



March 2021

Thank you for showing love to our children here at Familia Feliz. Without your support, we couldn't provide a Christ-centered, safe, and loving home for children who are orphaned, abandoned, abused, neglected, or unwanted. **You literally help put smiles on their faces here in impoverished Bolivia!**

Thank you for remembering us in your prayers. And thank you for sponsoring volunteers to serve here over the years. And thank you especially to those who regularly support us financially as it allows us to offer quality education, and emergency medical/dental care for every child that God places in our arms.

We are so excited to let you know what God has been doing here at Familia Feliz. It is hard to believe how time has passed from when I first came to Bolivia over 15 years-ago to do the preliminary scouting for an orphanage. Soon God empowered me to be the sole caretaker for four young children. Moving forward in faith, I quickly founded Familia Feliz in 2006. In 2013, I had to return home to Canada to get medical care and citizenship for several kids I personally adopted. The Lord then encouraged me to return to Bolivia in January of 2020 to again take up the role of director. The previous leader had a passion for academy-age students and has now gone on to start a boarding school a few hours away. While Familia Feliz continues to focus on its original mission of being a family-style orphanage that includes Adventist Christian education.

We currently have 56 kids living on campus, along with 14 staff, of which 8 are full-time volunteers. Amazingly six of our adult staff have been past students themselves at Familia Feliz. They are now passing on the blessing of growing up in a family-style Christ-centered environment to others. We also teach grades K-9 onsite with mathematics, language, science, social sciences, Bible, art, music, physical education, and English.

We grow quite a bit of our own food to eat here in our kitchen, with plans to expand our production to share with those in need or to sell to provide some income. We have around a hundred chickens and countless honeybees. We are currently growing 5 hectares (12 acres) of rice, along with varying amounts of yuca, sugar cane, citrus fruits (oranges, mandarins, lemons, grapefruit), pineapple, passionfruit, bananas, plantains, peanuts, papaya, flor de Jamaica, aloe vera, green beans, swiss chard, tomatoes, peppers, and other veggies.

While we are proud of the learning and hard work we do here on campus, being a family always comes first. Each child is growing individually, and each family is growing together. We have four homes right now. We are thrilled to have Juan and Emiliana in one of our homes as our first local Bolivian houseparents. Being a large family means that we learn together through the highs and the lows, the giggles and the tears. Each child has their own story about why they



are here at Familia Feliz. So many carry hurt from their previous living situations. We do our best to reach out to the parents to ensure each child can have connections to their birth family. We work closely with the local equivalent of social services. We would love to see every child safely reunified with their birth parents or other family members. However, drugs and abuse sometimes make our little home in the jungle the best place for a child to grow up safe and to have their ongoing needs fully addressed.

Moises was just nine years-old when he was brought here by police on Christmas Eve 2011.

No one even knew who his parents were. Sadly, to this day we still have not found any of his biological family. At first, Moises didn't like it here. He was not interested in learning during school time. He was angry and didn't want to work with us. What a change has happened since then! Moises is now 18 and could easily walk away on his own. Yet he chooses to stay here because he is now determined to finish school. He now enjoys learning and there has been such a positive change in Moises' attitude due to Jesus and because of the people and faith he found here at Familia Feliz.

Moises with two young friends

Moises says, "I like Familia Feliz because I have friends here. Once I ran away because I didn't know anything about the Bible. When I came back, I started to pay attention to worship and church, and now I like it. God is like a father to me, someone that always helps me and is with me." Moises is no longer alone in this world as he has found his family here at Familia Feliz.

I just wanted to thank you on behalf of Moises and the other children entrusted to our care.

Please know that God has taken what you have given and delivered life and hope to some of the most vulnerable in this dark world. You have brought light and impacted a lot of lives here through Familia Feliz.

We are very excited about the direction God is leading us as we continue to strengthen our family-style orphanage. Thank you so much for what you have done.

If you would like to continue supporting Familia Feliz, know that your continued generosity is changing lives, as it allows kids like Moises to learn what it means to be in a loving family. Most importantly they learn what it means to know Christ and His love.



Melissa Thank you,



Melissa Harding

*P.S. from Moises
"Muchas gracias por ayudar a Familia Feliz!"
(Thank you very much for helping Familia Feliz!)*