

## Resting in the Father's Lap *by Joe Baker*

*"And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"*(Matthew 3:17)

*"Yet to all who received [Jesus], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."*(John 1:12)

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*(Matthew 11:28)

These Scriptures have been very meaningful to me over the years. God has used them to help me understand who I really am: a child of my heavenly Father who is deeply loved by Him and pleasing to Him. These words remind me – in the midst of the craziness, busyness, and pressures of life – that my loving Father invites me to come to him anytime. My heavenly Daddy (who 'happens' to be the all-powerful Creator and King of the Universe) gives me rest and peace. He has everything under control; I don't need to try to do His job.

Recent trips to Honduras have given these words new meaning for me. Let me explain.

My wife and two sons first went to Honduras on an *All God's Children* service trip 2 years ago with a group of families from Chicago. It was life-changing. My wife and I didn't know how our kids were going to handle this trip, and we planned a few days of vacation afterwards on the beach in Costa Rica to chill and decompress. Well, the kids loved Honduras and the experience, wanted to come home early from the beach, and couldn't wait to go back to Honduras. We've been back several times – on family trips and Father-child trips – and we now sponsor a couple of the children.

Like so many other people who first visited Honduras on a service trip with no idea what we were getting into, we're now hooked. The Cross-cultural experience has been great. Meeting people like Al, Mama Carmen, Arville, Nellie, and others, and hearing their stories of God's leading and faithfulness has been inspiring. And getting to know the kids and adults that live and work at the Hogar and Farm and other homes has been a phenomenal blessing.

Of all the amazing stories I could tell, the one I want to share happened when I took one of the girls (Faviola) to the store last year. We finished our shopping before most of the others, so we sat and waited. Faviola was in my lap with my son Aaron, and she fell asleep. As I held that precious tired little girl in my lap, I thought of how God must smile and find

pleasure when we come to him as his children and rest in His 'lap.' And I prayed that Faviola, the other kids, and I would know and rely more and more on the powerful and peaceful love that our Heavenly Father has for us: His beloved children.



Faviola, Joe & Aaron

### Board Bullets March 2013

The Board received positive reports from several work teams that visited Hogar over the past few months.

The Buen Pastor mothers and their babies have relocated back to Casa Esperanza (the transitional home) due to the pending sale of the home they were in.

The Board received a comprehensive report from a 4 person Honduran consulting firm which spent many hours with senior staff at Hogar. The report noted the high level of commitment of staff, and also provided many recommendations for improving efficiencies and organization.

Daniel and Karen resigned as Directors at the granja. Miguel and Miriam Carbajal are capably serving as the new Directors.

Juan Francisco is living in the Chicago area for the next several months as he studies an English program at Dominican University.

Save the Date! The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual AGC Golf Outing is planned for Sept. 27, 2013.

# News of the Niños

Comayagua, Honduras

Spring 2013

**All God's Children**

**PO Box 5909**

**Villa Park, IL 60181**

**(630) 862-1728**

**Email:**  
[agcltd@comcast.net](mailto:agcltd@comcast.net)

**Website:** [www.agcltd.org](http://www.agcltd.org)

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*Treasurer*

Comayagua March 19, 2013.

Dear sponsors, friends and board.

Receive from Hogar de Niños Nazareth our love, respect and gratitude hoping that God will bless you abundantly.

We are asking for your prayers for our homes, we've been overcoming some difficulties.

In the boys' home, The Farm, many changes have happened, new Directors are Miguel and Miriam Carbajal. In the girls' home there is only one of the boys, Miguel Alberto Garcia that because of his health problem we cannot send him to The Farm, the others have been moved to The Farm. They are enjoying their new home, they are well cared for and have very devoted aunties including Aunt Eva who was previously with them in another home. They've been very excited because they have started a new project of breeding six pigs and the special children are excited about this project and they are responsible for their care.

The school Grandpa Jerry is always operating in the girls' home. The Farm's boys are traveling Monday to Friday morning for their classes; it is a school of great hope.

Thank you for all the love you have for our children, you are in the heart of each of them.

May God bless you abundantly.

With affection and gratitude:

Carmen and Children

When I was in high school, someone told me that German was the easiest foreign language offered, so that was what I picked to study. I don't know if I ever really considered the possibility of conversing with Germans or visiting Germany. I got through it. One day many years later, I was on a trip with my oldest brother, and we stopped in Germany for a day. I tried to impress him with my skill by ordering us both a ham sandwich for lunch in a restaurant. We had a good laugh when the waitress brought us cucumber sandwiches.

The first time we visited Hogar, a strange thing happened to me. I came home with a real desire to learn Spanish. It seemed to me that to build a relationship with kids who speak Spanish requires being able to speak Spanish. A lot has changed in the years and visits since, but I still feel the compelled to learn the language. I know there must be others who visit and feel the same about this, so my experience in trying to learn Spanish may be of interest to you.

From studying German, I knew it took a long time for me to learn very little in a classroom, but I first tried evening adult education class at the high school anyway. Intermediate level was what was available, so I was hopeful that my week in Honduras had somehow prepared me for that. It most certainly had not. The class was all about learning verb tenses, and I didn't know the basic verbs yet. That class would probably be really good for me now. The group was often broken up into small groups to practice. I haven't tried classroom again, mostly because my work schedule would cause me to miss several weeks out of any semester.

I tried various Spanish language audio CD's from the public library. I was always looking for ones that I could use during my driving time between home and work. However, most of the audio programs require referring to a book. They also seem to go quickly from learning greetings and simple phrases to the more complicated, and lose me along the way.

So, I bought the first level of the "Rosetta Stone" program. It seemed like a lot of money for a single CD, but when I thought of it in terms of the worth of a good tool, it seems reasonable. I spent quite a bit of time at my home computer using Rosetta Stone, and it taught me a lot of words, but not very much about putting them together. When I had completed the first level I found I still couldn't speak a sentence. This didn't seem to be working for me, so I didn't buy the next level.

A breakthrough came for me one day when one day an e-mail showed up with a link to a sales pitch for another set of Spanish language audio CD's. I kept watching the long sales pitch because it made some points that sounded right, such as: The best way to learn your second language is the way you learned your first, by listening to others and listening to yourself as you repeat it out loud. You need to

keep re-using words you learn within the right time intervals, or you forget them. When you have listened, repeated, and practicing putting words into new phrases, then you begin to know what sounds right, and that is a way to learn grammar. There was no book because the author believed a lot of mispronunciation came from trying to read words that you had never heard first.

The Pimsleur CD's had half hour lessons, two on each CD. I bought an introductory offer of four CD's for \$10, and found right away that these worked better for me than anything else had. I try to finish two or three every week while commuting. I have been able to get about half the CD's from libraries, and bought the others. I have loaned my CD's to several people, and a couple have come back and told me they found them very helpful.

About the same time I found the Pimsleur CD's, I found a dual language book, Spanish on one page, English on the other, that has actually been helpful in learning Spanish as well. The book is the Bible, an NIV. I had tried a couple of dual language books before the Bible. They were both books of classic Latin American short stories. The short stories were hard to stay interested in, mostly I think because they took so long to get through. It was like watching a baseball game on TV might be if you could only watch one inning per night. A couple of innings without much action, and it becomes difficult to stay motivated.

Reading the Bible, on the other hand, I found can be more interesting when read very slowly, because although the stories are familiar, there are always details that I never noticed or never struck me the same way before. Sometimes I need the English translation just to be sure that what I thought I saw in Spanish is really there. It also has given me some appreciation of how difficult it is to really translate the Bible from one language to another.

So, that's what has and hasn't worked for me. It has been eight years since that first visit to Hogar. I am not satisfied with the progress I have made learning Spanish in that much time, but there have been times I thought I would never make the progress I have. If I haven't already made any bigger mistakes than the one with the cucumber sandwich, I'm sure I will. But in the last couple visits to Hogar, I have felt it has been worth it. People generally encourage you when they see you are making an effort, and that has been enough to keep me going.

## THE NEHEMIAH PROJECT *by Jan Kamp*

In February of 2012, a challenge was issued to the people of Orland Park Church. Hogar de Amor Orphanage needed a wall built around the property. The challenge was to raise \$350 for one of the 113 sections of wall, whether it was with a small group, extended family, other couples, etc. This followed the example set by God's people in Nehemiah 3, where each family or group of people committed to rebuilding one part of the wall in Jerusalem. The response was incredible! In one month, someone or some group had committed towards funding almost every section. The workers started building on March 12<sup>th</sup> and by May 15<sup>th</sup>, the wall was halfway finished. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, Arvil and Miriam sent photos of the completed wall! Over 639 people gave about \$50,000 towards the Nehemiah Project and the wall was completed in 208 days. The wall was dedicated on January 17, 2013 with gratitude to God for His amazing providence.

*"...they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God" – Nehemiah 6:16b*



BEFORE



AFTER

