

Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage



Building Hope for Boys Without Families and Families Without Homes



MILESTONES AND MATCHING GRANT!

Greetings in the Lord at the beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year, September 1st! May God grant us a fruitful harvest!

Join us in our St. Innocent National Day of Collection on Sunday, October 8th as we celebrate the feast of St. Innocent we are asking our supporters to lead a collection in their parish for Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage.

Through God's grace we completed our 335th home this summer. Over the past 30 years we have changed the lives of thousands of Mexicans trapped in economic poverty. In this accomplishment we are reminded of how the Lord is working in the details throughout the ministry of Project Mexico.

This year, we built a new home design improving the house for the families in three important ways. The cubic space has doubled, the longevity of the house is increased by the materials being of higher quality, and the metal framing actual serves as a reflectant to make the rooms brighter inside. The fruit of this past year has come from the sacrifice of faithful Orthodox Christians ready to use their five fingers, pick up an electric drill and change lives.

This spirit of service continues as we enter the Fall and Winter where we have expanded our homebuilding program to offer two opportunities to Get Involved with weekend trips, painting and building panels for next summer's homes. Sign up today!

The St. Innocent School saw the first graduating class of four boys this Spring. Three of our oldest boys finished junior high and entered into one of the most prestigious high school in Tijuana, while the other received a scholarship to an art school for his photography. This is quite an accomplishment as most Mexican students never finish

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»»» Our Mission «««

Project Mexico performs works of mercy and helps others do works of mercy in the name of Jesus Christ, transcending cultural barriers by building homes for the poor in Mexico and by providing a home for orphaned boys through St. Innocent Orphanage.

»»» Our Values «««

Acts of Mercy, Excellence, Education, Love & Compassion, Mission Work, Strategic Partnerships, and Witness.

»»» Our Thanks «««

Thank you to those who graciously donated to School Buddies!

SHARING HOPE

Tell us your stories!

We'll share your stories of hope and mercy with our Project Mexico Community.

Send Stories and Photos to:
buildinghope@projectmexico.org

Or Tag us on Social:



GRASS ROOTS THEOSIS

In the Orthodox tradition we ambitiously rise to the challenge in following the will of God. The Lord commands us “to be perfect as the Father is perfect.” (Matt. 5:48) Reflecting on what it means to be more like God we look at the Greek word for God – *Theos*. The root meaning of *Theos* refers to seeing and perceiving. With this in mind we understand God as all seeing and all perceiving. There are no secrets from Him. Obviously we cannot become all seeing, but a part of Theosis is widening our ability to perceive and increasing our perspective. Serving as philanthropic missionaries for the Lord through Project Mexico stretches our volunteers in Theosis by expanding their perspective of the suffering of others. Here in Tijuana a grass roots transformation is happening. By spending days, weeks, and months with the afflicted children and marginalized families, the faithful who come to serve receive a larger understanding of the trials that the needy endure. Getting a glimpse of the sadness of an abandoned child or the hardship of having no running water or plumbing for a bathroom is not only eye opening but leads us down the road of deification (becoming God-like). An excellent example of this was when several of our summer college interns helped the boys of the orphanage in their ranch chores. In pulling weeds and grass out by the roots, they worked side by side visiting with these children and received a glimpse of a life struck by abandonment. The missionaries’ perspective was opened and their journey to God was continued. Truly Project Mexico encourages a grass roots process of Theosis.

The other perspective that missionaries receive is the grasping of God’s plan for us in eternity. This might seem very abstract, but salvation that lasts forever is key to Christian hope and perseverance. We are able to fight the good fight to the end because we understand that the sacrifices we make now are truly worth the effort. The suffering and hurt of the innocent is palatable only if there



is something greater waiting in the life to come. If our existence is nothing more than a handful of years and then we die, then this world is malicious. When you see the undeniable difficulties of this life, whether the evil abuse of a young soul or the never-ending burden of labor, we realize that there has to be more. Here south of the border in an Orthodox Christian context we unpack the difficulties so our eyes are opened to God’s plan for us: to live forever without suffering. Yes once

again Theosis occurs by expanding our understanding and knowing that eternity exists after this world giving us the strength to truly live today. And through God’s grace we become more like Him through the grass roots.

Fr. Nicholas L. Andruchow, M.DIV. ’02,
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Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage
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their education past the 7th grade. The boys’ persistence and willingness to grow has truly born fruit.

As we wrap up the summer we look forward to 2017’s Annual Matching Grant Program, your sponsorship will ensure we finish this year stronger and more stable than ever before. Plan your year-end giving today.

To date we have \$55,000 committed, which is very encouraging. By the end of September we hope to have all \$200,000 in sponsorships secured. If you want to be a Matching Grant Sponsor, contact me today as your matching donation provides the seed money that helps us raise 50% of our annual budget this year.

In 2017, much change has happened and the future is open to great possibilities. Together as faithful Christians we can fulfill God’s Will. Your attentiveness and consideration is tremendously appreciated. Please keep us in your prayers and all of us here at Project Mexico and the St. Innocent Orphanage look forward to your generous response and support in our St. Innocent Orphanage National Day of Collection.

With the love of Christ,

James P. Andrews, Executive Director, Project Mexico
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GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Glory to God, over the course of this past month we have been able to rejoice in the graduation of six of our boys into different stages of life!

Paul graduated from high school with high marks and has been accepted to Universidad Autonoma de Baja California. In January 2018, Paul will begin classes majoring in History and has expressed a passion and desire to teach and write historical texts. We are proud of Paul's dedication to school and ability to enter into this prestigious public university. Sponsor his college journey today!



Ignacio, Efrain, Anselmo, and Kevin represent our first generation of homeschool graduates! They worked hard over the past three years, increasing their knowledge and maturing into responsible and engaged students. Ignacio, Anselmo, and Efrain are headed to Ibero, one of the best private Jesuit high schools in Tijuana.

Kevin, on the other hand, will be attending Altazor, a private high school dedicated to teaching the visual arts. A gifted photographer with an excellent eye, this is a great step forward for Kevin as he continues to develop as an artist and visual storyteller.

One of our younger boys, Valentin graduated sixth grade! This earnest young man has overcome daunting obstacles with grace and perseverance. We are pleased and proud to announce Valentin will be entering the St. Innocent Homeschool Program, blessing our dedicated teachers with his pleasant and loving demeanor.

Graduations are always a time for celebration as it reminds us that change and forward progress is possible. We are grateful to our teachers Charity, Leo and Noelle. They have worked so hard to ensure that our boys receive the guidance necessary to accomplish their goals.

NEW FALL PROGRAMS

We're happy to announce the debut of two new volunteer opportunities to the Project Mexico experience: Project Mexico "Painting Hope," and Project Mexico "Panel Jamboree."

Project Mexico "Panel Jamboree" is offered for both individual and groups. Spend a long weekend with us at the Ranch building and assembling panels for family homes for the Spring and Summer 2018 Build Season. This is a great opportunity to, collaborate, connect and celebrate hope while contributing to a crucial need for the build season.

Project Mexico "Painting Hope" is a new way for volunteers to continue their ministry by supporting the legacy established during the summer build season.

We'll be painting houses in the neighborhoods where we've built over the summer using the traditional lime wash application process. Volunteers will receive instruction in mixing and methods of painting and have a chance to connect with the families of Tijuana and make a difference in their quality of life.

Summer Registration will begin in October. Last year over 800 people signed up in two hours, so plan accordingly and get your group together now. This year you will be able to begin fundraising sooner than in the past. Sign up on the mailing list to receive updates and check our homebuilding website at www.projectmexico.org/homebuilding or call (619) 426-4610 for more information.

GET INVOLVED!

Internships Open

Will you heed the call? Help us build hope! Summer 2018 Internship Applications are due Nov. 30, 2017. Apply online at projectmexico.org/get-involved.

Pantry Partners

Help feed the growing boys of Saint Innocent Orphanage by donating towards our pantries via our new virtual pantry partners! Please visit us at: projectmexico.org/get-involved or call us at (619) 426-4610.

School Buddies

Individuals, small groups or parishes can sign up to sponsor any one of our boys' education. Become a School Buddy today and help make a difference. For more information on becoming a School Buddy and to sign up visit: projectmexico.org/school-buddies-2017.

Project Mexico: Build

You can participate by donating toward our Ranch Beautification Project at www.projectmexico.org/donate or call us at (619) 426-4610.

INTERN HOUSING: Two houses - \$25,000 - MET!, and a duplex - \$50,000

SCHOOL RECREATION ROOM BUILDING: \$75,000

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT PROGRAM: A new van - \$30,000

ENSENADA CORNER HOUSE COMPLETION: \$25,000 - MET!

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BUILDING: Furnish Tools - \$10,000

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT: Improve sanitation station - \$1,500

BEAUTIFICATION WORK ROOM: Complete icons of Sts. Innocent & Jakov Netsvetov, and Sts. Herman & Peter Aleut - \$5,000

Project Mexico of the Orthodox Church



Building Hope for Boys Without Families and Families Without Homes

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San Diego, CA

Sponsor the costs of educating one of our boys by becoming a School Buddy for the 2017-2018 school year.

Pray for us and sign up to receive our quarterly emails to pray for all of the petitions of our ministry.

Fill our pantry with from a donation drive to collect food and supplies for our growing boys.

**HELP US
BUILD
HOPE!**

Build a home on a building trip and change the life of a needy family in Mexico.

Give the gift of donating on a monthly basis as a sustaining member of our ministry.

Plan a fundraiser to help us meet some of our ongoing and top needs.

SWIM FOR HOPE SEPTEMBER 16, 2017

Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage celebrates another year under God's mercy and protection. We rejoiced alongside our dear friend, Father Simeon Corona and his annual Swim for Hope on Sept. 16. They swam and kayaked 18.5 kilometer/ 11.6 miles around the Coronado Islands in celebration of his birthday, raising over \$13K for the orphanage!



HOMEBUILDING

We launched the homebuilding season on May 22 and hosted 512 volunteers from parishes across the country during the summer. We introduced traditional Lime Wash into our mission in the Tijuana Area. The watery white paint is "washed" onto the houses we build, leaving them finished with a stronger and more inviting exterior.

We were blessed by guest speakers like Father Martin Ritsi, Father Evan Armatas, Father Luke Veronis and Father Jordan Brown who helped guide our spiritual program as volunteers sought a deeper understanding of Christ's love through acts of mercy.

By August 22 our final team of volunteers from Washington, Colorado, Philadelphia, Michigan, Virginia,



Utah and BC Canada were departing for home after completing our twenty-fifth home of the summer.

Next Year we celebrate 30 years!

For more information, please visit us at www.projectmexico.org/get-involved or call our office at (619) 426-4610.

GET INVOLVED! Contact 619.426.4610 OR projectmexico.org/get-involved