

Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage



Building Hope for Boys Without Families and Families Without Homes



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING HOPE

As we move through the end of these cold winter days and towards the promise of spring, hope and light opens the opportunity for expanding our outreach to families in the community in honor of our 30th Homebuilding season.

Opportunity guides our efforts into the home building season as we expand our outreach to the poor, providing new opportunities for families through Painting Hope and Panel Jamborees. These are ways to expand our volunteer engagement throughout the year.

This spring break we have two trips with groups from churches, Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) and Holy Cross Hellenic College that will come to beautify our Ranch and prepare paint and panels for our summer builds.

Volunteers for Painting Hope will produce lime and lime paint to beautify the neighborhoods: this summer, while we build homes for one family, we will be painting neighbors' houses in the vicinity! Volunteers in the Panel Jamboree will construct the panels we use to build our homes in the summer! We will also be applying a colored layer of plaster to the west wall of our Pavilion in preparation for our Project Mexico History Mural which will feature a sgraffito displaying our story! We will also paint the boys' rooms and other structures on site and repair and renew the Ranch in preparation for the summer!

This will provide three critical needs: panel fabrication for Project Mexico's home building season; teach trade skills to our boys and volunteers; create an additional source of monetary support for our programs.

This year, we are planting seeds for a stronger Faithful Friends program. Sign up today and receive a Mexican Komboskini Wrist Prayer Rope! Funding and resources for our boys is our top priority as they grow and eventually transition into adulthood and independence. Make a difference and become a Faithful Friend today by joining our monthly giving program at projectmexico.org/faithfulfriends.

Faithfully Yours,

James P. Andrews, Executive Director, Project Mexico
jp@projectmexico.org | (303) 807-7772

»»» 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 the individual donors and the Global Rotary Grant that provided our vocational education shop! We have just completed it and are excited to set up the tools we've been waiting so long to install.

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:



RHYTHM OF REPENTANCE by Fr. Nicholas L. Andruchow



Christ came as God into the world as a man, as a child, as an infant. He historically laid in a manger, truly vulnerable to the brutality of the world. His life and sacrifice was shared with the world, beginning with the Apostles and passed down through the centuries so we can believe and have hope. God does not abandon us. Eventually some of the details of His ministry were written down in what we know as the Gospels. Through the perspective of St. Mark we know that the followers of Christ received baptism in order to repent and have their sins taken away. This baptismal cleansing is sealed with the proclamation of their committed sins. As the Gospel begins with reconciliation so should our lives (Mark 1:4-5).

It is impossible and overwhelming to be conscious of all of our transgressions and for this reason when we ask the Lord to take away our sins, we ask Him to take away those offenses committed knowingly and unknowingly. During the Nativity season as a community, we sang the Christmas carol, *The Little Drummer Boy*. Just as we imitate the playing of the drum, “Paaaa pum pum pum pum pum Rum pum pum pum ...” we strive to live a life in Christ through constant repentance, like the drumming of

a small boy offering up his sacrifice to God. As stated in the mentioned Gospel, confession of sins and repentance is tightly connected. For this reason, when we prepare for the feasts of the Church, we admit our mistakes in the sacrament of Confession as a subtle beat setting the rhythm of our Christian life.

Project Mexico and the St. Innocent Orphanage is a community with the goal to be unified in the Lord’s love. All are encouraged to draw near, confess their sins and receive true forgiveness from the loving Lord. St. Porphyrios from Greece, who passed away in 1991, labored to form communities of healing, love and repentance. He envisioned the faithful being unified in a state of paradise where men and women would gather to receive God’s forgiveness so that the worldly infirmities would be overcome (*Wounded by Love*, pg. 79-80, 2005).

Whether in Tijuana, Mexico, suburban America or the villages of Greece we can live the rhythm of repentance, so that through the beating of our heart and through the Godchild, our sins are taken away. †

Fr. Nicholas L. Andruchow, M.DIV.
'02, Priest and Associate Director of
Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage
fnicholas@projectmexico.org

COME TOGETHER

Come and fill us and our world with your majesty. We, implore you to stay awhile with us so we may learn by your shimmering light how to look beyond complexion and see community.

– A Christmas Poem, Maya Angelou

Like for most families, Christmas is a time to slow down, spend time together, and rejoice in the Birth of our Lord and Savior. This year, we came racing into the Nativity season very busy with all of the year’s happening, however, a week or so before Christmas all of these things came screeching to a halt as we welcomed the birth of Jesus. We took time together to feed the homeless, serve the 400 orphaned children still at the temporary shelter, attend church services, and sit peacefully in the company of one another. This year the light of Christmas came shining in with brilliance as we learned more than ever about the importance of community and our union through our beautiful faith. We are grateful to all that made Christmas at the orphanage possible in little and big ways. May we continue to see this light as we transition into the beginning of a new year. Glory to God! †

Madi Franck, Orphanage Director of
Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage,
madi@projectmexico.org

FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL (FDF)

"Let them praise His name with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp." – Psalm 149:3

With over 4,000 in attendance this was one of the largest FDF competitions; this included 108 dance and choral groups participating and over 3,000 individuals competing.

Uplift was the theme of the 42nd annual Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival (FDF) and that was the mood of the four-day event. This year it was held in the beautiful city by the bay, San Francisco and took place in mid-January 2018.

The vision statement of the FDF is: "The FDF encourages and continues the Orthodox faith, Greek heritage and culture among individuals, families and communities by expressing it through folk dance, folk art, music and language." Their goal is: "To



our work and inspire many to participate. We networked with priests from the San Francisco Metropolis and from across the country.

This year we were very fortunate to have our Executive Director, JP Andrews, Fr. Nicholas Andruchow and his son Luke Andruchow, help to man our booth along with other volunteers. There is always an excitement and a curiosity from those in attendance, which leads to many interesting conversations. This is a huge opportunity to present Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage to a vast number of people. We had an uplifting weekend, inspiring many to participate in Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage. We look forward to participating again at next year's FDF! †

Pres. Maria Margaritis, *Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage Volunteer*

HOMEBUILDING

Happy New Year from the homebuilding team! Since registration for summer homebuilding opened on November 1, 2017 we have been busy making plans and lining up the groups for another successful summer program. Summer 2018 is going to sneak up on all of us and it feels that much closer as we hear from our volunteers who are busy gathering their teams to make the trek down this summer to serve with us.

Something we love to do in the less busy fall months is to visit families we have built homes for in the past by checking in and making sure everything is going well in their new home. The families we visited were Maribel and Graciano who received a home built by the volunteers of Holy Trinity from Overland Park, Kansas in July, 2017.

Continued on page 4

HOMEBUILDING NEEDS

Download the Homebuilding Summer Needs list: www.projectmexico.org/homebuilding/resources.

MEDICAL/FIRST AID SUPPLIES

- Gauze pads (all sizes)
- Band-aids (all sizes)
- Neosporin / Antibacterial ointment
- Medical tape
- Gauze bandage rolls
- Saline Solution
- Antibacterial soap
- Medical Scissors
- Tweezers
- Hand Sanitizer
- Latex medical gloves
- Ace bandage wraps
- Q-tips
- Antiseptic wipes
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Splints
- Ice/Heat Packs
- Sterile pads
- Steri strips
- Triangular bandages
- Moleskines
- Alcohol wipes
- Nail clippers
- Baby wipes
- Thermometers

MEDICATIONS/PAIN RELIEF

- Cough Drops / Dayquil / Nyquil
- Pepto Bismol
- Antacid / Tums
- Imodium
- Benadryl / Allergy Medications
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Antihistamine cream
- Electrolyte Powder
- Adult & Child Acetaminophen / Tylenol

- Adult & Child NSAIDs / Aspirin / Ibuprofen
- Adult & Child Epinephrine Pens

PAPER GOODS / DESECHABLES

- Plates
- Cups
- Bowls
- Napkins
- Toilet Paper
- Paper towels
- Ziploc bags
- Plastic Cutlery

CLEANING SUPPLIES / BATHROOM

- Gel / liquid hand soap
- Trash bags (10-55 gal)
- Surface cleaner / bathroom cleaner
- Spray bottles
- Sponges
- Windex
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Hand lotion

WORK SITE / TOOLS

- Sharpies
- Drill bits (Phillips head)
- Waterproof gardening gloves
- Canvas gloves
- Protective eye goggles
- Utility knife/blades
- Duct tape
- Tape measures (30 foot)
- Expanding foam
- Ryobi drill batteries
- Impact drivers (drills)
- Paint brushes
- Tar scrapers

Project Mexico of the Orthodox Church



Building Hope for Boys Without Families and Families Without Homes

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Go to weblink.donorperfect.com/faithfulfriends



HOMEBUILDING, *from page 3*

Maribel told us of a miracle that transpired on Christmas Eve, 2016. She had recently become a Christian and had formed connections with an evangelical church in the area. The family was struggling to make ends meet. Graciano had begun training as a welder but they didn't have enough money to put dinner on the table that evening. She prayed that God would provide for their family. That evening, several men from the church appeared at their door with soup and gifts for the children. She said, "If you trust in God no challenge is too great."

We look forward to meeting the families we will build for this coming summer!

We are also hosting two Spring Break trips for college age students May 9-15 and May 19-24. If you are interested in registering for a Spring Break trip, contact us at homebuilding@projectmexico.org! †

Erik Swanson, *Work Trip Coordinator of Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage*, homebuilding@projectmexico.org. Erik is joined in his ministry by his wife, Rebekah.

FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Faithful Friends are the cornerstone of Project Mexico & St. Innocent Orphanage's mission. With your monthly donation, we are able to continue caring for the poor and orphaned of Mexico. As a Faithful Friend you will benefit our ministry by providing a stable source of income for the continued operation of the orphanage.

As a Faithful Friend, you will receive:

- + Komboskini Knotted Prayer Rope from Mexico City
- + Hassle-free giving via automated donations

- + Update, increase, or alter your pledge at any time
- + Annual donation statements for tax preparation
- + News and updates about the boys and our ministry

Start your monthly pledge today!

For more information or to sign up go to www.projectmexico.org/faithful-friends. †

Virtual Pantry Partners

Contribute virtually towards our Pascha, Homebuilding and Top Needs on our Virtual Pantry Partners at projectmexico.myshopify.com/collections/virtual-pantry-partners. To donate to our paschal celebrations go directly to projectmexico.myshopify.com/collections/holy-pascha.

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