

Merry Christmas



Child Rescue

CASA DE MI PADRE

Dear Family and Friends,

“For no word from God will ever fail.”

Luke 1: 38

December is one of the busiest times of the year for us at Casa De Mi Padre. Getting ready for our youth camp, pulling together our Christmas celebration for our children, and hosting a Christmas group from the states makes things move along at a rapid pace. There are so many wonderful things I love about the holiday season. I love the beautiful colors of the season, the brilliant lighting, the unique music, and the special traditions. I also love that it is a time of giving. It is so fun to be able to bless the children. I love to see their excitement and anticipation waiting for the celebration that is to come. Most of our children come from extremely poor backgrounds. They don't even know what a Christmas is. That makes it especially fun.

But the part I love the most is the recognition and celebration of the fantastic love story ever told. The coming of the Savior of the world. The King of Heaven, who came in the absolute humblest of circumstances to meet my deepest need. The thought that he would come for me, a broken child hopelessly separated from the heart of God and as lost as lost could be. And the way he came. Announced by long forgotten echo's of the prophets, with visions and dreams, angels speaking and singing, stars dancing in the night sky. The absolute greatest gift God could ever have given to mankind; Jesus, the Savior of the world, and Prince of Peace! Truly a matchless story. It is our desire to help our children to connect or attach the beauty, excitement, and the giving and receiving of Christmas with the love that God demonstrated in sending Jesus, his one and only son into this dark, cold world to rescue us. This is what Christmas is really all about.

For the children of Guatemala it is their vacation season. Their school year goes from the middle of January to the middle of October. We fill this time with work days, outings, youth camps, vacation Bible school, and our Christmas Celebration. If you don't keep kids busy they tend to get bored. That's not good for a large group of children. It is a lot to plan and provide for, but worth it all.

This year's Super Camp was a blast. It was our 14th year of operation. We specialize in lots of Jesus and lots of fun. Each day the kids receive over six hours of some kind of Bible instruction through devotions, Bible classes, Scripture reading, and memorization, and finally inspirational worship and preaching of God's Word. We believe God's word does His work.

Another wonderful part of putting camp together is all the planning and execution that is done by our grown up kids. It is personally a joy for me to have this time of interaction with them. We begin with camp planning and assigning of tasks. Everybody has a job. When camp comes, our grown kids are there to make it happen. We even vote one of them to be Camp Director. My job is to pay the bills and support staff. I want them to be able to continue to have camp because it was so impactful in their lives as children, even when I am gone. It is a lot of fun for me to be able to serve with them in this way.

Our hope is that over the three and a half days at camp, kids make life-changing decisions. And some of them will come to know Christ for the very first time. We want the kids to find the hope and healing found only in Christ. This is our hope. On the opening night of camp our speaker, Richie, a young man who grew up in our Christian school, gave the message. It was the clear gospel and the understanding that "you must choose." At the beginning of the invitation, no one responded. As the plea continued to respond to whatever spiritual need God was calling for the student to address, one young man came and stood alone at the front. Soon many others came to pray.

After a few minutes of prayer, the children were encouraged to go with their team leaders to talk about what was on their hearts. Peter, one of our oldest grown kids, met the first young man who responded and prayed for him. Then Peter went back to spend some time with the young man. Peter asked him what was on his heart. The young man began to share about how bad his family life was. The boy admitted to cutting himself and hitting himself as a way of releasing the emotional pain and frustration in his heart. Sometimes before one can minister to ones spiritual needs you have to meet them where they are emotionally. Peter listened intently and gave words of encouragement that God would meet his need. Peter prayed for him.



Shane Sanderson
Executive Director
Santa Cruz del Quiche Guatemala

The young man also told Peter, "Being at camp makes me feel much better." Thank the Lord some of the children of Casa De Mi Padre also responded to God's invitation. Four of our new children, Willian and Rudy, along with Elda and Yaser responded in prayer and spent time with their team leaders as well. These precious moments make all the work worth it. And to see our adult kids serving the Lord ministering was super sweet to me. We entrust the decisions that were made and place them into the Lord's hands. Thank you to everyone who helped sponsor the children so they could attend camp. It was worth it.

Our next big event during this special week was the Christmas Celebration for our kids celebrated together with the mission team. Oh, how the kids were excited! This year I decided to start a new tradition. I had purchased some jingle bells on sale at Hobby Lobby and planned to do an early morning wake up for the kids. So the morning of our celebration I showed up at Casa De Mi Padre with my Christmas hat and new jingle bells. I quietly walked from room to room jingling the bells ever-so-gently. Slowly, one by one the kids began to stir. The sleepy look on the faces all turned to big smiles when they saw it was me. All I said was, "It's Christmas!" It was fun. The team worked all morning to get all of the presents organized and the stockings stuffed. In the afternoon the big kids went into high gear. They helped me make two loads with my pickup to bring all the bikes that were purchased for the new children to Casa De Mi Padre. Then the big kids set up dinner for the 55 gathering for our Christmas meal.

We had a big ham dinner with pecan and chocolate pie, included. It was wonderful. After dinner we had the first part of the children's Christmas program. Cole was the host and Sarah played the keyboard while the children sang. It was beautiful! Next it was time for the giving of gifts. We had the kids sit in groups and had the mission team members bring out gifts to each child. The smiles are wonderful. The children can not contain their joy. But I think the team members had more fun than the kids. It is a joyous occasion. We want to thank everyone who gave money and bought the gifts. We are thankful to our missions team who helped so much at camp and transported all the gifts. Thank you all!

The Construction Front: We are and in full- blast mode on phase 1 to build the foundation for the Common House. We have purchased over 20 tons of rebar. The two teams of contractors have been busy forming the rebar and assembling it into the footing and column pieces. We have mountains of formed rebar and tied steel. We will need it all. I have been running the skid steer in the evenings, moving tons of extra dirt from the sight to much needed places on other areas of the land. Next week the men will begin placing the tied rebar structures in the ground. Then comes the forms and concrete. We still need \$25000. to be able to finish this part of the project. Please pray with us to see this need met. If you would desire to make a year end gift to help us it would be in answer to our prayers. You can go online at givetocasa.com and click on the Child Rescue-Construction button and donate. If you prefer a check, write it to Child Rescue and put "Construction" in the memo line. Please send your check to: 11201 Parallel Parkway, Kansas City, KS 66109.

Christmas present for Papa Shane: Yes, even Papa Shane has a wish list. This year Papa Shane is humbly asking for four new tires for his truck. Each tire costs \$220.00. I know this is not a glitzy Christmas gift, but they are much needed. If you would like to help purchase a whole tire or just half of one go online at givetocasa.com and click on the Child Rescue Special Projects button and donate to help with this need. If you prefer a check, write it to Child Rescue and put tires in the memo line. Send your donation by mail to: 11201 Parallel Parkway, Kansas City, KS 66109. Thank you!

Christmas is very special time for me and for the children of Casa De Mi Padre. Our hope is that in everything we do we are able to point our children to Christ. As we were sitting down to have our big Christmas dinner with all of the children, the 12 grown kids who had come home, and our wonderful mission team, I asked Virginia to pray for the meal and the evening festivities. I also told the children, "This special time in our home, the gifts you will receive are all provided to you because God loves you so much. That's what the Christmas story is all about, God so loved the world he gave us the gift of Jesus."

Our hearts are overflowing with gratitude and love for all God has done. Sometimes I find myself dwelling on what is needed monthly to care for the children or the gigantic financial needs for the construction and it seems overwhelming. The only way I know we can keep going, the only hope we have of meeting all the needs and continuing the construction of our future home is to remember it is God who called me to do all these things. And I know if he called me, I may fail, but his words will never fail. That's what Gabriel said, "For no word from God will ever fail."

Because His word is sure,



Joseph Shane Sanderson

*I pray you have
a blessed Christmas and
a joyous New Year!*