



Nov 5, 2019 Weekly Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.



Visiting Romeo in Ensenada. We were not allowed to photograph Romeo.

The Tijuana Oblate mission has long been of assistance to those people migrating to Tijuana for a better life. Father Julio, may his soul rest in peace, used to ask at every mass if there was anyone new here, and when someone would raise their hand, everyone would say “welcome”. Tijuana has grown tremendously since the 1990’s, and it is a good place to find work. When the caravan arrived in the last year, the mission did what it could to assist some of them to get established here. The youth ministry got involved and housed and fed a sub-group of about 19 persons.

Four of the young men have stayed on with us, having found work and housing here, rather than crossing

illegally into the US. But leaving family and old habits and reshaping dreams isn’t easy. Romeo is one of those four, and he has been trying to shake the habit of turning to alcohol or marijuana when the anxieties of life weigh him down.

Our group that is focused on the immigrants traveled to visit Romeo in a rehabilitation center. His decision to enter the facility was prompted by our recent SEARCH retreat for adults. He said he is feeling positive about himself and knows getting clean is the right path for him. We told him he can be a powerful example to others to make a new life physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We arranged for him to Skype his family and also to talk with Fr. Jesse, our youth-focused priest. He was very moved to feel the support of our group, and to see Ernesto, his friend who made the journey from Central America with him. Ernesto is seeking baptism, so maybe Romeo will follow.



Isaac is a 6 year boy who has a kidney disease called Nephroic Syndrome. This is a serious condition and we are told that the doctors want to do a kidney transplant. The older brother could be a donor, but the mother (Nancy) is torn, because she worries she would then have two sick sons. Isaac also has a condition called Slipping Rib, where the rib is detached from the sternum.

The family relocated from Guadalajara to Tijuana because they heard about Hospital De Las Californias, where they could receive affordable treatment. Currently, dialysis is an option that is being considered, but it is expensive for them. Isaac is on medication that costs \$300 a month.

When the family moved to Tijuana they were able to start making payments on a piece of land, where they put up a very modest plywood and tarps dwelling. They have three children: the older son is 10 years old, Isaac is 6 years, and their younger sister about 2. Nancy works the night shift in a factory and her husband works as a driver.

They were extremely fortunate to have been selected to have a group from the US build them a house, which was just completed. Nancy is elated and extremely thankful, however, she worries that the Church won't continue to help them, since they now have a house. The youth ministry understands that they still have needs and has been helping with food and supplies. We are also monitoring Isaac's situation to determine if there is a way we can help further.

This is Molina Pulido Christofer Alejandro. He is studying mechatronic engineering at the



university, thanks to his donors Chris & Dwight Landis (right). Christopher leads one of the chapel youth groups. He recently joined us to visit one of our families and maybe he is looking the other way on purpose, as we were



cleaning an amputee's leg.