



MannaMail connects people in the MPI community through bimonthly stories and updates - east, west, north, and south. See the mission act.



DISPATCH

*This week, Manna Project's Program Directors begin a much needed vacation for the holidays. Many have returned home to the US to celebrate with friends and family while others are taking advantage of this opportunity to travel. Our programs are on pause but we look forward to resuming our work in January. To everyone who has supported us in 2008, we at MPI wish you a very **Happy Holidays!***

For your reading pleasure, here is MPI Nicaragua's latest [Child Sponsorship blog entry](#) from Mary Rose Conroy. See the Act Section below for information on supporting the La Chureca clinic:

As we gathered with the mothers and children of our Child Sponsorship Program, there was palpable excitement in the air. When they entered the courtyard of La Esperanza, an elementary school located within the boundaries of La Chureca, the Managua city dump, the kids' eyes lit up when they saw the party we had set up for them. Our Christmas party is an annual celebration, made all the more special this year by the addition of Hilda Bleiwies, the founder of Mi Casa Charities.

Months earlier Hilda had contacted Manna Project International in the hopes of partnering with us as we both worked to better the lives of the children and families of La Chureca. The dump can be a difficult place to work, and we were encouraged to hear from a total stranger who had also fallen in love with "our" kids, so much so that she had recruited many of her friends and family members to the cause, collecting both monetary and clothing donations to bring to Nicaragua.

We are incredibly grateful not only for this outpouring of support and generosity, but also for the eagerness of Hilda to work with other organizations that have a presence in Chureca in order to maximize our effectiveness and strengthen our combined efforts. My coworkers and I collected boxes and boxes of medication (to be distributed by Casa Base, La Chureca's health clinic) and clothing that Mi Casa Charities had sent. We also were fortunate that the families in our program were the recipients of a delicious catered lunch courtesy of Hilda and her donors.

With the help of a local restaurant, we served an early Christmas meal of rice, bread, chicken, snacks, and sodas to over 100 people. After all of the families in our program had been served (and even had seconds!) we opened up the doors of the school to some other local children in need of a good meal and kept passing out plates of food until there was none left. The seemingly simple meal was a wonderful gift to families who all too often can barely afford to put the Nicaraguan staples of rice and beans on their tables.

I can personally attest to the gratitude these families felt for the generosity shown to them by strangers thousands of miles away. Their smiles and quiet expressions of thanks were heartwarming. It is a privilege for me to witness and be a part of this event that would not have been possible without the contributions of so many people who, in spite of difficult economic times, were moved to give this holiday season.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Hilda and Mi Casa Charities for many years to come and we're hopeful that through our work and that of so many others La Chureca will begin to see the change it so desperately needs.

Mary Rose Conroy

ACT

Help us Support the Clinic

Casa Base Clinic, where MPI runs its [child sponsorship program](#), operates on \$4000/month, including doctor's salaries, medicines and equipment, and operating expenses. [Austin Samaritans](#) has pledged monthly support of \$3,000 (\$36,000) for 2009.

MPI is seeking the remainder \$1,000 per month (\$12,000/year) so that the clinic can remain open and continue providing much needed services to this community. If you would like to donate, [click here](#).

Design MPI's next t-shirt

Design Manna Project's next t-shirt to win your own free t-shirt, a gift certificate, and everlasting world renown. Submit your design by January 12th. More details [here](#).

DATES

January 12th - Designs for MPI's t-shirt competition should be submitted to chris.taylor@manna-project.org.

February 2nd - Round two of applications for [Program Directors](#). Help us recruit next year's volunteers by telling any recent graduates or college students about serving with Manna Project.

www.manna-project.org



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