



www.neverbehungry.net

Newsletter

October 2010 - December 2010

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Guatemala and El Salvador Newsletter. Thank you to all of our supporters -- we've seen some great success stories thanks to your generosity!

What is the Never be Hungry Food Program?

Many families in Guatemala and El Salvador live in poverty. Work is scarce, wages are low, and natural disasters are a regular occurrence. For these families, even the most basic necessities can be out of reach.

Never be Hungry donations help bring food, clothing, blankets, shelter, and medical care to families in extreme need. These sponsorships often supplement school sponsorships to ensure that kids don't have to drop out to help put food on the table.

Each family has their own story and unique set of needs. **You can help either through onetime donations or monthly sponsorships.** Read about what we've been doing in this fall below:

Lavosi News letter

We have recently finished classes for the school year here at LAVOSI. We had a great year in 2010! We started the school year in January with high hopes and just two elementary level students. News of our program and the opportunities we offer the deaf at LAVOSI spread throughout the community and we finished the year with fourteen students; ten elementary students and four pre-elementary students!

On the 22nd of October we had the closing ceremony at LAVOSI. The children shared songs and dances with friends and family. Seeing the children Interpret a song in sign language is like watching a beautiful dance! Later everyone joined in to sing "Imagine" by John Lennon in the Guatemalan Sign Language. It was the perfect ending to a fantastic year!

We will move to our new location in Jocotenango (just minutes by bus from Antigua) in early January. We have already set up an office in our new location in order to enroll students for the coming school year.

Finally, thanks to the Forix Foundation we will have the funds to hire two teachers for the 2011 school year. Thank you Ellen and all the fine folks at Forix for your support and faith in LAVOSI!



Free Medical Mission

In June we had the great pleasure and good fortune to have Monsignor Joseph Catrambone visit LAVOSI. It is always good to have the Monsignor with us as he always brings good cheer and goodies for the children and staff. This time he also brought Dr. Obed Luna, his wife Natasha and his niece Sarahi from El Salvador in order to put on a free medical clinic for our students, their families and the community. What a blessing it is to be able to offer this service to so many in the deaf community and the community at large that do not have access to medical care! Dr. Luna, Natasha and Sarahi and Monsignor spent two full days at LAVOSI and put in many hours organizing and implementing this event. To view this mission go to: <http://www.youtube.com/user/tioobed>

School Bus Opportunity

We have an exciting opportunity to obtain a 28-passenger school bus from the Montgomery County School District for only \$1,500; however, getting the bus to Lavosi, our school for the deaf in Antigua, Guatemala, is a bit challenging. The cost for shipping the bus is near \$8,000. The bus could be driven there for \$1,500, but at the cost of adding a lot of extra miles to the bus, not to mention the possibility for trouble en route.

Donation Updates

Understanding the economy, you may not be surprised to hear that this has not been our best year for donations. Please know that ANY amount you can send our way would be immensely appreciated, and every little bit does add up. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your consideration.

Adding to the great need this year is a relatively new law forbidding any adoptions outside of Guatemala. So, while more children are being brought to orphanages, fewer are being adopted-out. Please pray that this law will be repealed and that these children can find homes with loving families.

On a happy note, our Christmas Gift Campaign is going well!! Some Capitol One Banks as well as high schools and local businesses are collecting gifts for children in Guatemala and El Salvador. These gifts will arrive for the children in time for "Little Christmas," or, the Epiphany, on January the 6th.

Struggling to Stay in School

Schools are out for their three-month break, and we want to send a big thank you to everyone who sponsored a student this year-with your help, we've sponsored almost 500

children! But despite these progresses, many in are still without access to education: while 86% attend Primaria (elementary education), older students are often forced to drop out and work. Only 19.6% complete Básico (grades 7-9), and only 7.9% complete Carrera (grades 10-12).



The consequences of dropping out follow students for the rest of their lives. A Carrera education provides training for work in tourism, teaching, business, medicine, mechanical work or a host of other steady, higher-wage professions. Without this education, students are confined to unskilled labor-jobs that will never bring in more than a few quetzals a day.

A lack of education has particularly severe consequences for women. Without the physical advantage of men, many low-wage labor positions are denied to them, and they are forced to depend on the men in their lives. They are unable to leave if relationships turn abusive, and unable to support themselves if they are abandoned or widowed. Women without an education have on average more than double the number of children as their more educated counterparts, stretching their already limited resources even thinner.

The gift of a Elementary, Junior High School or a High School education will bring students benefits that last a lifetime. A sponsorship for a year for Elementary School costs \$180, Junior High School costs \$380, a year of High School costs \$480 and a University Education costs \$1,200 a year.

Milk for New Mothers

Guatemala Missions has also been working recently to expand its Milk Program, which exists to help poor mothers care for their infants. The cost of milk in this area is surprisingly high, and many people don't realize how hard it can be for new mothers to feed their children. Guatemala has one of the worst rates of chronic malnutrition in Latin America: 30% of pregnant women face nutritional deficits, and 68% of indigenous children suffer chronic malnutrition. Malnutrition for the mother has far-reaching consequences for the child. Without proper nutrition, her milk dries up, leaving her unable to breastfeed. This problem is compounded by the disproportionately high cost of milk in the area. For an infant who needs baby formula, the cost is \$54 per month. After a year, when the baby can drink milk, the cost is still \$30 per month. In a country where 21.5% of the population lives on less than \$1 a day, this is a prohibitively high cost for these many mothers. The most impoverished mothers are most at risk of seeing their milk drying up due to malnutrition, yet they are also the least likely to be able to afford milk or formula. With both natural milk and milk substitutes denied to them, they have no way of feeding their newborn children. This creates a vicious cycle of malnutrition. Over a third of babies between 3 and 23 months suffer from chronic malnutrition, and of that, 13% face severe malnutrition. The Milk Program helps these mothers break the cycle of malnutrition by providing milk to their newborn infants. To help us expand this program to more mothers, Please send your donation and write "Milk Program" in the details section.



To make a contribution:

Online: please go to our website: <http://www.neverbehungry.net/donations>

By check please send your tax deductible donation made out to Guatemala and El Salvador Children Mission Fund to:

Guatemala Mission
636 Lakeworth Dr
Gaithersburg, Md 20878

If you would like to give this gift in Honor of someone special, please send us an email at josephcatrambone@yahoo.com giving us the details and we will put them on our IN HONOR OFif you would like to include a photo of your "someone special" we will also post their photo.....to have an e-mail sent to the person you are honoring - please send us their email address.

From everyone at Guatemala and El Salvador Children's Mission, thank you for all of your generosity and support!



Sincerely,

**Thank you for your support.
Merry Christmas and a Blessed Happy New Year**

Monsignor Joseph Catrambone, Executive Director
Tel: 301-869-0852
www.neverbehungry.net

ABOUT US:

Guatemala Missions was created for the purpose of serving the poor and marginalized people of El Salvador and Guatemala and other impoverished areas. Projects are designed to enable Guatemala Missions to provide housing, hunger, health, sanitation and educational assistance to those most in need.