



Mission To Mexico

P.O. Box 92351
Austin, TX 78709-2351

Matthew 25:31-46

July 7, 2013

KEEP IN TOUCH:

MISSION TO MEXICO

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I Have Returned...

By Deacon Mike Meisner

General Douglas MacArthur I am not, yet I have been known to exclaim like MacArthur, "I shall return" and finally, after a long and difficult absence, I have returned (to the colonia in Nuevo Laredo). But not a military victory, it was a victory (at least for me) of brotherhood and peace and for the greatest of virtues, Love.

Eighteen months away from my friends at Nuestra Senora de los Angeles Parish brought renewed commitment and dedication to myself and to many. For those living South of the Rio Bravo, they pray for and love their friends who come from the North. They await the arrival their bi-monthly visitors and pray for their safety. And then their patience turns into a fountain of joy as they witness the arrival of their brothers and sisters who bring, smiles, hugs and among other things, the Love of Christ.

And to those who muster-up the gumption to make the trip into the colonia, casting aside their fears and taking-up their faith that God will take care of them, when they see the many faces of the Poor, they have to swallow their emotion for it is easy to burst into tears of the heart in this ministry across borders.

And I, friends, am talking about myself. June's volunteers all found great grace by the few short hours spent in Nuevo Laredo. And many of us released our emotions with tears rolling down into the dusty earth of the church-grounds. And those tears planted in the dust, will produce much fruit. Good things are sure to come.

It is so awesome, and I just can't wait until the next trip. And for those who fear the things that turn hearts away from love, absolutely, no difficulties, no problems, no traffic-stops, no speeding tickets, no questioning, no comments, no army, no checkpoints, no red lights, nothing was in our way. For following prayer at the hotel in Laredo, we were led by angels opening the way for us. And never have I seen an easier entry or exit from Mexico in my entire life. Rachel has good policies and plans for our security and God provides and protects--even us, who do not deserve his goodness! Now, we give thanks to our God for the special renewed MTM that I re-committed myself to in June. Amigo's, I'll see ya in Nuevo Laredo in August!

Deacon Mike

President's Report

By Rachel Fannin



Our bi-monthly mission trips have resumed! Praise God!

The service delivery model has evolved to include more local support as well as ensure the safety of our volunteers.

- Grocery orders are now placed with the neighborhood grocery store through Alejandro, a resident of the colonia. Alejandro is the inventory control manager and coordinates the order, purchase and loading of groceries for each trip. Other local volunteers and Father Tony now provide assistance in transporting groceries to the church for distribution.
- Men and ladies of the colonia then help bag the groceries and prepare the site for the various activities planned for the trip including distribution of baby items, school supplies, hygiene items, religious items, as well as sponsorship items.
- One of the key modifications to our mission trip protocol is that all materials are purchased locally. No cargo is transported by mission volunteers across the border. As a result, we can no longer accept donations of cargo. Your cash donations are greatly needed and appreciated.
- MTM now has a volunteer on the Mexico side of the border who helps with purchase, storage and delivery of special needs like school uniforms, shoes, coats, school supplies, blankets, soccer balls, etc. Claudia Valdez has been instrumental in our ability to continue our delivery of services under this new model.
- With the local support of up to 30 men and 10 women and teens, we can now manage with a minimum of 15 to 20 missionaries per trip. However, the three day August trip (August 1,2,3) will require at least 20 missionaries to handle the school supply and sponsorship distribution. Please consider joining us.

We thank the Lord for his continued guidance in providing for the needs of our brothers and sisters in the colonia and for the generosity of our volunteers and their willingness to serve! We also thank the many supporters of our program. Without your prayers, personal support and cash donations, the work we do would not be possible.

Amor y Paz!

Rachel Fannin

Important Dates

2013 Planned Mission Trips

- October 4, 5
 - Grocery Distribution
 - Grade Check

- December 6, 7
 - Grocery Distribution
 - Christmas Celebration

2013 Board Meetings

- July 9
- August 13
- September 10
- October 8
- November 12

August Trip Details

If you are able to participate in our next mission trip, please contact me directly at rachel.fannin@mtmaustin.org no later than **July 25th** for hotel reservations and carpool arrangements. We need as many missionaries as possible to accommodate the August distribution requirements. The itinerary below will give you a general idea of planned activities.

August 1, Thursday

- Depart Austin 7:00 am
- Arrive Cotulla around 10:30 am for quick lunch and caravan along toll road to Columbia Bridge Crossing.
- Affix mission signs to all vehicles before crossing border.
- Arrive Colonia around 1:00 pm and set up site for sponsorship distribution.
- Depart Colonia around 4:30 pm for hotel via the Columbia Bridge.

August 2, Friday

- Depart hotel by 8:00 am for Columbia Bridge.
- Affix mission signs to all vehicles
- Arrive Colonia around 9:00 am
 - Grocery Pick-Up
 - Site set up
 - Bag groceries and school supplies
 - Sponsorship Distribution begins (215 +/- students)
- Depart Colonia around 4:30 pm.

August 3, Saturday

- Depart hotel by 7:30 am for Columbia Bridge [check out of hotel].
- Affix mission signs to all vehicles.
- Arrive Colonia around 8:30 am.
- Sponsorship distribution continues till 11:30 am.
- General Distribution Begins
 - Grocery (550 families)
 - Back Packs filled with School Supplies (800 students)
 - Religious Items
 - Baby Diapers (*if funds available. If you would like to donate to this fund, please indicate on your check. If you donate online, email me at rachel.fannin@mtmaustin.org.*)
- Depart Colonia around 3:00 pm via the Columbia Bridge to return to Austin.

Donate Now

Please click the "Donate Now" button to donate online or mail a check to our address shown at the top of the newsletter.

Thank you very much for your support.

Treasurer's Report

By Pat Gavia

First, let me thank those supporters who have stuck with us and continued to donate during this time of restructuring. We greatly appreciate your support. As you can see from Rachel's article, we have designed a new system and are back in the business of making bi-monthly mission trips.



The estimated cost of a bi-monthly trip (including groceries for 550 families, cost of workers, supplies, and our local storage) is estimated at \$4,600. We have August, October and December trips still to come for this calendar year, resulting in \$13,800 that is still needed just for mission trips.

This amount does NOT include funds needed for our Sponsorship and School Supplies programs. These are accounted for separately. Sponsorships have currently been paid through October, 2013.

This fiscal year, we have received \$4,241 in **general donations** from March 1st (the beginning of our fiscal year) through June 30th, including two rather large donations of \$1,500 and \$500. For this same period last year, we had received \$21,569 in donations.

As you can see, we have a significant budget shortfall and will need to drastically increase our donations to continue to fund our bi-monthly trips. Every donation, no matter the amount, is appreciated.

Please prayerfully consider donating to Mission to Mexico so that we are able to continue helping our brothers and sisters in Nuevo Laredo.



*Grocery Bags include rice, beans, oil, flour and tortillas **

() Depending on availability of funds.*

Sponsorship Report

By *Melanie Fannin*



Kay Arnold with sponsored child

June in the sponsorship world means that we travel to the colonia, gather grades, and measure the kids for their uniform shirts and shoes. With the expert help of several mothers of sponsored kids and two of our college graduate sponsorship alums, we were able to measure 145 children in the few hours we were at the colonia. Although we tried to get the word out to the sponsorship community that we were going to be back to our "normal" schedule in June, it is apparent that many of the families either did not know we were there or were unable to attend. Hopefully they will be present in August so that we can get them ready for the upcoming school year.

It was very exciting that the children remembered, in large part, to bring their grades so that we are able to chart their progress in school. In fact, two young men and one young woman arrived with their certificates showing they had completed their high school studies! That means that we will have **six** sponsored college students for the 2013-2014 school year!! **How wonderful is that?!**

August will find us scurrying about distributing the uniforms and new backpacks filled with school supplies to the children. Our college students will receive the cash equivalent to apply to their college tuition. We will also throw a "*graduation party*" for our recent high school and college graduates and their parents. August also means it is time to distribute scholarship applications to our university students so that they can return them for evaluation by a scholarship committee in time for scholarships to be awarded in October.

None of this would have happened or will happen without the continuing dedication and support of our resolute sponsors. Thanks to each and every one of you. Your generosity and unwavering faith in our mission to educate the children of the colonia is yielding amazing results!

A short personal aside. God truly blessed me when I was finally able to return to Nuevo Laredo in June. While I knew in my heart that it was the right thing for me to do, that conviction was driven home each time I was greeted by the children and their parents. The joy and gratitude I personally experienced during our short time in the colonia reinforced for me the importance of our mission not only to those we try to serve, but as importantly, to the volunteers who participate. As it is said, it is in giving that we receive. My cup runneth over!

If you are interested in learning more about the program, please feel free to contact me directly at melanie.fannin@mtmaustin.org.



Father with two sons being fitted for school uniforms.