

# Emmanuel Ministries

March 3, 2009

Dear Friends –

We have heard from many of you asking how we are doing here in Juarez. Thank you so much for love and concern. We live in a violent city where the realities of drug cartels, corrupt officials, and extreme poverty have been a part of life for decades. The violence has escalated because of the federal government's "war on the drug cartels" and a "war" between two large, powerful rival drug cartels.

We want you to know that we are fine. The vast majority of the violence has occurred in other parts of Juarez, east and south of us. Our children are in peace, our staff is here every day and thankful for their work, the Lord is indeed with us. We use more caution when moving about our city but other than that we are going about our business.

We understand that some of you who have visited us in the past have decided not to come this year. Thank you for your words of encouragement and support as you tell us of your decision. Thank you that you have not abandoned us but continue to support us financially and through prayer. We need you! We are excited and thankful that our spring and summer still has friends scheduled to come be with us and our children. We ask you to join us in prayer for them as they plan their trips.

The reality is that the children of Juarez need places like Emmanuel Ministries more than ever. Because of the global economic crisis many of the factories in Juarez are reducing their work force. Some of our mothers have gone from making \$60 per week to making \$20 per week or less. There are still abandoned or neglected children all over our city. We are privileged to continue to be a place of hope and refuge to 100 of those children who live with us and an additional 60+ children who attend our school and ballet academy.



I want to share the story of one of our newest children, Angel. Angel is a 6 year old boy with two siblings. Both of his parents are in jail and he and his siblings are now wards of the state. Angel's brother, aged 9, is extremely violent and is in a facility that can handle his special needs. We have been told that Angel's 4 year old sister can join us once she is ready. She is very traumatized and is getting special therapy. Angel and his family have heard about the Lord. When he first came to us one of the staff members asked if he believed in God. He answered, "Yes, of course!" The staff member asked why and he said, "Because He sent His Son to die on the cross for me. And because He brought me to this place."

When Angel came to Emmanuel Children's Home a few weeks ago we planned to have him enter Isaac Newton Academy right away. We discovered that he has such a severe fungul infection in both of his feet that he could barely walk and could not put



on shoes. So, we got Angel the medical care he needed and he is on the mend. We hope to have him enter school in about a week but I need to tell you a fun story about him.

We have an internal soccer league at Emmanuel, 4 younger teams and 4 older teams. Angel is on the Toluca team and we thought he would still be on the bench this week. But, his team took the field and he was there with them, his tennis shoes on loosely tied, scooting along playing with the children. You could see him wince in pain every now and then but his desire to be out there with his teammates was so strong that we didn't have the heart to stop him!

How humbling it is to be an answer to the prayers of a young boy. We have a big responsibility to be the salt and the light of this world and we thank the Lord for your generous partnership with us. Together we can make a difference, one life at a time.

Some of you have asked how you can help us in this trying time for our city and our country:

1. We need your prayer for our president and all of us in Mexico.
2. Your continued financial support is so important. We have much to accomplish and we count on your partnership.
3. For those of you who were planning to come and don't think you should this year. Please consider doing a fundraiser for us and sending us the money for our work here.
4. I would love to go visit your church or organization or fellowship group to share our vision. Let me know if/when you would like me to visit you!

Wendy (915-253-6393) and I (915-269-2211) would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you might have. Feel free to call us any time.

We are praying for each of you for we know that many of you are experiencing difficult times yourselves. We want you to know that we believe that God is still on His throne and that is what we hold on to.

With a Grateful Heart,

Betel Lopez

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