

## MARTY IN NORTHERN MEXICO

Dear Family and Friends,

February 2007

Thank you supporting churches, family and friends for the Christmas greetings. I was able to see some of my family during the holidays in Chicago and Grand Rapids (see photo of grandchildren). My Christmas cards did not arrive by my Jan. 6 mail pick up at my return, but by the first of February mail pick up, I found quite a pile. So right after Ground Hogs Day and before Valentine's Day, I enjoyed Christmas all over. I think the slowdown is at my postal mailbox, where the Dec. mail seems to get sorted in January.

Thanks for praying for our Christmas program. Our numbers definitely increased from last year and the weather was nice. The greatest and most enthusiastic applause followed two renditions: the first was a first grade student who recited about a five minute welcome with barely a breath, secondly, a speaking choir of all the children who had memorized Luke 2:1-20. The parents just couldn't believe the children, especially seven first grade students, could recite that much from memory. (See photo with first graders in costume). *"The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen" (Luke 2:20a)* I pray that the families saw and heard the true meaning of Christmas and went home glorifying and praising God throughout this past Christmas season.

Again, the parents were amazed that a number of Junior High students could play a variety of recorders in a special Recorder Band. The above results come from the new components to our school curriculum in the past two years, namely Bible and an expanded music program beyond the government requirements. Speaking of Bible classes, one of our teachers said that as she was teaching the story of the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter, tears came down a student's face. The teacher felt this was the moment to explain God's gift of salvation. Praise God, several accepted Jesus that day in her fourth grade class. Two days later this little girl came to this teacher to tell her about her very sick uncle and that she had told her father *Mark 11:22 says, "Have faith in God."* God can heal. Doesn't *Ps. 8:2 say, "Out of the mouth of babes and infants You have ordained strength."* Praise the Lord, the children are learning Bible stories and verses every morning at school.

In addition, I had asked you to pray that our school media story would turn for our good. February is enrollment month and we already have 22 children enrolled in the first grade. This will mean two classrooms. We are not sure where we are going to put this increase if the new classroom isn't completed by August. Once again, *I am asking that you pray for a construction team to come and help us build on the laid foundation of a room, as well as construct 15 more desks and chairs for our upper elementary.* This is the wonderful blessing of an abundance of students, which we have only seen in the last two years of the 15-year history of the school, "let the children come," to quote the title of a Christian educator's book. We believe Christian schools (as well as our churches) can impact our culture and grow the Kingdom of God here in Mexico.

Furthermore, in this week I had a new substitute to help for two days and this is how I learned about our good program. This 21 year old university student said, "Oh, these textbooks are Christian, how nice," as she began to prepare for the class. Later, I had her observe our best Bible teacher. She returned saying, "he is really good." After I

lent her the Bible textbook she will use while substituting for him, she said, “This Bible Guide B on David to Malachi is so good.” And before she returned to work with us she had read the whole textbook. Unfortunately, we may lose the good Bible teacher after he gets married at the end of the month, because he found a hotel job for a better salary. I asked this youth pastor if he could continue with one of his classes as his third job just to help us out and continue this high standard of teaching. *Please pray that God will always provide the very best for our school.*

*Thank you all for your prayers for wisdom for me, our Bible program, Christian teachers trying to learn how to integrate faith and learning, as well as our students.*

Joyfully serving Christ in Ciudad Victoria,

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