

Merry Christmas



Child Rescue

CASA DE MI PADRE

Dear Family and Friends,

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the alter of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah: your prayer has been heard..."

Luke 1:11-19a

"So what did God say to you at camp?" "Many things." "What was the one thing he said to you?" "He is calling me to surrender my life to Him and respond like Samuel and say "Here I am."

I have a few regrets in my life. Really not that many. But one has definitely bothered me. I made the mistake. but I didn't know at the time I was making it. I was asked to help. So I did. Ten years ago we were in our second year of operation at Casa De Mi Padre. We had our second married couple serving with us. They had done well and the kids really loved Roberto. He was easy going and had a great desire to always help with whatever I needed. He could do about anything. He was young enough to play soccer with the kids. And he was a great player. It was a great way for him to connect with the kids.

I believe at the end of Roberto's second year, he came to me and told me his father had given him a piece of land so he could build a house on it. It sounded good to me. However, in time his father began to put pressure on Roberto to get a house built on the land or he was going to let someone else live on the property. Roberto thought he was going to lose the land his father had promised him.

So in time Roberto came to me with a plan. He wanted me to help him get a visa to travel to the U.S. so he could make some money. Roberto planned to come back and forth until he had enough money to start building a house. He said he wanted to do it for his family. I didn't want him to leave, but it seemed like a reasonable request. So I helped him. Well that is not the way it worked out. Roberto left and I believe he came back once and then went back. That was nine years ago. It broke my heart when he left his two kids and his wife who was at that time pregnant with their third child.

It was even more difficult for me because I attended the to the same church where Roberto's kids went. Every week I would see his two children and knew I had a hand in their father not being with them. They would always seek me out every Sunday for a hug. And every time I hugged them I wondered if they knew I was part of the reason they were growing up without their father. I know it was his choice and he probably would have found another way, but it still bothered me. After Roberto left, the weeks turned into months and the months turned to years. He called me a couple of times from the States. Every time he called I told him he needed to come home, his kids needed him. They were growing up without him. Every Sunday I was reminded and it never got better. I believe his oldest son is 15 years old now and his sister is 14. The baby boy is now 9 years old. Heartbreaking to me. I have prayed many times for the Lord to do whatever he had to do to get him home.

The last couple of months I have been getting ready for our youth camp. It is a huge job and responsibility. I feel the need to try and attract as many kids as possible who live in our area. We must meet all their physical needs, give them a good time, good ministry, and pray no one gets hurt. Our ministry has to pay for almost all of it. Imagine entertaining, bedding and feeding 65 youth and adults for three days. A lot to get ready for. But, thankfully our adult children, who have transitioned from Casa De Mi Padre, come back to help me. This year they helped in the planning, preparation, and execution to provide a quality Christian camping experience for our kids and the other kids from our area. Our adult kids took so much of the burden off of my shoulders and were so helpful. It makes me believe they could make camp happen without me.

A day and a half after camp we also celebrate the kids Christmas. This includes a huge Christmas dinner, a program, and the giving of gifts. I worry about that as well. Trusting the Lord to provide for the Casa De Mi Padre kids Christmas is another act of faith. I also try to get our adult kids who are connected with the ministry and help with camp a couple of gifts. It is a way to say thank you. So all together the Lord has to provide Christmas for 30 kids in all. It is a big production. We also invite different people in our community who provide some kind of help to the ministry. Thank God the Lord has bigger shoulders than mine.

Every year as it comes to crunch time, I feel the burden and think, "I am not doing this again. I just don't know if it is worth it." It happens every year. I don't think we are going to make it. And this year those same thoughts and feelings tried to over take me. Even with all the help from our adult kids and Cole, my right-hand man, I still grapple with the burden wondering will it be worth all the effort and expense.



Shane Sanderson
Executive Director
Santa Cruz del Quiche Guatemala

Camp finally arrived and our grown children and volunteer staff came out in force. We had 23 helpers in total. This year camp included Bible classes, Bible Quizzing, and Bible centered messages each night. We also have various sports: B-B gun shooting range, games throughout the day and full camp competitions every afternoon. They include Mission Impossible, Mudd Wrestling, Slip-n-Slide, Tug of War and other games. Our adult children helped make everything happen. I was so proud of them all. And of course our volunteers, Juan Carlos, Rene, Loli, and the ladies in the kitchen were a blessing to all. Another huge blessing this year, was one of our very own kids who grew up at Casa De Mi Padre. He earned his theological degree as well as a psychology degree through our continuing education program and he was our camp speaker this year. What a joy! Peter did a great job giving a powerful Gospel message that connected with the kids. But God had even more blessings in store to remind me that all the planning, funding, and work would be worth it all.

The day finally arrived for camp. That morning I was told that a couple of the kids would not be coming today, but would be coming the next day. The reason was they were going to the capital to supposedly pick up their father. Honestly, I wasn't sure I believed it. It was Roberto's kids. Nine years had passed since he was in Guatemala.

Monday was wonderful. As Tuesday morning dawned we had lots of surprises in store for the kids. After morning devotion, I was in front of the chapel and looked up and as big as life, there was Roberto and Carlos and Nicole in tow. I couldn't believe my eyes! I gave him a big hug and welcomed him to Guatemala. I told him it was about time and he responded "I know." It was so beautiful to see him with his kids under his arms. So beautiful! We talked a while and he asked if he could spend time at the camp with his kids. Of course I said, "Absolutely, yes!"

We had a wonderful day. Again I spoke with Roberto. I was honest with him about how responsible I had felt about his kids losing him all those years. He began to cry and said he was sorry. He told me he had asked his son to forgive him for being gone so long. Roberto said he hoped Carlos could forgive him. I said, "Oh, you don't have to worry about that. The heart of a child can forgive completely. Your children have waited for you because they love you. It will be ok."

That evening at the rally Peter preached a beautiful message. Peter mentioned Samuel answering God's call to say, "Here I am." Peter gave the advice you need to be ready when God calls, you better have your answer ready. At the end of Peter's message Rene, our long time ministry friend, stepped up and gave the invitation. He challenged the kids to surrender their lives to the Lord saying, "Here I am." Many responded to go and pray. As Rene continued to invite others, I saw Roberto speaking and praying over his daughter and I thought about all those years I prayed he would come home and be with his children. God heard my prayer. And the spirit said, "It is worth it." That moment, watching him pour out his heart to the Lord for his daughter, it is all worth it. All worth it!

When we got home, I asked little Yaser what God had said to him. He responded, "many things." I said, "Give me just one." He responded and said, "He is calling me to surrender my life to Him and respond like Samuel and say, Here I am." It was worth it all. Even better yet, we had three kids pray to receive Christ through camp! Worth it all!

Our Christmas Celebration was wonderful. Thank you to everyone who gave and purchased gifts for the kids. We even had the special honor of the mayor of Quiche come to the Christmas celebration. It was all worth it.


Upcoming Needs: For our transitional adult kids we will need two additional computers for them to do their online classes. Please pray for this need and if anyone wants to help let me know. A good internet capable computer is \$1100.

Construction needs: We are about four and a half months from having Casita no. 2 done and about \$50000. Please pray for this big need. It does seem overwhelming at times but I know the Lord is able.

Administrative Item: Please remember as of January 1 Child Rescue will have a new address. We are working out the details.

January 1, 2023 Child Rescue
11201 Parallel Parkway
Kansas City, KS 66109

As the angel told Zechariah, "Your prayers have been heard." I pray this Christmas season you will know that the Lord heard your prayers in a very special way,


Joseph Shane Sanderson

*Have a joyous
and blessed very
Merry Christmas*