



# QUÉ PASA

What's Happening

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## Learning to Fly, Thanks to You!

### Nathalie's Testimony, part 2



Nathalie learned to put her faith in God at a young age during her time at the Las Palmas Village. Because of this, God has led her exceedingly far! Your donations are life changing! Thank you!

**Editor's Note: Last month, we shared the first part of Nathalie's testimony which included her arriving at Las Palmas at the request of her dying mother. Nathalie grew up within a loving home at Las Palmas and learned to be responsible at an early age. She also learned "that your achievements do not define your value as a person and much less the work you do. Your value comes from the simple fact of existing and being created by God." Here is the edited excerpt of the conclusion of Nathalie's testimony.**

**W**hen I completed my bachelor's degree in accounting and auditing, I remember entering a state of depression. I was ready to fly. I had never wanted to leave before.

But at that moment, I really wanted to leave, because during the 17 years I had lived at Las Palmas I had prepared myself for the moment when it would be my turn to go to work and be independent.

I spent those months fasting and praying every Wednesday. One day my tutor said to me, "Nathalie, would you like to go to Bávaro to manage a hardware store that my brother owns?"

I told her I would. It was the same thing I was asking God for— a job away from Las Palmas. I wanted to fly, to grow away from my comfort zone. I knew I was ready and that I had prepared myself for this.

For three years I worked at the hardware store, but I wanted something else. I looked for jobs at accounting firms and even turned one down because it was non-negotiable for me not to work on the Sabbath.

I am of Haitian nationality, but all my life I have lived in the Dominican Republic. This has caused an immigration problem for me even until today. This has

created many obstacles, but never a limit. Thank God I have always had a job, and I have never been unemployed.

One day I saw an announcement on Facebook that the General Directorate of Internal Taxes was recruiting personnel. I had done a specialty in taxation, and I always told myself that, even if I had an immigration issue, I would be so prepared that no company could reject me because of that situation.

I applied and, out of 3,500 applicants, was 1 of 100 that passed. After seven weeks of rigorous elimination tests, in the end, with prayer and talking, they let me in without having a Dominican Temporary Resident Identity Card.

I worked for four years in the General Directorate of Internal Taxes. Then I took a master's degree in forensic Auditing. I wanted to have this experience on my resume, so I applied to the Financial Analysis Unit (UAF) where I have worked for the past two years.

I still face problems regarding my

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# Q & A with ICC President, Rick Fleck



*Rick Fleck, ICC President*

**Q:** *What types of things do you see project administrators and house parents dealing with that ICC family members may not be aware of?*

**A:** It's likely that most ICC family members would not be aware of the scope or complexity of ICC administrators' dealings with governments. This includes the rules and constant inspections as part of their oversight. This often causes interference with the operation of the children's village because government officials aren't used to a project like ours. We're unique. The officials feel like they're dealing with an institution, but we're a home with house parents. They don't have many organizations like ours. But government officials try to apply rules that don't apply as well to the children's villages. It's complicated for ICC administrators to deal with this. For instance, government rules mandate a certain number of social workers and psychologists per specific number of children. That doesn't work well for our projects, because we have parents and homes. Our villages can operate with fewer social workers and psychologists. We're differ-

ent, but the officials try to make us conform to what institutions have to do.

For the house parents, I'm thinking about the balance between our facilities being a home and not an institution. Many times, the parents have their own children. They want to be the mommy and daddy that their own children need. They don't want their own children to feel like they've been abandoned. So they walk an interesting balance. I really admire those that are successful with this because somehow they are able to make everybody feel like they are part of the family. I think that's the way God treats us. For the ICC children, maybe they think they would be considered one of the outliers. But the child realizes that "No, this parent treats me like I'm actually one of the family. I know I'm not really, but they treat me like that."

I think that one of the most important roles of the parent is to give this "home" to the children. It's in the DNA of all of us. We want a home where we belong. We want to belong to something. That's where gangs come in. They say to vulnerable children, "You can belong to us. I'll be your daddy." Then it's bad, because you become loyal to whoever is giving you that home. This concept of giving orphan and vulnerable children a home is what ICC is all about.

**Q:** *In the past four decades since you started serving within this minis-*

*try, what has changed and what has remained the same when caring for orphan and vulnerable children?*

**A:** Recently, I was telling our director in Mexico that one of the things that is different now is the condition of the children who need intervention. He had been talking to the director of government child protection in one of the larger cities in the area. That director told our administrator, "The world has changed so much. I don't even have the kind of children to give you (that fit your criteria)." He went on to say that many parents of vulnerable children have been on hard drugs. The neurological damage done to the children is significantly worse than children with fetal alcohol syndrome.

He continued to elaborate by saying that many children are being damaged so much that they can't go to a normal place like an ICC facility. The children that are coming out of these situations are worse than what this director has experienced in the past. He said, "I don't know what we're going to do with them, because we can't just put them in places like yours. They need special care... We're being overwhelmed by this."

The children that came to us when ICC first started came because of civil unrest, civil war, and massacres that would happen in villages. It's a similar thing that has happened in the DR Congo more recently where children have come to us because of wars, conflict, and natural disas-



ters more than these other things. However, in other countries we're getting children because of drugs, crime, prostitution, and those kinds of things. Those create different kinds of children – totally different. If you receive a child because their parents were killed in a war, they're likely a very normal child who would have grown up to be an independent productive member of society. But when they come out of a background of drugs, alcohol and crime, they tend to be deeply affected by these things, and they often have a very difficult time in life. They need special individualized intervention.

The DR Congo is much like it was 40 years ago in Guatemala. The government in Congo treats us a lot like they treated us in Guatemala. They are just thankful that we are there.

One thing I mentioned previously that has changed for most

of our projects is that there is more government oversight. This can be good and bad. Sometimes they do things that create issues because it's like a one-size-fits-all mindset. On the other hand, it's good. For instance, they are requiring all caregivers to have first-aid training. They must be up-to-date, and every year they have to be recertified. That's really good, and I appreciate that. They have fire department inspections of our buildings at some of our projects. They tell us things that need to be done to ensure the safety of the children.

Technology and how we communicate with projects have changed. In the early days in order to communicate with our projects I had to use Ham radio. Most of the projects were remote and in places where they didn't have telephones. Then we went to using fax machines. We used that thermal paper with the faxes and

after a while we couldn't even read it. That was not a good solution, but we depended on it a lot. After fax we started using email. But here's something that hasn't changed. In some of these remote areas we still have a difficult time doing the kinds of communication that we should be doing that the rest of the world does. Sometimes their email doesn't work, or the Internet isn't working, or they don't have electricity. Communication is always a challenge.

Finally, something that hasn't changed: The children are innocent and have nothing to do with the problems that caused them to be orphaned or vulnerable. It's not their fault. They are totally dependent upon someone to do something for them. That hasn't changed over the years. It's just the same as it was. Children are still suffering. There's still a need for ICC and for donors who have a heart for children.

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immigration status because by law, a foreigner should not work for the Dominican state unless that person becomes a Dominican national. Thank God, He puts His grace in me and helps me to do my job well. My bosses are doing the impossible to keep me in the company without violating the law. They have requested that the Ministry of Public Administration extend my work period.

I will never stop thanking God and ICC for the opportunity to grow up in a family.

This is my story, and I am happy to be able to share it so that others can be encouraged and understand that no matter where you come from, the situations that surround you, if you place your life and trust in God, He opens doors that no one can close.

ICC is one of the doors that no one will be able to close to continue a special ministry to Dominican children.

Thank you, a thousand times. God bless ICC and all your team who work hard every day so that the children of the world find an

Oasis in their lives when they need it most.

**Note: When Nathalie and other alumni have the opportunity, they visit Las Palmas and give back to the current children. As a group they are demonstrating that there is greater pleasure in giving than in receiving.**

Natalie's story is featured in a special video presentation. To see it, use the following website link [vimeo.com/1011027019](https://vimeo.com/1011027019) or use this QR Code.

*To use the QR Code hover over the QR code with your smart phone's camera. A website address will appear at the bottom. Touch that website address, and it will launch the video viewer.*



# Memorials

**In Memory of Don K Bohlman**  
Jan Truttman

**In Memory of Eugene & Esther Krause**  
James & Karen Snyder

**In Memory of Rosemary Heck Lewis**  
David & Ruthie Brooks  
Francis Christian  
Bea Fordham  
Ken & Lynn Gaito  
Susan Jaecques  
Gail MacAlpine  
James & Sandy Steen  
Doug & Patricia Thrash  
Vernon Vavrina

**In Memory of Neva McAlister**  
John & Bev Walker

**In Memory of JoAnn McBroom**  
Connie Bruinsma  
Ralph & Gail Gearlds  
Marcia Longley  
Barry & Debi McBroom  
Rosalie Oliver  
Cheri Rifley  
Mattie Wren

**In Memory of Shawn Murphy**  
Fran Murphy

**In Memory of Dorothy Spry**  
Fred & Berniece Smith

**In Memory of John & Alta Szasz**  
Deborah Szasz

**In Memory of Harry/ Larry Walker**  
Roger Mikesell

**In Memory of Mel Wyles**  
Fred & Berniece Smith

**In Memory of Lillian Wysong**  
Nona Nowlin

**In Memory of Pamela York**  
Mary Jane Bruner  
Donna VanOrder

**In Honor of Leonard DeYoung**  
Beverly & Meredith Steele

**In Honor of Dedra Ottley's Birthday**  
Diane Hall  
LeCreasha Randall

**In Honor of Jean Parchment -  
Mother's Day & Birthday**  
Norville Parchment

**In Honor of Kevin J. Elvis Tobosaru**  
John & Merry Walker

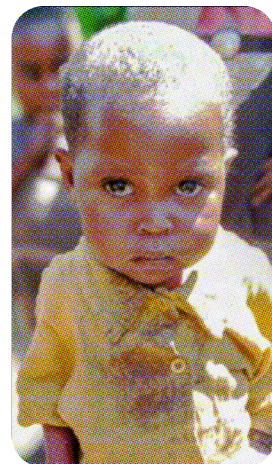
## WORLD ORPHAN DAY NOVEMBER 16, 2024



Be an ambassador for rescuing orphans and changing lives!

Consider having a special prayer for orphans at your church on November 16 and place a poster in your church. Scan the QR code to download the poster. You can also visit [ForHisKids.org/World-Orphan-Day-2024](https://ForHisKids.org/World-Orphan-Day-2024) to download.

This is also a great time to consider making a special donation to help save an orphan from poverty and neglect.



We're excited to let you know that we'll be having a special **Christmas Matching Challenge** again this year. Look for further details coming next month!



## Dates & Deadlines (for end-of-year giving)

- 📧 **Mail in donations:** *Postmarked by 12/31/2024*
- 📞 **Call in donations:** *Call before 3:00 pm PST on 12/31/2024*
- 🌐 **Online donations:** *received prior to midnight PST on 12/31/2024*