

Mount of Olives Blog March 3-11, 2018

Day 7

March 10th

Until next time!

By Debbie aka Ugly

This morning we woke up to yet another wonderful breakfast prepared for us by Patty and Rosa, our amazing chefs.

No one wanted breakfast to end because we all knew that it meant it was time to finish packing up and clean our rooms.

After a group photo and a presentation of certificates of Bautismo en Agua to the 5 who were baptized we had a time of prayer. The team gathered around some of the Mount of Olives Staff and prayed a blessing over them and the Mission. There wasn't a dry eye when we were done.

After hugs and a teary good bye we started our trek to the Mexican border.

We drove in the rain through beautiful wine country up to the Tecate border. As we waiting in line we spent the last of our Pesos on warm churros and ice cream. It was like we hadn't eaten in weeks.

We got up to the border and the guard saw we were Canadians and he quickly informed us that Trump had made a new law that Canadians were no longer allowed to enter into the USA but lucky for us it only goes into affect at midnight. Then he asked if we had any orphans in the van with us.

We were all very thankful for a guard with a great sense of humour and that we breezed right through.

We made a stop for a late lunch at In and Out Burger then headed to our hotel.

Some of the kids were eager to swim in the pool while others took a trip to Target.

I was happy to finally have a Starbucks after a week without one. Although I have to say that the coffee at Mount of Olives was wonderful and always seemed to be ready when we needed it.

We had one last team dinner of some yummy pizza in the hotel lobby before we said our good byes. Half the team flys out first thing, while the rest are staying one more day in San Diego before they start their trek back up to Canada.

I am feeling thankful for being able to brush our teeth with the tap water and not have to throw the Toilet paper in the garbage can, but it's safe to say that everyone of us would trade that to be spending one more day with our friends at Mount of Olives.

My heart is overflowing! Thank you to everyone who has been praying for our team. We have felt the prayers!

We can't wait to share more stories with everyone.
Adios Amigos!

DAY 6

March 9th

Blessed

Today's blog is written by Rob F.

Today was the most special of days on this particular missions trip. (I may be biased)

In the months leading up to coming we had been hoping there would be a desire from some of our team members to ask for baptism.

Chelsea had said early on that she wanted to be baptized and as we got closer to actually travelling to Mexico the number grew to 5 people asking for baptism.

Today at this very nice beach near Ensenada, Chelsea, Aly, Riley, Spencer and Diane were baptised in the waters of the Pacific Ocean. We had heard their testimonies on Wednesday and had asked each person to choose a prayer partner as well. Amongst a few of us we decided what our baptism would look like and I was able to use the information Pastor Darren had given me.

So at a fairly empty beach we held a public baptism as we dodged the incoming waves. Afterwards we stood in the warm sunshine and read special verses to each person.

Through this event I was able to be involved in the baptism of my mother in law and two daughters. I also was able to participate with Riley and Spencer. How special is that!. Part of our mission on this trip is also to the kids on our team. Sometimes I wonder how much Holden sees or understands as he is oblivious to a lot of his surroundings at times. But today after the baptism was completed and people left to warm up and change he came running up to me and said he had an idea for the next baptism. He suggested the people should roll in the sand before being baptized in the ocean waters. I asked why and he said that the sand would represent our sins and the cleansing ocean waters would represent Jesus washing away our filth. I might have shed a tear.

Collectively we have lots of pictures and videos that can be shared at the upcoming baptism service in church. What an amazing day!!!!

As Darrell (orphanage director) often says as he recounts God's many miracles "I am very Blessed" For me today these words are extra true.

Thursday - March 8

“Community”

Today's thoughts by Kathy

Today we experienced different aspects of community. After another great breakfast buffet we continued our devotional time with worship and teaching on Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb.

The team then spent time practicing the drama we would present for the afternoon vbs.

After that we loaded up the vans and headed to a local community farm where we met a single mom who is doing her best to take care of her 3 boys, one which is severally handicapped . We witnessed the love between this family and Darrell, Maureen and Ruth.

Our next stop was to the original site of the orphanage, now a run down building owned by the community. Darrell shared the story of how God has provided over the years and His many blessings.

The last stop on our community tour was the Hot Springs where the locals come to bath and do laundry. It's quite a sight seeing the clothes being scrubbed on wash boards and then hung to dry in the Mexican sun. Not an easy task!

After lunch there was playtime with the locals as today they didn't have school because of international woman's day. Others continued working on various projects until it was time for vbs. We welcomed 30 kids today (including some from the community) and the whole team participated in a drama about the Easter story . We took the children to various sites on the

ground as each scene unfolded, helping to keep their attention and interest. Our prayer is that the salvation message came through clearly and lives were impacted.

More time was spent playing soccer and tonight was extra special with all of them joining us for supper. A couple of highlights from tonight was watching the children destroy a piñata and singing songs together in both English and Spanish . A wonderful time of community.

Day 4

March 7th

CONTRAST

Written By Sara

The sun rose shortly before six a.m. The clouds caught the rosy glow for an instant before the full light of day chased it away. This morning, a group of youth stood by my side as we welcomed the new day. What a blessing it is to be surrounded by such passionate kids, each bringing their own gifts to serve the God we love. John 15:9-17.

After breakfast, preparations for a day trip to the Campo (migrant worker camp) were undertaken in earnest. Everything was packed into the vans, and we left the Casa Hogar. On the way we stopped at the local supermarket to pick up oil, milk, laundry detergent, beans and toilet paper. Thirty-five food hampers were assembled in the parking lot. Before leaving, two crates of oranges were purchased.

On the road to the camp up on the hill, we stopped at the lower campo and houses along the way, to pick up women and children at each stop. We reached the upper migrant camp just as another group from Las Vegas was leaving. They had provided different items, including cookware. Firstly, we set up goals for the boys and girls, who lined up to try and kick the soccer balls into them. Several balls were handed out. When that was over, the mothers lined up to receive the food hampers, while the children were kept occupied catching bubbles. After that, clothing was handed out. Then hygiene kits were given to the children, as well as dried soup packages made at the Gleaners in Abbotsford, (possibly even made by the youth and life group from ROL last fall). That was what we did. That's not the impact it made. Driving up initially, the women and children were shy, but eventually they jumped in the vans eagerly for a ride to the upper campo. Upon arriving, there was an eager anticipation. As the time passed, the children were quick to smile and their eagerness was apparent. I struck up a conversation with a young boy of about 6. In my stilted Spanish, I asked his name. He told it was Oscar. He had a shirt on that said "I am the boss". I asked him if it was true. He laughed and said "si" He asked for an orange and I told him soon. Then he started to talk. We communicated through actions and I was gifted with some big smiles. I asked for a photo with him, "por favor", so I could remember and pray for him, and he agreed right away. We purchased bracelets and necklaces from some of the ladies, knowing that every cent would be used to support them. As we loaded the vans to return the people to their homes below, I looked around at all the women, some only teenagers, almost all with babies. So many toddlers and babies, one just a month old. My heart ached for these people, having come to seek a way to a better life, and finding themselves trapped with no way home, and barely making enough to survive.

We continued on to La Bufadora, "the Blow Hole", We had lunch at a taco place, owned by the family of a former resident of Casa Hogar. We wandered to the Blow Hole, through the lane filled with vendors hawking their wares, trinkets and souvenirs for tourists and cruise ship passengers. Not necessities. Extravagance. What a contrast from where we had just come. I was again struck with the contrast of a vacation at a resort and a mission trip in Mexico. One is self-serving, the other is serving others. As Rob Frose expressed it later, we were the hands and the feet, but there were also so many hands reaching up to our hands reaching out to them. (Matthew 25:40)

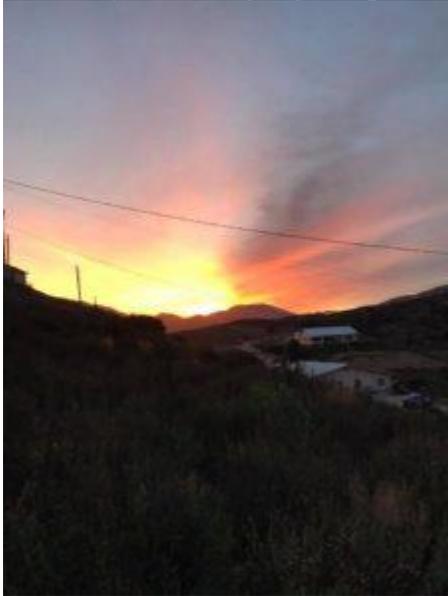
In the evening, after worship led by Dani, Aly, Riley and Kathy, we were blessed with the pre-baptismal testimonials of 5 people: Diane Joiner, Spencer Gilbert, Aly Frose, Riley Dyck and Chelsea Frose. After hearing each person speak, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. It was a day of contrasts, a day of blessings.

Day 3

March 6

Today's post brought to you by Sara...aka Moses

This morning I woke up before sunrise to welcome in the new day in the Prayer Garden. This trip is such a wonderful experience, I don't want to miss a moment. **Sunday**, I went alone. **Monday** Spencer joined me. **Last night** Riley asked if I would wake him as well. At 6 a.m. when I went to wake the boys, Holden came too. As we watched the **sun** rise together, I marvelled aloud at how at sunset each day, if we've had a bad day, that God grants us an end to that. Each sunrise heralds the promise of a fresh start. We are so blessed to receive the mercy and grace that God offers us. It wasn't a spectacular sunrise, but it was a moving moment. I think, for the boys it was extra-special, since they escaped the practical joke the girls had set up for the boys by being out of their room at the time their alarms were set to activate.



A hearty breakfast was enjoyed by all, followed by a devotional time led by Rob Krahn where we were reminded of how God washes our sins white as snow, and that His Son was a living sacrifice, absolving us from guilt. Rob has a way of shedding light on God's word from a new direction and we're so thankful for the devotional time each day.

During clean-up, someone asked me to recount some of the ways God has moved in my life. As I shared some of my experiences about how I came to be part of the River of Life family, how God has taken care of my health concerns, how He brought my Spencer to church, and how He fulfilled my heartfelt desire and cleared our way to come to Mexico, I noticed many people were as moved as I am by all that has occurred.

As we set out in our work parties [this morning](#), the conversations I had were deep and friendships grew. I felt God moving throughout this place. Not only were we filling a need at Casa Hogar, we were ministering to each other.

After lunch, a group of us decided to finish a task and band together, making light work with many hands. It was a laborious task, but it was done with light hearts and was done in no time.



The late afternoon was VBS time and [today](#) more children, came, having been brought in from Uruapan, the nearest village. It was so heartwarming to watch the children, laughing and playing, and learning about God. Carrie, Kathy, Debbie and Rob Krahn, as well as Lee and Kaari from the Casa Hogar blessed the children with [today's](#) activities and lessons.



As I sat here looking over the valley below, and across at the neighbouring hillsides, dotted with olive groves and farmer's fields, I was amazed at how God orchestrates things: not only one thing, but many, and in multiple areas of each at once, creating many facets reflecting His glory. It ripples outward exponentially. I am continually in awe.

After supper, there was time for worship and sharing. Firstly, we shared one on one, casually. Then Danielle, Aly and Riley led the worship time. We lifted our voices in praise for how God is moving in and around us. As we shared our God moments of how we grew closer to each other and the people at, and involved with this amazing ministry, we humbly bowed our head in prayer to a God for giving us this opportunity to share His blessings and be so blessed in return.



Day 2
March 5
Al+Dan

We started the morning with devotions led by Pastor Rob Krahn . We also had a delicious breakfast prepared by Master chefs, Patti and Rosa. We got a tour of the place from Darrell and found out the work we were going to do throughout the week. This included: collecting cement chunks that were in the way, painting the wall of a house, pulling weeds, and digging out roadside gutters (aka digging to China). We divided up the jobs and went to work. While Danielle and I were painting, we smelled some really good chicken cooking on the grill and almost ate it. The temptation was real..... The Mexicans weren't too impressed. Another thing that happened is Danielle and I almost got ran over by a skid steer. It came down the hill behind us so we ran down the hill and screamed. Again, the Mexicans were not impressed. Later Kathy led VBS and we learned about the 10 lepers and how Jesus loves you even when you feel left out. Every one in the team was involved in VBS so it was really fun. After a time of worship (we led that!) we played a competitive game of 4 on the couch in front of a warm fire, which ended with three people crying from laughter.

Hasta mañana muchachos!



Day 1

March 4th

Dani here,

Hello to the Greendale fam jam from back in the wack. And anyone else who's scrolling this site. We made it to Mexico! My family drove in (from home ugh) and we had a few mini adventures on the way.

We got caught in a snow storm in Northern California and saw snowflakes the size of golf balls and Natalie got gum stuck in her hair, so we had to stop at the grocery store and pick up some peanut butter. No jam though.

Anyways, after a night of everyone flying into San Diego and swimming at our hotel pool, we woke up, had breakfast and met up with Darrell, Ruth, and Maureen. The plane people hopped into the white vans decorated with the iconic green and orange handprints of Casa Hogar, and my family hopped into our big red Dodge. We all crossed the unpredictable USA-Mexican border without even showing them our passports and headed to our meeting place. Big Red got a little lost on the way but we met up, stopped for tacos at the taco stand, and finally made it to the beautiful mountain. When we made it inside, Darrell gave us instructions for the next week. We had a delicious dinner of rice, beans, and tamales(they make them taste really good!!). Rob Krahn led devotions and Aly and I led worship.

I think the biggest surprise concerning this trip so far is the temperature. It is cold. I only have three pairs of pants. SOS. Please send pants.

