



Mission to Mexico

Matthew 25: 31-46

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Thoughts after 14 years

By Steve Muras

I have been a "regular" Mission to Mexico participant for the past fourteen years. I was "hooked" on Mission to Mexico from my first trip to the colonia. Sadly, in spite of going there almost every other month for the past fourteen years, I still can't speak very much Spanish. However, I enjoy interacting with the people in the colonia during each mission trip. For the past several years, one of my responsibilities during the mission trips has been to "hire" the men who assist the Mission to Mexico team with set-up, security, despensa preparation and tear down. (Fortunately for me, there is usually at least one man in the group I get to choose from who speaks both English and Spanish. I use that person as my translator in communicating with the rest of the crew). The men are very eager to work and they are grateful for the few dollars we are able to pay them for helping. I enjoy watching the men receive their "dinero" on Saturday after they have finished working. I think they understand that although we do pay them, they are actually an extension of the MTM team and that they too are serving their brothers and sisters in Christ at the colonia. We could not do what we do without their help and for that we are grateful to all of them.

I am usually able to visit briefly with Father Antonio Anderson during each Mission trip. He is the primary priest serving the citizens of the colonia. We (the MTM team) interact with the people in the colonia a couple of days every other month, but Father Tony is with them day in and day out. He is devoted to the people. Being a priest is not an easy job and I'm certain that being a priest at the colonia is very challenging day in and day out.

The people we serve are grateful that we do return every other month. The children and their parents are so thankful for the school supplies and the school uniforms they receive as part of the sponsorship program. They are also thankful for the despensa and baby items



August Local Work Crew

they receive. It is beautiful to see the smiles on the faces of the children when they receive their uniforms or a new backpack filled with school supplies. When we are serving these people I feel we are serving Christ and following what he tells us to do...."As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34). ...I pray that I can serve with humility and compassion and hope the people we serve can see the light of Christ looking at them through my eyes and my smile. As I serve and work with the people at the colonia, I am reminded of the line in the "Prayer of St. Francis"... "it is in giving that we receive". I receive many smiles, handshakes, hugs and thank you[s] (gracias!) each time I go.

I know that many of the people who live in and near the colonia pray that the Mission to Mexico team will keep returning to the colonia. Their thankfulness and appreciation along with the knowledge that they are praying for me and the rest of the MTM team makes me want to do keep going back and do my part to ensure each trip is successful.

On behalf of all of our friends at the colonia, I want to express my sincere appreciation and thankfulness to everyone who participates in the sponsorship program and to those of you who support Mission to Mexico through your prayers and/or financial contributions.

Gracias y que Dios los bendiga a todos!
[Thank you and may God bless each of you!]

If you are able to participate in our next mission trip, contact me at rachel.fannin@mtmaustin.org no later than October 1st for hotel reservations and carpool arrangements. The itinerary below will give you a general idea of planned activities.

October 11, Friday

- 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.
- Photo Shoot for ID Cards.
- Depart Colonia around 4:30 pm for hotel via the Columbia Bridge.

October 12, 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)
 - 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.

President's Report

By Rachel Fannin

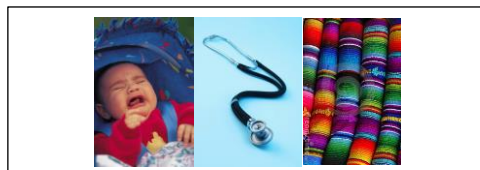
August School Supply Distribution Went Amazingly Well!

Despite the few volunteers that were able to make the trip from Austin to Nuevo Laredo, we were blessed with a strong local presence. This dedicated group of men, women and teens from the colonia stepped up and made a huge difference in preparing for the three day distribution. The August trip is the most labor intensive trip of the entire year under very harsh weather conditions. It was extremely HOT! We distributed 550 bags of groceries, more than 1,000 backpacks filled with school supplies, and met with 166 children in the sponsorship program. We also managed to have enough extras in the loaves and fishes distribution to provide for an additional 50 to 60 families. With only 12 missionaries making the journey south, the Lord truly blessed us with the needed local support. I want to especially acknowledge Claudia without whom the trip would not have been possible. She worked diligently for two months transporting our supplies to the colonia and making sure that every child in the sponsorship program received their uniforms, shoes and school supplies.

God Bless all those who continue to support our brothers and sisters in the colonia and please keep the families in your thoughts and prayers.

Amor y Paz!

Rachel Fannin



Special Needs

Cash donations to help purchase over the counter medications (pain, cold and flu symptoms, antibiotic ointment, baby rash ointment, etc.) and blankets.

Treasurer's Report

By Pat Gavia

The Board approved budget is represented below. As you can see, we continue to experience 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.

Approved Budget 2013 – 2014

Mission to Mexico		
Annual Budget		
Fiscal Year Ending 2/28/2014		
INCOME		% of Total
Donations	\$38,917	65.13%
Grants (Matching Funds)	\$ 720	1.20%
Interest (Savings)	\$ 120	0.20%
Sponsorships (*)	\$20,000	33.47%
TOTAL INCOME	\$59,757	100.00%
EXPENSE		
Administrative	\$ 1,977	3.31%
Contingency	\$ 500	0.84%
Projects & Goals		
MTM - Despensa Expenses	\$26,080	43.64%
Blankets	\$ 1,500	2.51%
Christmas Project	\$ 1,000	1.67%
School Supplies	\$ 8,700	14.56%
Sponsorships (*)	\$20,000	33.47%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$59,757	100.00%

(*) Restricted Funds

NOTES:

- YTD donations received through 8/31/2013 is \$12,811. We are significantly behind year to date and will need to adjust services if donations do not improve by December 31.
- Above budget was cut back to only 550 bags of groceries (last year distributed 750 bags of groceries); Goal is to increase to 600 depending on available funds.

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.

Donate Now

Sponsorship Report

By Melanie Fannin

The Lord continues to provide!

Frankly, we were nervous about the August trip. Over 1,000 backpacks needed to be filled with school supplies and distributed, not to mention that the school uniforms and supplies for the sponsorship children had to be sorted, packed and distributed in the same space. And, we had very few volunteers (10) to do the job we have previously done with the help of scores of volunteers. After we had done everything we could to prepare for the weekend, we prayed together and decided to put it in God's hands. To no one's surprise, God sent us the help we so desperately needed. I would like to briefly highlight several of those who were indispensable to the success of our August mission.

Kay Arnold - Kay adroitly and expertly handled the uniform money for the sponsorship children. Kay was so diligent that her funds balanced on the first try (and still balance!) Thank you Kay!

Belma Villareal - Belma was my interpreter and backup on sponsorship record keeping, a VERY thankless job. Belma was warm, caring and supportive in her interactions with the families. A ray of sunshine. Thanks Belma!

Claudia Valdez - A miracle worker for sure. Purchased and transported school supplies and school uniforms without so much as a hiccup. Performed a difficult job with a smile and a laugh. Brought joy to all. Oh, and acted as my enforcer on grades and the importance of an education. Wasn't always sure exactly what she was saying but I know her words were heard and that they made an impact. Thank you Claudia!

The Mothers of the Sponsored Children - Stepped up and worked diligently to assure that the uniforms were ready for distribution and then jumped in and packed the sponsorship kids' backpacks. They were tireless, accurate and dedicated. Committed to their children's education. Humbled me seeing their love and joy in helping each other. Would be proud to have any of them work alongside me whenever they are available!

We saw 166 of our 205 sponsored children. Eight did not get their uniforms because they failed to bring their final 2012-13 grades. (154 provided final grades!) They, along with the 27 children we measured for uniforms in August, will have the opportunity to provide their final grades in October and receive their uniforms. If they do not, we will give their uniforms to children on our wait list. Our three high school graduates were honored with a celebration of their accomplishments and we distributed scholarship applications to the university students. Hopefully we will be receiving those applications in the coming days so that we may have our panel review and recommend to whom we should award the scholarships.

Finally, just a reminder that October is the month for sponsorship renewals. We will be sending out an email to our current sponsors requesting their continued support. I invite anyone who has an interest in sponsoring a child or children to visit the Sponsorship section of the website. It outlines the program and its goals and explains how donations will be used. In short, a \$100 donation provides a child with a school uniform and shoes, a backpack and school supplies in August as well as replenished supplies in October, December, February and April as well as a lightweight jacket, hygiene items and a small Christmas gift. If you have any questions, email me at melanie.fannin@mtmaustin.org.

MTM has been blessed with five years of unstinting support for the children in the colonia. Thank you for that support. We recognize that you have trusted us to fulfill the mission we have all been given. With your continued prayers and generosity we will continue that quest.

Website News – Refresh in Process

We have identified a young volunteer willing to help us with a website refresh and migration to a FREE broadcast email platform. **Colton Brugger** joins the MTM team as a sorely needed technical resource. We are so grateful for the time he has committed to date on this effort.



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

PHONE:
(512) 288-1621

E-MAIL:
info@mtmaustin.org



Find us on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mission-To-Mexico-Page>

The mission statement
for Mission to Mexico
Austin is found in the
Gospel of
Matthew 25: 34-40

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.mtmaustin.org

Editor: [Caryn Wontor](#)

URGENT NEEDS ...



- **Financial Donations to cover the monthly food despena and over the counter medications.**
- **Child Sponsor Renewals: Due November 30, 2013.** Please contact [Melanie Fannin](#) for additional information.

- **Donate online today by visiting our website at the link below:**

<http://www.mtmaustin.org/donations/index.html>

Donate Now

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION...

MTM is dedicated to helping the poor in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. Fostering faith, hope and love while living out the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25. Our objective is to provide the opportunity for any willing volunteer to serve the needs of their Christian brothers and sisters in the community of La Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles Parish in Colonia Voluntad y Trabajo III.

As we serve, we must keep in mind that we are there as much for our own spiritual growth, as we are to help the poor. While our presence there requires some degree of organization, we try to stay focused on the spirituality of the mission. It is a tool of evangelization, not just in a spiritual sense, but also in a very real physical sense. We are families serving families in the name of the Lord.

2013 Upcoming Events

- ▶ **10/11 - 10/12: Mission Trip**
- ▶ 10/8: Board Meeting
- ▶ 11/12: Board Meeting
- ▶ **12/6 - 12/7: Mission Trip**

2014 Tentative Mission Trips

- ▶ **February**
- ▶ **April**
- ▶ **June**
- ▶ **August (3 days trip)**
- ▶ **October**
- ▶ **December**

Mission to Mexico is a nonprofit charitable organization under section 501[c]3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

MISSION TO MEXICO

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

