



# **Salesian San Lorenzo**

## Education for Impoverished Children

— San Lorenzo, Ecuador —



For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord,  
plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

JEREMIAH 29:11



## **We are a Catholic ministry**

that mobilizes the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church's spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach.

We invite you to join with us as we seek to transform the lives of the poor materially and spiritually — ways that please the Father and glorify him in Heaven and on earth.



## Project Synopsis

### Description

Through this project, 315 impoverished children will be equipped to succeed in school, develop more ambitious goals and grow in faith. Your gift will allow for these children to benefit from health campaigns where they will have access to deworming drugs and vitamins.

### Purpose

To enable street children and children from destitute families to build a way out of poverty.

### Our Partners

Chicos de la Calle, an outreach ministry of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

### Location

San Lorenzo, Ecuador

### Cost

\$16,056

### Highlights

- Extreme poverty ravages the slums of San Lorenzo, where families live without running water and adequate food.
- Families are unable to afford the costs of education, so children work at manual labor for meager wages, or they resort to life on the streets.
- Suffering has increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which further restricts families' access to food, work and education.
- Hearing Jesus' call to serve the poor, Salesian priests created Chicos de la Calle, which now operates five ministry centers in Ecuador.
- Children in the San Lorenzo center receive classroom supplies and tutoring. They grow in faith and self-esteem through spiritual formation and recreational activities.
- All of this depends on the support of Cross Catholic Outreach. Through your gift, the Salesian missionaries can inspire destitute children to break the bonds of poverty!





*Father Pepe of the Salesians, right, visits with Elizabeth, Gregorio and their two youngest children. One other child — Miguel — is often away working.*

## The Need

The crushing poverty of San Lorenzo has forced Miguel to work grueling 13-hour days at a local bakery — even though he is only in the fifth grade. Elizabeth, the mother of this young man, regrets the extremely long workdays her young son puts in, but she feels there is no choice. The family needs the meager income his job supplies.

The Montanos are tragically typical of the impoverished families living in the slums of San Lorenzo. Most live in one-room shacks without safe water or bathrooms. In this community, adults work for meager wages when they can find work at all, and gangs prey upon their children and put them at risk of being lured into prostitution or the drug trade.

This region on the border of Colombia also faces violence and economic hardships not seen in other parts of Ecuador. Government and paramilitary forces have been at war for decades in Colombia, with the unrest spilling over the border into San Lorenzo.

For destitute families like the Montanos, escaping poverty seems impossible — no matter how hard they try. Elizabeth's husband works hard on a palm oil farm, but his meager earnings are not enough for even basic necessities. Elizabeth, who cares for three younger children, can make some additional money gathering clams and mussels, but that work is filthy and challenging. To earn even a little extra, she and other unskilled local residents enter muddy mangroves with water up to their chests and grope for hours searching for shellfish. The profit is just pennies for each shellfish they find, and most earn just \$2 a day.

In the midst of such poverty, much of what we consider normal childhood activities — education, faith formation, school groups and teams — are unattainable luxuries and this too weighs on Elizabeth and her husband. They wanted so much more for their children, but they see no way to get ahead in life.

Thankfully, Jesus hasn't forgotten the poor in San Lorenzo and neither has the Church! Inspired by God and with a desire to demonstrate the compassion of Christ, the caring team at Chicos de la Calle wants to restore the gift of childhood to San Lorenzo's children and create a future of hope. ***You can help them accomplish both!***



## Ministry Description

Jesus welcomed children during his earthly ministry, and he is still calling boys and girls to join him today – especially those from the slums of San Lorenzo. Will you help the Church play its vital role in developing this important relationship? Your support will enable the spirit-filled team at Chicos de la Calle to bless 310 impoverished children with healing of the mind, body and spirit.

### Mind

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages in Ecuador, your gift is needed now more than ever to continue the ministry's successful educational outreach. Despite their poverty, 85 percent of children at the center passed final school exams last year and advanced to the next grade. With your help, students can overcome large obstacles, including illiterate family members and being too poor to pay for pencils, paper, books and other supplies.

### Body

Exercise, self-esteem and team-building skills are critical in child development, so Chicos de la Calle coordinates soccer and marimba dance teams. Expert training enables students to excel at choreographed dancing to marimba music, featuring colorful costumes and a joyful expression of the country's heritage.

### Spirit

The children at Chicos de la Calle feel the loving presence of God. The Salesian priests help children discover the joys of the faith and bring them to the Church's sacraments of baptism, first communion and confirmation.

**These ministries for the mind, body and spirit can be provided only through your support. Please join us in bringing the love of Jesus to the hungry and uneducated boys and girls of San Lorenzo!**



*Daily tutoring helps students succeed in class.*



## Help Now!

Salesian priests and their ministry team care for the children of the slums of San Lorenzo with great compassion. In this mission, they are following the example of St. John Bosco, the founder of their order. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, St. John Bosco ministered to street children and saw his compassionate acts as a way of restoring lost hope.

“It is not enough to love the young; they must KNOW that they are loved,” he once said.

With your gift to Chicos de la Calle, *hundreds of impoverished children will absolutely know they are loved.* Your support will provide them with educational support, healthy recreation, spiritual nourishment — and much more. It will bring them together with a caring and compassionate team that can demonstrate the love of Jesus, build their faith and restore their dreams of a better future.

Ensure that these precious children KNOW — beyond a shadow of a doubt — they are worthy of a future filled with hope. Support the mission of Chicos de la Calle today!

“The power of evil men lives on the cowardice of the good.”

**ST. JOHN BOSCO**

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### Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2023, the close of our ministry’s fiscal year. In the event that more funds are raised than needed to fully fund the project, the excess funds, if any, will be used to meet the most urgent needs of the ministry.

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