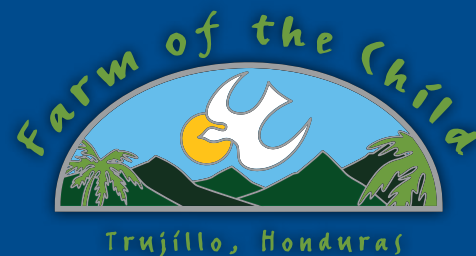


FRIENDS OF THE FARM

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR SUPPORTERS



S U M M E R 2 0 1 2

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO LAUGH

By Kevin Kuehl

Recently I've been doing a little reflecting on laughter (as I read Fr. James Martin's book *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life*); for me laughter can be such a sign of God's presence...that life is not so serious as we might sometimes make it out to be. Laughter of course can also be rather disturbing per se when my students snicker as my back is turned to them and I am writing on the board about DNA replication...which is no laughing matter in case it's been awhile since you've been in a biology class.

The laughter that really brings me joy is well...uh...joyful. I think of Brayan on the swing when I pushed him so hard that he could do nothing but explode with laughter, and again more recently when I picked him up about 77 times with him giggling out "otra vez...again, again" between every toss. When this kid feels loved, nothing can stop his laughter. Couldn't I learn from him?

I think that Kate's 3rd grade class might be the funniest place on the Farm with six of the kids being boys from the Finca itself. Kate (bless her heart) is already on the fast track to sainthood for this. Once when talking about the dangers of tsunamis, one of the boys, Rony, declared that he knew just how to deal with such a disaster. You see, he explained, tsunamis have a fear of crucifixes, so all you have to do when you see the tsunami coming is hold up your crucifix and the waves will turn right back around. Kate always quick on

her toes responded, "Uh...maybe, but you might want to move to higher ground too."

Another humorous happening in Kate's class was a discussion of planetary orbits. Kate explained how the planets are pulled by the force of gravity around the sun. Many of the students still had their doubts. Why don't the planets just fall from their places into the darkness of space? Despite this being a complicated subject for third graders, Angel provided a confident explanation saying, "Each planet is held in place by one of God's fingers..." he paused noting the mathematical dilemma, "...and two for Pluto!"

One of the things that Fr. Martin points out in his book is that humor has the tendency not only to make us laugh but to reveal some truth. The truth here is this: be children of God.

Be like little children "for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these," says Jesus (Matthew 19:14)—or "Jefuf" as Luz might say, and again he reminds us "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3-4). Yes, maybe Angel and Rony didn't give the most scientifically correct answer, but certainly God sustains the planets in their places and helps us through difficulties and disasters. These things are true. Angel also reveals to us that Pluto, that tiniest,



rejected quasi-planet is the one that God supports with the love of two fingers just as He has a special love for the poor and despised. As we stand before God humble and limited, our kids remind us that we shouldn't try to explain away all the mystery that God's creation has to offer because sometimes it's just that—mystery. From this childlike point of view, we begin to see our need for God in all that we do. Our children reveal to us that our planet really is balanced on one of God's fingers. While we chuckle, they teach us to trust in God.

\$370,000 must be raised by December to keep all program services running at current levels



Please note: The above reflects our newly adopted fiscal year.

SPIRITUALITY

SERVICE

COMMUNITY

SIMPLICITY

TOUCHED BY ANGEL!

By Kevin Kuehl

Last summer, The Farm welcomed seven new children home. One of the seven was a little boy named Angel who was dropped off by the police without any family, documents, or information. We did not even know his birthday. This boy without a past has made quite a present (in more than one sense of the word) at and to the Farm of the Child.

Comparable in both size and mannerism to the "munchkins of the lollipop guild," his rough outer shell melts away in less than one second when he shows a smile so large that it takes over his face. Angel can be many different things at many different moments, but his dominant attributes include his love of school and love of God. As volunteer Kate Mattoon said, "More than most children at the Farm, you can truly see that Angel is seeking God, and cares to know more about his faith." During prayer when asked for volunteers, without hesitation Angel is always the first to respond. This faith transfers over into his schoolwork as well. He desires to learn more each day, and when he messes up his schoolwork he becomes very frustrated. One day Angel was taking an English test and could not remember the word "there's", which is quite understandable for a 3rd grade non-English speaker. He was almost in tears with frustration but his teacher could not give him the answer. She moved on to help other students. Within a couple of minutes, she could hear Angel saying "Teacher! Teacher!" When she went over to see what was going on, Angel said, "Teacher! I made the sign of the cross and prayed to God to help me, and then He did! Now I know the answer!" His



teacher looked at his paper and he had the correct answer written.

When I asked Angel what one of his favorite things about the Farm was, he said "Everything. But mostly going to school." His favorite subject is English and when I asked him why, he said "Because the volunteers speak English all the time and I want to know what they are saying! Like right now! What are you writing?"

In addition to his love of both church and school, Angel brings a very large personality with him to the Farm. He is always joking with others and making people smile. When I drew a picture of a clown wearing a baseball cap

(that greatly resembled me) for the youngest boys' house, they all decided to try to copy the drawing. Days later I found this drawing in his backpack illustrating me, Angel, and my "novia" (girlfriend). The drawing gives a perfect example of the love and humor that this little boy has brought to all of our lives.

Although we are still not sure of his exact birthday, Angel's birthday was celebrated for the first time in his life on April 4th. This past weekend we had a party to celebrate all of the birthdays in April, and when Angel received his presents, he was close to tears with excitement. "I've never received presents for my birthday before!"

I asked Angel if there was anything he would like to tell the people in the United States, his response was, "Yes! Hello Francesca! Also, I'm very happy to be here at the Finca." I asked him if there was anything else he wanted to say and he said to

"Tell them that I love them! That's all."



Life changing ideas begin with a CONVERSATION

When describing the beginning of the Catholic Worker movement, Dorothy Day once said, "We were just sitting there talking. It was as casual as that, it just came about." A humble description of the beginning of a profound movement of love, and yet her words describe well how the Spirit often works. Start with a few passionate, faith-filled people sharing their ideas. Allow those ideas to be molded by time and God's grace, and gradually miracles begin to happen. This process describes well how two, small parishes in southeast Wisconsin developed a relationship with the Farm of the Child.

It began with two faith-filled, passionate people: Bob and Sue Riley. Having visited the Farm numerous times, Bob and Sue fell in love with the community and felt an insatiable urge to transform that love into action. The conversations began. The next step was to share the story of the Farm with the entire parishes. Bob spoke at weekend masses. He and Sue also facilitated presentations after masses, sharing personal stories and photos. Their passion and excitement were contagious; more hearts stirred and the foundation of a relationship was laid.

Inspired by the Rileys' passion and guided by the Spirit, the parishes decided to formalize a commitment to supporting the Farm. Our priest, Fr. Mike and the parish



council prayerfully decided that during Lent, our parishes would focus their almsgiving appeal toward raising money for the Farm's dairy budget. Since many parish families live on small farms, raising money for milk and cheese seemed an especially meaningful goal. Wearing cow suits and ringing cowbells, children enthusiastically collected money after masses and at the parish school. Farm pictures decorated the hallways and stories appeared in the bulletin. The six weeks of Lent became a time of almsgiving, raising awareness, and prayer. This time of prayer sparked more ideas, and soon the parishes would be sending its

first ever mission trip to the Farm. Three years have passed now, and three mission trips have gone. Some painted houses, some provided professional and spiritual support. Each missionary totes extra suitcases filled with donations. Each missionary departed with eager, helping hands; each returned with a heart transformed by God's love. The statistics are easy to summarize. Two small parishes totaling 1,100 families have raised more than \$19,000 over the last five years. Three mission trips have taken 19 missionaries and over 50 suitcases of donations to the Farm.

But perhaps the most notable statistic is that this year during Lent, despite the economic recession that continues to cause hardship for our families, our parishes raised more money than ever before. What began as a conversation started by two loving people has evolved into a dynamic relationship. Together we make up the body of Christ. By sharing our talents in service to others, we genuinely experience the Gospel truth that it is in giving that we receive. And we discover a deeper joy that flows from the Spirit.

So let the conversations continue. Let the Spirit guide us as we spread the word about the miracles happening at the Farm of the Child. Let us all continue to be the body of Christ for the children in Honduras!



Thank you to Dr. John and Barb Nei of Alexandria, MN for their 7th dental mission to Honduras. Our happy, healthy smiles say GRACIAS!



Many thanks to our brothers and sisters from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, OH for their 2012 mission. You have filled our hearts and spirits with your joy and love!

PRAYERS & PETITIONS

We pray for our children, especially those that are struggling the most right now, that they may always be aware of and find comfort in God's love for them.

For the entire Farm community in Honduras, that we may be able to grow in the four pillars of spirituality, service, simplicity, and community in order to best serve our children.

For all of our benefactors and Farm community in the United States, that they become increasingly aware of the impact they make in the lives of so many and that God may continue to bless them.

For all those loved ones and friends of the Farm that are sick or suffering that they may find comfort and peace in the arms of our Lord.

For the incoming class of missionaries, that God may prepare their hearts to humbly serve in new and different ways here at the Farm.

Amen.

Support the Farm of the Child by donating online at www.FarmoftheChild.org

My Father. My hero.

By Pamela Pescatore

I want to give recognition to the person who inspires me to give my best every day. A brilliant man who took advantage of every second of his life and fought to achieve his goals, he found true happiness in life with his compassionate heart and always had, not one hand, but both extended to help those in need.

With a great imagination and big dreams that many thought impossible to accomplish, he made his dreams a reality. Vincent grew up in a comfortable home in New Jersey with a good lifestyle that included ocean-racing sailboats. A Villanova University graduate who also studied engineering at the US Naval Academy, at the age of 25 Vincent abandoned a lucrative Price Waterhouse auditing career in Washington. Leaving his job as a highly paid corporate auditor, Vincent set out to build houses for the poor. True happiness for Vincent didn't involve money, instead he wanted to be able to change peoples' lives. He gave a radical turn in his life, and exchanged a lifestyle full of comforts for a simple and humble life in Latin America. One day he felt that God wanted something different for him in life, so he went to Guatemala to work in an orphanage. There, he met the woman he would marry and founded a mission called Farm of the Child. This mission gave a home to orphaned children and helped the community with services



Vincent Pescatore

of education, health care, food, and spiritual outreach. It is an exceptional man who can give up his high quality of life to serve those in need.

Vincent was a very intelligent man – he became a father, a teacher, a doctor, a constructor, a social worker, a director of a mission, and a pilot. He had a small airplane in which he evacuated medical emergencies

to the nearest hospital that was eight hours away by car. He founded not one, but two missions – the first Farm of the Child in Guatemala, and the second in Honduras.

I still remember the morning when my dad hugged my sister and me while we were playing in the garden. We lived in front of a small strip of

land used to land airplanes. My sister and I chased him until he closed the gate. We told him we wanted to go with him, but he replied, "Not this time." My sister and I watched as the airplane disappeared into the white clouds. We went back home to help my mom with dinner because my dad

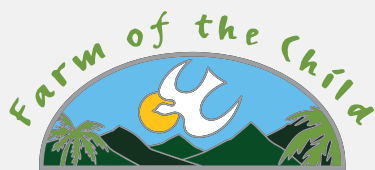


The Pescatore family

would be back in just a few hours. But dinner got cold and the hours become three days. When Vincent Pescatore's plane crashed he left behind not only his wife, Zulena, but also five children, relatives, friends, and associates. That morning, the 35 year-old Pescatore also left hundreds of Latin American men, women, and children that had found a friend who helped them and gave them a home at Farm of the Child. He was an extraordinary man who died helping the poor.

In establishing the mission of Farm of the Child, my dad faced constant struggles, but he never gave up his dream of building a better world. Everyone that knew him was amazed at the way he viewed, confronted, and handled things. Nothing was complex for him. In an interview Vincent said, "I don't think I could have survived any of this without a corresponding growth in faith." My dad has inspired a lot of people to make their dreams a reality. Happiness cannot be found in money and material possessions. My dad believed that happiness was acquired by helping other people, in changing the lives of orphans who had no one to take care of them – that was true happiness. Today Vincent is remembered as a hero by countless orphans and children in need, by the sick and lonely who were touched by his compassion, courage, and charity.

My father was a brilliant man who took advantage of every second of his life. He did more in eight years than most of us could do in a lifetime. He was an adventurous man that died following a unique journey in his life, but for all of us who knew him, he is still present in our hearts. I give him this recognition and I am proud to say that he is the person I most admire – **he is my hero and he is my Dad.**



1616 Nottingham Knoll Drive
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We exist because generous people donate money and time to help fulfill our mission — to provide for orphaned Honduran children.



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