



# QUIE PASA

WHAT'S HAPPENING

A Publication of International Children's Care  
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## PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

**H**urricanes can be such messy, inconsiderate things. They blow in, move stuff around, and then move on leaving those who've survived to clean up the mess. Our children's village, Las Palmas, in the Dominican Republic, was visited by violent storms twice last fall within a six-week period.

First Hurricane Noel and then tropical storm Olga. As with most of the farms in the Dominican ours was affected, with large portions of our crops rendered unusable. Our farm supplies the children's village with staple foods such as yucca and plantains. We've managed to replant much of what was destroyed but our crops are not yet ready to be harvested. Even six months later, food is still scarce in the Dominican and many people have resorted to stealing to survive. Las Palmas has lost 6,000 pounds of yucca to thieves. The staff now has to guard the yucca eighteen hours a day.

Our director at Las Palmas, Mario Lora, had this to say in a recent letter: "We are sorry to have to tell you that things are going from bad to worse. Each



*Our yucca and plantain crops*

day that you go to the market or the supermarket you find that the prices have gone up: rice, grains, milk, sugar, cereals, etc. One doesn't even like to talk about it any more, because the instability is so great right now and unpredictable. We are just trying to survive according to the possibilities that we have."

They're continuing to plant at Las Palmas and know that with your continuing support, one day this situation will be resolved. In the meantime, the strain on our food budget at Las Palmas continues. The children would certainly appreciate your prayers and financial support that you give to them in these times of tight constraints.

## PLEASE SPONSOR ME!

### My name is Acxer

I need a sponsor. I am 5 years old and live in Dominican. Please return this coupon to sponsor me each month. God bless you for helping me have a chance.

\$30    \$60    \$\_\_\_\_\_

**(800)422-7729**  
Sponsorship Department



# *A Personal Note*

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Dear ICC Family,

Juana was on the phone, "I had a surprise today. A letter came from Milton Casasola. I'm sure you remember him."

"Yes, of course," I replied. "The last I knew of him, his mother had come to his graduation and taken him back with her to Los Angeles. Where is he?"

"The letter came from San Diego, California. He is in the Navy there, has been almost since he left The Pines. It is a long letter and you will be interested. I'll send it on to you."

Juana went on to tell me more. "It sounds like he is homesick for The Pines. It is all about his life in the navy and what an impact his upbringing has had on him."

Later, reading the letter, I could see that Milton is still the same boy, industrious, doing the best he can. But, it was true; I detected a certain nostalgia for his life with us. Since he included his phone number, I called him.

"Mommy Fleck!" He exclaimed when he heard my voice. "I am so glad to hear you!" He went on to tell me about his life in the navy. One thing he said, "In the navy my superiors want to know where I grew up. When I tell them, 'In an orphanage,' they ask. 'Did they teach you all these things you know how to do?'"

"You know, Milton," I told him. "I think you should come and visit us. I want to hear all about what you are doing."

He eagerly accepted the invitation and arrived a week or so later. When Ken and I met him at the airport, he was the same Milton, but more mature and very polished in his dress and his conversation. Now we could talk in English and the next few days were filled with conversation and with taking him to see the Northwest. One of the first things I asked him was, "How is your faith in God while you are in the navy?"

"Oh, Mommy, I wouldn't forget that. There haven't been any problems for me. In fact, I have worked with the chaplain."

Silently I breathed a prayer, "Thank you, Lord, for being with this boy, even where he may have had temptations to forget what he had learned about You."

One of the first things he asked was, "Do you know where my sponsor, Mary Paulson, is? She wrote to me so faithfully all the time I was growing up at the Pines."

"Yes, in fact she doesn't live too far from here. We'll try to get in touch with her."

He stayed several days, and we had many serious conversations. When he shared some of his social life with me, I knew that he was getting the same attention that most sailors get from the opposite sex, so we talked about that. "When you begin to look for a wife," I told him, "think of a girl who shares your values and your faith. In fact, it wouldn't be a bad idea to look up some of your friends from The Pines," I suggested with a smile.

When we took him back to the airport, I told him. "You know you have a room at our house, Milton, whenever you want to come."

"Thank you, Mommy and Poppy Fleck. I will be back."

And he did come back to spend Christmas with us. But the war in Iraq was looming, and his aircraft carrier was sent to the Gulf. His work was in the technical field of aviation support. We kept in touch through Email almost every week. I would assure him, "We are praying for your safety, and you can tell the other boys with you that we are praying for all of you." When he would be in some port where there was a phone he would call us.

## *continued from last month*

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When his carrier came back to San Diego several years later he called me. “I’m going to go and visit The Pines. I can hardly wait. That is really home for me. Several of my old friends have sent me emails, including a couple of the girls who are studying at the university in Costa Rica. They want me to come down there too.”

“That will be great. You might want to go and study there some time. I replied.

It was during this time that Milton was made the Sailor of the Year.

I didn’t hear the whole story about his trip until recently when he said, “Grizelda Lopez was the one who met me at the airport. I was shocked when I saw her. It had been seven years since I had seen her and she was just one of the younger girls then. But here she came with her arms open to meet me, a beautiful young lady.” He went on to say, “We had been exchanging emails as good friends, and I hadn’t thought of her in any other way, but after leaving Costa Rica, I couldn’t get Grizelda out of my mind. We had spent time together, getting newly acquainted, and I admired her, first of all for her beautiful character as well as her physical beauty. She really lived her faith. But she still only considered me a good friend, one she could ask advice from and also one who could take advice! She is the person I would like to marry, I thought, and one day, on the phone I let her know how I felt and asked her to be my girl friend. But I was taken back when she replied, ‘This isn’t something you ask over the telephone,’ so I knew I would have to make another trip to Costa Rica.”

At his work on the base or wherever he was, his thoughts were full of that dream of a girl down in Costa Rica. He prayed for guidance. “Is this the girl you have for me?” he prayed.

One of Grizelda’s sponsors who had been assigned to her while she was still studying at our academy near the Pines was Dr. and Mrs. Anderson. They had taken such an interest in her that they practically adopted her as their daughter, even visiting her in Costa Rica several times. When she graduated from college there, they sponsored her to take advanced work in a local university. Because of her background of never knowing anything about her biological family, she often felt that there was an emptiness in her life. She longed for parents of her own. The Anderson’s had no daughter, and it seemed natural to think of Grizelda as theirs. Dr. Anderson, himself, was an orphan, and experienced that same hole in his heart. Giving a sense of security to this girl did something for him that nothing else had. A strong bond was formed that was a joy to the Anderson’s and the sense of really belonging to Grizelda. She accepted and loved her ICC family and never strayed from the character and spiritual principles she had learned. But to be a special daughter to a family who accepted her so fully was a blessing she thanked God for.

When Milton let her know he was coming again, she was secretly thrilled. Though admiring him as any girl would, she was determined to know him better before deciding that he was the one for her. Grizelda was a girl with high values and she knew what she wanted in a husband. She sensed that this visit could be a highlight of her life, and she prayed earnestly that God would guide her. It did turn out to be a visit to never forget. Milton rented a car and took her, as well of some of her friends, on different outings to the interesting places in Costa Rica. They went out for meals, and the more she saw of him the more she knew that this young man had what she had dreamed of. However, she was careful to learn all she could about him, his values, and his goals for life, as well as his relation to God. They spent hours talking.

When the time came that they were alone together, he asked her, “Would you marry me?”

Again, her answer surprised him. “Milton, I think you are the man I want to marry, but first you must meet my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Anderson, and get their approval. Then, you also need to ask Mommy Fleck.” Grizelda was not leaving anything to chance in this the biggest decision of her life. As for Milton, he was more and more sure that this very special girl was the only one in the world for him.

## Personal Note - *continued*

Events transpired in earnest. Milton visited the Andersons and she called me to know if this young Latin sailor was worthy of the girl they considered their daughter. I was happy to recommend him. Then he came to me. "I think you are making a wise choice, Milton. I can see that you have not walked into this hastily, and most of all, you are both asking God to guide you in this most important step. If in your marriage you always keep God as your guide, you can have a happy Christian home. In fact, it just seems that God had this all planned and brought you two together. He must have something special in mind for you."

In planning for the future, Milton succeeded in being relocated to Bremerton, Washington. Then the necessary arrangements were made, an immigrant visa gotten for Grizelda, and they had a lovely wedding near his mother's home in Los Angeles. He found their dream home near his new base in Bremerton. They were married November 5, 2006.

They are now settled in that new home and a new little member will soon be added to make their joy complete. Milton's status in the navy has been a Chief Petty Officer in the Technical Field of Aviation Support Equipment. He has received the word that he was among other navy men who would soon be commissioned as an officer.

Sitting in the living room of our house recently, we talked about their past. Grizelda told me, "I can see now how God rescued me as a baby, about to die, and placed me where I would be cared for, educated, and especially taught about my Father in Heaven who knew where I was and had a special plan for me."

"Yes, Mommy Fleck, Milton added. We have talked about this many times. I don't think it was a coincidence. We thank God every day for the way God has cared for us and brought us together. Now, we are anxious to know the rest of the plan He has for our lives."

I have related this beautiful story about Milton and Grizelda because I see it as a marvelous working of God's plans in the lives of two souls that the world had nearly given up on. What a wonderful thing it is to see how God works things out from when we are helpless little children until we are adults. As long as we are willing to put our lives in His care and keeping, He will continue to bless us and guide us.

Thank you each one who helps make this work possible for these children who are so much less fortunate. I know God has a special blessing in store for you as you continue to help us to help His children.

With our love,

*Aleyou and Jen*

## Harvesting at home!

**O**n the 15th of March, there was a real celebration at the El Oasis Children's Village when sixteen of "His Kids" were baptized in an emotional ceremony conducted by Pastor Mauro Reyes. Doug Congleton, ICC's executive director attended as well.

These sixteen children, all of whom were between the ages of ten and fifteen, were bap-

tized thanks to the ministry of International Children's Care, the house parents, aunts, and Mauro and Lidia Reyes, our administrators at the El Oasis Children's Village.

ICC and specifically El Oasis exist to provide homes and families for Mexico's orphaned and abandoned children. Your patronage of this ministry allows the children to learn about the



*Pastor Reyes during baptisms*

love of Jesus. We would like to thank you for all the support and assistance you have given to ICC, as these baptisms are the fruit of your generous and loving support for these special children of Mexico.