentle actions what love is all about.



To use the QR code, open the built-in camera app on your phone. Point it at the QR code. Then tap the banner that appears on your device.

You can access a short video clip of this moment using the QR code or type the following website link in your browser:

vimeo.com/935041814/b7e37648dd

Celebrating Mothers and Fathers

There are special days set aside each year to celebrate mothers and fathers.

However, at ICC, it seems we should be celebrating the house mothers and house fathers every day. They are doing such an amazing ministry for the children. And even though you're not able to go and provide the nurturing care the children need, please know that there are loving mothers and fathers like Juan, Maria and Clemente who stand in your place.



Thank you for supporting Clemente as he lets his little ones know that Jesus loves them.

Thank you for supporting ICC's mothers and fathers as they care for "His kids!"



My Mom and Mrs. McDonald

By Rick Bowes



With each passing year it seems that memories of my mom don't fade away, they actually become more vivid.

She was born at the end of WWI, and when she was just 3 months old her father died. Though her mom, my grandmother, worked several jobs and tried her best, their life in rural Iowa was extremely hard. For years they lived together in dire poverty.

The one bright spot as my mom grew into her teenage years was the tender, loving care that she received from a local church member named Mrs. McDonald.

When it was mom's birthday, Mrs. McDonald would bake a cake. When mom tore a dress, Mrs. McDonald would make a new one.

When mom was struggling with teenage emotions, Mrs. McDonald was a listening ear. Life seemed to be getting better and better as mom progressed through her teenage years, but then came the day when she received the horrible news that Mrs. McDonald was moving away to Madison, Tennessee.

There was an incredibly sad farewell, and just after that, mom's life went downhill. She became depressed. She stopped going to church. She began hanging around with questionable friends. Everything went from bad to worse. Try as she might, my grandmother could do nothing to stop mom's downward slide.

Then one day a letter came from Mrs. McDonald saying that she had dreamed about mom. In her dream Mrs. McDonald had seen a swift flowing river filled with struggling teenagers trying to save themselves. **As the dream progressed Mrs. McDonald saw herself running alongside the river trying in vain to pull at least one of them to safety. She missed one. She missed another, but finally she**

was able to grasp onto the hair of a teenage girl. That teenage girl was my mom!

The letter ended with an invitation for my grandmother and mom to start a new life in Madison, Tennessee. A long story made short, they made the move, and thus began a positive transformation in my mom. In later years she met my dad, and as they say, "The rest is history."

As I thought about this story last week in the context of ICC, I realized that in a very real sense all of you are like Mrs. McDonald. You may not be able to bake a cake, sew a dress, or listen to the pain of a suffering child, but through your financial support, you are actually snatching orphan children out of raging rivers of abuse, neglect and abandonment.

Thank you for holding onto them with a firm grip.

Thank you for giving them a second chance at life.

Thank you for saying to these precious children, "I will never let you go."

The Children Need YOU!

Over the past several months, ICC villages have received many new children. They have been snatched from the raging river of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. They need your help as project budgets continue to outpace resources.

During the month of May, please support the children by giving an extra gift in recognition of your mom, or dad, or a special "Mrs. McDonald" in your life. Use the QR code or go to ForHisKids.org/donate

If you let us know who you are recognizing, we'll publish it in the July edition of the Que Pasa. Thank you!

