



# **Santa Maria del Mexicano**

## Catholic Education for Children at Risk

— Queretaro, Mexico —



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

To benefit troubled children and teens, this project will help fund partial, or half, of the salaries for two directors, one nurse, one psychologist, seven primary teachers and seven secondary teachers in the Diocese of Queretaro, Mexico.

### Purpose

To provide a Catholic education, spiritual direction and encouragement to at-risk children and teens.

### Our Partners

Santa Maria del Mexicano, a mission of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

### Location

Diocese of Queretaro in central Mexico

### Cost

\$49,108

### Highlights

- Inspired by God to serve the poor, Father Anthony Norman founded the mission at the request of the local bishop, and his focus is to help troubled children.
- The staff this project will fund are essential to serving children in four boarding homes and schools, and an elderly home being operated by the Society of the Most Holy Trinity, a missionary order of priests, brothers, sisters and laypeople.
- In this impoverished region, many children are not able to rely on solid parental guidance or the emotional support families are intended to provide. Some are abandoned or abused, while others have single mothers who work long hours at low-paying jobs and do not have the time to tend to a child's needs.
- Cross Catholic Outreach is committed to ensuring these children have the opportunity to learn, gain confidence and develop goals in a Christ-centered environment. We can only bring this special blessing to hurting children with your help!



*Teresa, a teacher at Santa Maria, assists a fourth-grade student with a lesson.*



## The Need

Young boys and girls who don't have safe and loving homes to nurture and protect them will often slip into despair. They may instinctually know a better life is possible, but they can feel trapped by fate and see little hope for a brighter future. A tragic number of children in poverty-stricken central Mexico have fallen prey to this terrible sense of hopelessness, and they desperately need our help.

Life situations are often at the root of the problem. For example, boys and girls can be abandoned or abused by family members who have been crushed by extreme poverty themselves. In other families, addictions or other destructive behaviors produce the trauma. When children flee these abusive environments believing even a life on the streets will be better, they can grow up without any model for healthy family interactions at all.

For other children, the problem isn't abuse — it is neglect. Even the most well-intentioned single mothers living in impoverished neighborhoods must often leave their children alone to find work. These mothers love their boys and girls very much, but very long hours away — often 12 hours or more a day — can eventually take a toll. There is simply no one home to guide and direct these children during their formative years.

Whether through abandonment, abuse or neglect, impoverished children in rural regions and city slums lack positive role models and urgently need that support. Without this guidance and love, they may struggle with low self-esteem, have issues with trust and — tragically — fall prey to aggressive tendencies, leading to cycles of abuse being repeated as they begin families of their own.

In addition to addressing these emotional and behavioral issues, our work in solving this problem can also have educational benefits. While abused or abandoned children often fall behind in school and drop out, supported boys and girls typically gain confidence and further their life goals.

Please — allow God to work through you and Santa Maria del Mexicano, the mission of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity. By empowering this Catholic ministry, hurting boys and girls can finally receive an education and something they have never experienced before — hope for the future!



## Ministry Description

While reading, writing and arithmetic are emphasized at Santa Maria schools, the most important lessons for emotionally wounded children and teens to learn are directed at overcoming anger, fear and rejection.

For teachers, that means being able to listen and encourage, said Iveth Micaela Rubio López, who teaches children from ages 5 to 7.

“They have many very strong psychological traumas,” she said.

Caring teachers like Iveth ensure children receive the same nurturing care at school as they do while living at one of the ministry’s boarding homes. Teachers join with priests, brothers, sisters and other caregivers to provide a safe place for children to recover and heal. Children and teens also receive an outstanding Catholic education and develop into responsible adults, going on to university studies or finding steady jobs.

This work of Christ began when the local bishop was inspired to ask Fr. Norman, a missionary priest, to care for abandoned, neglected and abused children. The Society of the Most Holy Trinity later felt called to make the boarding homes one of its worldwide missionary projects.

And now, with the support of Cross Catholic Outreach, the ministry offers suffering children an inspired Catholic education. In addition to learning math and science, children experience the power of prayer, participate in youth groups and become altar servers. Boys and girls also are brought into the church through the sacraments of baptism, first communion and confirmation.

In this impoverished region, Santa Maria can only continue this ministry with our support. Please join us today!



*Jesus Sanchez Garcia, primary school director, constantly supports and encourages students. Jesus was once a scared and lonely student at Santa Maria like them! As a boy, he was removed from his home and brought to Santa Maria, where caring teachers helped him heal, reach his potential and go on to a university degree in education.*

The ministry team at Santa Maria ensures that the boys and girls experience the love and compassion of God in every part of their lives. In addition to receiving a high-quality Catholic education, students live in a safe family environment at one of these boarding homes:

- San Jose: a home for boys in grades 1-6
- Santa Maria, Casa de Muchachos: a home for adolescent boys in grades 7-12
- Casa de Niñas: a home for girls in grades 1-6
- Casa de Jovenes: a home for adolescent girls in grades 7-12



## Help Now!

The Lord has positioned Santa Maria del Mexicano to bless troubled and forsaken children in central Mexico. Now let him work through you to empower its life-transforming outreaches. Your support will enable the local bishop and Fr. Norman to realize their dream of providing children with a safe refuge at Santa Maria. It will also inspire the missionaries and dedicated teachers who have been sacrificing to pursue this important work.

Surely, our Lord wants these children to have an opportunity to grow in knowledge, self-assurance and faith. Join us in this important cause, and you can play a role in that blessing too!

“The benefactors are like angels that we do not see,” said Elvia Mota Gutiérrez, a teacher at the school. “But they are there helping us to take these children forward.”

Yes, your gift will appear just like an angel — arriving just in time and delivering the exact support the mission needs. You will bring the love and encouragement of God to hurting children in need of hope, and there can be no greater joy in life!

“Faith and reason are like two wings of the human spirit by which it soars to the truth.”

**SAINT JOHN PAUL II**

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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.

2700 N. Military Trail • Suite 300 • PO Box 273908 • Boca Raton, Florida 33427-3908  
**800-914-2420 • CrossCatholic.org**

 @CrossCatholic  @CrossCatholic  @CrossCatholic  /CrossCatholic  Blog.CrossCatholic.org

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