

Dear Orphanage Amigo,

I'm writing to tell you about an urgent need at the orphanage—and the story of young Chuy.

Let Me Introduce Myself To You

My name is Patty Meadows. I live in Auburn, Washington with my husband of nineteen years, Keith, and our three school-age daughters, Heather, Kate, and Brooke. I've been working as a sonographer (doing ultrasounds) for twenty-one years and teaching water aerobics for seventeen. But longer than all that, I've been privileged to be connected to El Sauzal Orphanage.

Twenty-four years ago, at age nineteen, I took my first out-of-country trip to go on a short-term mission. I arrived at El Sauzal naive and excited to help. My group painted, built things, and played with the children. I fell in love—I loved the sweet, affectionate children; the warm, inviting orphanage home; and the profound faith of the family that ran the orphanage, the Espinozas. At the end of the week, I had a strong desire to never leave, and to continue helping. God used this one trip to change the direction of my life.



*Me with U.S. liaison
Roy Ketring and orphanage
president Josue Espinoza*

God made it possible for me to stay strongly connected to the orphanage even though I live far away. In 2000, I started producing the 'Que Pasa' newsletter. Since then, I have become a director on the board of El Sauzal Foundation, Inc. I run the orphanage's website and send group emails. The family and staff at the orphanage are very busy caring for hurting children. From my home, I can share their needs with you. Much of the communication you get from the orphanage comes from them to you, through me.

Seeing Is Believing

Last month while visiting the orphanage, I was struck by their financial need. I knew before arriving that they are currently \$15,000 in debt. That number sounds large, and I couldn't really relate to it. Many times in past years, I've seen their debt come and go. I've seen how God always provides. But this financial burden was different; it felt very heavy to me.

One evening when I was with Erika, the assistant director, one of the teenage boys asked for bus fare for the next day's ride to school. Another time the cook sent a teen for money to buy eggs to make the upcoming meal. It was hard to see Erika scrambling to get the small amount of money needed.

In August it will be very difficult to prepare the kids for the new school year.

What Caused This Urgent Need?

First, there are fewer visitors to the orphanage. Stories of drug cartel violence on the mainland have created some hesitation to travel in Mexico. (Many believe that traveling in Baja is as safe as ever.) Stricter enforcement of importation laws at the Mexican border have made it difficult to bring much-needed supplies—items that so many of you, our friends, have brought before. I've seen weekends in the past when group after group would show up bringing food, clothes, toys, school supplies, and more. Even with less money, the orphanage would have unexpected blessings of fresh produce, canned goods, or boxes of diapers. This help has dwindled dramatically.

Like with each of us, debt can easily lead to greater debt. There are currently eleven active, adorable children in the nursery. With so many toddlers and infants, the diaper consumption is high. The most cost-effective place to get diapers in Ensenada is Costco. But with the current lack of funds, they have been purchasing pricier diapers at a local pharmacy that allows them to buy on credit. Some of their current debt is diapers!



Although very happy now, Selene was badly abused before coming

Another factor in the debt is a decrease in giving to the foundation. Last year at this time, the foundation's income was \$84,000. This year it is \$69,000. Would you believe that the difference is \$15,000—the same amount as the orphanage's current debt?

Chuy's Story

As you know, this ministry is vital. For forty-six years, the orphanage has taken in children off the streets—the wounded, abused and abandoned. They have nurtured, fed, educated, and loved children who had little hope. Not only have they demonstrated the love of Jesus, they have given the children the spiritual food they need to have a relationship with Christ.



Young Chuy was two when he arrived

Let me tell you the story of Chuy. (Jesús is his real name; Chuy is his nickname). He and his brother and sister came to the orphanage when Chuy was two years old. Their grandmother was caring for them because their father had died and their mother was addicted to drugs. Over the past sixteen years, Chuy has grown up to be a gentle, godly young man. Last month, he graduated from high school.

Chuy told me that he wants to be a missionary in Africa, because there are many people there in need. His plan is to go to three years of Bible school, followed by three years of language school. His favorite scripture is the entire chapter of Psalm 91, because, as he says, “It is full of God’s promises of protection.”

I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge. -Psalm 91:2, 4



Now Chuy wants to become a missionary

How can Chuy start Bible school this fall when the orphanage doesn’t even have funds to pay basic bills? How can the other children continue to grow and thrive?

Would You Help Today In One Of The Following Ways?

1. **Give a gift.** Your one-time gift of \$100, \$500, or \$1,000 could add up to quickly eliminate the current debt.
2. **Commit to monthly support.** A stronger monthly base can keep the debt from growing. Can you commit to send \$25, \$50, or \$100 per month?
3. **Sponsor Chuy’s education.** His education will cost around \$6,000 per year, about \$500 per month.
4. **Pray** for the financial health of the orphanage and protection for the children, staff and Espinoza family.

By faith, the Espinoza family has run the orphanage for decades despite the daily financial, emotional and spiritual struggles they’ve encountered. God has always provided, often in surprising ways, and frequently through amigos like you.

Thank you for joining me as we help the orphanage from our homes.

Con gratitud,

Patty Meadows

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Me and Melissa last month

P.S. Instead of sending the typical Back to School newsletter, I felt it was more important to share the current financial situation with you. I appreciate you taking your valuable time to read this and giving as you are led.