December 2010 Mission
Hospital Bloom, San Salvador

Gift of Life International & Proyecto Corazon Italiano
November 28th - December 12th
Sponsored by:
Syosset High School Interact Club, Rotary Club of Pelham, and Gift of Life International
HILDA KARINA GARCIA

Birth Date: December 9, 2000
Household Income: $5.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Hilda lives with her mother, brother and grandparents in a one room home that is located about four hours outside the capital city of San Salvador. Hilda's grandfather grows corn and beans to help feed the family. Hilda's mother is the sole supporter of the entire family. She works as a butcher and earns a mere $5.00 per day. Food is often scarce for this family with such a low income.

RICARDO ANTONIO RIVAS PEREZ

Birth Date: July 23, 2009
Household Income: $2.50 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Ricardo was born with down syndrome. Ricardo, his sister and mother live with the grandmother in her house that she owns. The grandmother works as a seamstress and works to support the entire family. Unfortunately her work is not steady and therefore there are times when the family has no income at all. For a year now, they have not received any financial support from Ricardo's father. The mother does not have the opportunity to work because there is no one to take care of Ricardo during the day. It is very difficult with such a low income to provide enough food for everyone.
WILLIAM ALEXANDER MARROQUIN

Birth Date: September 23, 2003
Household Income: $ 10.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Age: 7 years
Number of family members: 5
Mission: Nov 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length:

William’s family lives in a two room house which they rent for $60 a month plus $10 for basic services. All the children sleep in one room while the parents sleep in the other. Unfortunately William’s mom does not work because she does not have anyone to look after her children during the day. The family’s diet consist of rice, beans, eggs and sometimes chicken soup. William will be entering the first grade next year at a school which is near their house. The family struggles to provide enough food and necessities every month.

ELIAS ALBERTO ORELLANA

Birth Date: February 1, 2001
Household Income: $ 10.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Age: 9 years
Number of family members: 4
Mission: Nov 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length:

Elias’ mother worked in a gas station from 6:00 am to 8:00 p.m. in order to support her children. Unfortunately she had to stop working because Elias was always sick prior to his life saving heart surgery which he received in November. Now the only money this family receives is from an aunt who sends the family money each month. Elias’ father left the family eight years ago. They have lost contact with him and do not receive any financial support from him.
CECILIA GUADALUPE QUINTANILLA
Birth Date: April 23, 1998
Household Income: $13.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Age: 12 years
Number of family members: 4
Mission: Nov 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length:
Cecilia's family lives in a rented home with a dirt floor. Her father works in maintenance and her older brother, who has his own family, works as a bricklayer. Prior to her life-saving surgery, Cecilia did not attend school. When she was a little girl she became very nervous and upset in school and the teacher did not want to take responsibility for her, so her mother took her out. For the past three years, a friend of Cecilia's mom taught Cecilia every Sunday for three hours, but Cecilia struggles with learning. Her favorite thing to do is to paint and she hopes to make a career as a painter.

MELVIN DANIEL RODRIGUEZ
Birth Date: July 12, 2005
Household Income: $5.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Age: 5 years
Number of family members: 6
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length:
Melvin's family lives in a one room house made of metal sheets and their beds are made of rope. The house has a dirt floor and is borrowed from a friend. Melvin's family could be asked to leave the home at any time. His father does not have a permanent job. When he is able to find work, he works on a farm and earns only $5.00 per day to support his entire family. Melvin's family survives primarily on what they grow. Besides the beans and corn they grow to feed themselves, they also eat rice and eggs.
**JOSE RAFAEL HERNANDEZ NAVIDAD**

Birth Date: July 3, 2008  
Age: 2 years  
Household Income: $2.50 per day  
Number of family members: 8  
Hospital: Hospital Bloom  
Mission: Nov 2010 Corazon Italiano  
Sponsorship Length: 1 Year  
Sponsor: Needed  

Jose, his mother and his three brothers live with their grandmother in a 4-bedroom house which they share with a total of 8 family members. Jose's whole family lives in one of the rooms. His mother earns money from selling boiled vegetables. Jose Rafael has down syndrome and he will now be able to attend a special school because he has received his heart surgery. Jose's mother wants to start selling tortillas because no one makes them near her house and she thinks it would be a great business.

**ROBERTO CARLOS SANTOS RUBI**

Birth Date: September 12, 2008  
Age: 2 years  
Household Income: none  
Number of family members: 2  
Hospital: Hospital Bloom  
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano  
Sponsorship Length:  
Sponsor: Needed  

Roberto lives with his mother in a small house made of cement and metal sheets. His father moved to the United States one year ago. Roberto's heart condition was detected at 12 days of age. Unfortunately, he has had to wait two years to receive his life-saving surgery. Roberto's diet consists of breast milk, vegetables, eggs, and beans.
EMELY JULISSA CRUZ PENADO

Birth Date: April 9, 2005
Household Income: $18.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Age: 5 years
Number of family members: 4
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano

Emely lives with her family in a one bedroom home. They walk to a well to get clean water. They do have access to electricity. The family has financial difficulties because every month they must pay for their house and also for the vehicle that Emely’s father uses to sell vegetables to make a living. Now that Emely has received her gift of life, she will be able to attend elementary school.

BELQUIS GABRIELA MONTESINOS COREA

Birth Date: September 18, 1999
Household Income: $11.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed
Age: 11 years
Number of family members: 5
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length:

Belquis lives with her mother, father and two sisters in a rented home made of concrete and metal sheets. Their typical diet consists of beans, rice, eggs and sometimes chicken. Belquis’ mother does not work since she cares for the children. Also, it is difficult for her to work because she does not know how to read or write. Belquis’ father works at a private company everyday. After he gets home from work, he sews to earn extra money. He also sews clothing for their family. Belquis has been waiting for 11 years for her life-saving heart surgery. The hospital in the area where they live did not know how to help Belquis. Finally, after she had been sick for much of her life and the doctors noticed she was turning blue, they referred her to Hospital Bloom where she received her gift of life.
MARIA ISELA MEZA GUEVARA

Birth Date: August 23, 2002
Household Income: $3.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Maria's father does not have a steady job and many times does not work at all. When he is working he earns a small amount of money as a farmer or a bricklayer. Maria's mother does not read or write well and she is pregnant with their second child. The land on which they live has been divided into two in which the grandmother lives on the other half. Maria's grandmother has been very supportive and gives them the water and electricity they need, but they have to pay her for the services when they can spare any money. Maria's mother used to have a pupusa business with her sister where they earned $15 a day, but they owed too much debt and had to close the business.

JONATHAN ENRIQUE CADENAS

Birth Date: February 20, 1998
Household Income: $6.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed

Jonathan's mother and father abandoned him when he was very young. Since then, Jonathan has been cared for by his uncle who owns an auto repair shop but only earns about $6.00 per day. This small income makes it difficult to provide food for the family on a regular basis. Jonathan goes to school and is in the 4th grade.
CAMELI ABISAG MENENDEZ LOPEZ

Birth Date: January 28, 2009
Household Income: $23.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom

Carmel lives with her family in a home made of concrete that belongs to her aunt. They have access to water and electricity. Carmel's parents work together and have their own business selling cleaning products. Carmel is cared for by her grandmother. The family's diet consists of plantains, beans, cheese, eggs, chicken, and soup.

EMERSON JOSUE GUEVARA

Birth Date: August 16, 2008
Household Income: $6.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom

Emerson and his family live in a very poor village about 4 hours outside of San Salvador. They live in a small grass hut with a dirt floor and sleep on beds made of ropes. This house is borrowed from a family member. Their daily diet consists of beans and fruit and vegetables that they find in the area where they live. Emerson's mother is not able to work since she cares for him and his twin brother. One of Emerson's older brothers tries to get odd jobs to earn some money but does not have a steady income. The area where this family lives has been known for dangerous gang activity. The family must be very cautious at all times.
GENESIS AURORA SALGUERO GIROM
Birth Date: September 28, 2009
Household Income: $7.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Sponsor: Needed
Age: 1 year
Number of family members: 4
Mission: Nov 2010 Corazon Italiano
Sponsorship Length: 1 Year

The only financial support this family receives is the pension from Genesis's father of $200 each month. Genesis's mother wants to work because it is very difficult to provide enough food and items for the family with only this monthly pension. She is very interested in taking a class that our Vocational Training program offers and is willing to come any day at any hour. Luckily they live in a safe area where they own their home with electricity and water services.

RONY XAVIER DURAN DELGADO
Birth Date: June 17, 2004
Household Income: $26.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom
Age: 6 years
Number of family members: 4
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano

Rony lives in a home made of concrete and other materials with his parents and his brother. Rony is a good student at school. Approximately one year prior to his heart surgery, Rony was always tired and was not able to play and be his usual active self. Receiving the gift of life will once again allow Rony to run and play with his friends without getting tired.
MARIA JOSE LOPEZ HERNANDEZ

Birth Date: March 26, 2005
Household Income: $37.00 per day
Hospital: Hospital Bloom

Maria lives with her parents and two siblings in a house made of concrete. Her parents have good steady jobs and yet paying for heart surgery for their daughter was not something they could afford. Maria was diagnosed with congenital heart disease shortly after birth and has been on the waiting list for surgery for five years. She was bumped from the surgical list many times and is now very happy to be receiving her second chance at life.

Age: 5 years
Number of family members: 5
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano

The Children

The 21 children that were operated on during our mission were:

1. Erik Vladimir de Paz, 2 months old, PDA (photo profile missing)
2. Dora Alicia Cruz Vasquez, 7 days old, PDA (photo profile missing)
3. Maria bela Mena Guvera, 8 years old, ASD
4. Jonathan Enrique Cadenas, 12 years old, ASD
5. Cecilia Guadalupe Quintana, 11 years old, TOF
6. Emerson Josue Guerva, 2 years old, VSD
7. William Alexander Marroquin, 7 years old, VSD-AI
8. Jose Rafael Hernandez Navidad, 2 years old, ASD+VSD+PDA
9. Ricardo Antonio Rivas Perez, 1 year old, VSD+PDA
10. Jeiry Liseth Cisneros, 7 years old, Severe A.I. (LV Dilated)
11. Hildar Karina Garcia, 8 years old, TOF
12. Paola Veronica Elias, 9 years old, ASD
13. Belquis Gabriella Montesinos Corea, 11 years old, TAPVR
14. Melvin Daniel Rodriguez, 5 years old, VSD+RV Stenosis
15. Genesis Aurora Salguero Girom, 1 year old, Incomplete AV Canal
16. Rory Xavier Duran Delgado, 5 years old, COARC
17. Roberto Carlos Santos Rubio, 2 years old, VSD
18. Emely Julissa Cruz Penado, 5 years old, ASD
19. Elias Alberto Crelina, 9 years old, COARC
20. Carmel Abisag Menendez Lopez, 22 months old, VSD-PDA
21. Maria Jose Lopez Hernandez, 5 years old, ASD

(Gabriela Michelle Cruz Azahar received a diagnostic catheterization during this mission.)
The Mission

The surgeries were performed from November 29th to December 3rd and December 6th to December 12th. Each day 2 surgeries were conducted in the morning, except on the 29th when 4 surgeries took place and on the 12th when 1 took place. Of the 21 children that were operated on during this mission, we unfortunately lost one precious 7 year old girl named Jeiri. The other 20 children recovered from their surgeries and were all discharged from the hospital by December 15th. They will now be added to Gift of Life International’s nutritional assistance program.

We remember Jeiri with love and pray for her and her family.

The Administration of Hospital Bloom made available 2 operating rooms and 4 ICU beds every day of this mission. The Salvadoran surgeons and cardiologists selected the candidates for surgery. The children that received treatment suffered from a variety of ailments: PDA, ASD, VSD and Tetralogy of Fallot. Before, during and after the surgeries Salvadoran anesthesiologists, scrub nurses, perfusionists, surgeons, cardiologists, intensivists and critical care nurses participated alongside the visiting healthcare professionals. At every step the Salvadoran Team was involved in the care of each child, honing their skills with each patient they treated.

Participating in the mission from Proyecto Corazon Italiano were the following dedicated healthcare professionals:

Pediatric Cardiac Surgeons: Dr. Salvatore Agati and Dr. Guido Oppido
Pediatric Cardiologist: Dr. Alfredo Dipino
Perfusionists: Giuseppe Cicerello and Sabrina Meloni
Anesthesiologist: Dr. Dario Salvo, Dr. Vittoria Saraceno, and Dr. Vincenzo Mancini
Intensivists: Monique Radman and Jorge Roberto Polacics
ICU Nurses: Teresa Ducalo, Alexandra Brashears and Veronica Bustamante

Participating in the mission from the pediatric cardiac surgery team at Hospital Bloom were the following healthcare professionals:

Pediatric Cardiac Surgeons: Dr. Guillermo Martinez, Dr. Francisco Gamero, Dr. Guillermo Rodríguez Funes and Dr. Daniel Garcia
Pediatric Cardiologist: Dr. Mauricio Velado
Perfusionists: Sandra Pena
Anesthesiologists: Dr. Luis Martinez and Dr. Helen Campos
Nurses: Mirta Catalina de Henríquez, Mirta Martinez, Sonia Rauda, Roxana Carballo
Technicians: Isabel Arias, Cecilia Amaya, Emerita Caceres and Maria Adela Ramirez

GABRIELA MICHELLE CRUZ AZAHAR

Birth Date: September 22, 2009
Age: 1 year
Household Income: $33.00 per day
Number of family members: 3
Hospital: Hospital Diagnostico
Mission: Nov. 2010 Corazon Italiano

Gabriela received a diagnostic catheterization during the November 2010 Italian mission. It was determined that she needs open heart surgery to correct the defects in her little heart. The visiting mission team from Italy told Gabriela’s parents that they would accept her into a hospital in Italy to offer her a second chance at life.

Gabriela’s mother just recently lost her job since the company she worked for was downsizing. This will create a hardship for this family until she is able to find a new job.
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
JEIRY LISSETH CISNEROS
JUNE 1, 2003 - DEC. 3, 2010

The Syosset High School Interact Club from Long Island, New York together with the Rotary Club of the Pelhams (New York State) and Gift of Life International donated the necessary funding to support the logistics of the mission.

The generosity of these three organizations made this mission possible and provided an excellent beginning to Gift of Life International’s efforts to develop a sustainable pediatric cardiac surgery program at Hospital Bloom.

Gift of Life International’s Chief Medical Advisor, Dr. Joseph Gaffney, provided support in the evaluation and selection of the children treated during the mission.

Gift of Life International – El Salvador Executive Director Ivonne Lopez coordinated all aspects of the mission with the assistance of Elizabeth Ramos.

Rotarians from the Cuscatan Rotary Club, Kathy Self and Victor Silly, provided assistance in obtaining mission approval from the Salvadoran Government and in procuring hotel rooms for the mission team.

Lisselot Traconis helped to secure lunches for the surgical team and nursing staff.

Gift of Life International Chairman’s Council member, Fredlee Ann Kaplan (family therapist and clinical supervisor from New York), participated in the mission and will be formulating a Family Support Program that will be implemented at Hospital Bloom.

The success of this mission in large part had to do with the total support and cooperation provided by the Administration of Hospital Bloom, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the Italian Embassy. From the operating room to the ICU to the recovery ward, Salvadorans, Americans, Chileans, and Italians worked together to care for the 20 children as though they were their own. The cooperation and teamwork shown on this mission has set the standard for future missions.

Over the next year, 5 more medical training missions will visit Hospital Bloom. Each mission will focus on increasing the proficiency of the Salvadoran pediatric cardiac team while working to reduce the list of children waiting for their life-saving surgeries.
A New Era Begins at Hospital Bloom

On November 28, 2010, Gift of Life International entered into a new phase of its global initiative, 'Our Hearts Are in El Salvador.' In partnership with Proyecto Corazon Italiano from Italy, the Syosset High School Interact Club on Long Island, New York, and the Rotary Club of the Pelhams in New York State, Gift of Life International conducted its first medical training mission at Hospital Bloom in San Salvador, El Salvador. During the mission 20 Salvadoran children received the gift of life while the pediatric cardiac surgical team at Hospital Bloom began a new era. Salvadorans participated in every operation and phase of this mission. The Salvadoran Team led by pediatric cardiologist Dr. Mauricio Velado and surgeons, Dr. Guillermo Rodríguez Funes, Dr. Francisco Gamero and Dr. Daniel García, worked closely with the visiting team led by surgeons Dr. Salvatore Agati and Dr. Guido Oppido and anesthesiologist Dr. Dario Salvo to provide excellent care to the 20 children.

The Proyecto Corazon Italiano team was comprised of doctors and nurses from Italy, Chile and the United States. In addition to providing guidance during operations and the aftercare of the children, the team from Italy also donated supplies and equipment to Hospital Bloom.

The Future

As part of the 2010 Gift of Life International global initiative 'Our Hearts Are in El Salvador,' 81 individuals and organizations contributed money to the saving of 117 Salvadoran children at 28 Gift of Life affiliated hospitals in 13 countries. This was done to both decrease the list of children awaiting care and draw world attention to the plight of Salvadoran children that suffer from congenital heart defects. With this mission a new era has begun for the pediatric cardiac surgery program at Hospital Bloom. Over the next 5 years, 5 medical training missions will visit Hospital Bloom per year and will focus their efforts on increasing the ability of the Salvadoran Team to treat their own children in a sustainable manner while continuing to decrease the waiting list of children with congenital heart defects. We expect that over 150 Salvadoran children will be operated on at Hospital Bloom during the medical training missions and in between missions next year.

By the year 2015 the goal will be for the Salvadoran Team to operate on over 200 Salvadoran children per year who suffer from congenital heart defects.

We would like to thank all those organizations and individuals that have made the success of 'Our Hearts Are in El Salvador' possible and especially would like to thank Proyecto Corazon Italiano, the Syosset High School Interact Club and the Rotary Club of the Pelhams for making our first medical training mission to Hospital Bloom a success.

Gift of Life is a Rotary-based program which began in Rotary District 7250 some 35 years ago and is now a project of over 65 Rotary Clubs or Districts on 5 continents. During those 35 years, more than 11,500 children's lives have been saved. Gift of Life International's vision is to develop regional, sustainable pediatric cardiac surgery centers of excellence throughout the world in developing countries.