



Gifts That Make Children Smile

The end of December is the end of the year, but for children in Mexico it is the beginning of celebrating and receiving the toys that you have provided for them. It is also a time to share and enjoy the biggest gift ever given to human kind: Jesus Christ!

I had the opportunity to pick up some donations of toys, blankets and socks from some of the local churches in the San Diego area. I really enjoyed meeting with brothers and sisters in Christ, all with such a big heart to provide a smile on the faces of children in Mexico.

During Christmas time people in Mexico celebrated Posadas, which is the portrayal of the Christmas story when Joseph and Mary couldn't find a place to stay the night in the crowded city and they were offered only a stable for Our Savior to be born in, a manger for his bed.



At Lirios de los Valles (Lily of the Valley) Church, a boy swings at the piñata during the Posada.

Something very special happened during this time, some of those children and parents approached me and said "Please tell those who sent these gifts 'Thank you!' for remembering us".

While visiting one of the local communities in Tijuana in January, some of the children gave me thank you notes for you and the congregations and groups that support LBCM.



Handmade thank you cards from some children. They even made envelopes out of notebook paper.

Shoe box gifts were given by **St Paul Lutheran School** in San Diego. The boxes contain small gifts, toys, school supplies and candies.



Shoe box gifts always bring many smiles.

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I was able to attend almost all of the events where your gifts were distributed in churches and at the youth activities. More than 800 toys were given out in the local communities in Mexico, both in Baja California and Sonora states. The four churches in San Luis Rio Colorado also send you thanks and they wish you blessings in 2011.



*Job Jimenez and children from **San Mateo (St Matthew) Lutheran Church** in San Luis.*

In January, the first house of 2011 was built in Maclovio Rojas area of Tijuana, thanks to a donation from **Trinity Lutheran Church** from Jefferson, Iowa.

Fourteen volunteers participated in building this house, it is now the home of Guadalupe, Jose and their two children. The volunteers who helped were from **Iglesia Luterana San Pablo (St Paul Lutheran Church)**, including Pastor Abdiel and his wife, Alicia. The volunteers were led by Carmelo, our project coordinator in Tijuana.



Alica, on the left and Pastor Abdiel, on the right, with Guadalupe, Jose and their 2 children.

In early February, another house was built by volunteers, again using the donation from Trinity Lutheran. The house was built in San Luis Rio Colorado. Josafat, a lay leader, and his family were

blessed to receive the second house of the year. Members of the churches in the San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora state, as well as volunteers from the Tijuana churches helped to build this house.



Volunteers from both San Luis and Tijuana after the blessing of the new home for Josefat.

Josafat and his family have been attending and helping with preaching, teaching and evangelizing at **San Mateo (St Matthew)** and **Independencia (Independence)** churches in San Luis Rio Colorado.

We have been busy delivering beans, rice and ramen soup cups to Tijuana and San Luis. We are still able to only take a small amount of donations across the border at one time, but every little bit helps. We are in the process of trying to get a permit to cross larger amounts of items. Pray to God that He would open doors for this.



Beans are re-packaged into small plastic bags to be distributed during a Bible study in Colonia Independencia.

There are still a few spots available for mission teams to come during the summer to build or do a work project. If this is something your church or group would be interested in, just give me a call at the LBCM office. —R.C.

Legna's Corner

By Legna L

For an adolescent in the city of Tijuana, there are many obstacles which can prevent them from attending school. There can be a lack of money for the high cost of maintaining a child in school. There can be a lack of encouragement to continue in their education. Despite the difficulties, there are children in Tijuana who want to attend school and they make a great effort to succeed.

One of these motivated adolescents is involved in the Angel Scholarship Program. Keren P., pictured below, is a young girl who is only 12-years old, yet she has demonstrated a commitment to continue her education. Keren gets up at 5:00 a.m. every morning to arrive on time to junior high school. She takes a public bus which is called 'La Burra' – the donkey, because it is slower and less expensive than the other buses. The bus takes her to a town called Tecate which is located on the outskirts of Tijuana. When Keren started junior high, her parents couldn't take her to school anymore, so she learned quickly to take 'La Burra' by herself.



Another aspect that is very interesting about Keren's commitment to study is that she is very careful to take care of her uniform. Every teen in junior high school in Tijuana needs to wear a special uniform to school. These uniforms are very expensive, costing from \$50 to \$80 dollars each, not including shoes and socks. Keren is aware of this and she is careful to take her uniform off when she gets home from school and having only one uniform, get it ready for the next day.

Through the years, the Angel Scholarship Program has been supporting young people just like Keren, who have been motivated to continue with

their studies but often do not have the resources needed to pursue their dreams. We are happy that the scholarship program can continue to allow teens to study and learn, but also to get to know Our Father in heaven and how He blesses us in many ways.

Foster Home for Girls in Tijuana

It is sad to see hundred of children living in the government shelters in Tijuana. Many are taken away from their families because of drug use by their parents and others because they are neglected or abused. After they are taken from their families and their cases are brought before the government, which can take weeks or months, they are usually transferred to one of the orphanages/foster homes in the city.

There is an increasing need of places that will take care of these children in these unfortunate situations. Many orphanages/foster homes in Baja California are over capacity, making it difficult to give all of these children an appropriate, caring home environment.

Seeing the increased need and the love God has placed in our hearts for children and teens, a foundation has been created to start a foster home especially for girls in Tijuana. The home will take 10 girls, ranging in age from 4- to 17-years old. This will make it possible to give these girls a quality, Christian living environment. This will also allow opportunities to open similar homes in the future, to give not just a roof and a bed to a child, but also the love of God to each individual child.

This project has been in the making for several years and is now coming to fruition. Our hope at LBCM is that with the help of people that are concerned with the well being of children which live in extreme poverty, we can make this foster home a true reality and give hope for the future for girls in need. It is very important to create a sense of family for these girls and we want you to be involved, to be part of our family, to give girls at risk the one true love that only comes from Christ. There is a lot of work to be done, from demolition and cleaning of the site, lots of paperwork and registrations, actual building of the home, plus raising the funds to buy the land and building materials as well as the day to day costs of running a foster home. Please keep this project in your prayers. Watch for more information about this foster home as it continues to evolve.

LBCM Annual Meeting and Dinner

Saturday, March 5, 2011 - 3:00 P.M.

**Calvary Lutheran Church
3060 54th St San Diego CA**

**Please RSVP to 619-286-2445
or lbcmsd@gmail.com**

NEEDS

Rice
Instant Ramen Soup Cups
Hygiene Supplies
A Cargo Van or Pick up for Carmelo -
LBCM project coordinator

Follow us on Facebook at:
lbcfacebook@gmail.com

Check out our website:
lutheranborderconcernsministry.org

Thrivent Choice Dollars

LBCM is a qualifying organization for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Choice Dollars Program. Choice Dollars lets Thrivent members help choose where Thrivent distributes its charitable funds. For more information go to www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice .

The LUTHERAN BORDER CONCERNS MINISTRY (formerly the Lutheran Baja California Mission) is independent, inter-Lutheran, non-profit incorporated in California in 1967 to supplement ongoing Lutheran efforts with Latin Americans on both sides of the border. All programs are supported solely through voluntary contributions. Initially the work centered in two of the fastest growing and economically depressed areas in the Americas, in the border cities of Tijuana and Mexicali, today we include San Luis Rio Colorado. LBCM continues to provide religious Spanish literature to all areas we are currently working in. ALL GIFTS TO LBCM ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. With a dollar or more contribution, one becomes an LBCM member.