

Young widow shares husband's passion

Her husband loved helping orphans

My husband Michael visited El Sauzal in 2005. He was extremely passionate about helping widows and orphans—“Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” *James 1:27*

A couple months after he first visited we relocated from San Diego, California to a small town in Spirit Lake, Idaho. This made another trip to El Sauzal financially impossible for my husband and our growing family. But the orphanage and the people he met there always remained close to his heart. He prayed for the children and staff frequently and sent money whenever we could.

Our photography business began to grow here in Idaho and we decided that we would donate ten percent from each job to the orphanage. 2010 was projected to be our most profitable year. However, on June 24, 2010 my husband died in a canoe accident.

Carrying on Michael's vision

Although I have not visited El Sauzal myself, the chil-



Michael, with wife Renee and their three beautiful daughters, before his accident

dren and staff there will always have a special place in my heart. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” *2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

Even the smallest amount makes a difference

One of the the many things I love about Michael was how he lived every day with the perspective of his circumstances at a world level. He knew that no matter how tight our budget was compared to other people we were considered to be the richest in material wealth in the world. I encourage you today to view your life with that same perspective. If God places it upon your heart, please respond by donating. Even the smallest amount makes a difference.

-Renee Blankartz

You can visit Renee's photography website at onetreeoflife.com.

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Always willing to rescue children



Brothers Kevin Jesus, 5, and Yehirem Emanuel, almost 2, were brought recently by the police

Helping children at risk

Sometimes the Ensenada police find children that are at risk from abuse, neglect, abandonment, etc. When the police encounter a child in danger, day or night, they contact a DIF representative (Mexican social services), and ask where to take the child.

Good relationship with the police

We have a good relationship with the Ensenada police. Recently a policeman brought two brothers, Yehirem Emanuel and Kevin Jesus, ages 1 and 5, to orphanage director Josue. The policeman said to Josue, "You are always willing to rescue children in distress."

The children belong to our orphanage until DIF takes control and determines what will be best for them. Often they will stay and live at El Sauzal.

When you support El Sauzal, you are rescuing children in distress. Muchas gracias for your compassion for these children at risk.

Can you help Damian's soccer dreams?



Damian, a skilled soccer player hopes to play professionally (photo from Jeff Ho)

Damian has been selected by the 1995-1996 category Baja California Selection Soccer Sports Association. He is on a state sponsored soccer team. He also in on a local team called "Tigres" to improve his conditioning so he will be ready when the state team competes with teams from other states. This gives him exposure for scouts from professional soccer teams. His dream is to be selected by a professional team.

If he can continue to play for a state team it will open doors for scholarships for his higher education.

It costs about \$28 dollars per week for food and transportation from the orphanage to Ensenada for soccer practice, five days a week. Additionally he needs soccer shoes, shin guards, and an equipment bag. The orphanage does not have the funds to continue paying the transportation and food cost. Neither do they have extra money for Damian's equipment.

If you would like to help Damian with his soccer expenses, please let us know on the reply form.

It only took two minutes

Have you considered visiting El Sauzal this summer? With even a short trip you can help the kids and be moved by them, also.

I was on a brief, busy trip to the orphanage. It had been several years since I'd visited, and I wanted to get to know some of the new kids. But I only had half an hour. In my American mindset, I thought that would have to be sufficient.

I had never met the shy little girl standing near me, so I tried to engage her in conversation (in Spanish of course).

"Hi, I'm Patty. What's your name?"

"Esthela," she replied timidly.

"How old are you?" I asked. When she answered that she was eight, I smiled and told her that I had an eight-year-old daughter. I thought about things my daughter enjoyed, so I asked, "When is your birthday?"

"I don't know," she replied quietly. I thought again about my daughter and what it would mean for her to not even know her birth date. No family parties, no special cakes and no proud parents letting her know how beautiful she is. My mother's heart broke for her.

I thought I had thirty minutes to give. It only took two minutes for Esthela to steal my heart.

by Patty Meadows

Check out our calendar at www.elsauzal.org/calendar, and find an available date that you would like to visit. Then email us to schedule your trip Roy.Ketring@elsauzal.org.



Shy Esthela sitting with Patty

Sponsor a child: Christopher



12-year-old Christopher is praying for his sister Esthela (see other story on this page)

Date of birth: July 10, 1998

Age: 12

Hobbies: Likes soccer (futbol)

Favorite foods: Italian food

Favorite subject in school: Math

Christopher would like to be a professional soccer player when he is grown up. He and his sister Esthela were brought to the orphanage because of neglect and lack of care. (You can read about Esthela in the previous story.)

Christopher's prayer requests: Christopher is praying to return home to his parents. He prays that his parents are okay. He also prays for his sister Esthela's well being.

If you would like to sponsor Christopher, his sister, or any of our other children: Go to elsauzal.org/Sponsor. You can see the biographies for all of our kids. You can send your questions to Patty.Siegmund@elsauzal.org.

How do you know when God is speaking to you?

Loren from Ashland, Oregon shares how God spoke to him on his March trip to the orphanage. Loren also serves on the Maintenance and Facilities committee for the orphanage.

One of the best trips

Well I have now concluded my 14th year with the Ashland First Baptist high school group. Each year has its own monuments that God has built into my life. This year was no exception. In fact this year was one of the better. Why? Let me tell you the events of 2011.

For most of those years I have been the one designing the group's t-shirts and putting a verse on them. The last several years I had delegated the job, but this year it was back to me. Pastor Ken Baker and I have had a connection it seems. The verses I have chosen always work into what the lessons are on the week we are at El Sauzal even though we never talk about what the other is thinking. This year I didn't know what he had in mind. I seemed to be pushed to use John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

Blown away

On day two (Friday night) of our trip to El Sauzal we stayed in a church in Sera Mesa. At worship Ken talked to the kids. Within the first five minutes Ken read John 15:5! I was just blown away but could not, chose not,

to talk to Ken about it as the t-shirts were not yet known to anyone but me and my wife on the trip.

On Saturday night at El Sauzal we handed out the workbooks to be used for small groups. Ken had the acronym L.O.V.E. for the week—Listen to God, Obey God, Vulnerable to God and others, and Encouraging to others.



Loren hanging out with Jesus and Agustin

An emotional trip

On Sunday we all walked to church in San Antonio. The sermon was from I John 4:19, "We love, because He first loved us." Again I was just blown away.

On Wednesday night the t-shirts were revealed to the kids and leaders alike.

Ken had not seen them. As I shared with the group, an emotional wreck, I needed to have Ken read the verse. Later Ken told me that he had been listening to a tape on the trip down where the speaker used that verse and he liked it. On Friday night he chose to share it with the kids. How great is God! His plan is so perfect; we can only grasp it when it is revealed to us.

Listen in the quiet times

In leading a small group the question was asked, "How do we know when God is speaking to us?" I thought back and shared one night with the kids. God does not use so much the big things in life to speak to us, for at that time we are distressed and looking for His wisdom. We should listen in the quiet times. It is with the little things that we need to realize God taking care of us and telling us, "I love you."

Loren Deffebaugh, Ashland First Baptist