



# Living the Mission Experience

Delivering compassionate healthcare and the Gospel  
to the most needy in the developing world

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Forward to a Friend

## Taking a Light-Hearted Approach



For over 20 years HHMM has been bringing compassionate care to the world's most vulnerable human beings. I am so grateful to the thousands of missionary volunteers over the years. Which is why I never tiring from hearing testimonies like the one in this issue

of Living the Mission Experience. We just never know how and in what ways we will bring compassion to others. The world today needs to recover a greater sense of true compassion. Volunteering on a mission is a wonderful place to experience and grow in the virtue of compassion. Pope Benedict teaches us in Caritas in Veritate, "authentic human development, is integral; that is, it "concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension." (11) Development cannot be reduced to the material plane, limited to economic prosperity alone, as precious as that development is. Integral human development on the natural plane, as a response to a vocation from God the Creator, demands self-fulfillment in a 'transcendent humanism which gives [to man] his greatest possible perfection: this is the highest goal of personal development.'" (18, quoting "Populorum Progressio")'

In the same way, Catholic health care has always insisted that physical curing alone is insufficient for the whole human person; that true healing is of "body, mind, and spirit." The kind of care that Catholic health care aspires to is genuine caritas, complete self-giving love. This is what our missionary learned...true compassion is not just "transactional", it takes time to love, it takes courage, patience as you will read in her story.

If you would like to share your compassion with those in great need, please contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Lupita Assad, RN  
International Missions Coordinator

## Meet the Missionary

### Paulina Ramirez-Gomez, Translator

Home State: Michigan

Parish: St. Joseph Catholic Church

Mission: First



My volunteer experience was truly eye opening. I've seen poverty in Mexico but, I've never seen it to a point where even the floors are made out of dirt. My missionary experience helped me to grow in compassion, and realize I need to be grateful for what God has given me. As a translator and not

a medical professional I saw the mission experience from a different angle. Thus, my motivation was not the physical healing of a patient, but improving the communication between the patient and the doctor. I prayed that I would be a useful instrument in God's hands and draw closer to him and be the most effective translator I could be.

My favorite moment during the mission was meeting a boy named Sebastian. He was quiet when I first met him, but when we began to play, mostly coloring, he opened up about his life. While talking with him, I discovered that he only lived with his mom. His mom works all day and does not get home until 5:00 in the afternoon. His story broke my heart, he mentioned even some days no one prepares anything for him to eat. I invited him to eat with the missionaries, he was very happy and completely devoured his food. I was grateful for my opportunity to get to know Sebastian. Spending time with Sebastian taught me that we must always to attentive to the needs of the entire person, not just their physical needs. I look forward to incorporating what I have learned in my day-to-day experiences and planning for another opportunity to serve on a Helping Hands Medical Mission in the near future.

*Are you interested in serving on a mission? Please contact Gloria at the international headquarters of HHMM in Dallas, Texas at (972) 253-1800*