



TOR AND HOLGER WITH SOME CHILDREN OUTSIDE
THE HOME "LA FE".

*Financial help will be gratefully
received at:*

*Layman Action for Children, Inc.
P.O. Box 83023
Los Angeles, CA 90083*

*For any questions, write to:
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Southampton, PA 18966*



A NEW CHALLENGE FOR US IN TORREON, MEXICO?

Try to imagine that you are on a bus which has stopped at the station in the city of Torreon, Mexico. The bus is very crowded, because for most people, this is the only mode of transportation they can afford. The bus driver permits a young man on board and he speaks so all can hear him: "Passengers, I am in charge of a children's home where we are facing great needs for food, clothes and other things for sustaining over 70 children. Therefore I am asking you, trusting in your good will, to help us with whatever donation you can!"

These were the words of Mario Iturbe, who along with his wife Laura feed and house homeless children by asking for money from their fellow Mexicans. Some of the 12-13 year olds also must go out to beg for enough money to exist in a family of abandoned children.

My wife, May, and I were visiting our projects in Torreon with Mr. Holger Hansson and his wife Ingrid from Sweden when we learned of the home started by this Mexican couple. We were curious about these unusual people and wanted to meet them and their children.

Our wish was granted. Rebeca, our worker for the Breakfast Feeding and Student Programs in Torreon, drove us to the place they called "Hogar de Ninos La Fe" (The Faith, Children's Home). What we saw is hard to describe in a few words: a two room house with one kitchen and one bedroom. The seven babies, still in diapers, slept on the only bed. We were told that at night blankets were spread on the concrete floor where 29 of the younger children slept like sardines in a can. The older slept wherever they could in the small yard. One large table was set up outside with blankets over-head for shade. This was the dining room, school room, church and the place to entertain us as guests.

layman **action** for children, inc.
P.O. Box 83023 Los Angeles, Ca. 90083

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As a non-profit, interdenominational organization, it is our goal to respond to the needs of the under privileged children of the world. It is our belief that these needs must be met at all levels in a child's life - we must relate to the total being: the physical, the mental, the spiritual. When put into ACTION, this means providing food, shelter, and clothing to meet the children's physical needs; providing educational opportunities to enrich and enhance the mental capacities of the children; and providing the opportunity for worship thus encouraging spiritual growth.

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TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE
MAILED TO THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

Many children swarmed around us. They seemed so happy they had a place to call their own where they knew someone cared for them. Mario told us that most of the children were in school at the time we visited. It was hard to imagine so many living in a total property space of about 30 X 50 feet. Some also came there just for meals and activities. The total number of children served were 110 in June when we visited.

A local Mexican newspaper had interviewed this couple and asked: Why do you do this? Mr. Iturbe was quoted saying: "We are Christians and we have in our hearts love for our neighbor and mainly for the children." Mr. Iturbe came from Mexico City to start this ministry last February. He is educated as a Public Accountant and Teacher and could have a more comfortable life for his family if he chose. Together the couple teach and tutor their children in classes from Kindergarten to sixth grade under the blanket shade of their "school room". Later the same place becomes a church or a recreation area.

We heard several background stories of the children who had been left at the home. They were the same sad stories we have heard so many times at our other homes. Many are children of drug and alcohol addicts, many from single or widowed and unemployed parents. Many are just abandoned begging on the street to stay alive.

Our big joy of this trip to Torreon was that the Mexican adult volunteers, which we have been encouraging, decided to form an organization is called PRONIMEX (Protection of Children in Mexico). The members of this organization come from different Christian churches in Torreon.

PRONIMEX decided that their first project would be the "La Fe" home. I pledged that I would write to you, the donors, and ask if you could give a little extra for the child-

ren of Torreon. Our friends from Sweden pledged their support toward a larger place for children to live in. We in United States and Norway don't want the children to go begging in the streets to just stay alive. They need to go to school and make a better future for Mexico! LET'S HELP THEM!

I believe God is showing us a way to act out: "What you have done for the least of these, you have done for Me". Basic food for each children for a day costs 2500 Pesos or 1 Dollar. The monthly cost based on our other homes, is about \$60 for each child when you add the cost of clothes, school uniforms, books, and the operation of a home with a Christian environment.

I pray that you can give a little extra so I can tell Mario and Laura they have some partners in the ministry to the homeless and poor children in Torreon. Any publicity for this need you can give to friends and organizations would be appreciated. If you need more information write to us.

Tor . . .



A little girl standing in the doorway of the home.



Dinner time at the outside combination dining room, school room, church, and recreation area.



Children sleeping on the floor like sardine, inside the same doorway.

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MAMA PAULITA CHILDRENS HOME

The children greeted us with a show-and-tell at the trade school. The skills demonstrated were: cooking, typing, stenography, hairdressing, sewing, welding, and modern folk dancing by the youth. There are 52 healthy children at the home. Waiting for the activities of summer.

LA FAMILIA CHILDREN'S HOME

31 children were happy to see us. Holger had not visited for three years and many new faces were there. David Aguilar has decided to start his own career, so the home missed his work. Thanks David for many years of service!

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CASA CRISTIANA DE CINCO BANDERAS - MONTERREY

Our new youth home was officially opened for young people. Bunk beds for 16 boys are in place. Four boys from Casa Hogar Mama Paulita will be moving in August. Several others will join them in studies for jobs after approval by the house governing board. Esteban and Dora Valdes, who are the house parents, have already helped register some for technical schools nearby.

We have decided to postpone admission for girls till additional seperated dormitory and bath facilities are built. Plans are being prepared by a Mexican volunteer architect and we have been talking to volunteer U.S.A. building groups.

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GOSPEL OUTREACH CLUBS - IN AREAS OUTSIDE MONTERREY

Martha Flores, our program coordinator, writes to us that on April 30, Mexico celebrates Children's Day. The Gospel Outreach teachers prepared six club parties in areas where the children live. They had snacks, candies and pinatas, their usual Bible lessons and singing. Each group had from 15 to 30 children. One group had used clothing for distribution to families. If anyone is U.S.A. has any good used children and youth clothes to donate, please send to Mr. Eustolio Gonzales, 3505 Toronto Ave., McAllen Texas, 78501. He promises to transport your gifts to Monterrey.

Martha also writes: "I want to share with you one story from Norma and her assistant club teacher. They meet with one of the less fortunate groups. Some of those children have never been outside their slum colony so any new experiences are of great significance for them. This time Eustolio took all the children to Norma's house in his big station wagon. They were so happy and amazed at the new world shown to them. After the Bible class, the telephone rang. We discovered they had never seen a phone. They were astonished and asked: "Is it true you can hear something?" And when they saw another person pick up the extension and share in the conversation, they were even more surprised."

Martha thanks you for your specified gifts which help bring Christ and many happy moments to these children. A special thanks to two United Methodist Churches in Pennsylvania, which made this mission project part of their Sunday School and Vacation Bible School programs.

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STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

We visited the home of Veronica, one of our Secretarial School graduates. In the two room house with dirt floor and tin roof we were offered to sit on the family bed. The father was crippled from diabetes and the mother had to support five children by outside work. For three years you helped Veronica buy clothes needed to make her look like a secretary, pay her bus fare to school, buy her books and school fees. Now she is graduating with a skill and can help her family. The picture can't describe the appreciation of the parents. We were happy to be there and celebrate the joy from your donations to this student.

