



PROJECT Child

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Busy Summer for Casa de Luz

by Frank Valladares

We have had a busy summer so far. We sent a mission team of 24 from Bridgepoint Church in St. Petersburg from June 3rd to 11th; another team of 20 from Northside Baptist Church in St Petersburg, FL including friends from Virginia and North Carolina from July 11th to 18th; and a team of 4 married couples also from Northside Baptist Church from September 3rd to 7th. These groups were a blessing to Casa de Luz, the children, and the community. (Due to limited space, we will report on the June mission trip with highlights of the July trip at this time).

The Bridgepoint team had to spend a night at JFK Airport due to flight delays, but they got down to business right after their arrival. They gathered rocks and completed half the wall around the meditation garden, laid blocks, painted murals, cleared brush, but mostly loved on the children. They visited the children at the Robert Reid Hospital's burn unit in Santo Domingo where they met a beautiful 13 year old girl named Kiara who suffered third degree burns to over 40% of her body, and captured their hearts (see side 2). They also ministered to other children in the hospital and their families by providing them with bag lunches and Bible tracts. They visited two *bateys* called Inocencia and Paraiso, and performed programs of music and worship. The children were blessed with gifts of backpacks, school supplies, clothing, and shoes. The trip to the Paraiso *batey* was unique in that small village which has a gorge running through it. During the rainy season it creates an impassable river which prevents the children from crossing over to attend school which is located on the other side. This inspired Pastor Tim Whipple of Bridgepoint to build a bridge (a very fitting mission for this church).

Even the concert at *Casa de Luz* was well received by the community. The NBC team was also a big blessing. They poured cement for ten columns in the physical therapy and storage rooms being added.



Hilary Hibbard of Bridgepoint Church and Ruth(r) go for a walk.

They also finished the construction of a footing and stairs in order to place the gas tank outside the kitchen and thereby averting a serious safety hazard, as well as completed another 60 feet of wall around the medication garden. They visited a church planting in a very poor section of town where over 40 children greeted them, and showed off their Bible knowledge.

They visited a maternity ward where five women made professions of faith to accept Jesus Christ. Another highlight of the trip was the visit to the Robert Reid Hospital burn unit to see Kiara again. The Bridgepoint group had inspired us to try and bring Kiara to the U.S. for treatment of her burns at the Shriners Burn Hospital in Boston. This was a monumental undertaking which we thought would never happen in as much as Kiara is a true orphan, without a

mother or a father. We needed to get her a passport, a letter of referral from her treating physician, a letter from Shriners Hospital acknowledging that they would accept her as a patient at no cost, a power of attorney from her grandmother, a

special permit from the Dominican Immigration

department permitting a minor to travel, and most importantly, a U.S. visa to permit her to travel here. But never underestimate God! With a group of prayer warriors here in the states, and some very dedicated people in the Dominican Republic associated with the Juan Luis Guerra Foundation, all of these requirements were accomplished by late Friday afternoon. The next day, we picked up Kiara at the Hospital and brought her to the United States. We flew to Miami where we were met by Lourdes who flew with Kiara to Boston. Kiara is now undergoing a series of surgeries and skin grafts to give mobility and reduce the disfiguring effects of her burns and scarring. Please keep Kiara in your prayers as she undergoes these painful procedures.



Invitation to community around *Casa de Luz* for a concert results in many showing up for a time of song and new friendships.



Kiara smiles for the camera on her 13th birthday. Outpatient treatment after four surgeries has begun in Boston while a loving Spanish-speaking family opens their home to Kiara and take her to/from her daily appointments for therapy and counseling.

(Story on page 1) Kiara, early in her recovery, receives a personal visit in July from Dominican singer and Grammy Award winner, Juan Luis Guerra while in Shriners Burn Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts.

Please donate your Frequent Flyer Miles from American Airlines

Consider allowing Project Child to use 25,000 of your miles to purchase needed airline tickets for the personnel needed to make adjustments to recently purchased tilt wheelchairs for our children! Lunier (below) and 8 of our children await special adjustments to their wheelchairs before they can use them! At this time our funding is not enough that we can purchase airfare ourselves. Please donate your frequent flyer miles and give an early Christmas gift to our children who are waiting. Thank you and God bless.



Save the Date!
Saturday, November 21, 2009

**Project Child's 7th Annual
Fundraising Dinner And Silent Auction
"Saving the Children"
at St. Petersburg Woman's Club
40 Snell Isle Blvd, St. Petersburg, FL.**



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WHO WE ARE: Project Child is a Christian, non-profit 501(c)3 incorporation in Florida since 1999. Donations are Tax Deductible. We are dedicated to assisting and loving abandoned, orphaned, and neglected **special needs children in the Dominican Republic (DR)** by meeting their medical, physical and spiritual needs. We also seek opportunities to do individual/group evangelism and to support local church work among the poor in the Dominican Republic.

We operate "*Casa de Luz*" (House of Light) in a suburb of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. We have 20 full-time (resident) special needs children and a paid staff consisting of caregivers, and medical providers giving 24-hour care and facility management to our children's home. Monthly operating budget is \$8,700. We lead several Mission Teams per year to the DR. See examples of activities and opportunities for involvement on our website at www.projectchild.org

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