

The GOOD NEWS

Cuauhtémoc, Chihuahua

La Gran Familia

January 2020



ADRIANA

Adriana, came to LGF about 1 ½ years ago. Her father had died several years before and her mother is mentally ill. Her grandparents tried to care for her but they were desperately poor and brought her to LGF. She now is in her sophomore year at La Salle High School and is an excellent student. She lives at LGF from Sunday through Friday while attending school. She also works at a clothing store. Her salary goes to help support her elderly grandparents where she spends her weekends. She plans on going to a university in Cuauhtémoc and becoming a school teacher.

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL NINE BOYS: DIEGO COMES TO VISIT

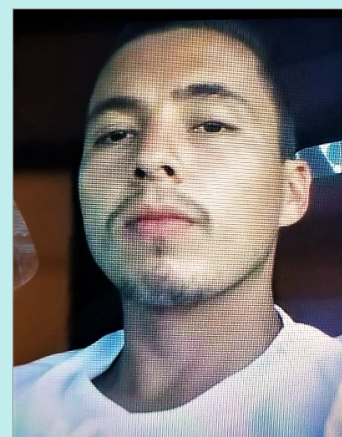
We don't always have opportunities to garner information regarding the early kids of LGF; however, when we do, it is reaffirming to know that we successfully rescued another child from the ravages on the streets of Mexico. Here is one such story. Recently, Diego visited with Martín at La Gran Familia for help and advice.

Between 1998 and 2001, Diego was the youngest of nine abandoned boys being cared for by Fr. Gregory Spinks, when he died of a heart attack in 2001. (Diego is shown in the picture below in front of Fr. Greg wearing an orange shirt.) He has warm memories of Fr.



Greg, mentioning how he “helped with homework, encouraged sports, taught us to pray, always had a smile and advised us to do good.”

Diego's mother had died of cancer and his father ran away, abandoning him to the poverty of his grandmother. He and his two brothers stayed at LGF for about a year after Fr. Greg's death and then they were taken to the United States illegally by a relative. One of the brothers committed suicide some years ago, but Diego attended high school in the U.S. and speaks English well.



above, Diego, now

Today, he is 26 years old, married, with a child, and had a good job working in the construction industry. In recent months, after a traffic violation, he was discovered to be an illegal immigrant and was quickly deported back to Mexico, leaving his family behind in the U.S.

“... Fr. Gregorio always had a smile and advised us to do good.”

He is trying to secure new employment in Canada, where he strongly hopes to immigrate legally so he can be reunited with his wife and child. If he can arrange to immigrate legally to Canada, LGF has committed to help with his travel expenses.

Our goal to keep all our kids (both current and former), on a path to success with assistance, resources, and advice, happens with your financial help. Sometimes, they come home.

LGF MOVES TONS OF FOOD TO THE BORDER

In the last four months of 2019, La Gran Familia has delivered over 75,000 meals to Gozo y Poder in El Paso that supplies food to about 30 feeding stations in Juárez, Mexico. The orphanages and shelters for stranded immigrants from Central America are requiring unusual amounts of food.

In December we also have provided 25,000 meals to Trinity on the Border (more on the left). They do extensive ministry in Harlingen, Texas and Matamoros, Mexico. They currently are helping to feed 1,000 Central American immigrants who live in a tent city on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande near Matamoros while awaiting permission to enter the United States.

The food is provided by “Kids Against Hunger,” a ministry in Weatherford, Texas. Youth groups in Weatherford join together and work an assembly line to prepare packages of dry food high in nutrients. All that is needed to prepare a healthy meal for six is one of the “Kids Against Hunger” packages, water, and a pot to cook it in. LGF provides transportation to ministries on the border who then get the food into Mexico. (Additional pictures below and on page 4)



TRINITY ON THE BORDER

Trinity on the Border is a chapel and outreach ministry working along the South Texas-Mexico border. Located in Harlingen, Texas, they labor with recent arrivals to the USA, and also with refugees awaiting entrance to USA and adjudication of their request for asylum. They do this in conjunction with *Asylum Seekers Resources Center, Catholic Charities of McAllen, and Team Brownsville.*

Your gift of food will go directly to these asylum seekers. They consist of about 1000 men, women, and children (mostly family units) from Central America. They have formed a tent city in Matamoros, Mexico right next to the international bridge leading into Brownsville, Texas.

In the last few months, in cooperation with their partners, they have been providing food, hygiene kits, tents, water buckets, and shower facilities for these folks. Their most recent initiative has been to start a service of healing and prayer each Wednesday in the tent city. They have a group of about 2 dozen adults and a greater number of children who attend.



WELCOME ANA

Newcomer at the home is Ana from Cuauhtémoc. She attends school with several of the kids from La Gran Familia. She is 16 years old and is an excellent student who is in her third semester of high school.



When she was nine years old, her mother died of a heart attack. Her father remarried, but his support for her has dwindled over the years. Feeling unwanted, Ana went to live with her older sister for a while, but there were many problems and she was often beaten.

On December 1st, she came to La Gran Familia searching for a place to live and also continue in school. Her sister has agreed to give up custody of her, and she will continue to live at LGF. She hopes to go to college and become a school teacher. Please pray for her, that she will thrive in her new environment and continue to excel in her studies.

THE INSTABILITY IN MEXICO IS CRITICAL: LGF HAS 48 CHILDREN

We have always said that we would limit the number of children at LGF to 40 children so that we maintain the feel of a family and not be some warehouse for needy children. However, several factors have caused the demand for child care in Mexico to expand.

It is estimated that there will be about 35,000 murders in the Republic of Mexico in 2019. A large percentage of those killed are young men from 18 to 35 years old. Most are fathers of young families. It is not hard to imagine that 80,000 to 100,000 children are left without fathers each year. Many of these shattered families will end up needing the assistance of orphanages or children's shelters like La Gran Familia.

Since the war between the narcos and the government started in 2006, it is estimated that over 150,000 have been killed. By comparison, the United States lost about 58,000 soldiers in Viet Nam and our population is double the population of Mexico.

The Lord has called us to be a haven for children, and we will step up to do all we can; made possible through your generous donations



FAMILY UPDATES

Unlike most of the kids at the home, **Joel** is from the immediate Cuauhtémoc neighborhood. As a young boy, he attended the church that Fr. Greg built. His mother is an alcoholic and was not able to care for him. His father died of esophageal cancer. He lived with his elderly grandmother, who didn't have the resources or patience to raise an energetic young boy. He has lived at La Gran Familia for about 10 years.

Now, in his last semester of high school, Joel is a compassionate and empathetic boy, so it is not surprising that he has plans to go to nursing school at a university in Cuauhtémoc. He is also a fine basketball player and he has received scholarships from La Salle School all through his high school years.

Ilda is seven years old and is from Urique in the lower Tarahumara region. She has no father and her mother works in the apple orchards. Her mother left her with her grandparents where she was beaten, so she brought her to La Gran Familia about 2 years ago. She has adapted well to LGF and is a happy child. She is now in first grade, but she has had difficulty learning Spanish. Please pray the tutors can help her.



Joel



Ilda

CUAUHTÉMOC, CHIHUAHUA

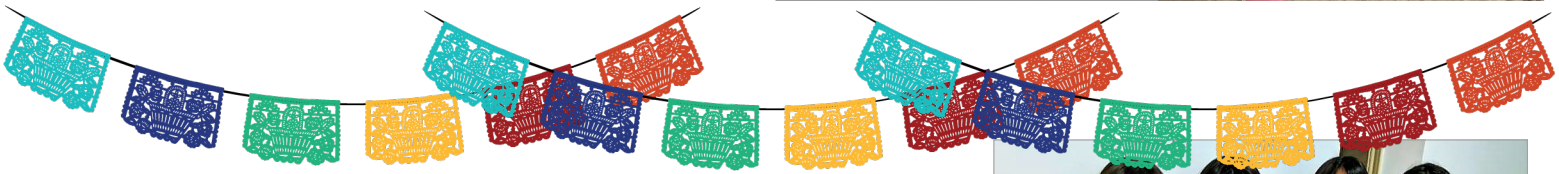
ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of La Gran Familia Inc. will be held at 1:30 PM on Saturday, April 4, 2020 at St. Vincent's Cathedral in Bedford, TX. It is hoped that all board members will attend. It is an open meeting, and all who wish to attend are welcome. The meeting usually lasts about two hours, and members of the La Gran Familia board from Mexico will be there as well. There will be more detailed information as we get closer to April, but mark April 4 on your calendars, and please try to attend

SOCCER STAND OUTS

FAMILIA DE GREGORY.A.C.

Seferino, Luis, Ángel and Josué, are part of a soccer football school. They train two days a week and play in local tournaments. This year 2020, they will attend a national tournament in the city of Mazatlan, Sinaloa. This sport has helped them to have health, mental distraction, discipline and motivation. They are from the best players on the team.



Little girls ready for bed



To you and yours, have a
Happy, Safe, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year