



Pastor Pancho Juarez, CC Montebello, shares his conga skills with children at an outreach from La Posada. He began ministering in Mexico 20 years ago.

LA POSADA

story by Sean Mercadante
photos by Jake Harman

With his van loaded up with a pallet full of donated clothes, Pancho Juarez took off with his wife and twin daughters for their monthly field trip to Tijuana, Mexico. Pancho's initial desire was to teach his daughters a lesson in giving. This family outing has led to a flourishing missions-hosting ministry—"La Posada del Calvario", The Inn at Calvary.



La Posada, a refuge for missionaries to Rosarito, Baja California, Mexico.

The Bible school at Calvary Chapel West Covina asked if Pancho would take a group of students on one of their family trips. He doubted that they would show up for the 4:30 a.m. departure. Pulling up to the church parking lot, Pancho was shocked to see a dozen students waiting for him. It was 1984.

These visits grew into a regular ministry with groups of 150 people taking the monthly trips. Lodging became an added responsibility. Pitching a tent on the beach was a charming experience, but with weather changes and children, the novelty wore thin.

"At first it was fun camping on the beach," says Pancho, "but we soon realized that we needed to be able to provide a more secure housing environment."

In 1990, CC Montebello was a weekly Bible study with no offering taken. They

decided to place agape boxes in the rear of the rented hall to collect funds to rent a house in Rosarito.

"We needed a place that we could call home," Pancho recalls. So with money provided by his study group, a house was rented

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Pastor Pancho Juarez



Sonia Mayoral, left, leads worship songs at an orphanage. She assists her husband, Victor (background), who is the director of La Posada. They have been ministering there since 1999.



Youth from CC Boston share the Gospel.

in Rosarito. “We fixed it up really nice, and people slept all over the grounds when they came to minister in Mexico. The owner of the house then wanted a huge increase in the rent.”

Pancho felt the Lord leading them to purchase their own property in Rosarito. In 1996, four lots were purchased and a trailer was parked on the property. Construction began.

“We decided to call the property ‘La Posada del Calvario’—The Inn at Calvary,” says Pancho. “Historically, an inn is where a caravan would stop and find rest. That is exactly the service we wanted to provide to those who were coming down to minister. La Posada is here to facilitate American churches that may have the resources but don’t know where to go.”

Over the next several years the body of CC Montebello, along with volunteers from other Calvary Chapels, began sawing, soldering, pouring, and pounding away at what would soon become La Posada. While the majority of the work done was volunteer labor, some local help was hired, and the fruit of La Posada was immediately evidenced when several of these workers became Christians.



CC Boston youth group ministered at the orphanage.



Friendships in Christ were made at the outreach.



Morning preparations at La Posada.



A time of worship in the fellowship room of La Posada.



Grilling chicken.



Gender-separate dormitory rooms.



The youngsters take over praise and worship.

With the construction completed, La Posada began offering housing for those traveling to Mexico to minister. While U.S. churches have faithfully ministered to their southern neighbors, many have been frustrated by the logistics of navigating through this foreign culture. La Posada serves as a host to those with a heart to serve in Mexico but who lack the familiarity of Hispanic culture.

The facilities include sleeping quarters, a full kitchen, showers, toilets, and a fellowship hall. The gender-separate sleeping quarters accommodate 40 guests, but the facilities have hosted as many as 160 people on one crowded weekend. Besides the dormitory-type sleeping quarters, there are also several inclusive family rooms. Victor and Sonia Mayoral, the full-time residents and overseers of the facilities, have lived on the property since 1999.

The indoor running water, flushing toilets, and hot showers—luxurious by many Mexican standards—are provided free of charge to the visiting churches and missionaries. “La Posada is supported by the body of CC Montebello as well as donations from other churches that often use the facility,” says Joe Totsis, the U.S. coordinator. “Those wanting to use the facility need only to call us at CC Montebello and set up available dates.”

Churches that have used the facility have come from as far as Alaska, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Georgia, Idaho, and Washington. Short-term mission teams keep it full throughout the summer as well as weekends year-round.

La Posada has become recognized by the community and the public officials as a place to turn in time of need. When a wife is beaten by her husband or a family has no

food, the officials often turn to the mission facility where Victor and Sonia offer food, medicines, comfort, and counseling.

La Posada goes beyond just providing housing. Small villages in the area are scouted out that have yet to hear the Gospel. “We go out to places that have no roads, water, or electricity and spy out the land,” says Victor. According to Pancho, “We verify the recipients before resources are distributed.”

There is a ministry blossoming in the small village of Plan Libertador. CC La Habra, which has been tapping into the resource of



CC Boston youth have devotional studies in the fellowship hall.



The team from Boston samples authentic Mexican food.

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Joe Totsis, U.S. Coordinator



David Alvarez, left, Cornerstone Fellowship, Napa Valley, CA, and Victor Mayoral, director of La Posada, spend time in fellowship as they walk through the surrounding community.

“People who come to La Posada return home with an appreciation for life and what they have. People leave La Posada with a different heart, especially the kids who come down to minister.”

Abel Maldonado, CC Montebello Associate Pastor



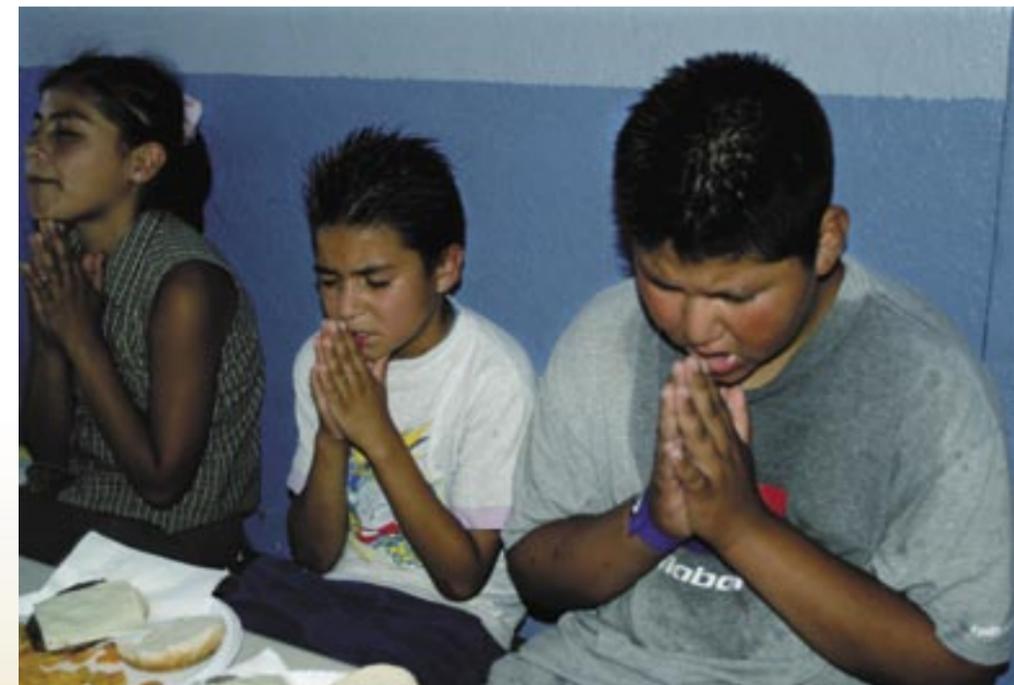
The city of Rosarito, Mexico.



Workers begin construction for a women's shelter.



Victor inspects a home built by missionaries from La Posada.



Children give thanks for a meal at an outreach.

La Posada for short-term missions projects, visited this dusty village and felt a kinship. Relationships have developed between the community and the body at CC La Habra. This discipleship has led to the recent purchase of a lot to build a church on the site.

“La Posada has become a source of encouragement to our body,” said Lance Cook, pastor of CC La Habra. “It is a second home to many people in our body. It has really been an oasis for a very diverse group of people.”

A Thursday night Bible study is taught at La Posada for local men who have expressed a desire for discipleship. Several CC pastors from as far away as Napa Valley, Lancaster, and Pomona have made a commitment to go and teach.

“People who come to La Posada return home with an appreciation for life and what they have,” said Abel Maldonado, associate pastor at CC Montebello. “People leave La Posada with a different heart, especially the kids who come down to minister.”

One 14-year-old American girl began to weep during morning devotions. She had gotten into a fight with her father over a desire for her own room. The fight had



Abel Maldonado, associate pastor at CC Montebello, shares the Gospel during an outreach in a nearby village.



A local man prays to receive Christ as his Savior.

left her bitter until God softened her heart through her experience at La Posada. She called her father asking for forgiveness.

While the work done through La Posada has already touched thousands with the love of God, the vision continues to grow.

Construction has begun on a shelter for abused women. Purchasing more land for a sanctuary is a prayer concern while services are presently held in the fellowship hall. Short-term missionaries that visit La Posada are grateful for the peace of God and the refuge they find. 🙏

La Posada - CC Montebello

931 S. Maple Avenue
Montebello, CA 90640

323-724-8464

jtotsis@ccmtb.com
www.ccmtb.com