



# Casa de Luz

Project Child

JANUARY 2007

*Bringing hope to children in the Dominican Republic*

## Christmas Joy Reaches the Children

By Frank Valladares

My wife, Lourdes, our girls (Danielle and Gabrielle) and I were able to break away this past Christmas Season and take a trip to the Dominican Republic to visit the children at Casa de Luz. We left on December 28, 2006 and returned January 6, 2007. We celebrated New Year's Eve with the children and our staff. Our staff prepared a wonderful feast. Massiel lead us in singing of countless *canticos* (worship songs), which she knew by heart. Massiel and Tia (her best friend) were inseparable and stayed awake until midnight.

We went armed with toys and baseball equipment. The Kindergarten students of Florida Christian School and the Dental Office of Vincent Kelly, DDS in Miami mounted a Christmas toy drive to benefit Casa de Luz and other children, and gathered over 100 new toys. Additionally, Dr. Robert Andrew, Headmaster at Florida Christian School also helped to gather baseballs, gloves, and bats from the students. The four of us traveled to Santo Domingo with eight extra large duffle bags packed with toys and baseball

equipment. On January 6, 2007 we were able to provide the children with gifts for el *Dia de Los Tres Reyes Magos* (Three Kings Day). We showered them with gifts, played with them, and held worship service with them. We were also able to reach out to the surrounding communities and provided the most needy children with toys and baseball equipment. It was an experience that we will never forget. Thank you to all who made it possible.



*Rafelina receives a special cloth doll for Christmas from her sponsors, the Quandt family in Ormond Beach, Florida.*

## New child arrives at Casa de Luz January 2, 2007

Meet Juanita. On January 2, 2007 we welcomed the newest addition to Casa de Luz, Juanita, an eleven year-old girl who suffers from partial paralysis as a result of having contracted meningitis. Juanita was living in abject poverty and weighing only 22 lbs. Her arms and legs were as thin as sticks, with scars throughout her body due to bug bites. Her mother was overwhelmed by having to take care of eight other children by herself and was not equipped or able to give the proper care and attention required by a special needs child. Though our visit on January 2 was to offer the mom our daytime care so as not to separate the family, it was clear from the start that her intentions were to let us take her daughter that same day. Juanita fit right into Casa de Luz and the other children and our caregivers welcomed her

with love and open arms. Join us in welcoming Juanita and praying for her family as well.



Lourdes and Juanita on their way to Casa de Luz.

## Who We Are

Project ChildHelp, Inc (dba Project Child) is a Christian, non-profit 501c3 organization and your **donations are tax-deductible.**

We are dedicated to reaching out to the forgotten children with special needs in the orphanages, hospitals and streets of the Dominican Republic by providing a loving home and meeting their medical and spiritual needs.

## What We Do

*Hogar Casa de Luz* (Casa de Luz Children's Home) is located in Los Frailes neighborhood of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. We provide a loving, Christian home and meet the children's most basic needs (food, clothing, diapers, vitamins, medical care, etc).

How to contact us:

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Did you know?

UNICEF 2006 State of the World Children Report

143 million orphans as of 2003

Get involved: prayer, mission trips, adoption, sacrificial giving of your time and money.



## Helping One Another

Our water purification system is now fully operational and we are starting to develop a loyal following of customers. While we help the community provide a great need of purified water at below cost, Casa de Luz also benefits. We sell the five gallon jugs of water for \$10 pesos, which is below the local market price of \$40 pesos. This is one of the ways that will help us raise funds for food, medicines, and general needs of the children as well as the salaries for the caregivers, doctor, nurses, therapist, cook, maintenance and night watchman.

**Right: water purification equipment.**



Speaking of fundraising, there are many ways to help us raise funds to support the children. If you would like to sponsor a yard sale, bake sale, penny jar campaign, or other event, we would be more than happy to hear that you are able to give of your time sacrificially.

Writing a check is not always possible for everyone, but giving of our ourselves and our time goes a long way to help a child. We would love to hear from you!



**Above: Neighborhood boys carrying away water.**

## March 2007 Mission Trip: Women of the Word

During March 19<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2007 Lourdes will be leading a very special group of 11 ladies from Northside Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, FL (they are a prayer group which is called Women of the Word) on a short-term mission trip to Casa de Luz. This group provided the seed money to start the Project Child ministry in 1999 with their endless yard sales, bake sales and unceasing prayers, and they have been a loyal supporter ever

since. They will be a "love team", assisting our caregivers in Casa de Luz with feeding, bathing, playing with, and loving the children. The group will be visiting a children's hospital and burn unit, bringing toys and hope to children, distributing Bibles, etc.

One of the children these special ladies will be nurturing back to health is little Suane Alex, only 12 months, who was left abandoned in the hospital after re-

ceiving extensive burns on his body and face. If his family does not come for him by the time he is discharged, Suane will be coming to Casa de Luz. Along with the loving caregivers and medical care that he will receive at the home, Suane has an excellent chance to be part of Project Child's Burn Project through our joint work with Shriners Burn Hospital in Boston, MA. Please pray for Suane.

**Right: Suane Alex, age 1, in Robert Reid Cabral Hospital for children in Santo Domingo.**



## A Family Smiles Again

It gives us great joy when we return to Casa de Luz and see the positive changes in the children. Love alone can transform a child, and when it is combined with nutritious meals, medical care and, as in the case of Yohana, much needed physical therapy, the results are astonishing. Yohana, age 11, was found by Project Child in October 2004. She was born a healthy child but because of contracting polio twice in her young life,

today Yohana is unable to walk or speak. Her distraught mother, Vilma, a widow with 8 other children could no longer care for her. Today, Yohana is in Casa de Luz because of the financial help and support of donors. Her mother, Vilma, is now employed at Casa de Luz as a caregiver where she can earn a salary to help her family while at the same time be close to her daughter. Project Child believes in giving a 'hand up' to encourage self-support. Thank you for yours.



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