

Reaping the harvest

August 2017

In July, we were blessed and delighted to celebrate our 50th anniversary. A few hundred friends joined us on a warm Saturday evening, under lovely, spreading trees. Lights twinkled with the sun setting as we rejoiced with music, food, stories, laughter and tears.



Juan José and brothers Pulé and Armando (left to right). Pulé and Armando both live in town, and Juan José lives in Ensenada

Several pastors, both from Mexico and the U.S., were present to honor founder Ramon Espinoza's contribution to the orphanage and the churches he has pastored.

Also in attendance were many supporters from the U.S., some new friends, and others who have been involved for many decades.

Laughter and reminiscing

We had a wonderful array of guests. Many orphanage alumni came with their own families, some of their children now adults. Former orphanage staff also attended. Many had been single mothers; for them and their children, the orphanage was a safe refuge, a home and a livelihood, often during some of the most challenging times of their lives.



The three grew up as friends in our home and enjoyed remembering their younger days with us (same order as above)

Seeing wonders

Seeing the fruit of loving children for so many years was powerful—both for those long involved in the ministry and for those who are new to El Sauzal. It was a night of reaping the harvest.

President Josue Espinoza shared, "When this home started here in San Antonio, through their [Ramon and Magdalena's] faith we were able to see wonders, and many of the kids here now agree with me."

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Will you help us to continue to do good for our wounded children? See more inside! ♦

On This Issue

Reaping the harvest	Page 1
Magical memories from the 50th	Page 2-3
"We needed this place"	Page 4
New school year, excited students	Page 5
Construction update: Dramatic changes	Page 6-7
Revealing an updated logo	Page 8

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50th Anniversary's



Josue with Anita Castagnola. Anita's parents, Joe and Rose, helped establish the orphanage, and worked closely with Ramon and Magdalena for over 8 years.



"God's using the orphanage and the Espinoza family to impact two generations of families in Ashland, Oregon, all to the glory of God," said Pastor Dwayne Robinson (center), with wife Sheri and Foundation board member Roger Christianson. Their church has supported our home for over 30 years.



Everardo and Ruffito, whose mom Erika runs the orphanage, enjoyed the fun and festivities.



Above and left: Orphanage alumni and their beautiful children were happy to celebrate.



Local pastors came to honor Papa Ramon.



Friends from a Tacoma, Washington church

Magical Memories



Our children worshipping to the live music



Papa Ramon with his great-granddaughter Karencita



Director Erika did much of the translating for the evening.



Ramon, with his long-time friends and ministry partners Roy and Patty



Josue and wife Lilia, laughing at old stories



Orphanage alumni lined up for photos and sharing memories.

August 2017

"We needed this place"

Two years that changed their lives

During the 50th anniversary celebration, we met up with some orphanage alumni. They were a cheerful, talkative group, reminiscing, laughing, and enjoying each other's company. Let me introduce you to two of them, inspiring sisters Karla and Laura. Karla and Laura lived in our home from 1997 to 1999 with their four younger brothers. Their mother voluntarily brought the six children to the orphanage while she raised money to buy some land. The sisters describe their brothers as "being raised in this place."

"We learned so much," said Karla. "We felt so safe in this place. We needed that time in this place. Many people prayed for us. For my brothers. We [came to] know God in this place."

Karla shared a story of a time she was sick, with heart arrhythmias. She shared how Papa Ramon would take all the children to the Nequa church he pastored every Sunday. One of the church's sisters prayed for her, and her arrhythmias went away. It was a memorable moment for Karla, seeing God at work.

When the family of six left the orphanage, Laura wrote a heartfelt note to Josue. She

was twelve years old when she wrote, "Josue, I do not want to leave because I came to know God here. I do not want to go out into the world but a part of me says yes because I want to tell my family and share with them about Jesus and that they would accept Him as their Savior. I do not want to leave the roadway to God nor do I want to return to the world's way. Please pray for us, I will be praying for

you."

This summer, Laura shared, "When we left, I was crying. No, I didn't want to go."

Today Karla is a social worker at a local Ensenada school. As a social worker, Karla sees the orphanage as a place where children learn to be sensitive and empathetic toward others. Laura is a director of a large Christian nonprofit south of Ensenada that helps indigenous migrant workers. "It's part of what we learned from the orphanage," Laura said.

Laura talked about raising her two children to serve the Lord. They work with her at her ministry. "They are *pequeño misionarios* [little missionaries]," she said, smiling. ♦



Young Karla and Laura lived with us, along with their four younger brothers.



Today the sisters are happy to share about their time at El Sauzal.

August 2017

New school year, excited students

Starting a new school year is always both exciting and nerve-wracking, especially when that includes starting at a new school. This is the case for several of our children this upcoming school year, as they graduated from their previous schools this summer. We are excited to share these graduation celebrations with you, so you can celebrate with us and support each of these kids with prayer as they begin the next phases of their education.



Carlos has been accepted to university and would like to study sports.

Excited for elementary school

Two of our young girls, Isamar and Legna, graduated from kindergarten this summer, and will be starting at the elementary school this fall. Isamar is sweet and playful, and Legna is feisty and spunky. Both girls love hugs and attention and like to play with Barbie dolls and play imaginary games. We hope they will greatly enjoy being in elementary school with their older brothers.

Moving up to middle school

We have two boys who graduated from elementary school this year. Gabriel and Angel will be starting junior high in the fall. This means they will no longer be attending the local school in San Antonio de las Minas but will instead transition to the junior high, located in El Sauzal. Along with growing in age and school status, both of these boys are gaining new

responsibilities as well. This means they now have the typical “teenage boy” chores to complete around the orphanage, instead of the chores of the young children. This is a great opportunity for Gabriel and Angel accountability as they grow.

Happy for high school

Ivan graduated from junior high this year. He will be transitioning to the high school, also located in El Sauzal. In the past Ivan has shown interest in becoming a chef. However, more recently he has said

that he is still deciding which career path he wants to take. High school will be a wonderful opportunity for Ivan to discover what his passions are, and what he wants to pursue for his future.

Going beyond graduation

Finally, we also had one high school graduation. Carlos graduated from high school and moved out of the orphanage to begin his independent life. He has taken the exam he needs in order to get into college and has been accepted to the university. He plans on studying sports at this time.

We are so proud of each of our children and we look forward to seeing where God directs their futures. ♦

August 2017

Construction Update:

A mind-boggling problem

We first learned in 2013 of the Mexican government's initiative to adopt legislation that mandated orphanages to modify and/or reconstruct their facilities to improve safety for the children who live there. In April 2014, the legislation passed. What was being asked of us, in order to continue serving kids, was mind-boggling.

We had to rewire our buildings, educate our nannies, adopt operating procedures, regulate how food is prepared, create operations manuals, develop and post evacuation routes and signage, and so much more.

Just what we needed

God has given our orphanage director, Erika Espinoza, a wonderful gift of networking. She has made friends in governmental positions and with several others who have helped her determine what the new legislation required of us. Through these connections, she's received lots of advice and services at little or no cost to



A safety ramp was added to the front of the nursery so that in case of an emergency, cribs could be rolled out with children in them.

the orphanage. Her friends helped her develop a list of building modifications which allowed her to seek out a civil engineer who gave us the first estimates.

The cost was going to be significant so we approached

you, the friends of El Sauzal Orphanage for help. God touched your hearts and you gave generously, more than we asked for, because Jesus knew what the actual cost was going to be. We have spent roughly \$240,000 dollars to date and have approximately \$10,000 dollars remaining to be spent to complete the remaining work that the contractor agreed to do. We

believe we will be given a new License of Operation after the contractor completes his remaining work.

Termites!

Earlier this year, termites were found in the upstairs apartment. The walls and ceiling were completely dismantled in order to eradicate them. The apartment work was not included in the



At the front of the sala (living room), a new exit and stair case were added because the old exit converged with an upstairs exit.

Dramatic Changes

contractor's estimate. We are now seeking new estimates to restore the apartment. Although we currently have no funding available for the apartment work, God knows the cost even if we don't.

Significant improvements

While we have more work to do, I want you to take great joy in what has been accomplished. Significant changes have been made. The nursery has been enlarged and is now located where the boys' dorm used to be. It was expanded to include the old front porch area and the original building that first housed the Espinoza family and church.

The new nursery has two nanny quarters, each with its own private bathrooms and showers, a wonderful improvement for the nannies. The old nursery was upgraded and is the new boys' residence. The girls' quarters, above the living room and behind the flag-pole, still needs to be finished.

All the wooden stairs have been demolished and replaced with new concrete and steel staircases. Concrete wonder board was attached to all accessible wooden portions of the buildings making them resistant to fire. The wonder board and all the exposed rafters, etc. were painted with fire-retardant paint.



All of the staircases are now concrete or metal, none are wooden anymore

It's all thanks to you!

You will see from the photos the significant difference you have made for the safety of the children and the overall look of our Home for Needy Kids. Come and visit and see for yourselves the dramatic changes.



The water heater has been made safer by adding safety bars in front

Finally, I have no adequate words to express my personal gratitude and love for each of you and for our Lord Jesus Christ for what has been done for the safety of the children. May God shower rivers of blessing upon each one of you for caring and sharing. ♦

by Roy Ketring

REVEALING AN UPDATED LOGO



A fresh new look

As we celebrated our 50th anniversary, our logo was updated by Adanesne Aguilar, the great-granddaughter of our founders Ramon and Magdalena Espinoza. Eighteen-year-old Adanesne, also called Ada, is a talented artist who plans to study graphic design. She wants to be an animator, where she can use her skills to create moving art. (Her parents chose her name because it is local city Ensenada spelled backwards.) She also works in the orphanage's office and has grown up with a strong desire to be part of the ongoing legacy of the orphanage.



Ada lives next door to the orphanage with her mom, director Erika, and her brothers.

Our logo's meaning

Our original logo was designed by a dear friend, Dennis Loughner from Placentia Presbyterian Church in Placentia, California. Dennis went to be with the Lord several years ago.

In the logo, the children are being held by the arm of El Sauzal Orphanage, shown with the red bricks.

The orphanage is supported by the arm of God, holding the cross of Jesus. Together, God and the orphanage can support and love the wounded children who come to us. ♦

In the middle of the recent construction work, our original logo mural was inadvertently painted over.

Ada has been hired to paint the new mural with the logo. What an exciting big job for our budding young artist!



Our old logo/mural in 2001



Ada also designed our 50th anniversary logo. Ada has grown up with her mom running the orphanage.

