

Lessons from the Farm of the Child

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We discovered on our relatively short mission trip that a high priority of such a trip is to learn about other people's lives, culture, and ministry. I could fill many bulletin articles about the lessons we have gained. This first has to do with the pillars of values that the orphanage maintains for all involved from leaders to teachers and to the children. These pillars are:

SPIRITUALITY - The orphanage encourages prayer and discernment in all things. Following our Catholic tradition, they begin the day at 6:00 a.m. with morning prayer or a communion service. Every day ends with a rosary and Thursday night includes a holy hour of adoration. Each Sunday they all get dressed up and go into town to the parish (in this case the Cathedral) for mass with the greater Catholic community. Individual prayer is certainly encouraged throughout as well.

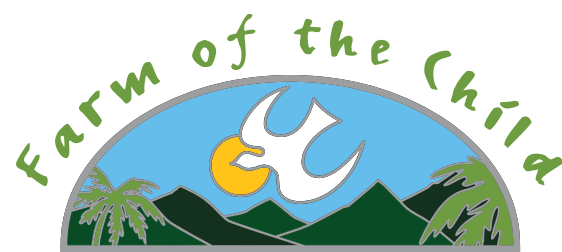
SERVICE - Not only do the missionaries from the United States live a life of service but all are encouraged to do the same. When visiting with one of their high schoolers, I asked what service work he does and he quickly stated he helps feed the poor. We had extra pizza at our meal together and he felt we should give it to the poor on our way home in spite of others wanting to keep it for themselves the next day (quite honestly this was my natural inclination as I considered the high schoolers "poor").

COMMUNITY - In living in tight confines, one would expect like most people sharing a house, this goal would be natural. But we all know that striving to be in community is different than sharing a house together. This means taking risks to have real conversations with each other and getting to know and love new people. Those who come through the orphanage continue to have a tight relationship with each other after entering adulthood. The missionaries become very close to each other and love gathering back together years later.

SIMPLICITY - Perhaps the greatest challenge to us citizens of the United States is to choose to live with less as opposed to having most of what we want. This orphanage operates, as we see in the above Community principle, as one big family who needs to share so all have what they need. We can grow in God's love by expanding that circle and live simply so all on Earth have what they need including generations to come. Perhaps as we apply this not only to treasure, but time and talent as well, we will see a path to greater peace and harmony.

If you really want to challenge yourself, stop and think of how each of these relates to the others.

We would do well to consider adopting these principles in our lives as a path to God's joy. In the great exchange between the Farm of the Child (Finca del Niño) and our parishes we get to give a great deal. In adopting these principles, we will gain at least as much as we give.

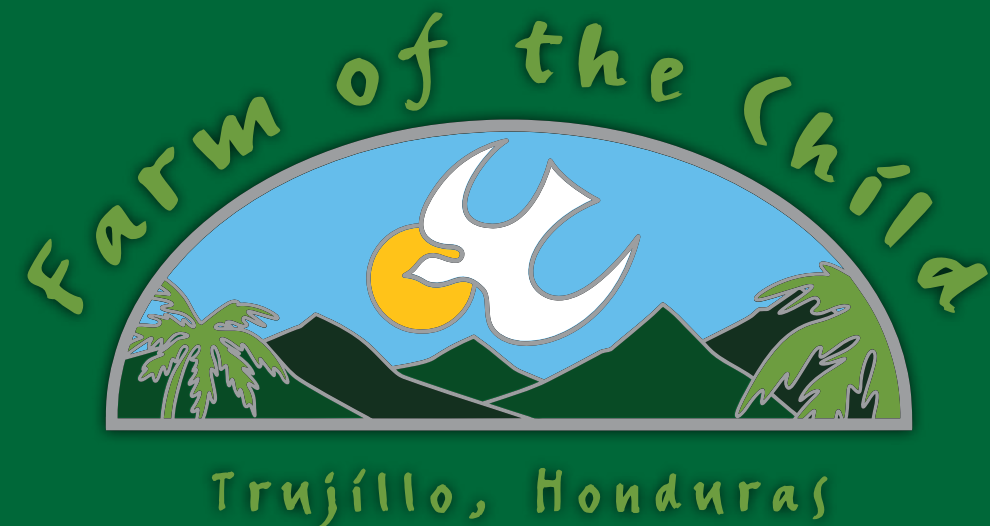


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Farm of the Child is an IRS 501(c)3 organization.

THE IMPACT OF SERVING AS A MISSIONARY IS TRULY IMMEASURABLE.



SPIRITUALITY

SERVICE

COMMUNITY

SIMPLICITY

“Whoever welcomes a child such as this for my sake welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me, but Him who sent me.”

— Mark 9:37



The Farm helps meet the spiritual needs of our children and our community.



Honduras is the poorest and least developed nation in Central America. Poverty and hunger prevail, leading to disease, violence, crime, and substance abuse. As a result, many families are weakened and destroyed. Their children are left orphaned and abandoned.

At the Farm of the Child, our answer is family-style homes for these orphans. With the Holy Family as a model, our Honduran house parents lovingly raise eight to ten children in each orphan home. With the support of the larger Farm community of missionaries and staff, the house parents raise the orphan children along side their own children. The orphan children range in age from one to seventeen, with a roughly equivalent number of boys and girls.

Each child arrives with his or her own story and challenges. They come from all over the country of Honduras with widely varying family backgrounds. Some children have lost both parents, some have been abandoned by family members, while still others have parents who are temporarily unable to care for them due to illness, incarceration, mental instability, or family difficulties. The children are nurtured in this family setting until they are ready for independent living, taking with them the gifts of faith and education to begin a productive life.

Needs Met at the Farm of the Child:

- Homes for orphaned children
- Primary school on site
- Opportunities to further education/training
- Health care for Farm children & community
 - Outreach to surrounding area
 - Religious & spiritual development



Jose was malnourished and withdrawn when he came to live at the Farm. Now he is happy, healthy, and full of life.



A brief history:

Motivated by love for Christ and the desire to follow God’s will, Vincent and Zulena Pescatore founded the first Farm of the Child in the remote rainforests of El Petén, Guatemala in 1987. After establishing an orphanage, clinic, and school in El Petén, Vincent and Zulena felt they were being called to begin an orphanage in Honduras. In 1993, they began



If you think you might be called to serve in the capacity of an international missionary with our program, please visit our Web site for additional contact information.

www.FarmoftheChild.org

construction outside of the town of Trujillo on the northern coast of Honduras. The Farm is currently run by the Sisters of St. Francis of Central America in conjunction with a team of international missionaries.



How can you serve as a missionary?

Each year, we attract international missionaries who make a 2½ year commitment of service to the Farm of the Child. They come from all different walks of life in order to serve in a variety of functions such as administration, accounting, social work, pastoral ministry, teaching, medicine, maintenance and community outreach. Before arriving at the Farm, missionaries attend language school in Guatemala for two months. Once they arrive at the Farm, missionaries live together and are guided by the four pillars of community, spirituality, simplicity and service.

Reflections from Our Missionaries

“There is much fulfillment in watching the children gradually transform and realizing that their lives have been radically altered by the Farm.”

— Tricia Zackrisson
Social Worker

“One would never guess the lives that live behind the sparkling eyes of these children. This is a magic place where an angry, abused boy becomes a caring, big brother; where scared, malnourished orphans find a family to care for them.”

— Cameo Schad
Teacher and Social Worker

“To me, the Farm means the commitment and celebration of a family united in God’s love. It is an intentional setting aside of self for the purpose of creating a loving community in which each person is stretched and blessed to grow. The Farm helps us recognize our interdependence, showing us God’s love as we daily see it lived by others.”

— Anne Klinkhammer
Former Sub-Director

“To me, the Farm of the Child is an intentional choice to live the Gospels by loving and serving ‘the orphan and the widow’ in a very real and intimate way.”

— Peter Tooher
Sub-Director

“The Farm is a place where you can see God... in the children, in the volunteers...and in the way that each one of our lives is transformed and redeemed.”

— Lupita Galvan
Missionary Psychologist