

November 22, 2010

Teddy's Birthday Wish

If you have been to Gabriel House you know who Teddy is. He is 10 years old, precocious, happy, intelligent, funny, despite the fact that he is wheelchair bound with several obvious disabilities.



Teddy has been at Gabriel House since he was 3 months old when his desperate parents brought him when they were told to take him home to die.

His parents were little more than teenagers when we met them. They lived in the vegetable fields in a tarp house. It was easy to see that they were making one of the most painful decisions of their lives, the decision to give up their child in order that he might possibly have a chance to live.

Through Teddy's 10 years, his parents, grandparents and siblings have visited him on a regular basis. This has always been an exciting time for Teddy. It gave him a chance to introduce his Mom and Dad to his Gabriel House family and show off his reading and writing skills; something his parents had never had an opportunity to learn.

This year when we ask Teddy what he wanted for his birthday, he said, "I want to go visit my family."

Saturday Poncho and Angelica packed up Teddy and his wheelchair, sleeping bag, and mattress, and headed south to Vincente Guerro the small town where Teddy's family lives, about 2 hours away. This was the farthest Teddy had ever been away from Gabriel House in his memory. He savored every new sight along the way.

Angelica and Poncho arranged by phone to meet Teddy's dad at the local gas station and from there they followed him to Teddy's family home.

Mom, 2 grandmothers, 7 sisters and brothers and aunts, uncles, and cousins, all waited impatiently for Teddy's arrival. They made a, "Welcome Teddy" sign, a birthday cake and presents were waiting along with chicken mole and rice for a birthday dinner.

There was also another big surprise, when Mom presented Teddy with his new baby sister just one month old.

Teddy spent the night with his family, while Poncho and Angelica stayed at the local motel.

Teddy has been sharing with all his Gabriel House siblings the memories of his birthday trip home. He looks forward to the opportunity to visit his family in the future, and the possibility of going home when he finishes his education; an opportunity he would not have had in Vicente Guererro.

It was a joy to all of us at Gabriel House to give this unique birthday gift to Teddy.

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Love in the mighty name of Jesus
Ted, Renie, the staff and kids of Gabriel House