

# Great things happening because God is interested in orphans

By Randy Wittig

Honduras is one of the most violent countries in the world with a shockingly high murder rate. The Honduran government is struggling to contain the gang violence and organized crime fueled by the drug trade. Children are forced to join gangs where they are used as watchmen, messengers, and drugs and arms carriers. The country is very poor and disturbingly corrupt. As a result, there are many violent deaths and orphaned children. Despite the poverty and corruption, or possibly because of it, the government budgets only 6.7 Lempira, which is about **29 U.S. cents a year — yes, a year** — to the care of each orphaned Honduran child.

Children do not choose to be orphaned or born into an impoverished situation. They do not choose to be abused. ***But we can choose to make a difference in their lives because God chose us to be His instruments to bring love and hope to orphans in a broken world.***

We know from the Bible that God is interested in orphans. Many verses speak of God's concern and commands regarding orphans. Similarly, we also know God is interested in children and has a special place in his heart for the poor. So, if we love God and we desire to become more like Him, we will be interested and have a special place in our hearts for the **poor orphaned children** of our world.

All God's Children was birthed out of the special love God placed in our hearts for the poor orphaned children of Honduras. That is the foundation, the motivation and passion that underlies what we do every day. Why else would we invest our lives, resources and talents in the pursuit of loving, providing and seeking a future for these children that have arrived sick, bruised, and with mental, physical and emotional scars?



Randy and Mercedes Wittig



Henry

Henry did not choose to have his mother shot at a bus stop on her way home from work when he was a little boy, leaving him without anyone to care for him. For years after he was placed in the Hogar, his obsession was to find the men that murdered his mother and kill them. His life revolved around this dream of revenge and hate.

But God had different plans for him. Henry heard about a God that loved him. He started reading the bible and going to a bible study. Henry learned of a God that

*"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me."* MARK 9:37

can heal his wounds and transform his life. A God that has a plan for him — not one of violence but of making a loving difference, overcoming evil with good.

Today, Henry is studying to become a lawyer. He jokingly states he wants to become the president of Honduras to bring about change, to help others not suffer what he has suffered. At the end of our Monday night bible study, he almost always includes in his prayer: "Lord, help us become good men."

Henry has become a good man. While previously he was one of the leaders of the conflicts and rebellions in the Granja, Henry now helps provides care, love, and leadership for the younger boys. On Friday nights, he leads the worship time with all the boys, praising the God that has touched his life. Henry's story is God's victory over violence, hate, and poverty.

How do you create a **hope that becomes reality** for those that know no hope? How do you enable a different life in those who do not see the possibility? How do you break habits that produce poverty in order to develop a mentality of diligence, wisdom, knowledge, love and blessing?

By willfully participating in what God is doing! What a privilege that is. At All God's Children Honduras, we do this by providing a place where they are safe and cared for, where love is given and where they can see and learn how to be good men and women.

It has been a difficult struggle at times. Recently, when we received five new girls and boys, I had to rush out to get new beds for them. Some have medical problems, others have mental problems. All need love and someone to hug them and let them know we will be there for them.

One of the little girls was so poorly nourished that when I picked her up, it felt as if I was picking up a rag doll as she barely weighed anything. A shot of pain went through my heart. And then hope. Hope that we can provide a better future for her, that her soul and body will be cared for and nourished. That she can become a good woman, one that makes a positive difference.

We thank each of you that participate in this great purpose of God. Together, we are His hands, feet, and mouth. We thank God and you for the privilege of being a part of His work with orphaned children in Honduras.

## A Refuge from the Storm

When we see the happy, smiling children playing in the Hogars, it is easy to forget the extreme circumstances that require the refuge Mami Carmen and AGC provides. Some were begging like George\* and his two younger sisters (ages 3 and 5) who were abandoned by their mother. Their alcoholic father drank instead of providing for the children's basic needs. At barely 10 years of age, George assumed the role of parent to his sisters. To have food to eat, the children begged and they slept in the park.



\*Names changed to protect identities

Other children experienced abuse by family members like 13-year old Iyana.\* Iyana lived with her mother, stepfather and his brother. She was sexually harassed by her stepfather's brother and a family friend. On three occasions, her stepfather sexually abused Iyana. After telling her mother what was happening to her, Iyana's mother accused the girl of lying, which led to verbal attacks and physical beatings. The girl was removed from the home after she summoned the courage to ask medical authorities for help.

Children find refuge at the Hogar where they are welcomed, fed, and paired with a buddy to show them the ropes. The Tias provide care and tuck them in at night. They no longer have to worry about finding something to eat or a place to sleep. Their basic needs are met, and they receive medical care and attend school. They are safe. Most importantly, they learn the love of Jesus that transcends the hurt and suffering they experienced in their young lives.

In 2017, we received 32 new children. We try to pair each child with a sponsor that will help AGC provide the tangible care they need. If you would like to sponsor a child, please visit our website or email Jan Kamp at: [sponsorship@allgodschilrenhonduras.org](mailto:sponsorship@allgodschilrenhonduras.org).

## 13th Annual AGC Golf Tournament

The 13th Annual AGC Golf Tournament on Friday, September 22 was a fun-filled day with 75 golfers.

*The winning foursome scored a 61 (11 under par): Ray Carter, Tim MacKenzie, Terry Gulley, and Pete Legan.*



## 25th Anniversary Benefit Dinner

We celebrated 25 years of AGC in Honduras on October 12 with nearly 300 friends, founders Wayne and Char Merz and Brian Kamstra, several adult children of the Hogar currently living in America, and award-winning artist Heather Headley.

## Dorm Renovation Update

We began raising funds in 2016 to begin a major reconstruction project to update and improve the living conditions in the dorms at the Hogar de Nazareth (girls' home) and The Granja (boys' home). We could not merely do cosmetic updates. We had to update the infrastructure.

The dorms at the Hogar de Nazareth were built 20 years ago to house 5–6 girls per room. At present, there are 10 rooms that house 8–10 girls per room along with their caretakers. Each dorm room had one small bathroom with just two sinks, one shower and one toilet. This meant that some girls had to wake up at 4:00 am to be ready to leave for school by 6:30 am. Water shortage issues required new plumbing throughout and new water tanks.

When the building was built, a half-inch pipe ran to every two bathrooms. When two girls tried to shower at the same time, in two different bathrooms, the water only trickled out. If girls were showering on the first floor, girls on the second floor did not have enough water to shower.

The small construction crew has been working room by room to dig up old pipes and replace them with larger, more sustainable pipes and fixtures. Several large 1500-gallon water tanks are being installed to resolve the water shortage. Each bathroom is being enlarged to allow for two sinks, two toilets, two showers per room. To enlarge the bathrooms, existing closets are relocated, requiring new clothing storage solutions.

Thank you to everyone that donated to this ongoing project. The girls LOVE their newly updated facilities.



Before



After

## CHANGING THE TRAJECTORY

For 25 years, AGC has done great work feeding and housing hundreds of children. Many lives have been saved and many more changed for the better. The AGC Board believes it is time to do more. Going forward, we seek to change the trajectory of the lives of these children with improved education in private, bi-lingual schools for the youngest and job training for the older children. To accomplish this, we need your help. Please consider what God would have you give, over and above your regular gift, to help AGC provide a brighter future for the Honduran children in our care.

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