

NEWSLETTER

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Shining Light Children's Home

FATHER, UNCLE, BROTHER, FRIEND

by Urias Apuy, caregiver

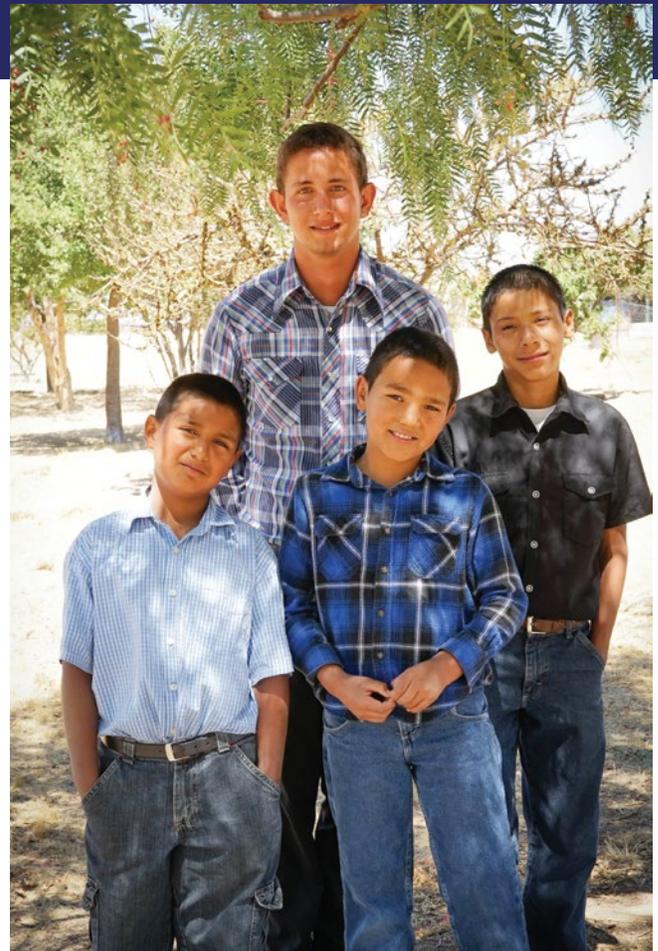
Since my adolescence, I have dreamed of being a missionary for Christ. Growing up, it was one of my favorite petitions in my prayers. One afternoon, I shared with a friend my dream of being a missionary. Immediately he commented, I have an idea for you.

Shortly after, Shining Light sent me an email asking for help. I felt this was a call from God, even though I felt afraid because I was only nineteen and lacked experience. I continued waiting on God, and soon the doors opened wide for me to go. I saw God working in all the details.

I want to be a helper, showing the most love possible, and I desire to be the best dad. My responsibilities include caring for a teenager and two younger boys, in addition to working in the dairy, garden, and maintenance.

The atmosphere here is unique. I quickly felt very much at home. The children have open hearts for anyone who shows a little bit of love and MORE when you're willing to give them your heart. It wasn't long before they called me Papa (daddy), tio (uncle), hermano mayor (big brother), and amigo (friend). I feel that I fail so often in successfully playing those roles.

My energy and inspiration stem from a look of pure love and energy from a child, a smile (even if it's missing teeth), a hug of love, an I like you or an I love



you, and the children's willingness to help me. When they repent for something they have done wrong, and come to me with open hearts and arms with tears in their eyes, I'm left with no option but to join them in tears. I am also inspired when I see them praying to God with lots of faith. Thanks to God, this year we've been able to see three miracles of answered prayers

almost instantly. The boys' testimony is, Wow, God really does love us and is watching out for us!

A normal day starts out by getting up early to milk and wash clothes. After these chores, we have a few smaller chores, such as raking the sand around the house, cleaning the garage, and taking out the trash. Then the boys dress for school and eat breakfast.

School is in session from 8:00 to 2:00, with an hour lunch break at 12:00. While Gilberto and Enner are at school, thirteen-year-old Alfredo and I work in maintenance, in the garden, or doing anything else that needs to be done.

In the afternoon when the younger boys are home from school, we all go do a small job before milking. After milking is over they shower in preparation for supper. After supper there is free time before they go to bed. The last activity of the day is a reflection from the Bible and prayer.

The jobs and activities the boys like best are fixing the gravel road, hauling water, and planting in the garden. Most exciting of all is hunting rabbits after dark

Sometimes this creates situations we don't anticipate, for example, falling off the tractor. Thanks to God, I wasn't hurt worse, though I did wake up the next morning stiffer

than an older person and with a few bruises and sprains.

Another scare included robbers and guys on motorcycles chasing us while we were hunting rabbits! Our hearts almost jumped out of our bodies, it scared us so much. We could imagine what a rabbit feels when we chase them!

I feel I have learned so much here. The children are my best teachers. Every day I learn more. One of the most difficult things I face is knowing how to supply their need of a dad. Each of the boys is different with a different heart, different thought processes, different needs, and different characters. It is a daily challenge to know what to do and how to respond properly when they do something that's not right, since we can't use corporal punishment.

Prayer and much wisdom is needed and often feels very far away. As I reflect on this, I always feel the power of God. One thing I lack is more male companions and friends in the work here. I recommend that every young man experience something like this. God has helped me and molded my spiritual life into better conformity to the Light of the Word. I'm like a jar of clay in the potter's workshop.

-Urias Apuy, Costa Rica

INDEPENDENCE DAY MOM PARTY

Red, white, and green festivity colors and decor invited the "moms" of the children to a party! Antonio and the big girls threw their hearts into making an all-out dinner. They coordinated the food, drink, clothes, and decorations with a Mexican Independence Day theme. After a delicious Mexican dinner, the "well-behaved" girls doused their moms in party foam! This was followed by coffee on the couches and games for fun. Celebrations like this add spice and joy to the mundane and challenging days these moms face.



FAREWELL LETTER FROM BIANCA



Dear friends,
greetings from
Shining Light.

First, I will tell you a little of my history. I was twelve years old when I came in July 2009 with my two-week-old son. It was with a bit of fear that I stepped into this

new place. I was scared they wouldn't treat me well. Thank God, they accepted us and treated us very nicely!

Lorne and Sharon, the houseparents, assigned me a room beside Marlene Villalobos. My baby and I slept in the room with Marisol, a friend and sister to me. After six months, something happened that we hadn't anticipated. My baby died. No one knew it would happen, and only God knows how painful this was for me.

I felt this was God's will and I had to accept it. Several months later I gave my life to God and became a Christian. I helped with the work at Shining Light—cleaning, cooking, and odds and ends. Later I taught two years at the school, which was a grand experience!

After I finished teaching, I felt the urge to do something different, but I had no idea what I

wanted to do. I asked God to give me a new experience and through prayer I left everything in His hands.

Then one of my first caretakers, Marlene, came to visit with her husband Norman. They asked me something that I never dreamed of! They wondered if I would go live with them in Costa Rica. It felt so far away to me.

But as I thought about it, I decided that God was probably giving me a new experience! I prayed and asked God if Costa Rica was His will for my life. He answered me, and I decided to go even though I feared leaving everything I know here.

While I struggled with this, a brother shared this verse: Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9). This opened my eyes, and I knew God wanted me to go with them.

In September I bought my ticket for October 6 and began preparing to leave. Meanwhile I helped at Shining Light as a floater. I really enjoyed the work there and I will miss every single one of the people there. Part of my heart will stay there. I'm very grateful for their support.

I plead for your prayers as I go to Costa Rica. May God bless you all richly. Love and prayers,
Bianca Estrada Victorio



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Daily safety on the outdoor equipment. Two accidents in a month's time remind us of the brevity of life. We are thankful both survived.
- Continue to pray for houseparents for boys.
- Strength, wisdom, and love for Greiven as he carries the daily load of responsibilities of the church and home.
- Young men to help with boys.
- Caretakers as they face difficulties and joys every day in working with hurting children.
- The school, which is in full swing again.

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WELCOME JOSUE!



Hello Josue Lopez. He arrived in August to help care for boys!

WELCOME NOEMY!



Hello Noemy Lopez, sister of Josue. She is teaching the younger grade classroom in the Spanish school.