

The GOOD NEWS

Cuauhtémoc, Chihuahua

La Gran Familia

November 2021

Donate



PayPal



Scan. Pay. Go.

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Have you ever thought about the cost of running a care home for 40+ children? That's 40 showers of water, 40 sets of laundry loads and the salaries for the day workers who come in to help with cooking, washing and cleaning.

There are also doctor, dental and vision care visits for the children. Most of them have lived pretty rough lives before they arrive to the home. All of them have lived through psychological trauma.

None of them are living a lavish life style, but to say they have a warm bed to sleep in, clean water to drink, a home cooked meal in their belly and a change of clothes is a blessing.

Will you help us continue this mission to rescue kids off the streets to live safe & productive lives? Thank you!

ANGELICA'S STORY: THE FIRST GIRL

Angelica came to live at La Gran Familia along with her 3 brothers, Javier, Jesus, and Manuel. They had been living in poverty in a shack behind Fr. Greg's house with their father, a widower. He could no longer take care of them, so he brought them to LGF. Angelica was only 4 years old.

Angelica, went to live with Goretti Lerma and her family. After Fr. Greg's death, Goretti eventually become the 1st director of La Gran Familia. After living three years with the Lerma's, a girl's house was added to LGF and Angelica and several more girls were added to the LGF family.

*"...seeing life differently,
with more joy, resolving
life's problems..."*

At LGF she was able to have 3 meals each day, a bed to sleep in, a shower to stay clean, and clean clothes to wear. She was able to go to school and learn how to read. She went to church and learned about how Jesus loved her. She acquired quite a few new brothers and sisters that all got along splendidly with each other. She was happy!

At age 9 she received notice that her father had disappeared. Alas, after a month, he was found dead. She would miss the times he would come visit her

and her brothers at LGF.

When Angelica turned 16 she left LGF.



She remembered having so much support and so many positive experiences at La Gran Familia. The only thing she wanted to do now was to find her family.

She did finally find her family. She married a wonderful man, Ismael and they have 2 beautiful children, 8 yr old Yais Alan and 6 yr old Maria Guadalupe. They live and work on a ranch close to Cuauhtémoc. At age 26 Angelica is a wonderful mother. She had quite a bit of experience taking care of the little ones at La Gran Familia.

She has learned to see life differently, with more joy, resolving life's problems that come along.

HISTORY OF HOW LGF GREW BY DEIRDRE HUNTER

The property at LGF today consists of 5 separate parcels that have been pieced together and contain two original structures and the large new building that was dedicated in 2014. But it didn't start this way. In 1999, the LGF supporters from the US decided that Father Greg needed a larger house to care for the growing 'big family,' that is when the 'boy's house' was purchased. It is a 2-story home that has gone through many modifications in the last 20 years. The downstairs area houses the main kitchen that feeds all of the children and staff, a dining room, a bathroom, and also a sitting area. The upstairs, has 2 large dorm-style bedrooms for the boys, a bathroom, another sitting area, and a smaller room for an overnight caretaker. Behind the main home is a one-story building that contains laundry facilities and storage.

In 2008 the 3 parcels northeast of the 'boys' house' were purchased along with the one-story home called 'the girls' house'. This is a one-story structure that is a typical 3-bedroom, 1-bath home, with a kitchen, dining room, and living room. For many years the girls lived here with a care-taker, the only modification being that the bathroom had an additional shower stall added. Behind this home is an additional smaller laundry facility. This is where Martín the LGF Director lives.

For many years, the land between the 'boys' house' and the 'girls' house' was a dirt and grass playground, at times had a vegetable garden. By 2012, we were bursting at the seams with children, they were growing in both size and number, so much so that it was decided that a new building should be custom designed and built to meet the needs of this again growing family. The 'new building' is a 2-story structure that has 3 segments. The center segment is a 2-story apartment for the primary house-parents, who live full-time at LGF with their family. This apartment, has a small kitchen, dining area, sitting area, and master bedroom with bath downstairs. And upstairs, it has two additional bedrooms with a bathroom and small play area. Currently the youngest children are staying in these upstairs rooms, so that the house

(Continued on page 3)



The original Boys' house

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a holiday celebrated throughout Mexico that honors loved ones who have died.

The traditional way of celebrating is by making an altar containing the favorite foods and beverages, as well as photos and memorabilia, of the departed. It is not about grief but love for the family and friends who left us.

Here is the altar the children of LGF built, remembering Fr. Greg and Fr. Glenn among their loved ones.



Lalo teaching the older boys about proper truck maintenance



STUDENT HIGHLIGHT: ABEL

Abel, lived on a ranch and like his brothers, **Chuy, Daniel, & Sergio** before him, came to LGF from an unstable home very far from any schools. His mother wished him to receive an education. Before he came to LGF, he did not bathe every day or have regular meals. Today he has all that and also attends Church.



Now, 7 years later, he's an excellent student, in his first year of secondary school. Abel's favorite subjects are science and reading. He is also good at athletics, but particularly soccer. He plays for a club team "Bravos Cuauhtémoc."

Abel tells me, his dream job would be taking care of animals on a cattle ranch. He wants a ranch with many cows.

Abel is maturing and is doing his best to take advantage of the opportunities that the LGF donors have made available to him.

Thank you for giving Abel a chance for a decent life.

THE BEGINNING OF LA GRAN FAMILIA PART 2

Glenn Polhemus lived his life on Jeremiah 29:11-13 even though he didn't always know it. As he was building the church in Cuauhtémoc, God sent Fr. Greg to Cuauhtémoc in September 1999 to prepare a place for the children that would come to him. Fr. Greg said to Glenn and to all of us, I believe in what Mother Teresa said, "that there is a disease more devastating than hunger, a disease more terrifying than AIDS, a disease more painful than cancer. It is the disease of being unwanted." And for that we built an orphanage.

SEPTEMBER 1999; Fr. Greg's Email to Glenn Polhemus

I hate to admit it but I have been exhausted today, dead tired. I was up all night with Alvera that has stomach flu. I worked on the budget last night as well. The problem I am having is this, I can't say NO to human suffering... I can't.... When the hungry and the sick show up on my doorstep, as long as there is a dollar in the bank, I will spend it on food or medicine.

Every ledger line, every budget item, has a face, has a name, and suffers in this world. These budget items sit every Sunday in church, mesmerized and starving for the Gospel we preach, that God's love is unconditional, and cares so very desperately for his people...and that they MATTER to someone. They are important and valuable to God and to me.

I believe that education is the only tool I have to permanently rescue these people, this congregation, from the living hell of hunger and poverty and for that I fervently put every kid that was in my reach in school.

How do we minister like Jesus? Jesus had compassion with the crowds that followed him. He healed them, he fed them, he loved them, he taught them, and he died for them. If we remove these elements from the Gospel, might not we do just as well as printing the Gospel on a giant bill board and then we all can go home. I believe that our programs are not something apart from the Church or the Gospel, these programs are the Gospel. When we feed the starving, clothes for Dona Odela (the elderly lady with no legs) and the kids, when we take children off the street and give them a home for the first time, when we give antibiotic injections and flu tablets, when we give a kid books, pencils and a pair of shoes, we are proclaiming the Gospel more effectively, more clearly, more passionately that a human being could ever do from a pulpit. [Fr. Greg died of a heart attack in his room at La Gran Familia October 7, 2001.]

NEW GIRLS WELCOMED AT LA GRAN FAMILIA

Three sisters were recently brought to La Gran Familia by their grandmother. She was unable to take care of them. Their alcoholic mother works in a bar and left the girls alone to wander the streets. They very seldom ever went to school. **Melany** and **Divany** are twins. Their birthday is July 6th. Their older sister **Fanny**'s birthday is January 20th. They are all now in school and doing well. The twins are in elementary 5th grade and Fanny is in the 6th grade. Please pray for Fanny's health. Her tonsils are swollen, and she is seeing an ENT doctor.

Melany's favorite thing to do is play ball in the courtyard. She wants to be a teacher when she grows up. Divany loves her school group. She says she wants to be a great doctor when she grows up so that she can heal people of their pain. Fanny likes to read, play soccer in the courtyard, paint, and help clean the shelter. She also wants to be a doctor when she grows up.

According to the LGF director Martín these girls have shown a very noticeable improvement in their behavior and self-care since coming to LGF one month ago. Love changes the hardest heart, heals its ailments, restores its fractures. Thank the Lord for his ministry at La Gran Familia. It is a blessing to those who live and work there.



Learning new games

CUAUHTÉMOC, CHIHUAHUA

(Continued from page 2)

parents can be close by at night time. On the right third of the building, the downstairs houses the computer lab, a library, and the staff offices. Above this area is the girl's dormitory, which has two separate dorm style rooms, each having two bathrooms. On the left third of the building, the downstairs is a game room and two tutoring rooms, and upstairs is the teenage boy's dormitory, which like the girl's, has two separate dorm style rooms, each having two bathrooms.

In front of the 'new building' remains a play area for the children that is now paved with concrete, contains a basketball hoop, soccer net, sun-brellas, and benches, and is a safe space for them to run and play as it is shielded from the road by a large privacy fence with gate.

LGF GIFT CARDS AVAILABLE

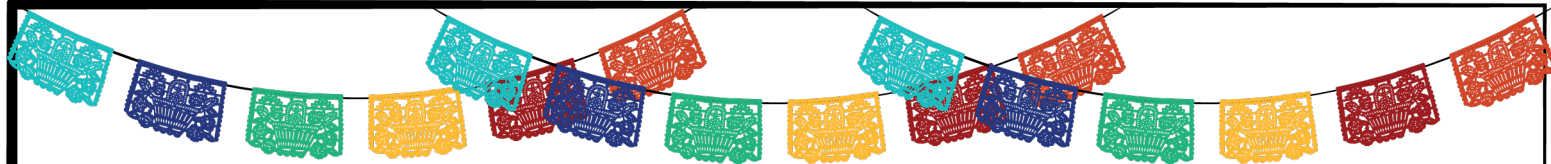
Do you have an acquaintance or relative that you want to remember at Christmas, but they have everything and are very hard to buy a gift for?

Why not consider our La Gran Familia gift card? We will send you as many cards as you want with envelopes and you return a donation of any amount you choose.

When I look at you and me, I know
that we are not hungry or thirsty or homeless.

When I look at you and me,
I know that we are truly blessed and my heart is
filled with thanksgiving.

When I look at you and me, I know that we
are blessed so that we can be a blessing to others.
And because of that, And because of you a gift has been
made to La Gran Familia Children's Home in your name
and in thanksgiving to God by (your name)



La Gran Familia needs your help.

If you would like more information on how to become more involved in the mission of La Gran Familia, please direct your inquiries to:

Mollie Polhemus
President
325-656-6244
mollie@wcc.net

Willa Hunter
Newsletter Editor
832-282-8788
lagranfamiliamexico@gmail.com

<http://www.lgfmexico.org>

La Gran Familia is a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization



The "new building"



La Gran Familia

2813 Southland Blvd.
San Angelo, TX 76904