

# HELP THE HELPLESS FALL NEWSLETTER



Fall, 2021

## *Special Needs Update*

We would like to extend our humble gratitude to all those who donated to our Special Needs requests from our Easter mailing. We had many donors give and one donor who so generously gave the remainder of what was needed to fund the 3 projects. With your donations, we were able to purchase 3 additional computers for the virtual classrooms in Ecuador, make the necessary repairs and maintenance to Holy Family School in Playa Prieta, and purchase 44 mobile devices for the students of St. Mary's School in India for their online learning. May God bless you all for your generosity.

## *Note From HTH*

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we are so very sorry to say that we are unable to obtain letters from the students at St. Mary's School in India, as the students are all at their homes. We hope to be able to send letters from them with the upcoming Christmas mailing. Again, please accept our sincere apologies.

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## Update from Playa Prieta, Ecuador

Dear Help the Helpless Benefactors:

We want to share with you some news from Playa Prieta. On May 10th, 2021, Holy Family School in Playa Prieta, Ecuador, initiated a new school year. In spite of the fact that classes continue to be virtual and not in-person, the students and their teachers began their studies with excitement and with a great desire to grow in knowledge. This year, we have received 34 new students in our school. Some have entered due to the declining academic level in other institutions during the pandemic, while others came in search of a profoundly Catholic education. Regardless of their particular motivations, we are certain that it was our Blessed Mother that has brought each of them here. For that reason, we can't help but give her thanks for making our family grow, since we sincerely experience this school as a true family.

Since the school year started in the month of May, a month specially dedicated to Mary, we began every morning with a virtual meeting in Her honor. All the students and teachers prayed a decade of the rosary after having sung a song together as a sign of Our Love for Our Mother in heaven. The highlight of the month was a virtual torchlight rosary on May 13th, the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima. We offered the rosary for two intentions: the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart and the return to in-person classes. From preschoolers to high school students, including many of their families, the sisters led the rosary from the school's chapel, and as always, the Virgin Mary made her presence known with great joy and peace. The rosary ended with many students' spontaneous cries: "We miss you," "Long live Our Lady," etc.

On June 3rd, the Thursday before the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, we joined together again, this time to show our love for Jesus in the Eucharist. With the Blessed Sacrament exposed, we spent an hour giving Him thanks and asking Him for His protection over each of us and our families. He is the center of this school, and we know that without His presence and blessing, we are useless and incapable of doing any good. With Him, however, miracles occur: wounded hearts are healed, true joy is found and souls are saved.

In both of these occasions, we particularly remembered and prayed for all those who support us financially and spiritually. We continue to ask for your prayers, especially for the return to in-person classes. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary triumph in each of your hearts and repay you for all your generosity. God Bless all of you, The sisters from Playa Prieta

P.S. Here is a link to a short video from the Sisters and Children at Holy Family School: [https://youtu.be/q8\\_RvmhTpP0](https://youtu.be/q8_RvmhTpP0)

## Update from Guayaquil, Ecuador

Once again we would like to share with you the wonders of our Lord. We are living in a time of great suffering and great graces; this is a very common dynamic in the actions of God, who in suffering, becomes closer and makes His mercy shine. Thanks to you, we already have here in Guayaquil more than 70 sponsored families, who continue to be helped materially and spiritually. It is a great work to "rebuild" the human dignity in them and elevate them to God. Some of them are preparing to receive the sacraments. We are also helping many families by building them new homes. Through charity, they are getting to know God and some are preparing for marriage. This grace also reaches the workers - one of the construction workers is now enrolled in catechesis.

A month ago, we started the "Saint Joseph" soup kitchen in Flor de Bastion, another marginal area of Guayaquil. Every day, 80 children come here to eat. When they arrive, they have catechesis and games and then lunch. As the soup kitchen is attached to the church, it is beautiful to see how they are learning to genuflect and pray. Many of them are not Catholic, but they come and get to know the Catholic faith. There are already 20 children who were without sacraments and are now beginning catechesis. The soup kitchen "Saints Niños Justo and Pastor" in El Fortin, continues to move forward. On Saturdays, over 30 volunteers serve 130 children, and we serve 60 children each day during the week. It is a precious work. Recently we had a heartbreaking experience with the death of one of the youngest of them, Akane, who was just 4 years old. Her mother had decided to baptize her this year, but she passed away very suddenly. God knows the heart and has this little girl in His mercy. The little girl was happy to go to the soup kitchen, and the strength with which she prayed the rosary was precious. She became sick with a fever and after three days, she died of a heart attack. The mother, in the midst of immense pain, is discovering our Lord. Now every Saturday, she comes with her children, and while they participate in the activities, she helps us cook. Soon the other children will be baptized.

Our Lord is very good. We have a God from whom we only receive good, even if sometimes we do not understand it. Thank you, a thousand thanks, for all the good you do, for all the generosity in your heart. Charity covers a multitude of sins, so it is a privilege to be able to exercise charity with those who suffer the most, and to do as Mother Teresa of Calcutta said to not give what is left over, but to give "until it hurts." I imagine that the generosity of some of you reaches that level, so you can hear the words of the Lord: "Come blessed of my Father because I was hungry..."

With a thankful heart,  
The Sisters of Guayaquil



## Update from St. Mary's School in India

Dear Loving Friends and Benefactors,

How are you all? My humble greetings to you all! We are so grateful to you! With the grace of our Lord Jesus and the invisible blessings of our Rev. Fr. Antony Xavier, the St. Mary's institutions are running smoothly. All the St. Mary's children are safely with their parents in their homes and are healthy.

The COVID – 19 issues and lockdowns have changed the normal routine of all the people in the world. St. Mary's has been closed since March 24, 2020. The total education system was changed to online learning. The computer-based online education system is the biggest challenge to the teachers and students as it replaced the traditional methods of teaching.

The classes for the academic year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 continue with online learning. It was very difficult for the students of the Handicapped School and the Deaf-Mute school to adopt this way of learning in the beginning.



Due to their economic level and the lack of knowledge of the parents, they were not able to afford to buy the materials for online learning. With the help of the merciful hands of the Help the Helpless benefactors, we have issued smart mobile phones for all the higher classes for those who are going to take their public examinations. The distribution of smart mobile phones to St. Mary's students took place on March 30, 2021, and August 11, 2021. The students and their parents were very happy. With the phones, they are attending classes online. Also, we distributed the books, notebooks, study materials, clothing, and other items needed for their studies.

For those teachers and workers who come to the St. Mary's campus, we provide sanitizer, masks, and have safety precautions in place to ensure their well-being during this time.



During this time, we have been making repairs and maintenance to the school, the hostel building where the students sleep, and also in the kitchen. A new bore well was drilled for drinking water and a new water tank was purchased for the kitchen at St. Mary's. We thank you very much for all your help and prayers for all of these projects.

When the children were living at St. Mary's prior to the pandemic, they received nutritious food, proper education, and sports and games in the evening under the supervision of teachers. Since it is financially difficult for the parents to provide meals for their children who are now at home, we have issued the basic needs to all the parents.

The second wave of COVID had a major impact in India. The number of those infected and those who have died are significantly higher this time. There is no place in the hospital for treatment; oxygen is scarce, life support measures are unavailable, public transportation is shut down, and there is a great increase in unemployment and poverty. The people in India have suffered a lot, but at least now, the spread is slowing down. We will continue to support the parents at St. Mary's in providing for them and their children's needs.

Our state government has permitted the opening of our medical/health care related colleges on August 16, 2021, and the regular high schools on September 1, 2021. However, we still have not received permission to re-open our schools for the special needs or deaf-mute, yet.

We are always praying for you, and please pray for us. Thanking you with warm regards,

I.MariaSelvam, Administrator of St. Mary's Schools in India

## Note from Fr. Rafael

Dear Friends of HTH,

May the Lord bless you abundantly and fill your hearts with His peace! Once again I am writing to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the help you give to the Missionary Groups of the Home of the Mother. How many people receive material and spiritual help thanks to your generosity! St. Paul reminds us that God loves a cheerful giver and that there is more joy in giving than in receiving.

I thank God for your true faith that leads you to seek the spiritual and material good of your brothers and sisters. I cannot fail to thank God for the trust you have placed in us by making us mediators of your help on behalf of others.

Many are the concrete works that have been possible this year thanks to you: opening and renovation of soup kitchens for poor children in the most disadvantaged areas of Guayaquil, a van for the Servant Brothers' apostolate with young people, scholarships for the formation of young university students, houses for homeless families, opening of a chapel for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Chone, distribution of Bibles, books and religious articles to increase the faith of the simple people, and so much more.

I want to assure you of our prayers for all of you, for your families, for your intentions. I ask the Lord to keep you very close to his Heart and that you may experience the love and tenderness of Mary, Mother of God and our Mother.

Let us continue to work together, with enthusiasm, with great humility, always grateful to God who allows us to do good. In the Our Father, we ask: "Thy Kingdom come." Let us work tirelessly so that people may know and love God, so that they may feel him as a Providential Father thanks to your generosity, so that they may believe and hope in eternal life, which we too hope to attain through God's mercy.

With my most sincere gratitude, I bless you all from my heart.

Fr. Rafael Alonso, President of the Missionary Group of the Home of the Mother



One of the new houses being built for a family in need in Ecuador

## Note from Fr. Altier

Dear Benefactors,

Praised be Jesus Christ! The benefactors of Help the Helpless never cease to amaze me! In the midst of economic difficulties and the world becoming a much darker place in the past year and a half, you continue to shine like a light in the darkness. Jesus told us He came to light a fire; He also told us that we are the light of the world. It is evident that He has ignited His fire of love within your hearts and that you are not putting the light under a bushel basket. You are shining brightly and giving light to everyone around you. The wonderful thing is that this light does not extend only to those in your immediate vicinity, but you are bringing a beautiful light to children in India and families in Ecuador.

Before your kindness was extended to them, many of them had lived in the darkness of despair, having no hope for themselves or for their children to get out of the poverty and the squalor in which they lived. You have changed that for many people. I think of the number of handicapped children that have been educated and are living productive lives now because of you. In India, most of those children are rejected as a bad omen when they are born and thought to be worthless to society. The good people at St. Mary's are proving that to be completely wrong. The joy of the people in Ecuador who are seeing their children get an education and having hope for a better life thanks to the selfless Sisters who are working with them provides us all with great encouragement. None of this would be accomplished without you!

Your charity in the midst of an economic downturn and the chaos of our world, our nation, and our own lives is not only a beautiful testimony to your faith and charity, but it is also an inspiration to many, including the Board of Directors of Help the Helpless. When I see the fruit of God's grace working through you, it strengthens me. You are truly an inspiration. From the depth of my heart and from the entire Board of Help the Helpless, thank you and God bless you for your goodness and charity! Our Lord told us that we would receive a hundredfold, but I also know this is not why you are doing this. Just know that God will never be outdone in generosity and that what you do for the least of His brothers you are doing for Him. I pray for each of you and for your families that God will shower you with an abundance of His grace and blessings.

God bless you,

Fr. Robert J. Altier, President of Help the Helpless