

Behind the Door

April 2019

The small street looks precisely like so many others in Tijuana. Tattered whitewashed boards joined together to make a long wall that spans a full city block. Every fifteen feet or so there is another board, etched into the wall that serves as a door. What's behind that door is anyone's guess.

Last fall I found myself walking through one of these doors in a neighborhood Spectrum works in called Pipila. Lily (Spectrum staff) and I were there to visit a young fourteen-year-old girl named Sarai who lived there with her mom and grandparents. We met Sarai in September at our neighborhood outreach. I'll never forget it. Sarai recently had her right arm amputated because of a tumor that developed and had grown out of control. It was the result of a condition that caused her body to produce tumors. What struck me though was her smile. Here's a young girl who had so many challenges, yet there was this smile that came from somewhere deep inside her that lit up her face!



Sarai looking at dresses for her quinceañera as she turned 15 last February.



Sarai and I outside of her house. Notice the wall behind us.

In January I received a call from Lily that Sarai had developed two new tumors, one in her breast

and the other on her back. After one failed attempt to surgically remove the tumors, she was back in the hospital in early March to try the surgery again. By this time the tumors had grown to the point that they could be seen under her clothes.

Then came more bad news. Through some pre-surgical testing, they found that her lungs were riddled with tumors as well. So many that they couldn't be removed. The doctors gathered and conferred and decided there was nothing they could do. They sent young Sarai home to die. Many of us spent the next two weeks praying for a miracle. Lily was by her bed for long hours at the house and brought oxygen tanks to help



Sarai's grandma and grandpa. He collects recyclable's around the neighborhood to provide for their family.

Sarai breath. I visited her as well, and in spite the pain and discomfort, she still occasionally flashed her amazing smile.

In the end, the miracle we were hoping for never came. Sarai's fight was over. During those precious months, Lily got a chance to share with her about Jesus and discovered she had already put her faith in Him. That must have been where her smile was coming from! We had the honor and privilege to walk till the end with Sarai and her small family on her hard fought journey. We helped with transportation to doctor visits, purchased medications, and prayed with her and her family. Lily even rubbed her back where the tumor was to help ease some of the discomfort.

There are so many doors like Sarai's in our neighborhoods. And there's a story behind every one of them! I'm thankful for our outreaches that bring people out of their homes to meet us. The relationships we form go well beyond casual acquaintance. When we are invited to go through the door, we get to enter into lives filled sometimes with joy, but often with pain. We're able to help through confusing and overwhelming situations. We can be there for them. Advice and financial assistance are sometimes what's needed. Sometimes it's simply a hug or a listening ear. Above all, we get to point them to a God who loves them and wants them to rely on Him. He's knocking on those doors as well and when they answer, He's overjoyed to come in!

From all of us at Spectrum, thank you for praying and giving for the work here in Tijuana as God takes us behind doors to reach people for Him!

Matt Kooi
Spectrum Ministries Director

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." - Revelation 3:20



MAY KIDS CAMP (May 3-5)

Kid's Camp is almost here! Please join us praying in the following ways for all that God wants to do!

- Pray for funding (50 dollars per kid) to bring over 150 kids to camp.
- Ask for safety in travel down to Camp Agua Viva (Living Water) in Ensenada, MX, that the vehicles run well and for protection for the kids as they play hard and enjoy everything the camp has to offer.
- That the kids will enjoy the many organized games and free time activities - zip line, pool, archery, water slide, crafts, etc.
- Ask that God would reveal His great love to each of the kids through the teachings, the videos, the one on one time with the counselors, and through everything the kids encounter at the camp.
- That the kids would hear and understand the Gospel in a way that enables them to trust in Jesus as their Savior!