



HOPE FOR CHILDREN FOUNDATION

Empower a child. Empower society.



Lessons of hope and solidarity

Fall 2017

Many of you reading this now may look outside and see the leaves turning colors, falling gently to the ground. A familiar smell of changing seasons may linger in the air. And while this can offer comfort, there is no ignoring the uncertainty and fear resulting from the natural disasters that have struck the world with tragedy this past month and the threat of more to come.

Throughout central and southern Mexico, there are also leaves falling from the trees. They fall onto collapsed homes, offices, shops, and schools, and tempt countless damaged buildings to let out their last breaths and fall along with them. The familiar sights and smells this September cause dismay rather than comfort, as people struggle to accept that such catastrophe has repeated itself. Mexico City, the State of Mexico, Morelos, Puebla, Guerrero, Veracruz, Tabasco, Oaxaca, and Chiapas have all been subjected to destruction from this month's earthquakes, many people have lost everything they owned.

Just a three-hour drive north of Mexico City, Santa Maria del Mexicano has remained out

of harm's way. As the youth, staff, and volunteers pray for their country, families, and friends, they remember what will pull Mexico together and out of the wreckage: solidarity, faith, compassion, and persistence. These values are not hard for them to recall, as they are taught and practiced day in and day out at Santa Maria.

With time and nurturing, there are positive stories that bloom from these teachings, like that of Teresa de Jesús Felix Olvera. Teresa, or Tere, first left her troubled home at the age of seven. Five years later, having grown too old to remain at her first group home and with nowhere else to go, she arrived at Santa Maria. Now 18, she says, "Santa Maria is my home. I feel like I am...from here."

Every year, Santa Maria opens its doors to children like Tere, children from impoverished and broken homes. As classes start up again, 230 new and returning children and youth have been admitted, and staff and volunteers are busy with integration activities, doing all they can to help them succeed in the setting of the modest, but supportive and loving boarding school.

Students at Santa Maria learn to serve others, and so it is no surprise that when Tere was faced with the question of what she would like to study after graduating from high school, she knew she wanted to choose a career that would allow her to help others in a direct and tangible way. When the opportunity of studying dentistry came along, she was attracted to a specialization in oral and maxillofacial surgery. "We saw cases of patients who were injured and left unable to talk," she shares, "but after surgery, they could speak again. Or there were other examples of people who had lost their confidence because of their appearance after an accident, and surgeons were able to help them feel like themselves again."

Yet, Tere's wish to be of service does not end there. The youngest of three siblings and the first to pursue higher education, she dreams that this career path will also make it possible for her to help loved ones. "I want to break the chain of trouble and suffering in my family," she states with conviction and an unassuming smile. She began her college classes just a few months ago, but there is a look in her eyes that insists she will push forward until she has earned her degree, just as she persevered against the odds to complete her secondary studies.

So, remember Tere as the changing seasons call on us to reflect on changing times, and keep Mexico in your thoughts and prayers as well, for the struggles of its people can teach us all an important lesson: From its homes that have been broken as a result of poverty, violence, abuse, and neglect to its homes that have been damaged and destroyed by overpowering tremors, our southern neighbor makes it clear that in the face of adversity we must respond with hope. From rescuers pulling people out of the rubble to give them another chance at life, to citizens who put everything else on hold to provide food, water, and shelter during an emergency, to young adults like Tere who, despite having little, wish to dedicate their lives to giving back, we see the power of coming together.

Division has no place in healing and overcoming. So as we face our fears of what's to come, may we also blur the borders that keep us apart, knowing that in changing seasons as in changing times, hope is born out of union. Help today with the faith that if you are in need tomorrow, others will also come together to help you.

BACK TO SCHOOL!

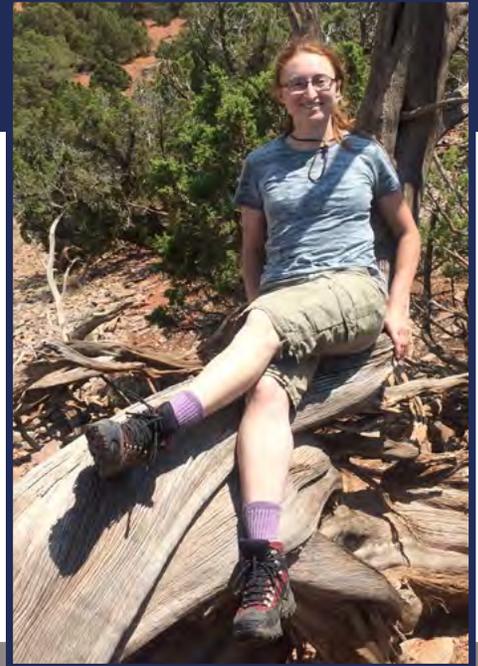
Santa Maria welcomes 230 new and returning students along with 12 full-time, year-long volunteers.



ROSA SALAZAR JOINS THE HFC BOARD

Rosa made her first trip to Santa Maria with her dad, LeRoy Salazar, when she was 14. In the 25 years since then, she's made many trips back with church youth groups, high school Spanish clubs, donors, and family members. In 2007 she spent six months teaching English, Biology, Poetry, and Mexican Dance to the girls and boys under Father Norman's care

Rosa has also served on the board of KRZA Community Radio in Alamosa, Colorado. She is currently employed at the Denver Zoo, teaching children and adults about giraffes, box turtles, and guinea pigs. She loves the children and the spirit of Santa Maria and looks forward to assisting Hope For Children in its mission to support them.



Carrying on traditions of service from one generation to the next.



LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

The destruction in Mexico is monumental and its people are in need of your neighborly support. To ensure your donation is allocated where it is most needed and distributed among local organizations and social initiatives, you can give to Diego Luna and Gael Garcia Bernal's Omaze campaign. [Find out more.](#)



WHAT'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT SANTA MARIA ALL ABOUT?



Click to watch a video about its lasting benefits.

*Do you know someone who might be interested in our work?
Help us spread the word by sharing this newsletter!*



WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF SANTA MARIA DEL MEXICANO?

*[Email us](#) to let us know you're interested in visiting or [click here](#)
to sign up for our volunteer email list.*

Our mission is to empower disadvantaged youth and children in Mexico by collaborating on sustainable educational and social programs.

HOPE FOR CHILDREN FOUNDATION

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Thank you for your gift

You are helping us empower disadvantaged youth and children in Mexico by collaborating on sustainable educational and social programs. We primarily support Santa Maria del Mexicano, a home and school located in the state of Querétaro, Mexico.

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Your Donation * \$ USD One-time Monthly



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One day, all youth in Mexico will have the opportunity to thrive.

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