

## More Than Fruit

October 2022



Cucumber, chile, and lime makes for a healthy snack

As I watched our staff prepare fruit that we would be handing out to children later in the day, I remembered a conversation I had with a child some time ago in Ejido Lazaro Cardenas, one of the poor neighborhoods we serve on the southern outskirts of Tijuana. We were walking in an empty field filled with small weeds and other wild plants struggling to survive in the arid conditions. I saw a small black leaf, which under closer inspection was revealed to be a green leaf covered with small black insects. I pointed out the insects to the child. He said to me, “Yeah, you can eat those. But only when you are really hungry.” He was likely repeating words told to him by his parents or some other caretaker in a time of distress. I imagined what it would be like to have no food to feed my kids, and after a time, with no other options, to resort to lying and telling them that it is okay to eat the insects they could find. “It’s okay when you are really hungry.” I imagine that is a painful lie to tell.

Our staff were packing nice apples this week. To a poor child an apple is a treat, and a nice apple can be a treasure. It is our joy to bring good quality fruit to the children. Though the apples cost a bit more than some of the other fruit options,

I am pleased that we have enough funding to upgrade the fruit this month. Thank you all for your faithful giving! It may look like a simple bag of fruit, but it is more than that. It is something for our kids to look forward to.

Each outreach day we share a short message with the families who attend. The last few weeks I have been sharing John 3:16. God loves us and He sent Jesus to pay for our sin. He desires none to perish, but rather He came to bring us life! In John 10:10 (NLT) Jesus says, “My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.” I told the group of mostly moms from the neighborhood that I could point out many good things that were available that day. We had popcorn, snow cones, fruit cups sprinkled with lime and chili powder, vegetables, fruit, and more. But the best thing I could point them to is that church across the street. We walk by it every day carrying our burdens! Yet Jesus invites us to come to Him and know the rich and satisfying life He gives!



Bananas and Apples ready for delivery



Gospel and games during our outreach day

Later that day a lady asked for more info on the church I had pointed out earlier. We talked to her and gave her the meeting times and contact information for the pastor. A few days later in another neighborhood a mom heard the message and struck up a conversation about her children and the difficulties in leading them down the right path. What she knew of religion was very work-oriented. I talked to her about the role God's spirit plays in our lives and His grace when we repent and come to Him. It is He who brings about fruit in our lives, not merely our own efforts! We come as we are and receive His grace. Offering assistance to the poor opens up a relationship with the communities we serve, and in turn, opens up opportunities to share the gospel. We see people respond to the messages we share. May God grant us success in connecting more families with the local churches. May

the gospel fall on good soil in the Tijuana neighborhoods!

Winter is just around the corner, bringing rain and cold. Now is the time for us to stock up on tarps and blankets for our community distributions for the next few months. The humble homes in the poorest communities are not well equipped for the winter rains. Thin walls with no insulation means the cold is felt hard. A simple blanket goes a long way! Tarps are a huge blessing as well. Keeping a living space warm and dry is essential in the hard winter season. We will be making purchases for blankets and tarps in the next few months. Your donations make this all possible. Thank you for partnering with us.

It is a blessing for us to serve here in Tijuana. We know we are not alone! Feel free to drop me a line at [paul@spectrumministries.org](mailto:paul@spectrumministries.org). God bless you!



Paul sharing the gospel

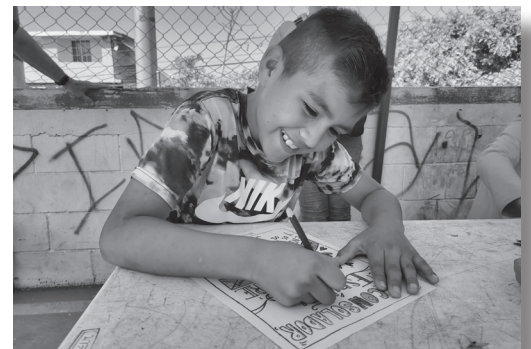
John 10:10 (NKJV) "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

For all of us at Spectrum Ministries,

Paul Alvarado  
Spectrum Ministries Director



Lily Makes a new friend



Having fun at the craft table

