



PROJECT ChildHelp

Volume I, Issue I

June 25, 2000

Who We Are

Project ChildHelp, Inc. is a non-profit Christian organization under laws of the state of Florida. We are dedicated to reaching out to the forgotten children in the orphanages of the **Dominican Republic** by providing humanitarian relief and meeting their spiritual needs.

Why We Exist

Our purpose is to provide the resources to meet the needs of these children by providing humanitarian aid. Additionally, as a Christian-based organization, we will communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to all children.

What We Will Do

We will provide humanitarian relief to meet the most basic human needs (i.e., food, clothing, diapers, vitamins, medicine, immunizations, etc.). Through a cooperative effort with local churches and concerned local citizens in the Dominican Republic, we will help establish an on-going support plan where local Christians will be challenged to a deeper involvement. This aspect of the ministry will be overseen by volunteers of APEN in the Dominican Republic (This organization is recognized in the United States as CEF-Child Evangelism Fellowship). **Project ChildHelp** will assist these volunteers by inviting them to play an important role in bringing new life to their own forgotten children.

How We Will

Through teams of committed Prayer Partners and individual Christian prayer warriors throughout the U.S. and the Dominican Republic, to intercede daily for the needs of the mission, personnel, volunteers and of course, the children. Additionally, we will be assisted by the people whom God will send our way to support **Project ChildHelp**, not just financially, but also through their skills, talents and God-given gifts.

A Vision's Beginning

By Lourdes (Lori) Belette Valladares

As many of you know, the creation of **Project ChildHelp, Inc.** resulted from my missions trip to the Dominican Republic through Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) for six weeks last summer. What you might not know is that this trip set off the start of a desire that I have had growing in my heart for many years. My desire had always been to help children in need, especially children that were orphaned for one reason or another. This desire was confirmed in my heart in April 21, 1991 when I asked Christ to be my personal Savior.



Boy, 15, being treated for bedsores by two nurses from our team

Though I had not seen it, I knew that there existed places where these children lived in substandard conditions. Sure, I had read about it and even seen documentaries on television throughout the years, but never could I have been prepared for what God allowed me to see for myself. You see, though I did not know for certain until just days before my departure as to what country I would be going to with my then five year-old daughter, Danielle, one thing I knew for sure. I asked God that I wanted to be broken that summer with the things that break His heart. And show me He did.

My trip took two roads. During most of the day, I would minister to children in summer camps, churches, playgrounds, and theaters. I applied what I had learned during my two-week training with CEF, being a preschool teacher and my love of children to share Jesus with them through Bible stories, songs, puppets, etc. But in the afternoons or evenings, I was taken to the "forgotten children."

See page 3 "His Hands at Work" for continuation to the story

Project ChildHelp Reveals God's Miracles, Mercy & Healing In Action

by Stacy Massengill

A small group of people on a mission to heal, comfort and spread God's love, experienced a miracle within the first hours of their trip. God's mercy and healing is taking place as you read.

On March 25 - April 1, eleven missionaries from the Miami and St. Petersburg area set out for two orphanages hidden discreetly in the country of the Dominican Republic. The team's goal was to help in any way possible.

The orphanages, located in the capital city of Santo Domingo, are not your "normal" orphanages in that they accommodate seventy children each, ranging in ages from newborn to young adult in some of the most detestable conditions you can imagine. The children have little food or water, some on the brink of starvation, few clothes, limited medical supplies. Most do not have diapers to keep them from soiling themselves over and over and then sleeping in it for hours or possibly days as there are few caretakers to look after the children. The needs seemed insurmountable in comparison to manpower. As always, God is faithful and revealed His presence early on.

Through the generosity and donations of many, **Project ChildHelp** collected clothing, sheets, medicines, diapers, cleaning solutions,

baby formula, toys and much more to be taken to the children. All of the items, when sorted and totaled, weighed at more than 600 lbs. over and beyond the airline allowance. This would normally seem to indicate a problem for the missionaries who did not have much money in their pockets or checkbook to pay for items to be sent. When it was time to pay, the American Airlines employee miraculously explained that there would be no charge for the goods to be shipped now or in the future. God was paving the way.

Once the missions team arrived, the healing and comforting began with meeting basic human needs of the children including feeding and providing water, bathing, treating minor ailments and tube feeding those who could not take food by mouth. The theme that rang through each day was God's presence in the people and their efforts. Lori (Belette) Valladares, founder of **Project ChildHelp** said, "God gave incredible strength to each person, strength that they may not have known they had." God gave Goliath strength and determination to those



Severely malnourished children waiting to be loved, fed, bathed...

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH A FRIEND

If you think your friends and/or family would like to receive our newsletter, please return the following portion to us.

Thank you for helping us spread the news about these children and their needs.



PROJECT ChildHelp

66 West Flagler Street, 2nd Floor • Miami, FL 33130

Yes, I would like to receive the newsletter from **Project Childhelp**.
Please put me on your mailing list.

Name _____

Address _____

State _____ City _____ Zip _____

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involved so they could stand the stench, the sites, to work with the disease and ailments, to provide healing and comfort and to spread God's love.

Daily miracles provided for further strength and encouragement. Just at the moment someone would comment that a certain medical supply was needed, it would be discovered packed away in one of the many hundreds of boxes of supplies. Through faith, prayer and perseverance, needs were being met one by one.

Lives were changed on this trip as each in the group seemed to connect with one or two children in a special way. Pastor Comesañas met Wendy; Wendy is blind. The doctor that examined her eyes, however, thinks there may be an operation that could cure her sight. Pastor Comesañas has arranged for an eye surgeon to visit with Wendy next month to see what might be done to help her regain her sight.

There are two children, Capuchino and another little girl, who are kept in captivity under some steps as well as outdoors in the orphanage. It is yet unclear as to why they are caged. Due to spreading their story with others upon return to the States, a donation was made specifically to help these children gain better living accommodations.

Additional accomplishments included the installation of a donated stereo system to pipe music into all the rooms of one of the orphanages. Even some of the most unresponsive children seemed to come alive when the sound of music filled the air. The team also hired repairmen to fix broken burner on stoves, to repair a window, purchase a new refrigerator, set up a TV & VCR that had been donated and most significantly, hired three staff people to include a full-time nurse, a child care worker and an administrator and liaison between the U.S. and the Dominican Republic to oversee proper use of donations.

If eleven people can accomplish all of this in one short week, think of the opportunities for your helping hand and comforting, prayer-filled heart. No matter how small your donation of time, effort or money, the children need you.

His Hands At Work

Continues from page 1
"A Vision's Beginning"

"Hermana Tata" (sister Tata), as she is affectionately known to children and adults all over town, as well as a volunteer of CEF in her country, lead me to the children. A five-story building, looking average from the outside, gave no clue as to what one could expect to see inside. There were probably seventy children laying in beds, mattresses, bare floors, and some were even tied or kept inside cages. I was told that many had severe mental disabilities and were a danger to others and themselves, and because of lack of personnel to oversee all the children, it was necessary to keep them in these cages. As shocking as this was to see, this was not all. The children looked severely malnourished; many lying motionless with sores over their little bodies. In my ignorance, when I asked what was wrong with them thinking that they were dying of cancer, or AIDS, it was explained that they were mainly dying of hunger. "You see," the Director said to me, "there's not enough food to feed them daily. We need to decide each meal time who gets to eat and who won't, depending on when they last had a meal."

She asked me if I had a photo camera. It turned out that I had a small camera in-

side my purse. Thinking that I was not allowed to be there with a camera, I started to handed it over to her when she explained that she wanted me to take pictures of the children. Seeing my complete surprise at the absurdity of this suggestion, she gently explained that "God would show me how best to use the pictures to help the children." Then she said "Please



Little boy held inside cage for acting "hyperactive"

help us." The look in her eyes, as well as the look in the children's eyes I will never, ever forget. My prayer is that God will never let me forget those pleading eyes.✽

Making A Difference: There Are Various Ways In Which You Can Help

We need your help in various ways. Please respond today by completing the form below.

- Yes. I would like to become a prayer warrior. **Project ChildHelp** please provide me with a list of your prayer needs
- Yes. I would like more information and possibly join **Childhelp** in the next Missions Team
- Yes. I would like to donate items
- Yes. I would like more donate money for the purchase of urgently needed items, including food, medicines and vitamins Enclosed is my gift of \$_____
- Yes. I would like to help with the sorting and preparation of goods to be sent

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____
(Optional)

The Trip of a Lifetime

By O. Frank Valladares

I never intended to go on the mission trip to the Dominican Republic. My wife had organized the trip, and although I supported her effort, I was too busy. As the date of the trip drew closer and the plans and preparations were becoming crystallized, I started to take more of an interest in the trip. Finally, when the trip was just a few weeks away, I told my wife to book me a flight also. However, I was not fully committed to the idea of going on a mission trip to help children in orphanages. I thought that it might be a good idea to spend some time with my wife, take a little vacation away from every day stresses of work, and maybe even squeeze in a little scuba diving. Little did I know what waited for me in the Dominican Republic. This trip turned out to be the experience of a lifetime, more rewarding than I could ever have imagined.

Once we arrived at the orphanage, I received a horrendous shock. I had never experienced such deplorable conditions in my life. The first thing that hit me as I walked into the orphanage was the stench of human excrement and urine, which permeated all of my clothing and even my skin, and made breathing an arduous task. The facility, was in a state of ruin, there was no running water, no air conditioning, no working toilets, exposed electrical wiring, broken windows, deteriorating walls and leaky ceilings, no working refrigerators, power outages that were an expected every day occurrence for hours at a time, and severely understaffed. In this hell hole were housed over 70 children with severe disabili-

ties and special needs. Many of them suffered from neurological disorders which made their little bodies twisted and grotesque. Many had Cerebral Palsy, Downs Syndrome, and many were unable to move or to be able to take care of their most basic needs. They were trapped in their own bodies, unable to communicate with the outside world, and untouched by human hands, and yearning to receive human contact. Every single one of them was malnourished and dehydrated, and many were at death's doorstep. As I began to absorb this experience, thoughts of vacation and scuba diving quickly dissolved. I knew that these were God's children, but I also began to question myself, "Where is God's perfection in this human wreckage?" It then dawned upon me that

"Every single one of them was malnourished and dehydrated, and many were at death's doorsteps..."

when God brings children like this into the world, the perfection that He seeks is in the way people react to these children and in the way they care for them.

There were eleven people in our group; two doctors, two nurses, two preschool teachers, a massage therapist, a beauty salon receptionist, a youth minister, a pastor, and yours truly, a lawyer. I could envision the roles that would be played out by the doctors, the nurses, and the teachers,

etc... but what possible purpose could be served by having a lawyer on this journey? The doctors and nurses quickly set up a makeshift Intensive Care Unit, and started tending to the children that were closest to death. They started intubating them to feed them nourishment, and hydrated them. I asked the doctors and nurses how I could assist them, and soon I was helping them to hold the children down in order to insert tubes down their noses to feed them, I was helping with the tube feedings, and preparing the feeding formula, and generally doing whatever I could to avoid being a hindrance.

Everyone in the group took a special interest in an individual child. With me, it was Cappuccino (the staff there did not know the names of many of the children, so they would give them nick names). Cappuccino was about 7 or 8 years old and was kept in a cage (about 3 feet wide 3 feet tall, and about 4 feet long), naked with very little food and very little water. The staff stated that he was kept there because he was hyperactive. This sight just broke my heart, and I have not been the same since then. This experience has changed my perspective on life and has truly blessed me. My day to day life problems now seem to be high class problems, and I'm grateful for having them. I want to go back to help this child in particular, but I know that the reward I receive will be far greater.

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: *A special thanks to "Women in the* :
: *Word" from Northside Baptist Church* :
: *of St. Petersburg, FL in appreciation* :
: *for choosing our ministry for their* :
: *donations. Many children were blessed* :
: *by their generosity.* :
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